NAVAL POSTGRADUATE SCHOOL

MONTEREY, CALIFORNIA

MBA PROFESSIONAL PROJECT

MARINE CORPS ACQUISITION OPTIMIZATION

December 2018

By: **Richard M. Yu**
Zully G. Pasindorubio
Gregory J. Carnazza

Advisor: **Mie-Sophia E. Augier**
Co-Advisor: **E. Cory Yoder**
Second Reader: **Timothy J. Winn**

THIS PAGE INTENTIONALLY LEFT BLANK

REPORT DOCUMENTATION PAGE			*Form Approved OMB No. 0704-0188*

1. AGENCY USE ONLY *(Leave blank)*	**2. REPORT DATE** December 2018	**3. REPORT TYPE AND DATES COVERED** MBA Professional Project

4. TITLE AND SUBTITLE MARINE CORPS ACQUISITION OPTIMIZATION	**5. FUNDING NUMBERS**
6. AUTHOR(S) Richard M. Yu, Zully G. Pasindorubio, and Gregory J. Carnazza	
7. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES) Naval Postgraduate School Monterey, CA 93943-5000	**8. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION REPORT NUMBER**
9. SPONSORING / MONITORING AGENCY NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES) N/A	**10. SPONSORING / MONITORING AGENCY REPORT NUMBER**

11. SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES The views expressed in this thesis are those of the author and do not reflect the official policy or position of the Department of Defense or the U.S. Government.

12a. DISTRIBUTION / AVAILABILITY STATEMENT Approved for public release. Distribution is unlimited.	**12b. DISTRIBUTION CODE** A

13. ABSTRACT (maximum 200 words)

The purpose of this report is to provide a comprehensive analysis on how the United States Marine Corps conducts contracting and acquisition activities. This report further evaluates how those activities, when optimized, can enable the Marine Corps to be ready to fight and win within current and future operating environments. This report begins by dissecting the status quo through the three pillars of acquisitions and contracting. The three pillars are: people, or talent management; processes, the mindset with which acquisition decisions are made; and platforms, the vehicles used in that acquisition. Through these three pillars, this report examines the status quo and identifies its strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats. This study then explores multiple optimization alternatives to the status quo, for each of the three pillars, and discusses their respective merits and deficiencies. Finally, based on the results of the analysis, this report provides comprehensive recommendations that have the potential of optimizing operational contracting support and the capabilities the Marine Corps contingency contracting force can provide commanders at every level.

14. SUBJECT TERMS contracting, contingency, 3006, 8059, procurement platforms, United States Marine Corps, contingency contracting force, CCF, operational contract support, other transaction authorities	**15. NUMBER OF PAGES** 103
	16. PRICE CODE

17. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF REPORT	**18. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF THIS PAGE**	**19. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF ABSTRACT**	**20. LIMITATION OF ABSTRACT**
Unclassified	Unclassified	Unclassified	UU

NSN 7540-01-280-5500 Standard Form 298 (Rev. 2-89) Prescribed by ANSI Std. 239-18

THIS PAGE INTENTIONALLY LEFT BLANK

Approved for public release. Distribution is unlimited.

MARINE CORPS ACQUISITION OPTIMIZATION

Richard M. Yu, Captain, United States Marine Corps
Zully G. Pasindorubio, Captain, United States Marine Corps
Gregory J. Carnazza, Captain, United States Marine Corps

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of

MASTER OF BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION

from the

NAVAL POSTGRADUATE SCHOOL
December 2018

Approved by: Mie-Sophia E. Augier
Advisor

E. Cory Yoder
Co-Advisor

Timothy J. Winn
Second Reader

Rene G. Rendon
Academic Associate, Graduate School of Business and Public Policy

THIS PAGE INTENTIONALLY LEFT BLANK

MARINE CORPS ACQUISITION OPTIMIZATION

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this report is to provide a comprehensive analysis on how the United States Marine Corps conducts contracting and acquisition activities. This report further evaluates how those activities, when optimized, can enable the Marine Corps to be ready to fight and win within current and future operating environments. This report begins by dissecting the status quo through the three pillars of acquisitions and contracting. The three pillars are: people, or talent management; processes, the mindset with which acquisition decisions are made; and platforms, the vehicles used in that acquisition. Through these three pillars, this report examines the status quo and identifies its strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats. This study then explores multiple optimization alternatives to the status quo, for each of the three pillars, and discusses their respective merits and deficiencies. Finally, based on the results of the analysis, this report provides comprehensive recommendations that have the potential of optimizing operational contracting support and the capabilities the Marine Corps contingency contracting force can provide commanders at every level.

THIS PAGE INTENTIONALLY LEFT BLANK

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF FIGURES

THIS PAGE INTENTIONALLY LEFT BLANK

LIST OF TABLES

THIS PAGE INTENTIONALLY LEFT BLANK

LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

AMOS	additional military occupational specialty
AO	approving official
AOR	area of responsibility
APEX	Adaptive Planning and Execution System
BIC	billet identification code
CCF	Contingency Contracting Force
CCLEB	Commandant's Career-Level Education Board
COA	course of action
CONUS	continental United States
COTS	commercial off-the-shelf
CPIB	Commandant's Professional Intermediate-Level Education Board
DAU	Defense Acquisition University
DAWIA	Defense Acquisition Workforce Improvement Act
DCAA	Defense Contract Audit Agency
DCMA	Defense Contract Management Agency
DoD	Department of Defense
ECP	Expeditionary Contracting Platoon
FAR	Federal Acquisition Regulation
GCPC	Government-wide Commercial Purchase Card
HQMC	Headquarters Marine Corps
KO	Contracting Officer
MAGTF	Marine Air Ground Task Force
MARADMIN	Marine Administration Messages
MARCORSYSCOM	Marine Corps Systems Command
MARFOR	Marine Corps Forces
MEF	Marine Expeditionary Force
MCI	Marine Corps Installations
MCO	Marine Corps order
MCPP	Marine Corps planning process
MCRP	Marine Corps reference publication

MLG	Marine Logistics Group
MOS	military occupational specialty
NMOS	necessary military occupational specialty
PMOS	primary military occupational specialty
NPS	Naval Postgraduate School
OIF	Operation Iraqi Freedom
OEF	Operation Enduring Freedom
OCONUS	outside continental United States
OCS	operational contract support
OJT	on-the-job training
OPFOR	operational forces
OTA	other transaction authorities
PME	professional military education
PMOS	primary military occupational specialty
RCO	Regional Contracting Office
SWOT	strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats
TIS	time in service
T/O	Table of Organization
USMC	United States Marine Corps

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

We want to express our highest appreciation to Mie-Sophia Augier and Commander Cory Yoder, United States Navy, Retired. We appreciate your guidance and insight as we progressed through our thesis. We also appreciate the lessons you taught us in the classroom. To all of our professors throughout our time at Naval Postgraduate School, we would like to thank you for the lessons you have taught us and how they will enable us to be better Marine Corps officers. And finally, to all those who provided us the insight and direction throughout the Marine Corps, we would like to extend our gratitude for your words of wisdom, pointed questions, and discussions to allow us to grow as academics and challenge us as Marine Corps officers.

THIS PAGE INTENTIONALLY LEFT BLANK

I. INTRODUCTION

The United States Marine Corps contracting force is made up of both uniformed and civilian contracting professionals. The civilian contracting force is utilized for large acquisitions and to provide an enduring presence in installation support. The Marine Corps currently uses its uniformed contracting force to provide contracting support forward in support of the range of military operations. This mindset is tactically focused and considerably under appreciates the full potential of what contracting can do for the Marine Corps.

A. IMPORTANCE OF INNOVATION

This year, Secretary of Defense (SecDef) James Mattis wrote an unclassified *National Defense Strategy*, which identifies innovation as a defense-wide strategy. In the strategy, he specifically directs leaders across the department of defense (DoD) to take a critical look at themselves and adapt in a way that best supports the Joint Force and ensures maximum lethality and performance:

> Organize for innovation. The Department's management structure and processes are not written in stone, they are a means to an end–empowering the warfighter with the knowledge, equipment and support systems to fight and win. Department leaders will adapt their organizational structures to best support the Joint Force. If current structures hinder substantial increases in lethality or performance, it is expected that Service Secretaries and Agency heads will consolidate, eliminate, or restructure as needed. The Department's leadership is committed to changes in authorities, granting of waivers. (Mattis, 2018, p. 10)

This excerpt helps illustrate the SecDef directing DoD leadership to create an environment that fosters innovation. In response to this directive, the Marine Corps is encouraged to create additional avenues for Marines to reach back with their outside-the-box ideas. One example is the Marine Corps Installation and Logistics (I&L) Command's quarterly innovation challenges which reach out to all ranks for disruptive ideas that can change how the Marine Corps conducts business. The ideas are only the first step. In order to reap the benefits of viable ideas, the processes must be responsive and capable of adapting rapidly.

B. DEFINING THE PROBLEM

The Marine Corps' tactical focus obstructs its ability to recognize the opportunity that exists in a more operationally focused integration of contracting capabilities which would better empower the Marine Air Ground Task Force (MAGTF). The inability of top leaders to understand what contracting can holistically offer at the operational level has contributed to a systemic issue in which Marine Corps contracting capabilities have remained stagnant over the years. Even though the current contracting methods have met mission requirements on a reasonably consistent basis for the past two major conflicts, one cannot expect the next battle to be within a similar environment. Top leaders in the DoD have emphasized the need for innovation and the adoption of new practices to stay relevant in the future fights to come.

A primary lesson a newly commissioned Marine officer learns is that the enemy gets a vote. One of the Marine Corps' most renown doctrinal publications, Marine Corps Doctrinal Publication 1, describes this sentiment as the following:

> War is thus a process of continuous mutual adaption, of give and take, move and countermove. It is critical to keep in mind that the enemy is not an inanimate object to be acted upon but an independent and animate force with its own objectives and plans. While we try to impose our will on the enemy, he resists us and seeks to impose his own will on us. (Department of the Navy, 1997, p. 3–4)

This recognizes that any approach to a given problem must account for the intrinsic forces that seek to oppose them. In addition, the rhetoric throughout the *National Defense Strategy* for 2018 acknowledges that the United States military is no longer guaranteed a competitive advantage against future adversaries. Not only will the equipment set and the implementation therein change, but also the way in which the Marine Corps critically thinks about challenges it will have to face. The Commandant of the Marine Corps, General Neller, acknowledges the challenge in the *Marine Corps Operating Concept* (MOC) by stating:

> The Marine Corps is currently not organized, trained, and equipped to meet the demands of the future operating environment characterized by complex terrain, technology proliferation, information warfare, the need to shield and

> exploit signatures, and an increasing non-permissive maritime domain. (Neller, 2016, p.12).

In the MOC, General Neller is calling Marines to action to find methods to overcome the organizational challenge currently before the Marine Corps. The MOC also contains a list of items on which its success is contingent. Two of those requirements are the extent to which the Marine Corps has:

> Redesigned our logistics to support distributable forces across a dynamic and fully contested battlespace – because iron mountains of supply and lakes of liquid fuel are liabilities and not supportive of maneuver warfare.
>
> Overcome the enduring obstacles to leveraging and sustaining "commercial-off-the-shelf systems" – because affordable "70%" solutions now are better than outdated solutions 10 years from now. (Neller, 2016, p. 13)

Modifications to contracting could provide viable answers to those two concerns. In order for the Marine Corps to be more effective and efficient in the battles to come, its leaders need to consider and be open to the idea of adopting new ways to employ its contracting capabilities.

C. RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Our report addresses the following questions:

Q1. Is the current Marine Corps Contracting Force structured to holistically support not only today's needs but prepare the warfighter to face future potential conflicts?

Q2. Is there a better method to recruit, employ, and utilize the Contingency Contracting Force, thus improving the operational value as a resource to the Marine Logistics Group (MLG)/ Marine Expeditionary Force (MEF)/ United States Marine Corps (USMC)?

Q3. Would the professionalization of the contracting force enhance the lethal capabilities of the Marine Corps?

Q4. Can the Marine Corps benefit from integrating a more diverse approach to contracting?

D. SCOPE

For the past 25 years, there have been multiple theses and projects written about the field of contracting within the Marine Corps. The first of these to attempt to address the concept of contracting in the Marine Corps was written by, then, United States Marine Corps Captain Eric M. Corcoran in 2000. Many other theses were written after 2000 which address specific aspects of the Contingency Contracting Force (CCF), from phase zero operations and contingency contracting in a deployed environment, to best methods and practices to professionalize the CCF. However, since Captain Corcoran's thesis, there has not been another thesis which takes a comprehensive approach to evaluate the CCF. Since 2000, CCF has supported several operations, to include Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF) and Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF). For these reasons, this report will take lessons learned over the last two decades of CCF operations; specifically, this report will cover in depth the past, present, and future potential of Marine Corps contracting operations.

E. METHODOLOGY

First and foremost, for the purposes of this report, it is critical to understand and differentiate between strategic in terms of levels of warfare, and strategic in terms of strategic thinking and management. Within the Marine Corps, the word strategic is most commonly associated with levels of warfare and joint planning efforts between the services. Although the Marine Corps conducts operations which supports strategic objectives, the Marine Corps does not operate at a strategic level of war; they operate at the tactical and operational levels of warfare. In contrast to that, this report will use the word strategic in reference to strategic management, or the way of thinking that deliberates decisions made in a rational and logical state of mind for long-term goals. In the conclusion of the MOC, General Neller calls upon Marines at every level to action by stating:

> The MOC is a start-point for change, not the end-point. It does not provide an answer to every problem. It is intended to generate professional debate and discussion about our future challenges. If we are to produce the force

> we need, it is essential that all Marines and Sailors read, understand and discuss the ideas in the MOC. I also ask that all of our partners and supporting organizations review the concept and its critical tasks to develop an appreciation for our future course and determine how they can improve their relationships with the Marine Corps. Working collaboratively together, we can refine our understanding of the challenges and the opportunities before us. We can develop a practical plan of attack to identify and realize solutions, and ensure the Marine Corps of the future is prepared to advance to contact, fight, and win where and when our Nation requires. Your proactive involvement in validating our operating concept is critical to ensuring we can Innovate, Adapt, and Win! I challenge all of you to help build the future force that will prove its mettle once again in combat and contribute to our legacy of victory. (Neller, 2016, p. 31)

Achievement of the objectives and goals outlined in the MOC requires strategic management at the organizational level, and the Marine Corps needs to think critically about where it is today and how it will take measurable steps to get to where it needs to be.

This report will discuss Marine Corps' acquisition and procurement optimization using a three-tiered approach. The three-tiered model includes looking at Marine Corps contracting operations through the lenses of people, processes, and platforms. The first pillar, people, will go into the talent management aspect of the CCF by offering three distinct courses of action (COA) the Marine Corps could adopt to improve the performance of their commissioned uniformed contracting officers (KOs). The second pillar, processes, will go into the mindset with which the Marine Corps acquires technology, goods, or services. Lastly, the third pillar, platforms, address the specific vehicles the CCF utilizes to acquire new technologies, goods, or services. Due to the unnecessary complexities of monetizing the intangibles with relation to this topic, this report will instead utilize a strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (SWOT) analysis to dissect the problem statement further. This SWOT will allow for a business model to assist in the production a more optimized structure that aligns with key strategic goals as laid out by the SecDef and the commandant of the Marine Corps. Through the three lenses, this report seeks to offer an understanding of how deviations, some simple and some complex, from the status quo can significantly augment capabilities and further optimize the lethality and performance of the Marine Corps contracting force.

F. ORGANIZATION OF THESIS

The comprehensive approach of this report will span five chapters which will cover the following areas:

Chapter I is the introduction which presents the questions this report seeks to answer.

Chapter II provides a comprehensive background understanding of the history associated with the current Marine contracting structure as it relates to people, processes, and platforms.

Chapter III states the status quo and provides a thorough SWOT analysis of the current Marine contracting structure as it relates to people, processes, and platforms.

Chapter IV provides recommendations for opportunities the Marine Corps could pursue which would optimize contracting performance and support to the MAGTF.

Chapter V makes recommendations of what an optimal contracting structure could look like and how its adoption could enable the Marine Corps to succeed in the future operating environment.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

A. BACKGROUND

Marine Corps contracting efforts have seen a number of theses written over the past 15 years. Many of the issues that were identified at the time of their publication still resonate in the Marine Corps and have not been addressed for a multitude of reasons. This section will conduct a review of some of the past works that have not only assisted the research team in better understanding the topic but stemmed critical thinking in which the authors attempt to discuss further. The reason this report is possible is due to the extensive research conducted and written by others and by both the faculty and students at the Naval Postgraduate School (NPS).

A prevalent document which assisted the authors to shape their mindset in preparation for this report was The Yoder Three-tier Model (YTTM) for Optimal Planning and Execution of Contingency Contracting by Elliot Cory Yoder, 2004. Yoder describes a Three-Tiered Model approach to combating complex contracting problems in a military setting, with the three tiers consisting of (1) training and education, (2) certification, and (3) experience (Yoder, 2004). More than seven years later, a report published in 2012 readdresses the same points identified by YTTM, but with a more strategic lens. The newer report, called *Phase Zero Contracting Operations – Strategic and Integrative Planning for Contingency and Expeditionary Operations* by E. Cory Yoder, William E. Long, Jr., and Dayne E. Nix, 2012, discusses how each of the three theirs associated with the YTTM can optimize and better prepare the DoD for future contingencies. The first tier of the YTTM describes contracting efforts by junior military staff conducting simple transactions at tactical and unit levels. The second tier can conduct operations at the tactical level but introduces the operational level as well. This tier consists of mid-grade officers and begins to integrate the planning efforts into the higher levels of command; contracting efforts that are above the simplified acquisition threshold (SAT) and consist of more complex negotiations. The third tier is senior officials, usually flag-level or equivalent, and introduces the strategic nature of contracting into the DoD. They are entrusted in ensuring that the Annex W, the contracting annex, will support the overarching concept of

operations. The three tiers complement each other to improve the lethality of the operating forces, balancing the three levels of warfare concerning contracting efforts (Yoder, Long, Nix, 2012).

As identified in Chapter I, the importance of innovative ideas, and the implementation thereof enable the DoD to be more equipped when a new contingency arises. In Yoder, Long, and Nix's report, the authors conclude that "contracting has not been fully integrated into military planning and execution," as well as "the lack of planning and sound contract integration at the strategic level leads to loss of efficiencies, lack of effectiveness, and in many cases, outright fraud" (Yoder et al., 2012, p. 33). These issues that were identified in 2012 are still persistent in 2018, and numerous theses were written researching these, among similar, issues.

1. Acquisition Workforce Management

a. Title 10, Chapter 87, Defense Acquisition Workforce

Chapter 87 of Title 10 of the United States Code (U.S.C.) covers matters concerning the defense acquisition workforce, civilian or uniformed. Specific to the purview of this thesis are two sections within this chapter; § 1721 and § 1722a. § 1721 establishes the requirement for the DoD to designate positions as being an acquisition position, or not, to indicate who is beholden to the requirements set forth by Title 10, U.S.C., Chapter 87. The section specifically says:

> (a) Designation.—The Secretary of Defense shall designate in regulations those positions in the Department of Defense that are acquisition positions for purposes of this chapter.
>
> (b) Required Positions.—In designating the positions under subsection (a), the Secretary shall include, at a minimum, all acquisition-related positions in the following areas:
>
> (1) Program management.
>
> (2) Systems planning, research, development, engineering, and testing.
>
> (3) Procurement, including contracting.

(4) Industrial property management.

(5) Logistics.

(6) Quality control and assurance.

(7) Manufacturing and production.

(8) Business, cost estimating, financial management, and auditing.

(9) Education, training, and career development.

(10) Construction.

(11) Joint development and production with other government agencies and foreign countries.

(12) Intellectual property. (Designation of Acquisition Positions, 2018)

Once acquisition positions are determined, §1722a, subsection (a) directs the SecDef to, "establish policies and issue guidance to ensure the proper development, assignment, and employment of members of the armed forces in the acquisition field to achieve the objectives of this subsection as specified in section (b)" (Special requirements for military personnel in the acquisition field, 2018). Subsection (b) then goes on to say:

> Objectives.—Policies established and guidance issued pursuant to subsection (a) shall ensure, at a minimum, the following:
>
> (1) A single-track career path in the acquisition field that attracts the highest quality officers and enlisted personnel.
>
> (2) A dual-track career path that attracts the highest quality officers and enlisted personnel and allows them to gain experience in and receive credit for a primary career in combat arms and a functional secondary career in the acquisition field in order to more closely align the military operational, requirements, and acquisition workforces of each armed force.
>
> (3) A number of command positions and senior noncommissioned officer positions, including acquisition billets reserved for general officers and flag officers under subsection (c), sufficient to ensure that members of the armed forces have opportunities for promotion and advancement in the acquisition field.

> (4) A number of qualified, trained members of the armed forces eligible for and active in the acquisition field sufficient to ensure the optimum management of the acquisition functions of the Department of Defense and the appropriate use of military personnel in contingency contracting. (Special requirements for military personnel in the acquisition field, 2018)

These are only small portions of the entire requirements levied on the DoD by Title 10, U.S.C., Chapter 87.

b. Department of Defense Instruction 5000.66 and Desk Guide

DoD Instruction (DODI) 5000.66, Defense Acquisition Workforce Education, Training, Experience, and Career Development Program, is the latest instruction for the implementation of Title 10, U.S.C., Chapter 87. Beyond implementation guidance, DODI 500.66, "Establishes policies, assigns responsibilities, and provides procedures for the conduct of the Defense Acquisition Workforce (AWF) Education, Training, Experience, and Career Development Program, referred to in this issuance as the "AWF Program" (Department of Defense [DoD], 2018, p. 1). Section 5 of DODI 5000.66 addresses positions which at a minimum will be coded as part of the AWF, of which contracting, uniformed or civilian, is one of them. The instruction not only acknowledges contracting as part of the AWF, but it goes on to make a distinction in that contracting positions have unique requirements. The requirements leveraged on contracting officers are above those leveraged on all other AWF positions. Furthermore, DODI 5000.66 makes the distinction between the AWF and the defense acquisition corps (DAC). Chapter 87, Title 10, U.S.C., directs each military department to properly identify positions that are part of the AWF, but it also has a separate requirement for each military department to have a DAC. AWF members are not automatically a member of the DAC. As per the instruction, the DAC is,

> A pool of highly-qualified members of the AWF from which KLPs and CAPs are filled. It is comprised of those persons who have met the standards prescribed by Chapter 87 of Title 10, U.S.C., and this issuance, and to whom the USD(AT&L) or a CAE has granted admission to the Acquisition Corps. (DoD, 2018, p. 33)

As members of the AWF, contracting officers are eligible to compete for acceptance into the DAC (DoD, 2018).

In addition to the DODI 5000.66, the Department also published a complimentary Defense Acquisition Workforce Program Desk Guide. The stated purpose of the desk guide is to provide, "detailed procedures for implementing policy established in Department of Defense (DoDI) 5000.66. If there is a conflict with the DoDI 5000.66, the Instruction takes precedence." (Department of Defense [DoD], 2017a, p. 2). Section 1 of the desk guide reiterates the importance of coding AWF positions as directed by Chapter 87 of Title 10, U.S.C. This section also lists the 15 career fields within which every AWF position must be assigned. One of those 15 career fields is contracting (DoD, 2017a).

2. Eric M. Corcoran, 2000 Naval Postgraduate Master's Thesis

In his thesis, then Captain Eric M. Corcoran researched the development of a permanent contracting command structure. To inform his analysis of the CCF at the time, Captain Corcoran conducted interviews with active duty KOs, personnel in leadership positions within the Marine Corps' contracting structure, and Marine Corps legal officers. One revelation Captain Corcoran made was that "The procurement policies and procedures are cumbersome while the structure of the personnel force is disjointed and unstable" (Corcoran, 2000, p. 43). Aside from the fact, there was only 16 KOs at the time, now there is about double, and that the contracting organization names were different at the time Captain Corcoran wrote his thesis, many things remain the same. There is no standard operating procedure by which contracting organizations conduct business. Each organization and each location pursues contracting activities slightly different (Corcoran, 2000).

In his interviews with active duty KOs, Captain Corcoran identified a problem in KO retention and concluded that all KOs believed the transition to KO should be permanent because contracting is a technically challenging and detail oriented profession which required constant utilization for proficiency and currency. At the time KOs were also educated through NPS. However, participants were selected by application and were not limited to only 3002 supply officers. All interviewed officers identified that their NPS education, while outstanding, was theoretical and did not prepare them for the realities of how the Marine Corps executes contracting activities. More than half of those interviewed

identified that background in a combat service support (CSS) facilitated a better understanding of the close relationship between contracting and CSS activities. Although interviewees acknowledged that a CSS background was not necessary, officers who held CSS background had a more gradual learning curve as compared to their combat arms counterparts. All interviewees unanimously had an appreciation for their fleet marine force (FMF) experience prior to transitioning to the KO field in that it enabled them to get to know their customer and develop the ability to communicate with them effectively. High-level officers interviewed called the FMF experience a must in that it helped KOs understand mission needs and customer support (Corcoran, 2000).

Through his research and the situational awareness, it developed, Captain Corcoran identified a command structure which would facilitate a permanent lateral transfer. He also identified the two primary hurdles such a change would have to overcome. First, contracting would need the buy-in of senior leaders. Second, in order to extend the contracting field, leaders will have to fight for billets in a table of organization (T/O). Congress sets total manpower authorized numbers, and as a result, the Marine Corps cannot add more billets in one community without taking them from somewhere else. Some of the additional billets would enable the contracting community to have a roadmap to advancement and promotion without requiring officers to leave the field for prerequisite billets in their primary military occupational specialty (PMOS). (Corcoran, 2000).

3. Urgent Reform Required: Army Expeditionary Contracting, 2007

The Commission on Army Acquisition and Program Management in Expeditionary Operations, more commonly referred to as the Gansler Commission, was established by the Secretary of the Army to produce lessons learned from contracting operations in OEF and OIF. The intent was for the commission to conduct an analysis of the Army's operations in-theater and make recommendations to help future Army operations be more effective, efficient, and transparent. Ultimately, in their report, *Urgent Reform Required: Army Expeditionary Contracting*, the commission identified five critical deficiencies. First, the Army did not have enough Army contracting officers or non-commissioned officers (NCO). Second, the Army did not have an acquisition workforce that was, "staffed, trained,

structured, or empowered" to meet the needs of a deployed Warfighter (Department of the Army [Army], 2007, p. 2). Third, the commission identified a seven-fold increase in workload and an increase in contracting complexity without the growth of the workforce or additional training. Fourth, the Army has not recognized how the increase in contractors in expeditionary environments impacts mission success. Lastly, the Army is not treating contracting like a core competency (Army, 2007).

From their root cause analysis, the commission identified four key improvements the Army should pursue if it wanted to be more effective and efficient in future expeditionary operations, as well as, reduce fraud, waste, and abuse. In addition to identifying deficiencies, the Gansler report made four overarching recommendations to the Army:

1. Increase the stature, quantity, and career development of military and civilian contracting personnel (especially for expeditionary operations).

2. Restructure organization and restore responsibility to facilitate contracting and contract management in expeditionary and CONUS operations.

3. Provide training and tools for overall contracting activities in expeditionary operations.

4. Obtain legislative, regulatory, and policy assistance to enable contracting effectiveness in expeditionary operations. (Army, 2007, p. 5)

Even though the commission's report was solely based on an analysis of the Army's contracting operations within an expeditionary environment, Section 849 of the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) for Fiscal Year (FY) 2008, required the entire DoD to evaluate the recommendations made in the Gansler report (United States House of Representatives, 2007).

4. Adam Harrison, 2016 Naval Postgraduate Master's Thesis

In Adam Harrison, Craig Warner, and Dylan Armknecht thesis from 2016 researched the nature of the transitory assignments of officers and the correlation to the

inability to efficiently execute mission requirements within the Marine Corps. During the research, the thesis group conducted a survey, which included senior enlisted and field grade officers who were currently serving in contracting billets at the time the thesis was written. In the conduct of their research the thesis group submitted a survey in which the following questions pertain to this thesis:

> Question 2: Does your command have a reintegration period for commissioned officer returning to the contracting MOS for a subsequent tour before they are able to deploy? If yes, what training is required? (Harrison, Warner, and Armknecht, 2016, p. 27)
>
> Question 6: Which of the following are documented as critical vulnerabilities that affect the mission readiness for contracting? (Harrison et al., 2016, p. 30)
>
> Question 7: What incentives (if any) could be offered to support retention of commissioned officers in the contracting community? (Harrison et al., 2016, p. 31)

Of the personnel that responded to question 2 of their survey, 100 percent replied "no." With the ever-changing policies and highly regulated environment which surround contracting, survey respondents agreed that returning KOs should receive additional training once they return to CCF. Furthermore, the group identified that Marine officers returning to their PMOS have minimal incentives to retain the knowledge and experience gained during their utilization tour. (Harrison et al., 2016).

The surveyed Marines identified that officer manpower shortfall were the highest risk to the Marine Corps impact on contingency contracting readiness. The second highest was the officer technical proficiency in the military occupational specialty (MOS). Furthermore, survey members provided additional comments of other critical vulnerabilities such as lack of a limited duty officer (LDO) or warrant officer (WO) option, lack of contracting training, and not permanently assigning 3006 operational contract support (OCS) officer as a PMOS. Table 1 is from Harrison, Warner, and Armknecht's thesis and it is a tabulated representation of the responses they received to question 6 of their survey. (Harrison et al., 2016).

Table 1. Critical Vulnerabilities to Contracting Mission Readiness. Adapted from Harrison, Warner, and Armknecht (2016).

Critical Vulnerability	Response	Qty	%
a. Impermanent officer assignment	**No**	5	24%
	Yes	16	76%
b. Officer manpower shortfalls	**No**	0	0%
	Yes	21	100%
c. Enlisted manpower shortfalls	**No**	10	48%
	Yes	11	52%
d. GS manpower shortfalls	**No**	15	71%
	Yes	6	29%
e. Officer's technical proficiency	**No**	4	19%
	Yes	17	81%
f. Failure of contract administration/oversight	**No**	11	52%
	Yes	10	48%
g. Lack of customer understanding of the contracting processes	**No**	5	24%
	Yes	16	76%
h. Systems synchronization for OCONUS to CONUS contracts	**No**	14	67%
	Yes	7	33%
i. Knowledge of systems usage	**No**	12	57%
	Yes	9	43%
j. Lost knowledge from retiring contracting personnel	**No**	10	48%
	Yes	11	52%
k. Other/Comments	**Yes**	5 responses	
Table Legend	Highest Percent Yes	Highest Percent No	

The top retention method was to provide a DoD-funded graduate degree program. Beginning with the 2014 Commandant's Professional Intermediate-Level Board (CPIB) and the Commandant's Career Level Education Board (CCLEB) results, Marine officers have been selected to attend NPS in order to the gain the knowledge required to receive the additional MOS of 3006 OCS officers. The highest no response was to take no actions to incentives retention within 3006 OCS officer community, much of the concerns revolve around the issue of competitiveness for promotions thus reducing the likelihood of returning to CCF. Table 2 is from Harrison, Warner, and Armknecht's thesis and it is a

tabulated representation of the responses they received to question 7 of their survey. (Harrison et al., 2016).

Table 2. Survey Responses to Incentivizing KO Retention. Adapted from Harrison, Warner, and Armknecht (2016)

Retention Incentive	Response	Qty	%
a. DOD funded graduate degree programs	**No**	6	29%
	Yes	15	71%
b. PME equivalencies for AMOS assignment	**No**	16	76%
	Yes	5	24%
c. Command billet opportunities aligned with the acquisitions MOS (8061)	**No**	8	38%
	Yes	13	62%
d. Special duty pay to incentivize retention	**No**	15	71%
	Yes	6	29%
e. None	**No**	20	95%
	Yes	1	5%
f. Other/Comments	**Yes**	5 responses	
Table Legend	Highest Percent Yes	Highest Percent No	

5. Lee A. White, 2017 Naval Postgraduate Master's Thesis

In his thesis, Mr. Lee A. White conducted a cost-benefit analysis of three COAs the Marine Corps does and could pursue to train and educate unrestricted commissioned KOs. In his analysis, Mr. White measured the cost of education and the time, in months, that it would take for a Marine officer to complete their education and utilization tour. This analysis considered several factors based on 2016 cost and pay data to calculate a low, typical, and high cost for each COA. (White, 2017).

In COA 1, a Marine officer would be educated through the NPS distance-learning program (DLP). Their utilization tour clock would start immediately, and they would

simultaneously be expected to complete the DLP program and their distance professional military education (PME) in grade. According, to Mr. White's analysis this COA would take 36 months to complete. The cost estimates range from a low of $215,512 to a high of $261,203 per student. (White, 2017).

COA 2 consisted of the current approach to education KOs by having them attend NPS. In the current approach, officers must complete their respective grade distance PME before graduation, and their utilization tour begins immediately after graduation. This approach is estimated to take 54 months to complete. The estimated cost ranges from a low of $195,990 to a high of $233,390 per student. (White, 2017).

In COA 3, Mr. White looked at an approach the Marine Corps does not currently utilize. Mr. White looked at what it would cost to have unrestricted commissioned officers attend night school online or at a local institution instead of attending resident or distance NPS. This COA requires that an officer in the program attend a four-month Contingency Contracting Office Course (CCOC), which does not currently exist, to get their Defense Acquisition Workforce Improvement Act (DAWIA) education as the first step. After finishing CCOC, an officer would go to their utilization tour location and simultaneously complete their distance PME and a masters of business administration (MBA) using the military tuition assistance program. This approach is estimated to take up to 40 months to complete. The estimated cost ranges from a low of $82,046 to a high of $104,034 per student (White, 2017).

6. Other Works

Although more works assisted in shaping how this report would be conducted, the mindsets came from the authors own perspective. This report will utilize a three-tiered approach, personnel, processes, and platforms, to address optimization which is similar to pillars found in Yoder, Long, Nix's Phase Zero Contracting Operations called Yoder's Three Integrated Pillars of Success (YTIPS). The three pillars under the YTIPS model are personnel, implementing the YTTM, platforms, incorporating all phases of the military operations with contracting, and protocols, procedures, and rules that are incorporated into the planning and execution of the contracting plan (Yoder et al., 2012). This report will

discuss personnel within a similar aspect, concerning talent management; but differ on the other two. The YTIPS model is written at a more strategic level, in which it uses joint publications as reference documents and actual contracting systems when discussing platforms and protocols. This report intends to discuss processes and platforms internal to the Marine Corps.

B. CONCLUSION

In summary, this chapter reviewed previous works that were read and referenced to assist this report's authors in the creation of the MBA project. Further discussion into the status quo of the Marine Corps contracting force is broken down by personnel, processes, and platforms and will be in Chapter III, followed by alternatives in Chapter IV. The works cited in this chapter assisted in creating the SWOT analysis in Chapter III and the alternatives discussed in Chapter IV.

III. STATUS QUO

This chapter describes the status quo as it relates to the people, processes, and platforms which support contracting activities in the Marine Corps. These descriptions will include a brief analysis of each section, followed then by a SWOT analysis. Since the Marine Corps reserves the right not to implement recommended changes, the authors decided to label the Status Quo as COA 1.

A. PEOPLE

This section will provide a description and analysis of how the Marine Corps currently conducts talent management of 3006 OCS officers.

1. Analysis

Since 2014, Marine Corps policy has been that only officers holding the 3002 supply officer PMOS are eligible for selection through either the CPIB or CCLEB to attend the 815 Acquisition & Contract Management curriculum at the NPS. Those officers selected thorough CPIB or CCLEB receive permanent change of station orders to attend NPS in Monterey, California the summer after the Marine administrative (MARADMIN) message is released announcing their selection. The 815 curriculum at NPS is an 18-month program which provides graduates with an MBA with a focus on acquisition and contracting. Graduates of the curriculum 815 depart NPS with the education necessary to achieve DAWIA Level I, II, and III certification upon meeting the experience requirements for each level.

In addition to a diverse knowledge base, Marine Corps officers in the 815 curriculum receive the necessary MOS (NMOS) of 3006 OCS officers. Current manpower structure aligns 3006 OCS officers under manpower management officer assignment (MMOA) 1 / monitored assignment codes 18 for assignment based on the Marine Corps' needs and with inputs from the OCS officer occupational field sponsor.

Based on the needs of the Marine Corps, a 3006 OCS officers on their first, or follow-on, contracting tour will be assigned primarily to three key billets in the Marine Corps.

1. MEF command elements: These billets are typically staffed by a field grade officers within G-4 as an OCS advisor to assist in the planning, coordinating, validating, and synchronizing of contingency contracting requirements for MAGTF operations.

2. Expeditionary Contracting Platoon (ECP): Each MLG has an ECP section under its Headquarters Regiment. They provide limited simplified acquisition procedures (SAP) contracting support to deployed units, and contingency operations support forward across a range of operation.

3. Regional Contracting Office (RCO): There are regional commands with multiple offices that support preparing the Marine Corps to fight contingency operations abroad. Each RCO maintains their mission statement, but they all provide general contracting and procurement support to their respective regions as well as a professional training and mentoring environment to create forward-thinking expeditionary officers. All 3006 OCS officers will spend a year of on-the-job training at an RCO office to gain experience and mentorship with KOs and civilian contracting officers.

Figure 1 depicts what the progression of an officer through the current talent management model could look like. This model assumes that an officer has no prior enlisted service and is selected to the 815 curriculum program after completing one tour as a 3002 supply officer.

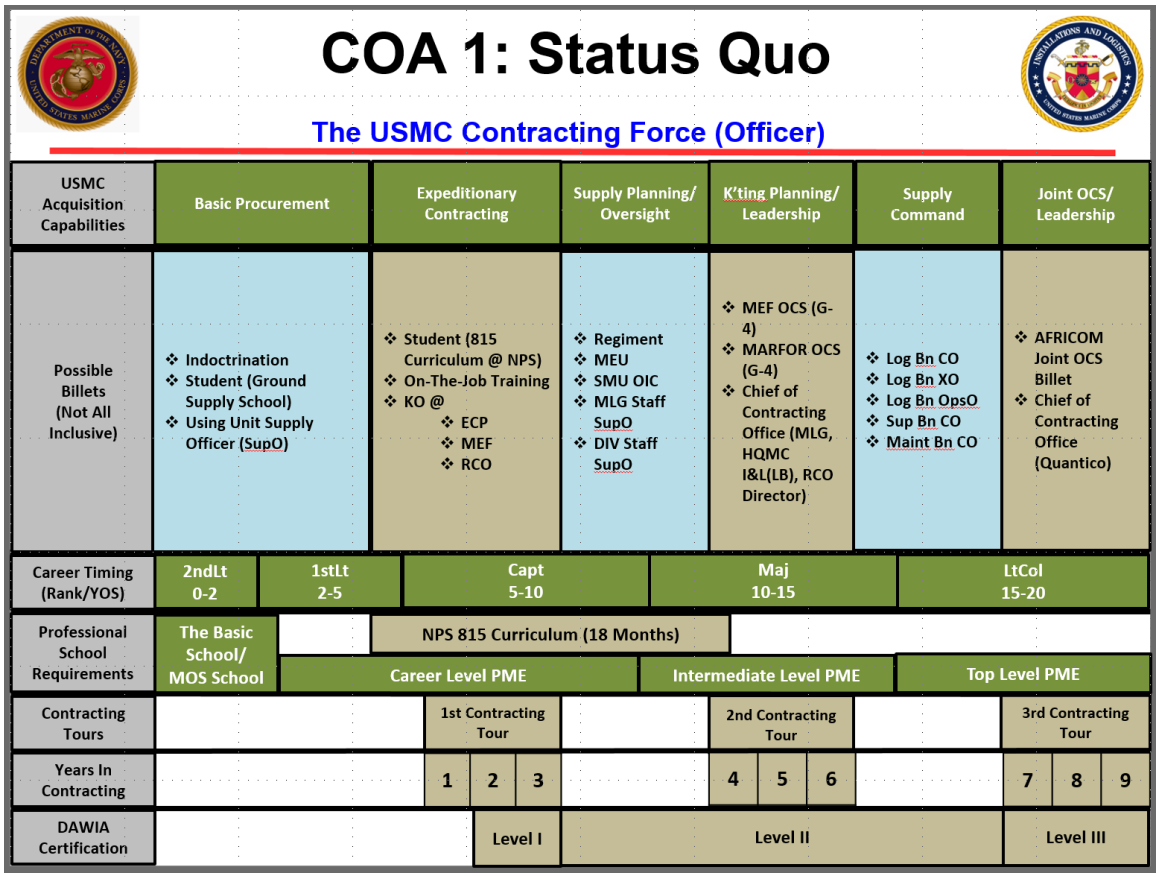

Figure 1. Sample Officer Progression through COA 1

a. Strengths

The most resounding strength of the current talent management approach the Marine Corps uses for officers in the CCF is that it is established and it is integrated into how the Marine Corps executes contingency operations today. Although the officer component of the CCF is relatively small, it has continued to find success in accomplishing the mission. The entire CCF officer core stabilizes around 30 officers at any given point, but there are more that have achieved the 3006 OCS officer MOS in the fleet conducting a tour within their PMOS. If a critical requirement for OCS officers arises, the Marine Corps has a pool of experienced KOs they can recall from the fleet.

b. Weaknesses

A significant weakness in the current talent management process is the proficiency loss during the rotation of KOs between a KO tour and a PMOS tour. Unlike many other MOS fields, contracting and acquisitions are in a constant state of evolving and changing regulations, statutes, and directives. The removal of KOs for one or two tours outside of the contracting realm is extremely detrimental to a set of perishable contracting skills. Since government contracting regulations continually evolve due to variations in policies, changes in key leadership positions, and improvements in the processes; staying abreast of all changes, and the ramifications thereof, is pertinent to the professional nature of the CCF.

The majority of the officers selected for the 815 curriculum under CPIB or CCLEB, in the last three FYs, were prior enlisted with an average of 10–15 years of service. This alludes that the board selects those who are more senior in their career progression rather than selecting more junior officers who will have the potential to execute multiple utilization tours. The potential for additional utilization tours is one of the distinctions between Marines who attend the 815 curriculum at NPS versus other NPS programs. Most of the other programs Marines graduate from through NPS require only one payback tour, but those selected for the 815 curriculum can conduct multiple utilization tours throughout their career. Even though all master's degree from NPS are the same, the Marine Corps requires a more educated pool of officers to manage the RCO and ECP units. Furthermore, in his thesis, Mr. White determined the cost to educate a KO through NPS to range from a low of $195,990 to a high of $233,390 per student. With only one utilization tour for most programs, the Marine Corps views the return on investment (ROI) has justified the cost of the education. However, due to the unique circumstances surrounding KOs, the 815 NPS graduates in the Marine Corps conduct follow-on tours within the 3006 OCS officer MOS. This provides an opportunity for the Marine Corps to expand the ROI being received from this community so long as it is planned correctly. One of the first issues which affects the number of follow-on tours is the fact that based on the FY16 through FY18 CPIB and CCLEB selection results for the 815 curriculum, the Marine Corps is consistently selecting prior enlisted officers with an average of 10–15 years of service. Table 3 showcases the FY16 through FY18 CPIB and CCLEB selections based on rank when selected, time in

service (TIS) each selectee will have upon graduating from NPS, and the average TIS of each class.

Table 3. USMC FY16-18 NPS 815 Curriculum Selection Data

		Rank When Selected	TIS Upon Graduation (In Years)	Average TIS
FY16	O1	Captain*	20.13	13.34
	O2	Captain	11.47	
	O3	Lieutenant*	16.93	
	O4	Captain*	16.41	
	O5	Captain*	15.49	
	O6	Lieutenant*	13.08	
	O7	Captain	6.65	
	O8	Captain	6.54	
FY17	O1	Lieutenant*	16.42	11.9
	O2	Captain*	15.78	
	O3	Lieutenant*	13.55	
	O4	Captain*	10.34	
	O5	Lieutenant*	9.94	
	O6	Lieutenant	5.17	
FY18	O1	Lieutenant*	17.82	14.4
	O2	Captain*	16.93	
	O3	Lieutenant*	16.35	
	O4	Lieutenant*	15.41	
	O5	Lieutenant*	14.54	
	O6	Lieutenant*	14.41	
	O7	Lieutenant*	11.66	
	O8	Captain	8.00	
			FY16-18 Average TIS (In Years):	**13.3**
			Percent Priors FY16-18:	**77.27%**

* Denotes prior enlisted service

The Marine Corps' selection for the CPIB or CCLEB, is based on future anticipated gaps. The selection quantity for the 815 curriculum has been based-on which officers will depart the MOS to return to their PMOS for a key billet tour or retire. Based on the CPIB and CCLEB slating results, six Captains and two Lieutenants were selected for FY16, two Captains and four Lieutenants were selected for FY17, and two Captains and six

Lieutenants were selected for FY18. Even though the number of officers selected for the 3006 OCS officer MOS has been steadily increasing, it is a reflection of those leaving the MOS as well. The current model does not grow the 3006 OCS officer community to meet T/O requirements or match operational staffing demands.

c. Opportunities

One of the key opportunities the Marine Corps can exploit is the training officers receive at NPS. NPS's academic catalog states the Acquisition & Contract Management Curriculum as:

> The Acquisition and Contract Management curriculum is an interdisciplinary program which integrates management theory, accounting, economics, finance, behavioral science, management theory, operations/ systems analysis, and specific courses in acquisition and contracting. The 815 curriculum includes a concentration option in strategic purchasing. Student input includes officers and civilians from all DoD services, other federal agencies, and allied nations. The curriculum is designed to provide officers and civilians with the skills to serve effectively in systems buying offices, field contracting offices, contract administration offices, and contracting policy offices. (Naval Postgraduate School, 2018, p. 53)

In addition to the skills learned during the NPS 815 curriculum, graduates receive DAWIA level 3 education. The Marine Corps can potentially utilize these highly trained officers more effectively by augmenting the level of responsibility it gives to the KOs with higher threshold levels than the SAT. Commissioned officers already receive a special trust and confidence by the President of the United States, when compared to their non-commissioned and civilian counterparts. This higher degree of responsibility can be enacted upon when delegating rights and roles of the KOs within the Marine Corps, in accordance with their commissioning warrant. This will provide a higher level of experience and knowledge in the contracting field.

Due to the level of training and education that officers received, there are other opportunities to use these highly trained professionals in other aspects of contracting. Other opportunities to conduct tours at other DoD agencies would assist in broadening the experience of these officers, which would increase the lethality of force and breadth of knowledge. These experience broadening billets would be at placed at locations such as

Defense Contracting Management Agency (DCMA), Defense Contracting Audit Agency, and Defense Innovation Unit (DIU) which would be in line with the other DoD services. These outside billets would better enable the KOs to incorporate the use of non-Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR) based contractual agreements, which would also give the Marine Corps more flexibility.

d. Threats

There are two significant threats to the current model: retention and mission accomplishment. With the first threat, retention is composed of internal and external factors. Internally, the contracting community has to contend with officers who want to return to their PMOS for advancement and command opportunities. Additionally, the trend of over half of those selected being later in their career places many in a position where they can retire after their utilization tour is over. Externally, there is a high demand for contracting experience in the private sector. This presents a highly lucrative opportunity for officers, which may influence their decision to leave active duty for a second career in the private sector.

The second threat of the current process is how it may potentially affect the ability of the CCF to meet future warfighter requirements in a timely fashion. In their thesis, Harrison, Warner, and Armknecht surveyed then active duty KOs and identified manpower shortfalls as the most significant critical vulnerability (CV) to the Marine Corps' ability to efficiently execute mission requirements. The first CV identified was manpower shortfalls, not in T/O quantity, but vacancies. Manpower deficiencies have not only resulted in the occasional assignment of Captains and Major to fill billets intended for one or two ranks higher, but on a few occasions, Lieutenant Colonels have been assigned to billet intended for a Majors. These practices contribute to the second CV vulnerability identified in their thesis which was a lack of KO technical proficiency. The combination of these two critical vulnerabilities threatens the enduring ability to support the warfighter most optimally.

2. Conclusion

This section provides the current status for selecting, educating, assigning and retaining KOs within the contingency contracting force. The Marine Corps invests

significant amounts of funds and resources to educate, train, and field its 3006 OCS officers and this segment highlights and provides a SWOT analysis to showcase the benefits or vulnerabilities of maintaining the current status quo. This next section will address the processes in which the Marine Corps procures services and goods.

B. PROCESSES

This section will address the current acquisition mindset with which the Marine Corps acquires technology, goods, or services.

1. Analysis

At the tactical level, the warfighter requests services or goods through its using unit supply section. Based on the dollar threshold amount, the organic supply section can procure services and supplies within its capabilities; however, if the amount surpasses a certain dollar threshold, the RCO will then contract out the service or procure the supply for the warfighter. Deploying units will have the support of both its organic supply section and an ECP KO for contingency contracting capabilities.

a. Strengths

Each contracting office has established standard operating procedures (SOPs) ensuring that policies and procedures are performed in a uniformed way ensuring that services and supplies are procured promptly. This ensures the format or layout of the contract that is awarded in a particular office is indistinguishable between different personnel, and this will reduce rework and minimize the manpower hours to focus on other tasks at hand.

b. Weaknesses

The Marine Corps heavily relies on a civilian contracting force for day-to-day operations and to conduct big "A" acquisition for new and old capabilities. This arrangement denies uniformed KOs the opportunities to receive the high-level contracting experience, which would enable them to provide guidance and recommendations to senior military leadership from a service member's perspective.

Since there is no standard SOP throughout the CCF, inspection results could vastly differ between each contracting office and reduce shared, community-centric, process improvement or best practices adoption across regions. Marine Corps Acquisition Policy & Procedures (MAPP) instructs contracting units to conduct an independent annual self-assessment to inspect each aspect of contracting to ensure that they are following proper procedure. MAPP provides very general and broad guidance on how a contracting command should self-assess internal contracting processes. Following is the guidance the MAPP provides on the annual self-assessment report:

> The annual report should clearly convey the actions the MCFCS office has taken to improve the quality of its contracting/procurement operations. At a minimum, the MCFCS office's report must address the following:
>
> (i) a summary of the self-assessments the MCFCS office has conducted during the previous fiscal year (identify dates/results of each assessment and explain the methodology that was employed);
>
> (ii) the MCFCS office's self-assessment in regard to the current DoN Special Interest Items;
>
> (iii) the MCFCS office's self-assessment of its Small Business program implementation;
>
> (iv) a summary of the findings noted for the MCFCS office and its subordinate offices;
>
> (v) any statutory and/or regulatory deficiencies identified;
>
> (vi) any associated corrective actions taken either at the MCFCS office level or specific subordinate office level;
>
> (vii) any best practices which could be useful to other DoN contracting activities or MCFCS offices;
>
> (viii) any other relevant information, i.e., the results of annual warrant file audits, acquisition staffing and workload analysis, external audits or reviews to include the status of relevant recommendations; and, if applicable,
>
> (ix) any actions taken in response to a DASN(AP) or HQMC I&L PPMAP performed during the reporting period." (Department of the Navy, 2017b, appendix M).

This kind of vague self-inspection guidance and requirement leave a wide gap for interpretation on how contracting policy should be executed and followed.

c. Opportunities

Being a smaller force compared to the other services, the Marine Corps has the opportunity to adapt more quickly. They quickly established a Marine detachment within the DIU organization; this immediately provided a presence and another an avenue to leverage other transaction authorities (OTAs). DIU is not the only organization within the Marine Corps to use OTAs as Marine Corps Systems Command (MARCORSYSCOM) as well as I&L both have elements that experiment with OTAs. The Marine Corps, as an organization, must exploit this opportunity and incorporate the capabilities these organizations offer into the operating forces. This will provide an increase in purchasing power, reduce unnecessary expenditures, and reallocate funds to other projects. As the RCO is already an established structure within the Marine Corps, KOs assigned to an RCO can be the representative link between the tactical level and the OTA efforts made by DIU, MARCORSYSCOM, and I&L. KOs assigned to an RCO will be the permanent collection center for potential OTAs which will create an avenue for innovative ideas to a working prototype.

Additionally, there is limited interaction between uniformed KOs and the using units. Requests for contracting support are submitted and often 'kicked-back' and get rejected or returned for adjustments. The lack of communication between the civilian contracting professionals and the requirements generator leads to a toxic environment where the customer does not trust the process due to the lack of understanding. There needs to be more involvement from the uniformed KOs to be the link between the civilian KOs and using unit organizations.

d. Threats

The military cannot count on having a competitive advantage in the next fight if the Marine Corps continues to rely on its current methods for acquisition. Presently, the Marine Corps as an organization is unable to adapt to current environmental changes or innovate to tackle future threats. This problem with adoption cannot support the future problems to

ensure the warfighters have the superior advantage over its adversaries. The lack of contracting knowledge, network managers, and effective processes to enable future adoption of technology and services will continue to reduce the performance of contracting in austere environments.

2. Conclusion

In conclusion, the Marine Corps can meet and complete assigned missions with the current contingency contracting process in place. However, this does not mean the Marine Corps is fully utilizing the capabilities of the contracting force. Not establishing a uniformed SOP within CCF has the potential of an increase of fraud, waste, and abuse within the acquisition. Due to the technological advantages fostered by the profit-oriented businesses, the Marine Corps need to adopt new pathways to incorporate these new technologies is apparent. The adaptive nature of the Marine Corps regularly promotes new innovative ideas; however, these ideas need an outlet to become prototypes and further the Marine Corps competitive advantage. Without looking at the strategy in which the Marine Corps acquires these technologies will put the Marine Corps behind the other services, and furthermore, behind their potential adversaries.

C. PLATFORMS

This section covers the third pillar and will begin by providing an overview of the platforms or vehicles the Marine Corps uses to perform acquisition functions. Following the overview, an analysis will be conducted using the SWOT approach. The SWOT will not be for each platform, but will instead analyze the overall capabilities of the combination of the platforms. Due to a lack of an understanding of software among the team writing this report, the optimization analysis in Chapter IV will be limited to options the Marine Corps could pursue when it comes to the government-wide commercial purchase card (GCPC).

1. Marine Corps Procurement Platforms

a. Procurement Request Builder

Procurement Request (PR) Builder is an online-based program that is the link between the requirements generator, usually the supply officer, and the procurement specialist, the KO, for supply or service requests. This system is the first encounter of the requirements generator into the contracting process, and the information inputted into the PR Builder must describe the detailed work being requested, or a detailed description of the needed supplies. Although the system is currently being used to capture data for auditability requirements by Headquarters Marine Corps, this report will only touch on the contracting aspect of it.

b. Government Commercial Purchase Card

The GCPC is a program where purchases under the micro-purchase threshold can be made for supplies, services, construction, or training. The GCPC is arguably the most streamlined form of commercial acquisition, authorized by Congress, available to the government and the Marine Corps. Although the separation of the requirements generator and purchaser is still a valid requirement, the certification process to become a GCPC cardholder is less stringent and time-consuming than that of becoming a KO. This empowers lower levels of the Marine Corps to purchase supplies, services, construction, or training under a shorter timeline. Additionally, KOs, due to their training, have the potential to be given a higher threshold for utilization of the GCPC and can exceed the micro-purchase threshold in coordination with their warrant dictated by FAR 1.606-3.

c. Wide Area Workflow / Invoicing, Receipt, Acceptance, and Property Transfer

Wide Area Workflow (WAWF), also known as Invoicing, Receipt, Acceptance, and Property Transfer (IRAPT), is an online system where vendors and buyers can track invoices, and the receipt thereof, which are submitted to the various government agencies. Since it is web-based, it leaves a paperless trail for the invoicing, receipt, and acceptance in a secure method. Ultimately, this method reduces the time spent on processing the invoices by government personnel due to its use of real-time submission timelines.

d. Global Combat Support System- Marine Corps

Global Combat Support System (GCSS), further the Marine Corps variant known as GCSS-MC, is a web-based program in which uniformed logisticians conduct a multitude of tasks. These tasks range from maintenance, accountability of equipment, ordering repair parts, tracking shipped parts, provide data based reports, and other such tasks. From the range of tasks that can be accomplished through GCSS-MC, the Marine Corps relies on the contracted services of GCSS-MC to be the system in which supply and maintenance would be conducted. Although the GCSS-MC processes are mainly used by uniformed logisticians, as well as supply and maintenance personnel, this system is used for tactical level movements, and total asset visibility, not to include any variation of the contracting processes.

e. Defense Travel System

The Defense Travel System (DTS) is the 'one-and-done' travel system for all travel that utilizes the government travel charge card. Although the funding for travel may come from a variety of sources, the method does not change from user to user, or from agency to agency, and it remains constant throughout the uniformed services. On this web-based application, members can schedule all aspects pertaining to travel, or they work with the commercial travel office representative to assist in contracting their travel requirements. This dissuades members from personally contracting travel that can be accomplished through the DTS system. Through DTS, the government reduces the cost of travel by contracting a preferred commercial carrier, removing change fees, and getting reduced cost flights for last minute travel.

2. Analysis

a. Strengths

The mission of the Marine Corps is being accomplished through the current platforms. Through these systems, there are necessary redundancies that allow the Marine Corps to maintain its internal controls that it has enacted on each one of the systems without being overly taxing to the personnel that utilizes these systems. The multitude of systems have been in use for numerous years and are familiar to the personnel that interacts with these systems

day to day. The delegation of these systems is at the lowest level at a battalion or the individual Marine level. This decentralizes the execution of these systems down to the individual who interacts with the system every day. In the cases of DTS, WAWF/IRAPT, and GCPC, the transactions are instantaneous and transparent and if successful; they provide real-time updates to the end user. Due to network application of these systems, the flexibility of accessing them from various locations is possible with an Internet connection and a Common Access Card connection.

b. Weaknesses

These systems are primarily web-based, which in an austere environment is not always easy to come across. The Marine Corps does have the ability to create a network connection that can support bandwidth demands through an air card, among other means; however, those network connectivity services may not be as reliable depending on some environmental factors, or the method of connectivity. Additionally, to conduct even routine business on some of these applications, such as DTS or GCSS-MC, requires a massive amount of relatively consistent data connectivity that puts a strain on the input and output of the networks. A hardline connection via a wired Ethernet cable is still the best option, which may not be readily accessible.

These systems also do not communicate with each other, nor do they seamlessly connect with other systems within the DoD. The systems used for logistics requests, Transportation Capacity Planning Tool along with Common Logistics Command and Control System, do not interface with each other, and any movements requiring supply support must be accompanied with an additional GCSS-MC request. If the requestor submits a contract action, and approval made, the invoices must also be submitted to WAWF/IRAPT, which only creates an additional, and unnecessary, step in the entire process.

c. Opportunities

Expanding the uses of these applications to include a broader variety set of capabilities can assist the MAGTF commander to accomplish their mission. The adoption of these capacities within these platforms can provide newfound flexibility to the MAGTF commanders. Updates such as the user interface update to the DTS portal, the GCSS-MC R12

Update, and updates to the GCPC online features enable a more streamlined method of conducting business. These are easier to accomplish due to their online web-based application, as well as they have a commercial sector counterpart. These systems can continuously be modified to meet the need of the Marine Corps.

d. Threats

As with any online system, there is an inherent security threat. Due to the nature of these systems being online, the chances of them being hacked into by any individual, private corporate agency, or state level hackers is a characteristically innate risk. These are mitigated by a defensive system such as firewalls, multi-factor authentication, layered security systems, but they do not always work. As no online system can ultimately be one hundred percent protected, the threat of these online systems is always there.

3. Conclusion

The PR-Builder, the GCPC program, WAWF/IRAPT, DTS, and GCSS-MC are all platforms with which the Marine Corps meets current needs. These systems are all web-based and even though they all require an Internet connection, connectivity over the past 15 years has been steadily increasing thus improving reliability. Improvements to how GCSS-MC is utilized have bridged the gap to enable the Marine Corps to continue doing business. Constant monitoring and security updates to these platforms assist in keeping hackers from entering into the systems and causing instability within them. As there are opportunities to improve the effectiveness of all the platforms through various means, such as: raising the micro-purchase threshold or creating a more streamlined and deployable version of GCSS-MC that requires less data, these advancements can enhance the lethality of a mission-set, or add flexibility to the MAGTF commander.

D. CONCLUSION

In summary, this chapter showed you the status quo, COA 1, through the three pillars of people, processes, and platforms within the Marine Corps. The next chapter, Chapter IV, will go introduce three different COAs for people, discuss two additional processes that the Marine Corps can adopt, and an expansion of one of the platforms.

THIS PAGE INTENTIONALLY LEFT BLANK

IV. ANALYSIS OF ALTERNATIVES

In this chapter, this report will present comprehensive and viable alternatives and options for the Marine Corps to implement in order to optimize the utility of their contracting capabilities. The first section will offer alternatives to the talent management model the Marine Corps currently uses for commissioned KOs. Then the following section will present possibilities for internal changes the Marine Corps could adopt that would enable the organization's ability to acquire new technology rapidly. Lastly, in platforms, this report will provide insight into efforts in the trial phase which have promise for service-wide adoption. Due to the lack of technical understanding, this report will not attempt to offer recommendations or options for an optimal contracting system, but will instead identify what an optimal system should be able to do.

First and foremost, in order for the Marine Corps to reap the maximum benefits out of their contracting capabilities, there will need to be a shift in how contracting operations are perceived. The traditional way the Marine Corps manages its KOs signals to a perception that contracting is a sub-activity of supply, which itself is viewed as a sub-activity of logistics. While in a purely tactical sense this perception can be effective, it is not efficient, and it does not provide the optimum capabilities to the warfighter. Instead, contracting should be seen with a more operational mindset. Contracting is not a sub-activity of supply or logistics, but an enabler of both activities, all of which fall under the ultimate goal of ensuring warfighters have what they need when they need it. If the Marine Corps wants to obtain the competitive advantage contracting can offer, senior leaders will need to adjust their perceptions of how talent management and contracting processes are implemented.

A. PEOPLE

This section will cover the analysis of three alternatives to the way the Marine Corps currently manages talent within the contracting officer corps. Arguably, people are the pivotal first element in the three pillars of contracting. The way commissioned KO assignments are managed right now is indicative of the larger Marine Corps thought

process. The Marine Corps views KOs as a tactical asset, and as such, KOs fall under the same monitor that manages supply and logistics officers. According to Title 10, § 1721, contracting is one of the twelve required positions which are considered acquisition positions (Designation of Acquisition Positions, 2018). The current Marine Corps talent management structure for KOs does not comply with this statutory requirement. The first step towards optimizing contracting activities is to realign commissioned KOs under a different monitor for billet assignments. For example, moving the management of KO assignments to the same monitor that oversees 8059 Marine acquisition officer.

1. COA 2: Permanent Transfer

There are three distinct differences between COA 2 and the status quo. First, under this alternative, the selection to KO will not be exclusive to 3002 supply officers. For implementation, this deviation would begin when a Marine officer applies to the CPIB and CCLEB. The eligibility pool screened by CPIB and CCLEB would be opened to allow 0402 logistics officers to apply for the 815 curriculum at NPS. The 815 curriculum would not need to be modified. Any student in the program would graduate with DAWIA contracting Level III education and meet the 24 business credit hour requirement. Secondly, the next deviation from the status quo is that the transfer to KO will be a permanent lateral transfer. As with the status quo, each newly graduated KO would execute orders to their first contracting billet. However, unlike the current approach, KOs will not go back to their original MOS. Upon completion of their first tour, KOs would receive an assignment to a follow-on contracting tour or a B-billet. B-billet opportunities should be kept to a minimum due to the highly technical nature of the contracting profession. The final deviation in this alternative is the requirement for advancement and command equivalent opportunities to be built into the contracting field.

Figure 2 depicts what the progression of an officer could look like in COA 2. This model assumes that an officer has no prior enlisted service and is selected to the 815 program after completing one tour as either a 3002 supply officer or a 0402 logistics officer. This progression also assumes that because officers will be permanently transferring to the 3006 OCS officer MOS, there is the possibility some will be assigned to B-billets. The

figure also shows the opportunity KOs in this alternative have to apply for the 8059 Marine acquisition officer MOS. This progression is not a guarantee as many factors affect the timing and assignments officer get throughout their career. This is merely an example of the possibilities afforded by this alternative.

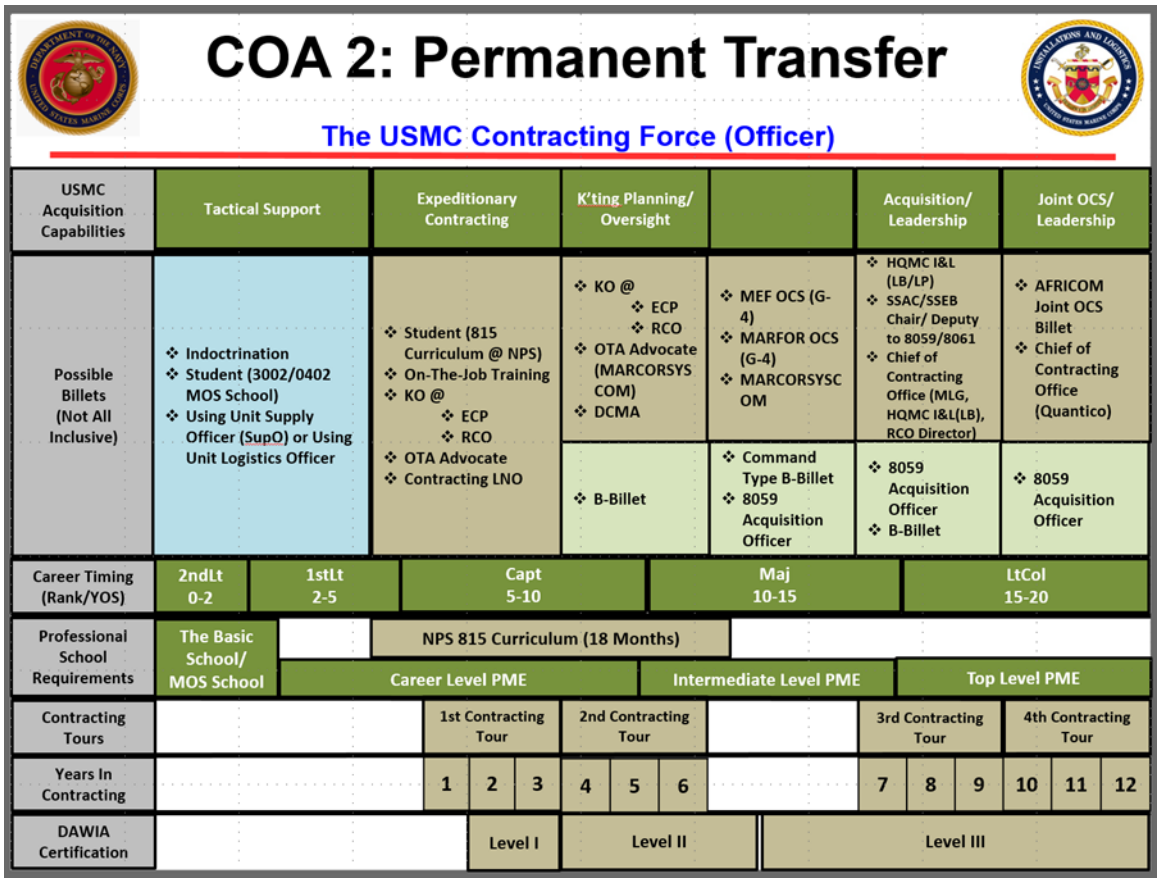

Figure 2. Sample Officer Progression through COA 2

a. Analysis

This section will discuss COA 2 through a SWOT analysis.

(1) Strengths

There are three distinct advantages of this alternative which mitigate weaknesses in the status quo. First, because, the current system screens all 3002 supply officer eligible for CPIB and CCLEB for selection to the 815 curriculum at NPS, sometimes selects

officers who did not apply for or desire to be KOs. Opening up the eligibility to include 0402 logistics offices, not only increases the size of the pool of available officers, but it increases the competition to get the highest quality officers into the contracting field. Properly advertising the opportunities afforded in the KO community to a larger pool would enable converting the selection process to one of the screening applications, rather than screening every eligible 3002 supply officer.

Secondly, as identified in Chapter III, based on their graduation dates, the average TIS of the 20 officers selected for the 815 curriculum from FY16 to FY18 is 13.1 years. Of those 20 officers selected only four did not have prior enlisted service, which lowed the average TIS. The Marine Corps cannot discriminate and deny Marines with prior enlisted service from applying, but they can put an application and selection prerequisite to be for an officer not to exceed ten years of TIS at application to the 815 curriculum. This requirement would be for the health of the commissioned KO community. At graduation, these officers would be at a maximum of 12 years TIS and would be able to conduct multiple KO tours upon graduation. Opening the pool increases the likeliness of finding officers who desire the MOS and who have the TIS to conduct multiple tours in the community. These conditions will also enable these highly qualified and desiring KOs to be competitive to pursue the 8059 Marine acquisition officer MOS as Majors.

Thirdly, the current model does not have a stable set of commissioned KOs who can benefit from back to back KO tours. One of the primary concerns among Marine Corps contracting professionals, active duty and civilian, is the loss of proficiency in a highly technical function such as contracting. Contracting is the least stagnant function within the Marine Corps and the one it has the least control over in terms of policy. Unlike any other field in the DoD, contracting is heavily constrained by entities outside of the DoD. Contracting policy is regularly changed through congressional mandates, in the name of adopting better business practices. The DoD cannot stray from what is required by constantly changing statutes, policies, and regulations. This external pressure has increased as the amount of funds allocated through contracting has surpassed half of the funds allocated to each of the four services. In such a field, even an officer with an optimal ability to retain knowledge would still be out of date with processes after a two or three-year

period out of the field. This alternative affords commissioned KOs the possibility of doing back to back KO tours and benefit from a sustained and compound knowledge building opportunity.

Finally, the consecutive tours better prepare KOs to serve as planners within OCS. Just as the Marine Corps does not put junior officers in planning roles with the MEF and MLG staff sections, inexperienced KOs should not be placed into OCS roles within the CCF. Possessing one or more utilization tours with the contracting profession better enables the KOs to give optimized recommendations to operational planners when they are emplaced within an OSC role. As the Marine Corps speaks about reducing the reliance on the iron mountain concept described in Chapter I, newer and innovative ideas on how to develop a feasible logistical network is necessary to the holistic mission set. The KOs described under the COA 2 design, will provide an optimized set of capabilities gained with successive KO tours, which would have immediate impacts on how the Marine Corps plans for their operations and exercises.

(2) Weaknesses

In order for this process to effectively get the highest quality officers to be interested and apply, it must be properly advertised. There is a current weakness in how information about NPS is disseminated to the fleet. There are many simple ways in which the Marine Corps can ensure the widespread delivery of information regarding contracting and other opportunities offered at NPS. The MMOA roadshow could coordinate with bases ahead of time to have NPS graduates volunteer to partake in either a questions and answers session or give a brief during the MMOA roadshow to inform officers of what NPS has to offer. Another option is the creation of a short and concise course on MarineNet which educates officers on the slew of opportunities they have available to them when they apply for CPIB or CCLEB. Currently, information is not widely available or understood which would significantly affect the number of applications to the program.

The lack of built-in command equivalent opportunities will potentially be a hindrance to recruiting top talent into the contracting field. Currently, the Marine Corps bypasses the lack of command opportunities within the contracting community by sending

KOs back to command billets within the supply officer community. Under this alternative, transfer to KO would be permanent and transferring back to another MOS for the sake of command opportunities will no longer be an option. If the Marine Corps wants to pursue this alternative, command equivalent opportunities must be built into the structure. The easiest would be for the Marine Corps to parrot the other services when it comes to considering top KO positions, the Head of Contracting Activity, for example, command equivalent. The level of responsibility, both over funds and personnel, is deserving of command equivalency consideration. These billets should have a screening process as well, to select the highest quality officers from among the eligible commissioned KO population; just like all other command positions. There is also the opportunity for commissioned KOs to compete and conduct command type B-billets, such as Recruiting Command Commanding Officer or the ability to ascend to the 8059 Marine acquisition officer MOS. The more difficult approach, due to T/O change requirement, will be adding billets at command equivalent positions in locations such as DCMA or Combined Fleet Tours.

(3) Opportunities

Currently, the Marine Corps does not employ commissioned KOs any differently than enlisted KO. The latest training and readiness (T&R) Manual does not list a single task which can only be carried out by commissioned KOs. This brings to questions why the Marine Corps has uniformed commissioned KO? The most apparent reason the Marine Corps would want commissioned KOs is for the leverage rank brings into MAGTF or joint exercise or operation planning meetings. This is a reasonable justification for a commissioned KO, but only using commissioned KOs for the leverage they bring to the planning table is a gross underutilization of the capabilities their contracting education could bring to the Marine Corps.

Commissioned KOs earn an MBA from NPS with a focus on contracting which provides them with all the education requirements for DAWIA level 3 certification. Making KO a permanent transfer increases opportunities for utilizing them to do more. After finishing their first tour, post-NPS, a KO will have the experience necessary to be fully DAWIA level 2 certified. These officers are ‘over-credentialed’ to only act within

contingency environments or the realm of SAP. In the Marine Corps, all Marine officers must attend The Basic School (TBS). TBS trains and educates every Marine officer to be a provisional rifle platoon commander and engrains in the mind of all officers who the warfighter is. Yet, the Marine Corps does not place a commissioned KO in major acquisition program offices to help advice the program manager (PM) with a focus on both the needs of the warfighter and the options governing contracting policies provide.

The value of the reliability and continuity that civilian KO brings to the Marine Corps cannot be overstated. There are many benefits to having a stable presence when one of the factors often identified by Government Accountability Office (GAO) reports is the lack of proper documentation or experience among acquisition professionals. However, civilians are far removed from the warfighter and might not always understand what the warfighter is asking for. Where a civilian KO might look at a contract as a task composed of many subtasks, a uniformed KO should see a mission, an endstate, and a sense of urgency to provide quality customer support. The Marine Corps has an opportunity to conduct some re-alignment of personnel if it cannot afford to expand personnel, and place commissioned KOs where they can best influence the efficient and effective support to the warfighter.

A potential re-alignment would create a roadmap which allowed KOs at the rank of Major to pursue the 8059 Marine acquisition officer MOS. With a dedicated KO profession, the Marine Corps has the opportunity of placing uniformed KOs to support acquisitions. This is not in place of the Marine Corps civilian contracting officers, but to bring a different perspective to big acquisitions. The Marine Corps does not currently have uniformed KOs participating in the acquisition of major weapons systems. The PM for those acquisitions has a civilian contracting workforce. These officers would have enough contracting experience that by the time they reach the rank of Lieutenant Colonel they could sit on either the source selection evaluation board (SSEB) or source selection advisory committee (SSAC) to a major acquisition program. In this position, the officer assigned could advise the PM in a way the civilian contracting officers cannot due to the lack of FMF experience.

One of the primary concerns among Marine Corps contracting professionals, active duty and civilian, is the loss of proficiency in a highly technical function such as contracting. Contracting is the least stagnant function within the Marine Corps and the one it has the least control over in terms of policy. Unlike any other field in the DoD, contracting is heavily constrained by entities outside of the DoD. Contracting policy is regularly changed through congressional mandates, in the name of adopting better business practices. The DoD cannot stray from what is required by constantly changing statutes, policies, and regulations. This external pressure has increased as the amount of funds allocated through contracting has surpassed half of the funds allocated to each of the four services. In such a field, even an officer with an optimal ability to retain knowledge would still be out of date with processes after a two or three-year period out of the field. This alternative affords commissioned KOs the possibility of doing back to back KO tours and benefit from a sustained and compound knowledge building opportunity.

(4) Threats

As with all change, adaptation is a threat. In order to optimize the utility of contracting within the Marine Corps, contracting must move out from under supply and logistics and assume its logical place under acquisitions. Such a change should not be implemented before mitigating the initial confusions of how contracts will continue to provide support to supply and logistics functions. The relationship between contracting and logistics is critical, even though it is not linear. It must be reiterated that contracting is an operational asset and it must be leveraged as such. This is not to say that contracting activities should not be focused on supporting tactical movements. Ultimately, contracting at the operational level can ensure the most effective and efficient support to tactical objectives.

b. Conclusion

This section analyzed COA 2, permanent transfer. Expanding the community invites a more competitive selection process, resulting with higher quality officers to enter the CCF. That expansion, paired with consecutive KO tours, advance the quality of officers that will continue to fill billets within the Marine Corps. The compounding experience

gained by back-to-back tours can provide better OCS planners for MAGTF officers. A weakness found within this COA would be the lack of command equivalent billets, but this can be addressed and rectified by converting officer in charge positions to command screened billets. The opportunity this COA can exploit is the ability to enhance the capabilities of the CCF to be used for more planning roles within an OCS environment. This growth of capacity of the KOs within the Marine Corps would not sacrifice the invaluable FMF time prior to selection but capitalizes on their ability to relate to their customers, the warfighters. Ultimately the greatest threat to the pursuit of this alternative will be universal institutional acceptance. Through this alternative, the Marine Corps would be adopting a talent management model similar to that of the Army. This section analyzed COA 2, permanent transfer.

2. COA 3: Contracting Officer as a Primary Military Occupational Specialty

This alternative considers the feasibility and consequences of making 3006 OCS officer a PMOS which would be assigned directly from TBS. Keeping in mind that even if the Marine Corps is willing to source additional billets for KOs within the total force structure, only a small number of new KOs would need to be selected out of TBS each year. Since this small number of officers will be graduating TBS at different points, it would not be cost effective to develop a commissioned KO course. Rather, in this alternative, those officers selected as KOs will receive orders to an RCO where they will work on completing their DAWIA contracting education and training online while simultaneous conducting OJT. For added benefit, those officers could attend the Ground Supply Officers' Course (GSOC) or attend the contracting officer courses established by the Army like the enlisted contracting Marines. Since ground supply is the first level of procurement within the Marine Corps, GSOC would enable commissioned KOs to understand where they fit within the acquisition cycle. Attending the Army contracting courses will facilitate learning some basics in an academic environment before going to OJT. Additionally, keeping true to the belief that contracting is more directly aligned with acquisitions than it is with logistics, this alternative would have a roadmap which encouraged KOs at the rank of Major to compete for the 8059 Marine acquisition officer

MOS. Even though these KOs would be selected right out of TBS, the opportunity to attend NPS will still be available. However, the curriculum would be updated to afford those officers to attend more advanced courses.

Figure 3 depicts what the progression of an officer could look like in COA 3. This model assumes that an officer has no prior enlisted service. This progression also assumes that because officers will start in the 3006 OCS officer MOS some of them will be assigned to a B-billet at some point in their career. These officers will also have the opportunity to attend resident PME and to compete for 8059 Marine acquisition officer MOS. This progression is not a guarantee as there are many factors affect the timing and assignments officer get throughout their career. This is merely an example of the possibilities afforded by this alternative.

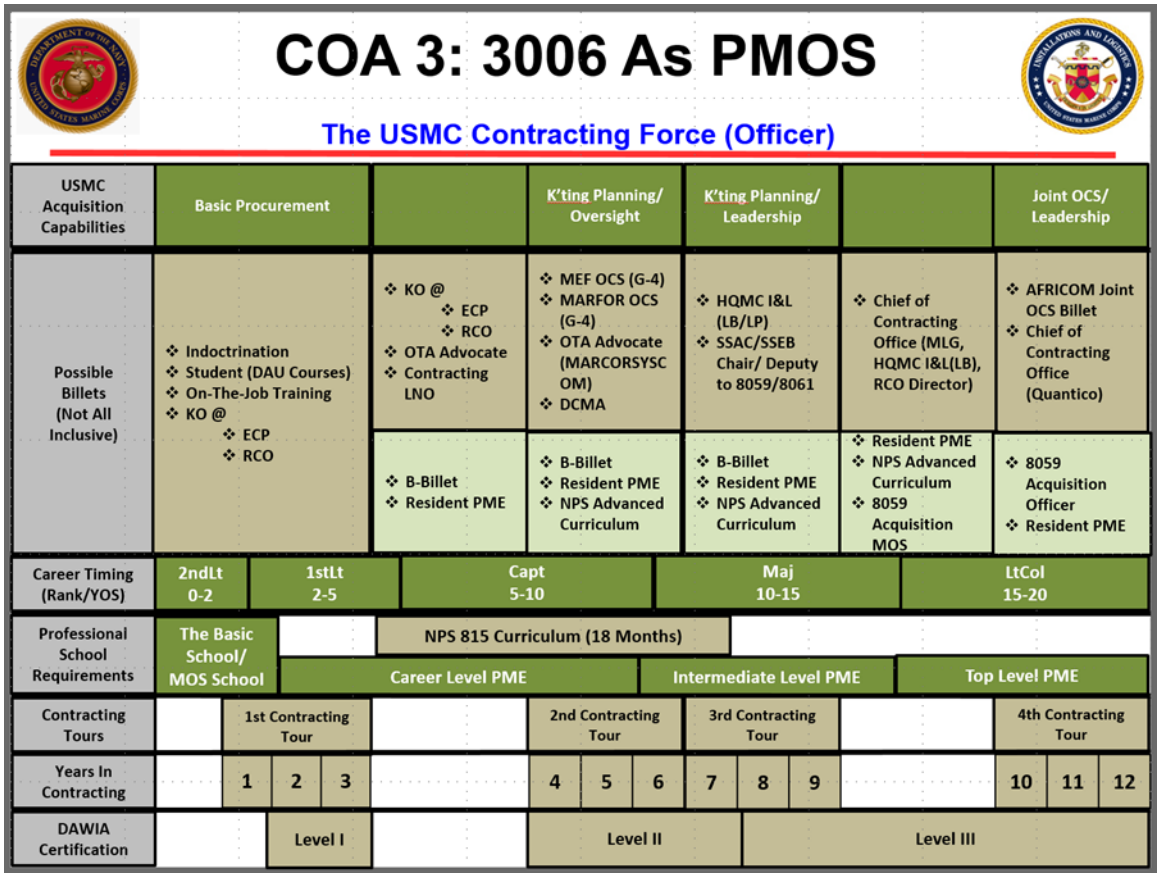

Figure 3. Sample Officer Progression through COA 3

a. Analysis

This section will discuss COA 3 through a SWOT analysis.

(1) Strengths

This Marine Corps has already started to consider imposing a requirement at TBS to have officers upload their college transcripts onto Marine Online. Staff platoon commanders would have the ability to scan their platoons for those who meet the 24 business credit hour requirement imposed by Congress on the DoD's acquisition professionals. TBS could also implement a policy where only those officers with the required business hours would be allowed to put KO on their top 5 desired MOS list. Even though nothing would preclude an officer from meeting the 24 business credit hour requirement while in the fleet, taking a more structured approach by assigning the MOS to desire officers with a business degree would put those officers ahead of many who have been selected in the past.

More importantly, this alternative has the potential to afford officers more time in KO billets. Whereas under the current approach, an officer will get at most three tours in a KO billet over a 20-year career, this alternative would enable an officer to serve in as many as five KO billets. The first deficiency identified in the Gansler Commission report was, "The expeditionary environment requires more trained and experienced military officers and non-commissioned officers (NCOs)" (Army, 2007, p. 2). The report goes on to say, "Experienced contracting should never be a first assignment. Contracting personnel sent into a theater of operations need to be highly skilled, adequately trained, and prepared for the challenging, fast-paced demands of expeditionary operations…This is the Super Bowl, not a scrimmage" (Army, 2007, p. 6). This alternative would take advantage of compound knowledge building, by giving these officers an opportunity to stay current and retain their proficiency in the contracting field. A structured roadmap would ensure that those officers deploying to expeditionary environments would be at an appropriate place in their career to perform successfully in that complex environment. This capability is only possible if officers are allowed to remain within the community.

(2) Weaknesses

The greatest weakness of this alternative is the absence of fleet experience for the uniformed KO. In interviews conducted by Captain Corcoran in the process of writing his thesis, it was the resounding sentiment among KOs and their leadership that FMF experience was invaluable to a KO's ability to effectively execute their responsibilities with an understanding of the customer. This understanding is one of the few things that separates uniformed KOs from civilian KOs. Beyond just understanding the customer, FMF experience enables an officer to gain insight into how operations happen. Particularly for 3002 supply officers and 0402 logistics officers, both of those MOSs are centered around customer service to multiple customers in often dynamic situations. FMF experience also places both supply and logistics officers in an environment where they have to partake in tactical planning. It gives those officers experience in the Marine Corps Planning Process (MCPP) and how to best support a unit's requirements. Both of these firsthand experiences in network management and using MCPP to support requirements are critical skills for uniformed KOs to have.

(3) Opportunities

TBS trains and educates every Marine officer to be a provisional rifle platoon commander and engrains in the mind of all officers who the warfighter is. Yet, the Marine Corps does not place a commissioned KO in major acquisition program offices to help advice the PM with a focus on both the needs of the warfighter and the options governing contracting policies provide. The value of the reliability and continuity that civilian KO brings to the Marine Corps cannot be overstated. There are many benefits to having a stable presence when one of the factors often identified by GAO reports is the lack of proper documentation or experience among acquisition professionals. However, civilians are far removed from the warfighter and might not always understand what the warfighter is asking for. Where a civilian KO might look at a contract as a task composed of many subtasks, a uniformed KO should see a mission, an end-state, and a sense of urgency to provide quality customer support. The Marine Corps has an opportunity to conduct some

re-alignment of personnel if it cannot afford to expand personnel, and place commissioned KOs where they can best influence the efficient and effective support to the warfighter.

A potential re-alignment would create a roadmap which allowed KOs at the rank of Major to pursue the 8059 Marine acquisition officer MOS. With a dedicated KO profession, the Marine Corps has the opportunity of placing uniformed KOs to support acquisitions. This is not in lieu of the Marine Corps civilian contracting officers, but to bring a different perspective to big acquisitions. The Marine Corps does not currently have uniformed KOs participating in the acquisition of major weapons systems. The PM for those acquisitions has a civilian contracting workforce. These officers would have enough contracting experience that by the time they reach the rank of Lieutenant Colonel they could sit on either the SSEB or SSAC to a major acquisition program. In this position, the officer assigned could advise the PM in a way the civilian contracting officers cannot due to the lack of FMF experience.

(4) Threats

Selecting officers as KOs from TBS would require the growth of the new PMOS to have billets available for the new Lieutenants entering the MOS each year. Considering the current structure has a staffing goal for nine Lieutenant Colonel and ten Major 3006 OCS officer billets to be filled, the manpower requirements needed to be able to satisfy that requirement might be more substantial than what the Marine Corps is willing to allocate to the commissioned KO community. After the manpower model determines what an optimal force number would be at each rank, there will be the bureaucratic struggle of getting the increase billets and having them cemented in a T/O. Since the Marine Corps is statutorily limited in the total population it can maintain, and it is already reorganizing to accommodate cyber and space functions, there is potential that communities from which commissioned KO billets will be pulled from will push back.

b. Conclusion

This section analyzed COA 3. A strength of this alternative is that commissioned KOs would start to build their knowledge and experience as Lieutenants. Its greatest weakness is that without FMF experience these officers might not understand their

customers or how to best support their needs. Having a community which starts grooming Marines earlier can produce more knowledgeable officers through the compound knowledge building inherent with the opportunity of back to back KO tours, enables officers to be put in billets of greater responsibility. In addition, this course of action would afford officers an opportunity to stay current on contracting policies and retain proficiency by serving in KO billets more consistently. A threat to this alternative will be getting through the bureaucratic process of cementing billets into the total force structure for KOs. Though this alternative the Marine Corps would be adopting a more professionalized talent management model that is similar to that of the Air Force.

3. COA 4: Restricted Officers Track

This alternative seeks to utilize the only avenue by which an officer in a technically demanding MOS can be assured they will not leave the FMF. Restricted officers in the Marine Corps are exempt from serving in B-billets. They progress through billets of higher and higher advisement at which their proficiency and experience best serve the commander. The enlisted progression would remain the same. This alternative would take effect when a 3044 Contracting Specialist is at eight years of service and eligible to apply to be a WO. If selected to be a restricted officer, possibly designated as a 3012 Procurement Operations Officer, the Marine would be slated to attend the four-month-long Warrant Officer Basic Course (WOBC). The community would have an LDO track to enable these highly technical experts to assume billets and leverage the authority or the unrestricted ranks. An officer in the restricted route is eligible to submit a package for LDO as soon as they are selected for promotion to CWO3.

Figure 4 depicts what the progression of an officer could look like in COA 4. This model assumes that an enlisted Marine would compete for selection to be a restricted officer as soon as they hit eight YOS. This model goes on to assume that a CWO2 would compete for selection to be an LDO as soon as they are selected for CWO3. This progression is not a guarantee as there are many factors affect the timing and assignments Marines get throughout their career. This is merely an example of the possibilities afforded by this alternative.

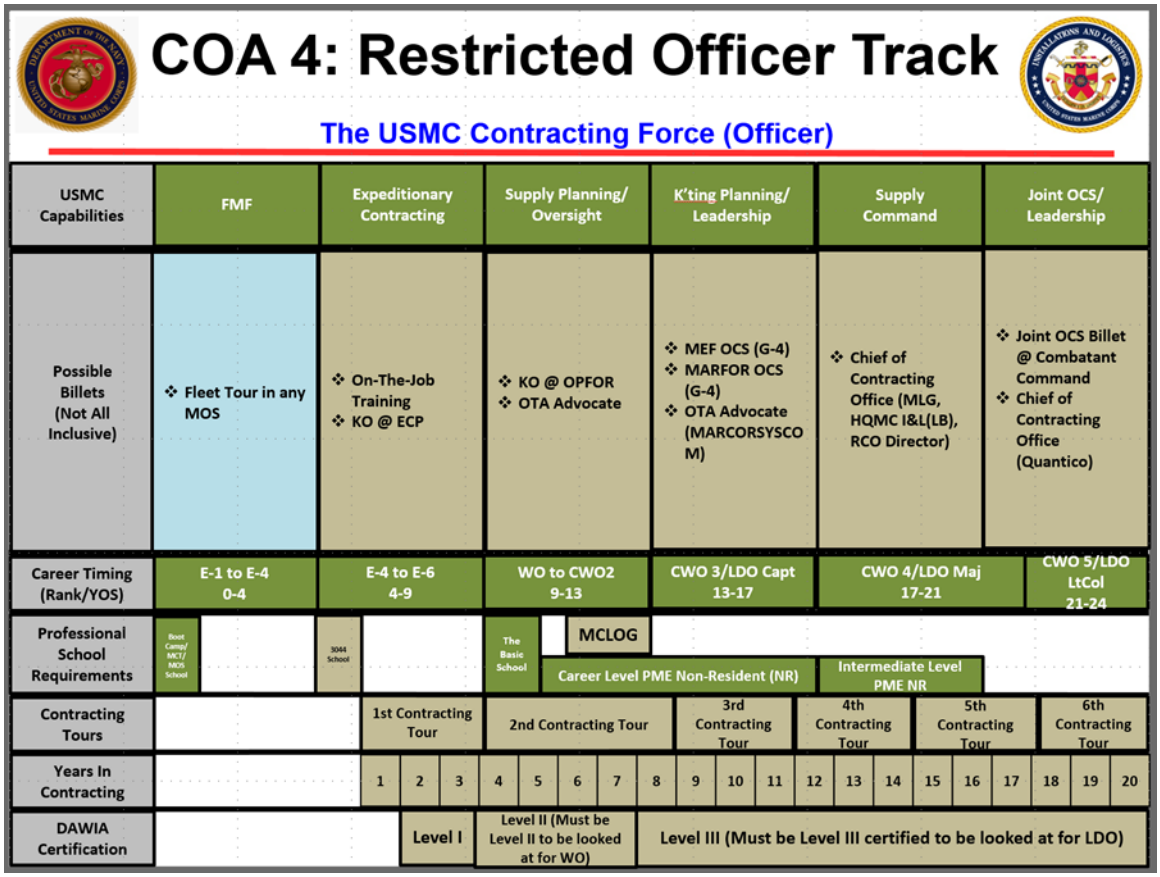

Figure 4. Sample Officer Progression through COA 4

a. Analysis

This section will discuss COA 4 through a SWOT analysis.

(1) Strengths

One of the primary concerns among Marine Corps contracting professionals, active duty and civilian, is the loss of proficiency in a highly technical function such as contracting. Contracting is the least stagnant function within the Marine Corps and the one it has the least control over in terms of policy. Unlike any other field in the DoD, contracting is heavily constrained by entities outside of the DoD. Contracting policy is regularly changed through congressional mandates to adopt better business practices. The DoD cannot stray from what is required by constantly changing statutes, policies, and regulations. This external pressure has increased as the amount of funds allocated through

contracting has surpassed half of the funds allocated to each of the four services. In such a field, even an officer with an optimal ability to retain knowledge would still be out of date with processes after a two or three-year period out of the field. The Marine Corps already has an option in place for retaining officers in highly technical MOSs, where being a subject matter expert (SME) is essential to the organization.

The greatest strength of this alternative is that restricted officers are not pulled out of the FMF to fill B-billets. By the time a Marine ascends to WO, they would have, at a minimum, achieved Level II DAWIA and had approximately four years of experience in contracting. By the time a Marine ascends to LDO Captain, they would have, at a minimum, achieved Level III DAWIA and had approximately ten years of experience in contracting. Their experience is sustained because as restricted officers they would have rarely left the MOS since laterally transferring to it during their first tour of enlistment. This entire process is incredibly competitive with multiple layers of screening. In the beginning, the requirements for selection to 3044 Contract Specialist are restrictive to a Marine's first tour, and their performance has to be top tier. In order to ascend to WO, Marines with a minimum of eight years TIS would need to apply and would be screened again for selection to WO. Then again, if a WO decides they want to apply to be an LDO, they would undergo another application and screening process. Both the application for WO and LDO require command endorsements up to the first general officer in the chain of command. Additionally, fitness reports are screened, among several other things to ensure the most highly qualified are selected to assume higher responsibility within their highly technical field.

One of the significant weaknesses in the previous alternatives is the lack of command opportunities for officers in contracting. This alternative alleviates any concerns about retention issues resulting from the lack of command opportunities. By the time an LDO makes it to the rank of Lieutenant Colonel, they will have, at a minimum, 22 years of service. Since a Marine can apply to become a restricted officer with as little as eight years of service or as many as 16 years of service, this structure allows these Marines to serve for as many as 40 years, at least 35 of which will have been in the contracting field. Similarly, another aid to retention from this alternative is the fact that in order for a

restricted officer to retire with their officer pay they must serve a minimum of 10 years as a commissioned officer. If the Marine does not serve a minimum of 10 years they will retire with the high three of the enlisted rank they were when they were selected to be a WO. This 10-year requirement and the FMF only restriction means these officers will conduct a minimum of three KO tours. The smallest of the strengths of this alternative is the cost savings coming from basic pay. Annual pay for a CWO5 with over 38 years of service caps out at less than what a Colonel with 21 years of service would make. LDOs will never make it to rank above Lieutenant Colonel, and the annual pay for Lieutenant Colonel caps out at 22 years of service. The basic pay for prior enlisted Captains and Majors caps out at 18 years. All of these caps make the WO and LDO community cheaper, in the long run than an unrestricted KO community.

(2) Weaknesses

The greatest weakness of this alternative is if the Marine Corps wants to increase the depth of its contracting capabilities. Title 10 of the United States Code allows an exception to the bachelor's degree requirement for the DoD's contingency contracting force (Contracting positions, 2018). That exemption is how the Marine Corps can issue warrants to enlisted personnel. According to Title 10 the contingency contracting force consists, "of members of the armed forces whose mission is to deploy in support of contingency operations and other operations of the Department of Defense" (Contracting positions, 2018). So long as the Marine Corps only intends to use their KOs in the capacity of contingency contractors, the lack of a bachelor's degree will not be a hindrance to restricted officers. However, if the Marine Corps wants to do more than expeditionary contracting, DAWIA requires KO's to have a bachelor's degree. This alternative means that Marine Corps could not afford KOs a route to the 8059 Marine acquisition officer MOS or support Big "A" acquisition contracting activities with uniformed KOs. As mentioned earlier, while the value of the Marine Corps' civilian contractors cannot be overstated, there is value added to having a Marine, focused on the warfighter, in contracting offices that support Marines. An additional weakness rises from how different this alternative is from the status quo. It would take at least a decade to grow a CWO and LDO force that would meet the needs of the FMF.

(3) Opportunities

The first deficiency identified in the Gansler Commission report was, "The expeditionary environment requires more trained and experienced military officers and non-commissioned officers (NCOs)" (Army, 2007, p. 2). The report goes on to say, "Experienced contracting should never be a first assignment. Contracting personnel sent into a theater of operations need to be highly skilled, adequately trained, and prepared for the challenging, fast-paced demands of expeditionary operations…This is the Super Bowl, not a scrimmage" (Army, 2007, p. 6). This alternative reaps the maximum benefits of compound knowledge built from years of contracting experience. Through their years of experience, these officers will know the guiding policies, statues, and laws so well that they will not feel constrained by the little they understand. This capability is only possible if officers are allowed to remain within the community. With the alternative, the Marine Corps has the opportunity to build the most professional and proficient expeditionary contracting force out of all the services.

Many of the billets for Majors and Lieutenants in the status quo are planning billets. Even though it is incredibly rare for restricted officers to attend resident PME, it is a possibility. As far as the Marine Corps Expeditionary Warfare School and the Command and Staff College, it varies from community to community, but in highly competitive communities, restricted officers are highly encouraged to conduct the distance learning version. There is also nothing that precludes the Marine Corps from sending restricted officers to the Marine Corps Logistics (MCLOG) Course soon after being selected to LDO. The combination of proficiency of expeditionary contracting and an understanding of MCPP at the operational level gained at MCLOG and PME will enable these officers to participate in planning at the level required in these contract planning billets. Especially in the Marine Forces Command billets, the experience and proficiency of these officers would enable their active participation OCS integration cells.

Even though restricted officers would not be able to be KOs for the acquisition of major weapons systems, with their depth of knowledge and experience there is an opportunity for an LDO Major or Lieutenant Colonel to sit on either the SSEB or SSAC to a major acquisition program. In this position, the officer assigned could advise the PM in

a way the civilian contracting officers cannot due to the lack of FMF experience. The only other exception to the requirement for KOs to have a bachelor's degree, other than contingency contracting, is the use of OTA. Technically someone does not have to have, contracting experience to use OTAs, even though that is highly discouraged. Restricted officers would be able to execute and oversee the use of OTAs just like any unrestricted officer.

(4) Threats

The biggest threat to this alternative venture is going to be cultural. There is a perception that higher education fosters the critical thinking environment. In his 2012 Marine Corps Gazette article, Major John D. Jordan identified a lack of critical thinking among unrestricted officers. He attributed to the poor quality of American higher education and highlighted a study which revealed that students attending four-year institutions were not achieving any measurable amount of learning (Jordan, 2012). In a 2009 Marine Corps Gazette article, Captain Mathew Van Echo identifies the institutionalized way in which the Marine Corps fails to create an environment for divergent thinkers to grow. He also suggests several low-level methods in which the Marine Corps can foster the kind of environment in which divergent thinkers can excel (Van Echo, 2009). Both Major Jordan and Captain Van Echo identify and appreciate the valuable experience, and convergent thinking has in individual and institutional success. This alternative will naturally foster convergent thinking, borne of experience; however, the community will have to adopt a framework that institutionalizes critical thinking.

There is also this notion that since no other service has pursued this avenue that it must be ineffective. This train of thought ignores that each branch is different. The Air Force does not have restricted officers. Therefore, their talent management is built to keep unrestricted officers in their specialty. The Air Force is the only service in which a person can commission and immediately assume the contracting profession. Their contracting officers participate in large acquisitions. Even though they do not start their contracting officers out as Second Lieutenants, the Army has uniformed contracting officers involved across the entire spectrum of acquisition operations. In comparison, the Navy and the

Marine Corps come across as the least professionalized uniformed contracting force. Taking into consideration the size of the Marine Corps, it would be flawed to assume the Marine Corps should or will ever have a contracting force as capable as that of the Air Force or the Army. However, the contingency environment is different from a domestic contracting environment. It has special laws, statutes, and regulations. This alternative guarantees that the Marine Corps would have the most proficient contingency contracting force. This force would have the level of experience which could prove to be an asset to the Joint Force during the planning or execution of joint operations in deployed environments across the range of military operations.

b. Conclusion

This section analyzed COA 4. Even though this alternative is the most divergent from the current process, it is the most effective at guaranteeing a proficient contingency contracting officer force. This alternative provides the Marine Corps an opportunity to be the premier contingency contracting force of the DoD. Conversely, if the Marine Corps wanted to increase its contracting capacity beyond contingency contracting or OTAs, this alternative would not allow for that increase due to the fact restricted officers are not required to have bachelor's degrees. Through this alternative, the Marine Corps would be adopting an entirely divergent talent management model.

B. PROCESSES

The next part of this analysis will consist of discussing alternative methods in which the Marine Corps can procure technology, goods, or services. More specifically, this section will go into detail about the mindsets in which a KO can explore to acquire said technology, goods, and services rather than the specific vehicles. As discussed previously in Chapter III, contracting as a provider is not the focal point within the MAGTF, but rather an afterthought when it may be too late to leverage contracting to its full potential.

1. Other Transaction Authority

Other transaction authority, more commonly known as OTAs, is an authorized method in which government agencies can procure prototypes, or fund research and

development efforts in a more rapid atmosphere. The authorization for the use of OTAs derived from Title 10 § 2371b and was identified in Section 815 from the 2016 NDAA. The other transactions that are authorized under the OTA umbrella are intended to fulfill the need of the government, as would a traditional contract; however, OTAs differs from traditional contracts because the FAR does not govern them. Due to the rapid emergence of new technology, locating companies that specialize in that technology has become more time constraining and arduous. Companies that find themselves in the process of creating new technology, inventing new ways of utilizing technology, or developing methods in which existing technology could be coupled together, are not typically started within a large company, but in the garage with the inventor and their idea. Company giants such as Apple and Alphabet, and the initial conception of the Predator drone are all examples of businesses started in their garage.

In the current climate of the policy-making, the FAR would not usually allow the DoD to do business with these companies without requiring them to meet responsibility determinations found in FAR 9.104-1. Many of these companies do not have the bandwidth or the venture capital opportunities to develop their idea as well as become a government contractor. OTAs are intended to attract 'non-traditional defense contractors' in supporting these government requirements. Title 10 § 2302 defines a non-traditional contractor as:

> An entity that is not currently performing and has not performed, for at least one-year period preceding the solicitation sources by the Department of Defense for the procurement or transaction, any contract or subcontract for the Department of Defense that is subject to the full coverage under the cost accounting standards prescribed pursuant to Section 1502 of title 41 and the regulations implementing such section. (Definitions, 2018)

The OTA handbook also proceeds to state that OTAs can also be awarded to traditional defense contractors so long as a non-traditional contractor performs to a significant extent, i.e., the non-traditional contractor perform the services rendered by the contract. These grassroots companies mark a transitional point when in discussion with the DoD procurement and acquisition processes. Defense conglomerates such as Boeing, Lockheed Martin, or Raytheon have the ability to sub-contract out services rendered to one

of these non-traditional contractors and cover the plethora of policies, as directed by the FAR.

As there are different colors of money, appropriated funds derived from congressional authority for a specific use, OTAs can only be used in prototyping or research and development efforts. This means that once the prototyping or research and development efforts are completed, there is no guarantee for a procurement contract. This differs from traditional FAR contracts. The funding for FAR-based contracts can be linked to where the need or at what phase of the acquisition cycle it may fall in. There can be research and development or prototyping contracts, procurement contracts, and even operations and maintenance contracts.

An additional way in which OTAs differ from FAR-based contracts, and arguably the most substantial difference, is the level of interaction allowed to be held between the requirements generator, the buyer, and the company awarded the OTA, the seller. During traditional FAR contracts communication regarding the requirement itself can only occur during the solicitation, source selection, and pre-award phases; furthermore, during the source selection phase, all communication with potential vendors must stop once the first bid is submitted. The reason why is because once the contract is signed with a statement of objective (SOO) or statement of work (SOW), the contractor must provide the good, services or technology rendered in the SOO or SOW. Changes cannot be made without initiating administrative paperwork that draws from the changes clause, such as a unilateral or bilateral contract modification.

The OTA's method of acquisition has a much more fluid and interactive communicative process. Congress allows the DoD to use OTAs as a means to add flexibility in the acquisition cycle. The regulations that dictate how OTAs can be used are not restricted by the FAR, and therefore allow the DoD, furthermore the government holistically, to speak with the awarded vendor throughout the process. This act intends to ensure that the DoD will receive a viable end product, whether physical or intangible, which can meet the government's need and satisfy a government requirement. As seen in the industry, research and development as well as the prototyping of rudimentary concepts,

do not always pan out, and the amount of the time and money spent on each one needs to be reduced in order to exercise sound business practices.

a. Analysis

This section will discuss the increased use of OTAs within the Marine Corps through a SWOT analysis.

(1) Strengths

The use of OTAs can give the Marine Corps the flexibility discussed in Chapter I. Technology in today's world is increasing at a rapid rate, one in which the current acquisition cycle cannot keep up with. Testing out new concepts to enhance the Marine Corps' warfighting ability is incredibly important, especially with the move away from OIF and OEF type campaigns. The ever-changing mission requirements may entail a changing set of technological advancements. This change would not eliminate the need for traditional FAR-based contracting efforts, OTAs would be another tool that a MAGTF commander would have at their disposal.

Due to the more unrestricted nature of the OTA agreements, speed can be prioritized when designing these technologies. John C. Maxwell, a public speaker and author who writes about leadership, said the famous phrase "fail early, fail often, but always fail forward." This quote is not typically used within the DoD big "A" acquisitions due to the bureaucracy that dictates the process, in fact, the big "A" process is seen as a necessary yet inefficient process. Industry, mainly for-profit companies, test and conduct research in areas of potential ROI at the cyclic rate to see which efforts will make their investment of time and money worthwhile. The strength here is that programs will have the flexibility to be adjusted and 'scraped' if need be without wasting tens of millions of tax payer's dollars, years within the bureaucratic system, and manpower hours. The power of OTAs can allow rapid changes to models, keeping up with the new technology, or the new requirements and increase the rate in which failure occurs. All of these are arguably necessary for growth to prosper, and these can occur while keeping associated costs down.

(2) Weaknesses

OTAs are not the end-all, be-all to acquisition concerns; there are weaknesses associated with them. Although not a new procurement method, as they have been in existence since the early 2000s, there is merely a newer realized focus on utilizing them for acquisitions. This associated new program is met with hesitancy for many reasons, whether it has not been utilized before, improper performance by other agencies, or misperceived results after the completion of an OTA. Commanders do not fully trust OTAs to accomplish the mission of what they are tasked with because they do not trust it. This first obstacle will have to be surpassed by direct orders by those at high command levels or by the sheer initiative of those at the lower, more operational, levels.

Another weakness with the OTA process is the training required to become certified in awarding the OTAs. Currently, there is no standardized and required training by the Marine Corps, yet multiple agencies within the Marine Corps use OTAs. From the research gathered, MARCORSYSCOM, Marine Corps Warfare Lab, Marine Corps I&L, as well as DIU, all are experimenting with OTAs; however, all of these organizations design their training guidelines to use OTAs in their acquisition pipeline. The units within the Marine Corps that are currently testing the OTAs process are not required to work together to share results nor lessons learned throughout the process.

(3) Opportunities

To date OTA use has been limited, beyond that, no military service uses OTAs at the operational or tactical level. Most of the services see the OTA as a substitute for the big "A" acquisition process, although a valid usage of them, a missed opportunity. Most of the DoD agencies agree that OTAs can assist with the prototyping phases of technology, but only within the concepts of big projects. The missed opportunity relies within the lower levels of acquisition that OTAs can be utilized. No dollar amount limits the use of OTAs, nor is there a regulation that dictates what acquisition levels can explore the usage of OTAs. This has the potential to take concepts, from all ranks within the Marine Corps, through the OTA process and see if it is feasible to invest money further. Since these acquisition

frameworks can be relatively inexpensive, you can invest in more ideas for the purposes of further researching potential designs.

Another aspect of the OTA field that the Marine Corps is not currently utilizing is having an OTA Advocate at each base under the RCO. This OTA advocate can bring the OTA process to a more tactical level instead of merely keeping at a more strategic level with large acquisitions, such as programs of record. The OTA Advocate is a warranted KO that understands the aspects of what OTAs can provide to the warfighter, and what flexibility that it can bring to the major subordinate commands, whether that is at the Marine Division, Marine Aircraft Wing, or the Marine Logistics Group. This OTA advocate could also provide a potential way forward for the continuing operational challenges that continue to occur. The concepts developed to answer those challenges, could turn into an OTA avenue in which MARCORSYSCOM could further pursue. Additionally, these smaller projects can utilize the remaining operations & maintenance funding since they are on a smaller level, thus reducing the need for solidifying a position within the program objective memorandum (POM) process.

(4) Threats

Any acquisition strategy has faults, and OTAs are no different; they share the same threats as traditional FAR contracts. Not having a full understanding of the requirements, awarding the OTA agreements to companies that do not meet the capability to produce feasible prototypes, as well as collusion. Larger companies may create, or buy out, a subsidiary in order to win the additional awards while still covering the overhead through their main company name.

Another threat is the transition from the OTA to the procurement process. For large projects, the procurement process requires funding to be included in the presidential budget; the POM process usually accomplishes this. Historically, the submission of the projects is five years prior to the date in which they receive funding. The inherent nature of the OTAs is that they are rapid in nature, and are produced in a relatively short amount of time, which is not typically enough time for the POM process to catch up. This creates a need for identification of the potential projects to have space within the POM process,

with no guarantee that the OTA will develop anything that can have associated funding for Congress to vote on.

DIU currently has active duty Marines stationed at the headquarters in Mountain View, California; however, the Marines that are located do not possess an acquisition or contracting background. They do maintain a working understanding of the acquisition and contracting process but do not have any traditional understanding of the FAR and the regulations that must be enforced when partaking in traditional FAR contracts. The threat here is the missed potential by not having formal contracting or acquisition trained Marines working at DIU. The structure cannot support any large balance of Marine projects due to the lack of personnel and specialties, nor can explore the transition between the prototyping OTA to the procurement FAR contract. Additionally, all Marine related projects must go through the Air Force and Army contracting personnel in order to be pass through the requirements to pursue the OTA agreement. As the fundamental processes between the four services vary significantly, the goals of the Marine Corps are cut short due to the lack of investment of personnel within DIU.

b. Conclusion

Overall, OTAs offer another process for research and develop projects where the end state of the development efforts is not readily known or apparent. The flexibility OTAs provide to adapting and adjusting the prototyping efforts during the process alone can change the factors enabling commanders to choose an outcome to accomplish their mission better. The strengths and opportunities have the ability to open more doors to the Marine Corps acquisition process, which although already authorized by Congress, not currently utilized on a scale to match the goals of the Marine Corps. The lack of collaboration efforts between DIU, MARCORSYSCOM, among the other USMC agencies leveraging OTAs illustrates the incomplete thought process that Marine Corps currently maintains.

Holistically, OTAs do not have the intent, nor can they replace traditional FAR contracting efforts due to their appropriation funding restrictions. The breadth of knowledge required to comprehend the entire acquisition process, from the prototyping OTAs agreements through the procurement FAR contract, is an intensive task that the

Marine Corps is not currently utilizing. Training for OTA professionals are regionally specific, and those selected lack the credentials to make a substantial impact on the process and mindset. Lastly, OTAs can be used on a variety of scales, from program of record (POR) to smaller acquisition methods, but the lack of understanding of the OTA process restricts those in decision making positions from making a long-lasting change to the way the Marine Corps thinks about procurement. The OTA process can be exploited to enhance not only the strategic goals but the operational and tactical ones as well.

2. Program of Record

It is a simple reality that nothing is possible without money. Regardless of it can be done cheaply or if it is expensive, nothing will get done without the funds to pay for it. The system by which the services obtain funds is just as convoluted as the federal acquisition system. In the DoD funds must be approved through the planning, programming, budgeting and Execution (PPBE) process. In order for a system to be funded, it must be deemed a POR and built into the current future years' defense program (FYDP). According to the Defense Acquisition University (DAU), the official definition of a "POR" is:

> A program as recorded in the current Future Years Defense Program (FYDP) or as updated from the last FYDP by approved program documentation (e.g., Acquisition Program Baseline (APB), Acquisition Strategy, or Selected Acquisition Report (SAR)). The term Program of Record may also refer to a program having successfully achieved formal program initiation, for example by assignment of a designated program manager. (Defense Acquisition University, 2018)

Even though it is nowhere in the definition, the term POR is often associated with a physical manifestation of a system. However, this false notion limits the potential of what can be acquired as a POR and how said program could keep pace with the private sector. More and more the DoD is procuring items with a technological shelf life. The current acquisition process ensures that the technology the DoD obtains is out of date by the time it reaches the operating forces. This is no way to do business if the DoD wants to be competitive with an adversary that is not constrained by a FAR.

An example of how this alternative mindset could be implemented is the Marine Corps' current pursuit of the capability to use a swarm of drones to overwhelm and distract

adversaries. Defining the capability as the physical attainment of drones to build swarm into the FYDP would make the drones the focus of the program. However, due to the speed with which drone technology is evolving, by the time the program is fielded, it has already lived past its technological shelf life. Instead, the PM should build the PORs around the concept of swarm. Much like the concept of parent-child relationships in the GCSS-MC, the swarm concept would be the parent, and the drones themselves would be the children. The contract for the POR would address a life cycle maintenance plan. Instead of only focusing the repairs and maintenance contract elements of the end-item, the contract for the life cycle maintenance plan would focus on defining the intervals at which the drone, or elements within the drone, will be replaced by the prime contractor. This will ensure the capability is defined as a POR, but the equipment itself is not anchored to the program.

The 21st Century has been laden with exponential technological advancements. The first iPhone was released in 2007, and earlier this year Apple released the iPhone 10XS. That means that Apple has released a newer and more capable model of their iPhone approximately once a year. Comparing the two models would further demonstrate how much technology has genuinely evolved. In a world where technology is evolving that quickly in the private sector, the government cannot afford to be left behind. This approach is best fit for capabilities which are primarily based on the use of commercial technology. Due to its commercial nature, market research would allow the acquisition team to predict how often new technology will be available. The contract should be built in a way as to define the intervals at which it will be expected that the contractor will upgrade specific components at that predicted interval. Similarly, market research will also allow the government to predict how much replacements at the predicted intervals will cost. The government will not be requesting technology in beta testing. The government will require a finalized product for the replacements as they are correlated to their public releases. Specifically, within the Marine Corps, these replacements could be pushed out through the use of modification instruction messages. Depending on the vulnerability to the system, how quickly or staggered the replacement process would be part of the acquisition plan.

a. Analysis

This section will discuss adopting a different approach to POR through a SWOT analysis.

(1) Strengths

One of the strengths of this approach is that its adoption will not require any restructuring, as there is no law, statute, policy or regulation which requires that a POR be a physical manifestation. The execution of this approach can and will be simple to implement and can start to be utilized immediately. What will be required for this approach to be adopted will be a change in the way the capabilities are defined. Historically programs of record are known as 'legacy systems' and stay in service for long periods of time. This conception limits the possibility of adopting new technologies where needed even though no law, statue, policy or regulation states that the acquisition process must follow this notion.

Since the capability is not tied to the equipment itself, but to the concept of what satisfies the requirement, the conceptual programs of record created under this approach can keep up with how quickly technology is evolving in the private sector. The technological aspects written into the original contract, or limitations to the technological abilities of current technology are no longer roadblocks within the holistic life cycle management plan. If the DoD deems a capability as critical to mission accomplishment throughout the various services, it is imperative the equipment should keep pace with the evolving technology.

(2) Weaknesses

A weakness of this approach is that it requires immense critical thinking in its implementation; it cannot be indiscriminately used. The government cannot use this in the acquisition of technology that is specifically developed for the use of the government. Those types of requirements are unique. For example, the F-35 Joint Strike Fighter cannot be defined as a concept and require the contractor to upgrade the interface or any of the other sub-components in a set time frame because no amount of market research will be

able to reveal when the capabilities will be obsolete. Even if the concept approach is used correctly, for example, to procure a network, another weakness of this approach is that its success depends heavily on market research and how well the contract for the acquisition is defined. The acquisition team will need to take a critical look at those components within the work breakdown structure which are mostly made up of commercial technology. Then, extensive market research will need to be conducted on expected upgrade intervals and cost. Finally, the contract will need to be built using the information gained through the research.

(3) Opportunities

The newly fielded equipment's ability to evolve reduces risk and increases security. So long as this is employed correctly, the approach gives the government the opportunity to develop large commercial programs that will keep pace with technology developed in the private sector. For example, a cyber-network is comprised of both hardware and software, most of which is commercial. Through this approach, the DoD would define the POR as the concept of the capability. Then within the contract, after extensive research, the acquisition team will provide the KO the time requirements when components such as the software, routers, and other such items will be expected to be replaced. The KO would merely submit a release order to have the contractor replace the old hardware. Specifically, when it comes to networks, having outdated equipment puts the enterprise at risk, and many times makes it incompatible with new equipment being fielded. The implementation of this approach also presents an opportunity for the DoD to save time on acquisitions. By defining the requirement as a concept and being able to build the contract in a way that life cycle management means upgraded equipment, the DoD will not have to worry about having to create an entire POR to replace the outdated program.

(4) Threats

The immense and immediate critical thinking required to use this approach effectively is itself a threat. This specific approach to a POR requires a level of contracting experience and forethought not traditionally seen within the contracting field. The lack of experience needed and understanding of the contracting process can prevent this approach

from ever reaching full potential. The greatest threat to the effectiveness of this approach is the failure of the acquisition team to frontload its life cycle management process and input it into the original contract. This requires extensive market research on not only price but the shelf life of components. If the contract is poorly defined, then this approach will be no different from the conventional method being used today. Additionally, since most acquisition projects extend beyond the average expectancy of those working within the program, it is imperative that justifications and determinations are documented adequately.

Another threat to the implementation of this approach is that it will result in increased contract cost up front. Predicting and requiring the contractor to not only providing technical support but also to replace hardware or software at set intervals will increase cost when compared to a one-time delivered system. This can prevent the original allocation of funding to the POR only on the basis of upfront cost.

b. Conclusion

This section presented a divergent approach to the way the DoD currently defines a POR. Although this approach cannot assist with the actual acquisition and procurement processes, it provides an alternative way of thinking within the realm of programs of record. There are no active regulations or laws restricting the use of this approach; therefore, immediate implementation is possible. The execution of these should be restricted to programs that are more based on commercial technological advancements rather than ones that are reserved for legacy systems, such as the Amphibious Assault Vehicle or the A-10 Warthog. This approach can not only change the way in which the Marine Corps employ current technologies, but incorporate calculated modifications to continue adopting the newest and most secure technological advancements into the current structure. The increased workload by all members of the acquisition team is frontloaded to conduct the market research necessary to forecast the increments and capabilities for future modifications; in addition to the increased dollar amount at the conception of a program. However, the benefits of the increased security while mitigating risk, balanced with a more technologically advanced system, may justify the added workload and cost upfront. This should not be seen as a replacement to the current processes for acquisitions, but an

additional capability that can be leveraged to keep the DoD programs current with the commercial sector.

C. PLATFORMS

As mentioned in Chapter III, none of the members of the research team which conducted this report has adequate knowledge to make a recommendation for the adoption of an all-inclusive enterprise system on which the Marine Corps could conduct all procurement activities. Instead, the research team focused their efforts on the only non-system based platform by offering a recommendation for the expansion of the GCPC program.

The uses of the GCPC program are delegated down to the lowest level while still maintaining the necessary accountability levels. Within a single Marine battalion, typically the commanding officer (CO) assigns the supply officer to be the certifying officer and approving official, while the supply officer selects one, or more, junior Marine(s) to be the card holders. This gives flexibility to the battalion CO to purchase items that are not procurable through GCSS-MC or existing contractual agreements. For the purchase of goods, the cardholder is limited to the micro-purchase threshold. Although the limit for GCPC purchases has been steadily increasing over the past few years, the low dollar amount creates rigidity for larger purchases, especially when preparing for, or conducting operations abroad. For MAGTF deployments, a force at a Marine Expeditionary Unit level, the smallest of the three MAGTFs, or the Special Purpose MAGTF, one which can fluctuate in size, will have a KO on their manning documents. This allotment grants the MAGTF commander flexibility to make purchases usually above the micro-purchase threshold. The KO also brings greater flexibility not only to the MAGTF holistically but to the GCPC program as well.

According to the GCPC program manual, which resides in the Naval Supply Systems Instruction 4200.99, "OCONUS [card-holders] with appropriate delegations of contracting authority, may use the purchase card, not to exceed $25,000 for procurements." (Department of the Navy [Navy], 2012b, p. 1–2). This policy does include purchases that would require regular contracting support if they were made in a CONUS environment,

but due to the nature of being overseas, additional authorities are granted to the cardholders and contracting personnel. This policy is not being utilized in widespread fashion across the MEF even though it has the potential for deploying MAGTF commanders with all available resources, thus increasing the lethality of their influence. Furthermore, contingency contracting operations allow the purchase card to be used up to the SAT (Navy, 2012b, p. 1–21).

D. CONCLUSION

In this chapter of this report, the research team provided alternatives to COA 1, Status Quo, on the three pillars of people, processes, and platforms. Within the first two pillars, people and processes, the report provided a brief introduction followed by an in-depth SWOT analysis for each one. Platforms were discussed by providing information on policies that which are authorized; however, not in common use.

THIS PAGE INTENTIONALLY LEFT BLANK

V. RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

This report, until this point, has discussed optimization through three pillars, and why the optimization of the acquisition field within the Marine Corps is needed. Chapter I introduced the idea of the importance of innovation within the DoD, and the need for acquisition reform. Chapter II analyzed previous theses and scholarly works written pertaining to contracting, acquisition, and the importance of reform therein. Chapter III discussed the status quo, COA 1, in the respective pillars of people, processes, and platforms through a SWOT analysis. Chapter IV presented alternatives based on the analysis conducted in Chapter III, through the three pillars, for the optimization of the Marine Corps OCS.

In the final chapter of this report, we will state our recommendations to optimize acquisitions in the Marine Corps by recognizing contracting as a function of acquisitions and the role it has to play in increasing the lethality of the warfighter. Based on the analysis conducted using the SWOT approach in Chapters III and IV, the recommendations listed in this chapter are the authors' conclusions to expand operational capacity, proficiency within the contracting field, as well as maximizing the ROI of the commissioned contracting force. Although they can be implemented independently, the recommendations are not mutually exclusive, as they can be implemented together. Moreover, it is the opinion of the authors that these recommendations are complementary in nature, and should be implemented concurrently. Finally, this chapter will close with suggested research opportunities for further analysis as well as a report conclusion.

A. RECOMMENDATIONS

In line with the report's methodology, the recommendations made in this chapter are broken down by each of the three pillars of people, processes, and platforms. The final part of this section will associate each research question presented in the introduction of this report with one or more of the recommendation made.

1. People

This section will answer the following research question as identified in Chapter I, as well as offer recommendations that pertain to retaining, training, and professionalizing the officer corps:

a. Recommendation 1: Commissioned Contracting Officer Eligibility Pool Expansion

The screening for commissioned KOs should not be limited to the supply community, but include the logistics community as well. With the background in supply chain management, supply and logistics officers both have the technical skills, and experience, to understand the warfighter's requirement and can quickly transform that requirement into a tangible acquisition. This expansion of the KO candidate pool will increase competition to obtain a seat at NPS, thus increasing the overall quality of the commissioned KO. The Marine Corps previously allowed all MOSs to apply to become a KO, and many of these officers had successful KO tours. We, however, would limit the pool to only allow supply and logistics officer due to the steeper learning curve experienced by other MOSs.

b. Recommendation 2: Professionalism of Commissioned Contracting Officers

Contracting is an acquisition profession, and therefore, KOs should be aligned under acquisitions. As stated in Chapter II, and reiterated in Chapter IV, Title 10 of United States Code, §1721 deliberately identifies that contracting is one of the many positions which falls under acquisitions, and therefore the Marine Corps talent management model should follow suit. The realignment of the contracting field from the current monitor to the acquisitions monitor would also introduce a necessary advocate to the contracting profession who is above the rank of Lieutenant Colonel. Due to their operational capabilities, acquisition and contracting career fields are inherently different from the combat service support career fields. The intricacies of not only fiscal law but FAR-based acquisition is an added level which separates contracting from supply activities.

Professionalizing the contracting service under acquisitions would also create a viable career path for KOs who apply to become acquisition officers. In addition to having the background in acquisition, program management classes overlap with contracting classes at NPS, to include a majority of the MBA core classes. Lastly, promotion boards have a precept for acquisition officers, which assists in alleviating the need for command equivalent billets during the utilization tours. KOs would be afforded the same opportunity to continue to be promoted within the contracting or acquisition fields.

c. Recommendation 3: Selection of COA 2, Permanent Transfer

COA 2, permanent transfer, offers the most significant increase in depth of capabilities while requiring the least amount of change to the current structures. The permanent transfer would allow the retention of the acquired contracting skills and knowledge to compound overtime, making a more robust KO, and someone who can adequately advise MAGTF commanders on the best acquisition methods in an OCS role. This would also introduce a viable path to retain the best officers and have them apply for the 8059 Marine acquisition officer MOS. Due to the similar necessary NPS classes, KOs would have not only the education requirement covered, but also the experience in how to meet the goals and objectives of cost, schedule, and performance. Additionally, this COA does not require significant changes to how the current KOs are chosen now; it would only include the pool of 0402 logistics officers into the field of potential candidates. COA 2 is the recommended

(1) COA 1, Status Quo, Not Selected Due to Inefficiencies

Even though COA 1 may fulfill current operational needs, it does not, and cannot keep up with the increased reliance on contracting in future battles. The current selection and retention process for commissioned KOs forces a cyclic rotation back to their original MOS for promotion and advancement. This career progression model loses valuable knowledge gained by KOs through their NPS education, and primary payback tour experience. Upon secondary or tertiary utilization tours, the KO cannot be expected to provide the best insight and apply intuition in terms of OCS planning due to the time

between KO tours. This break of follow-on tours fails to capitalize on the ROI the Marine Corps vested into their contracting professionals.

(2) Impracticalities Associated with COAs 3 and 4

COA 3, 3006 OCS officer as a PMOS, loses the invaluable distinction between uniformed KOs and civilian contracting officers by removing the FMF primary tour. This unnecessary separation between KOs and the rest of the Marine Corps would force the Marine Corps to abandon the axiom of every Marine is a rifleman. Additionally, COA 3 is most similar to the Air Force model concerning specializing each MOS. This is unnecessary due to the size of the CCF and inherent differences in contracting requirements. COA 4, restricted officers track, diverges so far from COA 1, status quo, as to require too much organizational change to implement. Furthermore, it does not offer the Marine Corps the opportunity to augment, enhance, or further develop its capacity to do more than only expeditionary contracting or OTAs.

d. Recommendation 4: Other Transactional Authority Advocate

Within each RCO, a commissioned KO will be assigned to be the OTA advocate to track and provide guidance for OTA submissions. This will provide the necessary link between the tactical level and MARCORSYSCOM, I&L, and DIU. This additional billet will assist in giving greater flexibility to the MAGTF commanders by allowing CONUS based units the ability to see if their idea would be a good fit for the streamlined acquisition OTA pipeline. This OTA advocate would receive training from DAU, DIU, or I&L and be able to understand the differences between FAR contracts and OTA agreements and help explain the differences between the two to the regional commanders.

e. Recommendation 5: Contracting Liaison Officer

Any contracting office in the Marine Corps that has uniformed KOs has an opportunity to optimize its network management and improve its support and relationship to the customer. The distinction between civilian and uniformed KOs is the FMF experience which enables them to understand and communicate more effectively with uniformed customers. Every Marine officer goes to The Basic School, and every enlisted

Marine goes to Marine Combat Training, both of which support the expression by General A. Gray "Every Marine is, first and foremost, a rifleman. All other conditions are secondary." (Department of the Navy, 2012a, p. 74). The Marine Corps civilian contractors are an invaluable asset, but they do not always have the ability to understand the requirements user's needs. Uniformed KOs should be used as a liaison officer (LNO) to bridge the gap in communication and build a stronger supporting-supported relationship. This does not have to be a billet title but should be seen as a collateral duty. Uniformed KOs should plan and coordinate to meet with supply officers and provide an informational and educational meeting. The informational meeting should clear up any confusion about what services contracting provides, how to receive the best support, and exchange information for future questions.

2. Processes

This section will answer the following research question as identified in Chapter I, as well as offer recommendations that pertain to processes:

a. Recommendation 6: Other Transactional Authorities Expansion

OTAs offer a level of flexibility that cannot be duplicated by traditional FAR contracts, and therefore, should be integrated into more activities within the Marine Corps. This would be an augmentation to traditional FAR contracts, and MAGTF planning will gain the ability to leverage both in their challenge to stay ahead of our adversaries. Additionally, OTAs can be utilized not only in large acquisitions but also at a more tactical level as well. Tangible ideas that originate from the Marine innovation challenges can be tested through a less expensive OTA process to conduct official research and development or create a working prototype. This tactical aspect of OTAs works best with used concurrently with recommendation 4. Finally, all of the entities who are currently experimenting or using OTAs need to create a common repository for lessons learned that would reduce the amount of overlap, and rework, within the Marine Corps.

b. Recommendation 7: Command Equivalency for Contracting Billets

The Marine Corps must establish command opportunities to be able to retain top performers within the OCS community. The Marine Corps already has the structure and billets available, such as RCO and ECP units, but the adjustment is an administrative to re-designate them as a command equivalent billet, similarly to recruiting command positions. This will allow Lieutenant Colonels to have the same competitive advantage when going up for a Colonel promotion board. The ECP and RCO are similar sizes to the Army commander positions, with the roughly the same amount of personnel under their command. This process will help retain the best officers within the CCF while modernizing and optimizing the OSC community holistically.

c. Recommendation 8: Redefining of Programs of Record

Critical thinking encourages the search and identification of divergent ways of doing things. This recommendation provides an alternate way of acquiring capabilities which rely on equipment that has a technological shelf life. The current approach to a program of record associates the program to a physical asset that will be obtained. This recommendation exploits the vagueness of the program of record definition to suggest pursuing contracts heavy in commercial technology as concepts, rather than a fully defined physical delivery. This approach does not and should not be used for all programs of record. This approach is optimal for programs such as a computer network where many components are commercial and have a technological shelf life.

3. Platforms

This section will answer the following research question as identified in Chapter I, as well as offer recommendations that pertain to platforms utilized in the Marine Corps:

a. Recommendation 9: Expansion of Government Commercial Purchase Card Utilization

The expansion to the GCPC program would grant MAGTF commanders greater flexibility to purchase commercial goods and services in a deployed environment. Although the power to grant usage of the GCPC up to the $25,000 limit requires a

contracting officer to authorize the purchases, uniformed contracting officers are present during deployments to assist in the process. This recommendation requires zero changes to the current strategy or manpower, as it is already allowed as identified in Chapter IV. What is necessary is a change of mindset to give MAGTF commanders the most amount of flexibility to enhance their lethality.

4. Revisiting the Research Questions

This section ties each recommendation to an answer for the research questions presented in the introduction.

a. Q1. Is the current Marine Corps Contracting Force structured to holistically support not only today's needs, but prepare the warfighter to face future potential conflicts?

In the MOC General Neller recognized the slew of issues before the Marine Corps as it prepares for the challenges of the future operating environment. Many of those challenges identified are ones which contracting can provide viable answers for. However, before contracting can provide the optimal solution, the Marine Corps will need to think critically about making changes to the current contracting force structure. Recommendations 2 recognizes that contracting needs to be directly aligned under acquisitions rather than under logistics. Recommendations 4 provides a method by which the Marine Corps can empower tactical commanders to source their Marines with the assets they need when they need it. Recommendation 4 also enables a consolidation of efforts when it comes to the use of OTAs across the Marine Corps. The combination of these recommendations would enable the Marine Corps to leverage the best that contracting has to offer in meeting the challenges that lay before it.

b. Q2. Is there a better method to recruit, employ, and utilize the Contingency Contracting Force, thus improving the operational value as a resource to the MLG/ MEF/ USMC?

Beyond the challenges of the battlefield, the MOC also recognized the need for the recruitment, development, and retention of highly qualified Marines. Recommendation 1 is in response to the recognition that the current system is not optimized to recruit the most

highly qualified Marines to be KOs. Similarly, recommendation 3 provides an answer to how the Marine Corps could not only recruit KOs more effectively, but also enables for the increased depth of contracting actions through which KOs can support commanders at every level. Recommendation 5 is a method by which the Marine Corps can improve the operational value of KOs everywhere by leveraging networks to not only inform and educate, but to also assist Marines with getting what they need. While contracting is not a function of supply, all supply Marines and KOs should have a network through which, together, they can provide effective and efficient support to the warfighter.

c. Q3. Would the professionalization of the contracting force enhance the lethal capabilities of the Marine Corps?

Recommendations 2 and 3 recognize how the current approach to managing commissioned KOs keeps the Marine Corps from leveraging all available means to facilitate its improved lethality. Contracting is a highly technical field that is consistently changing and evolving. Additionally, contracting is the only defense acquisition workforce with additional requirements leveraged upon it by DODI 5000.66. Professionalization of the 3006 OCS officer field with potential enables the development of compound knowledge development by not requiring officers to transition back and forth between two different MOS. Furthermore, changes in how the Marine Corps recruits KOs and the realignment and expansion of the locations where uniformed KOs are assigned will result in an increased depth of contracting capabilities. The combinations of these recommendations would increase the effectiveness and efficiency with which acquisition and contracting activities support the needs of the warfighter.

d. Q4. Can the Marine Corps benefit from integrating a more diverse approach to contracting?

Recommendations 6, 8, 9 discuss how a more diverse approach can enhance the capabilities of the Marine Corps contracting profession. When discussing acquisitions, the Marine Corps should not put artificial limitation and restrictions on methods which can benefit the Marine Corps. The expansion of OTAs discussed in recommendation 6 does not reduce the capabilities of contracting, it adds flexibility and provides another tool a

MAGTF commander can use to accomplish their mission. Recommendation 8 introduces a different mindset for how the Marine Corps defines POR, and keeps with the rhetoric of the SecDef's national defense strategy. Recommendation 9 is already approved for use according to Naval Supply Systems Instruction 4200.99, and is yet another tool MAGTF commanders can use to enhance their flexibility overseas.

B. CALL FOR ACTION

With the information in this thesis, we are recommending that agencies such as MMOA as well as I&L take these recommendations for further research, implementation, or discussion at higher levels. These agencies are the ones who genuinely effect long-term change within the contracting professions, and can take the necessary actions to allow the recommendations made in this chapter to take hold correctly.

C. RECOMMENDED FUTURE RESEARCH

This report was originally looking for ideal strategies that the Marine Corps can holistically enact to optimize contracting strategy. While this report was the first to look at each pillar of people, processes, and platforms entirely; additional areas of research were uncovered that could not be researched due to scope or time requirements. Primarily, taking this report and assigning costs to each alternative offered and conducting a cost benefit analysis is an area of possible further research. Furthermore, looking into the feasibility of enhancing COA 4, restricted officers track, by assigning costs to dollars saved is another area of potential research. Finally, looking into the applicability of combining the platforms and have them communicate with each other through web-based applications is the third area of potential research.

D. CONCLUSION

The recommendations made in this chapter are the authors' professional assessments on how Marine Corps contracting can be optimized in order to stay ahead of the United States' adversaries. The increase of developing technology, paired with a changing environment surrounding acquisition methods, is forcing the Marine Corps to

look closely at their practices and methods to make improvements. This report's objective was to identify ways to enhance the Marine Corps' operating success at levels that have not been tested, as a holistic analysis had not been done since the early 2000s. The concurrent implementation of the recommendations identified in Chapter V will ensure that the Marine Corps remains steadfast in their commitment to service of the United States, and keeping with the mindsets of the SecDef and the Commandant of the Marine Corps.

LIST OF REFERENCES

Acquisition Corps: In general. Title 10 United States Code (U.S.C.) § 1731 (2018). Retrieved November 16, 2018, from http://uscode.house.gov/view.xhtml?req=granuleid:USC-prelim-title10-section1731&num=0&edition=prelim

Contracting positions: qualification requirements. Title 10 United States Code (U.S.C.), § 1724 (2018). Retrieved October 2, 2018, from http://uscode.house.gov/view.xhtml?req=granuleid:USC-prelim-title10-section1721&num=0&edition=prelim

Corcoran, E. M. (2000). *Developing and structuring a permanent contracting command in the United States Marine Corps to maximize the training, education and potential of military contracting officers in order to be better prepared to support the operational forces and lead the Marine Corps through the 21st century* (Master's thesis). Retrieved from http://hdl.handle.net/10945/9243

Defense Acquisition University. *Program of record.* Retrieved August 21, 2018, from https://www.dau.mil/acquipedia/Pages/ArticleDetails.aspx?aid=2f2b8d1e-8822-4f88-9859-916ad81b597e

Department of Defense. (2011). *DoD financial management regulation* (DoD 7000.14-R). Washington, DC: Author. Retrieved October 2, 2018, from https://comptroller.defense.gov/Portals/45/documents/fmr/volume_02a.pdf

Department of Defense. (2017a, July 20). *Defense Acquisition workforce program desk guide*. Washington, DC: Author. Retrieved from http://www.hci.mil/docs/Policy/Guidance%20Memoranda/DoDI_5000_66_Desk_Guide_Signed_20_July_2017.pdf

Department of Defense. (2017b, January 17). *Other transactions guide for prototype projects version 1.2.0*. Washington, DC: Author. Retrieved from https://www.acq.osd.mil/dpap/cpic/cp/docs/OTA_Guide%20(17%20Jan%202017)%20DPAP%20signature%20FINAL.pdf

Department of Defense. (2017c, august 29). T*he planning, programming, budgeting, and execution (PPBE) process* (DoD Directive 7045.14). Washington, DC: Author. Retrieved October 2, 2018, from https://fas.org/irp/doddir/dod/d7045_14.pdf

Department of Defense. (2018, August 31). *Defense acquisition workforce education, training, experience, and career development program* (DoD Instruction 5000.66). Washington, DC: Author. Retrieved from https://www.esd.whs.mil/Portals/54/Documents/DD/issuances/dodi/500066.pdf?ver=2018-11-13-152340-037

Department of the Army. (2007). *Urgent reform required: Army expeditionary contracting*. Washington, DC: Author. Retrieved May 17, 2018, from https://www.acq.osd.mil/dpap/contingency/reports/docs/gansler_commission_report_final_report_20071031.pdf

Department of the Navy. (1997). *Warfighting* (Marine Corps Doctrinal Publication 1). Retrieved from https://www.marines.mil/Portals/59/Publications/MCDP%201%20Warfighting.pdf

Department of the Navy. (2006). *Marine Corps limited duty officer and warrant officer programs, promotions, and continuation procedures* (Secretary of the Navy Instruction 1412.9B). Retrieved from https://www.marines.mil/Portals/59/Publications/SECNAVINST%201412.9B.pdf?ver=2012-10-11-164116-653

Department of the Navy. (2012a). *Annual rifle training databook* (NAVMC 11660, Rev. 02–12). Retrieved from https://www.trngcmd.marines.mil/Portals/207/Docs/wtbn/ART%20NAVMC%2011660%20REV%2002-12.pdf

Department of the Navy. (2012b, September 12). *Department of the Navy government-wide commercial purchase card program policy* (NAVSUP Instruction 4200.99B). Retrieved from https://www.mcieast.marines.mil/portals/33/documents/contracting/navsupinst%204200.99b.pdf

Department of the Navy. (2014). *Consumer-level supply policy* (Marine Corps Order 4400.150). Retrieved form https://www.marines.mil/Portals/59/Publications/MCO%204400.150.pdf

Department of the Navy. (2016). *Marine Corps planning process* (Marine Corps Warfighting Publication 5–1). Retrieved from https://www.marines.mil/Portals/59/Publications/MCWP%205-10%20FRMLY%20MCWP%205-1.pdf?ver=2017-08-28-140131-227

Department of the Navy. (2017a). *Ground supply training and readiness manual* NAVMC 3500.64C). Washington, DC: Author. Retrieved from https://www.marines.mil/Portals/59/Publications/NAVMC%203500.64C%20Signature%20page.pdf?ver=2017-08-17-151108-017

Department of the Navy. (2017b*). Marine Corps acquisition policy and procedures (MAPP)*. Washington, DC: Author. Retrieved from https://ehqmc.usmc.mil/sites/LBContracts/Policy/MAPP/default.aspx

Department of the Navy. (2018a). *Contingency contracting* (Marine Corps Reference Publication 3–40B.3). Retrieved form https://www.marines.mil/Portals/59/Publications/MCRP%203-40B.3.pdf?ver=2018-11-06-075040-997

Department of the Navy. (2018b). *Military occupational specialty manual* (Navy and Marine Corps (NAVMC) 1200.1D). Washington, DC: Author. Retrieved from https://www.trngcmd.marines.mil/Portals/207/Docs/wtbn/MCCMOS/FY19%20MOS%20Manual%20NAVMC_1200.1D.PDF?ver=2018-05-16-070623-087

Designation of Acquisition Positions. Title 10 United States Code (U.S.C.), § 1721 (2018). Retrieved November 16, 2018, from http://uscode.house.gov/view.xhtml?req=granuleid:USC-prelim-title10-section1721&num=0&edition=prelim

Harrison, A., C. Warner, and D. Armknecht (2016). *USMC contingency contracting force: An analysis of transient officers in a rapidly changing acquisition environment* (Master's thesis). Retrieved from http://hdl.handle.net/10945/49482

Joint Chiefs of Staff. (2014). *Operational contract support* (JP 4–10). Retrieved from http://www.jcs.mil/Portals/36/Documents/Doctrine/pubs/jp4_10.pdf

Jordan, J. D. (2012). Wanted: critical thinkers: A critical approach to recruiting critical thinkers. *Marine Corps Gazette*, 98 (4). Retrieved from https://www.mca-marines.org/gazette/2014/04/wanted-critical-thinkers

Mattis, J. N. (2018). *National defense strategy*. Washington, DC: Department of Defense. Retrieved from https://dod.defense.gov/Portals/1/Documents/pubs/2018-National-Defense-Strategy-Summary.pdf

National defense authorization act for fiscal year 2016. Pub. L. No. 114–92 §815 (2016) Retrieved October 2, 2018, from https://www.congress.gov/114/plaws/publ92/PLAW-114publ92.pdf

Naval Postgraduate School. (2018). *April 2018 Naval Postgraduate School academic catalog*. Retrieved July 19, 2018, from https://my.nps.edu/documents/104111578/106291209/Academic+Catalog+JUN18.pdf/ce7312da-97b9-490c-9b12-4529fb3dcc99

Neller, R. B. (2016). *Marine Corps operating concept*. Washington, DC: Department of the Navy. Retrieved from https://www.mccdc.marines.mil/Portals/172/Docs/MCCDC/young/MCCDC-YH/document/final/Marine%20Corps%20Operating%20Concept%20Sept%202016.pdf?ver=2016-09-28-083439-483

Special requirements for military personnel in the acquisition field. Title 10 United States Code (U.S.C.) § 1722a (2018). Retrieved November 16, 2018, from http://uscode.house.gov/view.xhtml?req=granuleid:USC-prelim-title10-section1722a&num=0&edition=prelim

United States Government. (2018). *Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR).* Washington, DC: Author. Retrieved October 2, 2018, from http://farsite.hill.af.mil/vmfara.htm

United States Marine Corps. (2014, June 13). MARADMIN 283/14: Contingency contracting officer (AMOS 3006) sourcing and education. Retrieved from https://www.marines.mil/News/Messages/Messages-Display/Article/896438/contingency-contracting-officer-amos-3006-sourcing-and-education/

United States Marine Corps. (2015, March 12). MARADMIN 122/15: Establishing operational contract support capability in support of MAGTF operations. Retrieved from https://www.marines.mil/News/Messages/Messages-Display/Article/897029/establishing-operational-contract-support-capability-in-support-of-magtf-operat/

United States Marine Corps. (2016a, January 19). MARADMIN 028/16: FY16 commandant's career-level education board (CCLEB) slating results. Retrieved from https://www.marines.mil/News/Messages/Messages-Display/Article/897676/fy16-commandants-career-level-education-board-ccleb-slating-results/

United States Marine Corps. (2016b, December 13). MARADMIN 650/16: FY17 commandant's career-level education board (CCLEB) slating results. Retrieved from https://www.marines.mil/News/Messages/Messages-Display/Article/1028334/fy17-commandants-career-level-education-board-ccleb-results/

United States Marine Corps. (2016c, January 15). MARADMIN 027/16: FY16 commandant's professional intermediate-level education board (CPIB) slating results. Retrieved from https://www.marines.mil/News/Messages/Messages-Display/Article/897675/fy16-commandants-professional-intermediate-level-education-board-cpib-slating-r/

United States Marine Corps. (2017a, December 13). MARADMIN 673/17: FY18 commandant's career-level education board (CCLEB) slating results. Retrieved from https://www.marines.mil/News/Messages/Messages-Display/Article/1396035/fy18-commandants-career-level-education-board-ccleb-results/

United States Marine Corps. (2017b, December 13). MARADMIN 674/17: FY18 commandant's professional intermediate-level education board (CPIB) slating results. Retrieved from https://www.marines.mil/News/Messages/Messages-Display/Article/1396086/fy18-commandants-professional-intermediate-level-education-board-cpib-results/

United States Marine Corps. (2018, September 24). MARADMIN 538/18: FY19 acquisition primary MOS selection (8059 and 8061) board solicitation. Retrieved from https://www.marines.mil/News/Messages/Messages-Display/Article/1642898/fy19-acquisition-primary-mos-selection-8059-and-8061-board-solicitation/

Van Echo, C. M. (2009). Good decisionmakers are not enough: We need to train beyond the physical level of war. *Marine Corps Gazette*, 93(5). Retrieved from https://www.mca-marines.org/gazette/2009/05/good-decisionmakers-are-not-enough

White, L. A. (2017). *An analysis of costs and benefits associated with initial contracting technical education and training for unrestricted Marine officers* (Master's thesis). Retrieved from http://hdl.handle.net/10945/52951

Yoder, E. C. (2004). *The Yoder Three-tier Model for optimal planning and execution of contingency contracting* (NPS-AM-05-002) [Working paper]. Retrieved from the Naval Postgraduate School Acquisition Research website: https://apps.dtic.mil/dtic/tr/fulltext/u2/a498492.pdf

Yoder, E. C., Long, W. E., & Nix, D. E. (2012). Phase zero contracting operations (PZCO)—Strategic and integrative planning for contingency and expeditionary operations (NPS-CM-12-039). Monterey, CA: Naval Postgraduate School.

THIS PAGE INTENTIONALLY LEFT BLANK

INITIAL DISTRIBUTION LIST

1. Defense Technical Information Center
   Ft. Belvoir, Virginia

2. Dudley Knox Library
   Naval Postgraduate School
   Monterey, California