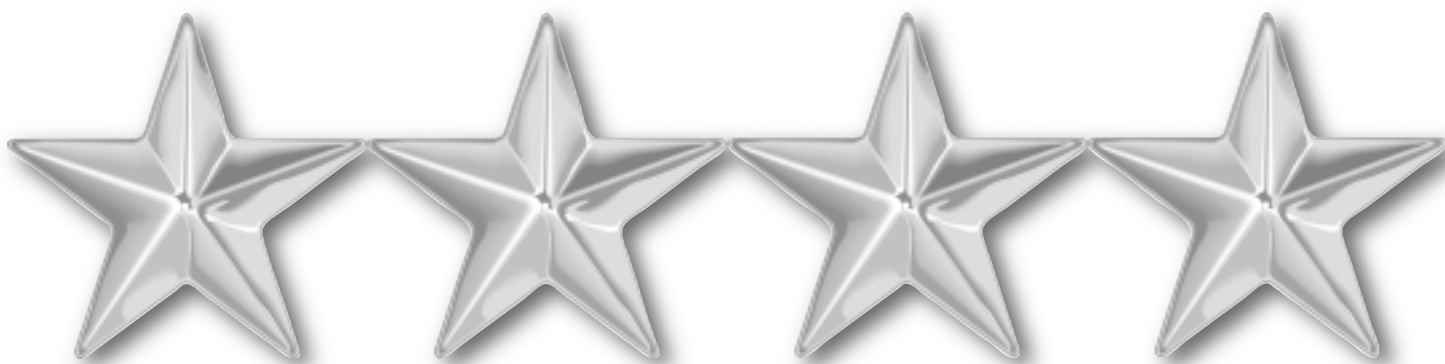
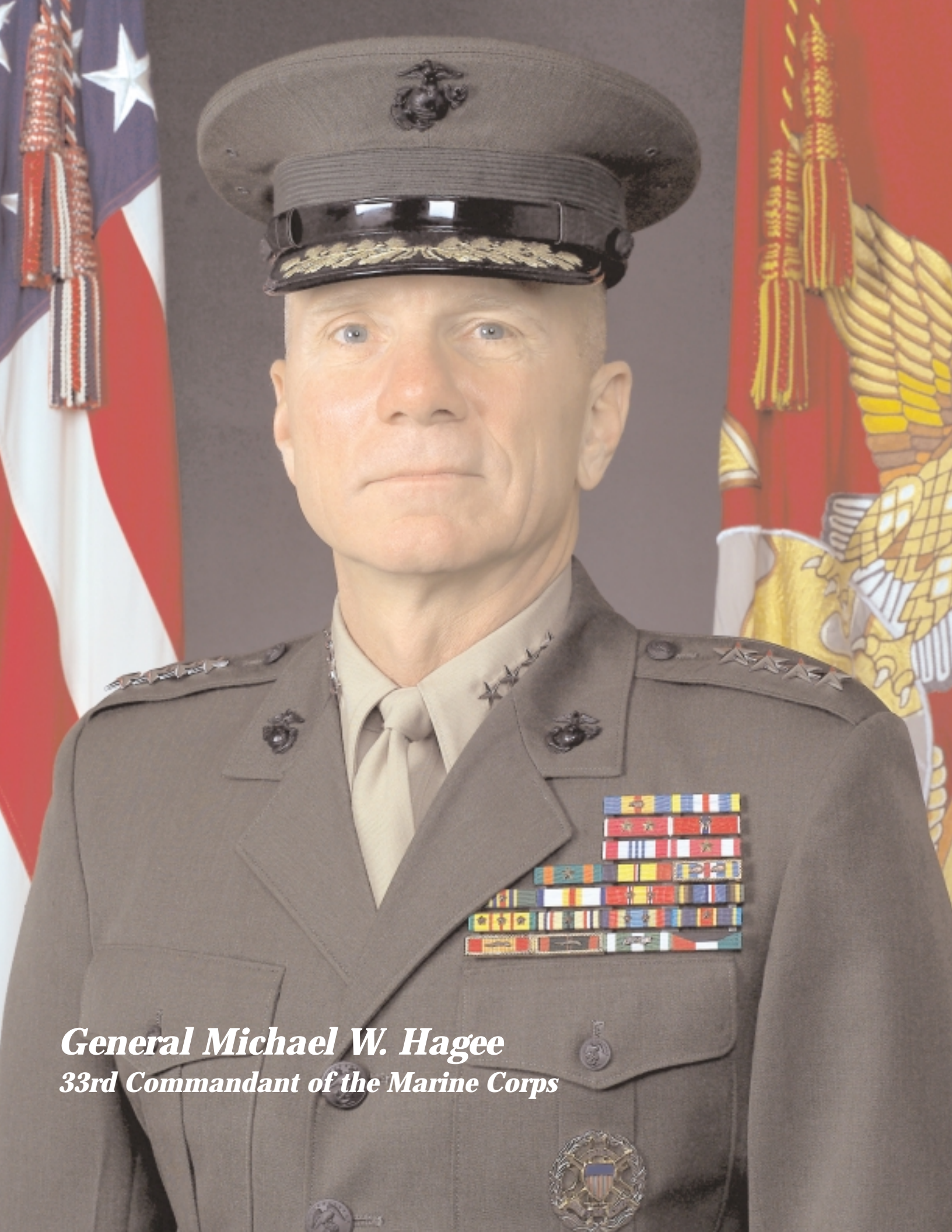


# ***33rd Commandant of the Marine Corps***



## ***Guidance***





***General Michael W. Hagee***  
***33rd Commandant of the Marine Corps***

## Introduction

*As I assume the duties as the thirty-third Commandant, I want all Marines – active, reserve, civilian, retired, former and their families – to know my broad objectives and intent. I will provide more detailed guidance on specific programs and timelines in the near future.*

*Up front, let there be no doubt that we are fundamentally on course. Our Corps remains a physically, materially, and most importantly a mentally-ready combat force. Marine contributions to the Global War on Terrorism over the last year have more than demonstrated this fact. Further, documents like Naval Power 21, Marine Corps Strategy 21, and Expeditionary Maneuver Warfare provide the vital intellectual preparation of the battlefield that will carry us well into the future.*

*An intellectual giant and one of our greatest leaders, General John A. Lejeune, was instrumental in leading the Marine Corps from its role as colonial infantry of the nineteenth century to the combined-arms expeditionary force needed for America's increased global responsibilities of the twentieth century. I have made use of the thirteenth Commandant's timeless insights about our legacy as warfighters throughout this guidance because they provide important guidelines for our current transformation at the dawn of the twenty-first century.*



## Warrior Legacy

*The warrior ethos is the Corps' hallmark. It is the product of long service to the Nation in peace and in war by many generations of Marines. Through that service, in the words of General John A. Lejeune, the term "Marine has come to signify all that is highest in military efficiency and soldierly virtue."*

*For those of us who are privileged to wear the eagle, globe, and anchor today, the rich legacy embodied in those words is the standard that governs our service. Our challenge is to conduct ourselves in such a manner that we are judged "worthy successors of that long line" that has gone before.*

## Naval Heritage

*Our naval heritage is integral to who we are as Marines. Since our founding, the sailors of the United States Navy have stood courageously beside us. Time and again, our partnership has proven compelling in peace and unbeatable in war. The powerful capability that the Naval Services bring to our joint forces on the battlefield is a central element of our Nation's successes.*

*As the Naval Services have long known, many of the Nation's most menacing security challenges lurk in the world's littorals and are characterized by multiple threats, growing instability, and an increased requirement for robust global power-projection capabilities. Based on recent events, others are now discovering the potent solution found in the sustained expeditionary culture that is shared by the Navy-Marine Corps team. Sustainable naval power-projection is critical to the security of our great maritime Nation. We, therefore, will remain "soldiers of the sea."*



## Commandant's Guidance

## **Our Main Effort – Excellence in Warfighting**

*Perceptions of our Corps vary. To most of our countrymen we are faithful, selfless servants. Our families and friends see us as dedicated and loyal defenders of our Nation. Our sister Services know us to be true professionals. And to those who would do harm to America and its interests, we are a dreaded adversary. Even the word “Marine” brings with it fear to our enemies, hope to those in need, and trust to our allies. All are in agreement, however, that we succeed due to our continued dedication to warfighting excellence and an unflinching determination to win.*



*This dedication must remain firm but not blinding. We must remember that we are part of the team that makes up the Nation’s joint warfighting establishment. Due to our expeditionary culture, we have always been responsive and immediately employable with our sister Services, special operations forces, as well as our coalition partners. We will leverage these institutional strengths to assist in achieving a victory in today’s Global War on Terrorism and other threats to our security. As we transform our Corps for this century, we must carefully preserve the*

*strengths of our past while not losing the flexibility to contribute to tomorrow’s unique national security needs. All our actions will focus on enhancing our warfighting excellence at each level of war, at home and abroad. Every member of our Corps must remain focused on our main effort, the warfighting excellence of the individual Marine and our combined arms Marine Air-Ground Task Forces, in order to ensure that we “will be found equal to every emergency.” As a part of this effort, I intend to attend and participate in all After-Action Reviews of exercises conducted at the Marine Expeditionary Force level by the staff from the MAGTF Staff Training Program.*

### **Leadership**

*“...the eternal spirit which has animated our Corps from generation to generation.”*

*– General John A. Lejeune*

### **Leadership**

*Leadership is, as General Lejeune states, “the eternal spirit which has animated our Corps from generation to generation.” It is our leaders – from our most junior, especially our noncommissioned officers, through the entire chain of command – who have kept the Corps successful and victorious. Their sense of responsibility is the cornerstone of our hard-earned successes. We will continue to develop leaders who, given mission-type orders and commander’s intent, can think on their feet, act independently, and succeed. In the future, as today, leaders will continue to instill stamina and toughness in each individual while simultaneously reinforcing character that values honor, integrity and taking care of our fellow Marines – including treating each other with dignity and respect. We will reward action that is guided by informed boldness and audacity. And, we will kindle a preference for responsive decision-making with room for errors and mistakes, while countering any institutional prejudices that punish initiative and undermine our warfighting capacity.*



**33rd Commandant of the Marine Corps**

*Aggressive and informed leadership demands education, training, and mentoring. The importance of these key elements cannot be over-emphasized, and we must attend to each at every opportunity. Formal education, well-developed and realistic training exercises, focused independent study, and informal weekly social events all contribute to the growth of leadership and victory in war. In order to increase the depth of our professional education, we will re-invigorate the professional reading program. It will evolve beyond a reading list to become a valuable study and discussion forum that assists in our goal of achieving excellence in warfighting based on competence and comradeship.*

## **Capabilities and Organization**

*Throughout the varied conflicts of the twentieth century, the Marine Corps demonstrated a true ability to adapt to the ever-changing face of battle. Today, we face new threats and scarce resources, yet at the same time, we must shape the Corps for the challenges of a new century. Along with the U.S. Navy, we provide the Nation its essential power-projection capability from the sea. In this regard, we have an immediate and critical tasking to define for our civilian leadership, the joint community, and the other Services how we intend to project naval power ashore in the 2015-2025 timeframe. This effort will require the intellectual rigor and participation of all five elements of the MAGTF. It will impact the entire Marine Corps – from how we are structured and train in peacetime to how we will fight on future battlefields.*

*As we prepare for the future, we will continue to be ready today to accomplish any assigned mission. As globalization shrinks the world before us, our principal contribution to national security will continue to be providing forward deployed presence and projecting naval power “in every corner of the seven seas so that our country and its citizens might enjoy peace and security.” Commanders at all levels are entrusted with ensuring we are ready to carry out this crucial responsibility.*

## **Innovation and Agility**

*The speed of technological change at once facilitates and hinders our ability to adapt. However, by effectively melding the unique qualities of the technologically sophisticated “new breed” with the wisdom of our “old breed,” we will harness technology to our advantage. The historical constants of the battlefield – uncertainty, fog and friction, and an independent, thinking adversary – as well as the demand for the careful integration of innovative thinking and accomplished warfighting skills necessitates that we heed the wisdom of our thirteenth Commandant that the relationship among Marines “should in no sense be that of superior and inferior nor that of master and servant, but rather that of teacher and scholar.”*



*This relationship will allow us to keep pace with technological change and exploit the opportunities it presents. An important first step we will take is to leverage technologies that allow us to more effectively share and expedite the flow of useful information. The increase in situational awareness through integrated command and control systems and a common operating picture, both for peacetime functions and on the battlefield, will dramatically increase our effectiveness and enhance the flexibility and responsiveness that are signature characteristics of our Corps.*

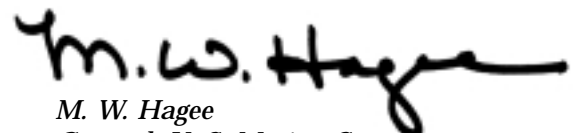
## **Conclusion**

*Success will not be defined by a specific operational “End State,” but rather in the cultivation of an ethos that prizes both continual evolution and innovation as means to meet the challenges of the future. We will continue to use agile readiness as a measure of our effectiveness, and we will use familiar touchstones to guide and support our progress. We will ensure that the Corps:*

- *Sustains its unique culture and core values;*
- *Takes care of its families and the individual Marine;*
- *Remains relevant to the threats of today and the future;*
- *Establishes processes that facilitate adaptation to a changing, dynamic world; and,*
- *Above all, keeps as its main effort excellence in warfighting.*

*I charge each and every Marine to join me in this challenging journey into the twenty-first century. Our tasks are before us – we will win the current battles and be ready to defeat our Nation’s future foes. Let us proceed with boldness, intellect, and confidence in each other, as we continue to forge the legacy of our great Corps and strive to take our rightful place in that “long line” of Marines that “have acquitted themselves with greatest distinction, winning new honors on each occasion.”*

*Semper Fi and Keep Attacking,*



*M. W. Hagee  
General, U. S. Marine Corps  
33rd Commandant of the Marine Corps*



***33rd Commandant of the Marine Corps***





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