



U.S. MARINE CORPS LOGISTICS
INNOVATION:
MANAGING INNOVATION MATURITY

TECHNICAL REPORT

IN SUPPORT OF:

THE LOGISTICS POLICY AND CAPABILITIES BRANCH (LPC)



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Executive Summary

In 2016, the Commandant of the US Marine Corps released the Marine Corps Operating Concept (MOC¹) to define the attributes of how an expeditionary force will operate in the 21st Century. The MOC contains five critical tasks and associated issue areas describing the future vision of the US Marine Corps. These critical tasks are to:

- 1) *Integrate* the Naval force to fight at and from the sea
- 2) *Evolve* the MAGTF
- 3) Operate with resilience in a contested-network environment
- 4) *Enhance* our ability to maneuver
- 5) *Exploit* the competence of the individual Marine

History tells us that a fighting force cannot evolve unless it evolves its logistics. So, what is needed to evolve, enhance, exploit, and integrate Logistics? The answer is a sustainable process of continuous innovation executed by an organization resourced and steeped in a culture that proactively Explores, Exploits, and Transitions (E2T) the best ideas, concepts, and emerging technologies responding to warfighter needs.

“Good ideas are worthless unless acted upon.”

General Robert Blake Neller, 37th Commandant of the US Marine Corps

The present document encompasses the period of October through December 2016, and presents to the Logistics Policy and Capabilities (LPC) branch a recommended implementation approach supporting the integration of Ground Logistics Innovation into the overall Maintenance Modernization Program. Our study team, an invested advocate of sustained US Marine Corps autonomy, proposes the establishment of the Center for Logistics Innovation to serve as an information syphon, channeling Corps-wide innovation projects and initiatives into a central, enterprise-wide Innovation Maturity Process. By means of this process, the Center will evolve and accelerate actionable outcomes from the lowest unit-level to the LPV/LPC advocates within identified fiscal-year targets. Ultimately, the Center will not only anchor the congruence of capabilities with needs, it will also synchronize the cycle of innovation maturation with the drumbeat of MAGTF deployments. By integrating much-needed technical knowledge and skill-sets into the innovation cell, the Center for Logistics Innovation will network the right people

¹ Neller, Robert B. (2016). *Marine Corps Operating Concept: How an Expeditionary Force Operates in the 21st Century*. Washington DC: Department of the Navy, HQMC.

with the right skills into these projects, better enabling Naval logisticians to implement new and adoptive solutions into pro-active logistics decisions.

This paper presents how a proposed US Marine Corps Center for Logistics Innovation (CLI) would execute the tenants of E2T through a proposed US Marine Corps Innovation Maturity Process (IvMP). The IvMP describes an interdependent eco-system of Activities, Participants, and Information advancing 21st Century US Marine Corps logistics capabilities. So not to be bound by the process, the IvMP provides great flexibility for the CLI to:

- 1) actively pursue relevant information and data to discover logistics needs and emerging logistics solutions,
- 2) interpret the business value of emerging logistics solutions,
- 3) evaluate against existing logistics capabilities, the form, fit, and function of the identified logistics solutions,
- 4) structure the cost, benefit, integration timeline, and description of emerging solutions,
- 5) advocate the logistics solutions with stakeholders,
- 6) and deliver a mature and validated recommendation for leadership consideration.

Innovation is the process of actualizing information. As a process of knowledge management, the IvMP merely captures and centralizes the various process of innovation naturally occurring across the Corps. In addition to official Research and Development programs, Program Managers and Program Offices innovate to sustain today's products, platforms and capabilities. Using the IvMP, the proposed CLI applies a defined process synchronizing collaboration, and transitioning Corps-wide innovation directly to end-user communities. In this way, the CLI serves the USMC as a valuable fulcrum affecting adaptive change, thus enabling the enterprise as a capability supporting tomorrow's readiness.