

## USACom Redesignated to U.S. Joint Forces Command

The 1999 Unified Command Plan (UCP), which establishes responsibilities among the Nation's nine combatant commands, directed U.S. Atlantic Command (USACom) to be redesignated as U.S. Joint Forces Command (USJFCom) effective 7 October.

The following highlights are the major UCP changes affecting USJFCom:

- Identifies USJFCom as successor to USACom, with a mandate to accelerate opportunities for forces to gain joint warfighting training and experience, leverage lessons learned in real and training scenarios, and recommend changes to joint doctrine that improve the warfighting capability of the Armed Forces.
- USJFCom serves as the DoD executive agent, responsible to the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff for joint warfighting experimentation. Joint experimentation

involves creating and exploring new concepts as well as planning, designing, preparing, and assessing a program of joint warfighting experimentation that will enhance future warfighting capabilities.

- Assigns USJFCom the mission of providing military assistance to civil authorities for consequence management of weapons of mass destruction (WMD) incidents within the continental United States, its territories, and possessions. USJFCom will also support the WMD consequence management efforts of the other combatant commands.
- In addition, USJFCom serves as the joint development process owner for DoD responsible for developing the methodology to deploy all military forces for rapid and decisive military force power projection from the continental United States.
- Transfers geographic responsibility of

selected waters around Africa and Europe from USJFCom to U.S. European Command and U.S. Southern Command, effective 1 October 2000. This change modifies USJFCom area of responsibility so that it more closely aligns with that of the Supreme Allied Command Atlantic.

The UCP provides guidance to all unified combatant commands; establishes their missions, responsibilities, and force structure; delineates the general geographic area of responsibility for geographic combatant commanders; and specifies responsibilities for functional commanders.

The Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff continuously reviews the missions, responsibilities, and force structure of each combatant command. This assessment is formalized and recommendations are forwarded through the SecDef to the President. This process takes place at least every 2 years. □

## Night Vision Training Facility To Open at Quantico

Following groundbreaking ceremonies on 18 June, a new state of the art night vision training facility will open by the end of next month at The Basic School at Quantico. Known as the Night Integrated Training Environment (NITE) Laboratory, the facility will provide Marines with night combat training while wearing night vision goggles.

A ceiling-mounted lighting system will simulate either full moonlight or starlight only. With the authentic night conditions, Marines will be able to conduct night vision training 24 hours a day. The terrain inside the NITE Lab will be

realistic as well. Synthetic trees and foliage developed specifically for the Lab by E-OIR Measurements, Inc., of Spotsylvania, VA, will reflect light as if they were natural. Boulders, fallen trees, and creeks will be among the various obstacles found throughout the terrain.

The terrain will consist of five lanes contained within the Lab's dimensions of 125 feet long, 80 feet wide, and 22 feet high. Each lane will present a different environment through which Marines will navigate: jungle, desert, woodland, urban, and urban underground.

After completion of the training, trainees will be able to review their performance with Lab instructors, whose assessments will be aided by the use of videocameras installed in each lane. The Lab will be staffed by instructors from The Basic School.

The NITE Lab is adapted from a project originally conceived by the Army's Night Vision and Electronic Sensors Directorate. The NITE Lab, budgeted at less than \$1 million, is being cosponsored by the Marine Corps Warfighting Laboratory and Marine Corps Combat Development Command (see photo on p. 12). □

## Ceremony Honors Marine Corps Authors

On 9 October, the Marine Corps Heritage Foundation held its annual awards banquet at The Army and Navy Club in Washington, D.C., to recognize excellence in Marine Corps-related writing and film in 1998.

Among the 12 awards bestowed at the ceremony were the:

- **Gen Roy Stanley Geiger Award.** Given to the author of the best Marine Corps aviation article published during the preceding year in the *Marine Corps Gazette*. This year's recipient was Capt Russell Blauw for his article, "Improving Marine Aviation Combat Readiness: A Maintenance Perspective" (*MCG*, Aug98).

- **Gen Wallace M. Greene, Jr. Award.** This award is given to the author of an exceptional nonfiction book related to Marine Corps history that was published during the last 3 years. Col Charles T. Williamson, USMC(Ret) re-



**Capt Russell Blauw receives the Gen Roy S. Geiger Award—established in memory of Wing Commander Ralph Hanke, Royal Air Force—from LtGen George R. Christmas, USMC(Ret)(left) and LtGen Phillip G. Shuttler, USMC(Ret)(right) at the 1999 Marine Corps Heritage Foundation Awards Ceremony.**

ceived the award for authoring *The U.S. Naval Mission to Haiti: 1959–1963*.

- **Col Robert D. Heintz, Jr. Award.** Awarded to the author of the best article related to Marine Corps history published in a magazine, newspaper,

journal, or other periodical during the preceding year. Joseph G. Dawson III received this year's award for his article, "With Fidelity and Effectiveness: Archibald Henderson's Lasting Legacy to the U.S. Marine Corps." Mr. Dawson's article was published in the October 1998 issue of the *Journal of Military History*.

- **Gen Oliver P. Smith Award.** The recipient of this award is recognized for a special contribution to the preservation of the heritage of the Marine Corps. This year, the two editors of the book *The Marines*, BGen Edwin H. Simmons, USMC(Ret) and Mr. J. Robert

Moskin, received the award.

The honored guest at the ceremony was Col John W. Ripley, USMC(Ret), the new Director of Marine Corps History and Museums Division. □