The *38th Commandant's Planning Guidance* and *Force Design 2030 (FD30)* draw into focus the challenge of renewed great power competition and the seminal work required to meet the bold demands of the *National Defense Strategy* (*NDS*). To optimize the Service to fight and win against peer competitors, we must be able to sense, make sense, and act faster than our adversaries. The foundation of rapid understanding, decision, and action remains the individual Marine, executing command and control (C2) to integrate all the other warfighting functions, drive tempo and execute decisively in all domains. While C2 integrates the warfighting functions, the information function is the foundational bedrock that maintains situational awareness in all domains, in both competition and conflict. Together, C2 and information enable decision superiority, kill-chain closure, and favorable asymmetries to compete with and deter strategic competitors, and when called upon, enable us to win during conflict.

As the Director for Command, Control, Communications, and Computers within the Deputy Commandant for Information, I am focused on modernizing the Marine Corps C2 networks as our Service's largest integrated weapons system, extending ubiquitously from the tactical edge to the flagpole. Our network environment enables everything we do: daily unit-level tasks, training and sustaining our high-quality talent, planning and execution of navally integrated training, decision briefs for Dynamic Force Employment, and combat operations. The network enables decisive action while operating in a constantly contested domain, serving as both a center of gravity and critical enabler for *FD30*. This year, the Marine Corps made incredible strides and investments to deliver a modern, resilient, global network that is unified, data driven, cloud and AI enabled, service-based, and optimized for warfighting.

In 2020, the Marine Corps published its first resource-informed enterprise Network Modernization plan, approved by the Assistant Commandant of the Marine Corps. This plan articulates Service-level modernization priorities, resourcing requirements, and risks over the Future Year Defense Program. The plan pivots the Marine Corps to a "system of systems" approach, leveraging technologies, such as Cloud, Free Space Optics, and 5G, secure application development at the tactical edge, and SATCOM as-a-service. This plan will deliver a modern, resilient global network supporting warfighting and business processes alike and directly enables *FD30*.

A key tenet of our modernization effort is to unify all Marine Corps networks under one Commander to reduce the threat surface, unity of command and effort, and improved threat response. In 2020, the Service consolidated all network C2 under the Commander, Marine Forces Cyberspace Command. The Marine Corps also established three new network battalions and three network activities to execute network C2 missions in both competition and conflict. These new organizations will extend the enable the Commander to secure, operate, and defend the Marine Corps warfighting networks globally.

Finally, the Marine Corps made great strides in command, control, and communications modernization efforts. The Service invested in several technologies, which provide a low probability of intercept and low probability of detection, and are executing modernization programs for our tactical radios, satellite communications, waveforms, and encryption to provide our warfighters with multi-path resilient and assured C2.

Our modernized network will enable Marine Corps forces to operate inside actively contested domains, integrate with the Navy, and maintain interoperability with joint and partner forces. Our networks will provide the resilient, diverse transmission paths our young decision makers require to maintain situational awareness and act decisively during competition and conflict against near-peer adversaries. This modernization is not simply a HQMC-driven initiative—units at all echelon are pushing the network's envelope with training, education, experimentation and innovation, and we need to hear from your cutting-edge thinkers. Successful delivery of lethal, timely, and decisive capabilities requires a collective effort, and we encourage your experimentation and feedback to sustain the pace of change and push the right capabilities to decision makers at the tactical edge.

While we will continue delivering modernized systems and networks, I believe that our asymmetry in both competition and conflict will always be the intellectual diversity our Marines bring to the fight

BGen Lorna M. Mahlock
Director IC4, Deputy Commandant for Information