# Marines Value Accountability, Are Eager to Deploy, Commandant Says

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Marines don’t want to be constrained to a stateside location. They want to deploy, said Commandant of the Marine Corps Gen. Eric M. Smith, who spoke yesterday at Defense One’s “State of Defense 2025” digital event.

If they don’t, then they won’t reenlist, Smith continued, noting that Marines are currently deployed to every geographic combatant command.

To remain operationally ready, Marines must be taken care of properly, he said. They need to live in a decent barracks, they need to have a say in where their next duty station will be, and they need to receive pay commensurate with their service.

Marines also value accountability, Smith said, mentioning the Marine Corps has passed the last two annual audits and will do so again.

When Marines check in to a new unit, they’re issued a rucksack, shelter and other gear. When they check out, they’re expected to turn in all the gear they were issued. If they don’t, then they’re expected to go to the surplus store and purchase what is missing. That’s accountability, he said.

“It’s just ruthless adherence to standards. I mean that there’s no secret to it, other than that’s how we make Marines,” Smith said.

The Marine Corps has been meeting its recruiting mission “because we don’t fail. We put our best and brightest on

recruiting duty, and we will reward them for successful completion, and we relieve them when they don’t make their mission,” he said. “We don’t know how to fail.”

Smith said he hopes for a budget because a continuing resolution is detrimental to the Marine Corps’ modernization efforts.

Also, the Marine Corps needs more amphibious ships, he said, so Marines can move about where they are needed.

“Everything we do is about warfighting and lethality. That’s all we know. That’s who we are. Any additional funding that we would get will go toward operational readiness and lethality,” he said.