

Marine Colonel Expresses Gratitude to GDLS-C Workers

"There isn't a better fighting vehicle in the world"

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"Thank you for what you do."

It was a phrase many GDLS-C employees heard during a visit from newly-promoted Colonel Russell Smith, USMC, Commander of the 2nd Light Armoured Reconnaissance Battalion.

Accompanied by Colonel Mike Micucci of TACOM, Colonel Smith led a contingent of 10 Marines to GDLS-C on November 4th. The visit began with a corporate overview of GDLS in the Video Conference Room.

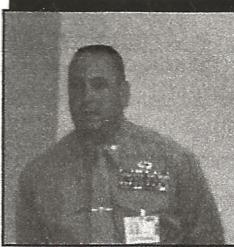
While most of the Marines accompanied Bill Huitema on a tour of the plant, Kris Smith, Manager of Production & Delivery led Colonels Smith and Micucci to a "packed" Production Conference Room.

Addressing approximately 50 workers, Colonel Smith recalled he had been involved with the LAV since 1988, using the vehicle in Panama, Desert Storm and maneuvers in Korea. Because of the quality of the LAV, Smith reports he is still running some of the same vehicles today that he did as a 2nd Lieutenant in 1988.

Smith most recently returned from Iraq and was pleased to report that, out of 901 Marines and sailors under his command, there was "not a single combat-related injury" in spite of coming under small-arms fire.

"Why? Because of the LAV," Colonel Smith says, adding "I owe you a huge debt of gratitude."

As an end-user of the vehicles produced at GDLS-C, Smith expressed his appreciation for the USMC LAV. Because the LAV is a wheeled vehicle, Smith explained it allowed him to get into the city where tanks could not. "There isn't a better fighting vehicle in the world," Smith says.



Colonel Russell Smith,
USMC

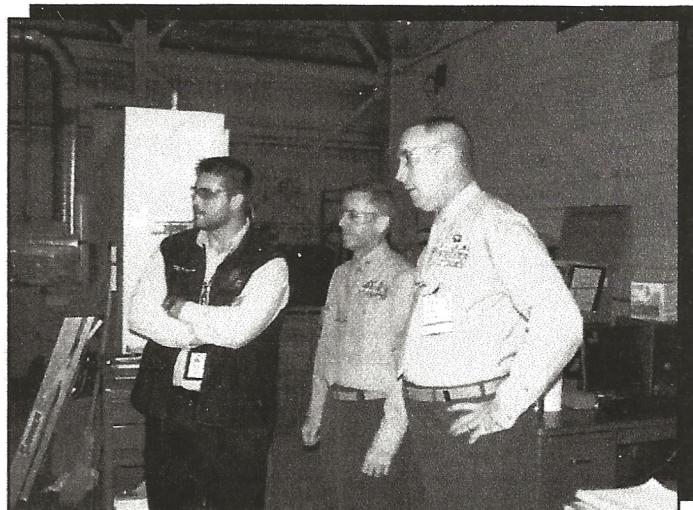
The Light Armoured Vehicles employed by the Marines in Iraq are, Smith says, not only helping to protect those soldiers deployed but helping the civilian population.

"You are making a contribution to a better life for those living in Iraq," Smith says.

Smith spoke of the value placed on the LAV. Whenever there is a crisis, Colonel Smith says, "the first question is 'where are the Light Armoured Vehicles and how can we get them (to the trouble spot)?"'

After speaking with the workers, Colonel Smith himself, accompanied by Colonel Micucci, was led on a tour of the Building #15 plant by Kris Smith. Colonel Smith was very impressed with what he saw from our employees.

"It's great to see such motivation in the workforce," Smith says, "Those guys are awesome!"



Colonel Mike Micucci (center) of TACOM and USMC Colonel Russell Smith (right) take look at one of the lasers in the Building #15 plant during a tour of the facilities, led by GDLS-C's Kris Smith. (LOD Staff Photo)