

VFW Calls For Full MRAP Investigation

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WASHINGTON — The Veterans of Foreign Wars of the U.S. has called upon the House and Senate Armed Services Committees [\[Read letter\]](#) to conduct a full investigation into an accusation that the U.S. Marine Corps gave priority to a future vehicle acquisition program instead of ordering readily available armored vehicles that could have had an immediate impact on the battlefield.

The accusation was made by Franz Gayl, a civilian science advisor for the Marine Corps, who wrote in an unofficial report that the Corps intentionally delayed the fielding of Mine Resistant Ambush Protected (MRAP) vehicles into Iraq, despite urgent requests from Marine ground commanders in February 2005. Gayl contends the Marine Corps wanted instead to focus its resources on the development of the Joint Light Tactical Vehicle, the 2012 follow-on replacement to the popular Humvee, which offers little protection against improvised explosive devices, or IEDs.

"There is no doubt that MRAPs have saved many lives in horrendous IED explosions, but to accuse the Marine Corps of knowingly and intentionally jeopardizing the safety of fellow Marines on the battlefield is a very serious charge," wrote VFW National Commander George Lisicki to the chairmen and ranking members of both committees.

"If the allegation is true, then charges should be brought against those military and civilian decision makers involved," said Lisicki, a Vietnam combat veteran from Carteret, N.J. "But if false, then the accuser should be held accountable for his actions."

Gayl's report is guaranteed to be a hot topic in the Pentagon and on Capitol Hill, even though it was an independent project not sanctioned by the Marine Corps. A copy of the report was leaked to the news media last week before the Marine Corps received a copy to review. According to press reports, Gayl had also filed for federal whistle-blower protection last year.

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