

Shipping Squads from Sea to Shore

Lee Powell:

For the past ten years, the Marines have wanted this multimillion-dollar vehicle, built to ship Marines from sea to land. It is almost twenty feet high and weighs about seventy-six thousand pounds.

U.S. Marine:

The engine sits in this compartment right here.

Lee Powell:

One cylinder on this engine is enough to power a Camaro, and these two twenty-three-inch propulsion systems can pump a hundred thousand gallons of water a minute. That's just some of what it takes to get this vehicle flying above the water at nearly thirty miles per hour. Sergeant Christian Button has been working with this vehicle for the past six months. He says the service can't get these armored bass boats fast enough.

Christian Button:

Overall, this vehicle is-is a leap into-into what we need to stay on top of, uh, of our military. Uh, it-it's god's gift to the Marine Corps right now. This is the next generation of-of military weapon systems.

Lee Powell:

But this program has not come easy for the Marines. The twenty-seven-billion-dollar program has suffered a series of setbacks and failed a critical test more than two years ago. Some wonder if the Marines even need this vehicle as the military conducts missions in Afghanistan and Iraq.

Lee Powell:

Last year, the Marines went back to the drawing board with contractor General Dynamics to redesign the entire vehicle from top to bottom. Now, in a matter of days, they will find out if all the money and time they spent was worth it.

Lee Powell:

If problems are discovered, that could put the entire program in jeopardy.

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