

Q1. What is LSE and why is it important?

A1. LSE 2021 refines how we synchronize maritime operations across multiple Fleets, in support of the joint force, and provides a key opportunity for the development and testing of alternative warfare concepts. LSE 2021 will test and validate our integrated naval capabilities to maximize lethality with the forces and capabilities we have now while validating tactics and acquisition plans for future capabilities. Through LSE 2021, we will apply lessons learned and warfighting concepts, like DMO, on a global scale to further our employment of synchronized, integrated operations across all domains globally, to ensure we remain the superior maritime force in a high-end fight.

Q2. When and where will LSE 2021 take place?

A2. LSE will take place August 3-16, 2021 in the Pacific Ocean, Atlantic Ocean and Mediterranean Sea.

Q3. How many total Sailors and Marines will participate and from what units/ships/subs/etc.?

A3. LSE 2021 will include dozen of live units underway ranging from aircraft carriers to submarines, over dozens of virtual units (i.e. participating pierside) and an unlimited array of constructive (computer-generated) units in addition to the Sailors, Marines, Government civilian and contract employees assigned to command and training staffs providing support to the exercise. Participating units will span 17 time zones to include six naval and Marine Corps component commands (U.S. Fleet Forces Command, U.S. Pacific Command, and U.S. Naval Forces Europe-Africa Command, U.S. Marine Corps Forces Command, U.S. Marine Corps Forces Europe and Africa, and U.S. Marine Corps Forces Pacific), five U.S. numbered Fleets (Second, Third, Sixth, Seventh, and Tenth) and three Marine Expeditionary Forces.

LSE 2021 will use technologies similar to what you see in virtual video gaming environments to expand the number of participants by linking commands and units around the globe virtually, thereby increasing the number of players, real and synthetic, to better replicate the realistic scale of scenarios our naval forces are likely to face in the future. The U.S. has conducted numerous major exercises in the (Atlantic/Pacific), over the past 10 years, exercises which have grown in scope and complexity in a testament to sustained U.S. commitment to regional maritime security.

Q4. Will this exercise incorporate unmanned technologies? If so, what platforms?

A4. Unmanned technologies have and continue to be a priority for the Navy and Marine Corps in alignment with the National Defense Strategy that prioritizes investment in unmanned capabilities. There is no question that unmanned technologies will play a role in LSE 2021. Testing this technology in an operational environment will provide vital feedback as to what is performing at or above expectations, and what needs refinement. Regardless of the results, LSE2021 will drive learning and advancement.

One platform we've incorporated into the exercise is the Autonomous Littoral Connector (ALC), a surface vessel designed to provide logistics support from Shore-to-ship in the littoral environment. Traditionally a Navy mission, LSE 2021 will exercise its capabilities under the command and control of the Marine Corps.

Q5. What is command and control in a contested (denied/degraded) environment, and what does it have to do with LSE21?

A5. Just as LSE21 tests our forces' ability to operate in a contested littoral environment, where adversary presence has an impact, so too does LSE21 test our forces' ability to operate in a contested information space, where adversary information warfare forces can be expected to probe and attack our networks and communications. As an example, Fleet Cyber Command (FCC) will lead this aspect of the exercise, integrating information warfare community members in multiple areas of operation under simulated combat conditions. FCC will stress communications infrastructure, operational and tactical procedures, and staff-to-staff interactions between higher headquarters, numbered fleet maritime operations centers, and subordinate task forces. Focus efforts will include Defensive Cyber Operations (DCO) and protection of afloat and ashore networks in a contested environment, as well as other capabilities across the spectrum of information warfare.

Q6. Will LSE 2021 include any new platforms/technology that will be tested for the first time?

A6. One focus of the exercise will be to provide a test bed for new and developing technologies to help inform submissions for Program Objective Memorandum (POM) 23 and beyond. The planning for those initiatives is still ongoing, however we look forward to providing opportunities to highlight them as we get closer to and during the exercise.

Q7. Can you provide a summary of the main training synopsis the service members will face?

A7. LSE 2021 is a reflection of hypothetical scenarios developed during fleet battle problems and is designed to test DMO, EABO, LOCE, NOA, and command and control in a contested environment. The training is based on a progression of scenarios the Navy and Marine Corps team is likely to face in the future.

Q8. CNO said LSE 2021 will be the biggest exercise in a generation. What was the last exercise on this scale?

A8. This exercise is unlike any before it. Through the use of live, virtual and constructive training, LSE 2021 will expand units' training beyond what has ever been achieved in live-only exercises such as RIMPAC, Bold Alligator, and others.

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Q9. Why is the U.S. conducting a global exercise that excludes allies and partner nations?

A9. Training and operating with allies and partners is a cornerstone of how the US Navy operates in defense of national interests and as part of our commitment to maritime security. This U.S. only exercise that provides us an opportunity to test and evaluate the new

globally-integrated format before inviting allies and coalition partners. We are making plans to invite allies and coalitions partners to participate in LSE 2023. LSE 2021 is the first large-scale exercise the U.S. has held since before we entered WWII. We feel it is a responsible decision to make the first iteration a U.S. only exercise that provides us an opportunity to test and evaluate the new globally-integrated format before inviting allies and coalition partners. We are making plans to invite allies and coalitions partners to participate in LSE 2023.

Q10. Who will lead the exercise from both the Navy and Marine Corps (if applicable)?

A10. LSE 2021 is a CNO-directed exercise led jointly by U.S. Fleet Forces Command, U.S. Pacific Fleet, and U.S. Naval Forces Europe alongside their Marine Corps counterparts, U.S. Marine Forces Pacific, U.S. Marine Forces Atlantic, and U.S. Marine Forces Europe.

Q11. Why conduct this exercise?

A11. The U.S. Navy's ability to conduct integrated operations around the globe across the full-spectrum of military operations is a core requirement for maintaining maritime superiority during this era of strategic competition. Large Scale Exercise was designed to reinforce the Chief of Naval Operations' effort to set the stage for advancing naval doctrine and tactics by integrating Fleet operations to validate DMO capabilities through execution during a live event, regardless of region. The scope and scale of this exercise was set to evaluate concept execution from the operational to tactical level of war.

Q12. What is the Marine Corp's role in the exercise?

A12. As the Marine Corps refocuses on naval integration and their amphibious capabilities in support of naval operations, LSE provides an opportunity for USMC involvement and participation in the development of our naval warfare concepts. This will ensure the smooth execution of operations requiring USMC integration into maritime operations.

Q13. Aren't there already several similar exercises such as RIMPAC and BALTOPS that can test the same concepts?

A13. Both RIMPAC and BALTOPS are valuable exercises, but their focus remains specific to Fleet and areas of responsibility, and are largely live-only in execution. LSE 2021 will be a globally-integrated exercise that involves multiple fleets and an expanded synthetic battlespace, specifically designed to test and evaluate new warfare concepts. We will then carry those concepts and lessons learned forward to exercises and operations both with allies and partners.

Q14. Is LSE2021 based on any real-world situation?

A14. No, the exercise is a reflection of hypothetical scenarios developed during fleet battle problems and is designed to test DMO, EABO, LOCE, NOA, and command and control in a contested environment. There is no link to any current geopolitical situation(s). The training is based on a progression of scenarios the Navy/Marine Corps team may face in the future.

Q15. Isn't this a bit aggressive given the tensions between the U.S. and near peer competitors China and Russia?

A15. No, the U.S. Navy is a global force for security and stability, and the nation's strategic instrument for sea control. LSE 2021 will ensure we maintain a competitive edge against near-peer adversaries in the maritime environment during this era of Strategic competition.

Q16. Is this exercise necessary, especially considering today's fiscal constraints?

A16. LSE 2021 ensures that our Navy and Marine Corps team is not divided by any regional construct of command, but ensures that our training, operations, and expertise remain as unconstrained as the waters on which we operate. Maritime security is critical to both our national defense and economic prosperity.

Q17. What is the Marine Corps testing as a part of DMO?

A17. The LOCE concept envisioned the potential for EABO and provided the genesis for development of the concept. Both LOCE and EABO are closely related to the Navy's DMO concept and contribute to a growing family of naval operating concepts indicative of an increasing level of Navy-Marine Corps integration. Collectively, these products reflect the ongoing intellectual rigor the Navy and Marine Corps are applying towards advancing naval operational art in the 21st century.

Q18. What is EABO?

A18. EABO is an emerging naval concept for employing mobile, low-signature, operationally relevant, and relatively easy to maintain and sustain expeditionary forces from a series of austere, temporary locations ashore or inshore within a contested or potentially contested maritime area in order to conduct sea denial or support sea control. Sea denial involves preventing an adversary the use of the sea, while sea control is the condition in which friendly forces have freedom of action to use the sea for their own purposes.

Understanding the importance of key maritime terrain is essential to understanding EABO. We define key maritime terrain as any landward portion of the littoral that affords a force controlling it the ability to significantly influence events seaward.

Q19. What warfighting advantages do EABO provide?

A19. EABO will provide additional naval warfighting capacity against near-peer competitors by employing more lethal, integrated and distributed forces. This concept supports and enables increased naval maneuver while simultaneously complicating our adversary's ability to achieve decisive effects on our forces.

Q20. What new concepts will the Navy and Marine Corps be testing that will better prepare the services for future conflict?

A20. LSE 2021 will apply concepts that have already been tested during the ongoing series of Fleet Battle Problems conducted at the strike group level throughout the year. The "new" aspect of the exercise will be how we apply LVC to increase the difficulty of the scenarios beyond what a traditional live exercise can provide and the lessons learned from observing how our forces react to those scenarios at a scale relevant to the complex warfare challenges of Strategic competition.

Q21. How are EABO temporary sites protected?

A21. EABO will disperse critical capabilities and employ passive defense measures and frequent repositioning of forces as a counter to long-range cruise or ballistic missiles. Local site security measures will be employed rather than perimeter security.

Q22. What are the implications of EABO with respect to the host country?

A22. Ideally, EABO activities are conducted during pre-conflict competition as a means of deterring regional aggression. In this regard, EABO are envisioned as a cooperative effort with like-minded nations.

Q23. Investing in EABO capabilities, is the Corps walking away from amphibious operations?

A23. As a naval, expeditionary force-in-readiness the Marine Corps conducts a wide variety of missions, usually enabled by the unique Navy-Marine Corps ability to quickly transition between sea and land. The application most people think of is amphibious assault, but the USM does much more than that. The ability to transition between land and sea will be essential to conducting EABO, and by adding EABO capabilities to our repertoire we are expanding rather than replacing what we contribute to the Navy-Marine Corps team and the joint force.

Q24: What is the relationship of EABO with the ARG/MEU?

A24: The ARG/MEUs are designed to provide strategically mobile crisis response and maritime power projection capability. Optimally, EABO will be conducted by other task-organized Navy and Marine Corps forces to avoid tethering ARG/MEUs to specific locations ashore.

Q25. What is the relationship of EABO to the land, air, SOF, and other Joint force components?

A25. While EABO will involve the tactical integration of Navy and Marine Corps capabilities, fleet/joint force maritime component commanders will conduct them within the larger context of a fleet concept of operations that supports a joint campaign. While the advantages of EABO may be more readily obvious in support of a joint campaign that is maritime in character, they are also applicable to some joint campaigns that are continental in character.

Q26. What is the purpose of LOCE?

A26. The purpose of the LOCE concept is to describe naval operations in the littoral environment in light of emerging threats in order to provide a unified framework for Navy-Marine Corps innovation. The Chief of Naval Operations (CNO) and Commandant of the Marine Corps (CMC) stated a renewed emphasis on fighting for and gaining sea control, to include employing sea-based and land-based Marine Corps capabilities in support of the sea control fight.

Q27. Are all USN underway ships, USN aircraft, USMC aircraft, and USMC ground tactical vehicles participating in LSE21?

A27. LSE21 combines live, virtual and constructive military forces and equipment. You may have seen ships, aircraft, and ground tactical vehicles exercising in a training area as part of LSE or they may be a part of a separate unit training event. Without further details on the time and location of the training, we cannot confirm if this is unit training in isolation or LSE exercise live

forces maneuvering. We are building a Navy expeditionary force ready to compete with peer adversaries. Everything we do is geared towards this goal.

Q28. How many aircraft will participate and mainly what types?

A28. We have only recently finished the final planning conference and are still working to finalize the specific details and units that will participate. Once we have this information, we will provide a more accurate list of aviation participants. Expect that we will have squadrons representing all airframes from both the Navy and Marine Corps in the exercise.