FORCE DESIGN
A SNAPSHOT

2025

CONTENTS

U.S. Marines with 2D Low Altitude Air Defense, 26th Marine Expeditionary Unit, patrol with utility task vehicles fitted with the Light Marine Air Defense Integrated System to provide security for exercise Native Fury 20 in the United Arab Emirates, Feb. 25, 2020.
(U.S. Marine Corps photo by Lance Cpl. Brendan Mullin)

THE FUTURE FIGHT

Since 2020, the U.S. Marine Corps has undergone a significant transformation, driven by the anticipated threat of a near-peer adversary and the growing potential for conflict in the Indo-Pacific region. This strategic shift acknowledges the need to project power in a vast maritime domain. The focus has moved towards countering sophisticated adversaries capable of challenging U.S. naval dominance and operating within the complex littoral environments of the Pacific. This threat necessitates a more agile, technologically advanced, and distributed force, capable of operating in contested environments.

This shift resulted in a comprehensive overhaul called Force Design, prioritizing capabilities relevant to maritime conflict, emphasizing the need for a lighter, more mobile force, capable of rapidly deploying and operating in challenging coastal environments. New concepts, such as Stand-In Forces, Expeditionary Advanced Base Operations (EABO) and those related to distributed operations and logistics, were developed to focus Marines on operating in small, dispersed units capable of establishing temporary bases and conducting offensive operations within striking distance of adversary weapons systems. The Marine Corps has invested in new technologies, including advanced UAS and counter-UAS systems, to enhance reconnaissance and targeting capabilities, and manned and unmanned littoral maneuver platforms, to support logistics.

Looking ahead, the Marine Corps will continue to evolve, maintaining its tradition of winning battles through threat-oriented advancement and serving as the Nation's 911 force. The Corps is committed to adapting to the rapidly changing security landscape, integrating emerging technologies, and refining its doctrine to meet the challenges of the future. This includes a continued emphasis on innovation, experimentation, and collaboration with allies and partners. The Marine Corps' ability to project power, conduct amphibious operations, and maintain a forward presence will remain crucial in deterring aggression and ensuring regional stability. The Marine Corps is working to ensure that it remains the deadliest fighting force on the planet well into the future.

A. Thirteen U.S. Marine Corps F-35B Lightning II are staged aboard USS America (LHA 6), Oct. 8, 2019. (U.S. Marine Corps photo illustration by Lance Cpl. Juan Anaya)
B. U.S. Marines with the 15th Marine Expeditionary Unit, use a Light Marine Air Defense Integrated System aboard an amphibious assault ship, Jan. 12, 2024. (U.S. Marine Corps photo by Cpl. Joseph Helms)
C. U.S. Marines with 13th Marine Expeditionary Unit, participate in a deck shoot aboard amphibious transport dock USS Anchorage (LPD 23), Jan. 3, 2023. (U.S. Marine Corps photo by Cpl. Austin Gillam)
D. U.S. Marines with 4th Marine Division, Marine Forces Reserve, aboard a multi-mission reconnaissance craft, March 4, 2025. (U.S. Marine Corps photo by Lance Cpl. Van Hoang)
E. U.S. Marine Corps Sgt. Avory Creech, with 7th Marine Regiment, 1st Marine Division, holds up a Skydio X2 Drone on Marine Corps Air-Ground Combat Center, Twentynine Palms, California, Dec. 18, 2024. (U.S. Marine Corps photo by Lance Cpl. Enge You)


A


B


C


D

CONCEPTS & INITIATIVES

COMMANDANT'S PLANNING GUIDANCE

The Commandant's Planning Guidance (CPG) provides all Marines with strategic direction for the Marine Corps. This document remains necessarily broad, with directive guidance issued to Deputy Commandants and Commanding Generals when necessary. Force Design continues as the aim point, and this guidance focuses on specific challenges requiring near-term action. Some items will take time to realize, but groundwork must be laid now.

TRAINING AND EDUCATION

This report sets a new direction, describing how we will transform training and education for the future force. It incorporates best aspects of our time-tested process of making Marines, feedback from Marines in the Fleet Marine Forces, and lessons learned from years of force-on-force (FoF) exercises into explicit guidance for improvements to T&E. This report explains the lessons we have learned and how those lessons will be used to make improvements. The report also identifies areas requiring further study so that we can broaden the scope of our organizational learning across the entire training and education enterprise.

TALENT MANAGEMENT

This report charts a new course for our personnel system and is informed by a decade's worth of studies, books, reports, and academic articles on military personnel reform, in addition to the significant body of literature on organizational leadership and the science of management. Like our force design effort, the redesign of our personnel system is a work in progress. This report explains why it is necessary and details some of the initial steps we are taking to create the information age personnel system required to continue winning the Nation's battles.

INSTALLATIONS AND LOGISTICS

This doctrinal publication focuses on logistics. It describes the theory and philosophy of military logistics as practiced by the United States Marine Corps. It provides Marines a conceptual framework for understanding how logistics is an essential aspect of every military operation. The Marine Corps' view of logistics is based on our common understanding of the nature of war, our role in the joint force, and our warfighting philosophy as described in Marine Corps Doctrinal Publication (MCDP) 1, Warfighting.

MARINE CORPS AVIATION PLAN

Project Eagle marks Marine Aviation's future path requiring a focus on sustaining and enhancing the aviation capabilities the Marine Corps trusts and relies on. As multiple platforms transition, we will continue to modernize our fixed, rotary, and unmanned fleets to deliver the sustained reach and lethality Combatant Commanders need. We will also continue investment and modernization of our Marine Aviation Logistics Squadrons to sustain our Marine Aircraft Groups and their combat aircraft operating in every clime and place.

EXPEDITIONARY ADVANCED BASE OPERATIONS

The Tentative Manual for Expeditionary Advanced Base Operations (TM EABO) was developed as part of an iterative process to test, refine, and codify the classified Concept for Expeditionary Advanced Base Operations (EABO), signed in March 2019 by the Commandant of the Marine Corps and Chief of Naval Operations, as well as to inform force design and development. This second edition of TM EABO includes updated information and captures lessons from war games, exercises, experiments, and other analysis to describe how naval forces will conduct EABO across the competition continuum.

STAND-IN FORCES

Stand-in forces reassure the Nation and our allies and partners.
Stand-in forces deter our adversaries' application of military power by establishing forces designed to persist forward alongside allies and partners within a contested area, providing the fleet, joint force, interagency, and allies and partners more options for countering an adversary's strategy. A Concept for Stand-in Forces is about generating new capabilities and operating in novel ways. In this sense, it provides an aim point for force design and force development. Iterative experimentation and exercises are being conducted to fully mature its methods and equipment.

NAVAL INTEGRATION

The Naval Services defend our Nation by preserving freedom of the seas, deterring aggression, and winning wars. The cost of deterrence is always less than armed conflict. Marine Corps stand-in forces deter with combat credible forces that deny threat access. To continue relevant support to deterrence, we must embrace new ways of operating within a mindset of integrated American sea power to generate better strategic choices.

DISTRIBUTED MARITIME OPS

Distributed Maritime Operations see small, dispersed land and sea detachments threaten the ability of adversary forces to concentrate from within their anti-access/area denial umbrella. Forces conducting DMO deny freedom of movement along key sea and air lines of communication. Distributed forces change the adversary's cost calculus and buy time for flexible deterrence options to assemble a joint task force.

PROCESS MAP

A THREAT-INFORMED, CONCEPT-BA

	2021	2022
STRATEGIC GUIDANCE	TRI-SERVICE MARITIME STRATEGY INTERIM NSS DPG 2021	SECNAV POM-24 NDS 2022
THREAT ANALYSIS	CHINA / RUSSI	
CONCEPTS	JOINT WARFIGHTING CONCEPT STAND-IN FORCES RECON / COUNTER-RECON	TALENT MANAGEMENT 2030 TRAI EDUC 2030
STUDIES & ANALYSIS	·JFOS 2.1 CAMPAIGN ANALYSIS ·III MEF FD IMPACT ·FORCE VULNERABILITY ASSESSMENT ·LOGISTICS C2 ·C2 ENABLERS ·FORWARD ENGAGEMENT CONCEPT 2.0	·JFOS 2. 2040 CAMPAIGN ANALYSIS ·II MEF IAMD ·AMPHIB FLEET ·SURFACE MOVEMENT CAPABILITIES ·FORWARD ENGAGEMENT CONCEPT 3.0 ·ARV MARITIME QUARTERBACKING ·MAGTF FIRES ·FUTURE INF BN TRNG ·MUX FoUAS PT. 2
WARGAMING	·PROVIDENT FORGE ·OIE ·III MEF ·MLR SERIES ·MEU SERIES ·POM-24 ·LITTORAL MANEUVER ·LITTORAL LOG ·EW-21 ·ENIGMA SERIES ·PACFLT 13 ·PACFLT 14 ·ENDER'S RISE	·GLOBAL 21 ·THREAT TTX ·AVIATION ·OIE ·EW-22 PT.1 ·EW-22 PT.2 ·GLOBAL 15 ·RXR ·PACIFIC CASCADE ·MLR SERIES ·NSG-22
EXPERIMENTATION	·LSE-21 ·TALISMAN SABER ·PROJECT CONVERGENCE-21 ·IBX-30 ·MWX	·RIMPAC-22 ·VALIANT SHIELD-22 ·PROJECT CONVERGENCE-22 ·IBX-30 ·STEEL KNIGHT-22 ·MWX ·COLD RESPONSE ·ARTIC EDGE-22
INTEGRATED PLANNING TEAMS	·ENTERPRISE LOGISTICS ·ISR ENTERPRISE PT.1 ·MLR PT.2 ·C5ISRT / X-C5ISRT ·MEU PT.2 ·RESERVE PT.2 ·INSTITUTIONAL SAP ·INTEGRATED AIR & MISSILE DEFENSE ·LITTORAL MANEUVER ·SYNCHRONIZATION	·AVIATION PT.2 ·COMPONENCY ·COMMUNICATIONS FORMATIONS ·SERVICE RETAINED FORCES ·NEF ·ISR ENTERPRISE PT.2 ·ALL-DOMAIN C2 ·MCISRE PT. 2 ·SYNCHRONIZATION ·GPN ·sUAS ·ENTERPRISE LOG PT. 2
CAMPAIGN OF POMS	*POM-23* *MATURING KILL WEBS*	*POM-24* *SET & SUSTAIN THE STAND-IN FORCE*

ASED, CAMPAIGN OF LEARNING

2019 - 2025
Studies: 70+
Wargames: 42
Experiments: 33
IPTs: 45

2023

SECNAV POM-25

2024

SECNAV POM-26

CMC39 CPG

2025

(U) NDS 2025

A / DPRK / IRAN / VEOs

NING & ATION

I&L 2030

DISTRIBUTED MARITIME LOGISTICS OPERATIONS

JOINT WARFIGHTING CONCEPT 3.0

21ST CENTURY AMPHIB OPS

HOW WE FIGHT

·ORGANIC PRECISION FIRES
·AoA OPERATIONAL SUSTAINABILITY
·NCIP-MC23

·NCIP-MC24
·MODERNIZING MEDICAL SERVICES
·MMRC CAPABILITIES ALTERNATIVES ANALYSIS
·ARV Co COMM ASSESSMENT
·CONTESTED LOG PORTFOLIO

·TACTICAL MULTI-DOMAIN SENSSORS IN LITTORALS
·FUTURE AMPHIB FORCE CBA
·ARTY AMMO IVENTORY ON T&R
·SEA-BASED EXP FORCES
·COMPLEX TERRAIN IN FUTURE CONFLICTS

·INF BN SERIES
·MLR SERIES
·MLSG SERIES
·AZURE DRAGON
·RECON/XRECON

·COMPETITION WARGAME
·MULTI-DOMAIN C2

·21 CAO
·MULTI-DOMAIN C2
·TRI-LATERAL
·MALTESE DRAGON II
·FUTUREW STUDIES PROGRAM

·EXPEDITIONARY WARRIOR 24
·TACTICAL LOGISTICS
·NAVAL SERVICES GAME

·FLEET BATTLE PROBLEM 23
·MLR SLTE
·BALAKATAN 23
·PARABELLUM HORIZON
·TOEE 23.1
·NORTHERN EDGE 23-1

·FPB-FFC 23.1
·NORTHERN EDGE 23-2
·LSE 23
·MFP IOC DEMO
·SK-23*
·BOLD QUEST 23
·IBX-30

·IBX V34
·PROJ CONVERGENCE C4
·VALIANT SHIELD 24
·RIMPAC 24
·GRAY FLAG 24

·KEEN SWORD 24
·NAVAL SERVICES GAME
·STEEL KNIGHT 24

·SYNCRHONIZATION
·C2 FORMATIONS/MIG
·ENTERPRISE LOG PT 3
·AVIATION PT 3
·TOTAL FORCE STRUCTURE IPT
·12TH MLR OPT

·COLAG 24
·MULTI-DOMAIN MOBILITY
·AVIATION
·4TH MARINES (REIN) IPT
·COLAG 25

POM-25
ENABLE THE STAND-IN-FORCE

POM-26
POSTURED IN OUR FIGHTING STANCE

NEW OR EMERGING CAPABILITIES

GROUND/AIR TASK-ORIENTED RADAR (G/ATOR)

Multi-role, ground-based, expeditionary three-dimensional radar system that provides surveillance of airborne targets, detection of cruise missiles, Unmanned Aircraft Systems, rockets, artillery, and mortars.

HIGH MOBILITY ARTILLERY ROCKET SYSTEM (HIMARS)

An indirect fire rocket/missile launcher capable of firing all rockets and missiles of the current and future Multiple Launch Rocket System Family of Munitions. The HIMARS 24-hour ground-based, responsive indirect fires can accurately engage targets at 60+ km with high volumes of fire under all weather conditions throughout all phases of combat operations ashore.

LIGHT MARINE AIR DEFENSE INTEGRATED SYSTEM (L-MADIS)

An internally transportable pair of Ultra-Light Tactical Vehicles capable of defeating Fixed and Rotary Wing aircraft and group 1-5 Unmanned Aircraft Systems, within the L-MADIS WEZ, via electromagnetic attack and Man Portable Air Defense Systems.

MARINE AIR DEFENSE INTEGRATED SYSTEM (MADIS)

Employed on a pair of Joint Light Tactical Vehicles, the MADIS can defend against Fixed and Rotary Wing aircraft, Unmanned Aircraft Systems threats, within the system weapons engagement zone, with non-lethal electromagnetic attack and lethal fires.

MEDIUM RANGE INTERCEPT CAPABILITY (MRIC)

MRIC defends forces against threat cruise missiles, Unmanned Aircraft Systems, and other aerial threats that enter its weapons engagement zone.

NAVY MARINE EXPEDITIONARY SHIP INTERDICTION SYSTEM (NMESIS)

NMESIS is a land-based weapon system designed to launch the Naval Strike Missile in support of the Joint sea control effort.

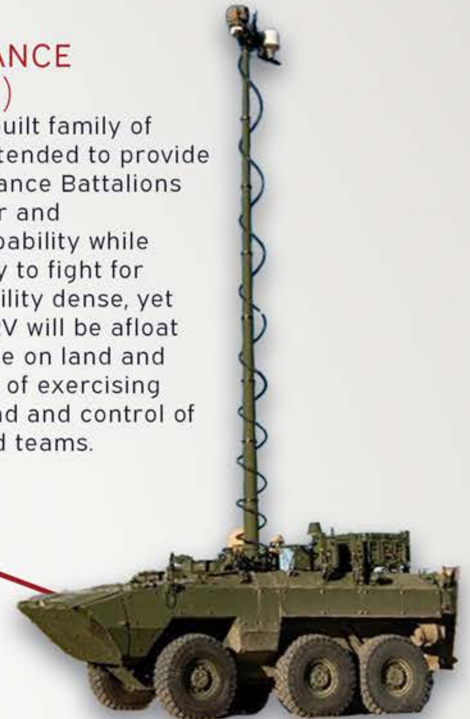
*Images Not to Scale

MEDIUM LANDING SHIP (LSM)

The LSM is a vessel to provide tactical maneuver and operational mobility for Marine forces conducting Expeditionary Advanced Based Operations to enhance the Joint Force's ability to carry out maritime campaigning in a 21st century threat environment.

ADVANCED RECONNAISSANCE VEHICLE (ARV)

This is a purpose-built family of combat vehicles intended to provide Mobile Reconnaissance Battalions with greater sensor and communication capability while retaining the ability to fight for information. Capability dense, yet weight efficient, ARV will be afloat ready, highly mobile on land and water, and capable of exercising persistent command and control of manned-unmanned teams.



AMPHIBIOUS COMBAT VEHICLE (ACV)

The ACV family of vehicles provide general support lift to otherwise foot-mobile infantry formations. Ship-to-objective capable, the ACV offers greater protected mobility, improved lethality, and on-the-move networked command and control. The Marine Corps will field 257 ACVs by the end of the fiscal year filling 41% of the acquisition objective.

AUTONOMOUS LOW-PROFILE VESSEL (ALPV)

The ALPV is an autonomous logistics delivery system that can be configured to deliver multiple variations of supplies and equipment throughout the littorals. This is one technology the Marine Corps is testing to sustain Stand-in Forces operating within contested areas, ensuring they are able to persist inside the reach of an adversary's weapons systems to distract and disrupt malign behavior before, during and after conflict.

MULTI-MISSION RECONNAISSANCE CRAFT (MMRC)

The MMRC is a watercraft designed to insert and extract Marines, carry out reconnaissance, surveillance and target acquisition on the water to extend and fill gaps in sensor web coverage created by the complex terrain. MCWL is currently experimenting to learn best tactics, techniques and procedures to allow Marines to be prepared to fully utilize the MMRC when it comes online.

STERN LANDING VESSEL

The vessel enables MCWL and the supported Marine Force and/or Marine Expeditionary Force to conduct experimentation across multiple domains, to include surface maneuver and mobility in support of Stand in Forces, as well as surface and subsurface (crewed and uncrewed) movement of ground equipment and cargo across the beach, and operation of uncrewed aviation platforms.

*Images Not to Scale

AVIATION CAPABILITIES

F-35B LIGHTNING II

The F-35 is a fifth-generation fighter jet with advanced stealth, agility and maneuverability, sensor and information fusion, and provides the pilot with real-time access to battle space information. It is designed to meet an advanced threat, while improving lethality, survivability, and supportability.

CH-53K KING STALLION

The CH-53K offers a significant value proposition to the Joint Force by enhancing operational capabilities, ensuring mission success in diverse environments, and providing unmatched heavy lift capacity that supports a wide range of military operations.

XQ-58A VALKYRIE

The Marine Corps XQ-58A Valkyrie is a newly acquired experimental aircraft. It provides the Marine Corps with a testbed platform for developing technologies and new concepts in support of the Marine Air Ground Task Force, such as autonomous flight and unmanned teaming with crewed aircraft. The XQ-58A has six planned test flights which will evaluate the effectiveness of autonomous electronic support to crewed platforms like the F-35B Lightning II.

MQ-9A REAPER

The MQ-9A is an extended range, medium altitude, long endurance remotely piloted aircraft capable of conducting multiple mission sets to include multi-sensor imagery reconnaissance, unmanned aerial escort, and electronic support. It can carry various payloads while integrating with command and control centers, allowing the synchronization of remotely piloted aircraft with ground and air assets.

STALKER BLK 30

Stalker is an operationally proven small, silent, Group 2 Unmanned Aircraft System that provides unprecedented long-endurance imaging capability in a variety of contested environments.

*Images Not to Scale

TACTICAL RESUPPLY VEHICLE-150

Also know as the Tactical Resupply Unmanned Aircraft System (TRUAS), this system is designed to provide rapid and assured, highly automated aerial distribution to small units operating in contested environments, enabling flexible and rapid emergency resupply, routine distribution, and a constant push and pull of material. The TRUAS is capable of carrying a payload of up to 150 pounds over 9 miles.

MEDIUM AERIAL RESUPPLY VEHICLE - EXPEDITIONARY LOGISTICS (MARV-EL)

MARV-EL will provide an autonomous operational level distribution platform for emergency resupply or sustainment when risk to manned air or ground systems is unacceptable, weather or environment precludes manned flight, or when ground transportation is slow, unavailable or unable to transit the terrain. MARV-EL has a threshold payload of 300lbs, objective 600lbs, with a threshold radius of 25 nautical miles and 100 nm objective.

V-BAT UNMANNED AERIAL SYSTEM

The V-BAT unmanned aircraft system is a rapidly deployable, expeditionary, vertical take-off and landing (VTOL) UAS that has demonstrated an ability to operate in a maritime environment with multiple deployments in support of Marine Expeditionary Units.

RQ-20B PUMA

The Puma is a small, hand-launched system that provides enhanced land-based and maritime intelligence, surveillance, reconnaissance, and sensing capabilities for increased area awareness. The Puma has day and night vision and can scan an area 360 degrees using a lightweight, electro-optical and infrared camera located on the bottom of the device, with an operational altitude of 500 feet above sea level.

X2D

The Marine Corps' future operating concepts emphasize the need for agile, distributed operations which require small unmanned aircraft systems to be organically owned and operated by tactical units for situational awareness, force protection, target engagement, persistent command, control, communications, and electronic warfare.

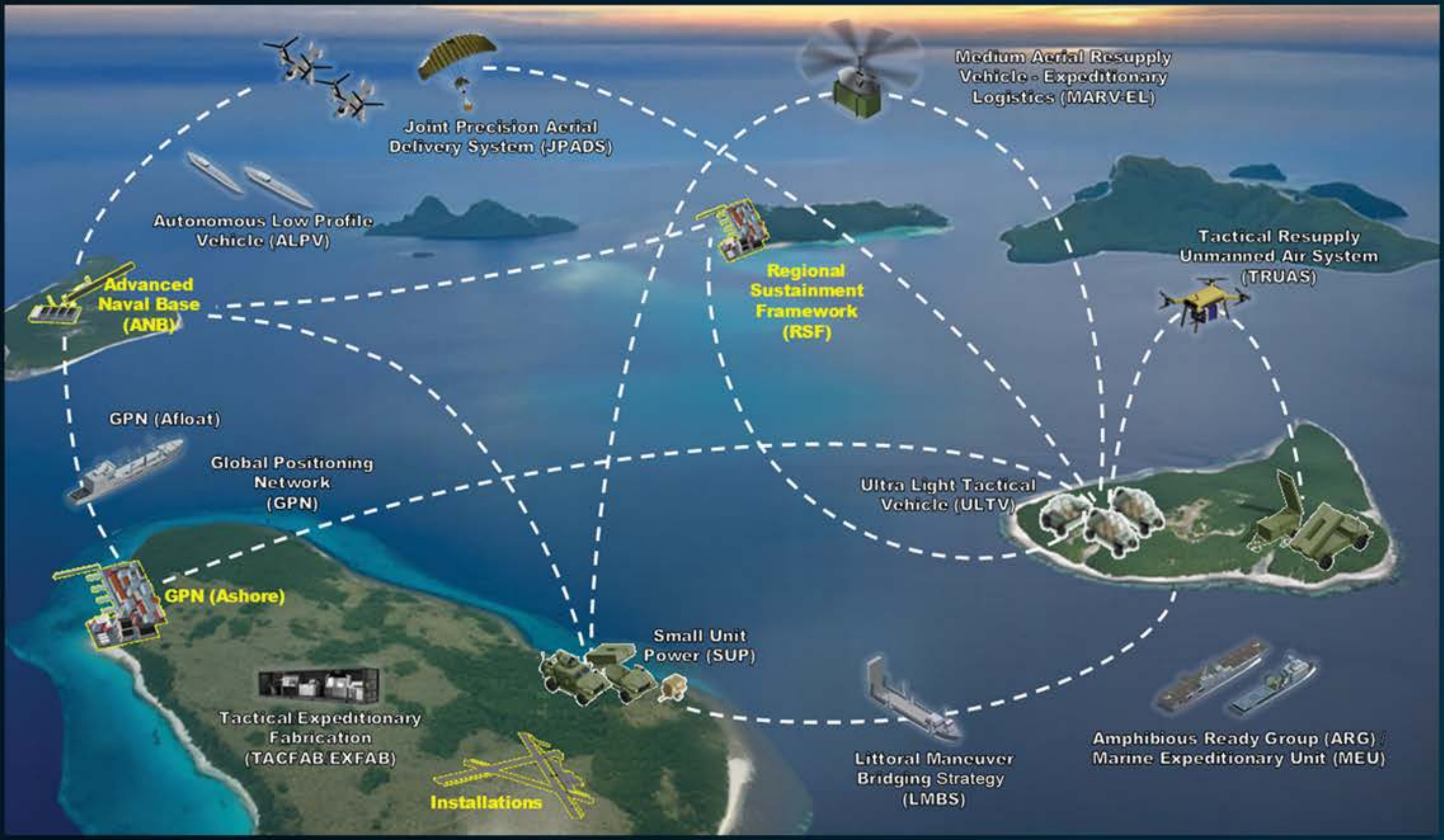
ORGANIC PRECISION FIRES LIGHT (OPF-LIGHT)

OPF-L will provide platoons and squads with anti-personnel and anti-materiel precision effects on the objective or in an engagement area in a man-packable, dismounted configuration as an organic, loitering, beyond line-of-sight precision strike capability.

*Images Not to Scale

LOGISTICS IN A CONTESTED ENVIRONMENT

GLOBAL LOGISTICS AWARENESS AND DECISION MAKING



PROBLEM STATEMENT

One broken link in the supply chain can result in an untethered force. We must build a more resilient supply web that can adapt to temporary broken links or obstructions. Improving sustainment will demand global logistics solutions that are non-linear and distributed, have a smaller physical footprint at any one site, and limit the vulnerability of forward forces. (Ref: I&L 2030).

IMPACT STATEMENT

The Marine Corps' ability to deter conflict and defeat our Nation's enemies in battle is based on achieving positional advantage in contested environments. This positional advantage is achieved through setting the theater and enhancing the force. Setting the theater requires capabilities that increase Advanced Base resiliency (ANB), integrate afloat (MPF) and ashore material into a Global Positioning Network (GPN), increase sustainment opportunities (RSF), and enable Global Logistics Awareness and Decision Making (GLADM). These programs will form the groundwork of the sustainment web. Enhancing the force from a functional viewpoint requires expanded capabilities in multi-domain distribution and improving sustainment. Multi-domain distribution includes manned and unmanned connectors (ULTV, MTT, ALPV, MOAV TRUAS, MARV-EL) working across the sustainment web. This also requires integrating our crisis response capability (ARG/MEU) and identifying organic littoral mobility bridging strategy (LMBS) to support expeditionary advanced base operations. Improving sustainment requires fielding advanced manufacturing (TACFAB/EXFAB), expeditionary medicine, and energy reduction capabilities (SUP) across the elements of the MAGTF.

MARINE LITTORAL REGIMENT

HEADQUARTERS AND SERVICE CO
COMMUNICATIONS CO

LITTORAL COMBAT TEAM

3X RIFLE CO

1X MEDIUM MISSILE BTRY

The Combat Team conducts reconnaissance and counter-reconnaissance, employs and enables multi-domain fires, and establishes expeditionary sites in order to support the maritime campaign across the competition continuum.

LITTORAL LOGISTICS BATTALION

1X GENERAL SUPPORT CO

2X COMBAT LOGISTICS CO

The Logistics Battalion provides tactical logistics and EOD support in order to sustain regimental operations across the competition continuum.

LITTORAL ANTI-AIR BATTALION

1X AIR CONTROL BTRY

1X GBAD BTRY

The Anti-Air Battalion conducts anti-air warfare, and enables integration of aviation operations with organic and joint fires in order to support the maritime campaign across the competition continuum.

https://www.marines.mil/Force-Design/