24th Marine Expeditionary Unit Assumes the Watch as Littoral Combat Force-24

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PUERTO RICO – The 24th Marine Expeditionary Unit has officially assumed the mission as the premier tactical force-in-readiness within the U.S. Southern Command Area of Responsibility. Operating under the designation of Littoral Combat Force-24, the command offers tactical options via an agile Marine Air-Ground Task Force of over 1,300 Marines and Sailors to the theater. Commanded by U.S. Marine Corps Col. Ryan Lynch, LCF-24 is directly nested under Joint Task Force 84-2 to support Operation Southern Spear.

“The Marines and Sailors of LCF-24 are postured to execute all prescribed mission sets directed by our higher echelons of leadership; to deter the threats facing our hemisphere today,” said Col. Lynch. “Through our transition with the 22nd MEU, we have seamlessly assumed the watch. Our posture is active, our forces are integrated, and we are committed to standing as the regional security partner of choice.”

Operation Southern Spear and Mission Essential Tasks

While in theater, LCF-24 will serve as the immediate crisis response force for USSOUTHCOM. The MAGTF is certified to execute a wide array of mission essential tasks, including but not limited to Quick Reaction Force operations such as embassy reinforcement and the tactical recovery of aircraft personnel, while standing ready to support disaster relief activities.

While operating in the contested littorals, LCF-24 also provides the combatant commander a flexible force capable of conducting maritime interdiction operations against sanctioned activities and illicit trafficking. The MAGTF will actively defend the U.S. homeland by disrupting networks utilized by Designated Terrorist Organizations and narco-terrorists.

A Purpose-Built Force for the Littorals

Distinct from a standard Amphibious Ready Group/MEU deployment, LCF-24 is a purpose-built MAGTF engineered for distributed operations. The force maximizes its rapid littoral maneuver capabilities by operating from both shore-based nodes and amphibious transport dock USS *Fort Lauderdale*, which is exclusively aligned to support the MAGTF's mission.

Nested Under National Strategy

The deployment of LCF-24 directly supports national defense priorities and the strategic objectives of USSOUTHCOM.

"Our success in Operation Southern Spear relies on our ability to out-maneuver and overmatch the illicit networks threatening the region," said U.S. Marine Corps Lt. Gen. Calvert L. Worth, commanding general of II Marine Expeditionary Force. "Littoral Combat Force-24 provides the exact combination of precision capability and interoperability we need. They are not just a crisis response force; they provide options to the Combatant Commander and serve as a tool for building partner capacity and securing the advantage across all domains."

Ultimately, this tactical execution nests directly within the theater-wide strategic objectives of U.S. Southern Command. The presence of LCF-24 serves as a powerful deterrent against malign state actors and reinforces the security of the homeland.

“The Western Hemisphere is no longer a permissive environment for narco-terrorists, criminal syndicates, or their state sponsors,” stated U.S. Marine Corps Gen. Francis L. Donovan, Commander of U.S. Southern Command. “With Littoral Combat Force-24 taking the helm of tactical operations, we are sending an unambiguous message: the United States is committed to defending our homeland and securing a prosperous, stable hemisphere alongside our enduring partners.”

As LCF-24 begins its tenure in the USSOUTHCOM AOR, the focus remains steadfast: defend the homeland, dismantle narco-terrorist networks, counter adversary disinformation, and ensure the United States remains the partner of choice for regional security.