

Marine Infantry to Become More Commando-Like



U.S. Marines with India Company, 3d Battalion, 1st Marine Regiment, 1st Marine Division, breach the objective while conducting Range 400 as a part of Integrated Training Exercise (ITX) 3-22 at Marine Corps Air Ground Combat Center Twentynine Palms, Calif., April 10, 2022. ITX is a month-long training evolution comprised of multiple ranges to refine combined arms maneuver in offensive and defensive combat operations. U.S. MARINE CORPS / Lance Cpl. Brayden Daniel

WASHINGTON – A critical element of the Marine Corps' 2030 force transformation process is a sweeping array of changes in how they train and educate their Marines, from recruiting training, through infantry and advanced skills instruction to the combat exercises among the war-fighting units. The basic thrust of these dramatic changes is to create a more lethal, resilient and innovative force that can adapt to the rapidly changing technological character of war and the actions of any

future peer adversary, a panel of the Corps' top training officers said May 12.

The goal is "to create a generation of Marines who will be able to out wit, out pace and out fight any 21st century adversary," said Col. Howard Hall, assistant chief of staff of the Marines Training and Education Command (TECOM). But throughout these dramatic transformations, the traditional Marine "rigorous standards will continue to apply" so the future Corps will be "a certain force in an uncertain world," Hall said.

A major focus of the improved training is on the infantry, with expansion and intensification of the initial and advanced training for both enlisted and officer infantry Marines and higher standards for assignment to what has traditionally been the essential core of the Marines' warfighting doctrine.

Responding to direction from Marine Corps Commandant Gen. David Berger, "we're going to make our infantry Marines more like (Army) Rangers, more commando-like," said Maj. Gen. Julian Alford, commanding general of Training Command. To prepare for that change, Alford said he and his staff visited the 75th Ranger Regiment, who are designed as light-assault raiders, and the British Royal Marines, who are traditionally labeled as "commandos. And to better serve these commando-like infantry units, the Marines will require the Navy hospital corpsmen assigned to those units to go through basic infantry training.

Among the training changes underway, are higher intelligence scores, better swimming capabilities and proven performance on obstacle courses, to qualify for basic infantry training, a four-week extension of that training and the addition of a sergeant or staff sergeant to supervise a 14-Marine element during training, he said. They also are extending the infantry officer training course by four weeks, adding more field training including combined arms instruction, Alford added.

And there will be additional training in crew-served and anti-armor weapons.

Although the initial recruit training program will not be extended, it will be modified to include periods in which the recruits are given more opportunity to demonstrate leadership and initiative, and the marksmanship training will shift from the standard shooting at fixed-range targets to more combat-like responding to unexpected targets, said Col. Joseph Jones, Commanding Officer Recruit Training Regiment, Marine Corps Training Depot San Diego.

The recruits also will be given a lot more swimming training to improve water survival skills and their training will be more closely supervised by an officer, Jones said.

But Jones said, "the critical element , the legendary relationship between the drill instructor and the recruits, will remains. It still is as powerful as it's ever been."

To support this intensified and redirected training, the Corps is making major expansion and modernization to its combat training infrastructure, with more simulation and constructive capabilities that can tie widely separated personnel into a combat scenario.

The overall factor in these significant changes is the need to change from what Hall called "industrial-age training models, one size fits all," to produce quantity of bodies to an "information-age" process to prepare for the future "multi-domain, multi-spectral fight."

Marines Prep for 'Stand-in Force' Goal of Operating in Enemy Weapon Engagement Zones



Col. Timothy Brady, commanding officer of the 3rd Marine Littoral Regiment said exercises like the upcoming Rim of the Pacific will play a part in the new regiment gaining full operational status in two years U.S. MARINE CORPS / Lance Cpl. Wesley Timm

WASHINGTON – A key part of the Marine Corps' ongoing Force Design 2030 is creation of a "stand-in force," which is intended to be relatively small, highly mobile but lethal units that are to operate well within the enemy's "weapons engagement zone," primarily in the Western Pacific. Although this would appear to be a radical, new and potentially dangerous task, a panel of senior Marine officers intensely engaged in the process argued May 11 that the Marines are inherently prepared for this mission and, they emphasized

repeatedly, those Marine units would be fighting as part of the U.S. joint force and closely aligned with allies and partners in the Pacific theater.

Force Design 2030 and the concept of the stand-in force is a recognition of the rapidly changing character of war, driven by the fielding of high-tech sensors and precision weapon and the growing involvement of cyberwarfare, said Brig. Gen. Joseph Clearfield, deputy commander of Marine Forces Pacific. "I am so proud that the Marine Corps is out in front on this change," Clearfield told an audience at the Modern Day Marine exposition at the Walter E. Washington Convention Center.

But Clearfield and his fellow panelists said the Marines traditionally train for the skills needed for the stand-in mission. "We are incredibly well positioned to assume this mission," Clearfield said.

Col. Timothy Brady, commanding officer of the still-forming 3rd Marine Littoral Regiment, which is to be the first of the units specifically prepared for the stand-in mission, said his regiment "is a small element of MarForPac, part of what will fight inside the enemy's weapons engagement zone" to set the stage for the joint force.

And Col. Stephen Fiscus, assistant chief of staff for Force Development in MarForPac, who said he is tasked with implementing Force Design, added that "we fight as part of the joint force" and are "already working with our allies and partners." Clearfield noted that Australia and Japan, America's closest Pacific allies, are starting to develop similar units.

Brady said his regiment, which was redesignated as the 3rd MLR last year, has its infantry battalion and is to add logistics and air defense battalions as it moves to full operational status in two years. But, he noted, the initial units already have conducted a large-scale exercise with Philippine forces

and will engage in even larger tests during the massive Rim of the Pacific Exercise later this year.

While stressing the Marines' inherent capabilities for the stand-in mission, the three officers acknowledged they need additional capabilities for "persistent stare" sensing and targeting and greater mobility, particularly at sea. Clearfield specifically cited the proposed light amphibious warships, which the Navy's shipbuilding plan had delayed for at least another year.

Clearfield warned that although the Marines' force design process is aimed at producing a new organization by 2030, "we may not have that much time," because of the rapid change in the character of war.

Marine Panel: Existing Platforms Need Better Employment to Address Global Logistics Challenges



A CH-53K King Stallion helicopter, left, flies over the Chesapeake Bay after successfully connecting with a funnel-shaped drogue towed behind a KC-130J tanker aircraft during aerial refueling wake testing. Lt. Gen. Edward Banta, Deputy Commandant for Installations and Logistics, noted the Marines would need to improve their use of C-130J transports; CH-53K helicopters; and developing unmanned aerial, surface and subsurface systems to address logistics challenges as the threat of a conflict in the Indo-Pacific grows. *U.S. NAVY / Erik Hildebrandt*

WASHINGTON – The emerging difficult security environment, particularly with the growing threat from China in the Indo-Pacific theater, has placed greater importance on global logistics and created new challenges on how to sustain the deployed forces, a panel of senior Marine officers said May 10.

Improving global logistics in this new operating situation will require better knowledge of “what we have, where we have it and how best to support the Marines” operating across the vast distances of the Pacific, said Lt. Gen. Edward Banta, deputy commandant for Installations and Logistics. Meeting the requirements to sustain the deployed forces also will require reducing their demands for support, including the need for energy and information bandwidth, Banta said at the Modern Day Marine exposition at the Walter E. Washington Convention Center.

Meeting the need to sustain Marine forces in a potentially contested environment will require better employment of existing support platforms, such as the C-130J transports and CH-53K helicopters as well as developing unmanned aerial, surface and subsurface systems, he said.

Maj. Gen. Joseph Shrader, commanding general, Marine Corps Logistics Command, said the new challenges will require “extending the reach” of the U.S. based logistics installations, such as the depots at Barstow, California, and Albany, Georgia. That could include moving some of the depot capabilities to the operational levels, while modernizing the depots by “deciding what we need and getting rid of the rest.”

Schrader and other officer on the panel also stressed the demand to create greater security for the energy and communications requirements for all the Marine installation. To do that, the Corps has experimented with moving some of its installations off the commercial energy grid and will do more of that in the future, they said. They also are making

concerted efforts to improve cybersecurity at the domestic installations and overseas bases.

The panel members echoed the statement by Marine Corps Commandant Gen. David Berger that better and more secure logistics was essential to the existence of the “stand-in forces,” which could be relatively small and mobile units operating on islands or isolated land positions within the enemy’s fire engagement zone. Those operations on what are called Expeditionary Advanced Bases, are among the concepts being developed under Berger’s Force 2030 reorganization drive

Brig. Gen. Adam Chalkly, assistant deputy commandant for Installations and Logistics also pointed out that 30 years of uncontested lines of global support is ending and the security of the forward-deployed operational and logistical support installations is no longer ensure, which puts new demands on the entire sustainment system.

BAE Systems Testing ACV for Marine Corps Recon Program



BAE Systems is proposing the Marine Corps use its Amphibious Combat Vehicle for the Advanced Reconnaissance Vehicle program. *BAE Systems*

WASHINGTON — BAE Systems is offering the Marine Corps an alternative to its proposal to produce a new-start platform for the Advanced Reconnaissance Vehicle program by demonstrating a new version of its Amphibious Combat Vehicle, which is currently operational.

“We like to believe there is an advantage in a proven platform,” that has great land and water mobility and significant survivability, BAE representative Mark Brinkman said May 10. The advantages of adapting the ACV for the recon requirement include a single established parts supply line, a single school house for vehicle drivers and maintenance personnel, and an active production line, he said.

Brinkman discussed the BAE proposal next to a basic ACV that has been modified with an assortment of sensors and defensive systems required for the reconnaissance vehicle, on display at the Modern Day Marine exposition at the Walter E. Washington Convention Center.

The demonstration vehicle had optical and infrared sensors, a

small tethered unmanned aerial vehicle, the ability to carry and command and control a larger class-two UAV, and counter-UAV systems. The modified ACV would support a vehicle commander, a driver and five sensor operators, each with a multi-function operating station, Brinkman said.

The Advanced Reconnaissance Vehicle program would replace the existing Light Armor Vehicle, which functions as a scout and troop support platform, but is nearing its end-of-service life. The Marine Corps has given contracts to General Dynamics Land Systems and Textron Systems to develop prototypes for the ARV. But BAE, on its own initiative, will test a modified ACV this summer, provide it for Marine testing and then submit a detailed proposal next year, Brinkman said.

A potential drawback for the BAE proposal is the Marines' requirement for a vehicle weight limit of 37,000 pounds, set to allow four vehicles to be carried on an LCAC ship-to-shore connector. The BAE ACV weighs about 35 tons – 70,000 pounds.

Brinkman said the ACV's weight is offset by its "ability to swim" from ship to shore, reducing the need for a connector, like the LCAC.

But that could minimize the standoff distance for the amphibious shipping as the ACV swims at about 7 knots, compared to the 30-knot water speed of the LCAC.

Naval Air Warfare Centers Have 'Sense of Urgency' to

Field Improvements



U.S. Navy's Blue Water logistics Unmanned Aerial System, from the Naval Air Warfare Center Aircraft Division's UX-24 Unmanned Test Squadron, takes off from the flight deck of Military Sealift Command's fleet replenishment oiler USNS Joshua Humphreys (T-AO 188) while the ship was at sea in the Atlantic Ocean, July 16. This UAS flight proved the feasibility of using unmanned aircraft to transport small payloads of cargo from one ship to another while operating in a maritime environment. *U.S. NAVY / Bill Mesta*

NATIONAL HARBOR, Md. – In an era when the defense acquisition process often appears ponderous and painfully slow, the Naval Air Warfare Centers have a “sense of urgency” and, the organization, talents and authorities to move needed improvements to naval aircraft and systems from concept to fielding in a fraction of the expected time. That speed of achievement is a weapon of war,” Jerry Swift, director AIRWorks, a division of the Naval Air Warfare Center Aircraft

Division (NAWCAD), said April 6.

The network of NAWCs can move quicker than the standard acquisition process due to the ability to quickly scan commercially available technologies, work with industrial partners on acquiring needed components, and internally performing rapid prototyping and testing, Swift said in a briefing at Sea-Air-Space 2022. And it has authorities Congress provided in acquisition reforms to execute that accelerated process, he said.

The NAWCs do not produce aircraft, but they assess the capabilities of those platforms, identify gaps and then move rapidly to find, test and field the needed improvements, Swift said. He offered the example of meeting the need of a blue water logistic program for a small unmanned aircraft with vertical takeoff and landing capability with a 50-pound payload. They screened the available systems, quickly trim the list and within a year conducted shore-to-ship, then ship-to-ship ability and fielded the system in less than the normal multi-year time frame, he said.

He also listed similarly rapid development and fielding of a way to install a number of anti-mine technologies into a pod that is now being deployed on the MQ-8C Fire Scout UAV, and a gunner's seat for the MH-60 helicopters that reduced the gunner's back problems on long missions and could withstand the impact of a hard landing. That seat is now fielded in the entire MH-60 fleet, he said.

The centers' work is guided by the demands from NAWCAD commander Rear Adm. John Lemmon, to install a "sense of urgency," and from Vice Adm. Carl Chebi, commander of Naval Air Systems Command.

"We're here to make sure that Navy and Marine Corps aviation remains relevant," he said.

Controversial EABO Concept Has Potential but Will Be Vetted, Speakers Say



Brig. Gen. David Odom, Director of Expeditionary Warfare, OPNAV N95 addresses questions during the Expeditionary Advanced Base Operations session. *SOLARES PHOTOGRAPHY*

NATIONAL HARBOR, Md. – The Marine Corps' concept of deploying small, lightly armed but highly mobile units into isolated locations within an adversary's weapons engagement zone – called Expeditionary Advanced Base Operations – has the potential of quickly getting forces into a strategically vital area in response to an evolving threat when no other U.S. military assets are available, a senior Marine officer said April 5.

In addition to being a response to a threat, the concept also could serve as a deterrent by making an adversary stop to think before taking offensive actions, Maj. Gen. Benjamin Watson, Commanding General, Marine Corps Warfighting Laboratory, told an audience at Sea-Air-Space 2022.

Although the EABO proposal has been controversial, partly because Marine Corps Commandant Gen. David Berger is executing a dramatic restructuring of Marine forces to facilitate it, sharply cutting heavy weapons like tanks and towed artillery, and reducing total end strength.

But Watson emphasized EABO is “a naval concept,” which was approved by both Berger and Chief of Naval Operations Adm. Michael Gilday, and would directly involve Navy assets, including aircraft carrier battle groups.

And EABO “is a concept. It’s not proven yet,” and will be tested repeatedly and in increasing detail in the future, Watson said, which was reinforced by other officials on the panel.

Brig. Gen. David Odom, director Expeditionary Warfare on the Navy staff, echoed both the naval aspects of EABO and the intensity of the experimentation process that lies ahead. Odom cited a number of recent exercises, including Nobile Focus, which involved two Marine expeditionary units, Navy surface action ships and Japanese Self Defense Forces. That exercise and further trials tested one of the critical challenges of the EABO concept – how to support and sustain these isolated units.

The sustainment and support question must be addressed by substantial “engineering” work, including procuring new amphibious ships and unmanned systems, Odom said.

The Marines are strongly urging production of a light amphibious warfare ship, which would be much smaller and more nimble than existing amphibs. The new Navy budget proposed

delaying starting the LAW program.

Tim Kao, vice president of data science at the Center for Naval Analysis, noted the challenge of sustainment is created by the development of precision anti-ship missiles and other systems by potential adversaries such as China, which prohibit past supply procedures like those used in Operation Desert Storm.

And Kao said in considering EABO, “You really have to think through how we contribute to deterrence.”

Retired Rear Adm. Jamie Barnett, vice president of Global Communications Solutions at Viasat, said his firm’s extensive and growing fleet of communications satellites could help the EABO units by providing the secure connections to keep them from being isolated.

CMS Breakfast Speakers: New Strategy, Posture Focus on Integrated Deterrence



Dr. Mara E. Karlin (middle), Assistant Secretary of Defense for Strategy, Plans and Capabilities, speaks during a panel discussion at the CMS breakfast. *SOLARES PHOTOGRAPHY*

NATIONAL HARBOR, Md. – An essential aspect of the recently released National Defense Strategy is that it was developed in conjunction with the Nuclear Posture Review, which creates a focus on “integrated deterrence,” a top Defense Department official said April 5 at the Center for Maritime Strategy breakfast.

“So, when you think about the national security challenge, you also think about the nuclear challenge. It seems so obvious,” said Mara Karlin, assistant secretary of defense for strategy, plans and capabilities.

That scenario forces a more rigorous and integrated process, which also includes cyber and can apply to our pacing challenge of China and the threat of Russia, Karlin said. That leads to an “integrated deterrence” that can bring together actions that can work across all these challenges.”

Retired Adm. James Foggo, session moderator and dean of the Center for Maritime Strategy think tank, which hosted the breakfast, said he did not agree with the strategy's description of Russia as an "acute" challenge.

Karlin explained that "China poses a geopolitical challenge and Russia does not." Although the Pentagon is focused on Russia's invasion of Ukraine and its actions in other regions, "that does not pose a geopolitical challenge in the same way as China."

Also speaking at the session, Adm. Samuel Paparo, commander of the U.S. Pacific Fleet, said his first year in that command has been a "very dynamic" time. Much of the fleet is now operating in the Pacific, after the withdrawal from Afghanistan allowed it to refocusing its effort on the U.S. Central Command region to the Pacific, where it deals with the challenge from both China and Russia.

Paparo stressed how Pacific Fleet is part of a joint naval force that includes extensive involvement of Navy, Marine Corps and Coast Guard elements.

"The morale of the naval forces is high, and it is operating on a high operational level," he said.

Paparo noted that a Russian naval group operated in the Hawaiian area last year, which warranted a "very robust U.S. response." But asked about China as the "pacing threat," the admiral said the fleet "operates every day as if the PRC [Peoples Republic of China] is going to attack Taiwan."

Along with the other U.S. forces, the fleet operates in a way that "any potential adversary would look out and say, "today is not the day," to take aggressive action.

Lt. Gen. Karsten Heckl, commanding general Marine Corps Combat Development Command, echoed Karlin's and Paparo's statements, calling for a "tri-service" naval force and for more

integration of the national deterrence strategy.

“Everything hinges on the national defense strategy and the integration piece, [which] I think is critical,” Heckl said. “I think we need to do a better job of integrating” so it has real applicability to day-to-day operations.

JADC2 Panelists Express Fears of ‘No Joint Process’



Rear Adm. Susan BryerJoyner said as the Navy continues its move to distributed naval operations and cannot mass its ships together, it further complicates command and control. *LISA NIPP*

NATIONAL HARBOR, Md. – The biggest problem with the effort to develop a joint all-domain command and control system that would integrate all the sensors and communication devices of the U.S. armed forces and our allies and partners may be that there really is no joint process. That was the situation described by a panel of experts at the Navy League's Sea-Air-Space expo on April 5.

The challenge for the Navy alone was how do the forces operate beyond line of sight when they know they will not have uncontested communications, "how does the Navy do that when we have a proliferation of sensors" and how do they leverage the sensors on one platform with those on another "in order to get the effects that we need," said Rear Adm. Susan Bryer-Joyner, director of the Naval Cyber Security Division. And as the Navy continues its move to distributed naval operations and cannot mass its ships together, it further complicates command and control, she said. The Navy needs to do more exercises to begin testing solutions to those problems, she advised.

Andrew Mara, executive vice president of the Center for Naval Analysis, asked how with the aggregation of different sensors does anyone achieve effects, and how do they assure the logistical needs are met. "All of those pieces will have to come together," he said.

And Todd Harrison, Director of the Aerospace Security Project at the Center for International and Strategic Studies, noted that the issue becomes more complex when you try to bring together allies and partners in the desired coalition operations, when each of them have their own unique systems.

Harrison suggested adopting the model of the F-35 Joint Program Office that has allied users of the F-35 included from the beginning of discussions.

Harrison warned, "This is not the first time we tried to do this," listing a host of supposed joint programs that failed

to produce compatible communication systems among the U.S. forces. “It didn’t work. I fear it won’t again.”

BreyerJoyner shared Harrison’s concern about the allies. Asking how would the Navy be able to fight as a joint and coalition force, which would be needed against China or Russia. “How would we share targeting information to get weapons on targets?”

Margaret Calomino, senior director of Strategy at L3Harris, one of the contractors that provide electronic systems to the U.S. and allied militaries, said it “would be good” if all the services would come together to determine what they needed. She also called for exercises to develop solutions.

Congressmen: Shipyard Improvements Will Continue to Lag With Proposed Budget



Reps. Joe Courtney and Rob Wittman, speaking at “The Future of Shipbuilding: A Congressional Discussion” panel, said it is “unacceptable” that it will take 10 years to modernize public shipyards with current budget plans. *LISA NIPP*

NATIONAL HARBOR, Md. – A major solution to the U.S. Navy’s chronic problems of building new ships and maintaining existing vessels is to make extensive and rapid improvements in its public shipyards and to encourage similar investments in the private yards, the bipartisan leaders of the House Armed Services Shipbuilding and Projection Forces Subcommittee said April 4.

With the level of funding to modernize the public yards in the newly released fiscal 2023 defense budget and in the long-term proposed spending, it would take 10 years to make any real improvement, subcommittee chairman Rep. Joe Courtney (D-Connecticut) and ranking member Rep. Rob Wittman (R-Virginia) said at the Navy League’s Sea-Air-Space 2022 exposition. That is unacceptable, the two lawmakers said.

Asked by the session moderator if there is a need for a new public yard, the two lawmakers were not sure if that was required, or obtainable. Improving the facilities at the public yards would also help with the growing problem of retaining the current workforce and attracting a new generation of worker, they said.

They also called for more investment in support for the shipbuilding industrial base as a whole, noting the recent addition of funds for the submarine supplier base, primarily focused on the urgent requirement to keep the Columbia-class ballistic missile subs on a tight schedule to replace the aged Ohio-class boomers.

Both men bemoaned the continuing delay in procuring replacements for the ancient sealift fleet, some ships of which are nearly World War II vintage. Wittman said that program must include new-build ships as well as converted retired commercial merchant ships. He insisted those U.S. built ships could be obtained for an acceptable price.

They also objected to the Navy budget proposal to stop construction of the San Antonio class of large amphibious ships and to delay start of the light amphibious warship program, which the Marine Corps is asking for. The Marines need both types of amphibs, they said.

HII Executive Addresses

Trickle Down Effect of CRs on

Defense Workforce



HII Executive Vice President and President of Ingalls Shipbuilding Kari Wilkinson addressed her company's steadfast workforce, despite pandemic challenges. LISA NIPP

NATIONAL HARBOR, Md. – The extended continuing resolutions in place of enacted funding affect shipbuilders "much the same as our customers," but HII deals with it by working closely with the Navy and trying to get an earlier start on programs, Kari Wilkinson, executive vice president of HII and president of Ingalls Shipbuilding, said at the April 4 lunch keynote.

HII is the new brand name for the company formerly known as Huntington Ingalls Industries. Speaking at the Navy League's 2022 Sea-Air-Space exposition, Wilkinson said an increasing priority for the shipbuilder is retaining its skilled work

force and attracting a new generation of workers. Even through the months of pandemic restrictions when many other employees were working from home, 64,000 shipbuilders walked through the gates at HII facilities every day. "They are the best of America," she said.

To keep that essential work force, HII is reaching out to different communities to recruit new workers. As a result, "Today, we have the most diverse work force ever," Wilkinson said, and none of those skilled craftsmen and women are easily replaced.

The chronic problem of congressional failure to pass defense appropriations bills on time complicates the effort to keep HII's work force, on top of the problems it creates in production efficiency and program affordability, she told the audience. Wilkinson also cited the challenges of keeping costs down when the Navy or Congress extends the time between new production of existing ship classes. In the interest of efficiency and affordability, "we like to see ships a lot closer" in start times, she told reporters after her speech.