Former PACFLEET Commander: FONOPs Should Be Consistent, Not Unique to China

WASHINGTON –
The previous commander of the U.S. Pacific Fleet said the United States should conduct more freedom-of-navigation operations (FONOPs) and not limit them to Chinese claims but include sailings through the disputed claims of other nations as well.

"Specific to the South China Sea, I think the United Sates should conduct FONOPS no less than every four weeks and not sooner than four weeks of the last FONOPS and not longer than six seeks of the previous one," said retired Navy Adm. Scott Swift, former commander of U.S. Pacific Fleet, the keynote speaker July 24 at the 9th Annual South China Sea Conference sponsored by the Center for Strategic and International Studies, a Washington think tank.

"Consistency is important," Swift said. "Right now, [the Defense Department] keeps track of all the FONOPs. They're passed over to the State Department, and the State Department publishes once a year what we do globally. We need to publish those FONOPs every three months."

“I don’t think that we should ever do a FONOP that is unique to the South China Sea, that’s unique to China,” he said. “We should always include other countries to point out that – I think it’s very important to maintain the position – that we don’t take positions with respect to claims.”

Swift said the United States “should be conducting more than 200 FONOPS a year globally. We should stop saying that these challenges are unique to China. This is a common issue: adherence to the rule-based order. If people disagree with the positions being highlighted by the U.S. conducting freedom-of-navigation operations, they are really done in the service of the State Department. It’s up to the State Department through the ambassador to take the reasoning why we did a FONOP to the country that’s being considered.”

He highlighted the importance of each country making its own decision about how it wants to highlight deviation from the international rules-based order.

“There are good friends of the United States that are very concerned about the term ‘freedom of navigation operations,’ he said. “They have another conceptual way to think about it and we encourage it. There’s pressure that we bring on other countries that they should be following our template. That’s not useful. We should

be talking about
the rules-based order and asking amongst ourselves the view of common nations
and common concerns about how we can work together to highlight where actions
are deviating from those norms.”

Navy Awards Billion-Dollar Sonobuoy Contract

Aviation Ordnanceman 2nd Class Jason Rosemond loads sonobuoys into a P-8A Poseidon aircraft at Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam during Rim of the Pacific exercise last year. U.S. Navy/Mass Communication Specialist 1st Class Kevin A. Flinn
Arlington,
Va. — The U.S. Navy’s increasing focus on anti-submarine warfare is reflected
in a recent mega-contract award for its primary air-dropped sensor, the sonobuoy.

Naval Air
Systems Command has awarded to ERAPSCO, a joint venture of Sparton and USSI
based in Columbia City, Indiana, a $1 billion contract to manufacture and deliver
a maximum of 37,500 SSQ-36B sonobuoys as well as 685,000 SSQ-53Gs, 120,000
SSQ-62Fs and 90,000 SSQ-101Bs for fiscal years 2019 through 2023.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=J1RLKPiS24c
This video shows the MH-60R helicopter’s sonobuoy launch

capability.
“Sonobuoys
are air-launched expendable, electro-mechanical anti-submarine warfare acoustic
sensors designed to relay underwater sounds associated with ships and
submarines,” according to a July 18 Defense Department release.

On a typical
ASW mission, a P-3 Orion or P-8 Poseidon maritime patrol aircraft can launch a
few dozen sonobuoys while tracking submarines. Sonobuoys also are dropped by MH-60R
helicopters.

In a new era of “Great Power
Competition,” anti-submarine warfare has taken on increasing importance as the Navy
and those of allied nations ramp up efforts to track and, should it become
necessary, counter the submarine forces of Russia, China, Iran or North Korea.

Iranian Drone Downed by Marine Corps Electronic Attack System

An Iranian UAV was targeted and brought down July 18 by the Marine Corps Polaris MRZR vehicle parked on the forward flight deck of the USS Boxer. U.S. Marine Corps/Lance Cpl. Dalton

Swanbeck

ARLINGTON, Va. — An Iranian fixed-wing unmanned aerial vehicle downed by U.S. naval forces July 18 was brought down not by missiles or guns but by a vehicle-mounted electronic attack system.

The Iranian UAV had flown within 1,000 yards of the amphibious assault ship USS Boxer and its unknown controller had ignored radioed warning calls. The ship was in transit toward the Persian Gulf through the Straits of Hormuz, the scene of several attacks on shipping and UAVs in recent weeks.

"At approximately 10 a.m. local time, the amphibious ship USS Boxer was in international waters conducting a planned inbound transit of the Strait of Hormuz," Chief Pentagon spokesperson Jonathan Hoffman said in a July 18 release. "A fixed-wing unmanned aerial system approached Boxer and closed within a threatening range. The ship took defensive action against the UAS to ensure the safety of the ship and its crew."

The Iranian UAV was targeted by a Marine Corps Polaris MRZR vehicle parked on the forward flight deck of the Boxer.

The MRZR hosted a Mk2 counter-UAS version of the Light Marine Air Defense Integrated System (LMADIS) that features four circular antenna radar antennas arrays mounted at 90-degree intervals and an electro-optical/infrared sensor turret, and a direct-fire weapon, according to the Marine Corps website.

President Trump
initially announced the incident in a June 18 White House briefing.

Iranian forces shot down a
U.S Navy RQ-4A Global Hawk UAV on June 21 and fired on an MQ-9 Reaper on June
13. Iranian forces also are believed to have planted the mines that damaged six
commercial tankers in May and June. Iran also claims to have seized a
British-owned tanker on July 19.

Marine Commandant Berger: Force Design is Top Priority

Gen. David H. Berger released a document detailing his vision for the Marines July 16. Gen. Robert B. Neller relieved his duties as 37th Commandant of the Marine Corps to Berger, 38th Commandant of the Marine Corps on July 11. U.S. MARINE CORPS / Sgt. Robert Knapp
ARLINGTON,
Va. — The new commandant of the Marine Corps has made force design as his top
priority as he moves to shape the Marine Corps for the future.

The "Commandant's Planning Guidance" (CPG), issued by Gen. David H. Berger July 16, lists his five top priority focus areas: force design, warfighting, education and training, core values, and command and leadership.

Berger said

that changes will be based on “where we want the Marine Corps to be in the next 5-15 years. … We cannot afford to retain outdated policies, doctrine, organizations or force development strategies.”

The CPG affirms that the Corps is preparing for operations in the event of a high-end fight.

“The Marine Corps will be trained and equipped as a naval expeditionary force-in-readiness and prepared to operate inside actively contested maritime spaces in support of fleet operations,” the CPG said. “In crisis prevention and crisis response, the Fleet Marine Force – acting as an extension of the fleet – will be first on the scene, first to help, first to contain a brewing crisis and first to fight if required to do so.”

> *Marines, today I released my planning guidance for the future direction of the @USMC. It will serve as the roadmap for where the Marine Corps is going, and why. Semper Fidelis. https://t.co/0w7b8YrqmC pic.twitter.com/kfmkAgbxGD*
>
> *— Commandant of the @USMC (@CMC_MarineCorps) July 17, 2019*

Berger said the Corps “should take pride in our force and recent operational successes, but the current force is not organized, trained or equipped to support the naval force – operating in contested maritime spaces, facilitating

sea control or executing distributed maritime operations. We must change. We must divest of legacy capabilities that do not meet our future requirements, regardless of their past operational efficacy."

He said that there is "no piece of equipment or major defense acquisition program that defines us. … Likewise, we are not defined by any particular organizing construct – the Marine Air-Ground Task Force cannot be our only solution for all crises. Instead, we are defined by our collective character as Marines and by fulfilling our service roles and functions prescribed by Congress."

Berger said he has "already initiated, and am personally leading, a future force design effort. Going forward, CD&I [Capabilities Development and Integration] will be the only organization authorized to publish force development guidance on my behalf. We will divest of legacy defense programs and force structure that support legacy capabilities. If provided the opportunity to secure additional modernization dollars in exchange for force structure, I am prepared to do so."

The commandant emphasized the need to improve integration with the Navy. He pointed out that the 1986 Goldwater-Nichols Act removed the preponderance of the FMF

[Fleet Marine Force] from fleet operational control and disrupted the long-standing Navy-Marine Corps relationship by creating separate Navy and Marine Corps components within joint forces. Furthermore, Navy and Marine Corps officers developed a tendency to view their operational responsibilities as separate and distinct, rather than intertwined. With the rise of both land- and sea-based threats to the global commons, there is a need to reestablish a more integrated approach to operations in the maritime domain. Reinvigorating the FMF can be accomplished by assigning more Marine Corps forces to the fleet; putting Marine Corps experts in the fleet Maritime Operations Centers; and also by shifting emphasis in our training, education and supporting establishment activities."

He said that the Marine Expeditionary Force (MEF) will remain the Corps' principal warfighting organization but that the three MEFs need not be identical.

"III MEF will become our main focus-of-effort, designed to provide U.S. Indo-Pacific Command (U.S. INDOPACOM) and the commander, 7th Fleet with a fight-tonight, standing force capability to persist inside an adversary's weapon systems threat range, create a mutually contested space and facilitate the larger naval campaign," the CPG said. "When modernized in a manner consistent with the

vision above,
III MEF will be a credible deterrent to adversary aggression in the Pacific."

"I MEF will
also be focused on supporting the commander, USINDOPACOM and the commander, 3rd
Fleet," Berger said. "I MEF will continue to provide forces to USINDOPACOM to
build partner capacity and reinforce deterrence efforts and must be prepared to
impose costs on a potential adversary, globally. We will increasingly accept
risk with I MEF's habitual relationship with CENTCOM [U.S. Central Command];
however, 7th Marines is at present purpose-built to support CENTCOM
requirements; thus, I MEF will continue to support CENTCOM requirements within
the capacity of 7th Marines.

"II MEF will
undergo substantial changes to better align with the needs of commanders of 2nd
and 6th Fleets," he said. "During a major contingency operation or sustained
campaign ashore, necessary combat power will be provided to the committed MEF
through global sourcing by the total force.

Berger said
the Marine Expeditionary Unit (MEU) is "no longer has the same relevance as it
once had to the fleet; however, this will change. We will consider employment
models of the Amphibious Ready Group (ARG)/MEU other than the traditional
three-ship model. We will accept and prepare for fleet

commander employment of
LHA/Ds [amphibious assault ships] as part of three-ship ESGs [Expeditionary
Strike Groups] as desired. I see potential in the “Lightning Carrier” concept,
based on an LHA / LHD; however, do not support a new-build CVL [light aircraft
carrier]. Partnering a big-deck amphib with surface combatants is the right
warfighting capability for many of the challenges confronting the joint force,
and provides substantial naval and Joint operational flexibility, lethality and
survivability.”

Navy Issues Request for Proposals for Medium-Displacement USV

Sea Hunter, a test vehicle, pulls into Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam, Hawaii, last October. The Navy has issued an RFP for a medium unmanned surface vehicle (MUSV). U.S. Navy/Mass Communication Specialist 1st Class Corwin M. Colbert

WASHINGTON
— The Navy has issued its Request for Proposals (RFP) to the defense industry
for the Medium Unmanned Surface Vehicle (MUSV), a vessel planned to be part of
its Future Fleet concept.

The RFP, posted

on the FedBizOps.gov website July 16 by Naval Sea Systems Command, calls for proposals for the MUSV, which “will be a pier-launched, self-deploying modular, open architecture, surface vessel capable of autonomous safe navigation and mission execution.”

The Navy is expected to field the MUSV along with a Large USV as adjuncts to its Future Surface fleet that will include the Future Surface Combatant and the new FFG(X) guided-missile frigate as well as Arleigh Burke-class guided-missile destroyers and the Independence- and Freedom-class littoral combat ships.

The Navy is experimenting with the San Diego-bases Sea Hunter medium-displacement trimaran USV, built by Leidos, testing its autonomous navigation capabilities and its effectiveness with various sensor and other mission systems. A second Sea Hunter is being built by Leidos for the Navy.

Defense Secretary Nominee Supports Modernization of Nuclear Deterrent

Mark T. Esper answers questions from the Senate Armed Services Committee during his confirmation hearing. U.S. Army/Sgt.

Amber I. Smith
WASHINGTON – President Trump's nominee for secretary of defense said he supports modernization of the nation's strategic nuclear deterrent.

"Clearly, modernization of the [strategic nuclear] triad is top priority," Mark T. Esper said June 16 during his confirmation hearing before the Senate Armed Services Committee, listing his top modernization priorities.

Nuclear deterrence "has kept the peace with regard to deterring nuclear war for 70 years now," Esper said during his testimony. "The important part is to ensure that we have a modern, effective, credible, safe and reliable deterrent."

Each leg of the triad [bombers, intercontinental ballistic missiles and submarine-launched ballistic missiles] "provides certain capabilities to complement one another," he added. "Continuing to modernize that triad is important our safety and security."

Esper said that each leg is in a different status.

"We need to certainly modernize the GBSD [Ground-Based Strategic Deterrent]," he said. "Obviously, we have plans to recapitalize the Ohio-class [ballistic-missile] submarines, and there is a program underway to [recapitalize] our long-range stealth bombers."

recapitalize

Esper said that two parts of deterrence are "having a capability and the will to use it."

He stressed that the strategic deterrent force needed to be cyber-protected.

> *"Clearly, modernization of the [strategic nuclear] triad is top priority."*
>
> *Mark T. Esper*

There was no daylight between the priorities between Esper and the nominee for the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Army Gen. Mark Milley.

Milley, testifying June 11 in his confirmation hearing before the same committee, listed the nation's strategic nuclear deterrent as his top modernization priority, the others being space capabilities, artificial intelligence and hypersonic weapons.

He supports modernization of all three legs of the U.S. strategic deterrent triad.

"The triad has worked," Milley said. "There are many reasons why there hasn't been a great power war since 1945. Clearly one of them is nuclear deterrence and part of that is the capability of the triad. Each leg of the triad gives you different capability."

"I think we need to develop the domain of space as a warfighting domain," Esper said. "We need to improve our capabilities and policies with regard to cyberspace. And then

of course there
is a wide range of conventional capabilities we need to improve.”

Space
is no longer “a place from which we support combat operations,” he said. “It is
now a warfighting domain. Not because we made it that way, but because the
Russians and Chinese are making it that way. To make sure we are sufficiently
robust in the space warfighting domain is to have unity of command and unity of
effort.”

State Department Approves Possible Sale of MH-60R Helicopters to Greece

An MH-60R Sea Hawk helicopter shoots a Hellfire missile during exercise Baltic Operations 2019. The U.S. State Department has approved the sale of MH-60Rs to Greece. U.S. Navy/Mass Communication Specialist 1st Class Theodore Green

ARLINGTON,
Va. — The U.S. State Department has approved the possible sale of MH-60R
helicopters to the Hellenic navy at the request of the Greek government, the
Defense Security Cooperation Agency (DSCA) said in a July 12 release. The sale,
if ultimately approved, would be made through the Foreign

Military Sales
program and could total $600 million.

“The government
of Greece has requested to buy up to seven MH-60Rs Multi-Mission Helicopters,”
the release said.

The sale also
would include aircraft systems and spares, including T700 GE-401 C Engines; APS-l
53(V) radars; Airborne Low Frequency Sonar systems; AAS-44C(V) Multi-Spectral
Targeting Systems; and Embedded Global Positioning System/Inertial Navigation
Systems with Selective Availability/Anti-Spoofing Module.

Also included
in the possible sale are ARC-210 APX-1990A(C) radios; AVS-9 Night Vision
Devices; and APX-123 Identification Friend or Foe (IFF) transponders.

The deal also
would include “spare engine containers; facilities study, design, and
construction; spare and repair parts; support and test equipment; communication
equipment; ferry support; publications and technical documentation; personnel
training and training equipment; U.S. government and contractor engineering,
technical and logistics support services; and other related elements of
logistical and program support,” the release said.

Along with
the helicopters, the sale would include 1,000 SSQ-36/53/62

sonobuoys; two AGM-114 M36-E9 Captive Air Training Missiles; four AGM-114Q Hellfire Training Missiles; 100 Advanced Precision Kill Weapons System (APKWS) rockets; 30 Mk54 Torpedoes; 12 M-240 crew-served guns; and 12 GAU-21 crew-served guns.

"This proposed sale will support U.S. foreign policy and national security objectives by helping to improve the security of a NATO ally, which is an important partner for political stability and economic progress in Europe," the release said. "The MH-60R helicopters will bolster the Hellenic navy's ability to support NATO and remain interoperable with the U.S. and the NATO alliance."

In addition to the U.S. Navy, the MH-60R, built by Lockheed Martin, is operated by the Royal Australian Navy, the Royal Danish Navy and the Royal Saudi Naval Forces. In April, the State Department approved the possible sale of 24 MH-60Rs to the Indian navy.

Prospective Joint Chiefs Chairman Supports Sub-

Launched Low-Yield Nuke

WASHINGTON –
The president’s nominee for chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff said that he supports development and deployment of a low-yield nuclear warhead as part of the nations’ strategic deterrent.

“I think it is an important capability to have in our arsenal in order to deal with any potential adversaries or contingency operations,” Army Gen. Mark Milley said as he testified June 11 on Capitol Hill at his confirmation hearing before the Senate Armed Services Committee.

The deployment of a low-yield warhead, the W76-2, is called for in the 2018 Nuclear Posture Review. Production of the warhead has begun for the Trident D5LE submarine-launched ballistic missiles to be deployed on board Ohio-class ballistic-missile submarines.

> *“I think [the sub-launched low-yield nuclear warhead] is an important capability to have in our arsenal in order to deal with any potential adversaries or contingency operations.”*
>
> *Army Gen. Mark Milley, JCC nominee*

The future of the W76-2 is clouded because of opposition of key Democratic members of the House of Representatives and is one of the contentious issues

of the National
Defense Authorization bill currently in work.

Milley listed
the nation's strategic nuclear deterrent as his top modernization priority, the
others being space capabilities, artificial intelligence and hypersonic
weapons.

He supports
modernization of all three legs of the U.S. strategic deterrent triad: bombers,
ground-based intercontinental ballistic missiles and submarine-launched
ballistic missiles.

"The triad has worked,"
Milley said. "There are many reasons why there hasn't been a great power war
since 1945. Clearly one of them is nuclear deterrence and part of that is the
capability of the triad. Each leg of the triad gives you different capability."

Three-Star Vice Adm. Gilday is Choice for CNO Following Moran's Sudden Retirement

Vice Adm. Michael Gilday, then commander of U.S. Fleet Cyber Command and the U.S. 10th Fleet, delivers remarks during a

change-of-command ceremony. U.S. Navy/Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class Somers Steelman

Editor's Note: This story has been updated as of July 18, 2019, to reflect Gilday's formal nomination.

ARLINGTON, Va. — For the first time since the 1970s, a three-star admiral is the nominee for chief of naval operations.

Vice Adm. Michael Gilday, who earlier this year became director of the Joint Staff, has been nominated by President Trump for promotion to admiral and to become CNO, according to a July 18 announcement from Acting Defense Secretary Richard. V. Spencer.

Gilday was selected to succeed Adm. John M. Richardson after Adm. Bill Moran's announcement that he would retire amid questions about his ongoing professional relationship with a disgraced former aide, sources confirmed.

Richardson had been scheduled to leave Aug. 1 and retire in September but will stay on until the U.S. Senate confirmation process for Gilday is complete.

The nominee for the Navy's next chief typically comes from a small pool of four-star commanders. Gilday is the first three-star admiral to be chosen since Vice Adm. Elmo Zumwalt was nominated by President Nixon in April 1970.

In a statement, Moran said he made the decision to retire "based on an open investigation into the nature of some of my personal email correspondence over the past couple of years

and for continuing to maintain a professional relationship with a former staff officer, now retired, who had while in uniform been investigated and held accountable over allegations of inappropriate behavior.”

Adm. Bill Moran speaks to members of the New York Police Department, service members, veterans and civilians during a Memorial Day cookout in May hosted by the NYPD as part of Fleet Week. Instead of becoming the 32nd chief of naval operations, Moran has abruptly decided to retire. U.S. Marine Corps/Cpl. Adrian A. Delgado

Press reports identified the staff officer as Chris Servello, former public affairs officer for Richardson.

Moran added that he did not condone the staff officer’s conduct, but said he understands how “toxic it can be to any team when inappropriate behavior goes unrecognized and unchecked.”

“Every Sailor is entitled to serve in an environment free of harassment or intimidation,” Moran said. “As painful as it is to submit my request to retire, I will not be an impediment whatsoever to the important service that you and your families continue to render the nation every day.”

Spencer said he admired Moran’s Navy service, but his decision to maintain the relationship with the staff officer “has caused me to call his judgment into question.”

Moran called his 38 years of Navy service a “high honor and

privilege” and said he deeply regrets “any inconvenience” his decision causes Trump and Spencer.

Gilday, a native of Lowell, Massachusetts, is the son of a Navy Sailor, according to his official biography. He is a graduate of the U.S. Naval Academy and holds master’s degrees from the Harvard Kennedy School and the National War College.

As a surface warfare officer, Gilday deployed on two cruisers and a destroyer before rising to command two more destroyers. Subsequently, he commanded Destroyer Squadron 7, serving as sea combat commander for the Ronald Reagan Carrier Strike Group.

As a flag officer, he served as commander, Carrier Strike Group 8, embarked aboard USS Dwight D. Eisenhower, and as commander, U.S. Fleet Cyber Command and U.S 10th Fleet. Ashore, as a flag officer, he served in joint positions as director of operations for NATO’s Joint Force Command Lisbon; as chief of staff for Naval Striking and Support Forces NATO; director of operations for U.S. Cyber Command; and as director of operations for the Joint Staff.

His earlier staff assignments include the Bureau of Naval Personnel, the staff of the chief of naval operations, and the staff of the vice chief of naval operations. Joint assignments include executive assistant to the chairman of the Joint

Chiefs of Staff and naval aide to the president.

Additional reporting by Megan Scully.

SAIC Integrates, Extends Life of Systems for Navy

ARLINGTON, Va. – One might be surprised that one of the most well-known companies in defense work does not manufacture any systems or equipment, but it has a wide portfolio of systems for which it serves as an integrator. SAIC focuses of a lot of its Navy business on service-life extension of systems.

“We’re the second largest independent technology integrator in government services right now,” Rick Sabol, senior vice president, operations, NAVSEA and NAVAIR Operations, at SAIC, said in a July 8 interview with *Seapower*.

“What sets us apart: we don’t build anything. We are always working on the government side as an agnostic partner with them using whatever technologies they choose. We facilitate the integration thereof, be it on platform or systems or what have you.”

SAIC, which is headquartered in Reston, Virginia, has 23,000 employees and an annual

revenue of $6.5 billion. Sabol oversees the company's work for Naval Air
Systems Command and Naval Sea Systems Command.

Sabol said SAIC
has three main areas for its business: engineering and platform integration;
enterprise information technology; and logistics readiness and supply.

"We
think we are in a particular niche where we excel," Sabol said. "We're in that
niche in the middle where we can provide the engineering development support. We
can sustain systems and platforms throughout their life cycle for the customer."

"We
think we are successful because some of [original equipment manufacturers] are
focused on selling the new shiny toy that costs a lot of money," he said. "But
we know that the Navy right now with its budget constraint has issues in
service-life extension [which] we are focusing on in that middle area to help
the Navy and the warfighter extend the life of existing systems at a much more
economical cost."

A recent
example of SAIC's integration work is its offering in the competition for an
amphibious combat vehicle for the Marine Corps. SAIC did not build any of the proposed
vehicle or its systems and subsystems but subcontracted that work and brought

all the components and integrated them into the full-up vehicle.

SAIC also has a role in the restart of production of the Mark 48 submarine-launched torpedo. The company is integrating all the components of the afterbody and tailcone of the weapon, including the propulsion system, which are being built by other companies. The integration involves 26 major subassemblies made up of 500 piece parts.

The integration occurs at one of SAIC's product support centers, in this case the one near the Naval Surface Warfare Center Crane in Bedford, Indiana.

At Lakehurst, New Jersey, home of the Naval Air Warfare Center Aircraft Division Lakehurst, the SAIC depot modernizes and refurbishes aircraft racks for bombs and other stores.

The company also integrates upgrades into surface and land-based radars for the Navy and Marine Corps; C4I (command, control, communications, computer, and intelligence) systems. The ground-based observation system towers built for the Army were integrated by SAIC.