

U.S. 3rd Fleet Hosts RIMPAC Mid-Planning Conference



[Release from U.S. 3rd Fleet Public Affairs](#)

Dec. 6, 2023

KANELOHE BAY, Hawaii – Commander, U.S. 3rd Fleet unveiled the new Rim of the Pacific 2024 logo at the kick-off of the middle planning conference for the exercise at Marine Corps Base Hawaii Dec. 5, 2023.

More than 800 personnel from representing nations participating in RIMPAC 2024 were in attendance to view the official logo before it was displayed to the public.

Of the 47 highly competitive entries from around the world, the final design was a combination of two separate submissions – one from Lt. Tristan Robertson of the Royal Canadian Navy

and one from Lt. Emily Paiz of the U.S Navy.

“The logo for RIMPAC represents the progress that has been made since the inception of the first exercise back in 1971,” said U.S. 3rd Fleet Deputy Commander Capt. Richard Meyer. “The design reflects the development of new and longstanding relationships while also highlighting the versatility in training that is a direct result of having a joint exercise of this scale.”

The RIMPAC 2024 theme “Partners: Integrated and Prepared” was the inspiration behind the creation of the logo. The creators wanted the logo to convey that RIMPAC is not just an exercise designed to bring multiple nations together, but also an event that allows its participants the opportunity to develop the relationships and partnerships required to meet the needs of each nation’s training and interoperability objectives.

“There has been tremendous growth with partnerships among nations,” said RIMPAC coordinator Royal Australian Navy Lt. Cmdr. Timothy Gill. “We continue to have more nations who want to join, want to train with us, and also want to train with all nations as a unit. We are all focused on the same goal of maritime safety and security.”

Unlike the previous RIMPAC, the entire exercise will solely take place in and around the Hawaiian Islands. To commemorate that, the backdrop of the logo features a tropical landscape. At the center of the logo is a trident that is representative of both U.S. 3rd Fleet and the joint warfighting capabilities of land, air and sea.

The logo was revealed at beginning of the mid-planning conference for RIMPAC 2024, a biennial event that allows participants from all partner nations to conduct detailed exercise planning, synchronize all aspects of the exercise, including harbor, force integration and tactical phases, and

review draft schedules of events.

“I anticipate that this RIMPAC will be more dynamic than previous iterations, and will provide increased opportunities for all participating nations to work together as an integrated and interchangeable force,” said Meyer. “While its focus on the maritime remains, the scale and scope of RIMPAC has grown and evolved over the years into a true multi-domain exercise. We see particular growth in the air and land domains. In keeping with the updated RIMPAC theme, vision and objective, RIMPAC 2024 will mark a notable advancement in the history of the exercise.”

The world’s largest international maritime exercise, RIMPAC provides a unique training opportunity while fostering and sustaining cooperative relationships among participants critical to ensuring the safety of sea lanes and security on the world’s oceans.

RIMPAC 2024 is the 29th exercise in the series that began in 1971 and was held annually until 1974, when it became a biennial exercise due to its increasing scale. The founding nations were Australia, Canada and the United States.

USMC Orders More Amphibious Combat Vehicles from BAE



Dec. 7, 2023

BAE Systems has been awarded a \$211 million firm-fixed-price modification to a previously awarded contract by the U.S. Marine Corps for more Amphibious Combat Vehicles (ACVs) under the Marine Corps' fourth order for full-rate production (FRP). In addition to vehicle production, the award covers procurement of 40 FRP ACV Personnel (ACV-P) variants, fielding and support costs, and support and test equipment.

The world's most capable amphibious vehicle, the ACV 8x8 platform provides true open-ocean amphibious capability, land mobility, survivability, payload, and growth potential to accommodate the ever-evolving operational needs of the Marine Corps.

"With this contract and alongside our strategic partner, Iveco Defence Vehicles, we are able to continue to offer the Marine Corps predictability, stability, and continuity with production and the supply chain to deliver ACVs on time and on budget," said Garrett Lacaille, vice president of amphibious

vehicles for BAE Systems. “With more than 200 ACVs delivered to date, this program, which began full-rate production in December 2020, has matured to deliver this critical capability so that Marines can fulfill their missions around the world.”

ACV-P is the first of a family of four variants to be manufactured and delivered to the Marine Corps. Additional variants include the ACV Command and Control (ACV-C) variant which is currently in production; the ACV 30mm Cannon (ACV-30) variant which BAE Systems is currently under contract to produce multiple production representative vehicles; and the ACV Recovery (ACV-R) variant which is currently in design and development.

ACV production and support is taking place at BAE Systems locations in Stafford, Virginia; San Jose, California; Sterling Heights, Michigan; Aiken, South Carolina; and, York, Pennsylvania. Deliveries are anticipated to begin in April 2025.

**ELBIT AMERICA WINS \$500
MILLION CONTRACT TO CONTINUE
SUPPLYING NIGHT VISION TO
U.S. MARINES**



The Squad Binocular Night Vision Goggle is lightweight, provides critical advantages on the modern battlefield

FORT WORTH, TEXAS – DEC. 7, 2023 – [Elbit America](#) received a five-year Indefinite Delivery/Indefinite Quantity (ID/IQ) contract from the [United States Marine Corps](#) (USMC) to continue producing the Squad Binocular Night Vision Goggle (SBNVG). The competitive contract is worth up to \$500 million, with an initial delivery order for nearly \$127 million. The goggles will be produced in Roanoke, Virginia. The company has delivered more than 15,000 SBNVG systems to the USMC since 2019.

The SBNVG has proven to be a game-changer in modern warfare, as it is lightweight without compromising capability. The goggles currently provide image intensification, with an enhanced clip-on thermal imager. The set-up allows Marines to operate at night, or in dark buildings and tunnels where one's situational awareness is challenged.

The SBNVG is a helmet-mounted system that provides Marines with increased depth perception, enhanced clarity through high-performance white phosphor image intensifier tubes, a

thermal-imaging capability, and more. These features, along with extra-long run times, provide Marines an added edge on the battlefield.

“No matter the light conditions or environment, Marines are tapped for challenging missions. Equipped with Elbit America’s Squad Binocular Night Vision Goggles, Marines can quickly understand their surroundings and act,” said Erik Fox, Vice President of Warfighter Systems at Elbit America.

“Elbit America is proud of our long history supplying Marines with night vision and electro-optic innovations,” said Raanan Horowitz, the company’s president and CEO. “We continue to refine our portfolio, offering solutions that enable the networked Warfighter of the future with sophisticated decision aids and display systems that work in all operational environments.”

More details about Elbit America Night Vision are available at <https://www.elbitamerica.com/night-vision>.

**GA-ASI AND USMC COMPLETE
FIRST MQ-9A WTI TRAINING
CLASS**



[Release from GA-ASI](#)

MAWTS-1 Graduates Will Be Employed as MQ-9A Experts

SAN DIEGO – 30 November 2023 – General Atomics Aeronautical Systems, Inc. (GA-ASI) and the U.S. Marine Corps (USMC) teamed up to conduct flight training for Marines that was completed on Oct. 29, 2023. The seven-week course on the operation of MQ-9A Block 5 Unmanned Aircraft System was given to Marine Aviation Weapons and Tactics Squadron One (MAWTS-1) at Marine Corps Air Station Yuma, Arizona. The students participated in Weapons and Tactics Instructor (WTI) Course 1-24, which is a comprehensive course designed for selected pilots and enlisted aircrew that incorporates Marine Corps planning along with implementation of advanced air and ground tactics.

WTI, recognized as an advanced, graduate-level program, provided standardized, advanced tactical training, and played a crucial role in developing and employing aviation weapons and tactics both over land and in maritime environments. The Marines were trained using a GA-ASI-supplied MQ-9A, and the graduates of WTI will now go on to be the experts in MQ-9A Block 5 employment in their squadrons.

The training is a critical part of the Marine Air-Ground Task Force (MAGTF) Unmanned Expeditionary (MUX) Medium-Altitude, High-Endurance (MALE) program meeting Full Operational Capability (FOC). GA-ASI is a committed partner in helping the USMC meet this critical program milestone.

“We congratulate the new graduates of WTI and Semper Fi,” said GA-ASI Vice President of DoD Strategic Development Patrick Shortsleeve. “GA-ASI is proud to support the training of the MAWTS-1 aircrews in the use and utility of the MQ-9A platform.”

Renowned for its fault-tolerant flight control system and triple-redundant avionics system architecture, the MQ-9A UAS embodies the industry’s highest standards of reliability and performance, surpassing those of many manned aircraft.

GA-ASI has delivered nine MQ-9A UAS to the USMC so far. Four of these MQ-9A aircraft are actively engaged in operational missions, playing a vital role in supporting mission-critical Marine Corps objectives. The USMC awaits delivery of 11 additional aircraft, which will fulfill their goal of three squadrons by 2025.

Vipers and Heavy Haulers Return Home from Indo-Pacific Deployment



MARINE CORPS AIR STATION MIRAMAR, UNITED STATES

11.27.2023

By [Maj. Natalie Batcheler, 3rd Marine Aircraft Wing](#)

MARINE CORPS AIR STATION MIRAMAR, Calif. – The Marines and Sailors of Marine Light Attack Helicopter Squadron (HMLA) 169, and Marine Heavy Helicopter Squadron (HMH) 462, 3rd Marine Aircraft Wing, returned from deployments in support of the Unit Deployment Program and 31st Marine Expeditionary Unit, to their home stations of Marine Corps Air Station Camp Pendleton and MCAS Miramar, California, respectively, earlier this month.

The HMLA-169 “Vipers” and HMH-462 “Heavy Haulers” demonstrated adaptability and versatility by task-organizing their squadrons into elements for two different deployments each.

The Heavy Haulers also attached the remaining third of their squadron to Marine Medium Tiltrotor Squadron (VMM) 163, yielding a reinforced assault support squadron, which supported a bilateral exercise and relief efforts in the Philippines this summer.

UDP enhances the United States' forward presence and provides a consistent and rapid response capability. The program aims to maintain combat readiness, deter aggression, and strengthen alliances and partnerships in the Indo-Pacific region. UDP reinforces the Marine Corps' ability to rapidly maneuver to key maritime terrain, establish resilient air command and control, and generate aviation combat power from distributed locations.

The 31st MEU is the Marine Corps' only permanently forward-deployed MEU, and is the nation's expeditionary force in readiness in the Indo-Pacific region.

The Vipers' UH-1Y Venom and AH-1Z Viper aircraft, and the Heavy Haulers' CH-53E Super Stallions operated across the Indo-Pacific, demonstrating the operational reach of Marine aviation.

They participated in exercises including Marine Aviation Support Activity, Talisman Sabre, Fuji Viper, Super Garuda Shield, and Korean Marine Exchange Program, and conducted training in Okinawa including a variety of flight operations and qualifications; maritime integration; and joint and Marine Air-Ground Task Force integration.

"The Vipers executed an aggressive campaign that emphasized distributed operations across the Indo-Pacific theater," said Lt. Col. Thomas Duff, commanding officer of HMLA-169. "We utilized strategic airlift, amphibious shipping, and self-deploying detachments to support five bilateral exercises and enhance interoperability with our partners in the region."

The Vipers and Heavy Haulers played a key role in fostering relationships with allies and partners in the region, demonstrating a forward presence in the Indo-Pacific, and enhancing capabilities for mission sets across the range of military operations.

“Mobility is an identified challenge in the Western Pacific, specifically in the First Island Chain, that is crucial for the United States to promote regional stability and strengthen alliances with partner nations while in Great Power Competition,” said Lt. Col. Jonathan Bryant, commanding officer of HMH-462. “Over the past seven months, the Marines and Sailors of HMH-462 met this challenge head-on by continuously demonstrating the Marine Corps’ ability to conduct long range assault support and heavy lift operations for III MEF as the Stand-In-Force in INDOPACOM.”

Marines and assets from 3rd MAW, the largest wing in the Marine Corps, are constantly forward-deployed in support of operations and training around the globe. Ready to fight tonight and win, 3rd MAW is poised to respond when called upon.

**PACIFIC MARINES, KIRIBATI AND
U.S. EMBASSY SUVA COMMEMORATE
80TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE**

BATTLE OF TARAUA

Nov. 21, 2023

TARAUA, Kiribati – Pacific Marines, alongside the Government of the Republic of Kiribati and U.S. Embassy, Suva, co-hosted the 80th Annual Commemoration of the Battle of Tarawa at the Betio Sports Complex, Tarawa Atoll, Kiribati, on Nov. 22, 2023.

Ceremony participants included U.S. Ambassador to the Republic of Fiji, Kiribati, Tonga, Nauru, and Tuvalu Marie Damour; His Excellency, Taneti Maamau, President of the Republic of Kiribati; and Col. Matthew Brannen, Deputy Director for Operations, Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency.

“Kiribati and the United States share an enduring commitment to freedom, democracy, rule of law, human rights, and regional peace and stability in the Blue Pacific. With today’s ceremony, we commemorate standing side by side in World War II to secure our collective freedom, as we continue to work together to promote security and prosperity,” said Ambassador Damour.

Marines from 2nd Battalion, 2nd Marines also participated in the ceremony, highlighting 2nd Marine Division’s historical role as one of the first units ashore during the capture of Betio in 1943.

The Battle of Tarawa was a pivotal engagement in the Pacific Theater during World War II. The actions that took place during the preparation and execution of the Battle of Tarawa led to significant innovations in amphibious warfare, including improvements to landing craft and intelligence-gathering procedures, marking it as a crucial turning point in momentum of the island-hopping campaign.

A portion of the ceremony honored the repatriation of unidentified remains discovered on Tarawa. Following the ceremony, the remains will be transported back to DPAA facilities in Hawaii for possible identification.

“As we commemorate the 80th anniversary of the Battle of Tarawa in Kiribati, we stand united in honoring the sacrifices of those who endured the harsh realities of combat and those who gave the last full measure of devotion to our Nation,” said Col. Brannen. “The opportunity underscores our unwavering commitment to fulfilling the Nation’s promise that no one is left behind. In the face of history, we renew our dedication to the mission of the DPAA, ensuring closure for families and preserving the legacy of those who bravely served. This moment reminds us that our duty to the fallen is timeless, and we press forward in the relentless pursuit of the fullest possible accounting for our missing heroes.”

The ceremony served as a reminder of our history with Allies and partners across the Pacific, as well the Marine Corps’ enduring commitment to the region as ‘Soldiers of the Sea.’

U.S. Marine Corps Forces, Pacific is the largest operational command in the Marine Corps and the Nation’s expeditionary force-in-readiness in the Indo-Pacific. Pacific Marines serve alongside the joint force and like-minded Allies and partners to preserve and maintain a free and open Indo-Pacific region.

12th Marine Regiment Re-Designated to 12th Marine

Littoral Regiment



Release from Headquarters Marine Corps

CAMP HANSEN, OKINAWA, Japan – 12th Marine Regiment redesignated to 12th Marine Littoral Regiment (MLR) on November 15, 2023, during a ceremony at Camp Hansen, Okinawa, Japan. This redesignation is the first step in the process outlined in January’s Security Consultative Committee (“2+2”) announcement that reinforces the enduring commitment of the U.S. to the defense of Japan and to peace and stability in the Indo-Pacific.

“Today marks a significant milestone in the storied history of the 12th Marine Regiment as they redesignate to the 12th Marine Littoral Regiment,” said Maj. Gen. Christian Wortman, commanding general of the 3d Marine Division. “12th MLR is poised to meet the challenges of today and tomorrow, with a

vigilant eye on the horizon and a steadfast resolve to protect our nation and support the defense of Japan.”

While forward stationed in Okinawa, Japan, 12th Marine Littoral Regiment will integrate with the Joint Force and the capabilities of our allies and partners, supporting deterrence efforts, and remaining prepared to respond to potential crises.

“12th MLR represents a vital evolution of our mission and capabilities.,” said Col. Peter Eltringham, commanding officer of 12th Marine Littoral Regiment. “We’re proud to be here in the First Island Chain, and a force prepared to respond to contingencies wherever and whenever required. It is our pledge to guard and advance the 12th Marines legacy of honor, fidelity and valor, now as the 12th MLR.”

Tactical Resupply UAS ready for the fleet



Six production models of the TRV-150C Tactical Resupply Unmanned Aircraft System (TRUAS) arrive at Littoral Logistics Battalion Three (LLB-3), Marine Corps Base Hawaii. The Navy and Marine Corps announced Initial Operational Capability (IOC) for TRUAS Oct. 27. (Marine Corps Photo)

[Release from Naval Air Systems Command](#)

Nov 1, 2023

Naval Air Station Patuxent River, Md. – The Navy and Marine Corps announced Initial Operational Capability (IOC) for the TRV-150C Tactical Resupply Unmanned Aircraft System (TRUAS) Oct. 27 at Marine Corps Base Hawaii.

The first six production systems arrived last week at the Marines Third Littoral Logistics Battalion (LLB-3) in Kaneohe Bay, Hawaii, which means that LLB-3 is sufficiently manned, trained and ready to deploy with the TRV-150C.

“This achievement means the fleet is ready and fully capable of deploying and using this game-changing system, which will

enable Marines to perform forward deployed contested logistics missions,” said Gregg Skinner, Navy and Marine Corps Small Tactical Unmanned Aircraft Systems program manager (PMA-263), whose Unmanned Logistics Systems-Air (ULS-A) team oversees the TRUAS program.

Prior to declaring IOC, support staff from the Air Test and Evaluations Squadron Two Four (UX-24) from Naval Air Warfare Center Webster Outlying Field in Maryland arrived at MCB Hawaii along with an instructor from the Training and Logistics Support Activity Pacific, to conduct final operator qualification with LLB-3. After reviewing the differences between prototype and production systems, the trainers and operators successfully completed 36 training flights to ensure that the unit was ready to deploy.

PMA-263 awarded the production contract for the TRV-150C in April 2023 following a rapid prototyping initiative that brought the system from inception to the fleet in less than four years.

“This was a total team effort in accomplishing this milestone in record time,” Skinner said. “Special thanks to the PMA263 Team, Training and Logistics Support Activity Pacific, Air Test and Evaluations Squadron Two Four (UX-24), and the Service Engineering Company (TRUAS prime contractor) for their hard work and dedication aimed at getting this much needed Force Design 2023 capability in the hands of the Warfighter.”

TRUAS is a land based, autonomous UAS that provides organic logistics to Marine squads through automated launch, waypoint navigation, and automated landing and payload drop. The system provides battlefield logistics capability to distribute critical supplies at Expeditionary Advanced Bases, where the risk to manned aircraft would deny manned aviation resupply operations out to the last tactical mile.

“The contested logistics environment challenges the ability of

our Marines to distribute necessary supplies to the right place at the time of need,” said Col. Aaron Angell, Logistics Combat Element Division director. “TRUAS gives a logistics unit the organic ability to immediately respond with a precision ground launched air delivery system. This is leap-ahead technology that we will learn to continue to shape future unmanned aerial logistics platforms.”

Service Chiefs from US Navy, Royal Navy, and US Marine Corps Sign Revised Strategic Charter, Strengthening the Special Relationship



[Release from Vice Chief of Naval Operations Public Affairs](#)

Oct. 18, 2023

ATLANTIC OCEAN – Vice Chief of Naval Operations Adm. Lisa Franchetti and Commandant of the Marine Corps Gen. Eric Smith embarked HMS Prince of Wales (PWLS) and met with Royal Navy First Sea Lord and Chief of Naval Staff Adm. Sir Ben Key to sign an updated strategic charter, Oct. 18.

The charter, known as “Delivering Combined Seapower” or DCS, is a bilateral tri-service strategic approach plan that supports cooperation, collaboration, and integration among U.S. and U.K. maritime services.

First signed in 2014, DCS was introduced to build and sustain interoperability between the U.S. and U.K. fleets.

The updated document includes a shared vision to enable the next level of interoperability the joint force requires,

acceleration of U.S.-U.K. interchangeability, and underscores the collective dedication to safeguarding global maritime interests and promoting a rules-based international order.

“‘Delivering’ is the key word here,” said Franchetti. “The U.S. and U.K. are providing real, operationally relevant capabilities that are making a difference on the oceans every single day. This document reflects the significant progress we’ve made since the original charter nine years ago and clearly articulates how we will advance and expand our interchangeability and deliver combined seapower going forward.”

Key emphasized the importance of this renewed alliance, “This Charter is testament to the enduring strength of the relationship between our navies and marines. By aligning our strategies and capabilities, we strengthen our ability to deter threats, respond to crises, and promote stability across the world’s oceans. This partnership will undoubtedly enhance our collective effectiveness, create opportunities to work ever more closely together, and promote our shared values.”

Although the U.S. Marine Corps has participated in U.S.- U.K. DCS Strategic Dialogues, this revision marks the first time the U.S. Marine Corps has been formally incorporated into the charter.

“I’m proud to be in this endeavor with Adm. Franchetti and Adm. Key,” said Smith. “Both countries’ Marines and Sailors have long-enjoyed a unique bond. We need to continue moving toward full interoperability, which includes maximizing our information sharing, training on each other’s platforms, and finding novel ways to integrate at the staff and warfighter level. This charter is a real step forward toward that goal.”

Throughout the days’ events the leaders observed a

demonstration of F-35B operations onboard HMS PWLS, and discussed maritime strategies, warfighting concepts, and future force design.

The U.S. and U.K. naval forces regularly operate together around the globe, and Franchetti and Smith last met with Key in September at the 25th International Seapower Symposium in Newport, Rhode Island.

HII AWARDED \$244 MILLION CONTRACT TO INTEGRATE MINOTAUR SOFTWARE PRODUCTS INTO MARITIME PLATFORMS



[Release from HII](#)

Contract Extends HII's ISR Mission Support Across Domains

MCLEAN, Va., (Oct. 17, 2023) – HII (NYSE: HII) announced today that its Mission Technologies division was awarded a \$244 million task order to integrate Minotaur software products into maritime platforms for the U.S. Navy, U.S. Marine Corps and U.S. Coast Guard.

HII was awarded this contract under the Department of Defense (DoD) Information Analysis Center's (IAC) multiple-award contract (MAC) vehicle. IAC MAC task orders are awarded by the U.S. Air Force's 774th Enterprise Sourcing Squadron to develop and create new knowledge for the enhancement of the Defense Technical Information Center repository and the research and development and science and technology community.

Under the Naval Air Systems Command task order, HII will perform research, development, test and evaluation to facilitate the integration of Minotaur Family of Services products into the services' maritime platforms to meet intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance warfighting requirements.

Minotaur products support the warfighter by enhancing sensor performance and presenting data from multiple types of sensors, including radar and C5ISR equipment, into a single common operating picture and transmitting that data to other platforms and units during operations.

HII has been the first and only industry prime developer of Minotaur since the program was first awarded to industry in 2020.

The contract has a five-year period of performance, with work conducted at contractor facilities in various U.S. locations.

“HII has been at the forefront of Minotaur software development for nearly a decade,” said Andy Green, executive vice president of HII and president of Mission Technologies. “It’s a privilege to continue this mission-critical work and to concurrently deliver the advantage to three branches of the Armed Forces.”

“We are pleased that the Navy has selected this proven technology to meet the combined requirements of next-generation Navy, Marine Corps and Coast Guard ISR platforms,” said Todd Gentry, president of Mission Technologies’ C5ISR business group. “We have assembled an outstanding team and look forward to expanding our longstanding partnership with the Navy and supporting the tri-service maritime strategy.”