

CNO, CMC Sign Amphibious Warfare Ship Terms of Reference, Strengthening Navy-Marine Corps Team



MEDITERRANEAN SEA (Feb. 26, 2024) The Wasp-class amphibious assault ship USS Bataan (LHD 5) transits the Mediterranean Sea during a photo exercise, Feb. 26, 2024. (U.S. Navy photo by MC2 Riley Gasdia)

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WASHINGTON, (June 17, 2024) – Chief of Naval Operations (CNO) Adm. Lisa Franchetti and Commandant of the Marine Corps (CMC) Gen. Eric Smith signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) on Amphibious Warfare Ship Terms of Reference, June 12, 2024, demonstrating Navy and Marine Corps full alignment and commitment to amphibious ship readiness.

The signing follows the CNO and CMC's letter earlier this year to their three-star officers who oversee plans and operations, calling for a deep dive on ship readiness and requirements for the training and certification of Amphibious Ready Groups.

“The Marine Expeditionary Unit is our crown jewel, and our Amphibious Warfare Ships are the most versatile, adaptable naval platforms in our inventory,” said Smith. “This MOU ensures consistency and uniformity in how each service talks about amphibious force readiness so we can better plan and execute naval operations. Ultimately, this creates a stronger Navy/Marine Corps team for all our Marines, Sailors, and the American people.”

The CNO echoed CMC's sentiment emphasizing that above all else, these new terms are intended to aid in better joint risk decisions between Navy and Marine Corps commanders and ensure the Navy remains ready and prepared to support contingency operations with the Marine Corps.

“Our Navy – Marine Corps team generates combat power with global impact – unmatched by any other naval force every day,” said Franchetti. “We stand ready to preserve the peace, respond in crisis, and win decisively in war, if called to do so. This MOU will ensure the ARG-MEU team remains the centerpiece of our naval expeditionary warfare presence, forcible entry, and sea basing capabilities.”

The new terms of reference serve as supplemental guidance to existing readiness reporting criteria and will ensure consistency and uniformity in Navy and Marine Corps amphibious

force planning, assessment, and operational mission execution.

The Department of the Navy is committed to reducing maintenance delays and is heavily investing in readiness in the Fiscal Year 2025 Presidential Budget.

The joint MOU was signed during the 2024 Naval Board. Guided by the CNO and CMC's priorities, the Naval Board provides a regular forum for senior leaders to consider naval policy and guidance that affects warfighting issues, and works with type commanders to identify solutions for remediating those deficiencies.

Further remarks from the CNO and CMC on the MOU can found in this [video](#).