

USMC Announces Ground Combat Element 2040



WASHINGTON, D.C. – The Marine Corps released Ground Combat Element 2040 Fiscal Year 2026 strategic framework today, outlining the service’s vision to ensure ground forces remain lethal and adaptable against peer adversaries. This update nests under the Marine Corps Force Design initiatives, transitioning from the initial GCE 2040 baseline vision to actionable implementation priorities for modular, multi-domain forces designed to seize, hold, and defend contested littoral terrain.

“Our central imperative is to cultivate a Ground Combat Element that is fully enabled by cutting-edge technology but remains fundamentally human-centric,” said Lieutenant General Jay M. Barger, Deputy Commandant for Plans, Policies, and Operations. “While we will aggressively pursue innovations in artificial intelligence, robotics, and multi-domain fires, we

will never lose sight of the fact that the individual Marine is our most critical asset. The courage, adaptability, and unwavering will to win of our warfighters are the true source of our combat power.”

The framework actively integrates artificial intelligence, robotics, and human-machine teaming via ruggedized tactical edge-computing nodes running localized Artificial Intelligence and Machine Learning. Key materiel priorities focus on advanced mobility platforms like the Amphibious Combat Vehicle and Advanced Reconnaissance Vehicle, expanded organic precision and long-range fires, and squad-level Ground-Based Air Defense. This is coupled with scaling the Marine Littoral Regiment’s capabilities to Division and regimental headquarters, supported by tactical edge command posts integrated with Combined Joint All-Domain Command and Control.

Spanning near-term (2026-2030), mid-term (2031-2035), and long-range (2036-2040) epochs, Ground Combat Element 2040 maintains a forward-looking strategy that ensures Marine Corps ground combat formations remain prepared not only for immediate operational demands but are positioned to secure and maintain decisive combat superiority through 2040.

Ground Combat Element 2040 is available on the [HQMC PP&O webpage](#).

From Headquarters, U.S. Marine Corps, Aug. 26, 2026