

## EXPEDITIONARY MANEUVER WARFARE

Expeditionary maneuver warfare is the Marine Corps capstone concept. It prepares the Marine Corps as a “total force in readiness” to meet the challenges and opportunities of a rapidly changing world. Expeditionary maneuver warfare focuses our core competencies, evolving capabilities, and innovative concepts to ensure that the Marine Corps provides the joint force commander with forces optimized for forward presence, engagement, crisis response, and warfighting. Expeditionary maneuver warfare serves as the basis for influencing the Joint Concept Development and Experimentation Process and the Marine Corps Expeditionary Force Development System. It further refines the broad “axis of advance” identified in *Marine Corps Strategy 21* for future capability enhancements. In doing so, expeditionary maneuver warfare focuses on—

- Joint/multinational enabling. Marine forces are ready to serve as the lead elements of a joint force, act as joint enablers and/or serve as joint task force or functional component commanders (JFLCC, JFACC or JFMCC).
- Strategic agility (rapidly and fluidly transitioning from pre-crisis state to full operational capability in a distant theater [requires uniformly ready forces, sustainable and easily reorganized for multiple missions or functions]). They must be agile, lethal, swift in deployment, and always prepared to move directly to the scene of an emergency or conflict.
- Operational reach (projecting and sustaining relevant and effective power across the depth of the battlespace).
- Tactical flexibility (operating with tempo and speed and bringing multi-role flexibility [air, land, and sea] to the joint team).
- Support and sustainment (providing focused logistics to enable power projection independent of host-nation support and against distance objectives across the breadth and depth of a theater of operations).

These capabilities enhance the joint force’s ability to reassure and encourage our friends and allies while we deter, mitigate or resolve crises through speed, stealth, and precision.

Expeditionary maneuver warfare focuses our warfighting concepts toward realizing the *Marine Corps Strategy 21* vision of future Marine forces with enhanced expeditionary power projection capabilities. It links Marine Corps concepts and vision for integration with emerging joint concepts. As our capstone concept, expeditionary maneuver warfare will guide the process of change to ensure that Marine forces remain *ready, relevant, and fully capable* of supporting future joint operations.

## Operational Maneuver from the Sea

OMFTS applies across the range of military operations, from major theater war to smaller-scale contingencies. OMFTS applies maneuver warfare to expeditionary power projection in naval operations as part of a joint or multinational campaign. OMFTS allows the force to exploit the sea as maneuver space while applying combat power ashore to achieve the operational objectives. It reflects the Marine Corps' expeditionary maneuver warfare concept in the context of amphibious operations from a sea base, as it enables the force to—

- Shatter the enemy's cohesion.
- Pose menacing dilemmas.
- Apply disruptive firepower.
- Establish superior tempo.
- Focus efforts to maximize effect.
- Exploit opportunity.
- Strike unexpectedly.

The force focuses on an operational objective, using the sea as maneuver space to generate overwhelming tempo and momentum against enemy critical vulnerabilities. OMFTS provides increased operational flexibility through enhanced capabilities for sea-based logistics, fires, and command and control. Sea-basing facilitates maneuver warfare by eliminating the requirement for an operational pause as the LF builds combat power ashore and by freeing the MAGTF from the constraints of a traditional beachhead. OMFTS is based on six principles:

- **Focus on the Operational Objective.** The operation must be viewed as a continuous event from the port of embarkation to the operational objective ashore. Everything the force does must be focused on achieving the objective of the operation and accomplishing of the mission. Intermediate objectives or establishing lodgments ashore assume less importance in OMFTS as the force is centered on decisive maneuver to seize the force objective.
- **Use the Sea as Maneuver Space.** Naval forces use the sea to their advantage, using the sea as an avenue of approach and as a barrier to the threat's movement. This allows the force to strike unexpectedly anywhere in the littorals and to use deception to mislead the enemy as to actual point of attack.
- **Generate Overwhelming Tempo and Momentum.** The objective of maneuver warfare is to create a tempo greater than that of the enemy. The tempo generated through maneuver from the sea provides the commander freedom of action while limiting the enemy's freedom of action.

- **Pit Friendly Strength Against Enemy Weakness.** The commander identifies and attacks critical vulnerabilities where the enemy is weak, rather than attacking his center of gravity when it is strong.
- **Emphasize Intelligence, Deception, and Flexibility.** Deception enhances force protection while reconnaissance and intelligence are essential in identifying fleeting opportunities.
- **Integrate all Organic, Joint, and Multinational Assets.** To realize the maximum effectiveness the commander must ensure the coordinated use of all available forces and capabilities..

OMFTS should not be viewed as a revolutionary new way of conducting amphibious and MPF operations. The brilliant amphibious operation at Inchon in 1950 is a classic example of OMFTS. It is an evolutionary way of using expeditionary forces assisted by greatly increased enhancements to current capabilities such as sea-basing. These enhancements will be in the form of new doctrine, organization, training and education, equipment, and technology.

When operating as part of a naval expeditionary force, MEFs will normally focus on conducting operations using OMFTS. The Marine commander, in concert with his Navy counterpart and higher-level direction, will orchestrate the employment of amphibious forces, MPFs, and Marine forces operating from land bases to shape events and create favorable conditions for future combat actions. The amphibious forces will normally execute tactical-level maneuver from the sea to achieve decisive action in battle. For the action to be decisive, the battle must lead to the achievement of the operational objectives.

### **Ship-to-Objective Maneuver**

STOM is the tactical implementation of OMFTS by the MAGTF to achieve the joint force commander's operational objectives. It is the application of maneuver warfare to amphibious operations at the tactical level of war. STOM treats the sea as maneuver space, using the sea as both a protective barrier and an unrestricted avenue of approach. While the aim of ship-to-shore movement was to secure a beachhead, STOM thrusts Marine Corps forces ashore at multiple points to concentrate at the decisive place and time in sufficient strength to enable success. This creates multiple dilemmas too numerous for the enemy commander to respond to, disrupting his cohesiveness and diminishing his will or capacity to resist. This concept focuses the force on the operational objective, providing increased flexibility to strike the enemy's critical vulnerabilities. Sea-basing of some of the fire support and much of the logistics support reduces the footprint of forces ashore while maintaining the tempo of operations. Emerging command and control capabilities will allow commanders to control the maneuver of their

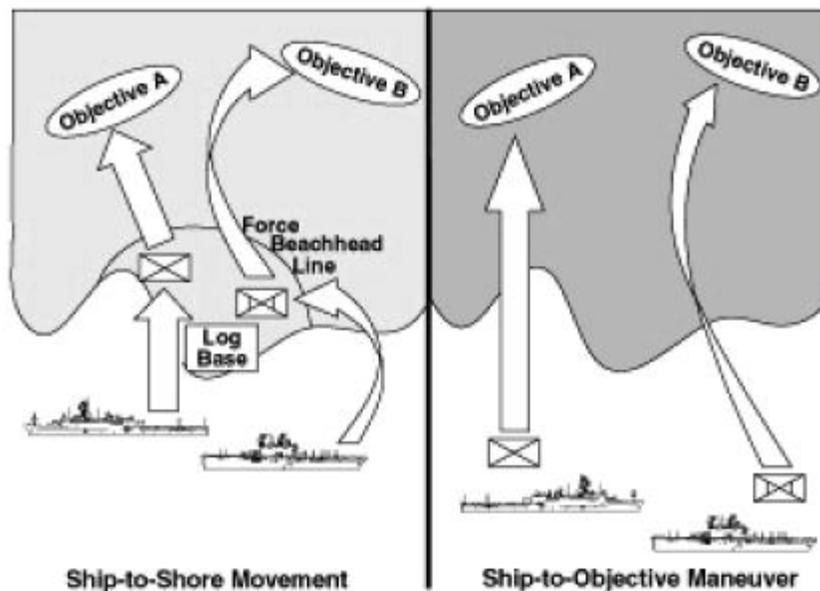


Figure 2-2. Operational Objectives.

units the moment they cross the line of departure at sea, to include changing the axis of advance or points where they cross the beach during the assault.

In STOM, rather than an amphibious assault to establish a force on a hostile or potentially hostile shore, an *amphibious attack* may occur. An amphibious attack may be defined as an attack launched from the sea by amphibious forces directly against an enemy operational or tactical center of gravity or critical vulnerability. See figure 2-2.

### Maritime Pre-positioning Force Future

MPF Future is the concept that next-generation MPFs will contribute to forward presence and power projection capabilities, which will remain central to United States deterrence and conflict resolution strategies well into the future.

Enhancements envisioned in MPF Future will expand the use of the future MPF across an increased range of contingencies. The concept is best illustrated through the pillars of future MPF operations:

- **Force Closure**—provides for at-sea arrival and assembly of forces.
- **Amphibious Force Integration**—using selective offload capabilities to reinforce the assault echelon of an amphibious force.

- **Indefinite Sustainment**—by serving as a sea-based conduit for logistic support.
- **Reconstitution and Redeployment**—without a requirement for extensive material maintenance or replenishment at a strategic sustainment base.

### **Expeditionary Bases and Sites**

Future contingencies will compel an ever-increasing reliance on expeditionary bases and sites, especially sea-basing, to support and sustain expeditionary maneuver warfare. Expeditionary bases and sites are locations in and out of the AO that can support the deployment, employment, and sustainment of expeditionary forces. They might include—

- Intermediate staging bases outside of the AO.
- Sites located within friendly contiguous nations or the host nation.
- Expeditionary airfields and forward operating bases established within the AO by the expeditionary forces.
- Existing facilities within the AO seized from the enemy.
- United States military bases overseas or in CONUS located near the AO.
- Amphibious shipping.
- MPS squadrons.

Marine Corps forces can quickly establish these temporary and often austere expeditionary bases and sites providing the ability to project, support, and sustain forces. Amphibious shipping or the MPS allows Marine Corps forces to operate from a mobile sea base far from the enemy's shore. Sea-basing allows the Marine Corps to bring ashore only those forces and assets essential to the mission. This provides the joint force commander with increased operational freedom, precluding the need to establish, man, and protect extensive shore-based facilities. The ability to conduct logistics and sustainment activities from the sea base, existing infrastructure ashore, or any combination will reduce the footprint ashore, thereby minimizing the threat to deployed forces.