

CHAPTER I

CONCEPT OF AMPHIBIOUS OPERATIONS

“A landing on a foreign coast in the face of hostile troops has always been one of the most difficult operations of war.”

Captain Sir Basil H. Liddell Hart

1. General

a. An **amphibious operation** is a military operation launched from the sea by an amphibious force, embarked in ships or craft with the primary purpose of introducing a landing force (LF) ashore to accomplish the assigned mission. **Types of amphibious operations** include assaults, withdrawals, demonstrations, raids, and other amphibious operations in a permissive, uncertain, or hostile environment.

b. An amphibious force conducts amphibious operations. An **amphibious force** is defined as an amphibious task force (ATF) and an LF, together with other forces that are trained, organized, and equipped for amphibious operations.

- An **ATF** is defined as a Navy task organization formed to conduct amphibious operations.
- An **LF** is defined as a Marine Corps or Army task organization formed to conduct amphibious operations.

c. The terms “commander, amphibious task force” (CATF) and “commander, landing force” (CLF) are used throughout this publication solely to clarify the doctrinal duties and responsibilities of these commanders. In operations and exercises, amphibious commanders are referred to by either their operational command titles (i.e., Commanding General, 2d Marine Expeditionary Brigade (CG2d MEB), Commander, Amphibious Group TWO (CPG 2)) or assigned task force designators (i.e.,

Combined Task Force (CTF) 62.1), not by the terms “CATF” or “CLF.” The terms “CATF” and “CLF” do not connote titles or command relationships.

Refer to Chapter II, “Command and Control,” for information on amphibious command relationships.

d. Amphibious operations apply maneuver principles to expeditionary power projection in joint and multinational operations. Maneuver is used to destroy or seriously disrupt the enemy’s cohesion through a variety of rapid, focused, and unexpected actions that create a turbulent and rapidly deteriorating situation with which the enemy cannot cope.

- **The goal of maneuver is the application of strength against selected enemy weakness.** Maneuver relies on speed and surprise to gain not only positional advantage, but to also generate a faster operational tempo than the enemy to gain a temporal advantage.
- Amphibious operations seek to exploit the element of surprise and capitalize on enemy weakness by projecting and applying combat power precisely at the most advantageous location and time. Amphibious forces provide the joint force commander (JFC) with a balanced, mobile force flexible enough to provide the required capability at the right time and place with sufficient endurance to accomplish the mission.

e. The **threat of amphibious operations** alone may be sufficient to induce enemies to

concentrate forces and make them susceptible to fires, or disperse forces and make them susceptible to destruction. The enemy can never be certain that its response to the amphibious threat will be effective; thus uncertainties are induced into the enemy's decision making process that can be exploited in a number of ways.

2. Applications

Amphibious operations can be used in many ways to support the JFC's campaign or operation plan. Conducted alone, or in conjunction with other military operations, they can be designed to:

a. **Achieve campaign objectives in one swift stroke** by capitalizing on surprise and simultaneous execution of supporting operations to strike directly at enemy critical vulnerabilities and decisive points in order to defeat operational or tactical centers of gravity (COGs).

b. **Comprise the initial phase of a campaign or major operation** where the objective is to establish a military lodgment to support subsequent phases.

c. **Serve as a supporting operation** in a campaign in order to deny use of an area or facilities to the enemy, or to fix enemy forces and attention in support of other combat operations.

d. **Support military operations other than war** (MOOTW) in order to deter war, resolve conflict, promote peace and stability, and support civil authorities in response to domestic crises.

3. Types of Amphibious Operations

Amphibious operations can take place across the range of military operations, from operations other than war to a major theater

war. They can generally be broken down into five major types: assaults, withdrawals, demonstrations, raids, and other amphibious operations.

a. **Amphibious Assault.** An amphibious assault involves the establishment of an LF on a hostile or potentially hostile shore. The organic capabilities of amphibious forces, including fire support, logistics, and mobility, allow the United States to gain access to a crisis area by forcible entry. **Forcible entry operations** can be accomplished through amphibious operations, airborne operations, air assault operations, or a combination of any or all of these forcible entry techniques. If the JFC's decision is to use a combination of forcible entry techniques to seize a lodgment, the JFC must further decide, based on maritime factors and mission, enemy, terrain and weather, troops and support available, time available analysis, whether to conduct the forcible entries as concurrent or integrated. **Concurrent forcible entry operations** occur when a combination of amphibious, airborne, and/or air assault forcible entry operations are conducted simultaneously, but as **distinct operations with separate operational areas and objectives**. **Integrated forcible entry operations** result when amphibious, airborne, and/or air assault forcible entries are **conducted simultaneously within the same operational area and with objectives that are mutually supporting**.

Refer to Joint Publication (JP) 3-18, Joint Doctrine for Forcible Entry Operations, for more information.

b. An **amphibious withdrawal** is the extraction of forces by sea in ships or craft from a hostile or potentially hostile shore.

c. An **amphibious demonstration** is a show of force conducted to deceive with the expectation of deluding the enemy into a course of action (COA) unfavorable to it.



Inchon Landing

d. An **amphibious raid** is a swift incursion into, or a temporary occupation of, an objective, followed by a planned withdrawal.

e. **Other Amphibious Operations.** The capabilities of amphibious forces may be especially suited to conduct MOOTW such as noncombatant evacuation operations (NEOs) and foreign humanitarian assistance (FHA). NEOs may use amphibious raid techniques and require relatively minor adjustments to planning. FHA and disaster relief may require more flexibility during planning and execution based on the assistance and/or relief required.

f. Within the five major types of amphibious operations, **there are a number of tasks that amphibious forces can accomplish** to facilitate joint operations. The following are representative, but not all-inclusive, of tasks that may be performed.

- Attack enemy critical vulnerabilities or decisive points that lead to the defeat of operational or tactical COGs;
- Seize a lodgment, to include ports and airfields, for the introduction of follow-on forces;
- Seize areas for the development of advanced bases;
- Destroy, neutralize, or seize enemy advanced bases and support facilities;
- Seize or conduct a preemptive occupation of areas that block free passage by adversaries;
- Provide an afloat strategic, operational, or tactical reserve to exploit opportunities and counter threats;
- Provide strategic, operational, or tactical deception to force the enemy to defend along littoral areas;
- Evacuate US citizens, selected citizens from the host nation, or third country nationals whose lives are in danger from a foreign country to a designated safe haven; and
- Provide a secure environment until other forces arrive on-scene to allow humanitarian relief efforts to progress and facilitate the movement of food and medical care to relieve suffering and prevent the loss of life.

g. Some combat operations involving waterborne movement possess characteristics and employ some of the same techniques as an amphibious operation. Examples are: maritime pre-positioning force (MPF); afloat pre-positioning force (APF); riverine operations; inland-water ferrying; and water terminal and logistics over-the-shore (LOTS) operations. While these may be part of an amphibious operation, they are not by themselves amphibious operations as described by this doctrine.

4. Characteristics

a. **Integration Between the Navy and Landing Forces.** The key characteristic of an amphibious operation is close coordination and cooperation between the ATF, LF, and other designated forces. **An amphibious operation is ordinarily joint in nature** and may require extensive air, maritime, land, space, and special operations forces participation. It is typified by close integration of forces trained, organized, and equipped for different combat functions.

b. **Rapid Buildup of Combat Power from the Sea to Shore.** The salient requirement of an amphibious assault is the necessity for swift, uninterrupted buildup of sufficient combat power ashore from an initial zero capability to full coordinated striking power as the attack progresses toward amphibious force objectives. **To achieve success, an amphibious force should be assured of maritime superiority against enemy surface and subsurface forces at sea, air superiority throughout the operational area, and a substantial superiority over enemy forces ashore.** In the face of compelling necessity, commanders may undertake an amphibious operation on the basis of a reasonable superiority of the entire force. For example, maritime and air superiority may justify a landing even though the LF does not possess the desired numerical superiority in ground forces, if friendly surface and air units can be

used effectively to negate the enemy's advantage. In addition to reasonable superiority within the landing area, an amphibious force should have the ability to provide continuous support for forces ashore.

c. **Task-organized forces** are capable of multiple missions across the full range of military operations to enable joint, allied, and coalition operations. **Amphibious forces are task-organized based on the mission.** While forward-deployed amphibious forces routinely deploy with a similar task organization, they can be quickly reinforced or augmented with other assets in theater, adjacent theaters, or the continental United States. These forces provide sustainable power projection to respond to a full range of crisis, from forcible entry to humanitarian assistance. The command and control (C2) capabilities of the Navy and LF facilitate the accomplishment of multiple missions and the integration of joint and multinational forces.

d. **Other Factors.** Other factors that must be considered when planning and conducting amphibious operations include the following.

- Natural forces such as weather, sea state, wind, waves, surf, tides, and currents; bathymetry and hydrography; and beach, gradient, soil bearing capacity, trafficability, beach exits, and adjoining transportation networks as well as access to inland lines of communications (LOCs).
- Technical, operational, and logistic problems associated with the following.
 - Combat loading large numbers of troops, equipment, and supplies in ships (possibly at geographically separated embarkation points).
 - Protecting essential information while assembling, embarking, rehearsing, and moving the amphibious force to the



Amphibious forces are task-organized based on the mission.

operational area, as well as denial and deception measures to be employed at various stages of the operation to deny enemy intelligence collection.

- Enemy surface, subsurface, air, and mine threats.
- Conducting planning among forces physically separated among various ships and shore-based locations.
- Reconfiguring the combat loading of the amphibious ships in response to changing situations in the operational area.
- Maintaining surprise while conducting reconnaissance and detecting and eliminating mines, surf zone and beach obstacles, and other threats to the amphibious force.
- Conducting complex ship-to-shore movement using multiple landing means (e.g., amphibious assault vehicles (AAVs), surface craft, and aircraft), possibly in the face of enemy defenses.
- Ensuring close cooperation and detailed coordination among all participating forces. Forces involved

should train and/or rehearse together and each possess a clear understanding of the mutual obligations and the special capabilities and limitations of every other element of the joint force.

- Establishing reliable and secure communications between all forces (US and multinational) to ensure commonality, redundancy, security, and reliability in advance of any operation.
- Ensuring force protection, as applicable.
- Providing C2 in the littoral environment using a full complement of systems and sensors (radars, data links, etc.) whose performance may be degraded at the land and sea interface.
- Considering the impact of the amphibious operation on the environment.

Refer to JP 4-0, Doctrine for Logistic Support of Joint Operations, for further information.

e. Unity of Effort and Operational Coherence. The complexity of amphibious

operations and the vulnerability of forces engaged in amphibious operations require an exceptional degree of unity of effort and operational coherence. **The difficulties inherent in amphibious operations may dictate that the JFC participates in planning, theater integration, and support.** To meet contingencies, commanders of assigned and supporting forces must prepare in anticipation of the needs of the amphibious force.

5. Capabilities

a. The adaptability and versatility of amphibious forces provide unique warfighting capabilities to the JFC, along with being well suited to accomplish a wide variety of missions.

b. The conduct of an amphibious operation is possible under a wide variety of weather conditions, various types of emission control (EMCON), and by either surface, submarine, or air insertion forces.

c. Amphibious forces have the capability to conduct amphibious operations from over the horizon (OTH), beyond visual and radar range of the shoreline. OTH capability also provides flexibility in MOOTW. Political situations may require keeping ATF ships out of view of a foreign shore, while retaining the capability to insert LF ashore via air and landing craft assets.

d. Routinely forward-deployed amphibious forces, comprised of an ATF and an LF, provide the JFC with a force proficient in time-sensitive planning and capable of rapid response to taskings in crisis situations. These amphibious forces operate without the requirements for bases, ports, airfields, or overflight restrictions. They can perform a wide range of mission-essential tasks to facilitate the accomplishment of the joint force mission. Through enhanced training and special equipment, these forces may also be capable of special operations.

6. Sequence

Amphibious operations generally follow distinct phases, though the sequence may vary (see Figure I-1).

a. While planning occurs throughout the entire operation, it is normally dominant prior to embarkation. Successive phases bear the title of the dominant activity taking place within the phase.

b. When amphibious forces are forward-deployed, or when subsequent tasks are assigned, the sequence of phases may differ. **Generally, forward-deployed amphibious forces use the sequence “embarkation,” “planning,” “rehearsal” (to include potential reconfiguration of embarked forces), “movement to the operational area,” and “action”.** However, significant planning is conducted prior to embarkation to anticipate the most likely missions and to load assigned shipping accordingly. The same sequence is useful for subsequent tasks or follow-on amphibious missions.

In short, the five phases of an amphibious operation are always required, but the sequence in which they occur may be changed as circumstances dictate.

7. Initiating an Amphibious Operation

Amphibious operations commence with an order issued by the commander with establishing authority to the amphibious force commanders. **The order initiating the amphibious operation may come in the form of a warning order, an alert order, a planning order, or an operation order (OPORD).** The complete information required to conduct an amphibious operation may come from a combination of these orders (e.g., a warning order followed by an alert or operation order). The order initiating the amphibious

PHASES OF AN AMPHIBIOUS OPERATION

PLANNING

The planning phase normally denotes the period extending from the issuance of an order that directs the operation to take place and ends with the embarkation of landing forces. However, planning is continuous throughout the operation. Although planning does not cease with the termination of this phase, it is useful to distinguish between the planning phase and subsequent phases because of the change that may occur in the relationship between amphibious force commanders at the time the planning phase terminates and the operational phase begins.

EMBARKATION

The embarkation phase is the period during which the landing forces, with their equipment and supplies, embark in assigned shipping. The organization for embarkation needs to provide for flexibility to support changes to the original plan. The landing plan and scheme of maneuver ashore are based on conditions and enemy capabilities existing in the operational area before embarkation of the landing force. A change in conditions of friendly or enemy forces during the movement phase may cause changes in either plan with no opportunity for reconfiguration of the landing force. The extent to which changes in the landing plan can be accomplished may depend on the ability to reconfigure embarked forces.

REHEARSAL

The rehearsal phase is the period during which the prospective operation is rehearsed for the purpose of:

- *Testing the adequacy of plans, timing of detailed operations, and combat readiness of participating forces*
- *Ensuring that all echelons are familiar with plans*
- *Providing an opportunity to reconfigure embarked forces and equipment*

Rehearsal may consist of an actual landing or may be conducted as a command post exercise.

MOVEMENT

The movement phase is the period during which various elements of the amphibious force move from points of embarkation or from a forward-deployed position to the operational area. This move may be via rehearsal, staging, or rendezvous areas. The movement phase is completed when the various elements of the amphibious force arrive at their assigned positions in the operational area.

ACTION

The decisive action phase is the period from the arrival of the amphibious force in the operational area, through the accomplishment of the mission and the termination of the amphibious operation.

Figure I-1. Phases of an Amphibious Operation

operation should normally provide the following information.

- a. The establishing authority's mission, intent, and concept of operations (CONOPS).

b. Designation of required commanders, establishment of their command relationships, and provision of special instructions as required to support the amphibious force organization and mission.

NOTE: Special instructions may include an establishing directive if a support relationship is established among designated commanders of the amphibious force. The establishing directive is discussed in detail in Chapter II, "Command and Control."

c. Designation of assigned, attached, and supporting forces to the amphibious force.

d. Assignment of an operational area as appropriate.

e. Assignment of tasks.

f. Assignment of responsibility and provision of necessary coordinating

instructions for the conduct of supporting operations.

g. Target dates for execution of the operation.

h. Additional coordinating instructions, as required.

8. Termination of an Amphibious Operation

The termination of the amphibious operation is predicated on the accomplishment of the amphibious mission in accordance with the specific conditions contained in the order initiating the amphibious operation. **Upon completion of the amphibious operation, the establishing authority will provide instructions as required for command arrangements and assignment of amphibious forces.**

CHAPTER II

COMMAND AND CONTROL

“Amphibious warfare requires the closest practicable cooperation by all the combatant services, both in planning and execution, and a command organization which definitely assigns responsibility for major decisions throughout all stages of the operation, embarkation, overseas movement, beach assault, and subsequent support of forces ashore.”

Admiral Henry K. Hewitt, USN

1. General

a. **Overview.** Amphibious operations are normally part of a joint operation. The command relationships established within the amphibious force are in accordance with the concepts and principles delineated in JP 0-2, *Unified Action Armed Forces (UNAAF)*.

b. **Multinational Operations.** Command relationships during multinational operations are based on international standardization agreements or on bilateral agreements between nations. The command relationships for these operations will be defined in the order initiating the amphibious operation. This allows the commander directing the amphibious operation to define the relationships in accordance with existing military and political agreements. Simplicity

and clarity of expression concerning command relationships are critical.

Refer to JP 3-16, Joint Doctrine for Multinational Operations, for more information.

2. Organization of Joint Forces

a. **General.** “JFC” is a general term applied to a combatant commander, subunified commander, or joint task force (JTF) commander authorized to exercise combatant command (command authority) or operational control (OPCON) over a joint force. A JFC has the authority to organize forces to best accomplish the assigned mission based on the concept of operations. The organization should be sufficiently flexible to meet the planned phases of the contemplated



Command relationships in a joint amphibious operation must be clearly defined.

operation and any development that may necessitate a change in plan. The JFC will establish subordinate commands, assign responsibilities, establish or delegate appropriate command relationships, and establish coordinating instructions for the component commanders. **Sound organization should provide for unity of effort, centralized planning, and decentralized execution.** Refer to JP 0-2, *Unified Action Armed Forces (UNAAF)*, for more details on joint force organization.

b. **Service Components.** All joint forces include Service component commands that provide administrative and logistic support. The JFC may conduct operations through the Service component commanders or, at lower echelons, Service force commanders. This relationship is appropriate when stability, continuity, economy, ease of long-range planning, and scope of operations dictate organizational integrity of Service forces for conducting operations. The JFC has full authority to assign missions, redirect efforts, and direct coordination among subordinate commanders. The JFC should allow Service tactical and operational assets and groupings to function generally as they were designed. The intent is to meet the needs of the JFC while maintaining the tactical and operational integrity of the Service organizations.

c. **Functional Components.** The JFC can establish functional component commands to conduct operations. Functional component commands can be appropriate when forces from two or more Military Departments must operate in the same dimension or medium or there is a need to accomplish a distinct aspect of the assigned mission. Joint force land, air, maritime, and special operations component commanders are examples of functional component commanders.

NOTE: Functional component commands are component commands of a joint force and do not constitute a “joint force” with the

authorities and responsibilities of a joint force as normally described in JP 0-2, *Unified Action Armed Forces (UNAAF)*, even when composed of forces from two or more Military Departments. The JFC establishing a functional component command has the authority to designate its commander. Normally, the Service component commander with the preponderance of forces to be tasked will be designated as the functional component commander; however, the JFC will always consider the mission, nature, and duration of the operation, force capabilities, and C2 capabilities in selecting a commander. The JFC must designate the military capability that will be made available for tasking by the functional component commander and the appropriate command relationship(s) that the functional component commander will exercise. Most often joint forces are organized with a combination of Service and functional component commands with operational responsibilities.

d. **Subordinate Joint Task Forces.** A JFC may also establish a subordinate JTF on a geographical area or functional basis when the mission has a specific, limited objective and does not require centralized control of logistics. The mission assigned to a JTF should require execution of responsibilities involving a joint force on a significant scale and close integration of effort, or should require coordination within a subordinate area. A JTF is dissolved by the JFC when the purpose for which it was created has been achieved or when it is no longer required.

3. Command and Control of Amphibious Forces

a. **Unity of Command. The JFC ensures unity of effort in achieving amphibious objectives by establishing unity of command over amphibious forces.** The JFC may establish unity of command over amphibious forces by retaining OPCON over the Service or functional component

commands executing the amphibious operation, or by delegating OPCON or tactical control (TACON) of the amphibious force to a Service or functional component commander. Forces, not command relationships, may be transferred between commands. When forces are transferred, the command relationship the gaining commander will exercise (and the losing commander will relinquish) over those forces must be specified.

b. Control of Amphibious Forces. The JFC will organize the amphibious force in such a way as to best accomplish the mission based on the concept of operations.

- If conducting operations through the Service components, the JFC may establish a support relationship between the Navy component commander and the Service component commander of the LF, or delegate OPCON or TACON of the assigned or attached amphibious forces to a Service component.
- If conducting operations through a combination of Service and functional component commands with operational responsibilities, the JFC may establish a support relationship between the functional components, Service components, or other appropriate commanders, or delegate OPCON or TACON of the assigned or attached amphibious forces to a functional component or Service component commander. Normally, joint forces are organized with a combination of Service and functional component commands with operational responsibilities.

c. Command Authority Options Between Amphibious Forces. The command relationships established among the CATF, CLF, and other designated commanders of the amphibious force is an important decision. The type of relationship chosen by the

common superior commander, or establishing authority, for the amphibious force should be based on mission, nature and duration of the operation, force capabilities, C2 capabilities, battlespace assigned, and recommendations from subordinate commanders. Command relationship options include either an OPCON, TACON, or support relationships as described in JP 0-2, *Unified Action Armed Forces (UNAAF)*.

Typically a support relationship is established between the commanders and is based on the complementary rather than similar nature and capabilities of the ATF and LF. However, it is not the intent to limit the common superior's authority to establish either an OPCON or TACON command relationship as appropriate.

d. Planning Relationships. Regardless of the command relationships, when the order initiating planning for the amphibious operation is received, unique relationships are observed during the planning phase. **The commanders designated in the order initiating the amphibious operation are coequal in planning matters and decisions.** All decisions must be reached on a basis of common understanding of the mission, objectives, and procedures and on a free exchange of information. Any differences between commanders that cannot be resolved are referred to the establishing authority. If a change in the mission occurs after commencement of operations or if an amphibious operation is initiated from an afloat posture, coequal-planning relationships (either as described above or as specified in the order initiating the amphibious operation) will apply to any subsequent planning. However, as the operational situation dictates, the commander delegated OPCON of the amphibious force may specify planning relationships to coordinate planning efforts, especially where time-sensitive planning is required under the provisions of the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Manual (CJCSM)

3122.01, *Joint Operation Planning and Execution System, Vol I: (Planning Policies and Procedures)*.

e. **Establishing Directive.** An establishing directive is essential to ensure unity of effort within the amphibious force. Normally, the commanders within the amphibious force will develop a draft establishing directive during the planning phase to provide the specifics of the support relationship. The commanders within the amphibious force submit the draft establishing directive to the establishing authority for approval. The establishing directive is normally issued to specify the purpose of the support relationship, the effect desired, and the scope of the action to be taken. It may also include but is not necessarily limited to the following.

- Forces and other resources allocated to the supporting effort.
- Time, place, level, and duration of the supporting effort.
- Relative priority of the supporting effort.
- Authority, if any, of the supporting commander(s) to modify the supporting effort in the event of exceptional opportunity or an emergency.
- Degree of authority granted to the supported commander over the supporting effort.
- Establishment of air, sea, and ground maneuver control measures.
- Development of joint tactical air strike requests and air support requests.
- Development of target nominations, establishment of fire support coordinating measures, integration of air defense, and the role of the supporting arms coordination center.

- Development of the amphibious force intelligence collection plan.
- Non-organic logistic support.
- Force protection responsibilities afloat and ashore.

Unless otherwise stated in the order initiating the amphibious operation or the establishing directive, the CATF and CLF will identify the events and conditions for any shifts of the support relationship throughout the operation during the planning phase and forward them to the establishing authority for approval.

The establishing authority will resolve any differences among the commanders.

4. Operational Control

a. **General.** The establishing authority may choose to delegate OPCON to a single commander within the amphibious force. When OPCON is delegated, it will include the following authority (in accordance with JP 0-2, *Unified Action Armed Forces (UNAAF)*) unless otherwise specified.

- Exercise or delegate OPCON and TACON, establish support relationships among subordinates, and designate coordinating authorities.
- Give direction to subordinate commands and forces necessary to carry out missions assigned to the command, including authoritative direction over all aspects of the amphibious operation and training.
- Prescribe the chain of command to the commands and forces within the command.
- Organize commands and employ forces within the amphibious force, as necessary, to carry out assigned missions.

- Employ forces within the command, as necessary, to carry out missions assigned to the command.
- Assign command functions to subordinate commanders.
- Plan for, deploy, direct, control, and coordinate the action of subordinate forces.
- Establish plans, policies, priorities, and overall requirements for the intelligence activities of the command.
- Suspend from duty subordinate commanders and recommend reassignment of any officer assigned to the command.
- Assign responsibilities to subordinate commanders for certain routine operational matters that require coordination of effort of two or more commanders.
- Establish an adequate system of control for local defense and delineate such areas of operation for subordinate commanders as deemed desirable.
- Delineate functional responsibilities and geographic areas of operation of subordinate commanders.

b. OPCON normally provides full authority to organize commands and forces and employ those forces as the commander in OPCON considers necessary to accomplish assigned missions. It does not, in and of itself, include authoritative direction for logistics or matters of administration, discipline, internal organization, or unit training.

5. Tactical Control

a. **General.** TACON is the command authority over assigned or attached forces or commands (or military capability or forces

made available for tasking) that is limited to the detailed and usually local direction and control of movements or maneuvers necessary to accomplish assigned missions or tasks. **The establishing authority may choose to delegate TACON to a single commander within the amphibious force.** When TACON is delegated, it will include the following authority (in accordance with JP 0-2, *Unified Action Armed Forces (UNAAF)*) unless otherwise specified.

- Give direction for specified military operations.
- Control designated forces.

b. TACON does not provide organizational authority or authoritative direction for administrative and logistic support; the commander of the parent unit continues to exercise these authorities unless otherwise specified in the establishing directive.

6. Support

a. **General.** Support is a command authority. **The establishing authority of the amphibious operation establishes a support relationship between commanders within the amphibious force as well as other designated commanders as appropriate.** This relationship is appropriate when one organization should aid, protect, complement, or sustain another force. The designation of the supporting relationships is important as it conveys priorities to the commanders and staffs who are planning or executing the operation. The support relationship is, by design, a somewhat vague and therefore very flexible arrangement. This flexibility is enhanced by the publishing of an establishing directive to specify the purpose of the support, the desired effect, and the scope of action to be taken.

b. **Planning.** In a support relationship, the CATF and CLF and other commanders

designated in the order initiating planning for the amphibious operation are coequal. All decisions made by these commanders are reached based on a common understanding of the mission, objectives, and procedures and on a free exchange of information. Unless published in the order initiating the amphibious operation, the CATF and CLF will identify the events and conditions for any shifts of the support relationship throughout the operation during the planning phase and forward them to the establishing authority for approval. The establishing authority will resolve any differences among the commanders.

c. **Supported Commander.** A supported commander may be designated for the entire operation, a particular phase or stage of the operation, a particular function, or a combination of phases, stages, events, and functions. Unless limited by the establishing directive or the order initiating the amphibious operation, **the supported commander has the authority to exercise general direction of the supporting effort.** General direction includes the designation and prioritization of targets or objectives, timing and duration of the supporting action, and other instructions necessary for coordination and efficiency. The establishing authority is responsible for ensuring that the supported and supporting commanders understand the degree of authority that the supported commander is granted.

- If not specified in the order initiating the amphibious operation, the CATF and CLF will determine who has primary responsibility for the essential tasks during the mission analysis in the planning process.

See Chapter IV, "Approach to Planning and Primary Decisions," for mission analysis and the planning process.

- **In an operation of relatively short duration, normally the establishing authority will choose one commander for the entire operation.** When there is no littoral threat to the amphibious force (for example, in a particular NEO) the establishing authority may designate the CLF as the supported commander for the entire operation. During the movement or transit phase, the CATF may be designated the supported commander based on having responsibility for the major action or activity during that phase. The CATF may be designated the supported commander based on capabilities for airspace control and air defense for the entire operation if, for example, the landing force does not intend to establish a tactical air command center ashore (see Figure II-1).
- The establishing authority should consider several factors when designating the supported commander at various phases and events during the amphibious operation, including but limited to the following.
 - Responsibility for the preponderance of the mission.
 - Force capabilities.
 - Threat.
 - Type, phase, and duration of operation.
 - C2 capabilities.
 - Battlespace assigned.
 - Recommendations from subordinate commanders.

EXAMPLES OF SHIFTS IN THE SUPPORT RELATIONSHIP*

<u>MISSION</u>	<u>SUPPORTED COMMANDER</u>
Assault	CATF, then CLF
Raid with coastal threat	CATF, then CLF, then CATF
Inland Raid with no coastal threat	CLF
Demonstration	CATF
Withdrawal	CLF, then CATF
Humanitarian Assistance	CATF or CLF

CATF Commander, Amphibious Task Force

CLF Commander, Landing Force

*Actual supported-supporting commanders will be designated by the establishing authority based on the specific mission requirements

Figure II-1. Examples of Shifts in the Support Relationship

d. **Supporting Commander.** The supporting commander determines the forces, tactics, methods, procedures, and communications to be employed in providing this support. The supporting commander will advise and coordinate with the supported commander on matters concerning the employment and limitations (e.g., logistics) of such support, assist in planning for the integration of such support into the supported commander's effort as a whole, and ensure that support requirements are appropriately communicated throughout the supporting commander's organization. The supporting commander has the responsibility to ascertain the needs of the supported force and take full action to fulfill them within existing capabilities, consistent with priorities and requirements of other assigned tasks. When the supporting commander cannot fulfill the needs of the supported commander, the establishing authority will be notified by either the supported or supporting commander. The

establishing authority is responsible for determining a solution.

7. Parallel Chains of Command

Elements of the amphibious force (ATF, LF, and other forces) may be embarked for what could be extended periods of time on the same platforms, but responsible to different or parallel chains of command. Such parallel chains of command create special requirements for coordination. **Except in emergencies, no significant decision contemplated by a commander in the chain of command that affects the plans, disposition, or intentions of a corresponding commander in another chain of command will be made without consultation with the commander concerned.** In emergency situations, the commander making an emergency decision will notify corresponding commanders of his or her action at the earliest practicable time.

8. Amphibious Force Task Organization and Task Designators

a. **Task Organization.** Amphibious forces are task-organized based on the mission. No standard organization is applicable to all situations that may be encountered in an amphibious operation. Flexibility is essential. Once the organization has been promulgated, numerical task organization designations (e.g., CTF 62.1) or unit command titles (e.g., CG 2d MEB, CPG 2) will be used exclusively for operational purposes.

b. **Task Designators.** The task designators utilized by US and North Atlantic Treaty Organization naval forces that assign forces in a task force, task group, task unit, and task element hierarchical structure are utilized for task structuring of the amphibious force.

c. **Navy Forces.** At the CATF's discretion and as promulgated in the order initiating the amphibious operation and establishing directive, two or more of these groups may be combined and others added or deleted as dictated by operational requirements. For

example, control groups may not be required when conducting OTH operations.

d. **Landing Forces.** The LF consists of ground combat units and any of its associated support units assigned to the CLF to conduct the amphibious operation. The LF may be composed of Marine Corps and/or Army forces, other forces, and multinational forces. The amphibious operation requires that the LF be organized at various times in one of three functional forms. The first two are specific to amphibious operations.

- **Organization for Combat.** Task organization of LF units for accomplishment of missions ashore. This organizational form is employed as soon as possible following the landing of various assault elements of the LF.
- **Organization for Landing.** Specific tactical grouping of forces for a landing.
- **Organization for Embarkation.** Temporary administrative task organization of forces established to simplify planning and facilitate execution of embarkation at all levels of command.



Organization for combat and landing is specific to amphibious operations.

9. Operational Areas

a. **General.** To assist in the coordination and deconfliction of joint action, **JFCs may define operational areas or joint areas.** The size of these areas and the types of forces employed within them depend on the scope and nature of the crisis and the projected duration of the operation. **Amphibious operations normally require a three-dimensional geographic area, within which is located the amphibious force's objective(s).** The operational area must be of sufficient size to conduct necessary sea, land, and air operations required to execute the mission of the amphibious force. In addition, JFC's employ various maneuver and movement control and fire support coordinating measures to facilitate effective joint operations. These measures include boundaries, phase lines, objectives, coordinating altitudes to deconflict air operations, air defense areas, amphibious objective areas, submarine operating patrol areas and minefields. JFCs may use boundaries to define areas of operations (AOs) for land and naval forces. Within the designated operational area, the designated commander will synchronize maneuver, fires, and interdiction. The operational areas that may be assigned to an amphibious force in an order initiating the amphibious operation are an amphibious objective area (AOA) or an AO normally in conjunction with a high-density airspace control zone (HIDACZ).

- **An AOA** is a geographical area (delineated for C2 purposes in the order initiating the amphibious operation) within which is located the objective(s) to be secured by the amphibious force. This area must be of sufficient size to ensure accomplishment of the amphibious force's mission and must provide sufficient area for conducting necessary sea, air, and land operations.

- **An AO** is an operational area defined by the JFC for land and naval forces. AOs do not typically encompass the entire operational area of the JFC, but should be large enough for component commanders to accomplish their missions and protect their forces.
- **A HIDACZ** is airspace designated in an airspace control plan (ACP) or airspace control order (ACO) in which there is a concentrated employment of numerous and varied weapons and airspace users. A HIDACZ has defined dimensions that usually coincide with geographical features or navigational aids. Access to a HIDACZ is normally controlled by the maneuver commander. The maneuver commander can also direct a more restrictive weapons status within the HIDACZ.

For additional guidance on boundaries and synchronization of joint efforts within land and naval AOs, refer to JP 3-0, Doctrine for Joint Operations.

b. **Assigned Area.** The commander designated in the order initiating the amphibious operation is responsible for airspace control, defense of friendly forces, and direction and deconfliction of supporting arms. The order initiating the amphibious operation will also specify the degree of authority that the designated commander has over supporting forces entering the assigned geographic area. The designated commander will request the air control measures required for inclusion in the establishing directive (for a support relationship) or in the concept of operations to further ensure success of the mission.

c. **Disestablishment of Assigned Area.** Once the type of operational area (AOA or AO) is defined, it is not necessarily dissolved

upon termination of the amphibious operation. The operational area may be required for the coordination of follow-on logistic support of the operation. As with its establishment, **disestablishing the area is the decision of**

the establishing authority (with CATF or CLF recommendations) and should be delineated in the order initiating the amphibious operation or in follow-on orders.

CHAPTER IV

APPROACH TO PLANNING AND PRIMARY DECISIONS

“Gallipoli was a tragedy for the Allies in World War I, but it was a failure in execution — not in concept. The lessons drawn from this campaign provided the framework for modern amphibious doctrine, which later would help the Marines defeat the Japanese in the Pacific. Everything is good for something — if only to serve as a horrible example.”

From *Gallipoli and the Role of Intelligence*
Naval Institute Proceedings
June 1995

1. General

This chapter provides general guidance on the amphibious planning process. The process is designed for use by any size amphibious force, to conduct any operation, and facilitates commanders making the ten primary decisions required in most amphibious operations, discussed later in this chapter. The process is based on joint and Service models. It provides logical procedures to follow from the receipt of an order initiating the amphibious operation through the amphibious force commanders’ development of operation plans (OPLANS), OPORDs, operation general matters (OPGENs), or operation tasks (OPTASKs).

For more information on joint planning models, see JP 5-00.2, Joint Task Force Planning Guidance and Procedures. Chapters V through X of this publication provide guidance on functional area planning considerations.

The amphibious planning process is capable of Service component interface with the joint deliberate planning process during the supporting plan development phase or Service or functional component interface during the crisis action planning (CAP) process, beginning in the situation development phase and continuing throughout the CAP process. **The focus of the planning process is to link the employment of the amphibious force to the attainment of strategic and/or**

operational objectives through the design, organization, integration, and conduct of the amphibious operation within the JFC’s overall campaign.

2. Tenets of Amphibious Planning

Planning for an amphibious operation is continuous, from the receipt of the order initiating the amphibious operation through the termination of the operation. **The tenets of successful amphibious planning are top-down planning, unity of effort (within the designated operational area), and an integrated planning effort.**

a. **Top-Down Planning.** Planning is a fundamental responsibility of commanders. **The complexity of amphibious operations requires amphibious force commanders to drive the planning process.** Their guidance and intent are central to planning and must be translated into a design for action by subordinates. Their decisions (e.g., amphibious force objectives, amphibious force CONOPS, landing beaches, commanders’ critical information requirements, and promulgated essential elements of friendly information) during the planning process are required before additional steps in the process can proceed.

b. **Unity of Effort.** Unity of effort in the operational area allows the amphibious force

commanders to effectively focus the amphibious force on mission accomplishment.

They must view their battlespace as an indivisible entity, for operations or events in one area may have profound and often unintended effects on other areas and events.

c. **Integrated Planning.** Integrated planning in amphibious operations has two parts. **The first part is the assembly of the amphibious force commanders and their staffs in the same locality.** When such arrangements are not practicable, the exchange of liaison officers qualified to perform planning functions and the use of advanced technology, collaborative planning aids, and video conferencing are necessary. During planning, and particularly in CAP, amphibious force commanders must ensure that their planning efforts are parallel and concurrent with those of their higher headquarters. The same degree of integration by amphibious force commanders and their staffs must also be achieved with subordinate units to ensure a coordinated and thorough plan. **The second part of integrated planning occurs across functional areas.** The use of functional areas, such as maneuver, supporting arms and fires, intelligence, C2, logistics, and force protection enable amphibious force planners to integrate the planning effort and supervise the plan. The use of functional areas helps the planners to consider all relevant factors and minimize omissions. The key to this part of integrated planning is the assignment of appropriate personnel to represent each functional area. Integrated planning is facilitated by the use of operational planning teams which are dynamic, ad hoc organizations formed around planners from functional areas, appropriate staff representatives, subordinate and supporting command liaison officers, and other subject matter experts.

3. Planning Directive

Following receipt of the order initiating the amphibious operation, the amphibious force commanders will issue a coordinated planning directive to ensure that plans are harmonized, thorough, and completed in the time allowed.

The planning directive specifies the plan of action and milestones to complete each major step in the planning process, and the timeline for the development of OPLANs, OPORDs, OPGENs, and OPTASKs.

4. Amphibious Planning Process

a. **Six Step Process.** The amphibious planning process **establishes procedures for analyzing a mission, developing and wargaming COAs against the threat, comparing friendly COAs against the commander's criteria and each other, selecting a COA, preparing an order for execution, and transitioning the OPLAN, OPORD, OPGEN, and/or OPTASK to those tasked with its execution.** The process organizes these procedures into six manageable, logical steps. These steps provide the amphibious commanders and their staffs with a means to organize their planning activities, to transmit plans to subordinates and subordinate commands, and to share a common understanding of the mission and commander's intent. Interactions among various planning steps allow a concurrent, coordinated effort that maintains flexibility, makes efficient use of time available, and facilitates continuous information sharing (see Figure IV-1).

b. **Mission Analysis.** Mission analysis is the first step in planning as it facilitates the organization of the amphibious planning process. **Its purpose is to review and analyze orders, guidance, and other**

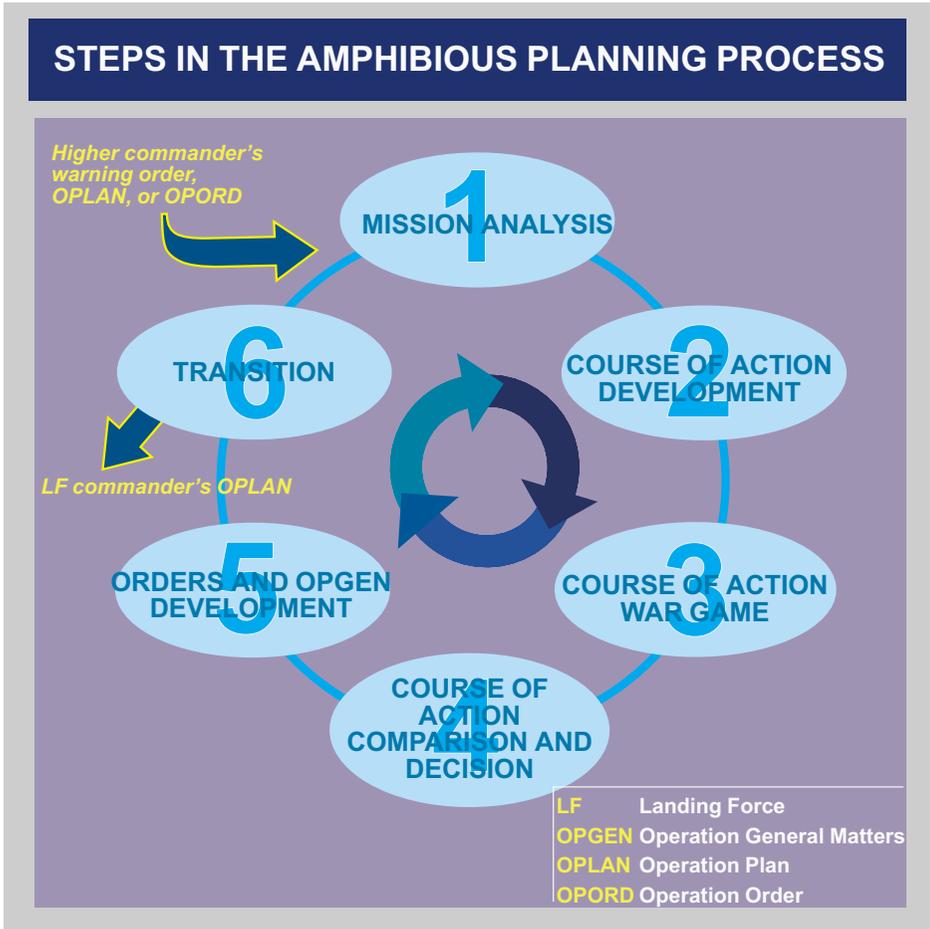


Figure IV-1. Steps in the Amphibious Planning Process

information provided by the establishing authority in the order initiating the amphibious operation and to produce an amphibious force mission statement(s). The commanders will provide planning guidance upon the completion of this step that will focus the staffs during step two, COA development.

c. Course of Action Development. COA development is the phase of the Joint Operation Planning and Execution System within the crisis action planning process that provides for the development of military responses and includes, within the limits of the time allowed: establishing force and

sustainment requirements with actual units; evaluating force, logistic, and transportation feasibility; identifying and resolving resource shortfalls; recommending resource allocations; and producing a COA via a commander's estimate that contains a concept of operations, employment concept, risk assessments, prioritized COA, and supporting databases.

d. Course of Action War Game. COA wargaming involves a detailed assessment of each COA as it pertains to the enemy and the battlespace. **Each friendly COA is wargamed against selected threat COAs.** COA wargaming assists planners in

identifying strengths and weaknesses, associated risks, and asset shortfalls for each friendly COA. COA wargaming also identifies branches and potential sequels that may require additional planning. **Branches** are contingency plans or COAs for changing the mission, disposition, orientation, or direction of movement of the amphibious force to aid success of the operation based on anticipated events, opportunities, or disruptions caused by enemy actions. **Sequels** are major operations that follow the current major operation based on possible outcomes, such as success or a setback (e.g., the amphibious force may plan a sequel based on a successful landing that requires re-embarkation and another assault). Short of actually executing the COA, COA wargaming provides the most reliable basis for understanding and improving each COA. Computerized simulations can also be used to conduct wargaming.

e. **Course of Action Comparison and Decision.** In COA comparison and decision, amphibious force commanders evaluate all friendly COAs against established criteria, then against each other. **The COA that will best accomplish the mission will then be selected.**

f. **Orders and OPGEN Development.** During orders and OPGEN development, the staffs use command COA decisions, mission statements, and intent and guidance to develop orders and OPGENs that direct unit actions. **Orders and OPGENs serve as the principal means by which the commanders express their decisions, intents, and guidance.**

g. **Transition.** Transition is an orderly handover of an OPLAN, OPORD, OPGEN, or OPTASK as it is passed to those tasked with execution of the operation. It provides those who will execute the plan or order with the situational awareness and rationale for key decisions necessary to ensure that there is a coherent shift from planning to execution.

5. Primary Decisions

Amphibious force commanders, as the principal force providers of the amphibious force, must make certain primary decisions during the planning process before further planning for an amphibious operation can proceed. In some cases, these decisions may have been made by the establishing authority and promulgated in the order initiating the amphibious operation. The decisions and who makes them are described below. **In the case of mutual decisions, both commanders must concur or the decision is referred to the establishing authority for resolution** (see Figure IV-2).

a. During **“Mission Analysis,”** the first step of the amphibious operation planning process, the following decisions must be made.

- **Determine Amphibious Force Mission(s).** Amphibious force commanders may decide on a coordinated mission statement or develop separate but supporting mission statements. The determination of a coordinated amphibious force mission statement is a mutual decision. If separate but supporting mission statements are chosen, then each commander must develop his or her respective mission statement.
- **Select Amphibious Force Objective(s).** **Amphibious force objectives are physical objectives, either terrain, infrastructure (e.g., ports or airfields), or forces, that must be seized, secured, or destroyed in order to accomplish the mission.** Amphibious force objectives are designated in alphabetic order (e.g., Amphibious Force Objective A and Amphibious Force Objective B). The selection of amphibious force objectives is a mutual decision.

b. During **“COA Development,”** the second step of the amphibious operation planning

PRIMARY DECISIONS RESPONSIBILITIES MATRIX			
PRIMARY DECISION	May be contained in the order initiating the amphibious operation	Decision	Decision made not later than step
1. Determine Amphibious Force Mission(s)	X	MUTUAL	1
2. Select Amphibious Force Objective(s)	X	MUTUAL	1
3. Determine Courses of Action for Development	X	MUTUAL	2
4. Select Course of Action		MUTUAL	4
5. Select Landing Areas		MUTUAL	4
6. Select Landing Beaches		MUTUAL	4
7. Determine Sea Echelon Plan		CATF	4
8. Select Landing Force Objectives		CLF	4
9. Select Landing Zones and Drops Zones		CLF	4
10. Select Date and Hour of Landing	X	MUTUAL	4
CATF Commander, Amphibious Task Force		CLF Commander, Landing Force	

Figure IV-2. Primary Decisions Responsibilities Matrix

process, amphibious force planners must **further develop COAs** based on the guidance from the amphibious force commanders. Normally, the LF planners will provide an LF COA for the ATF planners to build a supporting COA. At a minimum, COAs include the general area for a landing (which may already be specified by higher headquarters), designation of the main effort, the scheme of maneuver, and the task organization. The selected COAs will be wargamed and compared based on criteria established by the commanders. The selection of amphibious force COAs is a mutual decision.

c. No later than during “COA Comparison and Decision,” the fourth step of the amphibious planning process, the following decisions must be made.

- **Select Course of Action.** At this point a COA is selected and the CONOPS (including fire support planning guidance) is prepared. The CONOPS is usually a written and graphic representation, in broad outline, of the intent of both of the commanders with respect to their portion of the operation. It gives an overall picture of the operation, including the transit, formation for landing, and the scheme of maneuver for accomplishing the amphibious force objectives. Both commanders prepare mutually supporting CONOPS.
- **Select Landing Areas.** The landing area is that part of the operational area within which the landing operations of an amphibious force are conducted. It includes the beach, the approaches to

the beach, the transport areas, the fire support areas, the airspace occupied by close supporting aircraft, and the land included in the advance inland to accomplish the initial objectives. The selection of the landing area is a mutual decision (see Figure IV-3).

- **Select Landing Beaches.** A landing beach is that portion of a shoreline usually required for the landing of a battalion landing team. However, it may also be that portion of a shoreline constituting a tactical locality (such as the shore of a bay) over which a force may be landed. Landing beaches are selected from within the selected landing

areas. Principal factors in the selection of landing beaches (in addition to those previously described for selection of landing areas) are as follows.

- Suitability for landing craft and AAVs.
- Offshore approaches and tidal conditions.
- Number, location, and suitability of beach support areas, beach exits, and nearby infrastructure. Landing beaches are designated by color, and subdivisions are further designated with the addition of a number (Green

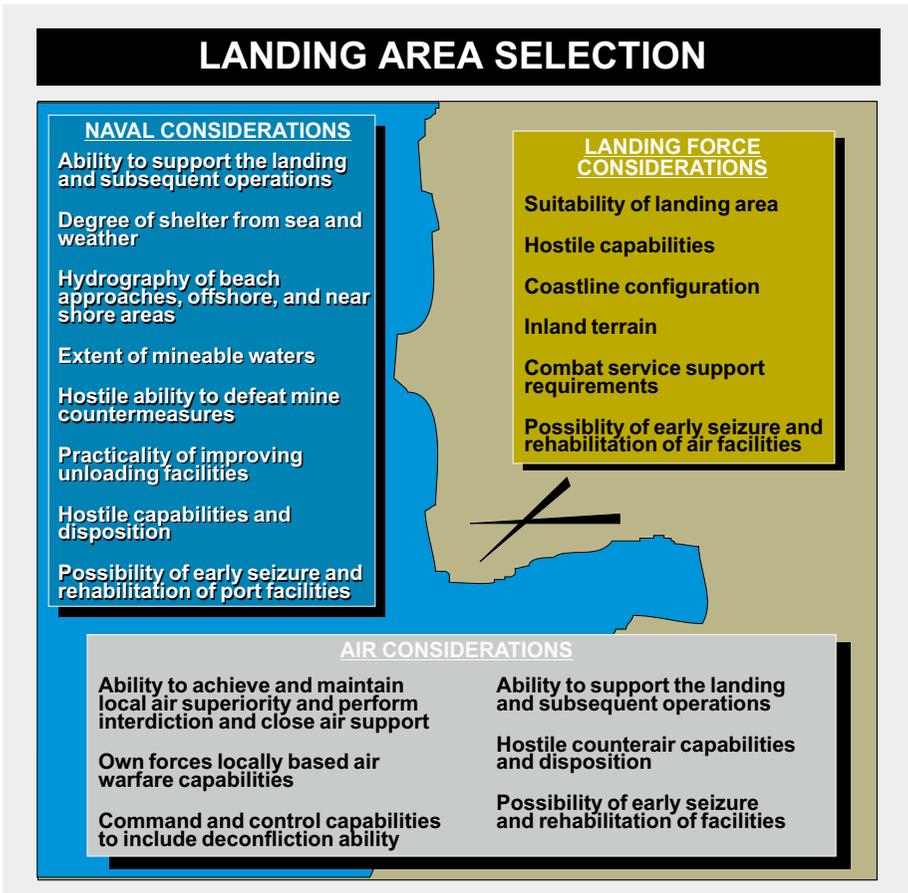


Figure IV-3. Landing Area Selection



The commander, landing force selects landing and drop zones.

Beach, Red Beach 1, and Red Beach 2). The selection of landing beaches is a mutual decision. Commanders and their staffs must also begin developing their “commander’s guidance for fires.” They should also ensure that the JFC targeting process is responding to their need for ‘shaping’ fires and incorporating them into an integrated joint fire support plan.

- **Determine Sea Echelon Plan.** The sea echelon plan is the distribution plan for amphibious shipping in the transport area to minimize losses due to threat attacks and to reduce the area swept by mines. The CATF determines the sea echelon plan. The design of the amphibious airspace must take into account, as a general rule, the lateral limits of the amphibious area above the sea echelon areas.
- **Select LF Objectives.** LF objectives facilitate the attainment of amphibious force objectives and/or ensure the continuous landing of forces and material. LF objectives are normally designated by LF and a number (e.g., LF Objective 1). LF objectives are selected by the CLF.
- **Select Landing Zones (LZs) and Drop Zones (DZs).** An LZ is a specified zone used for the landing of aircraft. An LZ may contain one or more landing sites. A DZ is a specific area upon which airborne troops, equipment, or supplies are air dropped. Fixed-wing LZs and DZs are designated when airborne or air-transported forces are employed. The CLF selects LZs and DZs.
- **Select Date and Hour of Landing.** The date and hour of the landing are selected unless they are specified in the order initiating the amphibious operation. **H-hour** is the time the first assault elements are scheduled to touchdown on the beach or an LZ and, in some cases, the commencement of countermine breaching operations. **L-hour** is defined in amphibious operations as the time at which the first helicopter of the helicopter-borne assault wave touches down in the LZ. H- and L-hour are confirmed prior to commencement of the landing based on the weather, enemy situation, and other pertinent factors. If not specified in the order initiating the amphibious operation, this is a mutual decision.

6. Crosstalks and Confirmation Briefs

a. **Order and OPGEN Crosstalk.** After the primary decisions have been made and step four of the planning process is completed, the amphibious force commanders develop their OPLANs, OPORDs, OPGENs, or OPTASKs. The staffs must maintain constant contact to ensure continued harmonization of their efforts. **Depending upon time available, once final drafts of the OPORD and OPGEN have been completed a crosstalk and confirmation brief should be conducted between the commanders and staffs.** The purpose of the orders and OPGEN crosstalk is to compare these documents with higher and adjacent orders to ensure unity of effort and to identify any discrepancies or gaps. Following the staff correction of any discrepancies identified during the crosstalk and confirmation brief, the OPORD and OPGEN will be submitted for approval.

b. **Confirmation Brief.** A confirmation brief is given by a subordinate commander once planning is complete. **Subordinate commanders confirm the plan to their subordinates who will actually execute the mission with the amphibious force commanders in attendance.** The participants brief the execution portions of their subordinate plans, including the commander's intent, specific task and purpose, the relationship between their unit's mission and the other units in the operation, and their detailed operational plans including actions on the objective. The confirmation brief allows the higher commander to identify discrepancies between his or her order and the subordinates' plan(s) and learn how the subordinate commanders intend to accomplish their mission.