

## CHAPTER 2

# Marine Corps Expeditionary Operations

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*“If a service does not possess a well-defined strategic concept, the public and the political leaders will be confused as to the role of the service, uncertain as to the necessity of its existence, and apathetic or hostile to the claims made by the service upon the resources of society.”*

—Samuel P. Huntington

*“... given the global nature of our interests and obligations, the United States must maintain its overseas presence forces and the ability to rapidly project power worldwide in order to achieve full spectrum dominance.”*

—Joint Vision 2020

## **MARINE CORPS CORE COMPETENCIES**

The Marine Corps’ contribution to national security and its role within a naval expeditionary force rest upon five unique core competencies. These competencies define the essence of the Marine Corps’ institutional culture and its contribution to the national military establishment. Core competencies are the set of specific capabilities or activities fundamental to a Service or agency role. The Marine Corps’ core competencies allow Marines to conduct expeditionary operations across the spectrum of crisis and conflict around the world. These core competencies, articulated by the Commandant of the Marine Corps in *Expeditionary Maneuver Warfare*, follow.

### **Warfighting Culture and Dynamic Decision-making**

War is fundamentally a clash of human wills and, as such, its outcomes are often determined more by human qualities than by technology. For this reason, Marines focus on the force of human resolve and utilize technology to leverage the chaos and complexity of the battlefield. From early on, Marines are instilled with a determination to accomplish the mission, ingeniously adapting available resources in chaotic and austere operating environments to realize success in battle. While Marines leverage technology to enhance tempo and decision-making capabilities—their training, education, and experience foster decisiveness even in the absence of perfect information. This ‘decision superiority’ recognizes that technology will never fully obviate fog and friction, and that the human ability to make effective decisions in battle is best achieved by intuition built through rigorous training, practiced discipline, and relevant experience. Leveraging chaos and complexity through information and decision-making technologies provides a truly asymmetric advantage to Marines engaged across the spectrum of operations.

### **Expeditionary Forward Operations**

Marines are continuously deployed around the world near potential trouble spots where they can deter aggression, respond quickly, and resolve crises whenever

called. The Corps' naval character and its strategically mobile presence enhance cultural and situational awareness of potential operating areas. This enhanced awareness enables Marines to work with friends and allies throughout each region, and is a cornerstone of the CINCs' engagement plans.

### **Sustainable and Interoperable Littoral Power Projection**

Today's scalable MAGTFs can access the world's littoral regions on short notice, responding quickly with a force tailored to the mission at hand. Our partnership with the Navy provides significant organic sustainment capabilities from the sea, and reduces the CINC's requirement to dedicate precious lift assets to sustaining early entry forces. This means that sustainable and credible naval forces can begin responding to a crisis early, supporting other elements of national power while giving the joint or combined commander time to develop the theater of operations more fully as required.

### **Combined Arms Integration**

Marines pioneered development of concepts such as close air support and vertical envelopment. MAGTFs constantly blend the art and science of commanding, controlling, training, and executing combined arms operations from air, land, sea, and space. Marines understand the logic and synergy of joint and multinational forces under the 'Single Battle' concept because of their culture and training in combined arms and expeditionary operations. They have experience with other government and nongovernment agencies. MAGTFs deliver desired 'effects' through both lethal and nonlethal means, with simultaneity and depth across the spectrum of operations. Marine employment of combined arms at the tactical level of war is a truly unique capability that reflects our innovative approach to warfighting and complements the tenets of maneuver warfare.

### **Forcible Entry from the Sea**

Together, the Navy and Marine Corps provide the Nation with its primary capability to rapidly project and sustain combat power ashore in the face of armed opposition. When access to safeguarding America's interests is denied or in jeopardy, forward-present, rapidly deployable Marine forces are trained and ready to create and exploit seams in an enemy's defenses by leveraging available joint and naval capabilities, projecting sustainable power ashore, and securing entry for follow-on forces. MEFs, reinforced by maritime pre-positioned assets when required, allow the United States to protect its worldwide interests, reassure allies, and fortify other elements of national power.

## EXPEDITIONARY OPERATIONS

An expedition is a military operation conducted by an armed force to accomplish a specific objective in a foreign country. Expeditionary operations encompass the entire range of military operations, from humanitarian assistance to forcible entry in a major theater war. The defining characteristic of expeditionary operations is the projection of force into a foreign setting. Successful expeditionary operations require—

- **Expeditionary Mindset.** Expeditionary Marine forces must establish and maintain an expeditionary mindset—an expeditionary culture—devoted to readiness and the mental agility and adaptability to accommodate changing conditions and accomplish rapidly changing missions with the forces and capabilities at hand.
- **Tailored Forces.** Marine forces are task-organized into MAGTFs to conduct expeditionary operations. MAGTFs are designed to accomplish the mission assigned and do not include forces or capabilities not required by the mission. Therefore, those forces needed to do the job—and only those forces—are employed.
- **Forward Deployment.** The presence of forward-deployed MAGTFs close to the crisis or objective area can expedite accomplishing the mission. They allow for a real deterrence, as the threat of employment is imminent and credible. Forward-deployed MAGTFs also can serve as a precursor to larger follow-on forces.
- **Rapid Deployment.** Expeditionary forces must be able to get to the crisis or AO quickly with all their capabilities ready to be employed. MAGTFs can rapidly deploy using airlift, sealift or movement or maneuver from a forward expeditionary site. Marines are always prepared to deploy anywhere in the world.
- **Expeditionary Basing.** Marines are prepared to take advantage of any opportunity to use expeditionary basing or sites to support rapid deployment and employment within the AO. Amphibious shipping, forward expeditionary sites, and intermediate staging bases are all methods the MAGTFs can employ to ensure the rapid buildup and effective employment of combat power.
- **Forcible Entry.** Expeditionary forces must be able to gain access to the AO despite the efforts of the enemy to prevent it. While Marines strive to avoid enemy strengths and take advantage of the enemy's weakness, MAGTFs must be prepared to defeat the enemy to allow follow-on operations. Marines are highly trained in forcible entry techniques such as amphibious assaults and helicopterborne (air assault) operations. Marines also train with allied, multinational, and joint forces such as United Kingdom Royal Marines, Republic of Korea Marines, and United States Army airborne forces.

- **Sustainment.** Expeditionary operations are often conducted in austere theaters or undeveloped areas of the world. Forces must be able to sustain their operations, providing the essential supplies and services necessary to keep the force manned and equipped to accomplish the mission. MAGTFs are well-suited to operate in these conditions as MAGTFs bring robust logistic and combat service support to the operation. Sea-basing, expeditionary sites, and the use of pre-positioned supplies and equipment assist in sustaining the force.

## FORCE PROJECTION

Forward-deployed MAGTFs, with their range of capabilities, are designed to enable the joint force commander to resolve crises and win conflicts. MAGTFs are uniquely suited to support the national security strategy by rapidly projecting the required capability into a foreign setting to abate the crisis. This capability is central to the United States ability to safeguard its national interests. Forward-deployed MAGTFs are prepared to meet a wide array of challenges in their AO. Their presence and engagement activities help to shape the crisis area. Finally, MAGTFs respond with appropriate force or capabilities to defeat the enemy, restore order or provide humanitarian relief.

The role of forward-deployed naval forces will grow even more critical as crises become more frequent, more unpredictable, and more difficult to resolve. Marines will be called upon to support, conduct, and in some cases, lead interagency crisis response operations. In such contingencies, the MAGTF's ability to establish *immediate* presence and access into the crisis area will be key. As the "first to respond" force, the MAGTF must be in or close to the intended AO, ready to gain access through forcible entry, and organized, trained, and equipped to respond to a wide variety of challenges. Deploying forces may be supported by a wide range of informational and security activities designed to demonstrate the Nation's commitment to regional security, strengthen ties with allies, and deter aggression. While these information operations may involve many agencies outside the MAGTF, it is the presence, readiness, and inherent flexibility of the MAGTF that ultimately projects national military power. In essence, this will enable the Marine Corps to expand its traditional "first to fight" role, becoming a "first to respond" element of national power.

The Marine Corps conducts force projection primarily through the use of MAGTFs conducting expeditionary operations employing three primary methods:

- Amphibious operations.
- MPF operations.
- Combination of the above methods.

Although the Marine Corps can deploy forces solely through organic, strategic, or theater air assets, our naval character favors the three primary methods.

## **AMPHIBIOUS OPERATIONS**

Joint Pub (JP) 3-02, *Joint Doctrine for Amphibious Operations*, defines an amphibious operation as 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 ashore to accomplish the assigned mission. Amphibious operations require a high degree of training and specialized equipment to succeed. Marine Corps forces are specifically organized, trained, and equipped to deploy aboard, operate from, and sustain themselves from amphibious ships. They are specifically designed to project land combat power ashore from the sea.

Amphibious operations are normally part of a larger joint operation. JP 3-02 sets forth the doctrine and selected tactics, techniques, and procedures to govern amphibious operations. Under Title 10, United States Code, the Marine Corps has primary responsibility for developing LF doctrine, tactics, techniques, procedures, and equipment that are of common interest to the Army and the Marine Corps. The doctrine, tactics, techniques, and procedures for conducting amphibious operations are not immutable; they are dynamic and evolutionary, adapting to new technology, threats, and requirements. Command relationships, the use of specific operational areas, and the control of airspace and fires must be flexible and adaptable to make amphibious forces more responsive to the current environment and an uncertain future.

### **Amphibious Operation Command Relationships**

Command relationships in amphibious operations should facilitate cooperative planning between the joint force, the Navy, and the Marine forces. They should ensure that appropriate responsibility and authority for the conduct of the amphibious operation is assigned to the commander of the Marine forces. The command relationship options available to a joint force commander or other establishing authority of an amphibious operation include OPCON, tactical control (TACON) and support as described in JP 0-2, *Unified Action Armed Forces (UNAAF)*, and JP 3-02. While doctrine should not specify a normal command relationship, typically a support relationship is established between the amphibious task force commander (Navy) and the LF commander (Marine or Army) based on the complementary capabilities of the amphibious task force and the LF. The establishing authority should consider the following factors when

developing the establishing directive and designating the supported commander at various phases and events during the amphibious operation (not all inclusive):

- Responsibility for the preponderance of the mission.
- Force capabilities.
- Threat.
- Type, phase, and duration of the operation.
- Command and control capabilities.
- Battlespace assigned.
- Recommendations from subordinate commanders.

An amphibious force is an amphibious task force and a landing force together with other forces that are trained, organized, and equipped for amphibious operations. An amphibious task force (ATF) is a Navy task organization formed to conduct amphibious operations. The ATF, together with the landing force and other forces, constitutes the amphibious force. A landing force (LF) is a Marine Corps or Army task organization formed to conduct amphibious operations. The LF, together with the ATF and other forces, constitute the amphibious force. There are five types of amphibious operations, each designed to have a specific impact on the adversary.

#### *Amphibious Assault*

The principal type of amphibious operation. It involves establishing a force on a hostile or potentially hostile shore. The assaults on strongly defended islands of Tarawa and Iwo Jima during World War II are examples.

#### *Amphibious Raid*

An amphibious operation involving swift incursion into or the temporary occupation of an objective followed by a planned withdrawal. The raid on Makin Island by Marine Raiders against the Japanese in 1942 is an example.

#### *Amphibious Demonstration*

An amphibious operation conducted for the purpose of deceiving the enemy through a show of force intended to delude the enemy into adopting a course of action unfavorable to him. The 2d Marine Division conducted a highly successful demonstration off the island of Tinian in 1944, fixing the Japanese defenders in place while the actual landing occurred at an unexpected landing site elsewhere on the island.

### *Amphibious Withdrawal*

An amphibious operation involving the extraction of forces by sea in naval ships or craft from a hostile or potentially hostile shore. The withdrawal of the 1st Marine Division's Marines, soldiers, and equipment along with 91,000 Korean refugees from the port of Hungnam following the retreat from the Chosin Reservoir in 1950 is a classic example of an amphibious withdrawal.

### *Other Amphibious Operations*

The capabilities of amphibious forces may be especially suited to conduct other types of operations, such as noncombatant evacuation operations and foreign humanitarian assistance.

## **Forcible Entry through an Amphibious Assault**

To support national interests and achieve national objectives, the United States must maintain the capability to gain access to a crisis area by forcible entry. United States forces cannot depend solely on the cooperation from contiguous countries to allow the introduction of forces within the crisis area. Forcible entry through an amphibious assault remains the Marine Corps' specialty. The amphibious assault is often considered the most difficult type of military operation due to the necessity to rapidly buildup combat power ashore. The unique power projection capabilities of the Marine Corps take advantage of the mobility provided by naval strategic lift and the organic logistics and sustainment within amphibious forces to provide significant capabilities to the joint force commander. Marine Corps amphibious assault forces complement other forcible entry forces such as airborne and air assault forces by seizing ports and airfields necessary to facilitate the arrival and sustainment of these forces.

Within the five types of amphibious operations, there are a number of tasks that the Marine Corps, as part of an amphibious force, can accomplish to facilitate naval and joint operations. The following are representative, but not inclusive, of tasks that may be performed:

- Attack an enemy operational or tactical center of gravity or critical vulnerability.
- 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 opposing forces.

- Provide afloat strategic reserve to exploit opportunities and counter threats.
- Provide strategic deception to force the enemy to defend along littoral areas.
- Evacuate United States citizens and selected citizens from the host nation or third country nationals whose lives are in danger from a foreign country to a designated safe haven.
- Operate with and provide training to allied or coalition amphibious forces.
- 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.

The adaptability and versatility of Marine Corps forces provide unique warfighting capabilities to the joint force commander. Amphibious forces are well-suited to accomplish a wide variety of operational missions. Opportunities should be sought to—

- Use the MAGTF decisively to seize or obtain the joint force commander's operational objectives.
- Use the full operational reach of the amphibious force, through its organic aviation, fires, and surveillance and reconnaissance assets.
- Use the command and control capability on amphibious ships to minimize staffs ashore and facilitate force protection.
- Sea-base logistics and selectively offload to minimize footprint ashore and facilitate force protection.

Once an amphibious force has executed its mission ashore, the LF can remain ashore to support ongoing land operations or may re-embark in amphibious shipping to be available for a new mission. Marine Corps forces can provide great flexibility to a joint force commander when they are re-embarked aboard amphibious shipping and poised to strike the enemy again.

### **Sequence**

Amphibious operations generally follow distinct phases, though the sequence may vary.

When amphibious forces are forward-deployed or 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 five phases of an amphibious operation are always required, but their sequence may change as circumstances dictate.

### *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. Planning, however, 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 when the planning phase ends and the operational phase begins.

### *Embarkation*

The embarkation phase is when the landing forces, with their equipment and supplies, embark in assigned shipping. 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*

Rehearsal may consist of an actual landing or may be conducted as a command post exercise. The rehearsal phase is when the prospective operation is rehearsed to—

- Test the adequacy of plans, timing of detailed operations, and combat readiness of participating forces.
- Ensure that all echelons are familiar with plans.
- Provide an opportunity to reconfigure embarked forces and equipment.
- Verify communications for commonality, redundancy, security, and reliability.

### *Movement*

The movement phase is when 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.

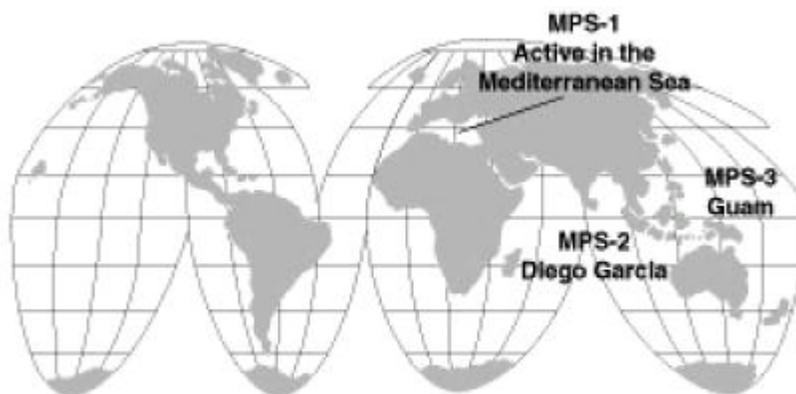
### *Action*

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

## **MARITIME PRE-POSITIONING FORCE**

The MPF is an integral part of the Marine Corps' expeditionary capability. Rapid response to regional contingencies is its primary role. An MPF consists of the MPS squadron (MPSRON), Navy support element, and MAGTF fly-in echelon. Together they provide the joint force commander with a proven, flexible force that can quickly respond to a full range of missions from combat to humanitarian relief. Fundamental to the MPF is its interoperability with joint forces and its rapid introduction of combat forces into austere environments.

Comprised of specially designed ships, organized into three squadrons, MPSRONs carry equipment and supplies for 30 days of combat operations by a Marine expeditionary brigade (MEB) of approximately 16,000 Marines and Sailors. When deployed together, these squadrons provide equipment and supplies to support a MEF. These squadrons are forward-deployed to ensure rapid closure to the crisis area within a 5–14 day sailing period. See figure 2-1. MAGTF and Navy support element personnel are airlifted to a previously seized lodgment, a benign or host nation port and airfield or to an intermediate support



**Figure 2-1. Current Location of Maritime Pre-positioning Ships Squadrons.**

base where they link up with equipment and supplies offloaded from the MPSRON. If a port is not available, the squadron may be offloaded in-stream. A unique characteristic of the MPF is that the embarked equipment is maintained aboard ship and is combat-ready immediately upon offload. The entire squadron or selected capability sets from designated ships can be offloaded to support a wide range of MAGTF missions.

Movement of Marine forces and their combat essential equipment must be fully integrated with ongoing tactical operations ashore. The MPF, consisting of the MPS and the fly-in echelon of Navy and Marine forces, can then integrate with the MAGTF commander's scheme of maneuver while delivering combat service support and force sustainment, enabling a rapid force buildup or providing support and sustainment for a prolonged period from offshore. MPFs can tailor support packages to accommodate a variety of missions to include MOOTW of varying scope and complexity.

## **SUSTAINED OPERATIONS ASHORE**

The Marine Corps also has the capability to operate independent of the sea to support sustained land operations ashore with the Army or coalition partners. The Marine Corps conducts sustained operations ashore to provide the joint force commander four options when fighting a land operation.

### **Enabling Force**

The enabling force sets the stage for follow-on operations by other joint force components. The amphibious landing and subsequent operations ashore against the Japanese on Guadalcanal in 1942 set the stage for the arrival of Army forces to complete the seizure of the island in 1943. These enabling actions are not limited to the opening phases of the campaign such as establishing a lodgment, but may be conducted to divert attention away from the main effort. An example of this would be the role of I MEF in Operation Desert Storm (1991) in fixing the Iraqi forces in Kuwait while allowing Central Command's main effort, U.S. Army VII Corps, to maneuver to envelop the enemy.

### **Decisive Force**

The decisive force exploits its advanced command and control system to identify gaps necessary to conduct decisive operations and reduce enemy centers of gravity. Decisive actions run the gamut from destruction of enemy military units to interdiction of critical lines of communications to the evacuation of American and third country nationals from untenable urban areas. An example of such a

decisive action is the landing at Inchon in 1950 that severed the North Korean lines of communications and forced their withdrawal from South Korea.

### **Exploitation Force**

The exploitation force takes advantage of opportunities created by the activity of other joint force components. The joint force commander may exploit these opportunities through rapid and focused sea-based operations by the MAGTF that capitalize on the results of ongoing engagements to achieve decisive results. The 24th MEU served in this role during operations to seize Grenada and safeguard American citizens in 1983. While Army forces fixed the Cuban and Grenadian forces at one end of the island, the Marines landed at will and maneuvered freely around the island, accomplishing the joint force commander's objectives.

### **Sustaining Force**

The sustaining force maintains a presence ashore over an extended period of time to support continued operations by the joint force commander within the joint AO. Also includes providing logistical sustainment to joint and coalition forces until theater level sustainment is established. I MEF fulfilled this role in the early days of Operation Desert Shield (1990) in Saudi Arabia and Operation Restore Hope (1992–1993) in Somalia by providing sustainment to joint and Army forces until arrangements for theater support were complete.

## **EMERGING CONCEPTS AND TECHNOLOGIES**

Concepts enable decisionmakers the ability to identify capabilities and changes to doctrine, organization, training, and education to create a force for the future. Future operational concepts are general descriptions of how military forces intend to fight in the future. Services and the joint community have relied increasingly on operational concepts as the "engines" for their combat development processes. These concepts also furnish the intellectual basis for experimentation and force development.

Increasing technological advancements will expedite the creation of capabilities articulated in emerging concepts. Technologically advanced systems will enhance the United States military forces' ability to exploit critical vulnerabilities and rapidly defeat centers of gravity. These centers of gravity will be located and identified using modern sensors and sophisticated intelligence collection and analysis. Some of the advanced systems that will provide the enhanced capability to conduct operations are advanced sensors and information systems; tilt rotor aircraft; vertical and short take-off aircraft; air-cushion vehicles and other hovercraft; high-speed shallow-draft ships; and the advanced amphibious assault vehicle.

## 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

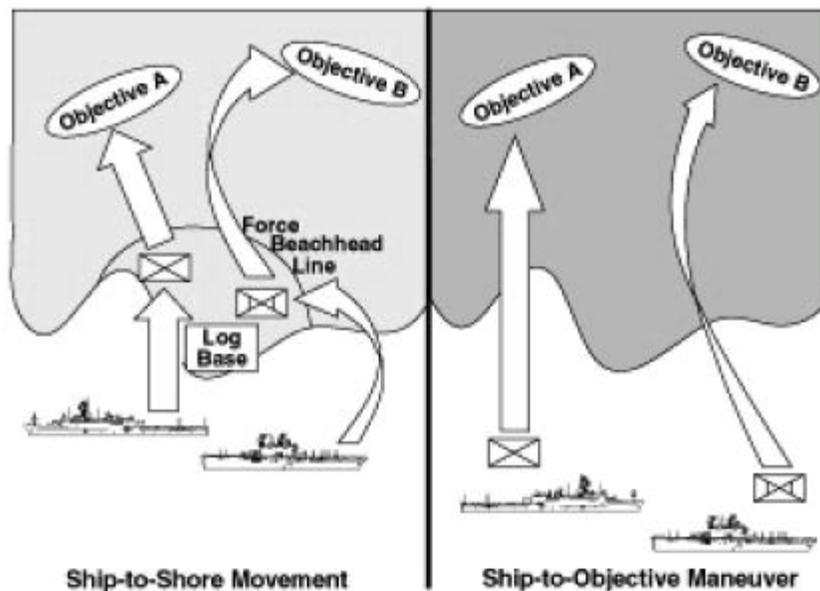


Figure 2-2. Operational Objectives.

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.