

# Amphibious Landings in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century

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# SecDef's Critical Questions

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“We have to take a hard look at where it would be necessary or sensible to launch another major amphibious landing again – especially as advances in anti-ship systems keep pushing the potential launch point further from shore. ... **In the 21<sup>st</sup> century, what kind of amphibious capability do we really need to deal with the most likely scenarios, and then how much?**”

# Outline

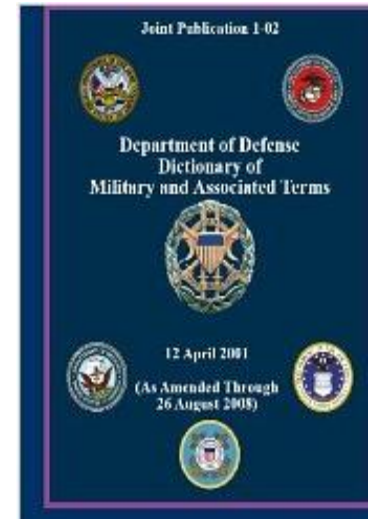
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- Why retain an amphibious assault capability?
  - A question for the entire DoN, not just the Marine Corps
- The future of amphibious assault
  - Rethinking our approach
- How much capacity do we need?
  - How much is enough
- Conclusions—the way ahead



# Definitions

- **Amphibious operation:** 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 assault:** The principal type of amphibious operation that involves establishing a force on a hostile or potentially hostile shore. See also assault.
- **Assault:** In an amphibious operation, the period of time between the arrival of the major assault forces of the amphibious task force in the objective area and the accomplishment of the amphibious task force mission.



Secretary Gates is posing two straight-forward questions:  
What is the future of amphibious assault?  
How much capacity do we need?



# From this....to what?

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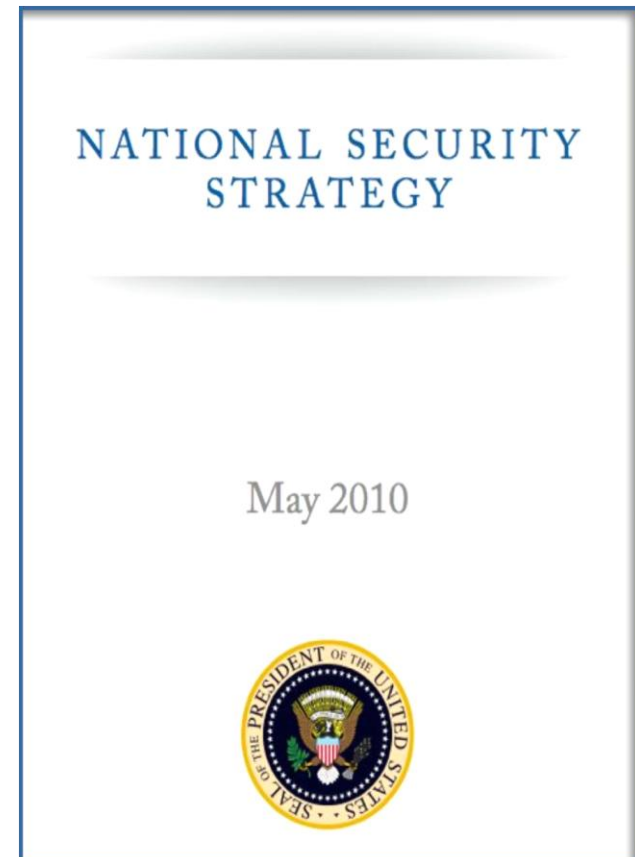


**BLUF:** Our amphibious assault capabilities must evolve with changes in the threat and our own doctrine and Joint capabilities and be relevant in a Joint context.

# The rationale for a future amphibious assault capability is in our National Security Strategy...

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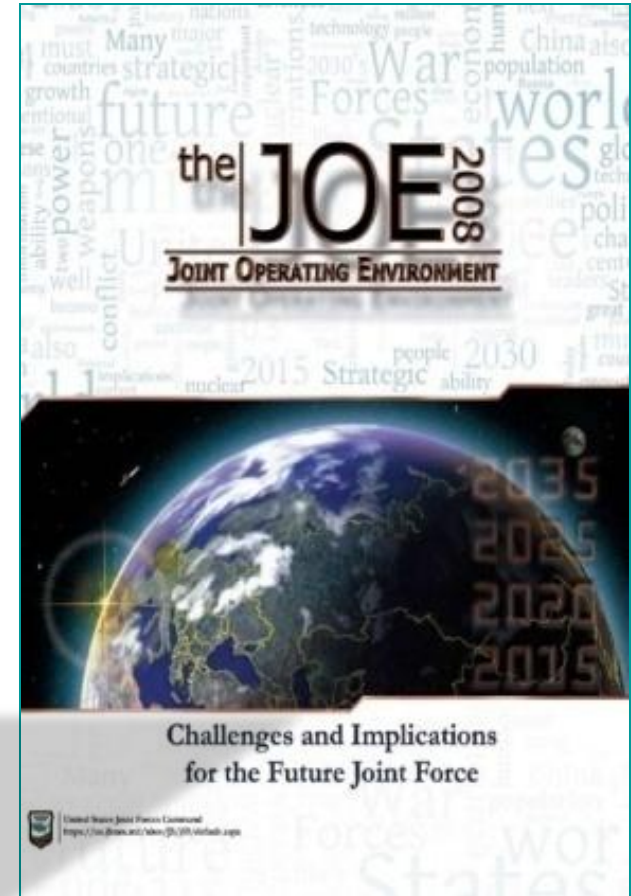
*“We will continue to rebalance our military capabilities to excel at counterterrorism, counterinsurgency, stability operations and meeting increasingly sophisticated security threats...This includes preparing for increasingly sophisticated adversaries, deterring and defeating aggression in anti-access environments...”*



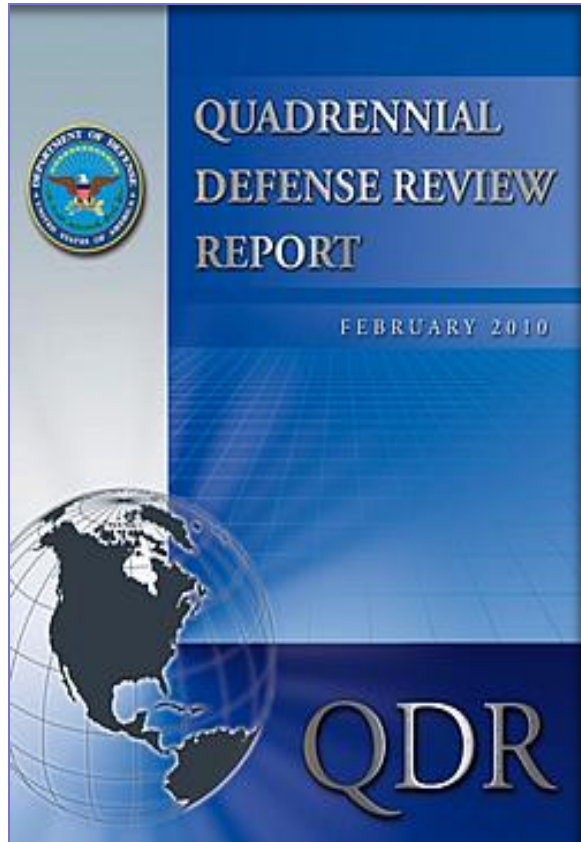
# ...in the Joint Operating Environment...

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*“...the United States may not have uncontested access to bases in the immediate area from which it can project military power..... **The battle for access** may prove not only the most important, but the most difficult.”*



# ...in and the 2010 QDR



*“In the absence of dominant U.S. power projection capabilities, the integrity of U.S. alliances and security partnerships could be called into question, reducing U.S. security and influence and increasing the possibility of conflict.”*

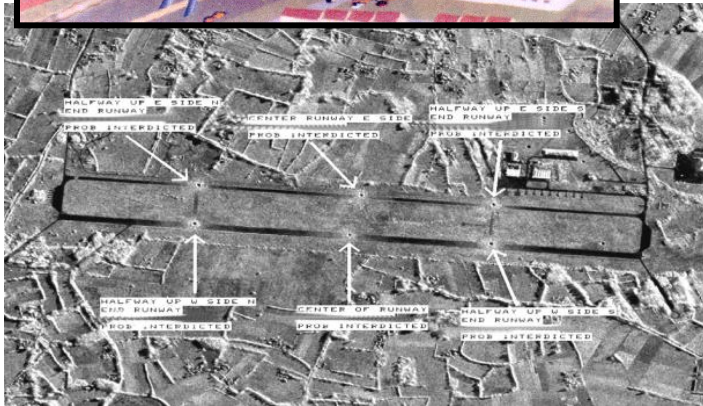
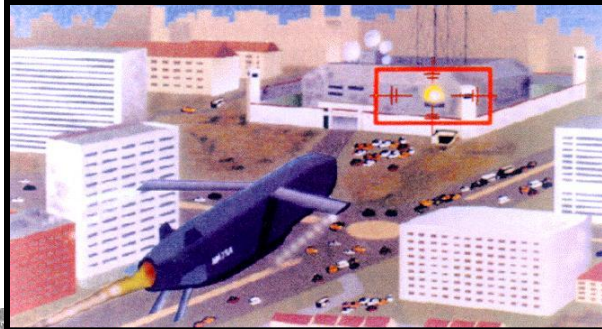
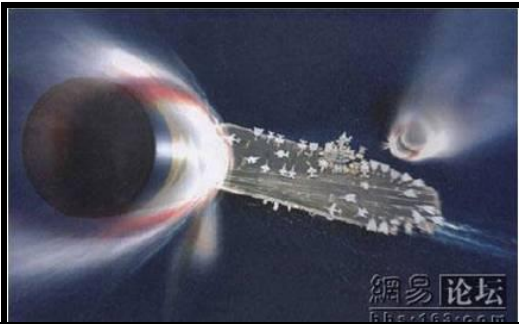
**Winning the “battle for access” in the 21<sup>st</sup> century in the face of emerging anti-access challenges is essential to U.S. policy objectives, alliances and global interests.**



# Operating in an A2/AD environment will demand new ways of thinking about the battle for access

## G-RAMM

**Guided  
Rockets,  
Artillery,  
Mortars, and  
Missiles**

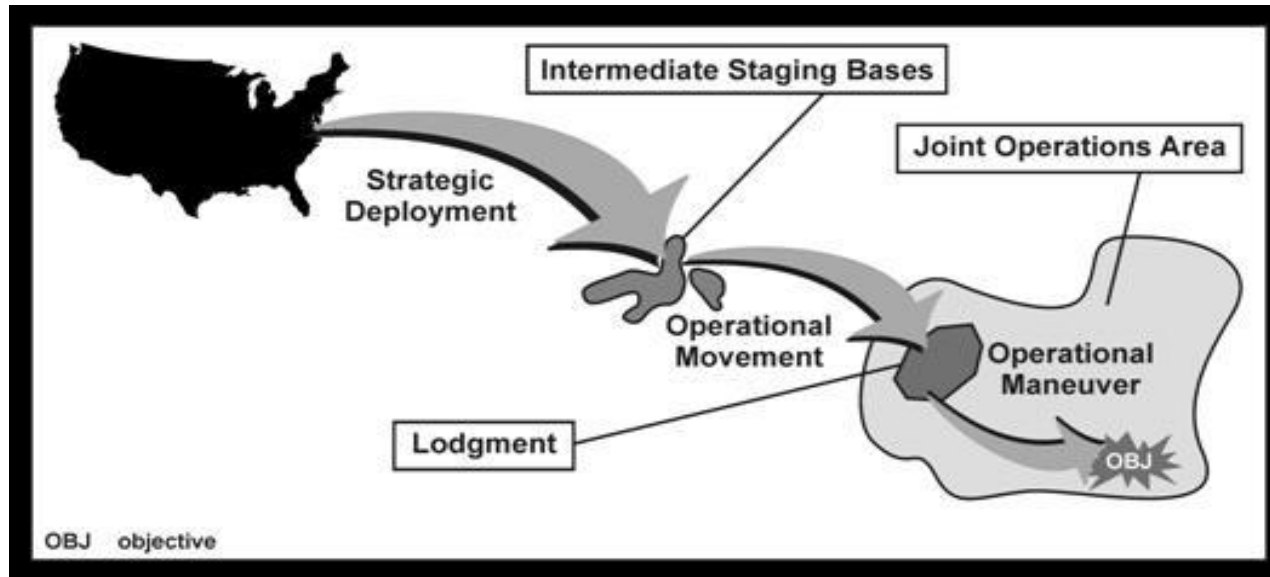


**Anti-access: prevent  
operational freedom of action**



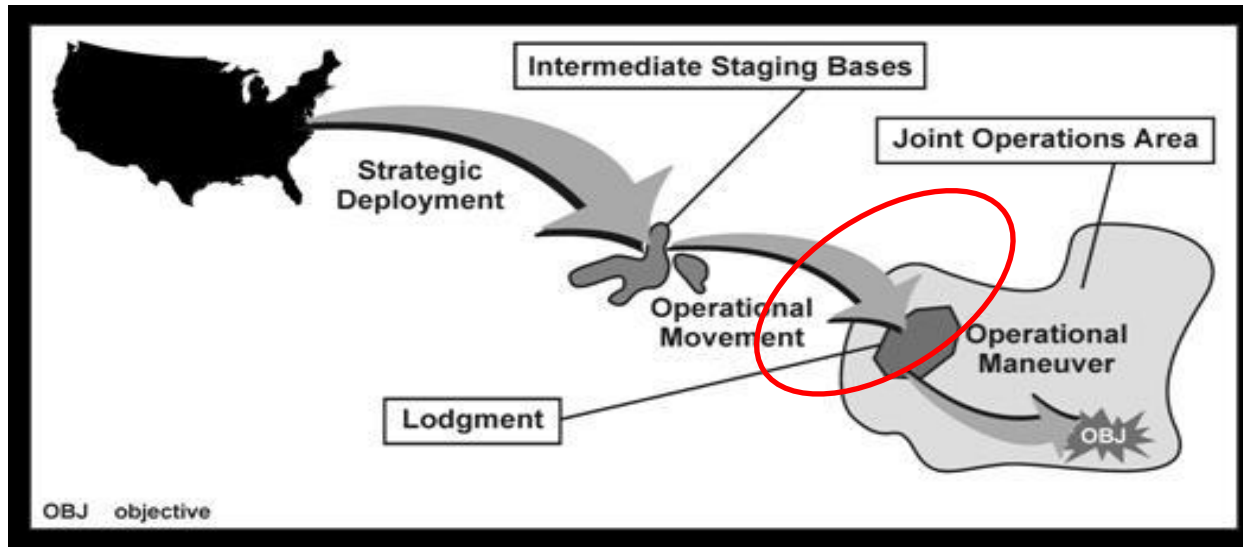
**Area-denial: prevent  
tactical freedom of action**

# Emerging A2/AD threats will require US joint forces to be proficient at Operational Maneuver from Strategic Distances



Operational maneuver from strategic distance combines global force projection with maneuver against an operationally significant objective. It requires strategic reach that deploys maneuverable land power to an operational area that provides a position of advantage... Success demands full integration of all available joint means. Thus, it combines force projection with land maneuver to operational depth in an integrated, continuous operation.

# Key to *OMFSD* will be seizing a joint lodgment



**Airborne operations**



**Air landing/air assault operations**



**Amphibious operations**



# 21<sup>st</sup> century amphibious assaults will thus focus on the forcible entry mission

- Forcible entry: Seizing and holding of a military lodgment in the face of armed opposition.
- Lodgment: A designated area in a hostile or potentially hostile operational area that, when seized and held, makes the continuous landing of troops and materiel possible and provides maneuver space for subsequent operations.





# Forcible Entry: lessons from the past

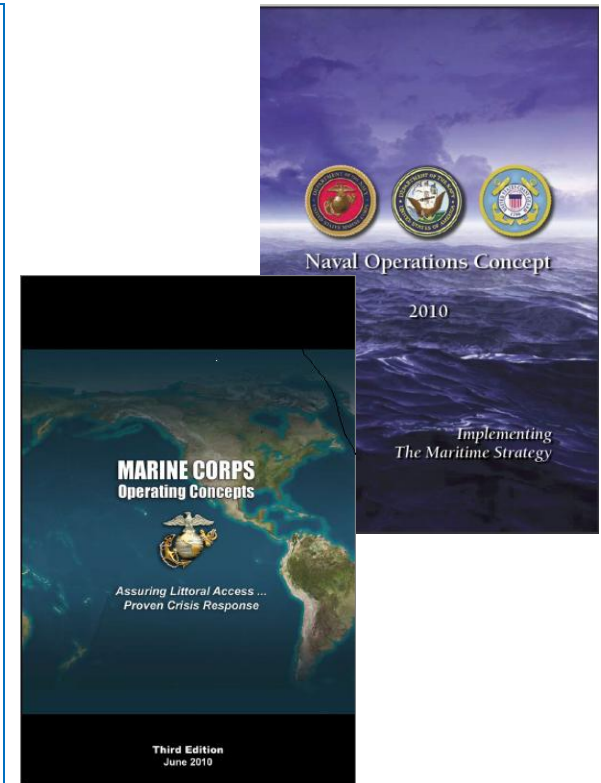
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- Navy/Marine amphibious assaults in the Pacific in WW II
  - The lodgment itself was the objective
  - Extensive shaping ops and rapid combat power buildup
- Army amphibious theater entry operations
  - The lodgment was the first move in an extended land campaign
  - Emphasis on surprise/deception
  - Most often combined with airborne landings
- Against sophisticated G-RAMM threats, will combine the Army theater entry approach with Navy/Marine advance force/shaping ops



# The naval answer: Littoral Maneuver

Defined in NOC and MOC as “*The ability to transition ready-to-fight combat forces from the sea to the shore in order to achieve a position of relative advantage over the enemy.*”



Recent Naval & Marine operating concepts reflect shift towards Littoral Maneuver

# What's Different or New???

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- **Character of Adversary**
  - Anti-access and area denial (A2/AD) threats armed with G-RAMM systems
  - Diffused/dispersed threat posture
- **Joint context—seize a lodgment vs. part of a naval campaign**
  - Scenarios for theater entry require larger Joint force vice a 1-2 MEB AE objective
- **Importance of extended naval shaping operations**
  - Persistent surveillance capability essential
  - Integrated fleet air and missile defenses (NIFC-CA)
- **Time before landing operations**
  - No more 10-30-30
- **Distance from the shore for surface landing ops**

# Littoral maneuver will once again demand close Navy and Marine Corps collaboration

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- **Force build-up and shaping phases**

- “Outer network battle”
- Offensive ASW
- Reliance on long-range and covert strike

- **Advance force phase**

- Persistent surveillance and strike
- Mine sweeping

- **Littoral maneuver phase**

- STOM
- Counter-G-RAMM battle
- Counter-swarm battle

- **Rapid reinforcement phase**

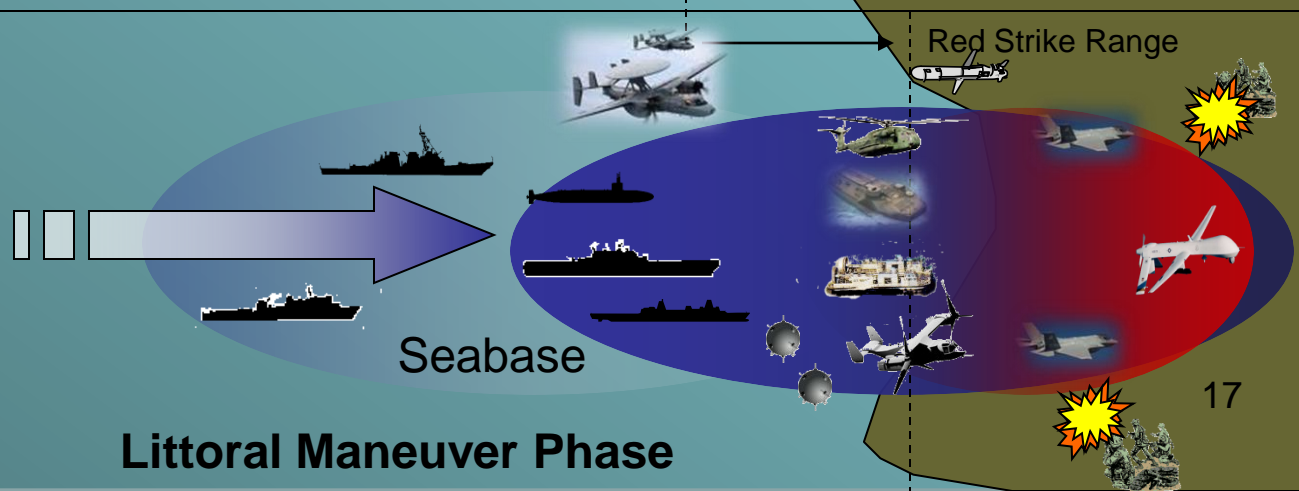
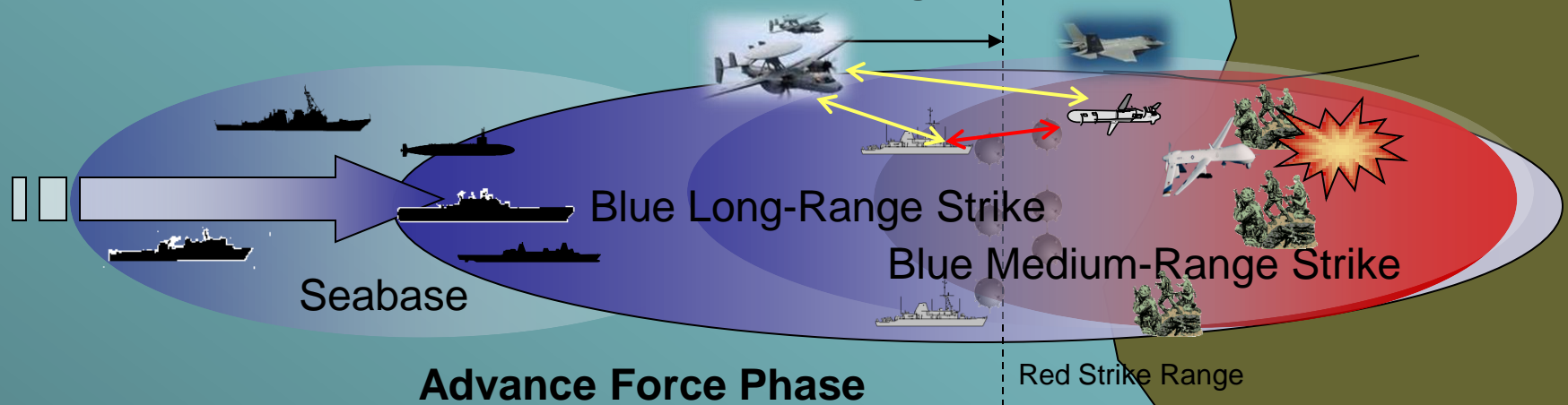
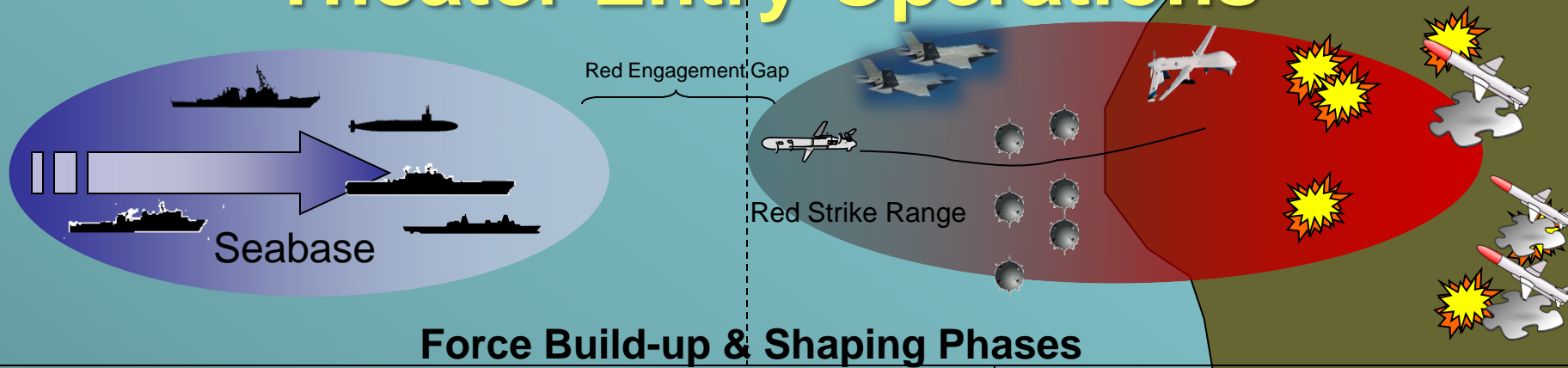
- Expand the inner G-RAMM perimeter
- Rapid RSOI
- Airborne?

## Key enablers

- CVNs and naval tac air
- NIFC-CA
- Navy BMD
- SSNs/SSGNs
- NSW and Marine force recon
- LCS
- Mine Warfare
- DDG-1000s
- NECC
- Amphibious ships
- V-22
- Family of STS connectors
- MPF
- JLOTS
- JHSV
- Unmanned systems
- Extended Range 5” round
- Counter G-RAMM

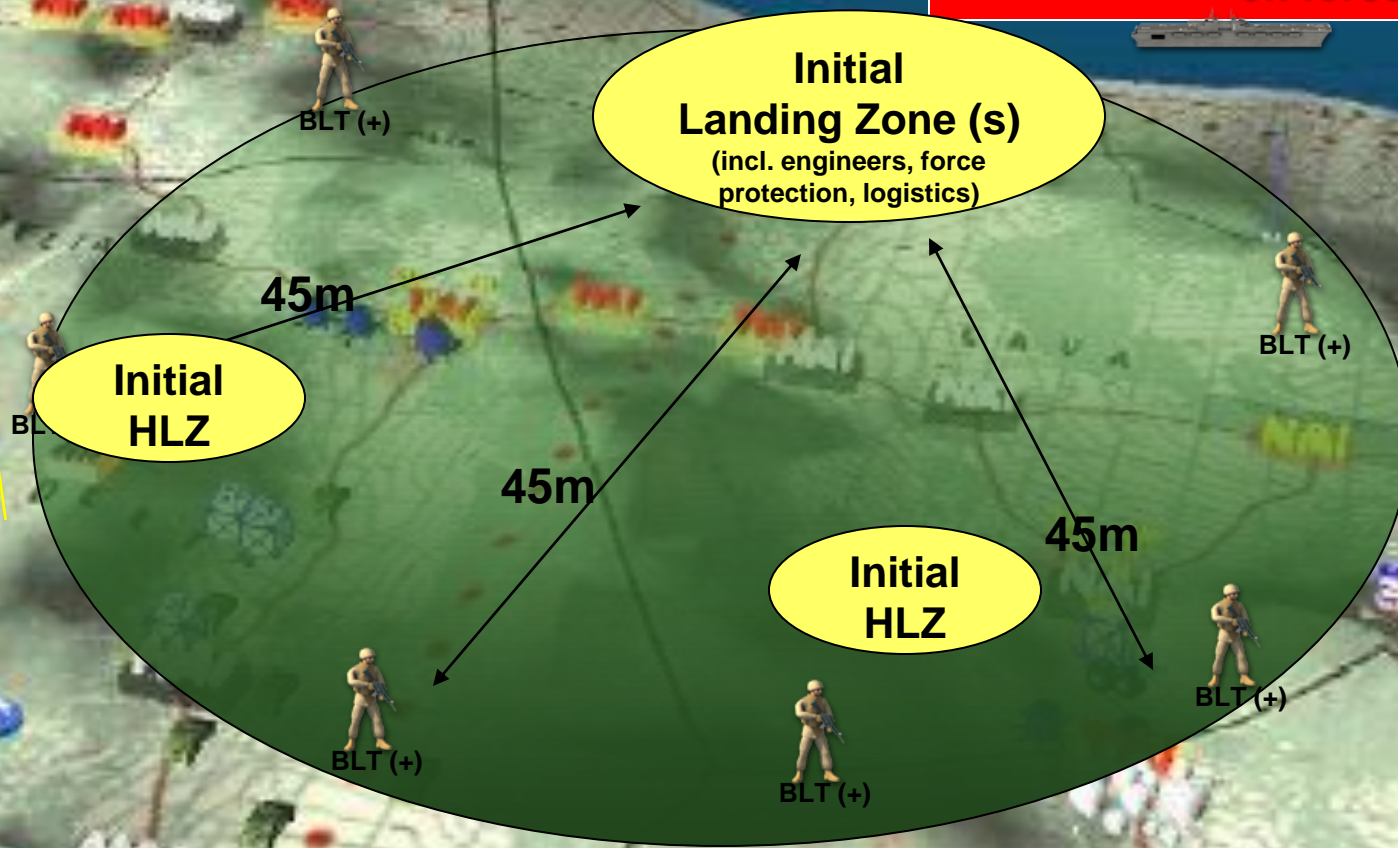


# Theater Entry Operations



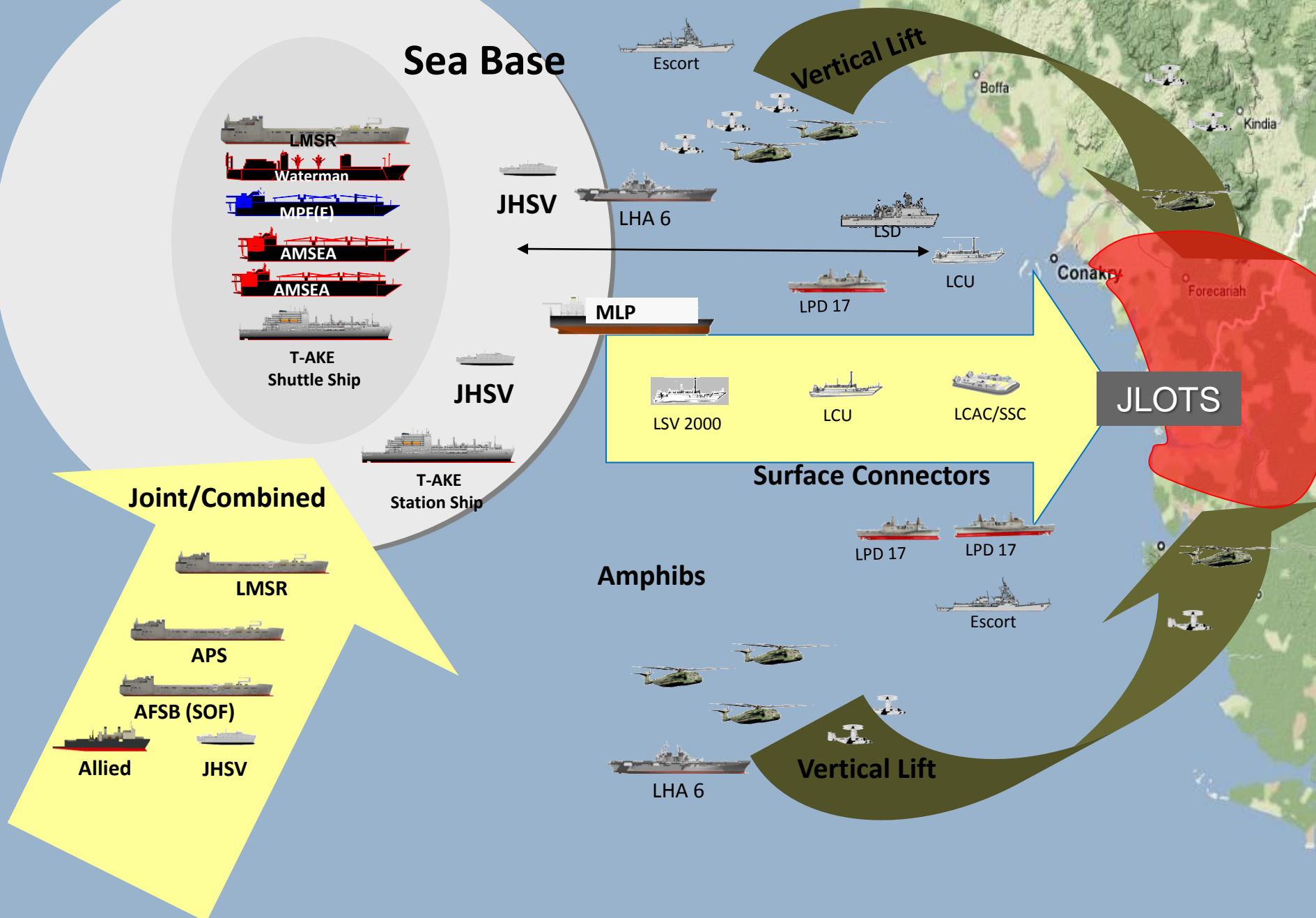
# Joint Lodgment

Supported by Joint fires, including USAF bombers, Marines and Army air assault/airborne assets gain access and secure joint lodgment for follow on forces.

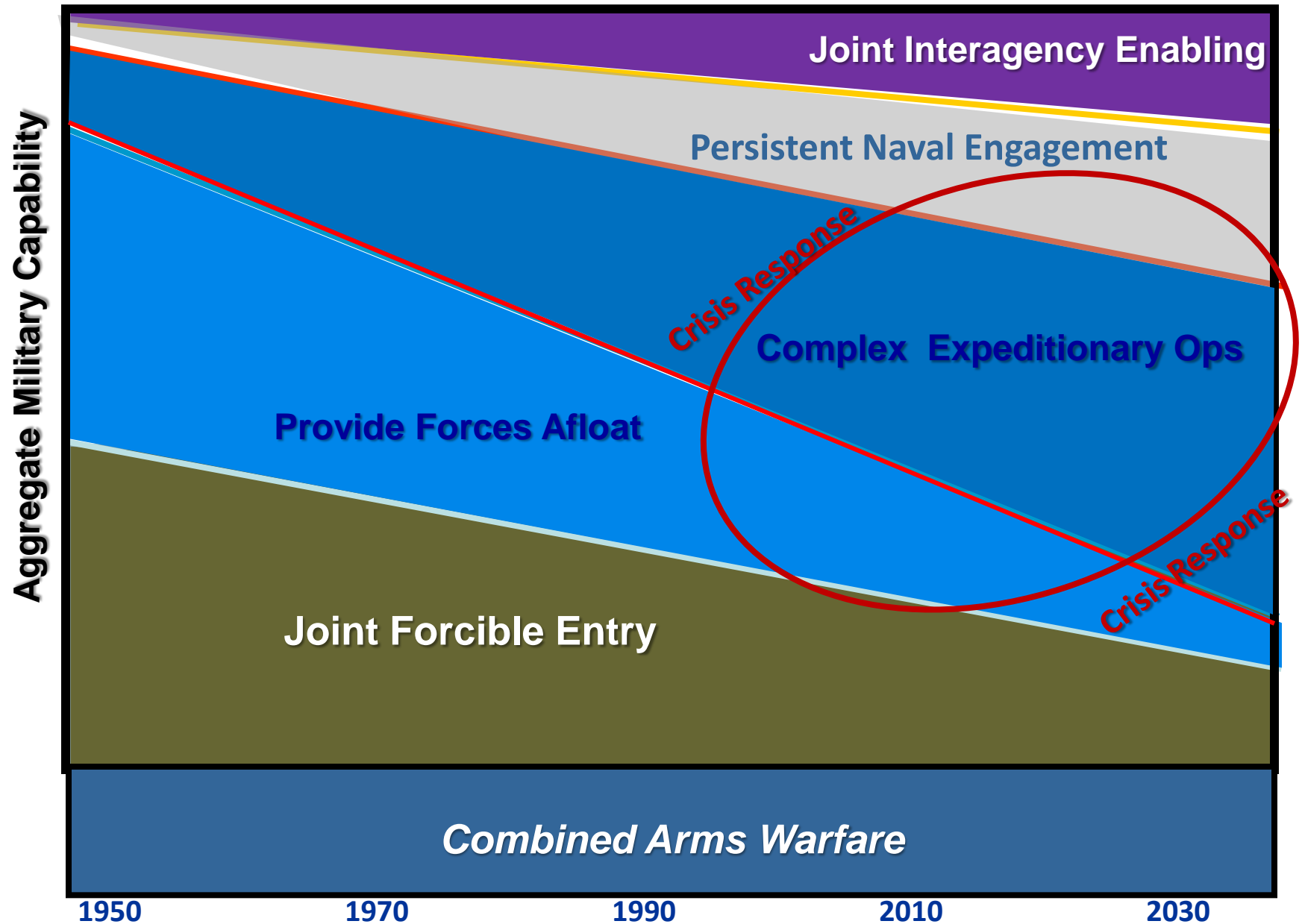


Littoral maneuver force must secure/clear lodgment against projected G-RAMM threat

# Rapid Reinforcement/Sustained Joint Throughput



# How much capacity?





# Current POR seems about right



- World War II

- Total force 96 divisions (5 airborne, 6 Marine)
- Amphibious lift for 13 divisions (14% of non-airborne divisions)



- Present Capacity

- Total Force of 85 BCT equivalents (6 airborne, 11 Marines)
- Amphibious lift for 2 BCT equivalents (2.5% of non-airborne)
- MPF, JHSVs, JLOTS, and surge sealift critical

# Conclusion

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**In the 21<sup>st</sup> century, what kind of amphibious capability do we really need to deal with the most likely scenarios, and then how much?**

- Why retain an amphibious assault capability?
  - To win the **battle for access**
- Most likely scenario?
  - **Theater entry** in an **A2/AD environment**
- How much capacity do we need?
  - 2 MEB seems about right—with moderate risk
  - Investments applicable over ROMO have priority
  - Requires additional conceptual development, gaming & exercises

# Questions?

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