



# Iwo Jima Amphibious Ready Group/ 24TH Marine Expeditionary Unit (IWOARG/24 MEU) NDIA Post-Deployment Brief

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The Overall Classification of this Brief is UNCLASSIFIED



# Agenda

- Introduction
- ARG/MEU Mission
- ARG/MEU Task Organization
- Executive Overview
- Operational Overview
- Summary/Key Takeaways



24 MEU Maritime Raid Force conducts full mission profile top-down VBSS aboard the USNS CARL BRASHERAR following a RAS with the USS IWO JIMA



# Introduction

*The Nation's Crisis Response Force forward deployed and poised to rapidly respond to Crises within the arc of instability and within regions of anticipated future conflicts.*

- Through the Future Force Posture Plan, Amphibious Ready Groups (ARG) / Marine Expeditionary Units (MEU) will be the right force in the right place at the right time.
- MEUs are forward-deployed forces with unique capabilities.
  - Sea-based Marine Air Ground Task Forces (MAGTF)
  - Flexible, forward-engaged
  - Capable of operating across the range of military operations (ROMO)
- Capable of conducting amphibious operations and contingency operations, introducing follow-on forces, and compliment special operations forces.
- There are seven standing MEUs that routinely deploy.
  - The 11th, 13th, and 15th are based on the West Coast.
  - The 22nd, 24th, and 26th MEUs are based on the East Coast.
  - The 31st MEU is forward assigned and located in Okinawa, Japan.



# ARG/MEU Mission

- The Amphibious Ready Group and embarked Marine Expeditionary Unit provide the Nation a forward deployed, flexible sea-based force capable of conducting amphibious operations, crisis response, and limited contingency operations, to include enabling the introduction of follow on forces, and, designated special operations, in order to support the theater requirements of Geographic Combatant Commanders. *MCO 3120.9C, 4 Aug 2009*
- Together the ARG / MEU provides flexible and sustainable options from the sea to the littoral in order to
  - DEFEND THE HOMELAND
  - DETER CONFLICT
  - RESPOND TO CRISES
  - DEFEAT AGGRESSION
  - PROTECT THE MARITIME COMMONS
  - STRENGTHEN PARTNERSHIPS
  - PROVIDE HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE AND DISASTER REPOSE

*Cooperative Strategy for  
21<sup>st</sup> Century Seapower*

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Expeditionary by nature</li> <li>• Sea-based, strategic reach with inherent force protection</li> <li>• Scalable levels of presence and visibility</li> <li>• Offers wide range of options for the national leadership</li> <li>• Rapid response: within 6 hours of notification</li> <li>• Self-sustaining: 15 days of organic, sea-based logistics</li> <li>• Combined arms integration of credible combat power</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Task organized to operate across the Range Of Military Operations (ROMO)</li> <li>• Enables follow-on, joint, interagency, and coalition forces</li> <li>• Operates from over-the-horizon and out-of-sight</li> <li>• Operates independent of facilities ashore</li> <li>• Capable of integrating with special operations forces</li> </ul> |
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*PP&O Capabilities Brief*



# Definitions

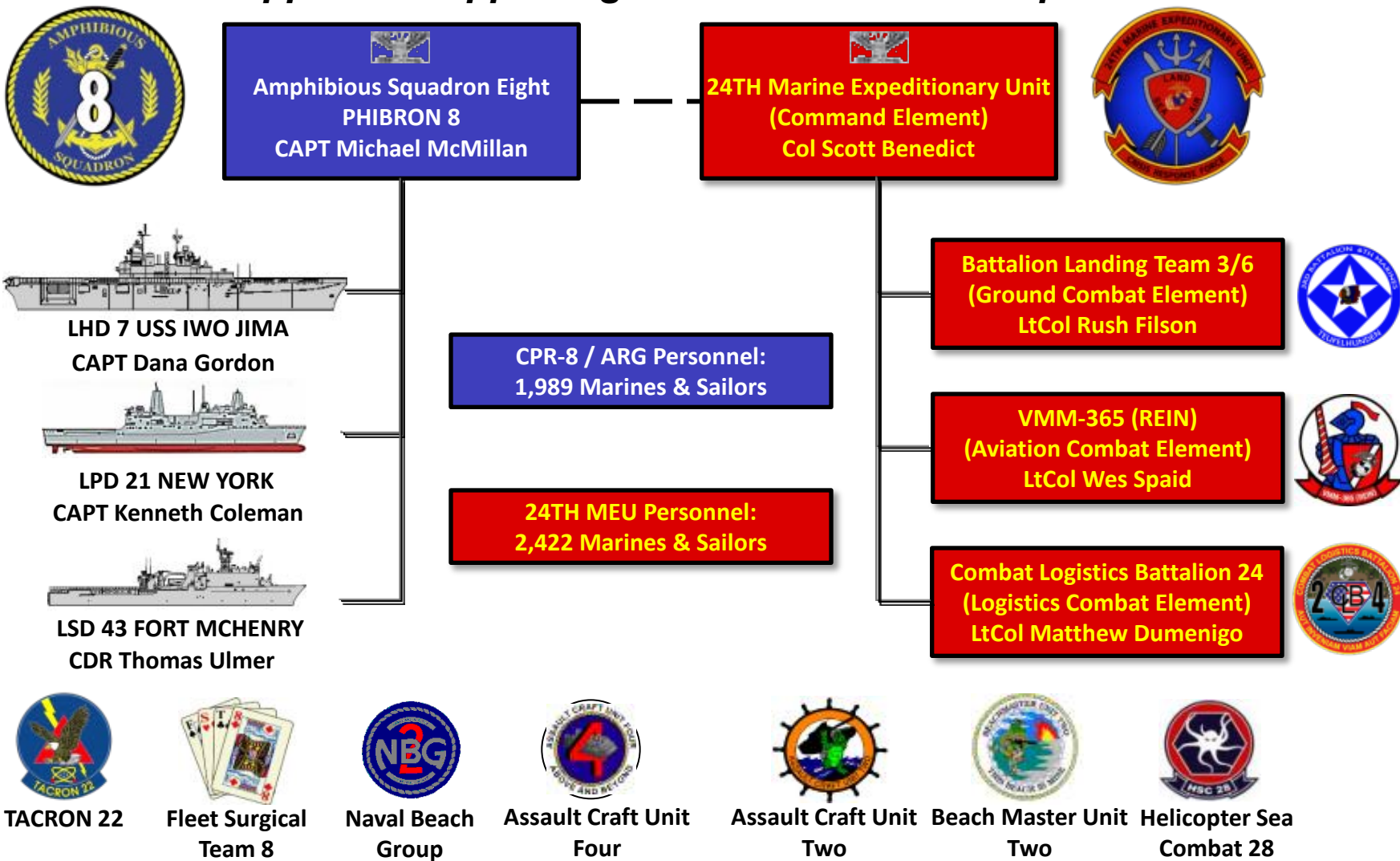
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- *For the purposes of discussion during this brief the following definitions apply:*
- **SPLIT Operations**: *ARG/MEU elements are operating in support of one joint force or combatant commander. During these operations TACON of elements remains with the ARG/MEU commander*
- **DISAGGREGATED Operations**:
- *ARG/MEU elements are operating in support of more than one joint force or combatant commander. During these operations TACON of elements no longer resides with the ARG/MEU commander.*
- *Reference: Disaggregated Amphibious Ready Group/Marine Expeditionary Unit Concept of Employment. 22 August 2014.*



# Task Organization

## Supported/Supporting Command Relationship







# Executive Overview



- **USS IWO JIMA Amphibious Ready Group (IWOARG) / 24TH Marine Expeditionary Unit (MEU) deployed 11 Dec 2014 - 20 Jul 2015 to EUCOM, AFRICOM, and CENTCOM AORs**
- **ARG/MEU adequately manned, trained, and equipped**
- **Split ARG /MEU operations were the norm, ARG/MEU aggregated for 6 days**
- **Deployment included (221 days)**
  - **Provided forward presence as the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (CJCS) Global Response Force, EUR/AF Rapid Response Force, and CENTCOM Theater Reserve**
    - **ARG/MEU was committed to operational tasking, including Yemen Contingency Alerts, Support to USEMB Sana'a and Special Operations Command Forward (SOCFWD) Yemen, and Support to KSA and Partner Nation Operations in and around Yemen**
  - **The ARG/MEU mission evolved to focus on Sea Control and Maritime Security in the Gulf of Aden and South Red Sea**
  - **Conducted Special Operations Forces (SOF) integration and joint and coalition operations**
    - **Coordination through SOF Liaison Element (SOFLE) resulted in approx. 30 Joint Operations, Activities, and Actions**
  - **Participated in nine major Theater Security Cooperation (TSC) exercises:**



Marines from K Co (Rein), BLT 3/6 rehearse an amphibious assault during Exercise EAGLE RESOLVE 15 in Kuwait.

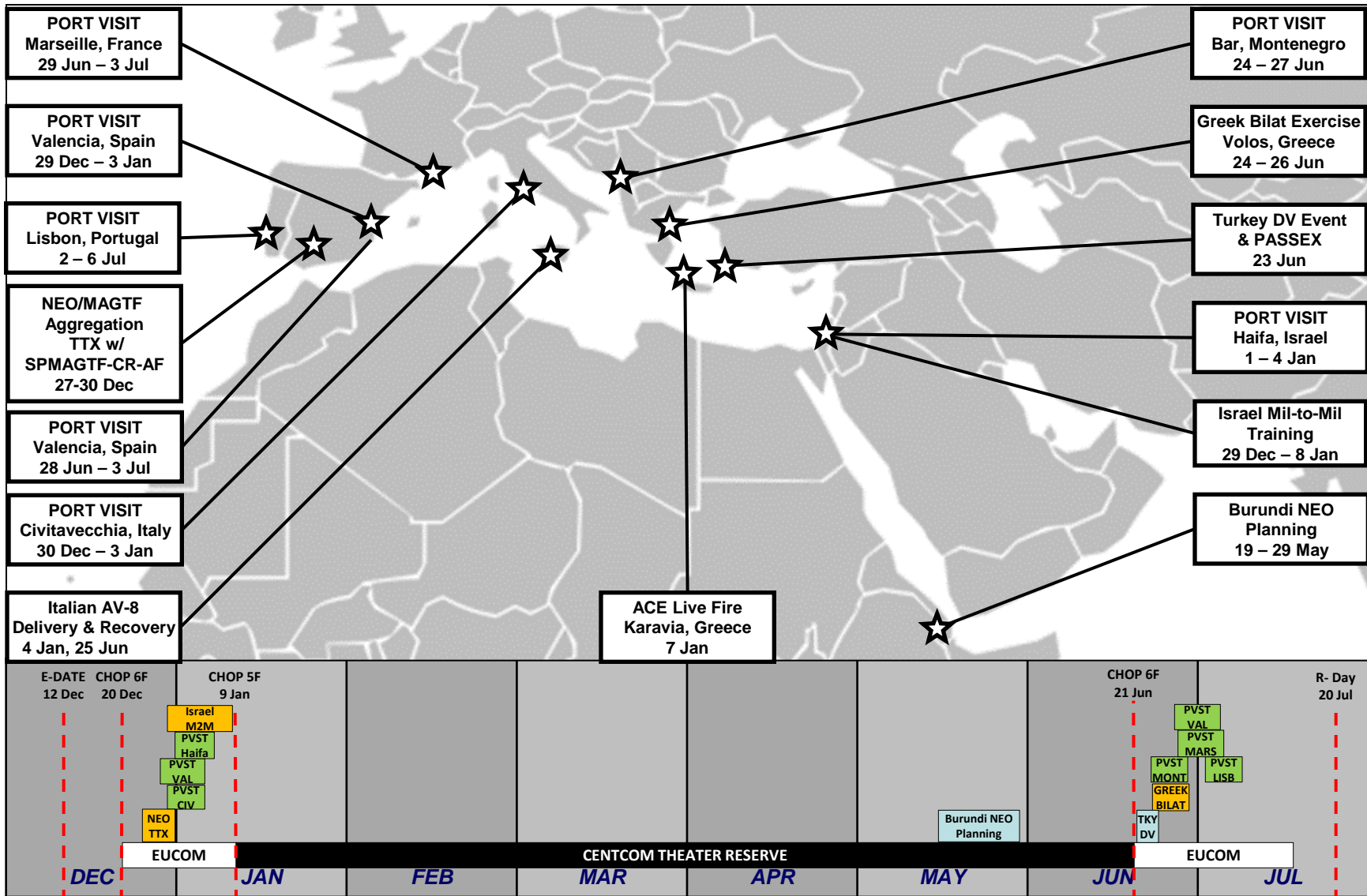
## EUCOM

- LEVANT
- PHIBLEX
- GREEK BILAT

## CENTCOM

- INVINCIBLE SENTRY
- CHARLES DE GAULLE INTEROP
- IRON MAGIC
- EAGLE RESOLVE
- SEA SOLDIER
- EAGER LION
- FRENCH BILAT

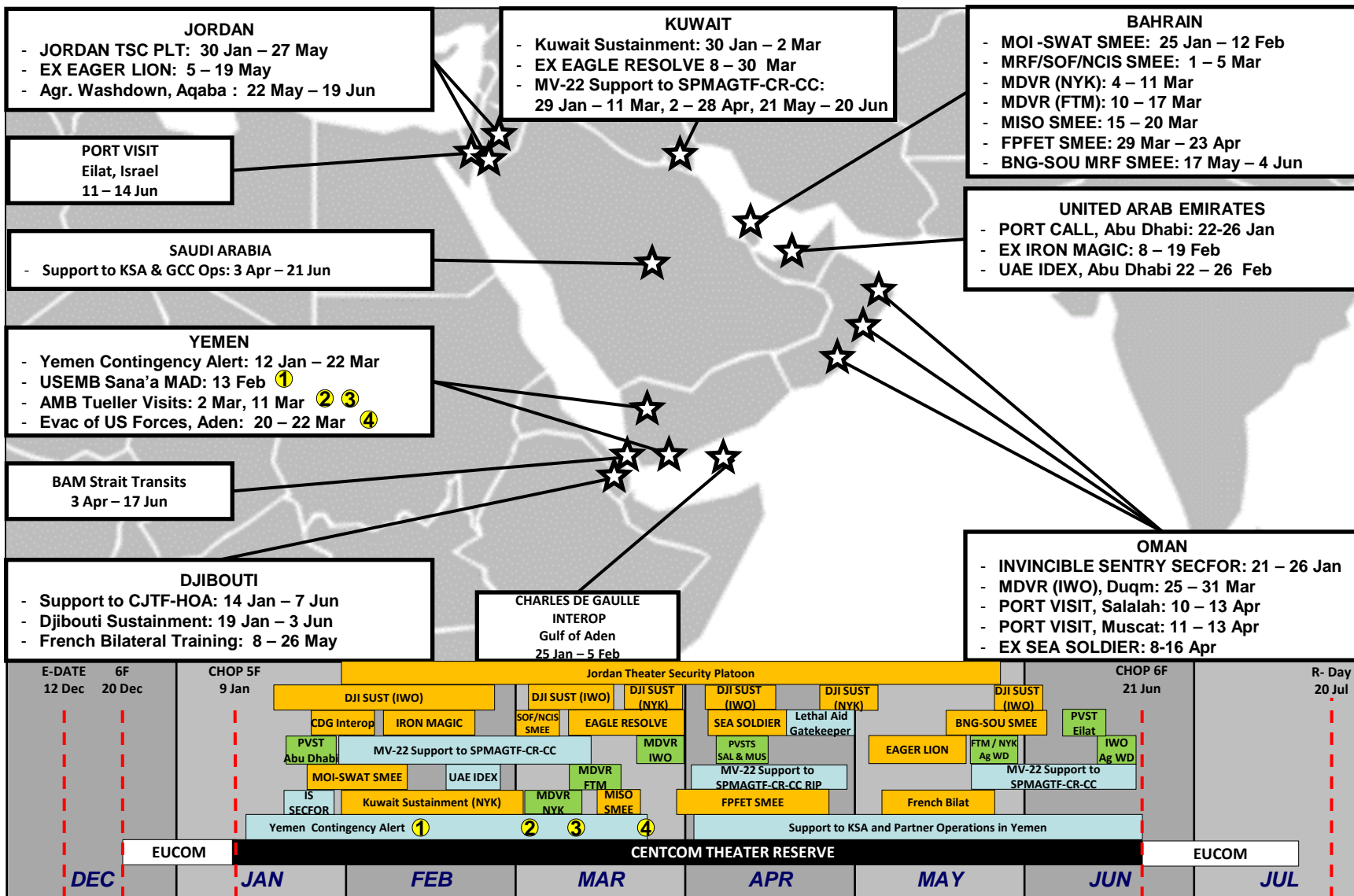
# EUCOM/AFRICOM Operations







# CENTCOM Theater Reserve

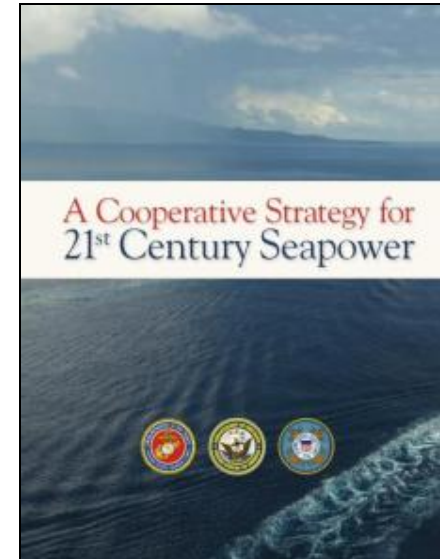
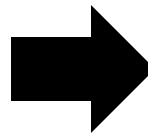


# Atypical ARG/MEU Deployment



## *Theater Mobile Reserve (Blue Primarily Enabling Green)*

- ARG/MEU is uniquely designed and employed as a “Branch and Sequel” force
  - MAD Sana’a and Aden
- ARG/MEU employment as a Task Force
  - US AMB Support, contingency support missions Tactical recovery of Aircraft and Personnel (TRAP), Quick Reaction Force (QRF), Casualty Evacuation (CASEVAC)
  - CF/SOF I-3
    - SOF Support, Integration, Interoperability, Interdependence






## *Enabling Maritime Presence (Green Primarily Enabling Blue)*

- Sea Control – Maritime Security
  - Surface and air transits of Bab Al Mandeb (BAM)
  - Ports Open to HA/DR – Closed to Lethal Aid
- Sector Air Defense Commander (SADC)
- Sea Combat Commander (SCC) Duties
- PQ – Information Warfare Duties
- SIGINT Operational Tasking Authority

**Atypical due to two distinct employment paradigms: Blue predominately in support of Green; and later Green predominately in support of Blue. The ARG/MEU integrated Marine afloat capabilities (supported/supporting) across the CWC construct at the tactical level in a complex maritime operational environment.**



# ARG/MEU Capability Distribution

ARG/MEU	C2	Intel	Fires	Maneuver	Mobility	Logistics	Force Protection	Stratcom
 LHD-7 - USS IWO JIMA (2606 pax / 2982 capacity)	FULL FULL	PARTIAL FULL	PARTIAL FULL	FULL FULL	FULL FULL	FULL FULL	FULL FULL	FULL FULL
 LPD-21 - USS NEW YORK (1094 pax / 1094 capacity)	PARTIAL PARTIAL	PARTIAL PARTIAL	PARTIAL FULL	PARTIAL FULL	PARTIAL FULL	FULL FULL	FULL FULL	PARTIAL PARTIAL
 LSD-43 - USS FT MCHENRY (722 pax / 865 capacity)	PARTIAL NOT	PARTIAL NOT	NOT FULL	PARTIAL FULL	PARTIAL FULL	PARTIAL PARTIAL	FULL FULL	PARTIAL PARTIAL

- Based on the likelihood of SPLIT or DISAGGREGATED Operations, PHIBRON 8 and 24 MEU balanced the Landing Craft mix and Landing Force assignment to shipping IOT provide *Fires, Mobility, and Maneuver* capability across all vessels as well as maximum connector flexibility.
  - Despite this effort on all ARG/MEUs, there remain physical limitations which prevent full warfighting capability on all independent ships of the ARG.
- The ARG/MEU remains the most capable while under the C2 of the PHIBRON and MEU, and should remain so to the maximum extent possible.
  - Capacity, depth of staff, C2, and enablers remain at the ARG/MEU level.
- Policy and Material solutions are greatest impediment to maximizing ARG/MEU capabilities, not the necessity to operate at great distances or across CCMD boundaries.

**Full** – Full capability\* to operate as an independent force.

**Partial** – Partial capability\*, which can be augmented or organized to conduct independent operations.

**Not** – Physical limitations which prevents independent force operations

\***Capability** – Personnel, training, equipment, capacity, sustainment



# Summary & Recommendations

- **PHIBRON Commander's key takeaways / recommendations:**
  - The IWOARG deployment evolved from a traditional mission of MEU sustainment to a focus on Sea Control / Maritime Security, which required proficiency in Naval Core Functions and the leveraging of MEU capabilities to ensure success.
  - ARGs continue to conduct primarily split ARG operations. The LSD class requires more capability to operate to ensure success.
- **MEU Commander's key takeaways / recommendations:**
  - Robust staff and enablers may need pathways to multiple components and possible CCMD levels to gain full effectiveness.
  - MEU capability and capacity is at risks of not being fully realized. A review of employment models should be undertaken to achieve maximum utilization and relevance of the force.
- **Strategic / Operational Level Lesson's Learned:**
  - The ability to Force-share across CCMDs would greatly increase utilization and mitigate force shortfalls across multiple CCMDs.
  - The IWOARG/MEU had a unique opportunity to execute nearly all of the forward presence missions of the Maritime Strategy during this deployment in an area where our foes transit and operate across Unified Command Plan (UPC) boundaries. We believe this force is unique in it's ability to mitigate the risks at CCMD seams.



# *Questions/Comments*