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MAGTF Ground Operations

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MAGTF Ground Operations

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BY DIRECTION OF THE COMMANDANT OF THE MARINE CORPS

Robert S. Walsh

ROBERT S. WALSH
Lieutenant General, U.S. Marine Corps
Deputy Commandant for Combat Development and Integration

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FOREWORD

Marine Corps Warfighting Publication (MCWP) 3-10, *MAGTF Ground Operations*, provides the doctrinal basis for the planning and execution of ground combat operations within the Marine air-ground task force (MAGTF). It establishes a common reference on how the ground combat element (GCE) plans, task-organizes, trains, deploys, and is employed for operations.

This publication is the keystone for all ground combat-oriented publications, but it does not provide detailed tactics, techniques, and procedures for specific ground combat organizations. It incorporates validated lessons learned from the last 13 years of conflict and operations and provides the link between the tactics, techniques, and procedures of subordinate publications and Service-level doctrine.

This publication is intended for Marine Corps leaders of every military occupational specialty and is recommended for commanders and planners assigned to the joint force. It concentrates primarily on the GCE's warfighting capabilities as the MAGTF's decisive maneuver force in the conduct of ground combat, including maritime expeditionary operations and subsequent sustained combat operations. Its contents are relevant to all elements of the MAGTF.

This publication supersedes MCWP 3-10, *Ground Combat Operations*, dated 4 April 1995.

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ROBERT S. WALSH
Lieutenant General, U.S. Marine Corps
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CHAPTER 1
THE ROLE OF THE GROUND COMBAT ELEMENT

THE GROUND COMBAT ELEMENT

The Marine air-ground task force (MAGTF), composed of forces task-organized under a single commander, is the Marine Corps' principal organization for all missions across the range of military operations (ROMO). The MAGTF provides an integrated, expeditionary, combined arms force capable of independent operations or of operating in a joint, interagency, intergovernmental, and multinational (JIIM) environment. The MAGTF is functionally organized into four core elements, as depicted in figure 1-1—a command element (CE), an aviation combat element (ACE), a ground combat element (GCE), and a logistics combat element (LCE). While the basic structure of the MAGTF remains the same, the number, size, and type of units comprising its four elements is always mission dependent. The flexibility of the organizational structure allows for one or more subordinate MAGTFs to be assigned. In a joint or multinational environment, other Services or multinational forces may be assigned or attached. When two or more divisions are assigned, the MAGTF may be organized with two or more GCEs due to the geographic separation of areas of operations (AOs) or due to command relationships with attached multinational forces.

The CE is the MAGTF headquarters and provides command and control (C2) capabilities necessary for effective planning, execution, and assessment of operations. The MAGTF commander plans, executes, and assesses operations from a holistic, MAGTF single-battle perspective. The MAGTF single-battle concept is a unifying concept recognizing that operations or events in one part of the battlespace have profound and consequential effects on other areas and events. The CE synchronizes efforts of the ACE, GCE, and LCE to deliver a level of operational effectiveness

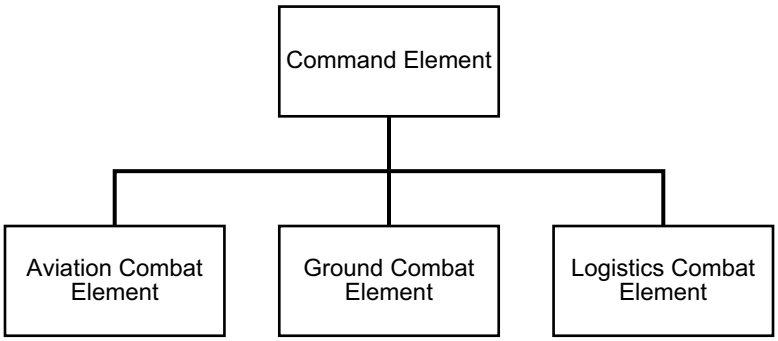

Figure 1-1. Marine Air-Ground Task Force Organization.

unachievable by any element of the MAGTF independently. See chapter 4 for a detailed explanation of how the MAGTF's battlespace is organized and the consequences for GCE operations.

The GCE provides the ability to conduct ground combined arms maneuver. While it has discrete capabilities to conduct ground combat, the GCE does not operate as an independent force. Ground combat element operations are planned and executed as integral components of MAGTF operations. Every GCE is task-organized in accordance with mission requirements, ranging from a light, air-transportable force built around a platoon (reinforced) to a relatively heavy mechanized unit that includes one or more Marine, Army, and/or multinational divisions. Marine Corps ground combat units are staffed, organized, trained, and equipped to operate inside the MAGTF construct and cannot be employed separately without a significant loss of capability. See appendix A for examples of GCEs in various MAGTF constructs.

The ACE supports the MAGTF commander, and subsequently the GCE, by providing all six functions of Marine Corps aviation—offensive air support, antiair warfare, assault support, air reconnaissance, electronic warfare, and control of aircraft and missiles. The ACE forms around an aviation headquarters with appropriate air control agencies and combat, combat support, and combat service support (CSS) units. The ACE can vary in size and composition from an aviation detachment of specific aircraft to one or more Marine aircraft wings consisting of multiple fixed-wing, tiltrotor, and rotary-wing aircraft of several types and capabilities.

The LCE provides the CSS required by the MAGTF, inclusive of the GCE, to include supply, maintenance, transportation, general engineering, services, health services, and operational contract support. The LCE is task-organized to provide the full range of combat logistic functions and capabilities necessary to maintain the continued readiness and sustainability of the MAGTF. The LCE can vary in size and composition from a platoon-sized detachment to one or more Marine logistics groups.

GROUND COMBAT ELEMENT MISSION-ESSENTIAL TASKS

The GCE's core mission-essential tasks (METs) are—

- Marine Corps Task (MCT) 1.6.1 Conduct Offensive Operations.
- MCT 1.6.4 Conduct Defensive Operations.
- MCT 1.12.1 Conduct Amphibious Operations.
- MCT 1.14 Conduct Stability Operations.

The GCE of a Marine expeditionary unit (MEU) has additional METs. See Marine Corps Order (MCO) 3500.26A, *Universal Naval Task List (UNTL)*, for more information on MCTs, and MCO 3500.110, *Policy and Guidance for Mission Essential Task List (METL) Development, Review, Approval, Publication and Maintenance*, for more information on METs/mission-essential task list development.

FUNDAMENTALS OF GROUND COMBAT

The fundamentals of ground combat have evolved from the logical, time-proven application of the principles of war to both offensive and defensive combat. See appendix B for more information about the principles of war.

Maintain Situational Awareness

The commander must be situationally aware of the force, the enemy force, the traits of the enemy commander, and the nature of the AO. The development of this knowledge involves those actions taken to determine the strength, composition, and disposition of the enemy and actors that occupy or influence the battlespace. This knowledge development provides the commander with accurate information for generating plans to accomplish the mission. The commander does this during operations by locating and establishing contact with the enemy and constantly developing the situation. Contact may vary from observation to close combat. By gaining and maintaining contact, the commander learns about the enemy and is less vulnerable to surprise. Knowledge of the enemy's location, disposition, and movement is a potentially decisive advantage that must not be surrendered when gained.

Exploit Known Enemy Gaps

The commander attacks with maximum speed and combat power against enemy gaps, leveraging activities in all aspects to exploit them. A gap can be any weakness in the enemy force, not just physical preparations and employment, including—

- Poor morale.
- Perception of power and legitimacy.
- Tactical error.
- Lack of preparation.
- Lack of mutual support.
- Predictable operating patterns.

Control Key Terrain

The GCE seeks to dominate key terrain that provides the advantages of observation, cover and concealment, and fields of fire; that controls avenues of approach; and that provides security. In any operation, there are likely to be several key terrain features. The commander identifies them and plans to use them or to deny their use to the enemy. Occupying terrain is not a goal in itself. The true purpose of an operation is to defeat the enemy; therefore, the possession of terrain is important only if the advantages it provides are exploited.

Terrain outside the zone of action is also key terrain if it can dominate actions within the zone. The commander ensures control of this terrain through coordination with friendly adjacent units or by requesting that higher headquarters (HHQ) move affected boundaries to include this terrain within the zone or sector.

Dictate the Tempo of Operations

The initiative normally belongs to the attacker at the beginning of an attack. A paramount goal for the GCE commander is to seize and retain the initiative in order to dictate the tempo of the battle instead of having to react to the actions of the enemy. Aggressive employment of combat power, surprise, and exploitation of enemy errors across all domains serve to gain or retain the initiative.

Neutralize the Enemy's Ability to React

The GCE commander makes every effort to disrupt and degrade the enemy's ability to react to friendly plans. In so doing, the GCE retains the initiative. Enemy capabilities are neutralized by—

- Using fire support to shape the battlefield.
- Suppressing enemy forces and disrupting enemy support activities.
- Attacking the enemy's command and control, cohesion, and morale.
- Isolating the battlefield and blocking enemy reinforcements.
- Concealing intentions from the enemy through proper security measures.
- Deceiving the enemy through diversions and other techniques.

Maintain Momentum

Momentum is the increase of combat power gained from seizing the initiative and attacking aggressively and rapidly. It is a function of initiative, concentration, and speed. Once the attack is launched, the commander makes every effort to build momentum until the attack becomes overwhelming to the enemy and the mission is accomplished.

The GCE commander does not sacrifice momentum to preserve the alignment of advancing units. Units drive hard at those points offering the least resistance. Attackers do not waste combat power and time on enemy units that cannot jeopardize the overall mission. Instead, they are contained with minimal forces and bypassed. Defenders gain momentum by employing the effects of weapon systems in mass against the attacker's critical vulnerabilities and by exploiting success gained through counterattack and rapid transition to the offense.

Exploit Success

A successful attack or defense must be pressed relentlessly to prevent the enemy from recovering from the initial shock. Plans must provide for the exploitation of any advantage gained. When the opportunity for decisive action arises, the GCE commander commits all available resources and demands the maximum effort from the troops. One of the most effective ways the commander can exploit success is by committing the reserve. See chapter 4 for more information about the reserve.

Act Quickly

Speed is essential to success. It promotes surprise, keeps the enemy off balance, contributes to the security of the force, makes the force a more difficult target, and prevents the enemy from taking effective countermeasures. Speed applies not only to physical movement but also to operational tempo, the exercise of command, staff functions, coordination, and all support activities. The commander who decides on a course of action (COA) and develops and executes a plan more quickly than the enemy counterpart can retain the initiative and dictate the conditions of the battle.

Speed can confuse and immobilize the enemy. It can compensate for a lack of mass and provide the momentum that the force requires. Attackers must move quickly to follow reconnaissance elements or successful probes through gaps in enemy defenses. Defenders must recognize opportunities created by successful defense or enemy movement and rapidly counterattack. The GCE commander must recognize opportunities and act quickly to exploit advantages; subordinate units constantly seek to develop situational awareness and identify opportunities consistent with the commander's intent. The enemy must never be given the time to recover from the shock of the initial assault or counterattack, to identify the main effort, or to mass against the force.

Be Flexible

Friendly plans must foresee developments as far ahead as possible. However, they must also anticipate uncertainties and be ready to exploit opportunities. The GCE commander must be prepared to modify plans and shift the main effort in response to any situation. The commander maintains flexibility by retaining a balanced reserve, developing a simple plan, minimizing restrictions on subordinates, and immediately reconstituting a committed reserve.

Be Audacious

Audacity is the bold and aggressive execution of the operation, characterized by seizing every opportunity to strike a decisive blow against the enemy and relentlessly exploiting every success. Like speed and surprise, aggressive action enhances combat power beyond the material assets at hand. All efforts to dictate tempo, maneuver to gain positional advantage, surprise the enemy, and apply combined arms are jeopardized if the final effort against the enemy is timidly executed. At all levels of the GCE, violence of action in the face of the enemy is a required, integral component of maneuver warfare. Violence against the enemy during the conduct of maneuver warfare is not to be solely associated with attrition-style warfare.

Provide for the Security of the Force

Security is always necessary, whether a force is assembling, on the march, or in combat. Security is achieved by detecting the enemy and by providing time and space to react to the enemy. The likelihood of contact with the enemy dictates security measures. Rapid and aggressive offensive action provides a measure of inherent security. The GCE conducts security operations in support of its own operations and may conduct these operations in support of other elements of the MAGTF or the MAGTF as a whole. In situations demanding immediate action, the GCE does not wait, but supports MAGTF security without specific tasking. The other elements of the MAGTF must do the utmost possible to limit GCE assistance requirements.

KEY CAPABILITIES OF THE GROUND COMBAT ELEMENT

Ground and Amphibious Reconnaissance

The GCE employs organic ground and amphibious reconnaissance capabilities (e.g., infantry patrols, Marine division's reconnaissance battalion) in support of its plans and in support of the MAGTF reconnaissance and surveillance plan. The GCE conducts reconnaissance and surveillance as continuous activities that are integral to the intelligence cycle and closely tied to maneuver operations. Ground reconnaissance integrates with aviation and technical

reconnaissance capabilities to answer information requirements, with priority assigned to the commander's critical information requirements (CCIRs), and to verify intelligence from other assets prior to the commitment of maneuver forces. Reconnaissance forces collect information about the enemy, terrain, or civilian population. Reconnaissance battalion assets are uniquely qualified to conduct amphibious reconnaissance by collecting information on hydrography, beaches, and beach access and egress.

Reconnaissance Pull and Reconnaissance Push. The preferred method of reconnaissance pull is to employ specialized ground reconnaissance forces to identify or confirm surfaces and gaps in enemy dispositions, permitting the commander to shape the battlespace. The commander can then decide to maneuver friendly combat forces to and through weak spots in the enemy defenses and exploit the advantage by striking enemy critical vulnerabilities. Reconnaissance pull requires early commitment of reconnaissance elements, sufficient time for the intelligence picture to develop fully, effective flow of information between reconnaissance elements and supported commanders, and the integration of intelligence and operations.

During defensive operations, reconnaissance assets observe enemy forces or target areas of interest (AOIs) to confirm or deny threat COAs. Additionally, they may engage enemy forces with supporting arms to delay and disrupt their advance.

Ground Reconnaissance-Capable Units. Ground combat element units have the following organic reconnaissance capabilities:

- Reconnaissance battalion units conduct amphibious and clandestine ground reconnaissance.
- Light armored reconnaissance (LAR) units conduct mounted and dismounted reconnaissance and surveillance.
- Combat and combat support units conduct route, area, and zone reconnaissance.
- Combat engineer units conduct engineer reconnaissance.
- Combat units conduct reconnaissance in force to stimulate an enemy response, often supported by intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance (ISR) assets, which observe enemy activities and signatures.
- All Marine Corps units conduct security patrols and establish observation and listening posts.
- All Marines understand intelligence requirements and serve as an intelligence collection asset.

For additional information, see Marine Corps Tactical Publication (MCTP) 2-10A, *MAGTF Intelligence Collection*.

Combined Arms

The GCE is capable of maneuvering to a position of advantage against the enemy and applying combined arms. Enemy actions to counteract one aspect of an operation make the enemy more vulnerable to another. The GCE integrates MAGTF capabilities to generate combined arms effects.

Ground Maneuver and Security

The GCE conducts maneuver warfare in an expeditionary environment. Marine Corps warfighting doctrine is based on maneuver warfare, a warfighting philosophy that seeks to shatter the enemy's cohesion through a variety of rapid, focused, and unexpected actions, which create a turbulent and rapidly deteriorating situation with which the enemy cannot cope. (Marine Corps Reference Publication [MCRP] 1-10.2, *Marine Corps Supplement to the Department of Defense Dictionary of Military and Associated Terms*) The GCE is the MAGTF's ground maneuver element. Its scheme of maneuver integrates with other elements of the MAGTF to exploit or create gaps in enemy defenses and strike enemy critical vulnerabilities. The GCE may gain maneuver advantages by seizing key terrain, increasing relative speed, and operating at a faster tempo than does the enemy. This may be accomplished by dominating the electromagnetic spectrum, by massing the effects of organic and supporting fires at a specific time or place, or by a combination of the two.

Security operations encompass traditional missions such as screen, guard, and cover, as well as rear area security and local security. The GCE provides the MAGTF commander the means to conduct a number of these missions. For example, a task-organized force of LAR units, tanks, mechanized infantry, and artillery may screen, guard, or cover the force. The GCE may provide a mobile reserve for rear area security or provide forces to safeguard critical installations.

Massed Firepower

The GCE is the only element of the MAGTF capable of delivering massed firepower. It possesses the capability to provide continuous, all-weather direct and indirect fires. The GCE possesses a wide range of target acquisition and weapons systems. These systems allow commanders to deliver fires ranging from precision rifle fire to direct fire attacks by tanks supported by artillery. The GCE plans fires, conducts targeting, integrates fires with maneuver, and coordinates all fire support within the GCE's AO. Aviation fires delivered by the ACE integrate into GCE fire support planning.

Close Combat

Once combined arms maneuver gains the advantage, the GCE may exploit that advantage by closing with and destroying the enemy. Despite the technological capabilities of the MAGTF, close combat often remains essential to achieving the mission and securing tactical or operational objectives. Close combat encompasses all actions that place friendly forces in immediate contact with the enemy where the commander uses direct fire and movement in combination to defeat or destroy enemy forces or seize and retain ground. The GCE relies on cohesive, rigorously trained, highly disciplined, and well-led small units to dominate the enemy during close combat operations. Though small units are empowered by technology, it is the leadership, warrior ethos, and physical conditioning of Marines that are most essential during close combat.

Seizing and Holding Key Terrain

The GCE is the only element of the MAGTF that can seize and hold terrain. It does so in support of naval campaigns when participating in amphibious advanced-force operations, conducting forcible-entry operations, or conducting sustained operations ashore.

Agility and Adaptability

The GCE is primarily a warfighting organization. The capabilities resident in the GCE are useful in executing a variety of combat and noncombat missions across the ROMO. As required, the GCE can rapidly deploy to disaster-afflicted areas, establish communications, conduct reconnaissance to determine requirements, and deliver foreign humanitarian assistance (FHA) and disaster relief. The GCE's warfighting capabilities make it well-suited to conduct theater security cooperation (TSC) and deterrence activities.

Scalability

A key capability of the GCE is its scalability. Forward-deployed forces are immediately employable and capable across the ROMO. As required, they can be reinforced by additional Marine Corps forces, conduct distributed operations, or detach forces to conduct disaggregated operations.

ORGANIC UNITS OF THE GROUND COMBAT ELEMENT

The Marine Corps maintains three Active Component divisions and one Reserve Component division, each of which is task-organized as required to provide ground combat forces to MAGTFs in response to operational requirements. The organic units of the Marine division are the fundamental building blocks of the GCE. Each division consists of a division headquarters battalion, two or more infantry regiments, an artillery regiment, and separate combat support battalions. Separate battalions normally include an assault amphibian battalion, a tank battalion, an LAR battalion, a combat engineer battalion (CEB), and a reconnaissance battalion. The organization of the separate battalions may vary from division to division. See MCRP 1-10.1, *Organization of the United States Marine Corps*, for detailed information on the organization of GCE components.

Marine Division

The Marine division is organized, trained, and equipped to conduct expeditionary operations as the GCE of a MAGTF across the ROMO. The Marine division plans, resources, and executes combat or stability operations using combined arms. During routine operations, the Marine division serves as a force provider, staffing, organizing, training, and equipping cohesive battalion landing teams (BLTs) and/or regimental landing teams (RLTs) for deployment in support of smaller MAGTFs. In support of major operations and campaigns, the Marine division is a fully capable combat command, which may serve as a joint task force (JTF) headquarters capable of leading joint forcible entry operations (JFEO) and subsequent operations ashore with augmentation. The actual composition of forces assigned to each Marine division may vary at any given time due to troop levels, basing, and operational requirements. One possible composition of a Marine division is illustrated in figure 1-2 on page 1-9.

Headquarters Battalion, Marine Division

The headquarters battalion is organized, trained, and equipped to provide C2, administrative, logistic, and security functions for the division headquarters. In tactical operations, the headquarters battalion is divided into the forward, main, and rear headquarters echelons. Headquarters battalions generally contain a division headquarters, a communications company,

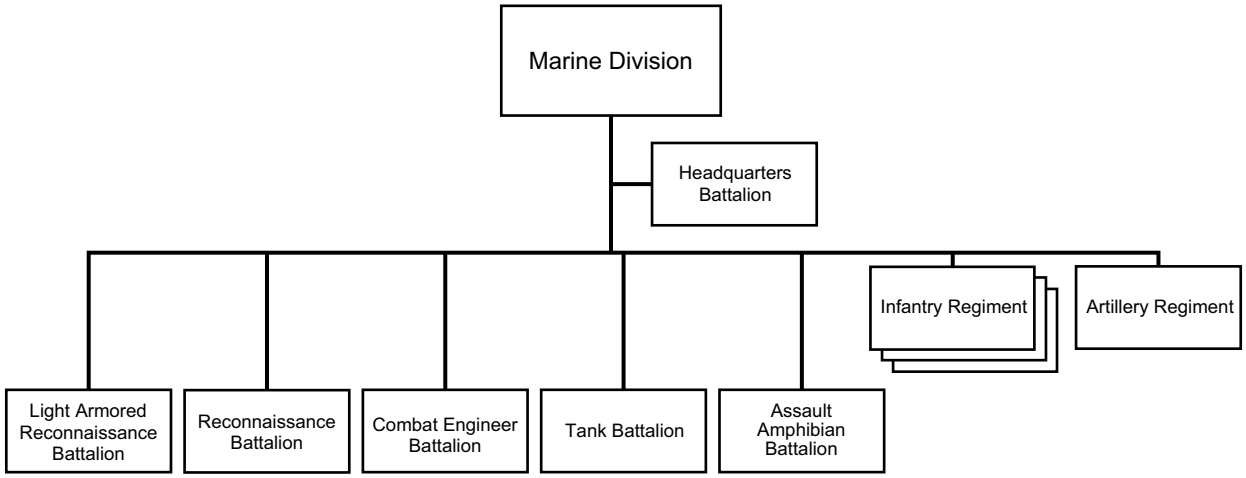

Figure 1-2. Notional Marine Division.

a truck company, a headquarters company, and a division band. A MAGTF may use the Marine division headquarters as the CE.

Infantry Regiment

The Marine infantry regiment is organized, trained, and equipped to conduct expeditionary operations across the ROMO. An infantry regiment's organic units consist of two or more infantry battalions and a regimental headquarters company. The infantry regiment is the major element of close combat power in the Marine division. The regiment, with appropriate attachments, is capable of independent, sustained operations. Depending on the mission assigned, the infantry regiment may serve as a maneuver element of a Marine division, as the core of an RLT, or as a force provider, providing task-organized battalions as required. The regiment and its subordinate battalions are designed as a light infantry force that can be transported by surface or air means. The regiment is normally reinforced with combat and combat support assets, which greatly increases its capabilities to conduct fire and maneuver. A MAGTF may use the infantry regiment headquarters as the core of a CE.

The Marine infantry battalion is organized, trained, and equipped to conduct expeditionary operations across the ROMO. An infantry battalion's organic assets consist of a headquarters and service company, a weapons company, and three rifle companies. The battalion is the basic tactical unit of ground combat power. Combat and combat support assets normally reinforce the infantry battalion. A regiment's subordinate infantry battalions may operate as subordinate maneuver units, provide the core of a BLT for a MEU or special purpose Marine air-ground task force (SPMAGTF), or serve as a force provider that provides task-organized companies and platoons as required. An infantry battalion headquarters and service company may operate as the core of a CE for a MAGTF. For more information, see MCTP 3-10A, *Marine Infantry Battalion*.

Artillery Regiment

The Marine artillery regiment is organized, trained, and equipped to provide close and continuous fire support to the maneuver elements of the Marine division. An artillery regiment's organic units consist of two or more artillery battalions and a regimental headquarters battery. The artillery regiment is the primary source of fire support for the Marine division. Its operations and actions

integrate closely with those of the infantry to be responsive to rapidly changing tactical situations. The artillery regiment provides a fire support coordination section to assist in establishing and operating a fire support coordination center (FSCC) at the division combat operations center.

Task organization considerations include the assignment of batteries equipped with mortars, cannons, or rocket systems as required by mission, enemy, terrain and weather, troops and support available–time available (METT-T). An artillery battalion is normally habitually associated with each infantry regiment, and subordinate artillery batteries are habitually associated with each of the infantry battalions. Artillery battalions provide artillery liaison teams to each supported infantry battalion. An artillery liaison team integrates into the infantry battalion's FSCC, with the team leader serving as the supported infantry battalion's fire support officer. The artillery regiment or a subordinate artillery battalion headquarters may operate as the core of a CE for a MAGTF. For more information, see MCTP 3-10F, *Fire Support Coordination in the Ground Combat Element*.

Light Armored Reconnaissance Battalion

The LAR battalion is organized, trained, and equipped to conduct semi-independent operations (e.g., mounted reconnaissance, security, economy-of-force operations, limited offensive operations, delaying operations) that exploit the unit's mobility and firepower. The LAR battalion, with reinforcements, may function as the GCE or as an independent maneuver element within the GCE. The LAR companies can operate as the maneuver element within the LAR battalion or can be task-organized to support infantry regiments and battalions. For more information on employment, see MCTP 3-10D, *Employment of the Light Armored Reconnaissance Battalion*.

Reconnaissance Battalion

The reconnaissance battalion is organized, trained, and equipped to conduct advanced force operations, battlespace shaping, amphibious reconnaissance, underwater reconnaissance, and ground reconnaissance or surveillance to observe, identify, and report intelligence information on the enemy, weather, and terrain. The reconnaissance battalion is composed of a headquarters and service company, two or more reconnaissance companies, and a force reconnaissance company. The reconnaissance battalion has administrative control of the force reconnaissance company, which is employed by the Marine expeditionary force (MEF). In addition to conducting reconnaissance, reconnaissance teams are capable of conducting initial terminal guidance for assault support aircraft, landing craft, and parachutists. If required, they can control supporting arms and/or use organic small arms to engage targets as directed. A reconnaissance platoon attaches to a BLT, and a reconnaissance company attaches to an RLT. For more information on the employment of the elements of a reconnaissance battalion, see MCRP 2-10A.6, *Ground Reconnaissance Operations*.

Combat Engineer Battalion

The CEB is organized, trained, and equipped to enable the mobility, survivability, and counter-mobility of supported units. Engineers enable the mobility of the GCE through engineer reconnaissance; obstacle breaching, including the capability to detect and reduce explosives (e.g., mines, improvised explosive devices, boobytraps); route clearance; construction or improvement of combat roads and trails; and supporting assault gap crossing. Engineers plan and emplace obstacles to turn, fix, block, or disrupt enemy maneuver. Engineers enhance GCE protection through the construction of hardened structures, battle positions, and protective obstacles. Additionally, engineers provide mobile electrical power generation to support

mission essential command and control. They have limited horizontal and vertical construction capabilities that enhance the quality of life of division Marines and support humanitarian relief efforts. A combat engineer company normally supports and is habitually associated with each infantry regiment, with the combat engineer company commander serving as the engineer officer for the supported regiment. A combat engineer platoon normally supports and is habitually associated with each infantry battalion, with the platoon commander serving as the engineer officer for the supported battalion. For more information on the employment of the elements of a combat engineer battalion, see Marine Corps Warfighting Publication (MCWP) 3-34, *Engineering Operations*.

Tank Battalion

The tank battalion is organized, trained, and equipped to provide expeditionary armor-protected firepower, shock effect, and maneuver in support of the GCE. A tank battalion normally operates as an independent maneuver element within the GCE. At the battalion level, the cross-attachment of a mechanized infantry company enables the creation of a task force tank and a task force mechanized. At the company level, the cross-attachment of a mechanized infantry platoon and tank platoons create team tank and team mechanized. Additionally, tank battalions have organic TOW and scout platoons that provide surveillance, reconnaissance, and antiarmor fires capabilities. For more information, see MCTP 3-10B, *Marine Corps Tank Employment*.

Assault Amphibian Battalion

The assault amphibian battalion is organized, trained, and equipped to enable supported elements of the GCE to conduct amphibious and mechanized operations. Assault amphibian units land designated surface assault elements of the landing force and their equipment in a single lift from assault shipping during amphibious operations. They support mechanized operations and related combat support in subsequent operations ashore, providing maneuver, fires, force protection, breaching, C2, and logistic capabilities. An assault amphibian platoon is capable of lifting a reinforced infantry company, and an assault amphibian company is capable of lifting an infantry battalion. A reinforced assault amphibian platoon is assigned to each BLT assigned to a MEU, mechanizing one of the infantry companies. Amphibious RLTs normally have two reinforced assault amphibian companies assigned, sufficient to mechanize the assault echelons of two BLTs. Assault amphibian units provide C2 capabilities, which are normally employed to allow the forward combat operations center to maneuver with the assault echelons of the battalion. When required, assault amphibian units can support riverine operations. For more information on the organization of the assault amphibian battalion, see MCRP 1-10.1. For more information on assault amphibious operations, see MCTP 3-10C, *Employment of Amphibious Assault Vehicles*.

TASK-ORGANIZED UNITS OF THE GROUND COMBAT ELEMENT

The GCE is task-organized based on planning conducted and orders issued by the relevant MEF in response to either a planned rotation or a Marine Corps component command request for forces. When possible, the G-3/S-3 from the unit that leads the GCE participates in the operational planning team regarding the composition and deployment of the MAGTF alongside representatives of the Marine division. This allows for the development of situational awareness.

Marine Division

The Marine division typically commands two or more RLTs. With augmentation, the Marine division may command a JTF or multinational force consisting of two or more regiment-sized forces. In major operations when two or more divisions (Marine Corps, Army, or multinational) are assigned to the MEF, the MEF task-organizes with each division commander reporting to the MEF commander as a major subordinate command (MSC).

While Marine division units serve as components of the GCE, headquarters elements inside the Marine division may assume the mission of a MAGTF CE. The use of infantry and artillery regimental headquarters as the CE for crisis response SPMAGTFs is one example. When executing this mission, GCE headquarters may require augmentation.

Regimental Landing Teams

Regimental landing teams are task-organized forces consisting of an infantry regiment reinforced with any necessary combination of artillery, reconnaissance, engineer, LAR, or armored units and other combat support attachments as required by the mission. Regimental landing teams are deployed either as the GCE of a Marine expeditionary brigade (MEB) or as a maneuver element of a Marine division.

Battalion Landing Teams

Battalion landing teams are task-organized forces consisting of an infantry battalion reinforced with any necessary combination of artillery, reconnaissance, engineer, LAR, or armored units and other combat support attachments as required by the mission. Battalion landing teams are deployed either as the GCE of a MEU or SPMAGTF or as a maneuver element of an RLT.

Company Landing Teams

Company landing teams (CLTs) are task-organized forces consisting of an infantry company reinforced with any necessary combination of combat and combat support assets required by the mission and capable of operating independently or semi-independently for a determined period. Company landing teams may be deployed as the GCE of a SPMAGTF. They may also be task-organized as a maneuver element of a BLT. They can be organized, trained, and equipped to conduct a wide variety of expeditionary operations ranging from TSC through crisis response and major operations. Company landing teams may also be organized to conduct specific independent combat operations for a limited time. A CLT may be detached from a battalion and assigned to conduct disaggregated operations as the GCE of a SPMAGTF formed for a specific mission.

Task Forces

Task forces are temporary groupings of units under one commander formed to carry out a specific operation or mission. The GCE often uses task forces to create elements based on core units other than infantry. For example, tanks and LAR units often serve as the core elements of task forces.

EMPLOYMENT OF THE GROUND COMBAT ELEMENT

Land Control Operations

Land control operations are the employment of land forces, supported by maritime and air forces (as appropriate), to control vital land areas within the land domain. The land domain consists of all the countless variations in terrain, climate, and hydrology found on Earth: urban areas, jungles, plains, mountains, deserts, and inland and tidal waterways. The GCE is the MAGTF's primary means of executing land control operations. See Joint Publication (JP) 3-31, *Command and Control for Joint Operations*, for more information on command and control of land operations.

Reinforcement of Forward-Deployed Forces

The scalability of the GCE allows it to reinforce and expand the original force, rather than replacing it with a larger one, promoting continuity of operations. In addition to forward-deployed forces, each MEF maintains a high-readiness alert contingency MAGTF. The alert contingency MAGTFs are light, air-deployable forces able to deploy within 6 hours of notification. They can serve as the fly-in echelon (FIE) for maritime prepositioning force (MPF) operations, can reinforce SPMAGTFs or MEUs, or can serve as the lead element for a MEB. The alert contingency MAGTF is designed for rapid transportation by strategic airlift. See chapter 5 for a detailed discussion of how forward-deployed units and crisis response forces combine to conduct expeditionary operations.

Distributed Operations

The Marine Corps increases its operational reach, while minimizing the signature of deployed forces, by employing small units in a distributed manner, often to support TSC. Technology and training enable the assignment of smaller units to accomplish missions compared to historical employment of larger units in the 20th century.

Unit Deployment Program

To reduce the number of unaccompanied tours and improve unit continuity, the Marine Corps established the unit deployment program (UDP). This program forward deploys forces to the Western Pacific (including Okinawa, Japan, Guam, and Australia) for periods of approximately 6 months. The ground combat units involved in the UDP include infantry, assault amphibian, LAR, and artillery units. These units provide forces to the 31st MEU and elements of the 3d Marine Division. These elements include the 4th and 12th Marine Regiments and the Combat Assault Battalion. Forces normally deploy and redeploy via commercial or military airlift, deploying personnel, weapons, and equipment and drawing heavy equipment from the 3d Marine Division.

Independent Deployments in Support of Theater Security Cooperation

Regional Marine Corps component commanders may request Marine Corps forces that are not part of a MAGTF to support TSC. Small teams of subject matter experts or small units up to company-strength may deploy to conduct missions in coordination with partner nation military or security forces. Common examples include conducting marksmanship, Marine Corps Martial Arts Program, Marine Corps Planning Process, and vehicle operations and maintenance training. Forces normally deploy and redeploy via commercial or military airlift. These forces are not a component of a MAGTF, but deploy as subordinate elements of a Marine Corps component command.

GROUND COMBAT ELEMENT CAPABILITIES AND LIMITATIONS BY WARFIGHTING FUNCTION

Each GCE is, by definition, task-organized and may vary from a reinforced platoon commanded by a lieutenant to a reinforced division commanded by a major general. The capabilities and limitations of each GCE vary accordingly, but the requirement to identify METs in support of their parent MAGTF and task-organize appropriately remains the same regardless of size.

Command and Control

The C2 process enables the commander to exercise command across the breadth of the forces. It provides the means for the commander to form an understanding of the situation, decide what action is required, transmit instructions to subordinate commanders, monitor execution of instructions, and assess the results of the action. The GCE is task-organized to command and control organic and attached forces, to conduct fire support coordination, to coordinate aviation and logistic support, and to maintain a common operational picture (COP). Ground combat element command and control is designed for maneuver warfare. It incorporates flexible and decentralized mission-type orders, while eschewing unnecessary control measures that limit the initiative of leaders.

The GCE philosophy of command capitalizes on human characteristics rather than on equipment or procedures. Communications equipment and command and staff procedures enhance commanders' abilities, but they do not lessen the human element of command. At every level, the GCE seeks to accommodate and exploit human traits such as boldness, initiative, strength of will, and imagination.

Control is accomplished through feedback that enables commanders to form and maintain understanding of the situation, decide what actions are required, transmit instructions to subordinate commanders, monitor execution of instructions, and assess the results of the actions. The GCE can provide voice and limited digitally interoperable command and control to organic forces. This capability is interoperable with the joint force. The GCE requires augmentation to execute command and control in a multinational or interagency environment.

In many instances, the GCE's adjacent and supporting agencies may not be part of the MAGTF. Similarly, the GCE may not have command authority over many of the agencies operating in or adjacent to its assigned AO. The GCE commander must understand the relevant authorities and address the challenges of operating in a JIIM environment. Personal leadership and engagement between the GCE commander and leaders from other organizations enable the unity of effort that results in successful operations.

Intelligence

The GCE uses intelligence to drive operations. Information collection is the responsibility of every organization, unit, and individual and is a continuous activity. Lack of detailed information regarding enemy disposition, composition, capabilities, strengths, and weaknesses creates conditions that prevent effective combined arms. Incomplete intelligence weakens the coordination of firepower and maneuver against critical objectives, and situational awareness becomes an impossibility. However, it is in this very environment that the GCE must excel. The commander and the staff understand that intelligence is never complete and that decisions are made even though some of

the CCIRs are not fully met. They must prepare a flexible scheme of maneuver that takes advantage of the results of the intelligence collection efforts of organic assets, as well as those of HHQ. The commander not allocated specific intelligence collection assets must dedicate maneuver units to this function.

When task-organized properly, the GCE has the capability to collect a variety of information within its area of influence. By design, the GCE integrates its organic intelligence resources with assets and capabilities possessed by other elements of the MAGTF to maximize the effectiveness of the expeditionary force. When possible, the GCE leverages and informs JIIM assets and sources. This is particularly critical when planning for future operations. The MAGTF CE and ACE must conduct close coordination to ensure their assets and those of higher and adjacent units are appropriately integrated to satisfy information requirements.

Intelligence preparation of the battlespace (IPB) is a critical component of the Marine Corps Planning Process, which supports decision making. It is a systematic and continuous process to analyze and visualize mission variables relevant to the threat, weather, terrain, and civil considerations in an AO. The IPB process describes the environment and the effects of that environment on the command's operations, and it integrates enemy doctrine and expected mission in order to identify enemy capabilities, vulnerabilities, and probable COAs. The GCE reconnaissance and surveillance plan is developed based on the IPB, focusing intelligence assets on CCIRs and target AOIs.

The development and dissemination of CCIRs focus the information collection capability and responsibility inherent in all units of the GCE. The GCE commander employs organic units to conduct reconnaissance and surveillance, collect information based on capabilities or specific expertise (e.g., engineers conducting bridge reconnaissance, civil affairs personnel identifying population-related information), and answer the commander's priority intelligence requirements. Examples of collection capabilities resident in GCE units include the following:

- Reconnaissance battalion (or elements thereof) conducts amphibious advance force operations, battlespace shaping, amphibious reconnaissance, underwater reconnaissance, and ground reconnaissance or surveillance.
- Scout sniper platoon (in each infantry battalion) provides ground surveillance and scout snipers for specific assignments as determined by the infantry battalion commander in support of CCIRs.
- LAR battalions, companies, or platoons provide the capability to conduct extended-range ground reconnaissance and surveillance for the GCE and MAGTF commanders.
- Engineer units may conduct or assist in the conduct of route, area, and zone reconnaissance operations. Engineer support to reconnaissance operations may include road, bridge, and river crossing surveys and obstacle evaluation.
- Forward observers, forward air controllers, and systems (e.g., target acquisition radars within artillery units) provide sources of information, particularly for current operations when in direct contact with the enemy.
- Combat units gather and report information gained from observation posts, sentinel posts, listening posts, and patrols.

For more information, see MCRP 2-10B.1, *Intelligence Preparation of the Battlefield/Battlespace*.

Maneuver

Maneuver is the dynamic element of combat and the means of focusing effort and generating decisive effects in the moral, mental, and physical spheres of war that enables smaller forces to defeat larger ones. (Marine Corps Doctrinal Publication [MCDP] 1, Warfighting) Commanders maneuver their forces to create the conditions for tactical and operational success. The GCE is the MAGTF's primary means of maneuvering in the battlespace. However, gaining positional advantage may be inconsequential if not exploited by decisive combat, which achieves tactical and operational success. Once an advantage is gained through maneuver, forces exploit that maneuver with close combat to obtain a decisive victory. A tough and dedicated opponent seldom capitulates when placed in an untenable position. The enemy accepts the cost of maneuvering to another position under indirect fires to avoid decisive combat that is not on the enemy's terms.

Maneuver requires mental and physical agility. Mentally, commanders must be able to visualize the operation, determine the critical events, and develop a successful scheme of maneuver. Physically, maneuver requires the requisite mobility to enable the GCE's employment against the enemy at the chosen time and place. Thorough training, preparation, appropriate task organization, relevant doctrine, mission tactics, and reliable equipment create this physical and mental agility.

The commander avoids decisive combat prior to discovery of an enemy critical vulnerability. In this respect, the GCE cannot become so embroiled in combat with ancillary enemy forces that the bulk of its combat power does not maneuver easily. When an opportunity to maneuver decisively against an enemy critical vulnerability arises, the GCE vigorously exploits the opportunity, focusing its strength at the decisive time and place.

Depending on task organization, the GCE normally has a limited ability to conduct tactical maneuver using mechanized and/or armored assets. Infantry forces are primarily foot mobile, unless reinforced. They possess excellent maneuverability in restricted terrain, but are at a disadvantage in open terrain. The GCE has relatively limited ability to conduct operational maneuver using organic assets in most circumstances. The GCE greatly enhances its ability to conduct sustained maneuver when operations are integrated with those of the other elements of the MAGTF and supporting naval platforms.

Fires

As stated in JP 3-09, *Joint Fire Support*, fires is the use of weapon systems or other actions to create specific lethal or nonlethal effects on a target.

The GCE possesses organic direct and indirect fires as well as the ability to conduct and integrate information operations to defeat the enemy and influence target audiences. By design, the GCE integrates organic fires, air and surface maneuver, MAGTF and joint fires, and information operations to generate combined arms effects against the enemy. The ability of the MAGTF commander to employ fires at the farthest reaches of the MAGTF's battlespace is critical to shaping the battlespace and protecting the GCE's freedom of action, allowing employment at the decisive time and place.

All operations, particularly those in the urban littorals, necessitate the generation of coordinated and precise lethal and nonlethal effects. This requires rapid and accurate target acquisition, timely and precise delivery, and assessment of those effects. The GCE utilizes discrimination in the

application of fires consistent with the threat to minimize collateral damage in terms of physical and cognitive effects. While acknowledging the value of precision fires, the GCE also has the requirement and ability to employ a large volume of conventional fires against appropriate targets, including when precision fires are denied or unavailable in sufficient quantity.

Fires capabilities, resident at each echelon of the GCE, can produce the following five effects:

- Destroy enemy personnel and equipment.
- Neutralize targets.
- Suppress the enemy when in direct contact.
- Interdict to curtail movement, lower morale, and disturb the rest of the enemy.
- Influence the decision making of targeted audiences.

Artillery. Artillery is the primary firepower asset in the GCE. Depending on operational requirements and task organization, artillery units may employ howitzers, air-transportable mortars, rocket launchers, and counterfire radars. Artillery conducts three tasks:

- Provide timely, close, accurate, and continuous fire support.
- Provide depth to combat by attacking hostile reserves, restricting movement, providing long-range support for reconnaissance elements, disrupting C2 systems and logistic installations, and attacking high-value targets with precision munitions.
- Deliver counterfire within the range of the weapon systems to ensure freedom of action of the ground forces.

Infantry Mortars. Infantry mortars provide responsive, close, and continuous fire support to infantry and LAR battalions and below. They are ideal for the suppression of immediate targets and for attacking close-in targets; targets on reverse slopes; and targets in areas difficult to reach with low-angle fire, such as many targets in urban areas.

Tanks. Tanks are the key element in creating shock. The firepower, armor protection, and mobility of tanks are well-suited for exploiting breakthroughs and conducting counterattacks. They provide precise, long-range, direct fires that are effective against enemy armor, fighting vehicles, and hardened positions. Combined with aviation assets and supported by artillery assets, tank and mechanized infantry task forces provide commanders with potent and highly mobile maneuver forces.

Direct-Fire Weapons. Direct-fire weapons are most effective when combined and coordinated with aviation-delivered fires, indirect fires, and effective maneuver. They are an integral part of the overall scheme of maneuver, and their employment requires the same degree of planning and forethought that ordinarily exists in fire support planning.

Fire Support Coordination. The GCE conducts fire support coordination throughout the GCE AO, utilizing an FSCC to control the fires of its organic indirect assets, fires delivered by the ACE, and fires requested by the GCE and delivered by agencies outside the MAGTF in support of the GCE scheme of maneuver. At levels below the battalion, units require augmentation to operate FSCCs.

Information Operations. As stated in JP 3-13, *Information Operations*, information operations are the integrated employment, during military operations, of information-related capabilities in concert with other lines of operation to influence, disrupt, corrupt, or usurp the decision making of adversaries and potential adversaries while protecting our own. Information operations involve the integration, coordination, and synchronization of all actions taken in the information environment to affect a target audience's behavior in order to create an operational advantage for the commander (see MCWP 3-32, *Marine Air-Ground Task Force Information Operations*, for more information). Information operations are integral to GCE operations and are applied in coordination with fires and maneuvers to create combined arms effects. Information operations can positively influence friendly and neutral audiences. They can deter adversaries or deny, disrupt, corrupt, or usurp the adversary's decision-making and C2 processes. The GCE employs and integrates the effects of the following information-related capabilities:

- Deception operations.
- Electronic warfare.
- Operational security.
- Military information support operations.
- Cyberspace operations.
- Physical attack.
- Information assurance.
- Physical security.
- Counterintelligence.
- Public affairs.
- Civil-military operations (CMO).

See MCWP 3-32 for more information on information operations.

Logistics

The GCE is able to operate in an austere environment, requiring only those things necessary for mission success. Each unit of the Marine division possesses organic CSS capabilities required for mission accomplishment. The GCE's organic CSS capabilities include conducting field maintenance on organic equipment, treating routine medical issues, and maintaining and distributing supplies and equipment in support of operations. At the battalion level and above, these assets are normally task-organized into combat trains and field trains. Combat trains are organic elements that operate in the unit's forward areas providing critical CSS. Field trains normally operate in a unit's rear area and are task-organized and located to ensure security while providing flexible, responsive, and austere logistic support based on the unit's scheme of maneuver. Field trains are responsible for planning and coordinating logistic support and normally work closely with the LCE.

The GCE requires LCE support for supply, maintenance, transportation, general engineering, services, health services, and operational contract support. Based on METT-T factors, the GCE may utilize ACE assault support aircraft to evacuate urgent and priority casualties and may use the ACE for movement of forces or supplies. Collaborative planning between the GCE and LCE is essential in order to provide rapid and responsive CSS. The GCE must be prepared to coordinate

and deconflict LCE movements within the battlespace. For additional information on logistics, see MCTP 3-40B, *Tactical-Level Logistics*, and MCWP 3-40, *Logistic Operations*.

Force Protection

Ground combat element forces use operational risk management and a range of tactics, techniques, and procedures to protect the force and mitigate the effects of the environment and the enemy's ability to locate, target, and engage friendly forces. The GCE counters enemy actions through fire and maneuver and active and passive security measures, including camouflage, dispersion, fortifying positions, conducting security and reconnaissance activities, and enforcing strict operations security standards. The GCE possesses organic counterfire capabilities and leverages MAGTF and joint force ISR and fires assets to protect the force. Units of the GCE train to operate in a chemical, biological, radiological, and nuclear (CBRN) environment.

The GCE establishes and enforces safety procedures in training, during planning, and while conducting operations to reduce inherent risk of nonbattle deaths and injuries. Similarly, commanders avoid fratricide through operational planning, which takes into account battlespace geometry and establishes required control measures and identification of friend or foe procedures. Intelligence supports force protection by reducing uncertainty for commanders and provides force protection through counterintelligence.

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CHAPTER 2
UNDERSTANDING THE OPERATIONAL ENVIRONMENT

THE NEAR TERM AND MIDTERM OPERATIONAL ENVIRONMENTS

According to JP 3-0, *Joint Operations*, the operational environment is the composite of the conditions, circumstances, and influences that affect the employment of capabilities and bear on the decisions of the commander. Prior to deployment, commanders and staffs strive to learn as much as possible about the operational environment. While conducting operations, they establish procedures to monitor and assess developments in the operational environment.

The AO is the portion of the operational environment assigned by HHQ or the joint force commander (JFC) to the MAGTF to accomplish the assigned mission. The MAGTF commander views the operational environment through the holistic lens of battlespace, recognizing that there will be enemy forces, friendly actors, infrastructure, information operations, and terrain that concern the commander beyond the assigned AO. Commanders coordinate with their HHQ to ensure those concerns are addressed and, as required, to request boundary changes to the AO.

Characteristics

Several factors contribute to the complexity of the operational environment. The near term and midterm operational environments are characterized by multiple factors discussed in the following subparagraphs.

Globalization. Globalization continues to increase interdependence among nations, placing a premium on trade routes. Globalization also results in proliferation and blurring of technologies for both military and civilian use. The United States continues to develop the advanced technologies required for high-end warfighting capabilities. Globalization and commercial innovation may make militarily relevant capabilities available to organizations that oppose US interests.

Demographic Shifts. In many areas, population growth continues to cause scarcity of resources, political instability, and the growth of urbanization in the littorals. Many regions of the third world are experiencing or will experience a youth bulge (when the population has a larger than normal percentage of the population between the age of 15 to 25), which has historically been a contributing factor in social unrest and conflict. In other regions, populations are declining and aging. Legal and illegal migration can contribute to conflict often complicated by cultural, racial, and religious differences. Migration, whether driven by people fleeing crisis or seeking economic advantage,

has national security implications. When migrant populations do not integrate into the host nation's social and civil fabric, conflict between the migrants and local populace is likely to result.

Competition for Energy and Water. Increased demand for energy and water will result in conflict as nations continue to grow in population and develop their infrastructure. Competition for affordable energy resources will continue to drive conflict. Conflict over water is expected to increase, especially in regions where water crosses national boundaries, such as rivers originating in one nation and flowing through one or more other nations, or where one or more nations share a common aquifer.

Failed States. A failed state is a country whose political or economic system has become so weak that the government is not able to police its own territory or provide basic services for the population. As such, failed states tend to be the location of humanitarian crisis, famines, and epidemics, and they are often a source of refugees. These states may become safe havens for terrorists and criminal groups that threaten the United States and its allies.

Rise of Nonstate Actors. There has been a significant increase in the number of nonstate actors, ranging from nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) with humanitarian charters, to corporations and business entities, to criminal gangs and terrorist or insurgent groups like Al-Qaeda. Some nonstate actors exploit international boundaries to escape taxation or law enforcement agencies.

All nonstate actors complicate and influence the operational environment, often working together in some areas and in competition in others at the same time. Even if a nonstate actor and a Marine Corps unit are working toward a similar end state, the nonstate actor may have very different means to accomplish it and may alternatively support or oppose US interests.

Weapons and Capabilities Proliferation. The proliferation of conventional weapons, cyberspace capabilities, and weapons of mass destruction has further empowered state and nonstate actors, amplifying the risks to US interests and those of its allies. Capabilities once solely owned by nation-states are now available to nonstate actors, including terrorists, insurgents, and criminals. Global Positioning System jammers, communication relay systems, laser dazzlers, night vision devices, and encrypted phones and radios are examples of technologies that are readily available on the global market. Contracting can provide military training and leadership and mercenary forces, enabling various actors to improve their operational capabilities. Similarly, the knowledge to build improvised explosive devices, using chemicals and components readily available in most urban areas, is freely accessible on the Internet.

Acceleration of Global Information Flow. Advances in information technology create both opportunities and challenges. Global connectivity and social media use increase awareness of human suffering in the wake of disasters, resulting in the rapid deployment of military capabilities for FHA and disaster relief. However, adversaries and enemies exploit the interconnected nature of the world and the freedom of social media to call into question every action by the United States Government (USG). The proliferation of information technology, including smartphones and private drones, means that sensors with the ability to produce instantaneous video and images continue to be pervasive. While traditional media remains important, bloggers and social networking sites increasingly shape public opinion.

Climate Change and Natural Disasters. Changes to the climate, such as changing precipitation patterns and extreme weather events, contribute to global instability by creating both short- and long-term crisis, including food and water shortages, destruction of infrastructure, refugees, and conflict over resources.

Implications for the Ground Combat Element

The near term and midterm operational environment are such that a GCE unit may find some or all of its subordinate units involved simultaneously in a diverse range of mission sets, originally described by General Charles C. Krulak as follows: "In one moment in time, our [S]ervice members will be feeding and clothing displaced refugees, providing humanitarian assistance. In the next moment, they will be holding two warring tribes apart—conducting peacekeeping operations—and, finally, they will be fighting a highly lethal mid-intensity battle—all on the same day. . . . all within three city blocks." (Quotation extracted from a speech to the National Press Club, Washington D.C., on 10 Oct 1997.) This environment places a premium on the ability of individual Marines and small unit leaders to adjust their posture and way of interacting with their surroundings, often with no notice. Similarly, the GCE must actively engage in the battle for the narrative and create unity of effort among friendly forces. How small units operate (and are perceived to be operating) must synchronize with the actions of commanders and their staffs to engage and influence a wide array of actors.

Multinational Operations. Future operations will likely be multinational operations. In many of these operations, US military actions may be a supporting effort, or they may be restricted by the presence of other actors.

The Expectation of Restraint and Precision in Use of Force. For legal and operational reasons, GCE units operating among the population must have the ability to exercise restraint and precision in employment of lethal and nonlethal force to mitigate collateral damage. This does not mitigate a commander's obligation to defend the force. The GCE requires the ability to mass fires based on the threat and objectives. Commanders use rules of engagement (ROE) to craft the framework for when and how Marines may employ force.

Forward-Deployed Forces Are Always Engaged. In a highly connected world, forward-deployed forces should expect continual observation by friendly, neutral, and hostile actors while training, while conducting security cooperation, and even while on liberty. What Marines do and how they do it influence the operational environment. To a certain extent, this phenomenon applies to Marines at home station as well.

Requirement for Cultural Understanding. Language, regional expertise, and culture capabilities are essential to successful operations in a complex environment and for operations that routinely occur amongst the population. Marines must understand how cultures influence planning and decision-making processes and be mindful of the strategic influence of cultural factors on all levels of operations.

THE LITTORALS

The United States is a maritime nation whose interests are inextricably woven into the network of global trade and dependent on a stable international order, making fair and equal access to the world's four physical domains—land, sea, air, and space—and cyberspace, a part of the information environment that permeates all four physical domains, essential to the Nation's well-being. The littorals are the complex areas where the sea domain and the land domain converge. It is also where a majority of the world's population lives. More than 80 percent of humans live within 100 miles of a coastline, and most maritime activities (e.g., fishing, commercial shipping, oil and gas extraction) occur within 200 miles of the shore. These densely populated urban regions are vital to US national interests and the interests of its allies.

Naval expeditionary forces provide the unique capability to rapidly project power in the littorals without requiring access to infrastructure or host-nation support. The GCE, like its parent MAGTF, operates on and from the sea domain using the sea and adjacent littorals to execute operational maneuver and to generate effects ashore, in the land domain.

The GCE's most likely operational environment is the urban littoral. Operating in urban terrain is challenging, as even small cities normally contain a complex mixture of high-rise business or administrative sections, suburbs, shantytowns, industrial areas, parklands, waterways, and transportation infrastructure, as well as underground complexes of subways, basements, and sewers. As difficult as the physical terrain of the urban environment is, understanding the political, military, economic, social, information, and infrastructure aspects is usually more challenging. Urban areas are densely populated (the key characteristic that separates them from other complex terrain), and invariably feature a number of organizations with their own agendas and often competing priorities. These organizations and actors form interrelated networks that Marines need to engage. The ability to identify and influence community leaders, both formal and informal, is essential for successful operations in urban environments.

As a globally deployable force, the GCE must rely on theater and national assets to provide sufficient understanding of the urban environment as a crisis becomes likely and during the initial response. This intelligence picture is continuously developed, and if the GCE is deployed ashore and interacting with local populations, the GCE is likely to become a prime source of intelligence information. For more information on urban operations, see JP 3-06, *Joint Urban Operations*, and MCRP 12-10B.1, *Military Operations on Urbanized Terrain (MOUT)*.

THE INFORMATION ENVIRONMENT

Achieving dominance in the information environment may be as crucial to victory in the 21st century as achieving air dominance was in the 20th century. The ability to share information in near real time, anonymously and securely, is a capability that is both an asset and a potential vulnerability to the United States, its allies, and threat actors. In the globally connected operational environment, the ability to influence perceptions, inform audiences, and affect

decisions provides commanders a valuable range of tools. These tools may deter aggression, prevent effective command and control by the enemy, deceive the enemy, conceal information about Marine Corps operations and capabilities, inform local populations, and reduce support for an insurgency. Rapid advances in information technology and globalization allow state and nonstate actors many of the same capabilities. In the future, the GCE will likely face well-networked state and nonstate threats that will continually generate nonlethal and lethal effects to seek an advantage in the information environment. These threats will likely target political, military, and civilian audiences in the GCE AO, as well as US political and civilian audiences.

The GCE commander and the staff integrate information operations into combined arms across all operations based on an informed understanding of the operational environment and identification of the specific effects desired. The commander and the staff must be cognizant that information operations can only be effective if informed by assessment and analysis of the cultural, political, social, and economic factors that influence the objectives and behavior of key actors. The goal is to modify the behavior, influence the decisions, or support the actions of friendly, neutral, and hostile actors. During TSC and other operations on the lower end of the conflict continuum, information operations are often the primary means of producing effects in the operational environment. During crisis response and major operations, information operations capabilities are integrated with fires and maneuver to attain desired end states.

The challenge for the GCE is to influence the decision making of enemies, adversaries, and other audiences in a time-competitive, information-intensive environment, while ensuring unity of effort with diverse partners. Planning considerations can include how to interrupt the flow of information or inject information at the right time, place, and duration to gain an operational advantage. By interrupting the flow of information, commanders can affect the quality or timeliness of a decision made by a threat. Effective information operations can prevent a decision from being made or delivered to those who must act on it.

Information operations are not about ownership of individual capabilities but rather the integration of these capabilities to create a desired effect. Many military and interagency capabilities are considered during the planning process. These include strategic communications, public affairs, CMO, cyberspace operations, information assurance, space operations, military information support operations, intelligence, military deception, operations security, special technical operations, joint electromagnetic spectrum operations, population perception assessments, and key leader engagements.

The GCE requires support from MAGTF, joint, Service, and interagency assets when employing information-related capabilities. The GCE must understand the information environment and how friendly, neutral, and hostile actors use the electromagnetic spectrum. That knowledge is used to selectively and precisely employ information-related capabilities to dominate the information environment. The coordination of information operations is as integral to effective operations as the coordination of indirect fires. Since many information-related capabilities are not organic to the GCE, their employment requires coordination with higher, adjacent, and supporting assets. The authority to employ some information-related capabilities resides well above the GCE commander; therefore, the time required to request and plan for the employment of these capabilities must be considered.

The Marine Corps expects that threat agencies will endeavor to turn every minor misstep into a controversy to advance their own agendas. Modern information technologies allow for the rapid creation of video and still imagery and their dissemination on a global scale. Adversaries, local nationals, outside agitators, members of the media, or even USG or partner nation government or military personnel may contribute to the spread of video or still imagery that is useful to a threat agency. Well-disciplined Marines conducting operations in accordance with ROE, engaging in honest communication with the media, and proactively informing local populations are a potent and effective defense against enemy information operations. Finally, commanders should consider embedding media within the GCE, as embedded media have proven to be useful in ensuring factual reporting.

PERMISSIVE, UNCERTAIN, AND HOSTILE ENVIRONMENTS

Commanders and their staffs plan and execute operations based on one of three operational conditions—permissive, uncertain, or hostile.

Permissive Environment

A permissive environment is the operational environment in which host country military and law enforcement agencies have control as well as the intent and capability to assist operations that a unit intends to conduct. (*DOD Dictionary of Military and Associated Terms*, hereafter referred to as the *DOD Dictionary*) Marines routinely conduct a variety of operations in permissive environments, such as training with host nation forces as part of TSC plans or deploying forces to support disaster relief in friendly countries. While operating in permissive environments, the GCE commander exercises routine force protection measures and relies on host nation security forces as well.

Uncertain Environment

An uncertain environment is the operational environment in which host nation government forces, whether opposed to or receptive to operations that a unit intends to conduct, do not have effective control of the territory and population in the intended operational area. (*DOD Dictionary*) Forward-deployed GCEs frequently conduct crisis response operations, such as noncombatant evacuation operations (NEOs) or embassy reinforcements, in an uncertain environment. This environment may be that in which expeditionary crisis response forces are most valuable; the ability to conduct a range of missions professionally, with the credible capability of conducting decisive combat operations, may de-escalate situations. When operating in an uncertain environment, the GCE cooperates with the host nation to the extent possible, but it retains primary responsibility for the security of the forces and the accomplishment of the mission. The GCE operates in a manner to present a hard target for any potential adversary.

Hostile Environment

In a hostile environment, hostile forces have the control, intent, and capability to oppose or react to operations. In a hostile environment, there may still be friendly host nation forces, but they do not have control of the situation. In this environment, the GCE conducts combat operations as required to accomplish assigned objectives.

FRIENDLY FORCES

United States law and policy, as well as the requirements of ongoing and future operations, dictate that Marines integrate JIIM capabilities into both Service-led operations and operations in support of another Service, partner, or ally. The GCE operates in a complex, interorganizational environment. Consequently, it must be aware of friendly forces and agencies operating in or adjacent to its battlespace, those with whom it must coordinate to accomplish the mission, and those to whom it is providing support or from whom it is receiving support. In the GCE's most likely operational environment and missions, the GCE can expect to routinely interact with, or be influenced by, some or all of the organizations discussed in the following subparagraphs.

Marine Corps Component Commands

Each geographic combatant commander (GCC) has a Marine Corps component command assigned. The Marine Corps component commander advises the GCC during planning, deployment, and employment regarding capabilities and support of Marine Corps forces. The Marine Corps component command supports the development of theater engagement plans, operational plans for contingencies, and operations orders. The Marine Corps component commander commands and logistically supports Marine Corps operating forces operating in the GCC's area of responsibility. The Marine Corps component command is the MAGTF's point of contact for access to theater capabilities, including intelligence, fires, and logistics.

The GCC's requirement for small units able to conduct crisis response and engage in steady-state TSC activities is a driving factor in the increasingly distributed and disaggregated operations of forward-deployed Marine Corps operating forces. At the same time, Marine Corps component commanders have a requirement to provide forces to respond to crises and contingencies. These competing demands require that GCE forces are sufficiently agile and interoperable and that forward-deployed forces and forces deploying from home station can aggregate and conduct effective combat operations.

Special Operations Forces

The GCE commander must be aware of special operations forces (SOF) that are, or potentially could be, operating in the AO. They must understand the procedures to request SOF support for operations, to include the introduction of expeditionary forces for crisis response and contingency operations. Finally, the GCE seeks opportunities, normally through the special operations forces liaison element (SOFLE), to integrate effects to mutual benefit. When preparing to deploy and/or when deployed ashore, the GCE commander seeks to synchronize operations with any joint special operations task force (JSOTF) that may be operating in the region. See appendix C for more information.

The Joint Force

During many contingency operations, the MAGTF and its subordinate GCE operate as the Marine Corps component of a JTF. In a joint environment, joint assets may reinforce the MAGTF and/or the GCE. Marine commanders and planners must understand the implications of the joint command and support relationships used to establish the joint force. They must familiarize themselves with the capabilities and limitations of joint assets and how to request,

leverage, organize, and employ them. When elements of the joint force are assigned to support the GCE, the GCE plans for orientation and training to integrate that force relative to time available. Key topics include the commander's intent, operational orientation, C2 procedures, CCIRs, and familiarization with standing operating procedures (SOPs) and ROE. For more information, see JP 3-0.

Multinational Military Partners

The United States often conducts military operations as part of an alliance or coalition containing military forces from allied countries. The United States is frequently the lead partner and commands the multinational force. All of the considerations discussed regarding the joint force also apply to multinational military partners. Additionally, commanders must understand and account for differences in operational and tactical capabilities, including national caveats. National caveats are constraints or restraints placed by a national government on its military forces or civilian elements assigned to a multinational force.

During multinational operations, the GCE works for the MAGTF CE, and allied forces may reinforce the MAGTF. Allied ground combat units may be assigned to the GCE or function as a separate maneuver element alongside the GCE. When allied forces are assigned to the GCE, commanders and planners must understand the capabilities and limitations of multinational forces and assign them missions appropriate to their capabilities inside the operation construct. Planning must account for national caveats and differences in partners' laws and authorities, doctrine, organization, weapons, equipment, terminology, culture, religion, and language.

Interagency Partners

Collectively, the USG agencies and departments, including the Department of Defense (DOD), are referred to as interagency partners. The security environment includes threats and challenges whose solutions require a sustainable, integrated whole-of-government application of national power and influence. A whole-of-government approach integrates relevant capabilities of, and prioritizes collaborative efforts among, the interagency partners to achieve unity of effort. The basis of this collaboration is recognition of common objectives nested within USG strategy.

The GCE commander may have interagency assets assigned to the staff, or interagency assets may be working independently in the GCE commander's AO. The commander and the staff must understand the interagency partners' capabilities, objectives, and limitations and recognize that collaboration with them enables greater understanding of the operational environment and of the tasks required to achieve a transition from military-led operations to civilian-led efforts. To develop this level of understanding requires frequent and robust collaboration.

Department of State. The ambassador (also called chief of mission) is the President's personal representative to each nation. The ambassador leads the Department of State (DOS) mission in his or her assigned country. The deputy chief of mission is the ambassador's lead for crisis management before, during, and after crises. The ambassador and deputy employ a country team that develops and implements the mission strategic plan. The country team normally includes the regional security officer (RSO), the senior representative of the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), the defense attaché, and personnel from the intelligence community. The GCE is likely to interact with members of the country team as part of embassy reinforcement, TSC, NEOs, and stability activities.

Other Governmental Agencies. In addition to the DOS and USAID, representatives from the Department of Justice, Department of Treasury, Department of Agriculture, and various other government agencies may have objectives and activities in the same AO. While their objectives nest within the US strategy for the country, they may not always directly support or contribute to military operations, a fact that underscores the need for robust communication and coordination between Marines and their interagency counterparts. It is imperative that the GCE understands the mission, authorities, capabilities, and limitations of each agency in order to maximize effectiveness of USG efforts. Because these organizations operate under different US titles and codes, they often have authorities and capabilities that provide the commander additional options within the context of MAGTF operations. For example, during combat operations in support of Operation Enduring Freedom, the Department of Justice and the Department of Treasury provided capabilities in support of sensitive site exploitation and counterthreat financing that denied the Taliban significant sources of funding, which restricted their logistics.

Reachback Support

As an expeditionary force with global responsibilities, the GCE, whether forward deployed or prepared to surge forward, is limited on the amount of IPB that can be done with organic assets. The GCE commander and the staff must familiarize themselves with the capabilities available to them through operational reachback and how to integrate, request, and employ those capabilities. The GCE can expect to routinely conduct reachback to organizations such as the Marine Corps Intelligence Activity and the Marine Corps Information Operations Center. These, and similar organizations, provide expertise and resources that support the expeditionary nature of the GCE. Reachback capabilities allow Marines to leverage Marine Corps, joint, theater, and national assets outside the operational area for classified and open-source studies, data, and actionable intelligence. Sufficient communications bandwidth is essential to reachback support as is an understanding of the capabilities and request processes of supporting agencies.

THREATS

Threats consist of enemies with whom we are engaged in combat and adversaries whose goals are contrary to US interests and with whom we might engage in hostilities. The GCE, as a component of the MAGTF, conducts operations against threat forces across the ROMO. Potential threats cover the entire spectrum from widely dispersed terrorist networks, to nonstate actors with significant governance and military capabilities, to near-peer competitors. The GCE is optimized for expeditionary operations. Within this context, the GCE seeks to balance the forces it needs to conduct operations against most likely and most dangerous threats. In the near term and midterm operational environment, the GCE is most likely to face terrorists and nonstate actors. The most dangerous threats are from regional powers or near-peer competitors.

Traditional Threats

Traditional threats are the military forces of a nation-state employing conventional weapons such as tanks, aircraft, and artillery in a conventional manner. Most nations with traditional military forces do not seek to engage US forces directly. They are more likely to attempt to use their military power to intimidate US allies into denying required access or to challenge US ability

to deploy and employ forces by threatening or denying strategic ports of debarkation and littoral maneuver. The increased range, precision, and proliferation of antiaccess and area denial systems requires the GCE to be capable of conducting dispersed or distributed operations with smaller, task-organized forces. Against this enemy, the GCE relies on the integration of MAGTF and joint force capabilities to identify or create and exploit gaps in enemy defenses to allow for mission accomplishment. The traditional threat generally requires the GCE to mass combat power and increase expenditure of resources.

Irregular Threats

Irregular threats can come from nonstate actors or indigenous organizations who are not members of the armed forces, police, or internal security forces of a nation and who employ violence to achieve their objectives. The irregular threat normally employs irregular warfare, though irregular forces may employ traditional warfare techniques at certain times. This threat is most common when the GCE supports a friendly nation dealing with an insurgency. Operations against this type of threat often require greater dispersion and more effort to locate the enemy and secure the population. Irregular threats do not attempt to fight Marines directly and are likely to use asymmetrical methods, such as improvised explosive devices. Against this enemy, the GCE requires significant support from the MAGTF to develop the required understanding of the human factors and to identify and influence friendly, neutral, and hostile networks. The intent is often to support or establish host nation security forces and to influence the population to support a legitimate host nation government.

Threats that combine traditional and irregular methods of warfare present the most difficult challenges. States, proxy forces, or some nonstate actors can create these challenges. The GCE must maintain the ability to rapidly transition the size, mobility, and capabilities of the force while in contact. Integration with the other elements of the MAGTF remains critical to success. The ability to employ selected next generation weapons systems or to exploit the information networks of modern societies with offensive cyberspace operations can also be anticipated.

Transnational Threats

A transnational threat is any activity, individual, or group not tied to a particular country or region that operates across international boundaries and threatens US national security or interests. (*DOD Dictionary*) These threats are most often criminal and terrorist activities. The actions of transnational criminal organizations and violent extremist groups contribute to regional unrest and instability that directly threaten US interests through terrorism, piracy, and trafficking of weapons, narcotics, humans, and other contraband. The GCE supports national and multinational law enforcement and SOF operations against these threats. See JP 3-26, *Counterterrorism*, for more information.

Neutral, Nonaligned, and Contested Actors

Any operational environment includes numerous individuals, population groups, actors, and parties who may not be easily categorized as friendly or hostile, such as business, religious, and cultural leaders; certain demographics; and nongovernmental actors. The GCE seeks to comprehend and effectively maneuver in these cognitive and cultural dimensions to positively

influence these actors to support mission accomplishment or to mitigate them to prevent their interference with operations.

In this complex environment, the GCE seeks to identify and engage enemies, as well as to identify, engage, and influence key leaders and the general population among which the enemy seeks to operate and who can either hide or expose them. Marines must understand the beliefs, values, and perceptions of the local population, as well as methods of information dissemination within the operational environment. A thorough understanding of existing human networks and how they are interrelated with threat networks provides the GCE with greater opportunities to understand, identify, affect, and target threat networks.

The Media

The pervasive presence of host nation, US, and international media is a factor in the operational environment. The media's primary role is to provide information. Most media personnel try to remain objective and report accurately. With or without manipulation by opposing parties, the media can have a great effect on public opinion and the national will of the opposing sides and can dramatically affect international relations and world opinion. Commanders should expect to encounter journalists and media organizations with a bias that serves to support the information operations of threat organizations.

Nongovernmental and Volunteer Organizations

Nongovernmental organizations and private volunteer organizations provide humanitarian assistance and disaster relief. Officially, they are not affiliated with a government, but they may be influenced by policies of their home country. Humanitarian relief organizations are generally motivated by charity. They often deploy to assist the local population in dealing with manmade and natural disasters and disease, hunger, and poverty. Their mission does not involve assisting the military in accomplishing its objectives.

Business Interests

Ground combat elements involved in a particular country or region must take into account multinational corporations conducting business in the region. These outside interests can put additional pressure on the host nation and the USG to protect certain infrastructure and avoid collateral damage to civilian life and property. In some regions, multinational corporations have their own armed security forces to protect their interests or perhaps those of their host country.

Private military companies (PMCs) provide security, training, logistic, and intelligence services on a contractual basis. The PMCs are not legally authorized to conduct offensive military operations. They often act as an adjunct to other security forces and may provide advisors, instructors, and maintenance personnel for host nation military, paramilitary, and police forces and provide security for private individuals and businesses (including multinational corporations). Interagency partners may employ PMCs for specific tasks. For example, the DOS has employed PMCs in conflict zones to provide security. The GCE should coordinate with any PMCs operating in the GCE AO to identify their intentions and establish communications and recognition procedures.

Mercenaries

The United Nations General Assembly's International Convention against the Recruitment, Use, Financing and Training of Mercenaries prohibits the employment of mercenaries. Mercenaries are soldiers who fight for any group or country that hires them, motivated essentially by the desire for private gain. Threat forces may employ mercenaries and PMCs to provide military capabilities beyond those organic to their organizations. For example, transnational drug cartels employ former SOF mercenaries as enforcers and security, while Ethiopia employed ex-Soviet pilots to fly high-performance fighter aircraft during their war with Eritrea.

The importance of these actors is relative to the level of conflict. The nature of traditional warfare may minimize the impact of these actors on the GCE; however, during irregular warfare, influencing these actors is essential to mission success.

CHAPTER 3
GROUND COMBAT ELEMENT OPERATIONS ACROSS THE RANGE OF MILITARY OPERATIONS

OVERVIEW

While fully capable of conducting operations across the ROMO, as the Nation's force in readiness, the Marine Corps conducts crisis response as a core competency. Marines are constantly forward deployed to shape the security environment, signal US resolve, deter conflict, and protect US interests. These same forward-deployed forces provide credible, immediately employable, combined arms forces, which are sustainable without access to bases or host-nation support, for crisis response. When more combat power than a MEU or SPMAGTF provides is required, the Marine Corps component commander can composite forward-deployed units and units deploying from home station to meet operational requirements in support of major operations. Forward-deployed MAGTFs may set conditions for the deployment of more substantial forces. The types of operations that the GCE participates in across the ROMO are discussed in the following paragraphs, sequenced to reflect historic precedence and the Marine Corps role as a force in readiness.

CRISIS RESPONSE AND LIMITED CONTINGENCY OPERATIONS

The majority of GCE operations fall into crisis response and limited contingency operations, typically occurring with little or no notice and designed to achieve specific operational or strategic effects. They may be standalone operations in response to a crisis (e.g., NEO) or an element of a larger, more complex joint operation. The BLTs of the MEUs and SPMAGTFs are forward deployed and ready to respond within 6 hours of notification. The types of operations that Marines are likely to execute in crisis response and limited contingency operations, and the role of the GCE in each, are discussed in the following subparagraphs.

Noncombatant Evacuation Operations

The DOS or other appropriate authority, in conjunction with the DOD, directs a NEO when the lives of noncombatants in foreign countries are endangered by war, civil unrest, or natural disaster. Diplomatic considerations significantly influence the methods and timing for the evacuation. The ambassador maintains authority for oversight of the NEO. Noncombatant evacuation operations

may entail the evacuation of US citizens and/or citizens of other countries to safe havens as identified by the DOS.

Ideally, there is no opposition to a NEO, and all factions in a host nation support it. When required, GCE forces are prepared to conduct a NEO in an uncertain or hostile environment, requiring the threat or use of force by the MAGTF. In this case, the GCE planning includes the employment of a range of organic and supporting arms, including information operations and nonlethal weapons. For example, information operations supporting the NEO may inform the population of the NEO's purpose and that it is not a US invasion.

Similar to a raid, NEOs are planned and executed to swiftly introduce forces, secure and process evacuees, and conduct a planned withdrawal. Detailed coordination is required between the MAGTF and the embassy. The US ambassador (or chief of the diplomatic mission) is responsible for maintenance of a regional emergency action plan that covers military evacuation of citizens and designated foreign nationals. A copy of the emergency action plan for each country is available to the MAGTF through the relevant Marine Corps component command.

Normally, the LCE is the main effort during the conduct of a NEO and operates the evacuation control centers. The GCE's role in a NEO is to establish required security conditions. The GCE commander coordinates with the DOS RSO, who is responsible for the security of the embassy and has control of the Marine security guards, and local national contract security guards, as required. The RSO normally communicates with the host nation security forces. The GCE commander and the staff develop plans that consider the emergency action plan and the need to secure the evacuation control centers and infrastructure or routes required to evacuate personnel, as required. For additional information, see JP 3-68, *Noncombatant Evacuation Operations*.

Embassy Defense and/or Reinforcement

When an embassy or other diplomatic post is threatened, the ambassador may call for reinforcement. The fleet antiterrorism security team companies of the Marine Corps Security Force Regiment are the primary force to conduct embassy reinforcement for the Marine Corps. However, based on the scope, scale, and urgency of the mission, the GCE may augment an embassy or diplomatic post with either small teams of subject matter experts (e.g., snipers, communicators, joint terminal attack controllers) or platoon- to company-sized units. Embassy reinforcement missions are frequently done in conjunction with a NEO. The embassy RSO retains responsibility for defense of the embassy and control of the Marine security guards and, if present, contract local national security guards.

Raids

The GCE is trained and equipped to conduct raids. Normally, the GCE conducts raids in addition to or instead of strikes by aircraft and missiles when there is a requirement to capture or confirm destruction of a high-value target, recover evidence/intelligence, or place pressure on governments or nonstate actors. The GCE may execute a raid as the raid force or serve as a covering force or quick reaction force (QRF) in support of other forces. There is often a requirement for the GCE to conduct site exploitation as part of a raid. Further information on raids is available in MCRP 3-30.1, *Raid Operations*.

Foreign Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief Operations

Foreign humanitarian assistance and disaster relief operations employ military personnel, equipment, and supplies to provide or support emergency relief to victims of natural or manmade disasters in the United States and overseas. Historically, forward-deployed naval forces have been quick to respond to an emergency or disaster. Forward-deployed forces are well suited to provide support to these operations because of their flexibility and logistic capabilities. In these operations, the GCE may provide a range of capabilities, including gathering intelligence regarding infrastructure and population; opening ground lines of communication; establishing security; and either commanding or supporting aid distribution, medical assistance, and evacuations.

International Chemical, Biological, Radiological, and Nuclear Response

International CBRN response is assistance provided by the USG to a host nation to mitigate the effects of a deliberate or inadvertent CBRN or high-yield explosives attack or event and restore essential government services (see JP 3-41, *Chemical, Biological, Radiological, and Nuclear Response*, for more information). While the Chemical Biological-Incident Response Force is specially trained and equipped for consequence management, forward-deployed forces may be assigned this mission. Consequence management in support of a foreign government by the GCE would be similar to FHA missions with the added complexity of operations in a CBRN environment. For additional information, see MCRP 10-10E.6, *Multiservice Tactics, Techniques, and Procedures for Chemical, Biological, Radiological, and Nuclear Consequence Management Operations*.

Tactical Recovery of Aircraft and Personnel

Deployed Marine Corps forces frequently maintain a tactical recovery of aircraft and personnel (TRAP) capability. An assigned and briefed aircrew performs TRAP, a Marine Corps mission performed for the specific purpose of the recovery of personnel, equipment, and/or aircraft when the tactical situation precludes search and rescue assets from responding and when survivors and their location have been confirmed. The composition of a TRAP force may vary from a single aircraft and aircrew to a package that consists of multiple fixed-wing and assault support aircraft with an onboard complement of security, ground search, and medical personnel. The mission commander is normally a GCE commander. The GCE provides appropriately trained and equipped forces (normally two reinforced platoons, a primary and an alternate), who are kept at a high state of alert. The TRAP mission is closely coordinated with the air mission commander assigned from the ACE. Platoon- and company-sized QRFs normally support the TRAP force (see chapt. 4). While the TRAP mission is a component of crisis response operations, the TRAP mission is applicable across the ROMO.

Defense Support of Civil Authorities

Defense support of civil authorities is support provided by military forces in response to requests for assistance from US civil authorities for domestic emergencies, law enforcement support, and other domestic activities or from qualifying entities for special events. Defense support of civil authorities is always conducted in support of an interagency partner and may range from support for special events (e.g., Fleet Week), to disaster assistance (e.g., Hurricane Katrina), to security and law enforcement support (e.g., I MEF support to the Los Angeles Police Department following the Rodney King verdict and rioting), to potentially assisting with CBRN consequence management. As required, the MAGTF CE may task the GCE to execute a wide range of missions under defense

support of civil authorities, though the most common is the provision of logistic, transportation, and security support to Federal, state, or local authorities assisting an area in recovering from a disaster. For additional information, see MCRP 3-30.6, *Multi-Service Tactics, Techniques, and Procedures for Defense Support of Civil Authorities*, or JP 3-28, *Defense Support of Civil Authorities*.

Peace Operations

According to JP 3-07.3, *Peace Operations*, peace operations encompass multiagency and multinational crisis response and limited contingency operations involving all instruments of national power with military missions to contain conflict, redress the peace, shape the environment to support reconciliation and rebuilding, and facilitate the transition to legitimate governance. Peace operations include peacekeeping, peace enforcement, peacemaking, peace building, and conflict prevention efforts. The two types of peace operations that MAGTFs are most likely to support are peace enforcement and peacekeeping.

Peace Enforcement. Peace enforcement is the application of military force, or the threat of its use, normally pursuant to international authorization, to compel compliance with resolutions or sanctions designed to maintain or restore peace and order. (*DOD Dictionary*) Peace enforcement involves the threat or use of force to separate belligerents involved in a conflict, with or without their consent. Forces employed in peace enforcement are prepared to use the amount of force necessary to compel compliance and end hostilities. Information operations are an integral component of peace enforcement operations, as they inform all concerned parties of the intent and authority of the force conducting peace enforcement and the belligerents of the consequences of not complying.

The GCE may conduct and/or support the following missions in support of peace enforcement:

- Preventive deployment.
- Internal conflict resolution measures.
- Assistance to (interim) civil authority.
- Protection of FHA operations.

The GCE tasks may include—

- Separating active or potential belligerents to forestall violence.
- Protecting/enabling the delivery of humanitarian relief.
- Assisting local authorities in securing threatened parties or population groups.
- Maintaining security to enable elections or transfer of power.

If deployed ashore, the GCE prepares to execute combat operations to enforce the relevant peace mandates and must be prepared to transition to either combat operations or peacekeeping operations.

Peacekeeping. Peacekeeping operations are military operations undertaken with the consent of all major parties to a dispute, designed to monitor and facilitate implementation of an agreement (cease fire, truce, or other such agreement) and support diplomatic efforts to reach a long-term political settlement. (*DOD Dictionary*) Peacekeeping operations are normally executed by small

teams of observers. Depending on the goals for the region, the security of these teams may require the threat of US military force. If this is the case, as part of the MAGTF, the GCE maintains a contingency plan for the employing force to assist and protect these teams.

MAJOR OPERATIONS AND CAMPAIGNS

When required to achieve national strategic objectives or protect national interests, US leadership may decide to conduct a major operation or campaign involving large-scale combat, placing the United States in a wartime state. In such cases, the general goal is to prevail against the enemy as quickly as possible, conclude hostilities, and establish conditions favorable to the host nation, the United States, and its multinational partners. A major operation is a series of tactical actions, such as battles, engagements, and strikes, and is the primary building block of a campaign. A campaign is a series of related military operations aimed at achieving a strategic or operational objective within a given time and space. (*DOD Dictionary*) Although historically Marines have spent far more time conducting crisis response and limited contingency operations, by law the Marine Corps must prepare to support major operations and campaigns. The Marine Corps has participated in major operations and campaigns during both World Wars, in Korea, Vietnam, Kuwait, Afghanistan, and Iraq.

Escalation of Crisis or Initial Response to Conflict

Forces conducting crisis response missions may find themselves to be the lead elements of major operations if the crisis escalates. Conversely, unexpected conflict may occur without significant escalation. For example, a MAGTF is often the first US force to arrive in an undeveloped theater of operations. In that case, the MAGTF commander often has operational-level responsibilities regardless of the size of the MAGTF. In either case, the JFC seeks decisive advantage through using available and early-entry forces to seize and maintain the initiative, deny the enemy the opportunity to achieve the enemy's objectives, and generate in the enemy a sense of inevitable failure and defeat.

Operating forward from amphibious vessels, the GCE provides an immediately employable, middleweight, combined arms force capable of sustainment in an austere environment or where denied infrastructure. The inherent flexibility and capability of MAGTFs, joined with the mobility and sustainability provided by amphibious warfare ships, provides the Marine Corps component commander an asymmetric advantage over adversaries in many situations. In coordination with carrier strike groups, amphibious forces utilize the sea as maneuver space and conduct or threaten strikes, raids, and JFEO.

Marine Corps ground force participation during the early stages of a major operation or a campaign varies based on operational circumstances. The JFC employs the MAGTF, and thus the GCE, to execute advanced force operations, seize or secure vital infrastructure (such as ports and airfields) to allow for the introduction of follow-on forces, or serve as a covering force to enable reception, staging, onward movement, and integration (RSOI) of the joint force. The GCE accomplishes this in conjunction with both theater and national ISR systems and special operations command assets.

While there are many METT-T variables, early seizure or defense of a lodgment may be preferable to waiting to conduct JFEO against an enemy who has time to establish defenses.

Joint Forcible Entry Operations

A Marine Corps core competency is the conduct of JFEO, which enable maneuver, allow access to critical infrastructure, or establish a lodgment to enable joint force RSOI. The JFC plans and conducts JFEO using a mixture of amphibious, airborne, and assault support capabilities of the Marine Corps and Army.

Amphibious MEBs are the smallest force capable of conducting forcible entry. The GCE contribution to an amphibious MEB's forcible entry capability is an RLT. Regardless of whether the MAGTF is a MEB or a larger unit, the GCE, with its ability to seize required objectives, normally constitutes the main effort.

Joint forcible entry operations usually require the compositing of forward-deployed forces from around the globe with forces deployed from home station. Ideally, forces would be composited prior to the start of operations, but operational requirements may require compositing after hostilities have commenced. In situations where the Marine Corps has forward-deployed or crisis response forces on hand, the MAGTF operates as the JTF CE. Similarly, the GCE may be assigned command of joint or multinational ground combat forces. Multinational forces may bring additional capabilities and capacity. For additional information, see JP 3-18, *Joint Forcible Entry Operations*.

Sustained Combat Operations

During sustained combat operations, JFCs simultaneously employ conventional and special operations forces and capabilities throughout the breadth and depth of the operational area. During sustained combat operations, the GCE is employed at the regimental or division level. The joint force may require elements of the MAGTF to conduct sustained operations ashore as part of a larger campaign. Alternatively, the MAGTF and GCE may be kept afloat and fill the role of a theater reserve, able to rapidly respond to crisis elsewhere.

Even after joint forces are firmly established ashore, sea-based amphibious forces provide JFCs with the capability to execute operational maneuver from the sea (OMFTS). Such operations can introduce significant forces over relatively great distances in short periods of time into the rear or flanks of the enemy. The mobility and fire support capability of maritime forces at sea, coupled with the ability to rapidly land operationally significant forces, can be key to achieving military operational objectives. See appendix D for more information about OMFTS.

As an expeditionary, middleweight force, the GCE may require reinforcement from joint or coalition assets during sustained combat operations. This augmentation may be required to increase combat power, mobility, and survivability and may include armored, logistic, and/or engineering forces as well as fire support capabilities.

An example of such employment is Marine Corps participation in Operation Desert Shield and Operation Desert Storm. Early arriving amphibious forces (11th MEU and later 4th MEB) remained afloat, threatening amphibious operations, while 1st Marine Division conducted the offload of two maritime prepositioning ships squadrons as part of the initial defense of Saudi Arabia, supported by information operations. As the coalition force transitioned from defensive

to offensive operations, 1st and 2d Marine Divisions, reinforced with an Army armored brigade, constituted the GCEs of I MEF ashore, while 4th MEB remained afloat as the amphibious element of 5th Fleet. These forces concurrently conducted offensive operations ashore, deception operations afloat, and amphibious raids in support of the overall campaign plan. Marine Corps forces breached Iraq's obstacle belts and liberated Kuwait City while simultaneously presenting a viable amphibious landing threat, which prevented multiple divisions of the Iraqi Army from maneuvering.

Stability Operations

Marine forces may execute stability operations in support of a transition to civil authority, which may be a follow-on to major combat operations. Conversely, the GCE may participate in major operations where stability operations are the primary focus, such as FHA operations following a natural disaster. Marine ground combat forces may be called on to safeguard the populace, enable or re-establish civil law and order, protect or rebuild key infrastructure, and restore public services. Combat forces may have to lead and organize these efforts when indigenous civil, USG, multinational, or international agencies do not initially exist or are incapable of assuming responsibility. As the situation progresses, military forces often decrease their leadership role and focus on supporting the efforts of host nation authorities, interagency partners, and/or NGOs.

MILITARY ENGAGEMENT, SECURITY COOPERATION, AND DETERRENCE

Deployed forces execute military engagement, security cooperation, and deterrence operations on a daily basis. The Marine Corps component commanders employ MAGTFs, in conjunction with other joint assets, to shape theater conditions and deter threats in their assigned areas of responsibility. The types of operations that Marines are likely to execute in support of military engagement, security cooperation, and deterrence, and the role of the GCE in each, are discussed in the following subparagraphs.

Theater Security Cooperation

Security cooperation covers all DOD interaction with foreign military forces to build defense relationships that promote US security interests, develop allied and friendly military capabilities for self-defense and multinational operations, and provide US forces with peacetime and contingency access to a host nation. Theater security cooperation plans exist for every theater, region, and country where the United States engages in security cooperation activities, providing long-term frameworks within which US forces engage regional partners in cooperative military activities.

Theater security cooperation activities include periodic and rotational deployments; access and storage agreements; multinational exercises; port visits; freedom of navigation exercises; foreign military training; foreign community support; and military-to-military contacts, including security assistance offices, military assistance advisory groups, and a personnel exchange program. For the GCE, these missions can range in size and scope from a small detachment of subject matter experts conducting training with another nation's military force to large North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) amphibious exercises involving an RLT.

Units conducting TSC may be drawn from forward-deployed units or active and reserve units deployed from home stations for a specific TSC mission. The GCE, along with other elements of forward-deployed MAGTFs, can participate in a range of activities in support of TSC. The GCE commander conducting TSC as part of a forward-deployed MAGTF should be familiar with the Marine Corps component commander's TSC plan in order to fully understand goals and objectives.

As an example, as of 2015, III MEF conducted approximately 70 exercises annually in support of the United States Pacific Command's TSC plans. Some of these exercises involved exchanges of small teams of subject matter experts with company-sized units, while others were MEF-sized exercises to serve military engagement, security assistance, and security cooperation goals.

In most cases, a GCE unit assigned to conduct TSC operations is neither the first nor the last US unit tasked to engage a nation's security forces. Through the supported Marine Corps component command, the MAGTF should seek out after action reports and/or contact the leadership of previous units. Similarly, the GCE should prepare after action reports and reach out to units that are preparing to conduct subsequent engagements.

Naval Forward Presence and Maritime Security

Marine expeditionary units are an integral component of the naval forces forward deployed to shape the security environment, signal US resolve, deter conflict, protect US interests, and promote global prosperity by defending freedom of navigation in the maritime commons.

Naval forces routinely conduct maritime security operations, maritime interception operations, and freedom of navigation operations; protect shipping; and enforce sanctions and exclusion zones. Embarked GCE forces may provide capabilities as required to support and/or conduct opposed day and night visit, board, search, and seizure, as well as other missions to protect US vessels and citizens, deter or prevent smuggling of contraband, and deny bases of operations to adversaries.

Nation Assistance

Nation assistance is assistance rendered to a nation by foreign forces within that nation's territory based on agreements mutually concluded between nations. (*DOD Dictionary*) The US ambassador's country plan integrates nation assistance planning. Nation assistance consists of security assistance, foreign internal defense (FID), and humanitarian and civic assistance (HCA). The following subparagraphs discuss the many different ways the GCE can support nation assistance operations.

Security Assistance. Security assistance is a group of programs the United States uses to provide defense equipment, military training, and other defense-related services to foreign nations in furtherance of US national policies and objectives. The GCE supports these programs by deploying mobile training teams to conduct military-to-military training. The mission of these teams is to train host nation personnel to operate, maintain, and employ weapons and support systems or to develop a self-training capability in a particular skill. Teams may train either military or civilian personnel, depending on requests.

Support to Foreign Internal Defense. Foreign internal defense is participation by civilian and military agencies of a government in any of the action programs taken by another government

or other designated organization to free and protect its society from subversion, lawlessness, insurgency, terrorism, and other threats to its security. (*DOD Dictionary*) These programs may address other threats to a host nation's internal stability, such as civil disorder, illegal drug trafficking, and terrorism. Marine Corps support may include training, materiel, participating in joint and multinational exercises, conducting CMO, intelligence cooperation, logistic support, and combat operations. The GCE can be assigned FID missions as a unit or in detachments supporting SOF. Within the GCE, support to these types of programs may include small unit training, staff training, combat advising, and unit partnership missions. For more information, see JP 3-22, *Foreign Internal Defense*.

Humanitarian and Civic Assistance Programs. Humanitarian and civic assistance programs are conducted in conjunction with military operations and exercises, usually as military unit training. Unlike FHA operations, HCA programs are planned activities to provide medical, dental, and veterinary services; construct rudimentary surface transportation systems, well drilling, and basic sanitation facilities; and to provide rudimentary construction and repair of public facilities. The MAGTF commander often tasks GCE units to provide command and control and subordinate task-organized units to provide manpower and leadership in support of HCA programs.

Combating Terrorism

Combating terrorism occurs through two sets of measures and activities—antiterrorism and counterterrorism.

Antiterrorism. Antiterrorism is the defensive measures used to reduce the vulnerability of individuals and property to terrorist acts, to include rapid containment by local military and civilian forces. (*DOD Dictionary*) Antiterrorism relies on active and passive measures, beginning with training and education. Essential to antiterrorism is tying into established theater intelligence collection and dissemination networks for timely threat information. The GCE executes defensive measures and conducts continuing actions and security procedures to protect the force and designated infrastructure and/or populations. The MAGTF may provide antiterrorism assistance to foreign countries as part of the overall US military FID and development programs; in this case, the GCE conducts assessments of and training for the host nation security forces. Detailed information can be found in JP 3-07.2, *Antiterrorism*.

Counterterrorism. Counterterrorism consists of activities and operations taken to neutralize terrorists and their organizations and networks in order to render them incapable of using violence to instill fear and coerce governments or societies to achieve their goals. For more information, see JP 3-26. Marine Forces Special Operations Command, fleet antiterrorism security teams, and the Chemical Biological-Incident Response Force are the primary Marine Corps contributions to these operations. The GCE conducts operations in support of SOF elements. Support may range from providing security, conducting blocking or diversionary operations, serving as a QRF or TRAP force, or conducting raids or offensive operations.

Show of Force and Deterrence Operations

Show of force operations are designed to demonstrate US resolve by increasing the visibility of deployed forces in an attempt to deter an adversary from taking actions detrimental to US interests or national objectives. These operations often involve forward-deployed forces, such as a MEU or other MAGTF offloading MPF assets, and include multinational training exercises, rehearsals,

forward deployment of units, or the buildup of forces within a theater. For example, the various exercises conducted in South Korea are examples of exercises that can function as show of force operations. The GCE often uses participation in show of force operations as a training opportunity. The GCE rehearses and demonstrates the ability to project combat power in the specified region. Marines deployed in support of a host nation can serve to both bolster the morale and operational capabilities of the host nation and deter hostile actors. Similarly, the credible threat of offensive ground operations, backed by naval and joint fires, may deter hostile actions in a way that other assets cannot.

Defense Support to Public Diplomacy

Deployed forces may support DOS or Presidential visits. In this role, the GCE conducts security missions.

Department of Defense Support to Counterdrug Operations

Illicit drug trafficking organizations undermine and corrupt regional stability. These organizations are often closely tied to, or are a component of, other transnational criminal and terrorist networks. Marine Corps forces support counterdrug operations in the United States operating under JTF-North, the DOD organization tasked to support the Nation's federal law enforcement agencies in the identification and interdiction of suspected transnational threats within and along the approaches to the continental United States. Elements of the Marine divisions assigned to support JTF-North normally conduct detection and monitoring operations to facilitate early notification of trafficking activity and interdiction by law enforcement. Forward-deployed forces may assist the counterdrug efforts of cooperating foreign governments, agencies, and forces through training and operational support to host nation forces and through technical assistance, intelligence support, and collaboration with host nation law enforcement agencies to prevent the export of illegal drugs. The GCE may conduct reconnaissance and security operations in support of counterdrug operations.

CHAPTER 4
COMMAND AND CONTROL OF GROUND COMBAT ELEMENT OPERATIONS

OVERVIEW

The C2 process in the GCE enables the commander to form an understanding of the situation, decide what action is required, transmit instructions to subordinate commanders, monitor the execution of operations, and assess the results of the action. Exercise of effective command and control is essential to achieving unity of effort and realizing the full combat potential of the GCE.

The GCE commander is aided in exercising command and control by the staff and subordinate commanders, by staff functioning and processes, by information systems and support structures, and by the assignment of appropriate authority inherent in command relationships. Discussion of how the GCE plans as an element of the MAGTF and a brief description of the role of the commander and the staff follow. See MCDP 6, *Command and Control*, and MCWP 3-30, *MAGTF Command and Staff Action*, for more information on command and control. See MCWP 5-10, *Marine Corps Planning Process*, for more information on planning.

The C2 support structure includes organizations, procedures, equipment, facilities, training, education, and doctrine. The GCE C2 support structure enables the commander to exercise command across the breadth of the force. It provides the means for the commander to form an understanding of the situation, decide what action is required, transmit instructions to subordinate commanders, monitor execution of operations, and assess the results of the action. For the GCE, this structure enables planning and execution of maneuver, fire support coordination, intelligence operations, aviation support, and logistics. Integrated digital C2 systems provide a COP that enables situational awareness and high tempo operations while reducing the risk of fratricide.

The experience and authority of the commander and the size and capability of the assigned staff vary based on the composition of the GCE. The commander of a CLT is normally a captain with 6 to 8 years of experience supported by a small staff with limited autonomy, which requires augmentation for prolonged independent operations. As the size of the assigned force increases, so do the experience of the commander and the depth and capability of the staff. The commander of a Marine division is a major general. The Marine division staff has more depth and experience and is capable, with select augmentation, to function as a JTF headquarters. The C2 capability and capacities required during operations are considered during planning and can be modified to meet mission requirements by task organization or through reinforcement or staff augmentation.

THE COMMANDER

At each level of command, the commander's personality, attitude, technical and tactical proficiency, and leadership influence the unit. The commander is responsible for establishing a command climate where all Marines know they have the ability, authority, and responsibility to make decisions in the midst of chaos or in the absence of specific orders. Ground commanders share danger and hardship with their Marines; therefore, they must have the ability to stay calm, remain mission-focused, and lead despite those dangers and hardships.

The art of war, which has been the commander's central historical role, remains critical in the contemporary operational environment. The art includes an understanding of both the science and the nature of war, which is that war is a violent clash of human wills, characterized by friction, uncertainty, disorder, and complexity. Successful commanders have the intuitive ability, informed by judgment and experience, to grasp the essence of a unique military situation and the creative ability to devise a practical solution. The commander's intent communicates the envisioned solution to subordinates.

The commander's intent is the commander's personal expression of the purpose of the operation. The GCE commander develops intent after considering the commander's intent of both the MAGTF commander and the next higher commander, often a JTF commander. Commander's intent allows subordinates to make decisions in a fluid environment in the absence of orders by describing the purpose of an end state, which may not only address the physical environment but also include the cognitive space of adversaries, allies, and the local populations. Once articulated and disseminated, the expressed end state stimulates the entire planning process, unifying the force toward a common mission objective. When combined with a bias for action, understanding of the commander's intent and end state empowers subordinate leaders to aggressively execute operations and make decisions that support the unit's mission.

The GCE commander develops relationships throughout the MAGTF and among key leaders found in the JIIM environment. Developing these relationships is a conscious, collaborative act reinforced in training as well as actual operations. The MAGTF commander has primary authority and responsibility in dealing with JIIM partners. Due to proximity and operational requirements, the GCE commander often has to coordinate directly with multinational military forces; host nation security forces; and US, host nation, and international government organizations and NGOs.

While forward deployed, the GCE commander may engage political, societal, and economic leaders who can affect the force's success in the operational environment. These engagements are an integral component of the commander's communication strategy and support mission accomplishment; therefore, the GCE commander must possess cross-cultural competence, which is the ability to quickly and accurately comprehend and effectively interact cross-culturally.

The GCE commander communicates with both senior and subordinate commanders to keep higher-level commanders informed of the situation. While the GCC and JFC may have a clear operational understanding of the problem, the GCE commander is likely to have a better perspective of the situation at the tactical level. Both perspectives are essential. During a commander's

decision-making process, subordinate commanders should actively share their perspective with senior leaders with the intent to identify opportunities or resolve issues at the earliest opportunity.

THE STAFF

The staff supports the GCE commander's ability to command by conducting planning and creating orders. The staff supports the commander's ability to control by gathering and providing information for making decisions. The staff also supports subordinate commanders by providing information and resources to enable them to accomplish assigned tasks.

The staff maintains situational awareness. Regardless of the size of the organization, the GCE commander and the staff must share a COP of the battlespace and have the ability to acquire and share critical information. The GCE commander and higher, subordinate, and supporting commanders must see the battlespace in a similar manner to exploit the full potential of the MAGTF and GCE firepower, maneuver, and sustainment capabilities. The GCE staff, at any level, is capable of planning and executing tasks across the warfighting functions in support of operations.

The staff is proactive, anticipating requirements for action and planning accordingly. The staff maintains running estimates of the situation and appropriate contingency plans, COAs, and branches and sequels to meet changing tactical or operational needs. This allows the GCE to dictate the tempo of decision making and execution by reducing the time required to plan and execute operations. Principle staff members have the authority to act in the name of the commander in order to execute the commander's plan.

While the tasks and purpose of GCE staffs remain similar from the platoon through the division, their capabilities and capacities vary considerably. Larger GCE staffs have significantly more depth and experience. The C2 capability and capacities required during execution of operations must be considered during planning and, as required, staffs are task-organized to meet mission requirements. As the mission or operational environment changes, C2 structure often changes as well. Smaller forward-deployed elements may lack the capability or capacity to execute some planning tasks and may use reachback to obtain support from a higher command level, such as their parent unit or the MAGTF staff, for support. Figures 4-1 through 4-3, on pages 4-4 and 4-5, provide illustrative examples of the organization of staffs at various levels of command.

The GCE participates in the MAGTF's integrated planning process. The GCE staff conducts close coordination with the MAGTF, ACE, and LCE staffs, as well as those of adjacent and supporting units, which may include joint and multinational military forces. In many environments, the GCE staff conducts interagency coordination with other USG agencies; multinational and host nation law enforcement agencies; and US, international, and host nation NGOs.

The GCE operates and fights in a JIIM environment, so the GCE staffs must be expert at identifying, integrating, and exploiting the full range of associated capabilities. The exchange of liaison officers (LNOs), the addition of augmentees, and the appropriate training of staff members to incorporate JIIM capabilities enable this kind of expertise.

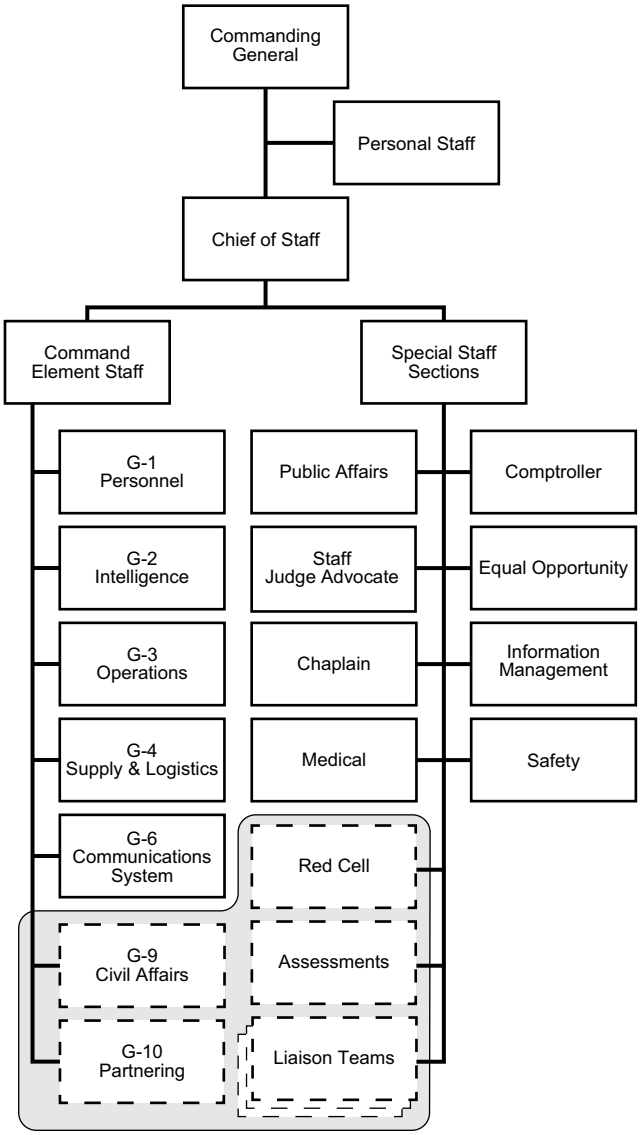

Figure 4-1. Notional Marine Division Staff Structure.

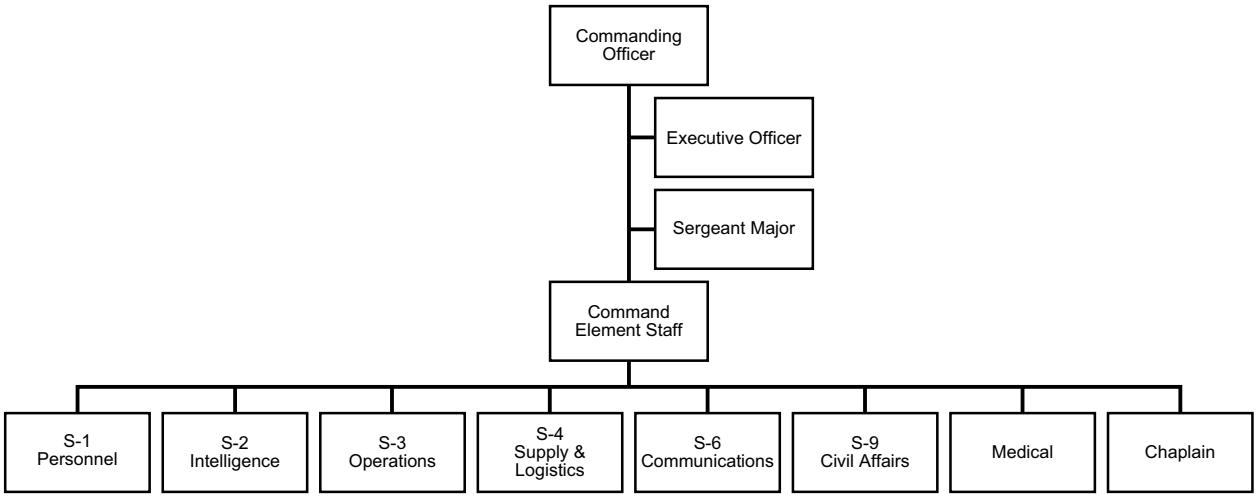

Figure 4-2. Notional Battalion or Regimental Staff Structure.

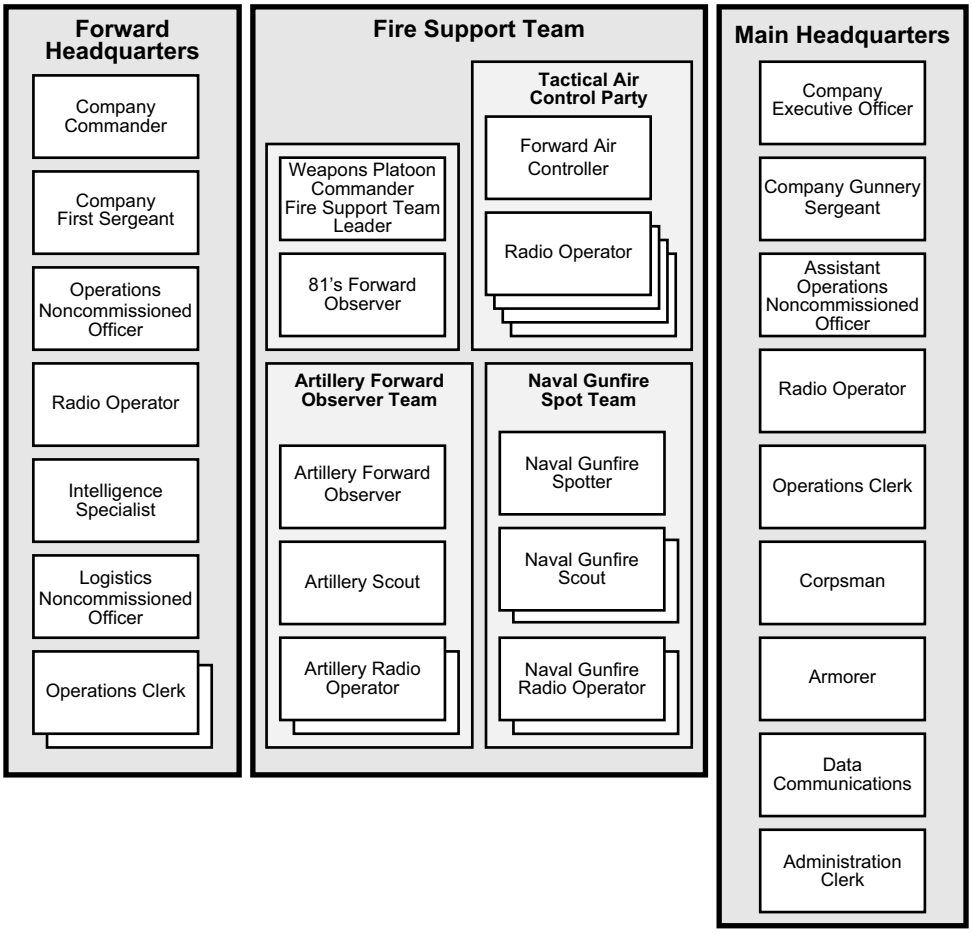

Figure 4-3. Notional Example of Company Staff Structure.

Additional information regarding the specific functions and individual responsibilities of staff members can be found in MCWP 3-30.

HEADQUARTERS ELEMENTS ORGANIZATION

At the company level, the commander may choose to organize headquarters into two echelons—the forward and the main. At and above the battalion level, headquarters may be organized into three echelons—the forward, the main, and the rear.

Forward Headquarters Echelon

The forward headquarters echelon is a subset of the headquarters that can detach from the main headquarters echelon and act as the forward command post, assuming command and control of operations including clearance of fires. The forward headquarters echelon conducts command and control of operations while the main is displacing. As a mobile forward command post, it can also enable the commander to execute command and control from critical points during operations. The forward headquarters echelon is austere and rapidly displaces, providing the commander freedom of movement. In the absence of the commander, the G-3/S-3 normally leads the forward headquarters echelon.

Main Headquarters Echelon

The main headquarters echelon is the principal headquarters of the commander, providing the commander all resources necessary for sustained operations to include planning, executing, and assessing operations across all warfighting and staff functions. It is fully mission capable, even when the forward headquarters echelon is detached. The main headquarters echelon possesses the ability to plan for future operations and includes a combat operations center, which provides command and control of current operations. An antenna farm supports communications and tactical electric power generation systems. If required, an intelligence operations center provides command and control of the intelligence effort. Similarly, an administrative and logistic operations center may oversee logistic and movement control functions. In the absence of the commander, the executive officer or deputy commander normally leads the main headquarters echelon.

Rear Headquarters Echelon

The rear headquarters echelon controls forces remaining at home station, controls training and subsequent deployment of subordinate units, or provides control of rear area operations in theater. The rear headquarters echelon supervises such tasks as rear area security operations, battlespace management, sustainment, movement control, and associated functions. The rear headquarters echelon must be capable of monitoring the activities of the forward units and the other two headquarters echelons.

Alternate Headquarters

At the BLT level and above, the senior artillery headquarters is designated as an alternate headquarters and assumes command of the GCE in the event that both the forward and main headquarters echelons are rendered nonmission capable.

Command Post

Any of the above elements may function as the command post (commonly referred to as CP), though only one may serve as the command post at any one time. The headquarters echelon that is exercising command and control of operations at that time dictates the command post.

Command and Control and Task Organization Changes

The decision to enact changes or adjustments to the GCE's C2 system or task organization resides with commanders; on occasion, this responsibility may be delegated to the executive officer or chief of staff. Indicators that a change to the unit's command and control or task organization may be necessary include the following:

- Change of mission.
- Transition from one phase of an operation to another, with related changes to the main effort.
- Change in threat tactics, techniques, and procedures.
- Change in operational construct (e.g., transition from sea-based raids to operations ashore).
- Change in operational environment (e.g., moving from rural to urban environment).

GROUND COMBAT ELEMENT BATTLESPACE

The assigned battlespace for a MAGTF is an AO inside a JTF AO that includes the surface, subsurface, airspace, and electromagnetic spectrum of an assigned AO. The MAGTF commander organizes that battlespace to facilitate the single-battle concept. Within the MAGTF's battlespace, the GCE's battlespace includes areas of influence, AOIs, and AOs. The GCE may be assigned a single contiguous AO, or it may have two or more noncontiguous AOs inside the MAGTF battlespace. The battlespace refines and focuses the planning, organization, and execution of GCE operations. As operations occur, it is likely that the shape, size, and character of the battlespace will change, usually in conjunction with changes of operational phases. The GCE commander must be able to command and control the forces throughout the assigned AO, which generally should not extend beyond the GCE's area of influence.

Area of Operations

The AO is a common control measure, prescribed by physical boundaries, that is normally large enough to allow the GCE to both accomplish its mission and protect the force by employing its organic, assigned, and supporting systems to the limits of their capabilities. The MAGTF normally assigns an AO to the GCE. The GCE commander may assign AOs to subordinate units down to the company level. In major operations, the GCE's AO is likely to be the terrain on which decisive operations are planned/expected to occur. Areas of operation may change as the mission changes or as the force shifts to a new phase of the operation.

When assigning AOs, commanders consider the capabilities of subordinate units. A unit's area of operation should not be greater than its area of influence. Units have the following responsibilities in their AOs:

- Battlespace management.
- Intelligence collection.

- CMO.
- Air and ground movement control.
- Clearance of fires.
- Security.
- Personnel recovery.

Contiguous Areas of Operation. Contiguous AOs are illustrated in figure 4-4. Commanders can choose to organize the AO so that subordinates have contiguous AOs, noncontiguous AOs, or some combination of both.

Commanders base the decision to establish contiguous AOs on an analysis of the mission factors of METT-T. Units with contiguous AOs are normally within supporting distance of one another and may be within supporting range. Other reasons why commanders establish contiguous AOs include, but are not limited to, the following:

- The AO is of limited size to accommodate the force.
- Political boundaries or enemy disposition requires a concentration of force.
- There is a risk of being defeated in detail by enemy forces.
- The enemy situation is not clear.
- The friendly force is significantly outnumbered.
- Concentration of combat power along a single axis of advance, movement corridor, or against a single avenue of approach is required.

Noncontiguous Areas of Operations. Noncontiguous AOs are illustrated in figure 4-5 on page 4-9. The intervening area between noncontiguous AOs remains the responsibility of the HHQ.

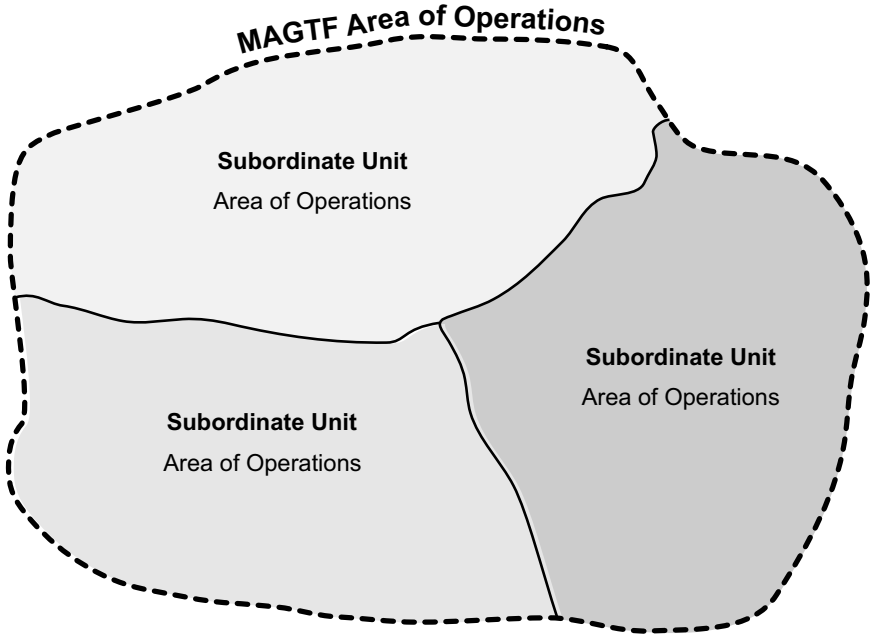

Figure 4-4. Contiguous Areas of Operations.

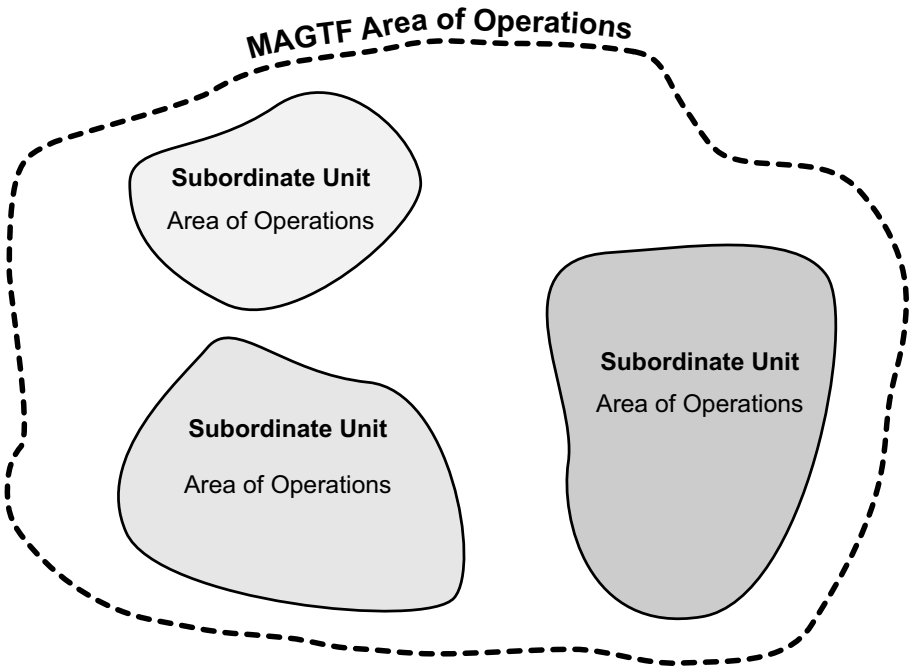

Figure 4-5. Noncontiguous Areas of Operation.

A noncontiguous AO has a continuous 360-degree boundary that closely aligns with the unit's area of influence. For example, commanders may place a noncontiguous regimental boundary at the limit of observed fires for the RLT's security forces. Because noncontiguous boundaries must provide all-around security, they generally allow for less concentration of combat power along a single axis. Further, there is a risk associated with establishing noncontiguous AOs, since units with noncontiguous AOs are normally out of supporting range of each other.

The contemporary operational environment often requires GCE forces to operate in noncontiguous AOs in order to secure key terrain and/or influence and protect relevant populations. Greater physical separation means that smaller units may be further removed from their higher commands and supporting agencies (e.g., command and control, fire support, medical evacuation); therefore, they must be task-organized appropriately.

Area of Influence

The area of influence is the area that a GCE can affect through maneuver, fires, and other actions of the force. Its geographical size relates to the physical limits of organic systems (e.g., fire support, mobility, reconnaissance capabilities) and operational requirements identified within each of the warfighting functions. The area of influence reflects the extent of the force's operational reach. The GCE considers its mission, forces, warfighting functions, and the AO to determine the area of influence. Correctly determining and understanding the area of influence allows the GCE to assign subordinate AOs and focus intelligence collection and information operations.

Area of Interest

The AOI contains friendly and enemy forces, capabilities, infrastructure, and terrain that concern the GCE. This area includes the area of influence and those areas that contain current or planned

objectives or threat forces that are capable of endangering mission accomplishment. The size of the AOI may exceed the GCE's operational reach, is unconstrained, could include noncontiguous areas, and may stretch far beyond the areas of operation and influence. The GCE commander coordinates with the MAGTF commander to address threats and challenges or exploit opportunities in the AOI.

Time-Distance Appreciation

Seeing the battlespace in terms of time requires an appreciation for time-distance factors. Time-distance appreciation is critical to dictating the tempo of operations. Based on the situation, the GCE commander must continually and realistically calculate the—

- Time necessary to complete movements, maneuvers, preparations, or other actions.
- Time before the force can expect to close with the enemy.
- Distance from the main body that security forces must operate to provide ample protection.
- Enemy capabilities regarding time-distance to move its forces.
- Amount of delay that can be imposed on the enemy through interdiction or other means.
- Time required to employ joint fires, which may operate on a 72-hour cycle.
- Time required to plan and to execute plans, including those that require coordination with MAGTF assets or joint/multinational forces.
- Time and method required for delivering logistic support and the impact on maneuver and security requirements. For example, an LCE truck convoy can often deliver far more supplies than ACE aircraft, but it requires a secure route and potentially more time.
- Time required to plan and to integrate long lead-time assets, such as information operations.

GROUND COMBAT ELEMENT BATTLESPACE FRAMEWORK

The battlespace framework depicts how commanders may organize the battlespace to relate their forces to one another in time, space, event, and purpose. It is applicable across the ROMO and ensures the consideration of essential elements of military operations in planning and execution phases. Commanders generally choose to use either spatial- or purpose-based battlespace frameworks. Spatial-based battlespace frameworks consist of deep, close, and rear operations, as illustrated in figure 4-6, on page 4-11, and may be contiguous or noncontiguous. Lines of operation are most often used in association with spatial-based battlespace frameworks. Purpose-based battlespace frameworks consist of decisive, supporting, and sustaining actions. Lines of effort are most often used in association with purpose-based battlespace frameworks. It is possible to blend the two types, and changes in situation and mission might mandate a transition between them. The battlespace framework often changes with the phases of an operation. For example, deep operations conducted by the MAGTF today may shape close operations the GCE will be engaging in within 72 hours. See MCDP 1-0, *Marine Corps Operations*, for further discussions of battlespace frameworks, areas of influence, AOIs, and AOs, as well as contiguous and non-contiguous AOs. See JP 5-0, *Joint Operational Planning*, for further information on lines of effort and lines of operation.

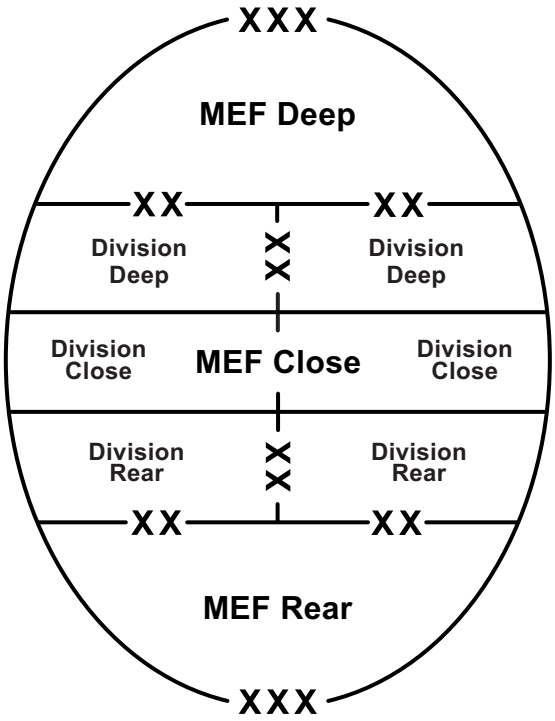

Figure 4-6. Example of Spatial-Based Battlespace Framework.

Spatial-Based Battlespace Framework

Spatial-based battlespace frameworks focus on arranging operations and forces in terms of time, space, and geography. Most often associated with aspects of traditional warfare, spatial-based battlespace frameworks are useful when the primacy of the tactical problem, mission, and situation is based on ground objectives, physical capabilities of the enemy, and the corresponding deployment of friendly forces.

Deep Operations. Commanders use deep operations to seize the initiative, shape actions, or prevent future close battles. Deep operations can strip away enemy capabilities, force an early culmination, or otherwise attack the enemy system so friendly forces can handle what remains when the enemy forces become a part of the close battle. Because of its operational reach, the ACE primarily conducts deep operations, although the GCE and LCE play significant roles as well. The MAGTF ISR assets, such as reconnaissance units, signals intelligence, reconnaissance aircraft, and unmanned aircraft systems (UASs) contribute to deep operations by identifying threats. Then, ACE fires and MAGTF information operations shape enemy actions. Deep operations may require coordination and integration with national-level assets and joint forces.

Close Operations. These operations require speed and mobility to concentrate overwhelming combat power, which may be achieved through the employment of supporting arms, at the critical time and place. Fire and maneuver, conducted by combined arms forces from the GCE and supported by the rest of the MAGTF, dominate close operations.

Rear Operations. All MAGTF elements conduct rear operations. The GCE may provide the MAGTF commander with capabilities in support of rear operations, including a tactical combat

force, route clearance packages, or fire support. To minimize the logistic footprint, rear operations exploit seabasing, host-nation support, and existing infrastructure. As the operation progresses, the geographic location, C2 structure, and the organization of the rear area often change.

Purpose-Based Battlespace Framework

Purpose-based battlespace frameworks focus on arranging operations, forces, and resources in terms of time, conditions, and effects. Most often associated with aspects of irregular warfare, purpose-based battlespace frameworks are useful whenever the best way to approach the tactical problem, mission, and situation is through functions, activities, actions, and effects.

Decisive Actions. Decisive actions are those actions that lead to major results. They are actions that commanders deem fundamental to achieving the purpose at any given point of time, phase, or mission. The designated main effort normally accomplishes a decisive action. While multiple subordinate units may be engaged in the same decisive action, priorities among them must be carefully delineated. It is possible that any particular action or series of actions conducted by friendly forces might prove decisive, and commanders must remain prepared to exploit unexpected, unplanned opportunities. For example, strikes and raids associated with shaping actions may lead to a loss of will and an unexpected enemy withdrawal from the battlespace.

Shaping Actions. Shaping actions establish conditions for the decisive action through effects on the enemy, indigenous populations and institutions, and terrain. They can become decisive actions if circumstances change or if the shaping actions enjoy unexpected success or opportunities. Shaping actions may occur throughout a unit's AO and involve any combination of forces and capabilities. Shaping actions may occur before, during, or after the decisive action begins. Supporting efforts normally accomplish shaping actions.

Sustaining Actions. Sustaining actions are plans and activities focused on support and force protection of friendly forces throughout the battlespace to promote unity of effort and extend operational reach. Sustaining actions differ from decisive and shaping actions in that they are focused internally (on friendly forces) rather than externally (on the enemy, environment, or population). For example, logistic support in stability operations would not be a sustaining action since it is part of mission accomplishment. Sustaining actions typically address important logistic and force protection actions essential to the success of decisive and shaping actions. While the success of decisive and shaping actions may ultimately rely on sustaining actions, these actions cannot be decisive themselves.

ORGANIZATION OF FORCES

The GCE commander normally organizes the forces depending on the resources they possess and the requirements of the mission and associated operations. The organization of forces often changes with the phases of an operation; for example, a unit assigned as the reserve for an attack may become the main effort while exploiting the attack at the same time that the original main effort reconstitutes the reserve. Maneuver warfare doctrine dictates task organization of the GCE's combat power into the following elements—main, supporting, and reserve.

Main Effort

Of all the activities going on within the command, commanders recognize the success of the main effort as the most critical to mission success. Commanders plan main efforts to ensure success at the decisive point. This often means that the main effort contains the greatest concentration of combat power, but not always. The purpose of the main effort is to accomplish the GCE's mission, and the designation of a main effort allows the GCE to focus its energies, actions, and resources toward enabling the main effort. As the element that achieves the GCE's mission, the mission of the main effort, in terms of task and purpose, should nest directly with the GCE's task and purpose. For example, in conducting an attack on a strongpoint, the GCE commander is likely to task the main effort with the duties associated with the assault element. All other units in the command understand that they must actively seek to support and enable the main effort.

Supporting Efforts

Supporting efforts enable the main effort to achieve success at the decisive point. For example, in conducting humanitarian relief efforts, the GCE commander may task an infantry company to provide security in support of a logistic-based main effort. The mission assigned to supporting efforts must directly support the main effort's purpose. This nesting of task and purpose allows supporting efforts to exercise initiative on the battlespace in ways that assist the main effort's success, including being prepared to assume the main effort's mission. Supporting efforts receive the combat power, attachments, and any other enablers needed to accomplish their mission in support of the main effort. Supporting efforts may use suppressive fires, sustainment actions, reconnaissance, secondary attacks, deception, obstacle reduction, or other actions to—

- Allow the main effort to conduct actions against enemy critical vulnerabilities.
- Mitigate or eliminate a culmination point.
- Prevent the threat from reacting to friendly actions.
- Cause the enemy to dissipate their combat power or prematurely commit their reserves.
- Prevent the enemy from surprising the main effort.

Reserve

Commanders should always retain a reserve, reconstituting one whenever possible on the commitment of the original reserve. The reserve exists primarily to reinforce success. It normally becomes a unit's main effort once committed. Commanders constitute a reserve regardless of where within the ROMO a mission falls, basing the size of the reserve on the level of uncertainty and risk in the current tactical situation. The location occupied by the reserve depends on its most likely mission, time-distance requirements, and on survivability considerations. The primary tasks for a reserve are to—

- Conduct the decisive action.
- Retain or regain the initiative.
- Take advantage of unexpected success.
- Counter tactical reverses that threaten the integrity of the friendly force's operations.

Deployed GCEs often maintain QRFs, which are examples of a reserve. The forces are normally built into reinforced platoon- and reinforced company-sized modular packages, which train,

rehearse, and stage with required munitions for rapid employment. They may be employed by assault support or surface means, and their task organization and load reflect their mode of employment. The Marine Corps component commander or a JFC may task a deployed MAGTF to maintain a company-sized QRF as a theater reserve. This task falls to the GCE.

PREDEPLOYMENT PLANNING

The MAGTF and its MSCs plan holistically to fight the single battle. Representatives from the Marine division participate in the MEF operational planning team. Information derived from the MEF operational planning team informs parallel planning inside the GCE. When possible, representatives of the staff of the unit that will lead the GCE participate in the operational planning team regarding the formation and deployment of the MAGTF. This allows early development of situational awareness.

Planning for Training

The time available between notification and deployment dictates how much predeployment training is possible. Commanders assess current training against operational requirements and prioritize and schedule training as the situation permits.

Planning for Task Organization

Ground combat elements are task-organized based on planning conducted and orders issued by the relevant MEF in response to either a planned rotation or a Marine Corps component command request for forces. In either case, the GCE starts planning as early as possible to make the most of what time is available. A designated GCE commander normally requests a report for planning order from the relevant Marine division to bring together commanders of reinforcements and staff augments and integrate them into predeployment planning and training.

The majority of GCE capabilities and capacities derive from the task organization of forces from within Marine divisions. Staffing, organizing, training, and operational readiness of available units are considered when task-organizing units to meet mission requirements. Each GCE is task-organized around a cohesive unit to accomplish missions in a specified operational environment. The GCE is frequently built around an infantry core, but if the mission dictates, it can be built around other units, such as combat engineer or LAR battalions.

Recognizing that requirements often change during the execution of operations, the GCE identifies requirements during different phases of operations, which contributes to the sequencing of forces flowing to and from theater. During problem framing, the GCE, in coordination with the MAGTF CE and other MSCs, identifies gaps in information and capability shortfalls.

The GCE submits requests for information to the MAGTF in an effort to increase situational awareness regarding the operational environment and friendly, neutral, and hostile actors that may influence it. The GCE commander preparing to deploy shall actively seek, through the MAGTF and relevant Marine Corps component commanders, information on JIIM capabilities and assets that are operating, or could be tasked/requested, in the AO and AOI, to include their

mission/objectives, capabilities, and requirements. Identifying JIIM organizations in the AO prior to deployment enables understanding of capabilities available, the request and approval processes, and communications requirements.

The GCE identifies capability gaps and requests support to the MAGTF CE. Examples of organic support might include signals intelligence or human intelligence teams and explosive detection dogs. The GCE also seeks to develop the capability to request and receive joint and/or interagency support. Examples include identifying, sourcing, and deploying specific data processing equipment and software required to receive ISR products or procuring encrypted cell phones to allow a GCE unit to communicate with DOS or USAID teams conducting activities in its planned AO.

Planning for Rotations

Major rotations are typically scheduled 18 months in advance, with the GCE composited 6 months prior to deployment. Units often do not know specific employment locations or missions. They plan and train for the conduct of core METs and the specific missions associated with MEU and SPMAGTF deployments, such as TRAP and embassy reinforcement missions.

Planning for Crisis Response

The MEFs, and their subordinate divisions at home station, communicate with supported Marine Corps component commands to develop and maintain as much understanding as possible of the region on which they are focused. This includes understanding of requirements in support of theater engagement plans, operational plans for contingencies, and operations orders. This regional focus allows the division and its subordinate forces a head start on responding to crisis.

When a MEF receives a warning order or request for support regarding a potential crisis response operation, it begins contingency planning. Normally, the lead for crisis response planning is the standing MEB headquarters. Marines from the relevant division staff support the planning.

Each MEF maintains an alert contingency MAGTF on high alert. These units are the first choice for deployment in response to a crisis. They train to standard on their core METs and, as time permits, they conduct additional training and develop situational awareness on potential deployment locations.

Planning Collaboratively

Information technology has advanced sufficiently that it is now realistic to expect that, prior to deployment, commanders and their staffs routinely communicate with and conduct collaborative planning with receiving Marine Corps component commands and JTFs to develop increased situational awareness and comprehension of the operational environment. The GCE planners utilize modern communications systems (e.g., SECRET Internet Protocol Router Network sites, secure video teleconference systems) to gather real-time information on the potential AO and conduct collaborative planning with other MAGTF elements and supported and supporting commands that they operate with when deployed. Units preparing to deploy should have visibility of the COP and be able to remotely access lessons learned products, operational assessments, and intelligence products.

FORWARD-DEPLOYED FORCES

Whether embarked on amphibious ships or forward deployed to land-based locations, GCE units maintain situational awareness concerning potential crisis. However, as crises worldwide can occur on short notice, forward-deployed forces must be prepared to quickly respond to either quell the crisis or set conditions for the introduction of a larger force. The GCE commander assesses capabilities necessary to execute any assigned task with the current load configuration and equipment density list and readiness levels. As time and the operational environment allow, the commander and the staff modify task organization, including integration of reinforcements and enablers; conduct additional training or rehearsals; or reconfigure embarked equipment to accomplish assigned tasks in the best manner possible.

COMPOSITING AND DISTRIBUTED OPERATIONS PLANNING

A key capability of the MAGTF is its scalability. The Marine Corps, normally in partnership with the Navy, maintains forward-deployed MAGTFs, which provide the GCCs with combined arms forces available for immediate employment. As the Marine Corps component command missions and requirements change, MAGTFs and their subordinate elements may be reorganized or reinforced to accomplish assigned missions. For example, the GCE may be reinforced, growing from a BLT to an RLT, or a BLT may task-organize and detach a CLT to conduct operations. Forward-deployed forces can serve as the vanguard of a larger Marine Corps force, enabling fly-in of a higher level CE and additional combat, combat support, and CSS units to expand the MAGTF. Likewise, the GCE may grow, taking command of additional Marine Corps, Army, or multinational forces. Just as the GCE conducts planning in conjunction with the other elements of the MAGTF, the GCE should also incorporate joint and multinational planners into the planning process in order to best understand and employ their capabilities.

The three most likely compositing or distributed operations scenarios a GCE may face are—

- Increasing the size and capability of the force while not in contact.
- Increasing the size and capability of the force while in contact.
- Providing forces to another mission while forward deployed.

The preferred method is to composite a force prior to operational commitment and the initiation of hostilities. Crisis may require that forward-deployed forces conduct operations concurrent with the arrival of forces in theater. This has an adverse impact on the speed of the effort and the security of the force. Hostilities may also affect the time or rate at which augmentation arrives.

When compositing forces, the GCE commander plans for sequencing and RSOI of forces. This planning should be a collaborative effort between forward-deployed forces, the Marine Corps component command, and the arriving forces. Arriving C2 and logistic assets should be deployed early to prepare for the arrival and immediate employment of additional combat forces. Time and transportation resources must be allocated to receive and integrate equipment and munitions from

forward-deployed stores or MPF shipping. Situation permitting, live-fire exercises should be conducted to test fire weapons and exercise C2 and logistic processes, such as medical evacuation.

The GCE commander preparing to aggregate forces must consider the current readiness, equipment density list, and munitions loads of subordinate forces. For example, a forward-deployed SPMAGTF that has detached a company to defend an embassy may be understrength if required to commence other operations. Similarly, units deploying for TSC missions are often limited regarding the types of weapons with which they may deploy. As a result, a company deployed to conduct Marine Corps Martial Arts Program mobile training may need to link up with its heavy weapons and conduct some level of training before being employed for combat operations.

The deploying headquarters considers the requirements for the force holistically and includes enablers, such as interpreters or explosive detection dogs, that augment both the forces preparing to deploy and those already forward deployed.

COMMAND AND CONTROL IN JOINT, INTERAGENCY, INTERORGANIZATIONAL, AND MULTINATIONAL ENVIRONMENTS

The Marine Corps expects all major operations and campaigns in the future to be conducted in a complex environment where Marine Corps forces will operate alongside joint and multinational forces augmented by interagency assets. The United States will most likely conduct military operations as part of an alliance or coalition containing allied countries. In addition to multinational military partners, host nation police, other host nation government agencies, an array of USG agencies, NGOs, and private volunteer organizations will likely be present. As the number and diversity of these organizations increase, the need for coordination and integration and the difficulty in designing a coherent campaign that generates unity of effort rise exponentially. During JIIM operations, unity of command may not be possible; however, the requirement for unity of effort remains vital. Figure 4-7, on page 4-18, provides a notional illustration of agencies that may be located in or adjacent to a GCE AO in an expeditionary environment. For further information, see JP 3-08, *Interorganizational Cooperation*.

Joint Operations Environment

Although the GCE functions as a component of the MAGTF, the GCE expects to have elements of the joint force operating in adjacent AOs and/or in supporting roles. The GCE is prepared to accept command of, integrate, and employ reinforcements from the joint force as required.

Interagency Environment

The GCE may support other agencies during some operations, executing those missions under the MAGTF command structure. In other operations, personnel or capabilities from other agencies may support or reinforce the GCE. Presidential directive, law, regulation, policy, or agreement among or between agencies prescribes Federal lead agency responsibility.

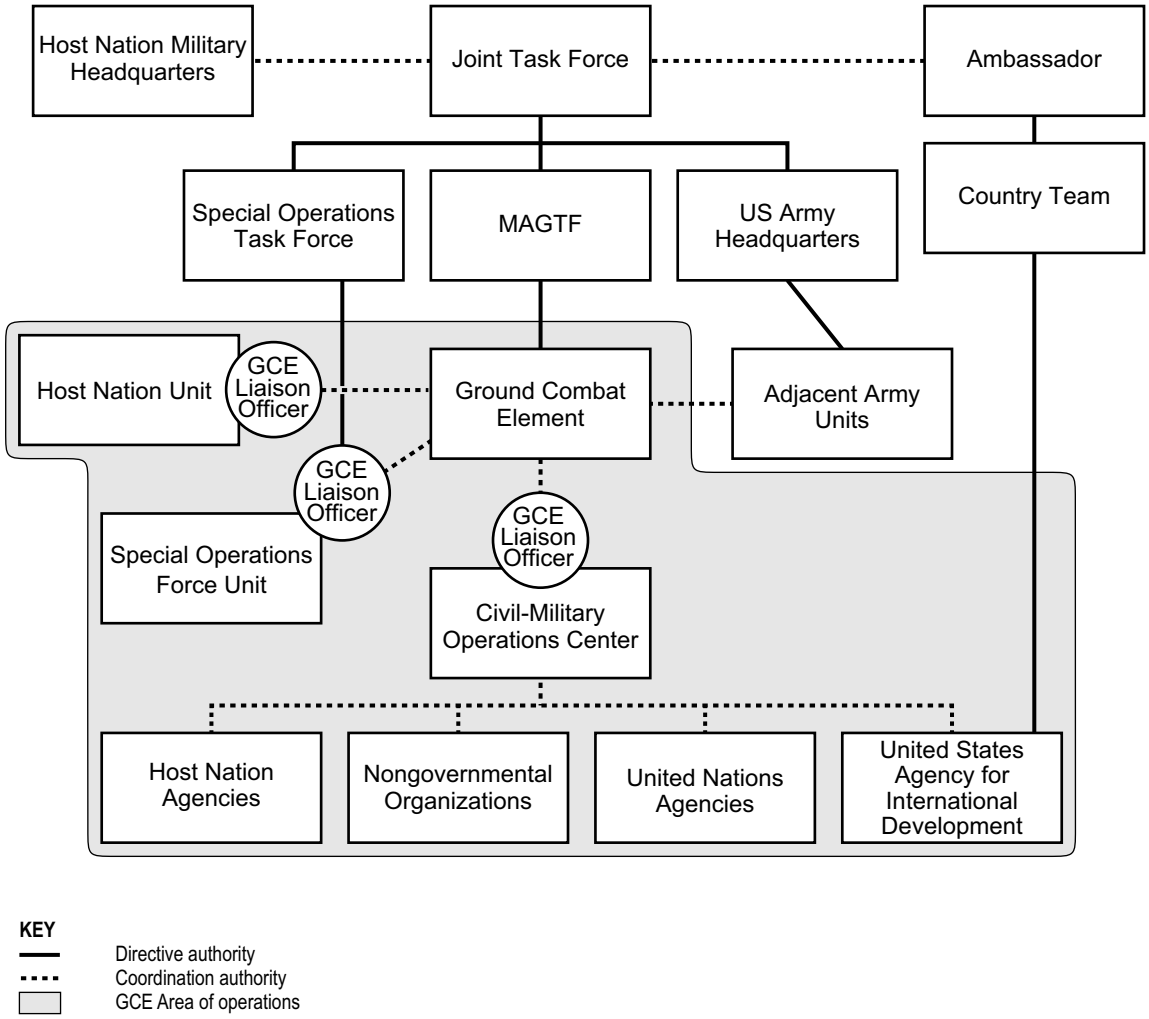

Figure 4-7. Notional Example of Ground Combat Element Coordination With Military and Nonmilitary Organizations During Foreign Operations.

Intergovernmental Environment

The ambassador or JFC conducts intergovernmental coordination. However, GCE units must be cognizant of the objectives of friendly governmental agencies and, as appropriate, support or leverage their efforts in support of the GCE's mission.

Multinational Operations Environment

The GCE must be prepared to plan and execute operations either in command of or alongside forces from other nations within the framework of an alliance or coalition. In this environment, cultivation and maintenance of personal relationships between counterparts is fundamental to operational success. The tenets of multinational operations are respect, rapport, knowledge of partners, patience, mission focus, and trust and confidence; personal relationships establish or enable most of these tenets. See JP 3-16, *Multinational Operations*, for more information.

Command and Control Structures in Multinational Operations. The basic C2 structures for multinational operations fall into one of three types—integrated, lead-nation, or parallel. A good example of an integrated C2 structure is NATO, where a strategic commander is designated from a member

nation, but the strategic command staff and the commanders and staffs of subordinate commands are of multinational makeup. A lead-nation structure exists when all member nations place their forces under the control of one nation. This C2 structure is distinguished by a dominant lead-nation command and staff arrangement with subordinate elements retaining strict national integrity. Under a parallel C2 structure, no single force commander is designated. The coalition leadership must develop a means for coordination among the participants to attain unity of effort. Coordination centers can accomplish this goal.

Alliances. Alliances (e.g., NATO) typically have developed C2 structures, systems, and procedures, and the predominant contributing nation provides the allied force commander. Staffs are integrated, and senior representatives from member nations often lead subordinate commands. Shared doctrine, standardization agreements, close military cooperation, and robust diplomatic relations characterize alliances. Often, alliance members have a greater understanding of these topics than US forces do. The GCE commander and the staff must familiarize themselves with such agreements and doctrine to facilitate effective and rapid integration.

Coalitions. Coalitions are less standardized. They may adopt a lead-nation or parallel C2 structure or a combination of the two. A lead-nation command construct is preferred as it achieves unity of command, while a parallel C2 structure can only achieve unity of effort.

GCE Interface with Host Nation Security Forces. In many operations across the ROMO, there is extensive interface between the GCE and host nation military authorities to plan and conduct military operations. This does not establish a C2 relationship between the US force and the host nation forces. Command and control is executed through parallel C2 structures. In many cases, coordination, support, or training with host nation security forces is primarily conducted by the GCE. The GCE elements may conduct security force assistance and FID in support of host nation forces and may often accomplish objectives by working with and through the host nation security forces, perhaps including combat advising and control of supporting arms and medical evacuation.

Multinational Operations Considerations. Language and communication differences, cultural diversity, historical animosities, and the varying capabilities of multinational partners are among the many factors that complicate the integration of forces during multinational operations. When working with multinational forces, commanders must understand the capabilities and limitations, including national objectives and caveats, of multinational forces adjacent to or supporting the GCE.

Language. Language is often the most basic challenge in multinational operations. Communication occurs through verbal and nonverbal means. Face-to-face coordination, even when done through an interpreter, remains valuable to establishing communication. Military or nonmilitary interpreters and translators facilitate oral and written communication with multinational or host nation forces. Contract linguists should be screened for security purposes and vetted to verify their abilities.

Command and Control. In multinational operations, commanders must consider the additional time required to receive and process reports; develop and translate plans; and distribute plans, often without the benefit of interoperable electronic communications systems, to multinational partners.

This additional time often adversely affects the tempo of operations. Incorporation of multinational LNOs into planning and rehearsals helps overcome procedural difficulties among nations.

Culture. Each partner in multinational operations possesses a unique cultural identity. Commanders attempt to accommodate holidays, religious observations, and other unique cultural traditions important to allies and coalition members.

Civil-Military Integration

The crux of interorganizational coordination is in understanding the civil-military relationship as collaborative rather than competitive. While the military focuses on reaching clearly defined and measurable objectives within given timelines under a C2 structure, civilian organizations are often concerned with fulfilling changeable political, economic, social, and humanitarian interests using dialogue, bargaining, risk taking, and consensus building. These particular skill sets can make civilian organizations effective agents of change within a society. Integration and coordination among the GCE and foreign civilian agencies are much less formal and rigid than military command and control. Some civilian organizations may have policies that conflict with those of the USG, particularly those of the US military. Formal agreements, robust liaison, and information sharing with intergovernmental partners are processes that should facilitate common understanding, enhance coordination, and support mission accomplishment. Information sharing with NGOs and the private sector may be more restrictive. The GCE commander may consider establishing a civil-military operations center to facilitate intergovernmental coordination and information sharing.

COMMUNICATIONS PLANNING IN JOINT, INTERAGENCY, INTERGOVERNMENTAL, AND MULTINATIONAL ENVIRONMENTS

The mission and structure of the GCE and assigned or adjacent and supporting JIIM agencies dictate specific information flow and processing requirements. Requirements drive the architecture and configuration of communications systems. Interoperability and communications security planning with these partners are essential to ensure that secure communications protect sensitive information. Planning considerations include frequency management, equipment compatibility, procedural compatibility, cryptographic and information security, identification friend or foe, and data-link protocols.

INFORMATION MANAGEMENT AND SHARING IN JOINT, INTERAGENCY, INTERGOVERNMENTAL, AND MULTINATIONAL ENVIRONMENTS

Information management and sharing in multinational operations require planning and command attention. The GCE is trained and equipped to communicate effectively in the joint environment. The GCE maintains the required cybersecurity and integrity of Marine Corps data and systems, while enabling MAGTF command and control. National disclosure policy regulations govern

the release of classified information to foreign agencies. The JFC establishes intelligence sharing guidance in compliance with these regulations. The GCE's ability to operate with NATO partners is well established and governed by relevant doctrine and processes. Both the processes and the communications infrastructure needed are in place to share information, including classified information.

The GCE's ability to collaborate with other coalition and interagency partners is less well developed, requiring more attention from leadership. Many allies lack the same level of digitization, while interagency partners often use noninteroperable systems.

Host nation governments, including military, law enforcement, and civilian organizations, are intimately familiar with the infrastructure, culture, language, sensitivities, and status of the populace. This information can be invaluable to GCE commander and the staff. Conversely, Marine Corps forces may have ISR products or national-level intelligence, which may be valuable to the host nation government. Planning for the exchange of appropriately classified versions of US intelligence and the integration of local intelligence, which must still be vetted, can mutually benefit and contribute to developing relationships. Exchanging LNOs, assigning mentor or training teams, and partnering a GCE unit with a host nation unit are all techniques that have been used in the past for relationship development. Assignment of personnel and release of classified material to host nation units must be accompanied by careful consideration of the potential security threat from hostile actors who may be working inside the host nation forces.

Nongovernmental organizations and intergovernmental organizations (IGOs) that have been operating in a region for extended periods of time often have excellent situational awareness concerning the infrastructure of a region and the condition, issues, and concerns of the population. However, these organizations hold neutrality as a fundamental principle. They resist being sources of intelligence, and they may be hesitant to associate with the military. The NGOs and IGOs often need information from commanders and their staffs concerning security issues. Consequently, either GCE or MAGTF commanders may establish mechanisms like a civil-military operation center, periodic working groups, or similar organizations to coordinate activities and facilitate information sharing. The IGOs and NGOs will likely participate if they perceive that mutual sharing of information aids their work and is not a threat to their neutrality.

Liaison

The exchange of LNOs/liaison teams is an important enabler of effective command and control in JIIM environments. The GCE may exchange liaison teams or individuals between supporting, adjacent, and subordinate commands, as required. Liaison personnel must represent the interests of the sending commander and must have a good knowledge of the commander's intent and concept of operations for specific operations as well as general capabilities, limitations, and SOPs. Ground combat element planners must account for the personnel staffing and equipment required to both receive and send LNOs.

Coordination Centers

Another means of increasing multinational and interorganizational coordination is the establishment of a coordination center, which is a proven means of integrating the participating agencies into the JIIM construct. The GCE may establish a civil-military operations center to coordinate with NGOs and civil organizations, or a multinational coordination center may be established to integrate

or deconflict the operations of two or more multinational military forces. Again, planners must account for the personnel staffing and equipment requirements.

BEST PRACTICES TO DEVELOP AND MAINTAIN INTERORGANIZATIONAL COORDINATION

The following are best practices used by the GCE commander and the staff to systematically develop and maintain interorganizational coordination:

- *Forge a collective definition of the problem in clear and unambiguous terms*. This is achieved by conducting mission analysis that identifies the problem and recognizes capabilities, limitations, and shortfalls; understanding relevant authorities; and developing COAs that are mutually supporting.
- *Establish command relationships*. Identify who is the lead agency and who is supporting and supported.
- *Organize*. Develop clear and concise plans for operations. Extensive use of LNOs/liaison teams greatly benefits all organizations and reduces friction.
- *Establish solid working relationships with the interagency, IGO, and NGO with which the GCE is operating*. These relationships are personality driven, and it is imperative that a "one team, one fight" mindset is adopted, fostered, and achieved. Close coordination reduces friction and assists in ensuring unity of effort.
- *Understand the overall USG strategic goal in addition to the objectives, end state, and transition criteria for each involved organization or agency*. The GCE commander and other decision makers should seek a clearly defined military end state supported by attainable objectives and transition criteria.
- *Understand the differences between the GCE objectives, end state, and transition criteria and those of IGOs and NGOs*. Although appropriate IGOs and NGOs may participate in some level in defining the problem, ultimately their goals and objectives are independent of those of the GCE.
- *Establish a common frame of reference*. Differences in terminology and—in the case of foreign organizations—the use of English as a second language can complicate coordination.
- *Capitalize on experience*. Review after action reports and lessons learned using the Marine Corps Center for Lessons Learned. Make use of existing tools and analyses to assess proposed COAs, including the DOS essential task matrix, completed assessments produced by external organizations, and best practices from the US Army Peacekeeping and Stability Operations Institute.
- *Develop COAs or options*. The GCE commander and the staff should focus on the military enabling capabilities that contribute to national security policy objective attainment and are part of the mission's country strategy.
- *Establish responsibility*. A common sense of ownership and commitment toward resolution is achievable when all participants understand what needs to be done and agree upon the means to accomplish it.

- *Plan for the transition of key responsibilities, capabilities, and functions*. In most multiagency operations, civilian organizations remain engaged long after the military has accomplished its assigned tasks and departed the operational area. Therefore, prior to employing military forces, it is imperative to plan for the transition of responsibility for specific actions or tasks from military to nonmilitary entities.
- *Interact, coordinate, and integrate*. The GCE and any multiagency partners come with a variety of capabilities, limitations, and authorities. It is the responsibility of the GCE commander and the staff to leverage the strengths of these organizations, mitigate weakness or limitations, and develop a unity of effort that results in an "extension of combat power" and mission accomplishment.

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CHAPTER 5
TASK ORGANIZATION, TRAINING, AND DEPLOYMENT OF GROUND COMBAT ELEMENT UNITS

GROUND COMBAT ELEMENT TASK ORGANIZATION

Decisions on the size and composition of the GCE, as well as the date the various elements will composite and deploy, derive from MEF planning. Concurrent with the MEF planning, the Marine division nominates the specific units and arranges for METs and mission-specific training as constrained by the deployment date.

The Marine division considers habitual relationships when identifying units for deployment, but establishing such relationships is secondary to creating effective task organizations. Habitual relationships are existing customary relationships between specific combat, combat support, and CSS units, which facilitate coordination and planning and allow development of cohesion. For example, 1st Battalion, 10th Marines; Company A, 2d CEB; and Combat Logistics Battalion 2 are habitually associated with 2d Marine Regiment. Habitual relationships facilitate task organization, make coordination easier, and increase tempo because operating procedures and the personalities of leaders are known.

Despite the advantage of habitual relationships, all Marine Corps GCE units are globally deployable and assigned as required by operational commanders. Sourcing units from the same geographic location simplifies predeployment training. When required, a GCE may be composited from units sourced globally, from either the Active or Reserve Components, to meet mission requirements. This is a driving force in Marine Corps efforts to standardize Marine Corps ground combat units' training and SOPs. The goal is to ensure that units are sufficiently interoperable so that MAGTFs can be globally sourced and deployed while providing known capabilities, capacities, and processes.

When identifying and creating units for deployment, the Marine division ensures they possess the necessary capabilities and capacities to accomplish assigned missions. Based on the scope and scale of these missions, the GCE receives required resources, experience, and authorities. In some instances, the GCE may be intentionally task-organized to have a more senior commander and larger staff relative to the maneuver units assigned in order to accomplish specific tasks. This was the case during some portions of operations in Iraq and Afghanistan, when the seniority of the commander proved to be critical to the GCE's ability to advise partnered forces.

The GCE often requires staff augmentation when preparing to operate in interagency and multinational environments. Planners identify these requirements. The exchange of LNOs/liaison teams with assigned, adjacent, or supporting joint, allied, or coalition units is one common example, which planning must account for. For many missions, it is necessary to augment staffs with regional and cultural experts to enable understanding of the human factors. Beyond the staff augmentation, in many environments, the GCE requires linguists with specific language and cultural capabilities.

Joint, multinational, or interagency capabilities may be provided or accessed through an LNO or enabler assigned to the staff. Integrating these enablers into the unit or staff task organization and including them in predeployment training improves their operational effectiveness.

GENERATING PREDEPLOYMENT AWARENESS

Prior to deployment, the GCE commander tries to gain as much understanding of the operational environment as possible. This information informs task organization and predeployment training.

When alerted for deployment, the GCE stands up an operations center to allow real-time receipt of operational information and intelligence. This information forms the basis for unit and staff predeployment training and exercises. The MAGTF and the GCE should add the JTF battle update briefs, or similar events, to their battle rhythm.

When deploying into a mature theater, the GCE requests authority to conduct direct liaison with the unit that is being relieved. This can provide a wealth of information to predeployment planning, preparation, and training. For example, a unit preparing to deploy as a crisis response SPMAGTF might monitor the current SPMAGTF's battle update brief and conduct periodic secure video teleconferences to gather information, recommendations, and lessons learned.

The GCE actively seeks to understand and employ joint, interagency, and multinational capabilities to enable mission success and protect Marine Corps forces. Understanding nonorganic ISR and fire support capabilities is an obvious example. Other capabilities the GCE should understand and exploit include, but are not limited to, cultural, political, economic and language expertise; technical exploitation capabilities; engineering capabilities; and communications infrastructure.

GROUND COMBAT ELEMENT PREDEPLOYMENT TRAINING

Units assigned to each Marine division have a continuous training program designed to obtain and maintain a high state of training that focuses on METs. During routine operations, the divisions cycle their regiments and battalions through a training, exercise, and evaluation plan (TEEP) designed to develop and exercise the requisite warfighting skills to execute METs. The TEEP reflects planned deployments in support of MEUs, UDPs, and SPMAGTFs, as well as periods of assignment to alert contingency MAGTFs and other requirements. The TEEP includes a training, deployment, and recovery cycle designed to support commanders in efficient and effective

utilization of Marine Corps supporting establishment and operating force resources. The TEEP integrates realistic, progressive, and challenging training with operational deployments. Exercises pit units against skilled and determined adversaries capable of sophisticated tactical actions. Experienced monitors support and enhance the effectiveness of exercises by ensuring safety, coaching and mentoring participants, and providing detailed after action reviews.

Once identified for deployment, specific task-organized GCEs build on this institutional foundation. Unit commanders conduct mission analysis, then prioritize and determine the focus of training. Training is standardized through a Service-supported predeployment training program, which establishes a coherent progression of training, culminating in a mission rehearsal exercise. Building on standardized individual and collective training and readiness standards and adapting common SOPs ensure interoperability of globally sourced GCE units. Aggregating globally sourced units, including MEUs, alert contingency MAGTF units, and others, is rehearsed during unit mission rehearsal exercises and Service large-scale exercises.

The Commander, Marine Forces Command, develops and maintains common core METs and associated standards for like-type conventional units (e.g., infantry regiments, BLTs) and maintains templates for requirements for deployment in support of planned rotations (i.e., UDP or MEU deployments) or in support of specific operational plans. Marine Forces Command's METs are informed by requirements submitted by the other Marine Corps component commanders. Marine Forces Command's METs are the basis for the Service-level predeployment training program. The Marine division reports readiness to accomplish METs in the Defense Readiness Reporting System. For more information, see MCO 3000.13, *Marine Corps Readiness Reporting Standard Operating Procedures (SOP)*.

When joint or multinational forces are assigned to the GCE, predeployment training and integration is optimal; however, this has proven to be the exception rather than the rule. It is important for the GCE to plan for orientation and training to integrate joint and/or multinational assets into the GCE.

Language skills, regional knowledge, and cultural awareness enable effective operations. Units preparing to deploy and operate among the population must develop an understanding of the regional and local culture, economy, politics, religion, and customs. Deployed forces must be capable of understanding and effectively communicating with indigenous populations, local and national government officials, and coalition partners. The GCE must be prepared to integrate interpreters down to the platoon and squad level. A variety of organizations may provide these specialists, including interagency organizations, IGOs, civilian contractors, coalition forces, and host nation personnel. These personnel must be integrated as early as possible in the planning and training prior to and during a deployment.

EMPLOYMENT OF THE ALERT CONTINGENCY MAGTF

Each MEF maintains an alert contingency MAGTF that is organized and trained to execute core METs in response to short-notice crisis. The force is air deployable with initial increments able to embark within 6 hours. Its size can range from a reinforced rifle company with a small CSS

element to a MEB with an RLT and appropriate aviation and CSS elements. An alert contingency battalion comprises the ready increment of the GCE and is ready to deploy its lead company in 6 hours and the entire battalion within 18 hours. This force can be used to reinforce forward-deployed forces as the FIE for MPF operations or as the lead element of a MEF.

The alert contingency MAGTF is not a forcible entry asset and requires a secure airfield for the aerial port of debarkation. The FIE of the alert contingency MAGTF deploys from the continental United States or Okinawa, Japan. The alert contingency MAGTF may deploy to a secure in-theater airfield, conduct RSOI, and then conduct follow-on movement using organic or theater assets. Theater assets might include MAGTF or joint aircraft, high-speed vessels, or an amphibious ready group (ARG) that has landed its MEU.

The alert contingency MAGTF may deploy independently or it may reinforce forward-deployed forces. The use of MPF shipping to deploy the unit's equipment, supplies, and munitions greatly reduces the number of aircraft sorties required and, normally, the time to deploy the force.

TASK ORGANIZATION CONSIDERATIONS IN SUPPORT OF COMPOSITING AND DISTRIBUTED OPERATIONS

The primary rapid response forces for the Marine Corps component commands are MEUs and crisis response SPMAGTFs. Based on the Marine Corps component command's requirements, Marine Corps forces can be composited or disaggregated, drawn from globally distributed forces, to generate and employ required force packages. A combination of forward-deployed MEUs, crisis response SPMAGTFs, alert contingency MAGTFs, and additional forces and headquarters from across the MEFs can quickly assemble or disassemble to provide a scalable force capable of combined arms operations.

Compositing

When a MEU or SPMAGTF does not have sufficient capacity, the next echelon for deployment is a MEB, which includes a JTF-capable CE. The MEB forces may be composited from forward-deployed forces; alert contingency MAGTFs deployed by a combination of strategic airlift, MPF shipping, and amphibious shipping; or a tailored combination of the preceding. The size, composition, speed, and method of deployment are influenced by the Marine Corps component commands' request for forces, force limits set by the host nation or ambassador, available strategic lift (e.g., amphibious shipping, MPF, strategic airlift), and available ports of debarkation.

Each MEB has a habitually associated infantry regiment. For example, 7th Marine Regiment is assigned as the GCE for 1st MEB. Regimental headquarters companies are prepared to deploy and composite an RLT, taking command of both forward-deployed forces and forces deploying with the alert contingency MAGTF. The regimental headquarters begins planning to build situational awareness regarding their potential employment and identify required reinforcements and staff augmentation as soon as they are alerted.

If the Marine Corps component commander decides to composite forward-deployed forces, a time and date for the BLTs of forward-deployed MEUs and SPMAGTFs to be attached to the RLT is established. It is essential that the RLT has deployed and established C2 capability in theater prior to the attachment.

One possible scenario would be a MEB headquarters flying in to join two afloat MEUs and crisis response SPMAGTF forces to participate in operations. The MEB may conduct operations, or if a larger force is required, it could prepare the battlespace for forces flowing in to build out the joint force. Initially, GCE forces would most likely operate at the company and battalion level working for the MEUs and crisis response SPMAGTF as they shape the operational environment. Once the MEB and RLT headquarters are in the theater and operational, the RLT composites as the GCE and conducts operations.

As required, one or more additional RLTs and a JTF-capable division headquarters element able to provide command and control over assigned GCE units and joint and multinational brigades can reinforce the GCE.

Distributed Operations

The BLT is the base unit for GCE deployment and employment; however, for many mission profiles, specifically those involving distributed operations, CLTs have often been and will likely continue to be the go-to force for employment. The employment of CLTs allows Marine Corps component commands to increase operational reach, effectiveness, and versatility. It allows the force to disperse and concentrate as required by the tactical situation.

Increasingly, operational requirements are calling for the employment of more capable, yet smaller, forces. The GCE may distribute forces to reduce operational signature, mitigate a threat, generate more capacity, and better support mission accomplishment over a wider area. Distributed forces remain under the command of their parent organization but operate beyond the distance where they can mutually support one another with organic fire and maneuver. A crisis response SPMAGTF sending small units to train alongside the host nation forces in support of Marine Forces Africa Command's TSC requirements would be an example. While operating in a distributed manner, the GCE relies on the MAGTF primarily and joint capabilities secondarily, to enable and sustain operations across the warfighting functions. Forces operating in a distributed manner are task-organized to operate independently for a specific timeframe determined by METT-T.

In disaggregated operations, units are detached from their HHQ and assigned to another organization. The parent command ensures that the dispatched units possess the capability to operate independently across the warfighting functions for a predetermined time against the most likely threat. For example, a MEU's BLT may form, detach, and attach a CLT to a SPMAGTF formed specifically to reinforce an embassy for a specified timeframe.

Due to their greater physical separation, small units are increasingly task-organized with low-density, high-demand capabilities previously maintained at higher levels (e.g., long-range communications equipment, independent duty corpsmen, signals and human intelligence teams, explosive ordnance disposal teams, joint terminal attack controllers, UASs, data exploitation teams). Integrating all these capabilities into small unit concept of operations places great demands on small unit leaders at the company, platoon, and squad levels.

INTELLIGENCE, SURVEILLANCE, AND RECONNAISSANCE IN SUPPORT OF GROUND COMBAT ELEMENT OPERATIONS

As smaller units operate at greater distances from one another, intelligence can provide the means to accomplish assigned tasks, protect the force, and identify and attack the enemy's center of gravity. The GCE task-organizes and trains to provide the ability to receive the COP and the common intelligence picture to increase the situational awareness of small unit leaders. Units of the GCE must plan for the integration of organic ISR assets and MAGTF assets and be capable of leveraging theater and national resources.

Examples of intelligence capabilities provided by units organic to the Marine division, which may be organic or task-organized into the GCE, include the following:

- Reconnaissance battalion units.
- LAR battalion units.
- Scout sniper platoons from infantry battalions.
- Scout platoons from tank battalions.
- Engineer reconnaissance teams from the CEB.
- Sensors (e.g., counterfire radars, ground-based operational surveillance systems).
- Unmanned air and ground systems.

Additionally, all combat and combat support units can conduct patrols and establish listening and observation posts.

Examples of additional ISR capabilities not organic to the GCE include the following:

- Ground and space-based sensors.
- UASs with longer endurance and better sensors assigned to the ACE.
- UASs operated by joint force or national assets.
- Force reconnaissance companies.
- SOF.
- Signals intelligence teams.
- Human intelligence teams.
- Geospatial intelligence.
- Measurement and signature intelligence.
- Cyberspace intelligence.

When integrating or leveraging nonorganic assets, particularly theater and national capabilities, the GCE commander and the staff must understand the request, allocation, and tasking processes.

Detailed planning and close coordination across the MAGTF and JIIM environment allow for a better understanding of capabilities that can facilitate mission accomplishment.

FIRES AND INFORMATION OPERATIONS CAPABILITY IN SUPPORT OF GROUND COMBAT ELEMENT OPERATIONS

Ground combat elements are combined arms teams by nature. The GCE employs and integrates information operations, direct fires, and supporting arms from ground, air, and naval forces. Information operations are employed across the ROMO to influence target audiences in support of the desired end state. On the lower end of the ROMO, information operations are the primary means of influencing the operational environment. Fires, or the threat of their use, lend credibility to information operations in crisis response operations. During combat operations, information operations are integrated with maneuver and fires to create combined arms effects against the enemy. At the higher end of the ROMO, information operations are employed to degrade enemy morale, cohesion, and command and control, allowing the GCE to achieve surprise and generate superior tempo.

The GCE plans, targets, integrates, and coordinates fires within their AO. Based on METT-T and the requirements identified during planning, each GCE is organized, trained, and equipped to plan and coordinate maneuver; to deliver organic direct and indirect fires; and to manage and direct fire support provided by the ACE, naval surface fires, and joint fires assets. An integral component of controlling fires is the determination of the effects desired in accordance with the situation and commander's intent. The GCE employs or calls for a range of fires and munitions. Capabilities range from precision munitions capable of engaging targets while limiting collateral damage to massed fires to defeat massed enemies.

The GCE is task-organized with required organic firepower. During crisis response and combat operations, the GCE deploys a range of weapons allowing commanders and small unit leaders to select and employ appropriate weapons systems. Task organization is the primary method of determining the GCE's types of weapons and mobility:

- Infantry battalions are primarily dismounted and employ the following:
  - Rifle companies: small arms, grenade launchers, machine guns, rockets, and 60 mm mortars.
  - Weapons companies: antitank guided missiles, 81 mm mortars, and heavy machine guns.
  - Headquarters and service companies: snipers and the FSCC, which controls fires.
- Tank units bring armor-protected firepower along with a robust TOW missile capability.
- Assault amphibian units increase the mobility, protection, and firepower of the embarked force.
- LAR units conduct armored reconnaissance and armored security operations in support of maneuver. Armored security tasks include cover, guard, screen, and area security.
- Engineers are experts with explosives and provide the ability to detect and breach obstacles, including urban breaching.

- Reconnaissance units provide reconnaissance and target acquisition capabilities.
- Artillery units provide the following:
  - Continuous all-weather fire support using howitzers, rocket launchers, and heavy mortars.
  - Artillery cannon and rocket launchers able to employ guided munitions.
  - Expertise in planning and employment of counterbattery radars and counterbattery fire.

If required, GCE units can employ nonlethal weapons suites including, but not limited to, riot-control equipment, laser dazzlers, pepper spray, tasers, and nonlethal munitions (beanbag rounds).

During crisis response and combat operations, the GCE requires continuous availability of fires under all weather conditions. These fires must engage fleeting targets rapidly and precisely. In the current operational environment, minimizing collateral damage is often critical to operational success. At the same time, the GCE must have the ability to quickly mass fires against enemy concentrations.

While Marine Corps ground units can create combined arms effects using organic assets, the GCE is best employed in synergy with the ACE, generating combined arms effects at the MAGTF level. The GCE commander aims to integrate lethal and nonlethal effects with maneuver and sustainment provided or enabled by other elements of the MAGTF to accomplish the mission.

Task organization and training of GCE units provide and exercise the capability of small unit leaders at the platoon level to employ MAGTF and joint fires. A joint terminal attack controller in each rifle platoon enables this capability. Similarly, small unit leaders should be equally adept at integrating information operations support from the MAGTF and joint force. An assigned, school-trained information operations planner enables this at the CLT level and above. For additional details, see MCTP 3-10.F. For additional information on information operations, see JP 3-13.

APPENDIX A
EXAMPLE GROUND COMBAT ELEMENTS WITHIN MAGTF CONSTRUCTS

By design, the MAGTF is scalable to enable the Marine Corps to respond quickly to crises with forward-deployed assets reinforced as required to integrate additional capabilities and capacities. For example, the Navy-Marine Corps team maintains forward presence with globally deployed MEUs and SPMAGTFs, as well as UDP forces deployed to the Western Pacific. These forward-deployed forces are capable of serving as enablers for follow-on forces. This appendix provides examples of GCEs within various MAGTF constructs and a short description of the operational construct in which they might operate. These examples illustrate the size, capabilities, and employment options for each level of MAGTF and its associated GCE.

Special Purpose Marine Air-Ground Task Force

The SPMAGTFs are organized, trained, and equipped with narrowly focused capabilities. They accomplish a specific mission, often TSC missions of limited scope and duration. They may embark aboard amphibious ships, or they may deploy by other means. Though a SPMAGTF may be of any size, it is normally the size of a MEU or smaller.

The SPMAGTFs routinely deploy for exercises and TSC missions to Africa, South America, Eastern Europe, and the Western Pacific. A SPMAGTF's GCE can be any size, but it is most often a CLT or a BLT. One example is SPMAGTF-Cooperation Afloat Readiness and Training, which executes a series of biannual bilateral exercises and TSC engagements in Southeast Asia and Micronesia to strengthen relationships and enhance force readiness. A CLT assigned to SPMAGTF-Cooperation Afloat Readiness and Training will mostly likely include the following:

- Infantry company.
- Detachment from headquarters and service company of the parent infantry battalion.
- Assault amphibian platoon.
- Engineer squad.

Crisis Response Special Purpose Marine Air-Ground Task Force

Crisis response SPMAGTFs are regionally focused, forward-deployed, shore-based units numbering around 2,000 Marines and Sailors, roughly the size of a MEU. These forces are designated in accordance with the region to which they deploy. For example, the SPMAGTF assigned to Marine Forces Central Command is designated SPMAGTF Central Command. They are capable of self-deploying elements utilizing aircraft assigned to the crisis response SPMAGTF's ACE. As required, elements can embark aboard available naval ships, including high-speed vessels or other nontraditional shipping. In addition to being able to conduct TSC, they are tasked, trained, and equipped to serve as a crisis response force. They provide commanders a highly mobile,

C2-capable force that is trained and certified for a range of capabilities including embassy reinforcement, TRAP, NEOs, and TSC.

The crisis response SPMAGTF's CE is often built around an infantry or artillery regimental headquarters, reinforced with required enablers and specialists. The crisis response SPMAGTF is capable of integrating the full range of joint assets, including ISR, fires, logistics, and engineering to accomplish missions. Based on an operations requirement, a crisis response SPMAGTF is often reinforced with specific capabilities (e.g., civil affairs, Navy construction engineers [commonly referred to as Seabees], a shock trauma platoon, Coast Guard Masters of Arms, interagency LNOs) to allow them to execute planning and operations in a complex JIIM environment.

Each crisis response SPMAGTF is task-organized for specific missions and deployments, and its GCE is typically a CLT or BLT, though the size and composition vary based on Marine Corps component command requirements and regional issues. When CLTs or BLTs are shore-based, the host nation may limit the number of personnel and types of heavy weapons and equipment with which they deploy. Ground combat elements assigned to SPMAGTFs usually include combat engineer and reconnaissance detachments and may include artillery or armored units. Host nation basing agreements for a crisis response SPMAGTF may limit the types of missions or may require pre-mission notification regarding missions launched from sovereign territory.

The GCE of a crisis response SPMAGTF normally maintains a platoon-sized TRAP force and a company-sized QRF and conducts other missions as directed by the crisis response SPMAGTF commander. Routine TSC missions may be accomplished with organic assets. Crisis response missions often require support from joint or National assets.

In 2014, the crisis response SPMAGTF assigned to Marine Forces Africa Command deployed from Spain, executing two NEOs and securing the evacuation of several hundred US citizens and foreign nationals. That same year, a platoon-sized detachment flew 3,400 nautical miles to conduct an NEO in South Sudan. Later in 2014, elements of a rifle company, again based in Spain, deployed to Libya and secured the US ambassador and DOS personnel.

A notional BLT assigned to a crisis response SPMAGTF includes the following:

- Infantry battalion.
- Engineer platoon.
- Reconnaissance platoon.

Marine Expeditionary Unit

Deployed aboard an ARG, MEUs are rotational, forward-deployed MAGTFs. The MEU is task-organized, trained, and equipped to provide the JFC with a responsive expeditionary force. It fulfills the Marine Corps' forward, sea-based deployment requirements and deploys with roughly 2,300 Marines and Sailors and 15 days of sustainment. Two to three MEUs are normally forward deployed supporting Marine Corps component commands and GCC requirements.

Forward-deployed ARG/MEUs provide an operationally mobile, sea-based response force capable of deterring threats or projecting power. The embarked MEU is capable of rapid response planning and can commence operations within 6 hours of notification.

In terms of employment, a MEU does not normally conduct JFEO and can only conduct amphibious operations of limited duration and scope. Its expeditionary warfare capabilities make it extremely useful for crisis response and immediate reaction operations (e.g., NEO, FHA, embassy reinforcement, TRAP, limited objective attacks, raids) and for acting as an advance force to enable follow-on forces.

The GCE of a MEU is a task-organized BLT organized around an infantry battalion and mustering approximately 1,200 Marines and Sailors. The BLT is capable of executing amphibious, offensive, defensive, or stability operations. The unit is trained to conduct the full range of MEU missions, including NEO; maritime interdiction operations; visit, board, search, and seizure; and reconnaissance and surveillance missions.

A notional BLT assigned to a MEU includes the following:

- Infantry battalion.
- Artillery battery.
- Assault amphibian platoon.
- LAR platoon or company (minus).
- Tank platoon.
- Combat engineer platoon.
- Reconnaissance platoon.

Marine Expeditionary Brigade

The MEB is a crisis response force, commanded by a brigadier general or a major general, capable of forcible entry and enabling the introduction of follow-on forces. The MEB is capable of rapid deployment by air, in combination with the maritime prepositioning squadron, by amphibious shipping, or through aggregation of forward-deployed forces and forces deploying from the United States by the preceding methods. While each MEB is task-organized and varies in size accordingly, the standard programmatic MEB, used for planning purposes, musters approximately 12,000 Marines and Sailors for an amphibious MEB and approximately 15,250 Marines and Sailors for an MPF MEB. The MEBs deploy with 30 days of sustainability. When larger forces are required, MEBs serve as both the lead elements and building blocks for a MEF deployment.

Amphibious Marine Expeditionary Brigade. An amphibious MEB is normally deployed to support major operations and campaigns, being an integral component of the Nation's joint forcible entry capability. Personnel, equipment, and supplies sufficient for 30 days of operation are embarked aboard amphibious shipping. Each MEB is task-organized based on METT-T. A notional GCE assigned to an amphibious MEB includes the following:

- Headquarters company (reinforced), infantry regiment.
- Three infantry battalions.

- One artillery battalion (reinforced) (three howitzer batteries and one expeditionary fire support system battery).
- Two companies (reinforced), tank battalion.
- Two companies (reinforced), assault amphibian battalion.
- Two companies (reinforced), CEB.
- Two companies (reinforced), LAR battalion.
- One company (reinforced), reconnaissance battalion.

Maritime Prepositioning Force Marine Expeditionary Brigade. The MPF MEB deploys for FHA, disaster relief, or to support major operations and campaigns. The majority of equipment and supplies, sufficient for 30 days of operation, are deployed with the maritime prepositioning ships squadron (commonly referred to as MPSRON), while Marines and select equipment deploy with the FIE. The GCE for an MPF MEB is an RLT. The standard force list for an RLT, for which the equipment density list is designed, is the following:

- Headquarters company (reinforced), infantry regiment.
- Three infantry battalions.
- One artillery battalion (reinforced) (five howitzer batteries).
- One tank battalion.
- Two companies (reinforced), assault amphibian battalion.
- Two companies (reinforced), CEB.
- One company (reinforced), LAR battalion.
- One company (reinforced), reconnaissance battalion.

Marine Expeditionary Brigade Task-Organized for Sustained Operations Ashore. Marine expeditionary brigades are mid-sized MAGTFs that either act alone or provide the building blocks for forcible entry and other power projection operations. They can conduct the full range of expeditionary operations and may serve as the lead echelon of a MEF.

An example of a MEB (and its GCE) deployed for sustained operations ashore is 2d MEB (commonly referred to as Task Force Leatherneck), which was task-organized for deployment to Helmand Province, Afghanistan, from May 2009 to April 2010. The MEB deployed Marines and select equipment by air. The majority of the heavy equipment was brought in overland. The globally sourced 2d MEB was organized for counterinsurgency operations, with heavy emphasis on engaging with and influencing the population. The MEB eventually mustered more than 10,500 Marines and Sailors. The GCE comprised over 4,000 Marines and Sailors and was organized as follows:

- Headquarters Company, 7th Marine Regiment.
- 1st Battalion, 6th Marine Regiment.
- 3d Battalion, 6th Marine Regiment.

- 3d Battalion, 3d Marine Regiment.
- 2d LAR Battalion (minus).
- 3d Battalion, 10th Marine Regiment (minus).
- 2d CEB (minus) (Rein).
- Company C (Rein), 2d Reconnaissance Battalion.
- Company C (Rein), 2d Assault Amphibian Battalion (operating MRAPs).

During combat operations, specifically including the reduction of Marjah, a Taliban strongpoint in Southern Helmand Province, 2d MEB had operational control (OPCON) of joint and multinational assets including the following:

- 4th Battalion, 23d Infantry (US Army, Stryker battalion).
- 4th Brigade, 205th Corps, Afghan National Army.
- Danish tank squadron (with Leopard II tanks).

Marine Expeditionary Force

The Marine Corps' principal warfighting organization is the MEF, which is employed for major operations and campaigns, including forcible entry. Each MEF is commanded by a major general or lieutenant general, deploys with 20,000 to 90,000 Marines and Sailors, and is capable of sustaining itself for 60 days with equipment and supplies transported by amphibious and MPF shipping.

Example of a MEF Conducting Offensive Operations Ashore. In spring of 2003, I MEF, as task-organized for the invasion of Iraq, mustered more than 81,000 personnel. The 1st Marine Division received the deployment order on 9 January 2003 and aggregated forces in Kuwait. The 7th Marine Regiment was the first unit to deploy, traveling by air to Kuwait, where it drew equipment and munitions offloaded from MPF shipping. The 7th Marine Regiment completed RSOI and was combat ready on 1 February 2013, less than 3 weeks after being ordered to deploy. The 5th Marine Regiment followed, completing RSOI on 15 February. Two amphibious MEBs, deployed on amphibious task forces sailing from the East Coast (deploying 2d MEB, including 2d Marine Regiment) and the West Coast (deploying 1st Marine Regiment), arrived in Kuwait by 25 February. The I MEF also included the 1st Armored Division of the United Kingdom (UK), over which I MEF had NATO OPCON.

The MSCs and their approximate personnel strengths were as follows:

- I MEF CE (Rein): 4,600 personnel.
- 1st Armored Division (UK): 21,000 personnel.
- 1st Marine Division (Rein): 20,500 personnel.
- 3d Marine Aircraft Wing (Rein): 14,000 personnel.
- 1st Force Service Support Group: 10,500 personnel.
- Task Force Tarawa: 5,000 personnel (deployed as 2d MEB).

- I MEF Engineer Group: 3,100 personnel. (This force primarily consisted of US Navy construction engineers [commonly called Seabees], reinforced by US Army and Republic of Korea engineer battalions.)
- 15th MEU: 1,700 personnel. (The 15th MEU was NATO OPCON to the UK 1st Armored Division for the initial phase of the operation. They were subsequently attached to Task Force Tarawa.)

The 1st Marine Division is I MEF's organic GCE. In this case, the MEF commander exercised command over three GCEs—1st Marine Division (Rein), the 1st Armored Division (UK), and Task Force Tarawa. The 1st Marine Division (Rein) was task-organized for the 2003 invasion of Iraq as follows:

- Headquarters Battalion, 1st Marine Division (Rein).
- Regimental Combat Team (RCT)-1:
  - 3d Battalion, 1st Marine Regiment.
  - 1st Battalion, 4th Marine Regiment.
  - 2d Battalion, 23d Marine Regiment (Marine Corps Reserve).
  - 2d LAR Battalion.
- RCT-5:
  - 1st Battalion, 5th Marine Regiment.
  - 2d Battalion, 5th Marine Regiment.
  - 3d Battalion, 5th Marine Regiment.
  - 2d Tank Battalion.
  - 1st LAR Battalion.
- RCT-7:
  - 1st Battalion, 7th Marine Regiment.
  - 3d Battalion, 4th Marine Regiment.
  - 3d Battalion, 7th Marine Regiment.
  - 1st Tank Battalion.
  - 3d LAR Battalion.
- 11th Marine Regiment:
  - 1st Battalion, 11th Marine Regiment.
  - 2d Battalion, 11th Marine Regiment.
  - 3d Battalion, 11th Marine Regiment.
  - 3d Battalion, 27th Field Artillery (Army multiple launch rocket system battalion).
- 1st Reconnaissance Battalion (Rein).
- CEB (combined 1st and 2d CEBs).
- 2d Assault Amphibian Battalion (minus) (Rein).
- 3d Assault Amphibian Battalion (minus) (Rein).

Example of a MEF Conducting Counterinsurgency Operations. The II MEF (Forward), as task-organized for operations in Helmand and Nimruz Provinces, Afghanistan, in the spring of 2011, is an example of a MEF conducting counterinsurgency operations. The Marine Corps forces of the MEF arrived by strategic airlift, assuming the equipment in use by I MEF (Forward), whom they relieved. The commander of II MEF (Forward) was dual-hatted, serving under NATO authority as the commander of Regional Command Southwest, International Security Assistance Force. Total coalition forces were approximately 30,000 personnel, of which the Marines and Sailors of II MEF comprised 19,400. Marines and Sailors assigned to the Marine division accounted for more than 10,000 personnel. Major subordinate commands included the following:

- 2d Marine Division (Forward) (also known as Task Force Leatherneck).
- 2d Marine Aircraft Wing (Forward).
- 2d Marine Logistics Group (Forward).
- Task Force Helmand (UK, 3d Commando Brigade, reinforced with Danish and Estonian forces).
- UK's Joint Aviation Group (UK Aviation Force, augmented by a company of Tongan Marines).
- A battalion of Bahraini military police.
- 1st Battalion, 23d Marine Regiment (Marine Corps Reserve) assigned local security duties.

Again, the MEF was task-organized with multiple GCEs—Task Force Leatherneck (2d Marine Division [Forward]) and Task Force Helmand (UK, 3d Commando Brigade). While not directly subordinate, the MEF was supported by the US Navy's Mobile Unit 6, an explosive ordnance disposal battalion, and the US Army's 54th Engineer Battalion assigned to route clearance duties. The II MEF exercised OPCON of both units while they were operating in II MEF's AO, with OPCON of the 54th Engineer Battalion delegated to 2d Marine Division. In 2011, the 2d Marine Division (Forward) was task-organized for counterinsurgency operations in Helmand Province, Afghanistan, as follows:

- Headquarters Battalion (minus) (Rein), 2d Marine Division.
- RCT-1:
  - 1st Battalion, 3d Marine Regiment.
  - 2d Battalion, 3d Marine Regiment.
  - 3d Battalion, 9th Marine Regiment.
- RCT-8:
  - 3d Battalion, 2d Marine Regiment.
  - 3d Battalion, 4th Marine Regiment.
  - 1st Battalion, 5th Marine Regiment.
  - Georgian 33d Light Infantry Battalion.
- 1st Battalion, 10th Marine Regiment. (Provided general support artillery support from widely dispersed locations throughout Helmand Province. One battery secured the Kadjaki Dam.)
- 2d LAR Battalion (minus) (Rein).
- 2d Reconnaissance Battalion (minus).
- 2d CEB (minus) (Rein).

The 2d Marine Division was partnered with the Afghan 215th Corps and tasked to develop their capabilities to allow them to assume the mission of securing Afghanistan from coalition forces. The 2d Marine Division headquarters partnered with the 215th Corps headquarters, while the subordinate RCTs, as well as the UK's Task Force Helmand, were partnered with 215th Corps' subordinate brigades. The 2d CEB and 2d Marine Logistics Group's combat logistics regiment were likewise partnered with their Afghan equivalents. For more information, see MCWP 3-02, *Insurgencies and Countering Insurgencies*.

APPENDIX B
PRINCIPLES OF WAR

The Marine Corps warfighting philosophy of maneuver warfare focuses on finding the best way to defeat the enemy with the minimum amount of effort. Within this philosophy, the principles of war can help commanders organize their thinking about the mission, enemy, battlespace, and forces. The principles of war are neither universal truths nor prescriptive steps or actions; rather, they are tools to plan, execute, and assess operations. Application of the principles is a component of the art of war, informed by a commander's judgement, skill, and experience to adapt to constantly changing conditions and situations.

Mass

The purpose of mass is to concentrate the effects of combat power at the most advantageous place and time to produce decisive results. In order to achieve mass, appropriate joint force capabilities are integrated and synchronized where they may have a decisive effect quickly. Mass must be sustained to have the desired effect. Massing effects of combat power, rather than concentrating forces, can enable even numerically inferior forces to produce decisive results and minimize human losses and waste of resources.

The GCE is often critical to the MAGTF commander's ability to project and mass combat power at the decisive place and time to achieve decisive results. Mass is not the sheer weight of numbers. Numerical strength may be less important than the ability to maneuver rapidly and direct combat power at the critical point. Proper application of the principle of mass may achieve decisive local superiority for a numerically inferior force. Contributors to achieving mass include the following:

- Leadership.
- Troop strength and quality of the force.
- Tactical disposition and positional advantage.
- Skillful use of fires and supporting arms.
- Combat support and CSS to sustain tempo.
- Discipline, morale, and resolution.

Due to the lethality of modern weapons, the GCE requires the ability to mass quickly and unexpectedly from dispersed or distributed units and to disperse again after accomplishment of the mission. The commander concentrates forces and masses fires where they can exploit enemy weakness or where terrain offers the best opportunity to make maximum use of fires and maneuver. At the decisive place and time, the commander often commits the reserve to generate the greatest combat power or to exploit success.

Objective

The purpose of specifying the objective is to direct every military operation toward a clearly defined, decisive, and achievable goal. The purpose of military operations is to achieve the military objectives that support attainment of the overall political goals of the conflict. This frequently involves the destruction of the enemy armed forces' capabilities and their will to fight. The objective of joint operations not involving this destruction might be more difficult to define; nonetheless, it too must be clear from the beginning. Objectives must contribute directly and efficiently to the purpose of the operation. Each operation must contribute to strategic objectives, and commanders should avoid actions that do not contribute directly to achieving the objectives.

Additionally, changes to the military objectives may occur because political and military leaders gain a better understanding of the situation, or they may occur because the situation itself changes. The JFC should anticipate these shifts in political goals necessitating changes in the military objectives. The changes may be very subtle, but if not made, achievement of the military objectives may no longer support the political goals, legitimacy may be undermined, and force security may be compromised.

At the operational and tactical levels of war, the GCE commander aims to identify and attack critical vulnerabilities, which, when the attack is successful, can lead to the destruction of the enemy's center of gravity. Subordinate unit objectives must contribute quickly and economically to the ultimate purpose of the operation.

The commander selects objectives based on consideration of METT-T. The commander must clearly understand the overall mission and intent of the higher commander, the GCE's own mission, and the tasks that must be performed. The commander must consider every contemplated action in light of its direct contribution to the objective and communicate clearly to subordinates the overall objective of the operation.

The GCE commander directs operations at enemy vulnerabilities. A vulnerability is a capability that is susceptible to attack. A critical vulnerability is a capability that is susceptible to attack and critical to the enemy force's success. On the dynamic battlefield, identification of vulnerabilities may be difficult, and commanders must quickly decide on the COA to pursue when vulnerabilities are discovered. Enemy vulnerabilities may become or cease to be critical for brief periods. The commander who can identify and take quick action against critical vulnerabilities dictates the tempo of operations.

Offensive

The purpose of an offensive action is to seize, retain, and exploit the initiative. Offensive action is the most effective and decisive way to achieve a clearly defined objective. Offensive operations are the means by which a military force seizes and holds the initiative while maintaining freedom of action and achieving decisive results. The importance of offensive action is fundamentally true across all levels of war.

The commander adopts the defensive only as a temporary expedient and must seek every opportunity to seize or regain the initiative. An offensive spirit must be inherent in the conduct of all defensive operations.

Offensive operations allow commanders to dictate the tempo of an operation and impose their will on the enemy, determining the course of the battle. The goal is to deprive the enemy of opportunities relevant to the enemy's operational objectives by putting the enemy on a reactive footing. The GCE commander can accomplish this through swift decision making coupled with rapid execution on the battlefield.

This principle is applicable across all physical domains and the information environment, which includes cyberspace. The GCE commander, while principally focused on the land domain, must understand how to leverage MAGTF and JIIM capabilities to force the enemy to respond to offensive operations.

Security

The purpose of security is to prevent the enemy from acquiring unexpected advantage. Security enhances freedom of action by reducing friendly vulnerability to hostile acts, influence, or surprise. Security results from the measures taken by commanders to protect their forces. Staff planning and an understanding of enemy strategy, tactics, and doctrine enhance security. Risk is inherent in military operations. Application of this principle includes prudent risk management, not undue caution. Every unit is responsible for its own local security, regardless of security measures implemented by a higher echelon.

Economy of Force

The purpose of economy of force is to expend minimum essential combat power on secondary efforts in order to allocate the maximum possible combat power on primary efforts. Economy of force is the judicious employment and distribution of forces. It is the measured allocation of available combat power to such tasks as limited attacks, defense, delays, deception, or even retrograde operations to achieve mass elsewhere at the decisive point and time.

Maneuver

The purpose of maneuver is to place the enemy in a position of disadvantage through the flexible application of combat power. Maneuver is the movement of forces in relation to the enemy to secure or retain positional advantage, usually in order to deliver, or threaten delivery of, the direct and indirect fires of the maneuvering force. Effective maneuver keeps the enemy off balance, thus protecting the friendly force. It contributes materially in exploiting successes, preserving freedom of action, and reducing vulnerability by continually posing new problems for the enemy.

The GCE is the MAGTF commander's principle maneuver element. The GCE contributes to seizing and sustaining the initiative and exploiting the success of other elements of the MAGTF and the joint force. The GCE employs maneuver, integrated with organic and MAGTF fires, to achieve decisive superiority at the critical time and place. The GCE commander integrates ACE fires with the scheme of maneuver to create synergistic combined arms effects for the enemy.

Unity of Command

The purpose of unity of command is to ensure unity of effort under one responsible commander for every objective. Unity of command means that all forces operate under a single commander with the requisite authority to direct all forces employed in pursuit of a common purpose. During multinational operations and interagency coordination, unity of command may not be possible, but the requirement for unity of effort remains. Unity of effort, the coordination and cooperation toward common objectives, even if the participants are not necessarily part of the same command or organization, is the product of successful unified action. Commander's intent, what must happen and a description of the end state, is the foundation for both unity of command and unity of effort.

Surprise

The purpose of surprise is to strike at a time or place or in a manner for which the enemy is unprepared. Surprise can help the commander shift the balance of combat power and thus achieve success well out of proportion to the effort expended. It is not essential that the enemy be taken unaware, but only that the enemy becomes aware too late to react effectively. To reap the benefits of surprise, the commander must exploit and amplify the enemy's initial shock, allowing the enemy no time to recover. An enemy taken unaware loses confidence, suffers a drop in morale, and is less able to take effective countermeasures. Operating tempo and maintaining the initiative are essential to achieving surprise. Operating contrary to the enemy's expectations can also achieve surprise. Factors contributing to surprise include—

- Speed in decision making, information sharing, and force movement.
- Unexpected use of forces or of terrain that appears unfavorable.
- Operating at night/during limited visibility.
- Effective and timely intelligence.
- Deception.
- Security.
- Variation in tactics, methods, and techniques.

Simplicity

The purpose of simplicity is to increase the probability that plans and operations will be executed as intended by preparing clear, uncomplicated plans and concise orders that minimize misunderstanding and confusion. Simplicity contributes to successful operations. When other factors are equal, the simplest plan is preferable. Simplicity in plans allows better understanding and execution planning at all echelons. Simplicity and clarity of expression greatly facilitate mission execution in the stress, fatigue, and complexities of modern combat and are especially critical to success in multinational operations. The GCE seeks to reduce friction by relying on clearly understood processes, standardized procedures, and clear and concise expression of intent and objectives.

APPENDIX C
GROUND COMBAT ELEMENT AND SPECIAL OPERATIONS FORCES INTEGRATION

During expeditionary operations, Marines and SOF are highly complementary. In order to maximize operational effectiveness the GCE commander must understand the capabilities and limitations of SOF units that are or could potentially be executing operations in the AO or AOI. The SOF elements do not normally initiate contact with conventional forces; the GCE commander and planners who know or suspect that there may be SOF elements capable of operating in or influencing their AOI, should seek information from HHQ and initiate contact with the SOF elements. When possible and/or appropriate, the GCE integrates SOF representatives (planners) in predeployment training to develop and exercise procedures for communication between the GCE and SOF elements. For more information, see MCRP 3-30.4, *Multi-Service Tactics, Techniques, and Procedures for Conventional Forces and Special Operations Forces Integration, Interoperability, and Interdependence*.

Command and Control of Special Operations Forces

A theater special operations command (TSOC) is the US Special Operations Command component command assigned to each GCC. When the GCC establishes functional component commands, the TSOC functions as the joint force special operations component command. A GCC exercises command and control of assigned SOF through this organization. The TSOC is a standing headquarters assigned to a GCC; the intelligence section of the TSOC is often well versed on the threat networks operating in the GCC's area of responsibility. They often have access to information from allied and other Government agencies that are not readily available to MAGTFs. Requests for information concerning SOF capabilities go from the GCE to the MAGTF to the supported Marine Corps component command, which coordinates with the GCC's TSOC.

A JSOTF is a JTF composed of special operations units from more than one Service. It carries out a specific special operation or prosecutes special operations in support of a theater campaign or other operations. The JSOTF may have conventional units assigned or attached to support the conduct of specific missions. (JP 3-05, *Special Operations*)

The JFC may establish a joint special operations area (JSOA), which is an area of land, sea, and airspace assigned to the JSOTF to conduct special operations activities. Establishing a JSOA allows for coordination and deconfliction of SOF and conventional force missions, which can reduce the risk of friendly fire incidents. The JSOA may be established within the AO of the GCE for a specific time or until special operations activities are completed. Coordination is vital in the transition to and from a JSOA to protect the force and maintain tempo.

The JFC may designate either a JSOTF or the MAGTF as a supported or supporting command for a specific operation or a specific phase of a major operation or campaign. If designated supported command, SOF may rely on MAGTF assets, fire support, or a QRF. If designated supporting command, SOF can execute advance force and shaping operations or conduct specific operations (e.g., time sensitive targeting of a high-value target) in support of the MAGTF mission.

Integration

Just as joint interdependence is the purposeful reliance by one Service on another Service's capabilities, SOF and the GCE may conduct mutually supporting operations to integrate capabilities and achieve synergy. The degree of integration varies based on METT-T factors and command relationships.

Even when not designated supporting or supported, MAGTF and SOF operations can create a combined arms effect against threat forces. The MAGTF employs its combat power and the full range of joint forces against a massed enemy. Special operations teams backed by the assets of the MAGTF may target a dispersed enemy.

GCE and SOF units should coordinate early, prior to combat rotations, to foster relationships, develop mutual understanding, understand each other's staff planning procedures, and defuse any misconceptions or friction points. If possible, GCE and SOF units expecting to be employed in adjacent areas should participate in each other's predeployment training. Best practices include traveling to the other element's home station, engaging in information exchange, and linking up staff function sections. For example, prior to a deployment to US Central Command's area of responsibility as a SPMAGTF, the MAGTF could make contact with the SOF unit assigned to US Central Command during the same period. They could invite planners to participate during command post exercises and invite the SOF unit to participate or send representatives to the subsequent integrated training exercise.

Information exchange should include mission, CCIRs, specific force capabilities, and limitations. Understanding the capabilities and limitations of each other's force is critical to coordination. In some situations, JSOTF ROE may differ from MAGTF ROE based on US Special Operations Command's counterterrorism mission. During operations, GCE and SOF commanders should understand each other's mission planning cycle, intelligence/operations cycle, and mission approval processes.

Exchanging LNOs is the most commonly employed technique for establishing and maintaining continuous communication between SOF and GCE/MAGTF commanders. The LNOs work with the supported commanders and their staffs to ensure the timely exchange of necessary information to aid mission execution and preclude fratricide, duplication of effort, disruption of ongoing operations, or loss of intelligence sources. They may assist in the coordination of fire support, targeting, or military deception.

Usually, LNOs are exchanged between the MAGTF headquarters and the JSOTF working in the region. The GCE commander and the G-3/S-3 should be familiar with the SOF LNO. Situation permitting, the GCE commander should conduct an in-person meeting with the commander of the JSOTF that is operating in the area to discuss end states and mutual support.

Special Operations Forces Liaison Element

For forward-deployed MEUs, the SOFLE facilitates synchronization of efforts with SOF. This task-organized, rotational SOF element deploys with the MEU CE. The SOFLE coordinates, assesses, and recommends various training, equipping, and engaging opportunities with host nations and provides connectivity and synchronization with the expeditionary force.

Other MAGTFs, not assigned a SOFLE but expecting to require coordination with SOF elements, should request, through the relevant Marine Corps component command, assignment of a SOFLE and/or LNO. The Marine Corps component command coordinates with the TSOC. When possible, the SOFLE and/or LNO should participate in at least the major exercises of a MAGTF's pre-deployment training program to allow mutual understanding of capabilities and limitations.

Ground Combat Element Support to Special Operations Forces

The MAGTF may support SOF missions or operations and the MAGTF may task the GCE to assign units in direct support of a JSOTF for a specific mission. This support may cover any of the warfighting functions. For example, the GCE may provide a QRF or fire support, and it may conduct maneuver operations to cover or support SOF operations. The GCE must have enough information to successfully plan and rehearse the assigned mission in support of SOF. This information should specifically include the supported commander's intent, concept of operations, and signal plan.

Both parties should make every effort to use standard joint systems and tools, which are generally broken into two groups—situational awareness tools (e.g., command and control personal computer system) and collaboration tools (e.g., chat, file sharing, secure video teleconferencing, messaging).

When supporting SOF, the GCE should coordinate rehearsals. Considerations include control measures and significant events, such as the timing of the establishment and disestablishment of the JSOA. Communications rehearsals ensure interoperability between GCE elements and SOF elements and verify that all elements involved are accurately displayed on the COP.

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APPENDIX D
GROUND COMBAT ELEMENT OPERATIONS FROM THE SEA

Forward-Deployed, Sea-Based Forces Shape the Environment

In support of theater security plans, naval forces are forward deployed to shape the security environment, signal US resolve, deter conflict, respond to natural disasters, protect US interests, and promote global prosperity by defending freedom of navigation in the maritime commons. Forward-deployed forces operating in international waters use the sea as maneuver space to affect operational outcomes in support of theater campaign plans.

The presence and capabilities of these forces are a visible and tangible reminder of our Nation's resolve, for friends and foes alike. Forward presence builds trust, which cannot be generated suddenly in response to a looming conflict. Sustained engagement develops partnerships and builds partner capacity.

The GCE's day-to-day contribution to forward naval presence is the BLT. Alone, the BLT is a capable combined arms force. In conjunction with the other elements of the MEU, they can leverage naval, joint, and National assets to achieve operational effects.

Operational Maneuver From the Sea

In OMFTS, the sea is a maneuver space. Operations should create freedom of action for the amphibious force while creating a tempo greater than the enemy can withstand. The commander, amphibious task force and the commander, landing force (normally the MAGTF commander) can exploit advances in electronic warfare, precision targeting systems, and waterborne and airborne connectors to allow for the introduction of the amphibious force at the time that supports the JFC's concept of operations. Naval maneuver takes full advantage of maritime distances and options to close the shoreline. Such maneuver involves fighting on, above, under, and from the sea, including striking targets on a hostile or potentially hostile shore while conducting amphibious operations. The 1st Marine Division's amphibious landing at Inchon during the Korean War, and the subsequent recapture of Seoul by the landing force, is an example of OMFTS.

Naval forces use the entire array of combined arms to shape the environment and initiate decisive maneuver against objectives that are critical to the enemy's ability to mass, maneuver, and command and control enemy forces. Operational maneuver from the sea limits the enemy's ability to predict and respond to our operations. Maritime component commanders and their subordinates shape the operational environment by—

- Integrating National, theater, and organic intelligence capabilities to identify enemy critical vulnerabilities and gaps in the enemy defensive system.
- Coordinating with theater SOF for special reconnaissance and direct action missions to obtain intelligence, deny enemy capabilities, or deceive the enemy as to our intent.

- Applying information operations to influence the ability and willingness of the enemy to resist operations.
- Conducting offensive electronic warfare and amphibious advanced force operations.
- Applying surface, subsurface, aviation, and joint/combined fires throughout the battlespace to mask the main effort.
- Utilizing the full range of naval capabilities to project force, including air and surface delivered precision munitions, SOF, and amphibious forces, to deny enemy sanctuaries.

In coordination with carrier strike groups, amphibious task forces utilize the sea as maneuver space and conduct or threaten strikes, raids, and forcible entry operations that project US power and influence into the littorals. The GCE plays a critical role in projecting this power ashore. A forward-deployed ARG/MEU provides a force with proven combined arms capabilities that is proficient in time-sensitive planning, capable of rapid response in crisis situations, and able to sustain the force from the sea.

Using the sea to maneuver provides a relatively secure base for C2, ISR, logistic, and fires capabilities, which enables operations. Traditional amphibious forces habitually massed forces prior to execution, clearly signaling intent. New capabilities and methods provide the ability to strike from over the horizon or to disguise the main effort and mask the axis of advance. The GCE can achieve surprise by initiating maneuver from dispersed locations while supporting the attack with precision munitions launched from the sea before the enemy can comprehend and react to the situation.

Principles of Operational Maneuver From the Sea

The principles of OMFTS are—

- Focus on an operational objective.
- Use the sea as maneuver space.
- Generate overwhelming tempo and momentum.
- Pit strength against weakness.
- Emphasize intelligence, deception, and flexibility.
- Integrate all organic, joint, and combined assets.

The Sea Base to Aggregate Combat Power

The MAGTF and the GCE are, by definition and design, scalable. Depending on METT-T factors, a MEU's BLT may be sufficient to accomplish operational objectives against terrorist or paramilitary forces. More capable opponents or missions requiring forcible entry require larger forces. Based on requests for forces from the Marine Corps component commander, the Navy–Marine Corps team builds the required combat power by aggregating other forward-deployed forces and surging forces from the United States.

As demonstrated by Task Force 58 in Operation Enduring Freedom, two MEUs can be composited afloat to provide additional combat power. As required, they can be reinforced with alert contingency forces, other forces, or subject matter experts required by the commander. When aggregating forces, the Marine Corps component commander, in coordination with the Navy component commander, may employ a tailored combination of amphibious warfare ships, strategic

airlift, maritime prepositioning ships, or high-speed vessels to bring together the personnel, equipment, and munitions required. Amphibious warfare ships provide the most capable and flexible means of deploying and employing Marines across the ROMO. Key to deploying the correct force is operational planning, which assesses mission requirements and prioritizes deployment of units.

When required, a MEB can be aggregated without access to bases ashore, utilizing MPF capabilities. For example, a Marine Corps component commander could aggregate an RLT in support of a MEB by combining the BLTs from two afloat MEUs and flying in a regimental headquarters, an additional infantry battalion, and required combat support units from one of the alert contingency MAGTFs. The additional forces could be flown into an aerial port of debarkation in theater and transported to the sea base using high-speed vessels, tactical aircraft, commercial transportation, or some combination of these means. Based on operational requirements identified during planning, other reinforcements might include subject matter experts (linguists, for example), a Seabee air detachment, and staff augments (e.g., Marines to be assigned as LNOs or to liaison teams from SOF, the 82d Airborne Division, multinational forces the RLT may operate with).

Forward-deployed or crisis response forces enable access for the rest of the joint force. Operating under austere conditions ashore, Marines can sustain themselves from the sea base for long periods without the need for immediate reinforcement or resupply through ports or airfields. The integrated firepower of Marine Corps aviation, operating from amphibious ships or expeditionary basing ashore, allows Marine Corps operating forces ashore to operate with a light footprint. For more information on seabasing, see MCWP 13-10, *Seabasing*.

Ship-to-Objective Maneuver

As a tactical application of the concept of OMFTS, ship-to-objective maneuver (STOM) provides the amphibious force a methodology to project forces through entry points to maneuver toward or on the objective without the need to secure a beachhead in order to build combat power ashore. Figure D-1, on page D-4, illustrates how naval forces employ OMFTS and STOM. This option, which may be executed in a more distributed manner, may place a higher demand for landing beaches or sites and landing zones. Ship-to-objective maneuver may result in a need for additional forces (e.g., more mine warfare assets, surface warfare assets to counter small boats and other threats), time to set the conditions necessary to conduct the operation, or time to clear additional sea approaches. Seabasing more of the C2, logistic, sustainment, medical support, and other capabilities allows forces using STOM to maintain momentum with a smaller footprint ashore.

Historically, amphibious power projection included a deliberate buildup of combat power ashore. This buildup required the establishment of a force beachhead with relatively fixed fire support, logistic, and C2 nodes ashore. Only after establishing a secure beachhead would the force focus its combat power on the operational objectives. A combination of technologies and tactics enable modern Marine Corps forces to be employed in a dramatically different manner, striking directly from the sea base against operational objectives. Amphibious raids, for instance, typically use STOM, effectively removing a beachhead as a consideration.

In conducting STOM, the GCE employs combined arms operations, landed by both air and surface means, against operational objectives. This requires good intelligence, detailed planning,

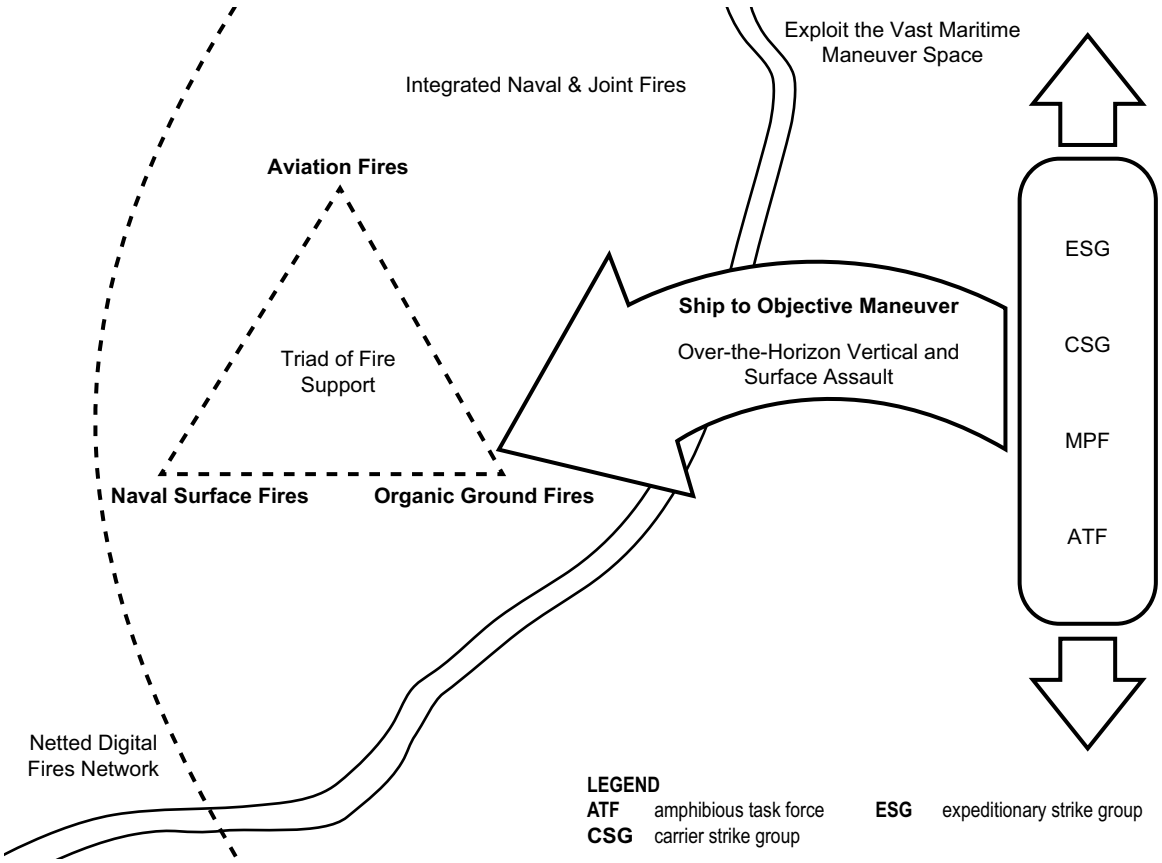

Figure D-1. Operational Maneuver From the Sea and Ship-to-Objective Maneuver.

deliberate task organization and embarkation of the force, and effective fire support to allow the GCE to maneuver to operational objectives without operational pauses.

Task organization involves deliberate consideration of the landing force operation center's C2 capabilities, organization of combat, combat support and combat support forces, distribution of surface connectors, and ability of amphibious ships to support aircraft operations and deck cycles. The following considerations guide GCE planning and preparation for STOM:

- Work with MAGTF commander to shape conditions and criteria for execution.
- Employ MAGTF, joint, and theater capabilities to locate or create exploitable gaps in enemy defenses.
- Exploit gaps to transition ashore without expending time and resources securing a beachhead.
- Maintain the tempo of operations ashore to prevent effective enemy response.
- Plan to provide concentration of combat power, enabled by MAGTF, naval, and joint fires, at critical times and locations.
- Conduct detailed planning to minimize the requirement for and ensure reliable delivery of supplies and evacuation of casualties.
- Coordinate closely with the LCE and the ACE.
- Integrate the ACE and joint assets to cover and support the maneuver of forces ashore.

- Provide sufficient flexibility to exploit opportunities discovered during execution of the operation.
- Maintain a reserve to exploit success.

Planning for sustainment of the force executing STOM is key to maintaining the momentum of the attack. Rather than relying on the systematic buildup of sustainment ashore, tailored logistic packages are sent to the maneuver units as the situation dictates. This requires anticipatory planning to ensure continuous support as forces maneuver and may result in changes to task organization, requiring LCE units to be cross-attached to the GCE, for example, as helicopter support teams or explosive ordnance disposal teams.

There are times when the joint force may require the establishment of a beachhead to either support or enable joint operations (e.g., securing airfields and port facilities). Ship-to-objective maneuver operations can be an enabler for this mission, serving as a turning movement to create a gap. Seizing operational objectives ashore directly forces the enemy to respond and can have decisive morale effects, making the enemy more vulnerable to subsequent operations.

Joint Forcible Entry Operations

Forcible entry is a Marine Corps core competency that may be executed by MEBs or a MEF. This competency fundamentally underwrites the deterrent value of the joint force and provides to decision makers options that complement other capabilities.

The US joint forcible entry capabilities include amphibious assault, amphibious raid, airborne assault, air assault, and any combination thereof. Based upon mission analysis, joint intelligence preparation of the environment, and the joint operation planning process, these operations may be used singularly or in combination, employing single or multiple entry points.

Joint forcible entry operations may be conducted to seize and hold lodgments against armed opposition. A lodgment is 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. (*DOD Dictionary*) A lodgment may be an airhead, a beachhead, or a combination thereof. The lodgment and the means of seizing depend upon the objectives of the operation or campaign. In most operations, forcible entry secures the lodgment as a base for subsequent operations.

Operational maneuver from the sea, STOM, and the establishment of a beachhead or lodgment are not mutually exclusive. Rather, they are nested concepts that enable a responsive, scalable, pre-emptive JFEO capability tailored to the threat and mission. The JFC applies capabilities and techniques as required by METT-T and presents a multidimensional threat to the enemy.

The GCE may conduct STOM to seize operational objectives designed to secure beachheads and/or a lodgment in support of a campaign. The assault echelons of the amphibious force may proceed directly to the objective, deploying by assault support aircraft or amphibious assault vehicles, for example. As the situation develops, the GCE may secure a conventional beachhead allowing for deliberate off-loading from landing craft and lighterage of vehicles, cargo, and

additional forces. Although not required to initiate an amphibious operation, a lodgment may be needed for sustainment or for enabling the deployment and RSOI of follow-on forces.

Unites States Army airborne and air assault forces, as well as SOF, have maneuver capabilities that may be integrated into JFEO. Beyond the amphibious warfare ships, Navy and Air Force components are integral to JFEO through their provision of intelligence, fires, logistic, and C2 capabilities.

Types of Amphibious Operations

Amphibious forces conduct five types of amphibious operations listed below in order of expected likelihood, as discussed in MCDP 1-0. For more information on amphibious operations, see JP 3-02, *Amphibious Operations*.

Amphibious Forces Support to Crisis Response and Other Operations. The GCE routinely supports security cooperation, FHA, NEOs, and peace operations from the sea base. The GCE often establishes and maintains, at a high degree of readiness, a platoon-sized TRAP force and/or a company (reinforced)-sized QRF for amphibious operations that contribute to conflict prevention and crisis mitigation.

Amphibious Raids. An amphibious raid is a type of amphibious operation involving swift incursion into or temporary occupation of an objective followed by a planned withdrawal. (*DOD Dictionary*) Raids are usually small, involving battalion-sized or smaller forces for psychological action, destruction, harassment, information collection, evacuation and recovery, or diversion and deception. Amphibious raids may be conducted using air or surface means. Depending on METT-T, the GCE may provide the raid force or provide supporting capabilities (e.g., QRF) in support of amphibious raids executed by force reconnaissance assets assigned to the MEU or naval special warfare units operating from the amphibious task force.

Amphibious Assault. An amphibious assault involves the establishment of a landing force on a hostile or potentially hostile shore. An amphibious assault may comprise the initial phase of a campaign or major operation, or it may accomplish operational objectives directly. The operation may be coordinated with other operations (e.g., Army airborne operations, SOF direct action, support to an insurgency). The salient requirement of an amphibious assault is the swift introduction of sufficient combat power ashore to accomplish operational objectives. The GCE provides the decisive combat power ashore, maneuvering as required to achieve operational objectives assigned by the MAGTF. The GCE relies on the MAGTF, the amphibious task force, and the joint force for intelligence, fire support, logistics, and mobility during forcible entry.

Amphibious Withdrawals. An amphibious withdrawal is a type of amphibious operation involving the extraction of forces by sea in ships or craft from a hostile or potentially hostile shore. (*DOD Dictionary*) Amphibious withdrawals may extract a force under pressure, assist in the repositioning of forces elsewhere in theater, reconstitute forces afloat, or establish an operational reserve after introduction of heavy follow-on forces. Amphibious withdrawals may be conducted under pressure from threat forces and are not an administrative backloading of amphibious ships. In an amphibious withdrawal, the GCE would likely cover the withdrawal of other forces and elements of the MAGTF before withdrawing itself.

Amphibious Demonstrations. An amphibious demonstration is a type of amphibious operation conducted for the purpose of deceiving the enemy by a show of force with the expectation of deluding the enemy into following an unfavorable course of action. (*DOD Dictionary*) In supporting an amphibious demonstration, the GCE does not intend to contact the enemy or seek a decision. The GCE provides forces to the demonstration and may use the opportunity as an amphibious rehearsal. Forces and assets providing an amphibious demonstration can be rapidly redirected to support operations elsewhere.

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GLOSSARY

Section I: Acronyms and Abbreviations

ACE ..... aviation combat element
AO ..... area of operations
AOI ..... area of interest
ARG ..... amphibious ready group

BLT ..... battalion landing team

C2 ..... command and control
CBRN ..... chemical, biological, radiological, and nuclear
CCIR ..... commander's critical information requirement
CE ..... command element
CEB ..... combat engineer battalion
CLT ..... company landing team
CMO ..... civil-military operations
COA ..... course of action
COP ..... common operational picture
CSS ..... combat service support

DOD ..... Department of Defense
DOS ..... Department of State

FHA ..... foreign humanitarian assistance
FID ..... foreign internal defense
FIE ..... fly-in echelon
FSCC ..... fire support coordination center

G-1 ..... assistant chief of staff, personnel
G-2 ..... assistant chief of staff, intelligence
G-3 ..... assistant chief of staff, operations
G-4 ..... assistant chief of staff, logistics
G-6 ..... assistant chief of staff, communications system
G-9 ..... assistant chief of staff, civil affairs
G-10 ..... assistant chief of staff, partnering
GCC ..... geographic combatant commander
GCE ..... ground combat element

HCA ..... humanitarian and civic assistance
HHQ ..... higher headquarters

IGO ..... intergovernmental organization
IPB ..... intelligence preparation of the battlespace
ISR ..... intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance

JFC ..... joint force commander
JFEO ..... joint forcible entry operations
JIIM ..... joint, interagency, intergovernmental, and multinational
JP ..... joint publication
JSOA ..... joint special operations area
JSOTF ..... joint special operations task force
JTF ..... joint task force

LAR ..... light armored reconnaissance
LCE ..... logistics combat element
LNO ..... liaison officer

MAGTF ..... Marine air-ground task force
MCDP ..... Marine Corps doctrinal publication
MCO ..... Marine Corps order
MCRP ..... Marine Corps reference publication
MCT ..... Marine Corps task
MCTP ..... Marine Corps tactical publication
MCWP ..... Marine Corps warfighting publication
MEB ..... Marine expeditionary brigade
MEF ..... Marine expeditionary force
MET ..... mission-essential task
METT-T ..... mission, enemy, terrain and weather, troops and support available—time available
MEU ..... Marine expeditionary unit
mm ..... millimeter
MPF ..... maritime prepositioning force
MSC ..... major subordinate command

NATO ..... North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NEO ..... noncombatant evacuation operation
NGO ..... nongovernmental organization

OMFTS ..... operational maneuver from the sea
OPCON ..... operational control

PMC ..... private military company

QRF ..... quick reaction force

RCT ..... regimental combat team
RLT ..... regimental landing team
ROE ..... rules of engagement
ROMO ..... range of military operations
RSO ..... regional security officer
RSOI ..... reception, staging, onward movement, and integration

S-1 ..... personnel officer
S-2 ..... intelligence officer
S-3 ..... operations officer
S-4 ..... logistic officer
S-6 ..... communications system officer
S-9 ..... civil affairs officer
SOF ..... special operations forces
SOFLE ..... special operations forces liaison element
SOP ..... standing operating procedure
SPMAGTF ..... special purpose Marine air-ground task force
STOM ..... ship-to-objective maneuver

TEEP ..... training, exercise, and evaluation plan
TRAP ..... tactical recovery of aircraft and personnel
TSC ..... theater security cooperation
TSOC ..... theater special operations command

UAS ..... unmanned aircraft system
UDP ..... unit deployment program
UK ..... United Kingdom
US ..... United States
USAID ..... United States Agency for International Development
USG ..... United States Government

Section II: Terms and Definitions

adversary—A party acknowledged as potentially hostile to a friendly party and against which the use of force may be envisaged. (DOD Dictionary)

air domain—The atmosphere, beginning at the Earth's surface, extending to the altitude where its effects upon operations become negligible. (DOD Dictionary)

area of influence—A geographical area wherein a commander is directly capable of influencing operations by maneuver or fire support systems normally under the commander's command or control. (DOD Dictionary)

area of interest—That area of concern to the commander, including the area of influence, areas adjacent thereto, and extending into enemy territory. This area also includes areas occupied by enemy forces who could jeopardize the accomplishment of the mission. Also called **AOI**. See **also area of influence**. (DOD Dictionary)

area of operations—An operational area defined by the joint force commander for land and maritime forces that should be large enough to accomplish their missions and protect their forces. Also called **AO**. See also **area of responsibility; joint special operations area**. (DOD Dictionary)

area of responsibility—The geographical area associated with a combatant command within which a geographic combatant commander has authority to plan and conduct operations. Also called **AOR**. (DOD Dictionary)

battalion landing team—In an amphibious operation, an infantry battalion normally reinforced by necessary combat and service elements; the basic unit for planning an assault landing. Also called **BLT**. (DOD Dictionary)

campaign—A series of related major operations aimed at achieving strategic and operational objectives within a given time and space. (DOD Dictionary)

civil-military operations—Activities of a commander performed by designated civil affairs or other military forces that establish, maintain, influence, or exploit relations between military forces, indigenous populations, and institutions, by directly supporting the attainment of objectives relating to the reestablishment or maintenance of stability within a region or host nation. Also called **CMO**. See also **operation**. (DOD Dictionary)

close operations—Military actions conducted to project power decisively against enemy forces that pose an immediate or near term threat to the success of current battles or engagements. These military actions are conducted by committed forces and their readily available tactical reserves, using maneuver and combined arms. See also **deep operations; rear operations**. (MCRP 1-10.2)

combined arms—1. The full integration of combat arms in such a way that to counteract one, the enemy must become more vulnerable to another. 2. The tactics, techniques, and procedures

employed by a force to integrate firepower and mobility to produce a desired effect upon the enemy. (MCRP 1-10.2)

command and control—(See DOD Dictionary for core definition. Marine Corps amplification follows.) The means by which a commander recognizes what needs to be done and sees to it that appropriate actions are taken. Command and control is one of the six warfighting functions. Also called **C2**. (MCRP 1-10.2)

command post—A unit's or subunit's headquarters where the commander or designated representative and the staff perform their activities. Also called **CP**. See also **forward command post**. (Upon promulgation of this publication, this term and definition are approved for use and will be included in the next edition of MCRP 1-10.2)

contiguous area of operations—An area of operations in which all of a commander's subordinate forces' areas of operations share one or more common boundary. (MCRP 1-10.2)

decisive action—Any action the commander deems fundamental to achieving mission success. See also **shaping action; sustaining action**. *(Note: Decisive actions are part of a purpose-based battlespace framewor*k.) (Upon promulgation of this publication, this modified definition is approved for use and will be included in the next edition of MCRP 1-10.2)

deep operations—Military actions conducted against enemy capabilities that pose a potential threat to friendly forces. These military actions are designed to isolate, shape, and dominate the battlespace and influence future operations. See also **close operations; rear operations**. (MCRP 1-10.2)

distributed operations—In ground operations, subordinate units are separated by distance and/or time, usually beyond mutually supporting range, to better support the achievement of an objective and mission accomplishment. These operations require coherent planning and decentralized execution due to the separation of the units. (Upon promulgation of this publication, this term and definition are approved for use and will be included in the next edition of MCRP 1-10.2)

fires—(See DOD Dictionary for core definition. Marine Corps amplification follows.) Those means used to delay, disrupt, degrade, or destroy enemy capabilities, forces, or facilities as well as affect the enemy's will to fight. Fires is one of the six warfighting functions. (MCRP 1-10.2)

force protection—(See DOD Dictionary for core definition. Marine Corps amplification follows.) Actions or efforts used to safeguard own centers of gravity while protecting, concealing, reducing, or eliminating friendly critical vulnerabilities. Force protection is one of the six warfighting functions. (MCRP 1-10.2)

foreign humanitarian assistance—Department of Defense activities conducted outside the United States and its territories to directly relieve or reduce human suffering, disease, hunger, or privation. Also called **FHA**. (DOD Dictionary)

foreign internal defense—(See DOD Dictionary for core definition. Marine Corps amplification follows.) Participation by civilian, military, and law enforcement agencies of a government in

any of the action programs taken by another government or other designated organization to free and protect its society from subversion, lawlessness, insurgency, terrorism, and other threats to its security. Also called **FID**. (MCRP 1-10.2)

forward command post—An installation from which close supervision and command is exercised during combat. It contains the facilities required to control the operations of widely separated or rapidly moving units. See also **command post**. (MCRP 1-10.2)

gap—1. Any break or breach in the continuity of tactical dispositions or formations beyond effective small arms coverage. Gaps (soft spots, weaknesses) may in fact be physical gaps in the enemy's disposition, but they also may be any weakness in time, space, or capability; a moment in time when the enemy is overexposed and vulnerable, a seam in an air defense umbrella, an infantry unit caught unprepared in open terrain, or a boundary between two units. This is part one of a three-part definition. (MCRP 1-10.2)

ground combat element—The core element of a Marine air-ground task force (MAGTF) that is task-organized to conduct ground operations. It is usually constructed around an infantry organization but can vary in size from a small ground unit of any type to one or more Marine divisions that can be independently maneuvered under the direction of the MAGTF commander. It includes appropriate ground combat and combat support forces, and in a joint or multinational environment, it may also contain other Service or multinational forces assigned or attached to the MAGTF. The ground combat element itself is not a formal command. Also called **GCE**. See also **Marine air-ground task force; Marine expeditionary brigade; Marine expeditionary force; Marine expeditionary force (Forward); Marine expeditionary unit; special purpose Marine air-ground task force**. (MCRP 1-10.2)

humanitarian and civic assistance—Assistance to the local populace, specifically authorized by Title 10, United States Code, Section 401, and funded under separate authorities, provided by predominantly United States forces in conjunction with military operations. Also called **HCA**. See also **foreign humanitarian assistance**. (DOD Dictionary)

joint special operations area—An area of land, sea, and airspace assigned by a joint force commander to the commander of a joint special operations force to conduct special operations activities. Also called **JSOA**. (DOD Dictionary)

information environment—The aggregate of individuals, organizations, and systems that collect, process, disseminate, or act on information. (DOD Dictionary)

information operations—(See DOD Dictionary for core definition. Marine Corps amplification follows.) The integration, coordination, and synchronization of actions taken to affect a relevant decision maker in order to create an operational advantage for the commander. (MCRP 1-10.2)

interagency—Of or pertaining to United States Government agencies and departments, including the Department of Defense. See also **interagency coordination**. (DOD Dictionary)

interagency coordination—Within the context of Department of Defense involvement, the coordination that occurs between elements of Department of Defense, and engaged US Government agencies and departments for the purpose of achieving an objective. (DOD Dictionary)

intergovernmental organizations—An organization created by a formal agreement between two or more governments on a global, regional, or functional basis to protect and promote national interests shared by member states. Also called **IGO**. (DOD Dictionary)

interorganizational coordination—The interaction that occurs among elements of the Department of Defense; engaged United States Government agencies; state, territorial, local, and tribal agencies; foreign military forces and government agencies; intergovernmental organizations; nongovernmental organizations; and the private sector. (DOD Dictionary)

land control operations—The employment of land forces, supported by maritime and air forces (as appropriate) to control vital land areas. (DOD Dictionary)

littoral—(See DOD Dictionary for core definition. Marine Corps amplification follows.) A zone of military operations along a coastline, consisting of the seaward approaches from the open ocean to the shore, which must be controlled to support operations ashore, as well as the landward approaches to the shore that can be supported and defended directly from the sea. (MCRP 1-10.2)

main effort—The designated subordinate unit whose mission at a given point in time is most critical to overall mission success. It is usually weighted with the preponderance of combat power and is directed against a center of gravity through a critical vulnerability. (MCRP 1-10.2)

maneuver—(See DOD Dictionary for core definition. Marine Corps amplification follows.) The movement of forces for the purpose of gaining an advantage over the enemy. Maneuver is one of the six warfighting functions. (MCRP 1-10.2)

maneuver warfare—A warfighting philosophy that seeks to shatter 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. (MCRP 1-10.2)

Marine air-ground task force—The Marine Corps' principal organization for all missions across a range of military operations, composed of forces task-organized under a single commander capable of responding rapidly to a contingency anywhere in the world. The types of forces in the Marine air-ground task force (MAGTF) are functionally grouped into four core elements: a command element, an aviation combat element, a ground combat element, and a logistics combat element. The four core elements are categories of forces, not formal commands. The basic structure of the MAGTF never varies, though the number, size, and type of Marine Corps units comprising each of its four elements will always be mission dependent. The flexibility of the organizational structure allows for one or more subordinate MAGTFs to be assigned. In a joint or multinational environment, other Service or multinational forces may be assigned or attached. Also called **MAGTF**. See also **ground combat element; Marine expeditionary brigade; Marine expeditionary force; Marine expeditionary force (Forward); Marine expeditionary unit; special purpose Marine air-ground task force**. (MCRP 1-10.2)

Marine expeditionary brigade—A Marine air-ground task force (MAGTF) that is constructed around an infantry regiment reinforced, a composite Marine aircraft group, and a combat logistics regiment. The Marine expeditionary brigade (MEB), commanded by a general officer, is task-organized to meet the requirements of a specific situation. It can function as part of a joint task force, as the lead echelon of the Marine expeditionary force (MEF), or alone. It varies in size and composition and is larger than a Marine expeditionary unit but smaller than a MEF. The MEB is capable of conducting missions across a range of military operations. In a joint or multinational environment, it may also contain other Service or multinational forces assigned or attached to the MAGTF. Also called **MEB**. See also **ground combat element; Marine air-ground task force; Marine expeditionary force; Marine expeditionary force (Forward); Marine expeditionary unit; special purpose Marine air-ground task force**. (MCRP 1-10.2)

Marine expeditionary force—The largest Marine air-ground task force (MAGTF) and the Marine Corps' principal warfighting organization, particularly for larger crises or contingencies. It is task-organized around a permanent command element and normally contains one or more Marine divisions, Marine aircraft wings, and Marine logistics groups. The Marine expeditionary force is capable of missions across a range of military operations, including amphibious assault and sustained operations ashore in any environment. It can operate from a sea base, a land base, or both. In a joint or multinational environment, it may also contain other Service or multinational forces assigned or attached to the MAGTF. Also called **MEF**. See also **ground combat element; Marine air-ground task force; Marine expeditionary brigade; Marine expeditionary force (Forward); Marine expeditionary unit; special purpose Marine air-ground task force**. (MCRP 1-10.2)

Marine expeditionary force (Forward)—A designated lead echelon of a Marine expeditionary force (MEF), task-organized to meet the requirements of a specific situation. A Marine expeditionary force (Forward) varies in size and composition, and it may be commanded by the MEF commander personally or by another designed commander. It may prepare for the subsequent arrival of the rest of the MEF/joint/multinational forces, and/or conduct other specified tasks, at the discretion of the MEF commander. A Marine expeditionary force (Forward) may also be a stand-alone Marine air-ground task force (MAGTF), task-organized for a mission in which a MEF is not required. In a joint or multinational environment, it may also contain other Service or multinational forces assigned or attached to the MAGTF. Also called **MEF (Fwd)**. See also **ground combat element; Marine air-ground task force; Marine expeditionary brigade; Marine expeditionary force; Marine expeditionary unit; and special purpose Marine air-ground task force**. (MCRP 1-10.2)

Marine expeditionary unit—A Marine air-ground task force (MAGTF) that is constructed around an infantry battalion reinforced, a composite squadron reinforced, and a task-organized logistics combat element. It normally fulfills Marine Corps' forward sea-based deployment requirements. The Marine expeditionary unit provides an immediate reaction capability for crisis response and is capable of limited combat operations. In a joint or multinational environment, it may contain other Service or multinational forces assigned or attached to the MAGTF. Also called **MEU**. See also **ground combat element; Marine air-ground task force; Marine expeditionary brigade; Marine expeditionary force; Marine expeditionary force (Forward); special purpose Marine air-ground task force**. (MCRP 1-10.2)

maritime domain—The oceans, seas, bays, estuaries, islands, coastal areas, and the airspace above these, including the littorals. (DOD Dictionary)

noncontiguous area of operations—An area of operations in which one or more of the commander's subordinate forces' areas of operations do not share a common boundary. (MCRP 1-10.2)

nongovernmental organization—A private, self-governing, not-for-profit organization dedicated to alleviating human suffering; and/or promoting education, health care, economic development, environmental protection, human rights, and conflict resolution; and/or encouraging the establishment of democratic institutions and civil society. Also called **NGO**. (DOD Dictionary)

operation—1. A sequence of tactical actions with a common purpose or unifying theme. 2. A military action or the carrying out of a strategic, operational, tactical, service, training, or administrative military mission. (DOD Dictionary)

operational control—The authority to perform those functions of command over subordinate forces involving organizing and employing commands and forces, assigning tasks, designating objectives, and giving authoritative direction necessary to accomplish the mission. Also called **OPCON**. (DOD Dictionary)

rear operations—Military actions conducted to support and permit force sustainment and to provide security for such actions. See also **close operations; deep operations**. (MCRP 1-10.2)

reconnaissance in force—A deliberate attack made to obtain information and to locate and test enemy dispositions, strengths, and reactions. It is used when knowledge of the enemy is vague and there is insufficient time or resources to develop the situation. (MCRP 1-10.2)

regimental landing team—A task organization for landing composed of an infantry regiment reinforced by those elements that are required for initiation of its combat function ashore. (DOD Dictionary)

reserve—1. Portion of a body of troops that is kept to the rear, or withheld from action at the beginning of an engagement, in order to be available for a decisive movement. 2. Members of the uniformed Services who are not in active service but who are subject to call to active duty. (Parts 1 and 2 of a 3-part definition.) (DOD Dictionary)

rules of engagement—Directives issued by competent military authority that delineate the circumstances and limitations under which United States forces will initiate and/or continue combat engagement with other forces encountered. Also called **ROE**. (DOD Dictionary)

shaping actions—Lethal and nonlethal activities conducted throughout the battlespace to attack an enemy capability or force or to influence the enemy commander's decision making. See also **decisive action; sustaining actions**. (*Note: Shaping actions are part of a purpose-based battlespace framework*.) (Upon promulgation of this publication, this modified definition is approved for use and will be included in the next edition of MCRP 1-10.2)

special purpose Marine air-ground task force—A Marine air-ground task force (MAGTF) organized, trained, and equipped with narrowly focused capabilities. It is designed to accomplish a specific mission, often of limited scope and duration. It may be any size, but normally it is a relatively small force—the size of a Marine expeditionary unit or smaller. In a joint or multinational environment, it may contain other Service or multinational forces assigned or attached to the MAGTF. Also called **special purpose MAGTF; SPMAGTF**. See also **Marine air-ground task force; Marine expeditionary brigade; Marine expeditionary force; Marine expeditionary force (Forward); Marine expeditionary unit**. (MCRP 1-10.2)

supporting effort—Designated subordinate unit(s) whose mission is designed to directly contribute to the success of the main effort. (MCRP 1-10.2)

sustaining actions—Activities conducted to prepare and support friendly forces (e.g., planning, logistics, force protection) that promote unity of effort and extend operational reach. See also **decisive action; shaping actions**. (*Note: Sustaining actions are part of a purpose-based battlespace framework*.) (Upon promulgation of this publication, this term and definition are approved for use and will be included in the next edition of MCRP 1-10.2)

target area of interest—The geographical area where high-value targets can be acquired and engaged by friendly forces. Also called **TAI**. See also **area of interest**. (DOD Dictionary)

task force—(See DOD Dictionary for core definition. Marine Corps amplification follows.) A temporary grouping of units, under one commander, formed for the purpose of carrying out a specific operation or mission. (Upon promulgation of this publication, this term and definition are approved for use and will be included in the next edition of MCRP 1-10.2.)

Section III: Nomenclature

MRAP ..... mine-resistant, ambush protected vehicle
TOW .....tube-launched, optically tracked, wire-command link guided missile

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REFERENCES AND RELATED PUBLICATIONS

United Nations

General Assembly Resolution 44/34, *International Convention against the Recruitment, Use, Financing and Training of Mercenaries*, A/RES/44/34 (4 December 1989)

Joint Issuances

Joint Publication (JPs)

3-0	Joint Operations
3-02	Amphibious Operations
3-05	Special Operations
3-06	Joint Urban Operations
3-07.2	Antiterrorism
3-07.3	Peace Operations
3-08	Interorganizational Cooperation
3-09	Joint Fire Support
3-13	Information Operations
3-16	Multinational Operations
3-18	Joint Forcible Entry Operations
3-22	Foreign Internal Defense
3-26	Counterterrorism
3-28	Defense Support of Civil Authorities
3-31	Command and Control for Joint Land Operations
3-41	Chemical, Biological, Radiological, and Nuclear Response
3-68	Noncombatant Evacuation Operations
5-0	Joint Operational Planning

Miscellaneous

DOD Dictionary of Military and Associated Terms

Marine Corps Publications

Marine Corps Doctrinal Publications (MCDPs)

1	Warfighting
1-0	Marine Corps Operations
6	Command and Control

Marine Corps Warfighting Publications (MCWPs)

3-02	Insurgencies and Countering Insurgencies
3-30	MAGTF Command and Staff Action
3-32	Marine Air-Ground Task Force Information Operations
3-34	Engineering Operations
3-40	Logistic Operations
5-10	Marine Corps Planning Process
13-10	Seabasing

Marine Corps Tactical Publications (MCTPs)

2-10A	MAGTF Intelligence Collection
3-10A	Marine Infantry Battalion
3-10B	Marine Corps Tank Employment
3-10C	Employment of Amphibious Assault Vehicles
3-10D	Employment of the Light Armored Reconnaissance Battalion
3-10F	Fire Support Coordination in the Ground Combat Element
3-40B	Tactical-Level Logistics

Marine Corps Reference Publications (MCRPs)

1-10.1	Organization of the United States Marine Corps
1-10.2	Marine Corps Supplement to the Department of Defense Dictionary of Military and Associated Terms
2-10A.6	Ground Reconnaissance Operations
2-10B.1	Intelligence Preparation of the Battlefield/Battlespace
3-30.1	Raid Operations
3-30.4	Multi-Service Tactics, Techniques, and Procedures for Conventional Forces and Special Operations Forces Integration, Interoperability and Interdependence
3-30.6	Multi-Service Tactics, Techniques, and Procedures for Defense Support of Civil Authorities
10-10E.6	Multiservice, Tactics, Techniques, and Procedures for Chemical, Biological, Radiological, and Nuclear Consequence Management Operations
12-10B.1	Military Operations on Urbanized Terrain (MOUT)

Marine Corps Orders (MCOs)

3000.13	Marine Corps Readiness Reporting Standard Operating Procedures (SOP)
3500.110	Policy and Guidance for Mission Essential Task List (METL) Development, Review, Approval, Publication and Maintenance
3500.26A	Universal Naval Task List

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