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ARG/MEU Combat Packages...Efficiently Executing Global Mission Requirements

"This new approach will change the way amphibious forces are requested and packaged within the joint Global Force Management process. The change will ensure the most efficient and effective employment of amphibious combat assets while supporting geographic combatant commanders."

– Vice Adm. Pete Daly, Deputy Commander, U.S. Fleet Forces Command

In January 2009, the Navy began a review of amphibious deployment plans to ensure U.S. naval forces were efficiently supporting geographic combatant commander requirements. In coordination with the Marine Corps, Navy leaders announced the return to Amphibious Ready Group (ARG)/Marine Expeditionary Unit (MEU) deployment construct as the routine, rotational amphibious force deployment package.

Maximizing Amphibious Flexibility

- Deploying under the ARG/MEU construct will ensure the most efficient employment of U.S. naval combat assets while supporting geographic combatant commanders.
- Expeditionary Strike Group (ESG) assets effectively supported combatant commander requirements, but rarely as a single ESG unit.
- Employing the ARG/MEU as the routine amphibious naval capability will enable commanders to train their Sailors and Marines for likely combatant commander missions more efficiently.

Capturing Efficiencies and Maintaining Interoperability

- Amphibious forces are now designated and deploying as ARG/MEU combat-ready teams.
- Amphibious Squadron (PHIBRON) and MEU Commanders will lead USS Bataan (LHD 5) ARG/MEU team on deployment this week. The force package will be referred to as an Expeditionary Strike Group (i.e. Bataan ESG) only when the mission requires a Flag or General Officer to lead an ARG/MEU.
- Existing ESG staffs will retain a combination of Amphibious Warfare and Navy Composite Warfare expertise while serving as the Navy's amphibious operational experts.
- A key mission for ESG staffs is ensuring Navy/Marine Corps amphibious warfare equities through direct coordination with the Marine Expeditionary Brigades.

Ensuring Future Mission Accomplishment

- ARG/MEUs and surface combatants will continue certifying to conduct integrated operations through their Fleet Response Training Plans, and ARG/MEUs will be prepared to plan and coordinate a variety of missions such as Naval Surface Fire Support and Visit Board Search and Seizures.
- The Navy and Marine Corps ESG working group will continue to define the roles, missions, capabilities and training applicable to this force structure. The Chief of Naval Operations and Commandant of the Marine Corps retain final approval of all recommendations.

Key Messages

- ARG/MEU deployments more efficiently support geographic combatant commander requirements.
- ARG/MEUs will maintain the ability to conduct integrated operations for combatant commanders.
- ESG staffs remain responsible for Navy amphibious planning functions and alignment with the Marines.

Facts & Figures

- Standard ARG/MEU is composed of: PHIBRON, LHA/D, LPD, LSD, embarked naval support elements and MEU (approx. 5,000 Sailors & Marines).
- ESG 2, 3 and 7 will continue as standing ESG staffs.
- USS Boxer (LHD 4) ARG/MEU is deployed to the 5th Fleet Area of Responsibility supporting counter-piracy operations.