



# RHUMB LINES

*Straight Lines to Navigate By*



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## Building Partnerships: Fuerzas Aliadas (FA) PANAMAX

*"FA Panamax is designed to exercise — alongside our regional partners — operations to collectively protect the Panama Canal, enable safe passage for transiting vessels, and refine procedures that promote regional maritime security."*

— Rear Adm. Joseph D. Kernan, Commander U.S. Fourth Fleet

Multinational exercise Fuerzas Aliadas (FA) PANAMAX is tailored to the defense of the Panama Canal, and involves civil and military forces from the U.S. Southern Command area of focus including the government of Panama.

### Significant Multinational Cooperation

- FA PANAMAX fosters cooperation and interoperability, builds trust among participating nations, and contributes to regional, hemispheric and global stability. The exercise ensures that civil and military forces can operate as an effective team to coordinate assets and share information when needed. This teamwork serves to protect the security of the region while respecting national sovereignty.
- FA PANAMAX has 16 participating nations: Argentina, Brazil, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, Panama, Peru, Uruguay and the United States. France, Mexico, Paraguay and Spain will participate as observers. Three participating organizations are the [Conference of Central American Armies](#), the [Organization of American States](#) and the [United Nations](#). This is a significant increase from three participating nations in 2003.

### Enhances Regional Security

- FA PANAMAX is being conducted August 11-22, and trains a multinational force of civil and military forces for interoperability in support of the Panamanian government to protect the Panama Canal and ensure its neutrality.
- Increasing participation in FA PANAMAX underscores the importance the international community places on cooperative efforts and strong partnerships, as pillars of worldwide security and stability.
- Global threats that have emerged in the 21<sup>st</sup> century affect all free nations and have transnational impact. A multinational approach is required to neutralize these threats effectively.

### Realistic Training Opportunity

- FA PANAMAX provides realistic training opportunities for civil and military forces operating in multinational environments. Participating nations train in a variety of operational environments including: the 32-ship multinational maritime task force led by USS Tarawa (LHA 1), mine countermeasure activities, and the detection, monitoring and boarding of target vessels by 31 Visit, Board, Search and Seizure Teams.
- FA PANAMAX will also feature a HA/DR event in Honduras, a [Global Peace Operations Initiative](#) (GPOI) event in Guatemala, and a command and control event with the Joint Operating Center in the Dominican Republic.
- The Panamanian National Maritime Service will respond to simulated threats located within its territorial waters, and the Panama Canal Authority retains ultimate responsibility for the security of the Panama Canal waterway.

### Key Messages

- FA PANAMAX promotes interoperability and ensures freedom of navigation and sea lanes of communication are unrestricted.
- In support of the government of Panama, FA PANAMAX trains a multinational force to protect the Panama Canal and ensure its neutrality.
- FA PANAMAX executes the Maritime Strategy by building partnerships and ensuring maritime security.

### Facts & Figures

FA PANAMAX 2008:

- Includes civil, naval, air and ground forces from more than 20 countries.
- Provides multinational training for the defense of the Panama Canal along its Caribbean and Pacific approaches.
- Includes more than 7,000 participants, with the largest number of contributing and observing nations ever.