

# Operationalizing Naval Integration



***At Sea***



***From the Sea***



***Ashore***



## NAVAL AMPHIBIOUS FORCES, TASK FORCE 51 5TH MARINE EXPEDITIONARY BRIGADE

In June 2016, the process of full naval integration within Naval Amphibious Forces, Task Force 51/5th Marine Expeditionary Brigade had just begun. As one of our earliest initiatives, TF 51/5 determined the unit required a crest that highlighted its unique integrated nature. Upon conducting research to find an appropriate example, it became readily apparent that naval integration is not merely the direction that the Navy and Marine Corps team is currently moving, but is instead the way the Navy and Marine Corps have operated for much of their long and intertwined history.

Our unit crest is not a new design, but rather has a distinguished history – the V Amphibious Corps “Gator Head” of World War II fame. V Amphibious Corps provides a clear example of what is achievable when the Navy-Marine Corps team is fully integrated and works in a cohesive manner – at sea, from the sea, and ashore. Under the command of Lieutenant General H.M. Smith, V Amphibious Corps captured the Marianas Islands from the Japanese Empire in 1943. Spread across three islands and widely separated in time and space, this operation showed the power of unity of effort between the Navy and Marine Corps, as V Amphibious Corps served as the joint Marine Corps-Army portion of Vice Admiral Kelly Turner’s Task Force 51. Task Force 51, in turn, leveraged the power of the U.S. Navy and Air Force, supporting V Amphibious Corps with the air power of Mitscher’s fast carriers and Hale’s Seventh Air Force, as well as its own fire support capabilities.

Although this document describes integration within Task Force 51/5, our ability to bring to bear the supporting power of the Joint Force in just the way described above is perhaps the most important part of naval integration.

As in World War II, our success will stem from our ability to integrate, create unity of effort, and synchronize the many dispersed and unique units under our charge and the supporting units that will make it possible. The Gator Head of the V Amphibious Corps serves as a constant reminder of our history of integration; we will continually strive to add to the distinguished accomplishments that this storied unit indelibly etched into the history of the Gator Head crest.

F. L. DONOVAN  
BRIGADIER GENERAL  
UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS  
COMMANDING GENERAL, TASK FORCE 51/5



## NAVAL AMPHIBIOUS FORCES, TASK FORCE 51 5TH MARINE EXPEDITIONARY BRIGADE

### Table Of Contents

<i>Page 1</i>	Purpose and Context
<i>Page 2</i>	History and Environment
<i>Page 3</i>	Mission
<i>Page 4</i>	Our Capabilities
<i>Page 5</i>	Operationalizing naval integration
<i>Page 6</i>	Ready the Force
<i>Pages 7-8</i>	Our Organization
<i>Page 9</i>	Scalable Capability
<i>Page 10</i>	Small Scale Naval Contingency
<i>Page 11</i>	Executing the Concept-Vignette
<i>Pages 12-14</i>	Executing The Concept
<i>Page 15</i>	Conclusion



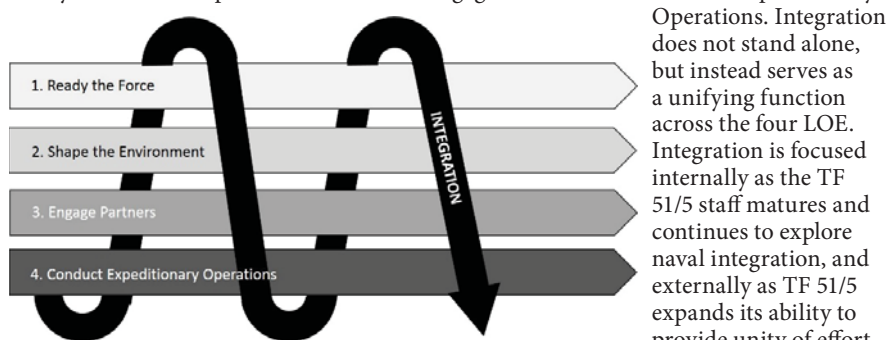


## NAVAL AMPHIBIOUS FORCES, TASK FORCE 51 5TH MARINE EXPEDITIONARY BRIGADE

### 1. PURPOSE AND CONTEXT

The purpose of Naval Amphibious Forces, Task Force 51/5th Marine Expeditionary Brigade (TF 51/5) Operating Concept: Operationalizing naval integration is to describe TF 51/5's broad array of capabilities, and demonstrate how an integrated naval expeditionary command employs its unique capabilities in support of U.S. Fifth Fleet (C5F) and Marine Forces, Central Command (MARCENT) requirements.

In May 2016, Commander, USMARCENT and Commander, US Naval Forces, Central Command (NAVCENT) signed a two-year memorandum of understanding (MOU) that agreed to integrate the staffs of CTF-51 Naval Amphibious Force and 5th Marine Expeditionary Brigade (MEB). The result of this MOU was TF 51/5 – an integrated naval headquarters. This document describes how TF 51/5 operates at sea, from the sea, and ashore in support of both NAVCENT and MARCENT along four lines of effort (LOE): Ready the Force, Shape the Environment, Engage Partners, and Conduct Expeditionary



synchronization, and coordination between elements of the Joint Force, Interagency, and our multinational partners.

The TF 51/5 Operating Concept nests with proven service concepts such as the Marine Corps Operating Concept, “A Cooperative Strategy for 21st Century Seapower,” and A Design for Maintaining Maritime Superiority, amongst many others. TF 51/5 operationalizes these concepts on a daily basis as it supports Phase 0 operations throughout the Area of Responsibility (AOR), responds to crises and contingencies, and provides forces and support to Operation INHERENT RESOLVE.

This operating concept:

- Describes TF 51/5's history, mission, roles and responsibilities
- Explains TF 51/5's current efforts regarding naval integration
- Highlights how TF 51/5 has executed and will continue to execute expeditionary operations in support of C5F and MARCENT at sea, from the sea, and ashore
- Examines possibilities for future operations in accordance with recommendations in the *Marine Operating Concept* and other emerging concepts



## NAVAL AMPHIBIOUS FORCES, TASK FORCE 51 5TH MARINE EXPEDITIONARY BRIGADE

### 2. HISTORY AND ENVIRONMENT

The lineage of TF 51/5 begins well before the 2016 MOU integrating CTF-51 and 5th MEB. The true genesis of TF 51/5 lies in the Expeditionary Strike Group concept. In 2006, USNAVCENT established ESG 5 to serve as the Fifth Fleet Amphibious Force Commander. ESG 5 remained in existence until 2012, when it was redesignated CTF 51, and the Navy determined it would no longer resource a one-star commander for this organization.

In 2010, the Secretary of Defense authorized the establishment of a MEB headquarters to provide command and control of crisis response (CR) forces within the USCENTCOM AOR. Shortly after this, MARCENT established a one-star headquarters in Bahrain, serving as both the MARCENT forward headquarters as well as fulfilling the aforementioned MEB headquarters requirement. This unit was designated as MARCENT (FWD), and in 2013 MARCENT and NAVCENT agreed to “dual-hat” the commanding general of MARCENT (FWD) as the commander of CTF-51. Dual hatting the commander served to provide unity of effort, although the two staffs and functional focuses of the different commands remained separate.

In May 2016, NAVCENT and MARCENT signed an MOU to integrate the staffs of CTF-51 and 5th MEB with the objectives of creating an integrated structure that can:

- Prosecute a single battle concept
- Strengthen partnerships with both naval and special operation forces
- Enhance interoperability with joint and regional coalition partners
- Enhance crisis response options for Commander, USCENTCOM

This MOU and process of naval integration continued to evolve throughout 2016 as CTF-51 and 5th MEB became increasingly more integrated as the TF 51/5 combined team. The MOU specifically tasked only the integration of the operations and intelligence staff functions; however, by the end of 2016 TF 51/5 had integrated the remaining staff functions, thus creating unity of effort and command across all functional areas.

**Operating Environment.** The current operating environment within CENTCOM and adjoining AORs is dynamic and complex. Violent extremist organizations (VEOs) actively work to counter U.S. interests throughout the region. The ongoing conflicts in Syria, Iraq, Afghanistan, Yemen, Somalia, and Libya, combined with unrest in many of the other nations in and around the AOR, create an environment that requires security cooperation, deterrence, and other partnered activities to counter malign forces. Additionally, this conflict and unrest creates a fertile environment for crisis and contingency response operations that require TF 51/5 – CENTCOM's expeditionary response force – to be constantly ready to conduct expeditionary operations at sea, from the sea, and ashore.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Marine Corps Doctrinal Publication 3, *Expeditionary Operations* states “the defining characteristic of expeditionary operations is the projection of force into a foreign setting,” and that expeditionary operations can vary broadly – from noncombat crisis response to full-scale combat.



## NAVAL AMPHIBIOUS FORCES, TASK FORCE 51 5TH MARINE EXPEDITIONARY BRIGADE

### 3. MISSION

Naval Amphibious Forces, Task Force 51/5th Marine Expeditionary Brigade executes operations, responds to contingencies and crises, and conducts theater security cooperation at sea, from the sea, and ashore in support of U.S. Central Command, Fifth Fleet, and MARCENT theater objectives.

TF 51/5 has responsibilities in three main areas:

- TF 51/5 serves as MARCENT and 5th Fleet's primary crisis response (CR) capability, proving the viability of the Expeditionary Force 21 Marine Expeditionary Brigade Concept of Operations compositing concepts<sup>2</sup> while simultaneously highlighting the complementary nature of TF 51/5 subordinate units. The integrated TF 51/5 staff helps to provide synchronization and coordination between many different CR units – serving as a sort of “CR task clearinghouse” sorting tasks and assigning units appropriately – while providing a capable nucleus for a Task Force-Crisis Response or Joint Task Force-Crisis Response headquarters as required.
- TF 51/5 has the ability to synchronize the efforts of the composited force to provide the Joint Force Commander with the most effective option for amphibious operations. Specifically, as an integrated command, TF 51/5 can most effectively operationalize the sort of Navy/Marine Corps unity of effort described in “A Cooperative Strategy for 21st Century Seapower.”<sup>3</sup> Because it controls both the naval and land elements of the amphibious force centralized under a single commander, TF 51/5 can deconflict and provide mutual support to amphibious operations more flexibly than the doctrinal Navy – Marine relationship has historically allowed.
- In steady state operations, TF 51/5 serves as a synchronizing headquarters for theater security cooperation (TSC) and exercises by coordinating and prioritizing the efforts of its subordinate headquarters throughout the AOR. TF 51/5 receives requirements from both Fifth Fleet and MARCENT, and has the ability to assess these requirements and ensure that the most effective unit – whether Navy or Marine – supports them to achieve the desired security cooperation objectives.

<sup>2</sup>Expeditionary Force 21: MEB CONOPS

<sup>3</sup>A Cooperative Strategy for 21st Century Seapower



## NAVAL AMPHIBIOUS FORCES, TASK FORCE 51 5TH MARINE EXPEDITIONARY BRIGADE

### 4. OUR CAPABILITIES

TF 51/5 provides a breadth of capability that is unique within the naval service. Our forces operate at sea, from the sea, and ashore on a daily basis, and provide a response capability unmatched across the CENTCOM AOR.



- **SPMAGTF CR-CC.** The Special Purpose Marine Air-Ground Task Force - Crisis Response - Central Command provides a shore based CR and steady state capability to the CENTCOM and MARCENT commanders. Dispersed throughout the CENTCOM AOR and designed to conduct operations primarily at the low end of the range of military operations, this organization provides partnering and shaping capability during steady state operations, has an immediate CR capability, and can combine with additional force packages (“compositing”) for larger scale combat operations if necessary. The SPMAGTF is comprised of a USMC infantry battalion, a USMC fighter/attack squadron, a mixed transport aviation squadron, and aviation and ground logistics support elements.
- **FASTCENT.** Fleet Anti-Terrorism Security Team Central Command is the force of choice for high threat security operations. FAST provides expeditionary antiterrorism and security forces throughout the AOR to embassies, consulates, and other vital national assets.
- **ESB.** The Expeditionary Sea Base ships provide a unique capability to TF 51/5 and the other forces they support throughout the AOR. These ships provide a broad array of capabilities, to include intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance support, support to special operations forces, and support to embarked MEU, SPMAGTF or FASTCENT forces.



- [illegible]

Critical Task 6.1 of the Marine Operating Concept is to “Integrate the naval force to fight at and from the sea.”<sup>75</sup> As an integrated command, TF 51/5 is unique within the naval service as it provides command and control of naval expeditionary forces at sea, from the sea, and ashore. TF 51/5’s unique structure allows it to operationalize the concept of naval integration via four lines of effort: Ready the Force, Shape the Environment, Engage Partners, and Conduct Expeditionary Operations.

<sup>5</sup>Marine Corps Operating Concept

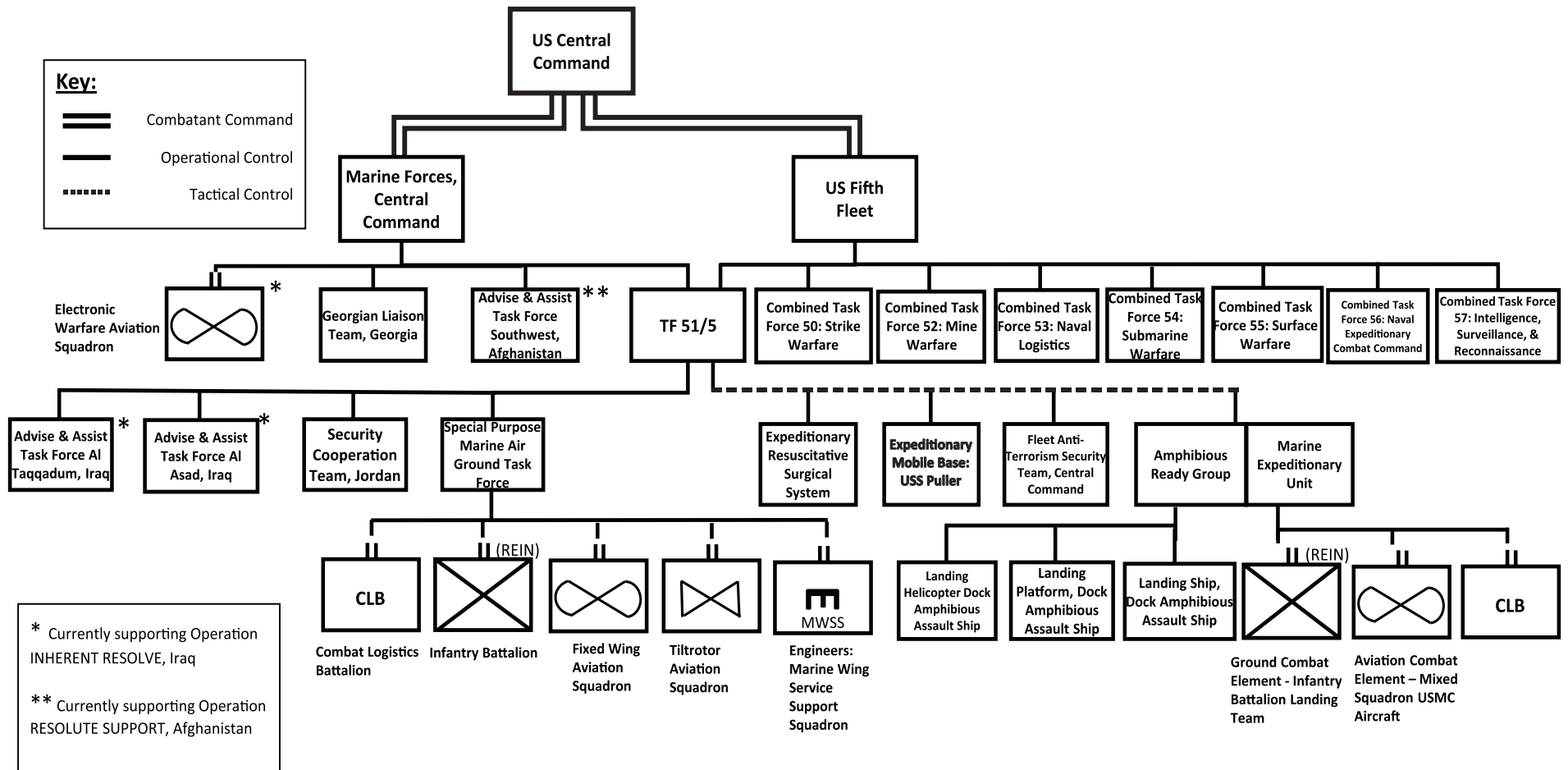


- Force positioning at sea, from the sea, and ashore in order to prepare for immediate response to crisis and contingency requirements. TF 51/5 positions forces throughout the AOR to ensure they are “where it matters, when it matters.”<sup>9</sup> We will continue to focus on malign actors throughout the AOR and transregionally posturing our forces to be prepared to meet mission requirements regardless of size, scope, or location.
- Deliberate planning and execution of exercises and other events to deter malign actors in the AOR. Every security cooperation event – subject matter expert engagement, theater security cooperation, or large scale exercise is supported by clear, unambiguous messaging and objectives regarding malign and unaligned actors.

<sup>9</sup>*A Cooperative Strategy for 21st Century Seapower*



# NAVAL AMPHIBIOUS FORCES, TASK FORCE 51 5TH MARINE EXPEDITIONARY BRIGADE



\* Currently supporting Operation INHERENT RESOLVE, Iraq

\*\* Currently supporting Operation RESOLUTE SUPPORT, Afghanistan





## NAVAL AMPHIBIOUS FORCES, TASK FORCE 51 5TH MARINE EXPEDITIONARY BRIGADE

### *Engage Partners*

TF 51/5 recognizes that the United States' partnerships within the CENTCOM AOR represent a crucial element of all that we do. Our forward posture, ongoing operations, and continued positive impact in this region all depend heavily on relationships built with nations within the AOR and other partners around the globe. TF 51/5 has a unique ability to reinforce existing relationships while simultaneously expanding and building relationships with key partners. Our operational flexibility provides a unique option for the component commanders to support continued engagement with our partners in the AOR.

### *Conduct Expeditionary Operations*

TF 51/5 has a recurring task to "establish sea control" in numerous existing plans along with Phase 0, steady state operations that focus on varied portions of the AOR. There are a number of elements to sea control that TF 51/5 applies in every day operations.

- TF 51/5 provides a rapidly deployable, scalable capability that can provide unity of effort for the many unique capabilities that are required to achieve sea control. Whether creating the conditions for sea control at sea, from the sea, or ashore, TF 51/5 is the headquarters of choice to command and control the breadth of tasks required to achieve command of the sea.
- TF 51/5 integrates land and sea based MAGTFs with amphibious shipping and non-standard shipping in order to conduct amphibious operations as required. TF 51/5's ability to integrate the activities of nonstandard and amphibious shipping provides the ability for rapid operational movement of Marine forces to achieve localized sea control at sea, from the sea, and ashore.

Additionally, TF 51/5 will continue to be the "go-to" headquarters for crisis response operations within the CENTCOM AOR. No matter the crisis or contingency, TF 51/5 will be prepared to provide a scalable force to achieve the Commander's objectives.

## **6. SCALABLE CAPABILITY**

TF 51/5 provides a scalable command and control capability for a broad array of operations ranging from Phase 0, steady state operations to large-scale contingencies that require the compositing of multiple subordinate and adjacent units.

The TF 51/5 headquarters consists of a trained battle staff who can task organize to provide command and control, unity of command, and unity of effort to a broad array of potential situations and subordinate structures – integrating the CWC, Marine Single Battle Concept, and Joint Communications System. Phase 0: during Phase 0, steady state operations, TF 51/5 maintains an integrated operations center from its command post at NSA, Bahrain. This operations center provides full scale command and control capability for the wide array of ongoing operations throughout the AOR.



## NAVAL AMPHIBIOUS FORCES, TASK FORCE 51 5TH MARINE EXPEDITIONARY BRIGADE

### *Small Scale Naval Contingency – Command at Sea*

TF 51/5 maintains the capability to provide command and limited control from aboard multiple, varied, at sea platforms. If required, TF 51/5 is able to embark aboard a broad range of naval assets, to include LHA/LHD, LPD, AFSB, EPF, DDG, or CGs, amongst others. The capability to provide command at sea enhances the TF 51/5 ability to conduct sea control operations as well as scale to larger amphibious and expeditionary requirements from the sea.

### *Moderate Contingency – Command from the Sea*

In moderate, "mid-range" contingency operations, TF 51/5 maintains the capability to employ a land or sea-based forward command element, paired with a forward command post synchronized with the NSA Bahrain-based integrated operations center. This organization supports the requirement to composite multiple elements of subordinate MAGTFs and other naval assets into a task organized response capability.

### *Full Scale Contingency - Command Ashore*

Finally, TF 51/5 maintains the capability to command ashore in the event of full spectrum combat operations. Although the command requires augmentation and external support in the event of establishing a full joint task force (JTF) headquarters, it maintains a rapidly deployable core staff. This core staff pairs with a Deployable Joint Command and Control (DJC2) suite that can phase forward and provide the capability to supervise the compositing of multiple elements of the joint force required to support a full spectrum contingency response.





## NAVAAL AMPHIBIOUS FORCES, TASK FORCE 51 5TH MARINE EXPEDITIONARY BRIGADE

A single commander supervising an integrated staff is what sets TF 51/5 apart from previous experiments and attempts to create naval integration. The ability of TF 51/5 to create unity amongst different capabilities while maintaining the ability to weight efforts with Navy or Marine personnel depending on context is unique and provides the commander with a “go-to” command – no matter the size, scope, or location – at sea, from the sea, or ashore.

### *Aggregation at Sea, from the Sea, and Ashore*

A core capability of TF 51/5 is its ability to aggregate unlike forces under nonstandard command relationships to achieve decisive tasks in all three operational mediums – at sea, from the sea, and ashore. This aggregation of amphibious, naval, and expeditionary forces at a decisive point is what sets us apart.

Rapid operational maneuver of forces – Marine, Navy, and Special Operations – from across the AOR to composite into a cohesive, effective force is the essence of naval integration. TF 51/5 enables unity of effort by integrating these widely varying forces, thus providing “immediate response options while buying time for distant elements of the Joint force to mobilize and deploy.”<sup>10</sup>

This immediate response capability provides the Joint Force Commander a flexible enabling force – a trained, fully capable headquarters to provide command and control, synchronization, and unity of effort at the Full Scale.

## **7. EXECUTING THE CONCEPT- VIGNETTE**

### **Blueland – March 2018**

After three years of a multi-party civil war between the government of Redland, numerous opposition forces, and IS-Redland (IS-R), the situation in Northern Redland has largely stabilized. After significant combat in much of the northern portion of the nation, government forces have reasserted control of the majority of the country. By January 2018, the Redland regime and the international community reached a limited agreement to stabilize the war torn nation. In late February 2018, IS-R released a statement that they intended to ally with all remaining rebel groups within Redland. Their primary aim was no longer to be the establishment of a caliphate, but was to make western interests in the region so costly that these nations would withdraw their forces. Their first target, however, was not to be a western nation – it was to be Blueland, who the group declared an apostate nation and thus far worse than any westerners.

Intelligence analysts did not immediately give credence to this announcement. However, by the beginning of March, it became apparent that there was a major shift underway.

Unconventional attacks on Bluelandian security forces tripled, there appeared to be major enemy formations massing in the Southern Redland Desert, and reporting suggested that there was a significant maritime threat in the Gulf of Blueland.

<sup>10</sup>Marine Corps Operating Concept



## NAVAAL AMPHIBIOUS FORCES, TASK FORCE 51 5TH MARINE EXPEDITIONARY BRIGADE

Blueland requested assistance from the U.S. military on 14 March and by 16 March, the President determined that it would be necessary to provide forces for the immediate defense of Blueland – Operation ALLIGATOR ARMOR.

The force laydown in theater did not support this operation in March 2018. There was no aircraft carrier available, and the LHD was conducting disaggregated operations in an adjacent GCC while the remainder of the ARG/MEU conducted operations in the southern portion of the AOR.

The majority of Joint Forces in theater remained dedicated to their primary operations, and were unable to refocus on the defense of Blueland. Nonetheless, CENTCOM designated MARCENT as supported commander for the operation, who subsequently tasked TF 51/5 to deploy to Blueland and form the nucleus of JTF-515, buying time for the larger elements of the Joint force to deploy.



On 17 March, TF 51/5 began deploying forces to Blueland. The TF 51/5 FCE, elements of FASTCENT, and a Special Operations Command Crisis Response Element (CRE) flew directly to the U.S. Embassy. Simultaneously, the LHD began steaming for the coast of Redland. The LSD and LPD made best speed for a major port on the Gulf of Blueland, while the SPMAGTF command element, the infantry battalion command element, their quick reaction infantry company, and aviation squadrons deployed to the Bluelandian border. Upon arrival, the infantry battalion command element immediately integrated SPMAGTF elements already present in Blueland and elements of a Blue battalion, thus becoming a multinational task force.

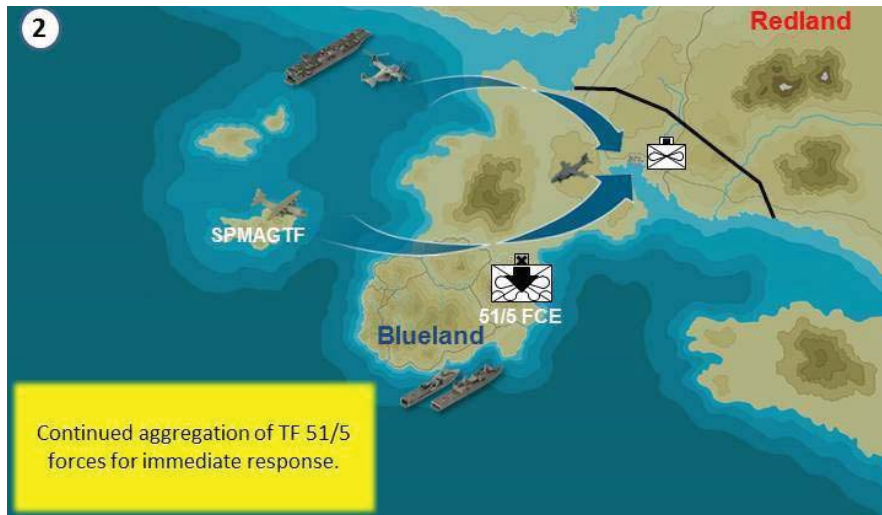




## NAVAL AMPHIBIOUS FORCES, TASK FORCE 51 5TH MARINE EXPEDITIONARY BRIGADE

On 18 March, the LHD was in range to fly a company of the ARG/MEU infantry battalion to reinforce. This company arrived on deck by the end of the 18th, and cross-attached to the SPMAGTF. By 19 March, the LSD and LPD began amphibious offload at the port of Blue land, while elements of NAVCENT's Task Force 56 and the Blue land Marine Battalion attached to TF 51/5 to conduct seaward security operations in the port.

On 20 March, the MEU infantry companies, combat logistics battalion detachments, and "B" command element from the LSD and LPD began to transit north in order to reinforce the border region as the MEU "A" command element arrived in vicinity of the border region and established its command post.

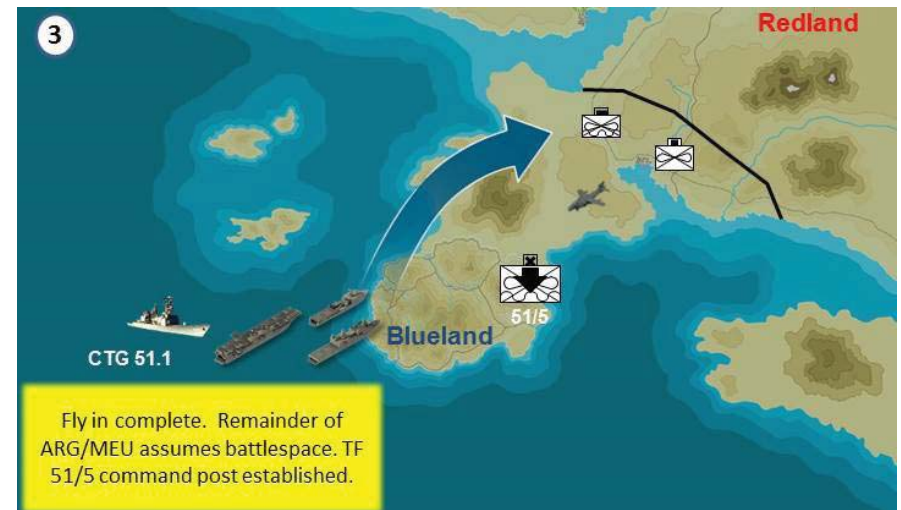


On 21 March, the TF 51/5 DJC2 arrived in vicinity of central Blue land, thus allowing TF 51/5 to establish full spectrum command and control of the operation. The LHD completed her transit and arrived at the port of Blue land. She immediately offloaded and sent the remainder of the MEU north to the border. TF 51/5 established a command node afloat and received Tactical Control of two U.S. destroyers and a British destroyer. This force (the aggregated ARG and three destroyers) was then designated CTG 51.1, tasked to establish sea control in the greater Gulf of Blue land.



## NAVAL AMPHIBIOUS FORCES, TASK FORCE 51 5TH MARINE EXPEDITIONARY BRIGADE

The EF-21 MEB CONOPs calls for precisely this sort of compositing of SPMAGTF and MEU forces. However, there is only one command in the Navy and Marine Corps that can execute this sort of mission without requiring additional authorities – TF 51/5. This is due to the unique "dual hatted" commander and integrated staff structure reporting to both the Marine and Naval component within CENTCOM.



Finally, by 22 March, joint force and MARCENT augmentation arrived and TF 51/5's main command post assumed control of the coming battle. MEU and SPMAGTF forces aggregated in the vicinity of the Blue landian border under their respective command elements and executed the task to defend the border in zone, CTG 51.1 established sea control in the Gulf of Blue land, CTF 56 conducted seaward security operations in the Port of Blue land, and TF 51/5 continued to coordinate with adjacent, supporting, and coalition elements as required.



## NAVAL AMPHIBIOUS FORCES, TASK FORCE 51 5TH MARINE EXPEDITIONARY BRIGADE

### 8. CONCLUSION

Because of its unique, integrated nature, TF 51/5 can provide an extraordinary breadth of capability to the Joint Force commander. The unification of Navy and Marine assets within a single command allows TF 51/5 to form the core headquarters of a crisis response JTF, employ its subordinates in Phase 0, steady state, shaping and security cooperation activities, or aggregate its units at the decisive point to provide maximum combat power – all within existing authorities. Its forward deployed nature ensures that when the call comes – TF 51/5 will be postured and prepared to provide unity of effort and synchronization to Joint Force efforts, whether at sea, from the sea, or ashore.



"The supreme test of the naval strategist is the depth of his comprehension of the intimate relationship between sea power and land power, and of the truth that basically all effort afloat should be directed at an effect ashore."

Captain Dudley Knox, USN