

# Pacific Marines Strategy 2025



U.S. Marine Corps Forces, Pacific



# Purpose



The U.S. Marine Corps Forces, Pacific (MARFORPAC) Strategy is the Commander of MARFORPAC's (COMMARFORPAC) strategic guidance that provides the specific vision, approach, and characteristics required of Pacific Marines to contribute to the National Defense Strategy (NDS) and National Military Strategy (NMS) priorities, and the Commander, U.S. Indo-Pacific Command's (USINDOPACOM) "Prevail Strategic Assessment and Operational Design." This Strategy offers the underlying intent and guidance that informs the MARFORPAC Campaign Order Fiscal Year 26-30 and is accessible to Pacific Marine leaders of every level. It informs the "why" behind the operations and activities, all of which contribute directly to extending deterrence of adversaries, assuring allies and partners, and recommendation, responding to regional crisis. Should deterrence fail, Pacific Marines are set for transition to combat in support of a free and open Indo-Pacific.



# The Problem

Pacific Marines simultaneously face both the most challenging terrain and the most dangerous adversaries across the geographic combatant commands. The Indo-Pacific is a vast and diverse region that includes the majority of the world's population spread across 38 countries and thousands of islands. It includes both the world's largest military and economic powers as well as some of the smallest. Pacific Marines may operate from the Arctic Circle to the Southern Ocean and from India to Arizona in a region known for its natural hazards like monsoons, earthquakes, tsunamis, typhoons, and volcanic eruptions.

Within the Indo-Pacific lies the most significant challenge to U.S. national security, the People's Republic of China (PRC). The PRC aims to reshape both the Indo-Pacific and global order, based on a different set of values and international norms. For Pacific Marines, this translates to the PRC aggressively leveraging its military and economic power, with ambitions of unifying with Taiwan through non-peaceful means, seeking control over the East China and South China Seas, using coercion against countries of all sizes throughout the Pacific, and extending its influence beyond the Indo-Pacific region.

However, the PRC is not the only adversary in the region. The Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) continues to expand its nuclear and missile capability to disrupt U.S. alliances with the Republic of Korea and Japan. Russia continues to grow its relationship with both the PRC and DPRK as a means to resupply its war effort in Ukraine and distract the West. Violent Extremist Organizations and Transnational Criminal Organizations continue to exploit the region's archipelagos and sea lanes to find safe havens allowing the trafficking of drugs, weapons, and humans.





# Vision

The strategic approach of the NDS, known as Integrated Deterrence, aims to create warfighting advantages by coordinating the diverse capabilities of the U.S. military, interagency, private sector, and allies and partners. This unified effort is designed to show adversaries that the costs of armed conflict are too high, and the benefits of restraint are significant. In simpler terms, by leveraging the combined and mutually supportive resources of the United States and its allies and partners, adversaries will recognize that they are likely to lose in any armed conflict, thereby deterring them from escalating to such armed conflict.

MARFORPAC contributes to Integrated Deterrence as USINDOPACOM's maritime maneuver and fires and crisis response force of choice. MARFORPAC's approach of "Two MEFs Abreast," forward deployed across key terrain in the region, uniquely positions Pacific Marines to provide responsive maritime domain awareness, command and control, fires and effects, and rapid crisis response against any adversary. Such unique positioning requires developing a forward logistics network that enables quick transitions from competition to conflict, through access to pre-positioned equipment and sustainment on shore and sea-based logistics nodes.

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# Mission

MARFORPAC commands assigned and allocated forces in the Indo-Pacific through shaping the information environment, generating credible combat forces, assuring allies and partners, and setting the theater, in order to contribute to integrated deterrence, respond to crises, and provide Commander, U.S. Indo-Pacific Command combat-ready Marine Corps forces capable of defeating any adversary should deterrence fail.





# Approach

The strategic priorities of Pacific Marines serve a single purpose: to ensure all actions by MARFORPAC contribute to extending a free and open Indo-Pacific. The NMS introduces a concept called “strategic discipline,” which emphasizes the ruthless prioritization of operations, activities, and investments. This approach enables the U.S. military to deter adversaries now, while building warfighting advantage for the future.

## MARFORPAC Operational Approach

The MARFORPAC operational approach identifies four lines of effort (LOEs). Pacific Marine leaders at every level should consistently use these LOEs to critically look at the impact of their operations, no matter how small, to ensure they maximize contribution to integrated deterrence in the Indo-Pacific.

### Informational Advantage

In every operation and activity seek the opportunity to accelerate and instill informational advantages over adversaries. Examples include deliberate demonstrations of the strength of Pacific Marines and partnered services and nations, as well as exposing to the world the negative actions of adversaries.



### Dynamic Combat Power

MARFORPAC will develop and employ advanced all domain combat power through joint task forces, ready naval task forces, and Marine Air-Ground Task Forces.



### Allies and Partners

Pacific Marines strengthen Indo-Pacific alliances and partnerships through security cooperation, by focusing on enhancing interoperability with allied and partnered nations. Every operation and action seeks to expand partnerships and increase opportunities for expanded access and persistent presence.



### Sustainment

Rapid transition from competition to crisis necessitates that Pacific Marines project sustainment requirements and enhance logistics networks. This requires an integrated, distributed, and effective multi-domain logistical network that leverages the capabilities and resources of service branches, joint forces, and host nations, both at sea and on shore.





# PACIFIC

## WHAT WE NEED TO WIN

1. Improved response time
2. Forward positioned capabilities, supplies and equipment
3. Ability to operate effectively from remote and austere locations
4. Integration of modernized capabilities while maintaining readiness
5. Strengthened relationships and efforts to develop allies and partners
6. Persistent presence of and realistic rehearsals for Stand-in Forces in support of sustained air, naval and space campaigns during contingency
7. Ability to monitor, understand and operate effectively in the information domain

## III MARINE EXPEDITIONARY FORCE



## US Code, Title 10, Subtitle C, Pt. 1, Chapter 507, § 5063

“The Marine Corps shall be organized, trained, and equipped to provide fleet marine forces of combined arms, together with the supporting air components, for service with the fleet in the seizure or defense of advanced naval bases and for the conduct of such land operations as may be essential to the prosecution of a naval campaign.”



# MARINES

**REGIONAL COMMAND HEADQUARTERS**  
Marine Corps Base Hawaii

Camp H.M. Smith

1st Marine Division

11th Marine Expeditionary Unit

13th Marine Expeditionary Unit

15th Marine Expeditionary Unit

1st Marine Logistics Group

**I MARINE EXPEDITIONARY FORCE**

Mountain Warfare Training Center

MCAGCC 29 Palms

Camp Pendleton

MCAS Miramar

MCAS Yuma

1st Marine Division

3rd Marine Aircraft Wing

11th Marine Expeditionary Unit

13th Marine Expeditionary Unit

15th Marine Expeditionary Unit

1st Marine Logistics Group



## U.S. MARINE CORPS FORCES, PACIFIC

- ~75,000 Marines, representing 2/3 of the Marine Corps' combat power
- ~23,000 Marines west of the International Date Line
- 100+ training activities per year to maintain readiness
- Frequent engagements with majority of Indo-Pacific Nations
- Transformation Triad: In-stride Modernization + Force Design
- Naval Integration / Joint Force Enabler

## LEGEND

★ Actively supporting Marine Corps/Naval Infantry development in Australia, India, Indonesia, Japan, Malaysia, the Maldives, Mexico, New Zealand, the Philippines, Singapore, South Korea, Sri Lanka, Thailand, and Tonga.

✦ Additional countries with amphibious capabilities



# Approach

## Lines of Operations



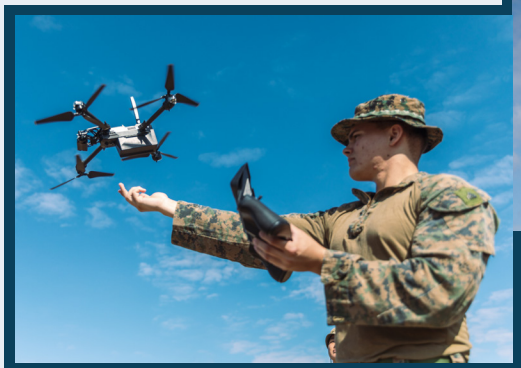
MARFORPAC's operational approach identifies three lines of operation (LOOs) branded singularly as "Two MEFs Abreast". The three LOOs focus on achieving effects in seven geographic areas. Previous strategies may have identified I Marine Expeditionary Force (I MEF) as an "outside" force for USINDOPACOM deploying from the continental United States, and III Marine Expeditionary Force (III MEF) as an "inside" force operating within range of potential adversaries' weapons systems. All Pacific Marines must now be prepared to operate in the First Island

Chain, from positions as far forward as practicable for both deterrence and crisis response. Were deterrence to fail, the "Two MEFs Abreast" present adversaries with the dilemma of confronting two Marine Air-Ground Task Forces fighting side-by-side, integrated with ally and partner militaries. As the service component headquarters, MARFORPAC HQ represents the third LOO to shape and influence beyond the decisive competitive terrain and enable the continued sustainment and resourcing of I and III MEF decisive actions.



## Unifying Action Concepts

Lastly, MARFORPAC's operational approach includes three unifying action concepts – Posture, Modernization, and Protection. Each unifying action is a whole-of-MARFORPAC endeavor executed through the four LOEs and three LOOs. Through the three unifying actions, MARFORPAC improves forward positioning, expands operations, and prepositions equipment and materiel required to effectively respond to crises and to defeat enemies. Through these unifying action concepts, MARFORPAC protects its forces against all hazards to ensure mission accomplishment and enables integration of the latest capabilities emerging from Marine Corps force modernization.





# Approach

## Two MEFs Abreast

Pacific Marines maintain a forward presence to deter aggression and uphold regional stability. We operate as two MEFs abreast, with III MEF forward-stationed in Japan, focused on the northern Indo-Pacific, and I MEF persistently deployed across the region, concentrating in areas near the Philippines and Australia. Both MEFs stand shoulder-to-shoulder alongside our allies and partners to reinforce strength, readiness, and unity in the region. This integrated approach allows I MEF and III MEF to mutually support one another, strengthening interoperability and increasing our ability to rapidly respond together in crisis and conflict.



# III MEF



# I MEF



# Characteristics

Pacific Marines share a common set of characteristics that guide leaders at all levels during the stress and confusion of crisis and conflict. These characteristics are crucial in their ongoing efforts to enhance the lethality of the force.

## Integrated

Integrated Joint Force lethality will not improve if we stay focused solely on our own formations or turn our sister services or allies and partners into adversaries. The nature of distributed operations in the Indo-Pacific requires reliance on the support of adjacent units, services, allies, and partners to maximize strength against real adversaries who will exploit any gap they can find. Pacific Marines are most lethal when integrating warfighting capabilities with U.S. Pacific Fleet, U.S. Pacific Air Forces, U.S. Army Pacific, U.S. Special Operations Command Pacific, and U.S. Space Forces Indo-Pacific. We are strongest when shoulder-to-shoulder with allies and partners, presenting a seamless surface to adversaries.



## Adaptive



The NMS warns the U.S. military to “Adapt Now or Lose.” Adapting and modernizing the force is the responsibility of every Pacific Marine leader and has both a technical and intellectual aspect. MARFORPAC will adapt operations and activities to improve effects on our adversaries, deepen integration with adjacent units, and enhance lethality. This requires changing or abandoning old patterns and ideas that are no longer effective.

## Responsive

Pacific Marines must be ready for crisis and conflict when the Nation is least ready. The nature of the Indo-Pacific requires combat-credible forces ready for crisis now. This demands leaders on all levels to prepare their units for transition at any time.



## Resilient



Crisis and conflict in the Indo-Pacific require lightweight, unpredictable, resourceful, and low signature maritime formations. These maritime forces require smart Pacific Marines who are tough to locate and are continually coordinating and executing lethal maneuver and fires in multiple domains through jungles, mountains, and deserts.



## Way Ahead

Pacific Marines plan and execute with a unified vision, approach, and a shared set of characteristics at every level. All are challenged to maintain the highest standards, establish and sustain resilient teams, build trust with allies and partners, innovate, and set the conditions for enduring success. Successful execution ensures that Marine Corps forces in the Indo-Pacific can effectively defend, deter, and modernize to maintain U.S. advantages, and to prevail in conflict when deterrence fails. MARFORPAC is one of several key contributors to extending integrated deterrence in the Indo-Pacific. Potential adversaries should view MARFORPAC as the most capable and formidable force, fearing the cost of conflict with a Marine unit. Peace through strength preserves a free and open Indo-Pacific and positions highly trained, equipped, and resourced Pacific Marines to respond swiftly and decisively to any conflict or crises in the region.





