LITTORAL MANEUVER AND INTEGRATED MARITIME OPERATIONS

B4V1000

STUDENT HANDOUT

Littoral Maneuver and Integrated Maritime Operations

Introduction and Importance

As officers in the Nation's expeditionary force in readiness, it is essential to posses an understanding of the Marine Corps' core competencies and prepare ourselves to embrace them in our future endeavors in the operating forces. Quite often, when individuals hear words such as "amphibious operations," they immediately imagine ship-to-shore movement conducted in an amphibious assault to project power ashore on a beach in hostile environment as was seen in the Pacific in the World War II or in the landing at Inchon in the Korean War. And while this type of operation is still within the realm of possible, as the lethality and effectiveness of anti-access and area denial capabilities possessed by our enemy's continue to improve, it becomes even more important for us to understand the importance of maneuver in the littorals and the Marine Corps' integrated role in the conduct of maritime operations. Through the progression of the program of instruction, you have been exposed to a large number of concepts and historical examples of amphibious operations. The goal of this lesson is to expose students to the nature of littoral maneuver and what role the Marine Corps plays in Maritime Operations which are critical in the projection of power around the globe, but also in maintaining our way of life as a maritime nation.

In This Lesson

This lesson provides a background in littoral maneuver, integrated maritime operations, and the most significant doctrinal concepts that provide the Marine Corps with conceptual and doctrinal requirements.

Learning Objectives   <u>Terminal Learning Objective</u>

TBS-OFF-2104. Given Marines, an amphibious ship, landing craft, and landing plans, leading a platoon during amphibious operations to accomplish the mission.

<u>Enabling Learning Objective</u>

TBS-OFF-2104o. Without the aid of references, identify the concept of littoral maneuver, without omission.

Chaos in the littorals

The first chapter of MCDP 3 is entitled "Chaos in the Littorals." Although the forward for MCDP 3 was drafted in 1998, recent history, stemming from instability in the middle east, to natural disasters in southeast Asia, to climatic and man-made chaos in Africa, have proven it's accuracy and the Marine Corps' foresight in terms of the importance of returning to our amphibious roots. Of course, amphibious operations, defined by JP 3-02 as military operations launched from the sea by an amphibious force (AF), are relatively ineffective without the ability to project force ashore. A key aspect of that power projection of course is the ability to operate and win in seam that joins the sea to land—the littorals.

The end of the Cold War ushered in a global climate characterized by widespread disorder and potential crises, particularly in urban littorals. These crises can be categorized in the following way: disaster, disruption and dispute.

Disaster   Accidents or calamities—complex human emergencies—the cause suffering on a massive scale. Disasters create societal and political instability as well as physical devastation. They may be natural, such as earthquakes, floods and droughts. They may also be manmade such as nuclear/industrial accidents, economic failures, or catastrophic governmental collapse. Regardless of type may lead to significant turmoil, violence and rebellion without sufficient infrastructure, effective governmental responses or rule of law. The urban littorals are even more susceptible to disaster given the prevalence of such crises, lack of strong governance and level of socioeconomic inequality.

Disruption	Intentionally disorderly activities that cause internal commotion on a scale sufficient to interfere with a government's ability to perform its functions. Unlike disasters, which are typically forces of nature or unintentional human actions, disruptions are the result of human intent. They may be the result of organized political groups with unified agendas such as insurgency movements, terrorist organizations, criminal organizations or groups individuals acting in their own self-interest. Disruptions may originate internal to a specific state or region, or could be the result of external players. Disruptions may include: genocide, terrorism, insurgency, and drug trafficking. Disruption may be caused by disasters. Non-state actors that cannot access traditional means of mass destruction may contemplate such equally destructive expedients as the blowing up of dams and the poisoning of water supplies.
Dispute	A clash between two political groups. A disruption may escalate to a dispute when the disruptive element becomes powerful enough to openly challenge the established government rather than to merely subvert its authority. Disputes may be internal, as in a rebellion or insurrection, or external between sovereign states or other independent political groups. Disputes can result from single incidents or long-lasting ethnic, ideological or other differences. It may take the form of political tension that doesn't result in armed conflict (such as the Cold War), or it could take the form of open warfare.

Forces Driving Changes in Global Politics

There are two primary forces or processes that are driving the changes, past and current, in the geopolitical landscape since the end of the Cold War. These processes contribute significantly to the complexity and unpredictability of current and future world events. These two concepts—fragmentation and integration—has resulted in a tightly-coupled, increasingly complex global social-political system that is potentially very sensitive to disruptions and in which seemingly local evens in one part of the world can have potentially significant third and forth order effects elsewhere.

Fragmentation	The break-up of multination states into smaller, more natural national groups with narrower communities of interest. Fragmentation usually results in a loss of authority and the ability to maintain stability in a region as parties vie for space and the pursuit of their individual values and interests. The simple increase in the number of active political groups as a result of fragmentation increases the complexity of global political relations because the interests of some different groups invariably overlap and conflict.
Integration	Despite becoming more politically fragmented, the global landscape is becoming increasingly connected from an economical standpoint through the rise of **global commons** which are defined as areas of air, sea, space, and cyberspace that belong to no one state. This global economic rise has been driven largely by advances in communications technologies that provide both near-instantaneous worldwide transfer of capital and worldwide access to goods and services. Our Nation has significant national interests around the globe which have become even more important and vital in sustaining our way of life,

The Developing World

The most volatile regions of the globe—the most likely scenes of crisis requiring U.S. involvement—are generally not in the industrialized world, but in the developing world. These are generally the regions undergoing the greatest change. As a result of rapid change and growth, the lack of established economies, infrastructures, and functional governments, we see competition for scarce resources, overpopulation, and socioeconomic disparities that further complicate our ability to operate and maintain stability in these regions. Many of these regions, specifically outlines in the arc of instability, are consequently located in the littorals. While representing a relatively small portion of the world's surface, littorals provide homes to over three-quarters of the world's population, locations for over 80 percent of the world's capital cities, and nearly all of the marketplaces for international trade. The world of 2025 will be more populated than today's by more than 30 percent and more heavily concentrated within the littorals.

Littorals defined

Defined in JP 2-01.3, The littoral comprises two segments of operational environment:

1. Seaward: the area from the open ocean to the shore, which must be controlled to support operations ashore.

2. Landward: the area inland from the shore that can be supported and defended directly from the sea.

As can be seen by the definition, there is no exact distance that can be placed upon the definition of the littorals. Instead, an easier way to envision and describe the littorals is in terms of the operational reach and influence of assets, personnel and policy. When considering the ability to influence the littorals, one must consider both friendly and enemy threat capabilities, as well as that of the populace across the domains of the littorals, which expands our understanding of the two segments of the operational environment. The idea of the littorals being defined and analyzed in terms of domains is the first step in understanding the importance and complexity of littoral maneuver.

Littorals Domains to be Considered in Littoral Maneuver

Air	The atmosphere, beginning at the Earth's surface, extending to the altitude where its effects upon operations become negligible.
Land	The area inland from the shore that can be supported and defended directly from the sea.
Maritime Domain	The world's oceans, seas, bays, estuaries, islands, coastal areas, littorals, and the airspace above them—supports 90% of the world's trade, it carries the lifeblood of a global system that links every country on earth.
Space	The environment corresponding to the space domain, where electromagnetic radiation, charged particles, and electric and magnetic fields are the dominant physical influences, and that encompasses the earth's ionosphere and magnetosphere, interplanetary space, and the solar atmosphere.
Cyberspace	A global domain within the information environment consisting of the interdependent networks of information technology infrastructures and resident data, including the Internet, telecommunications networks, computer systems, and embedded processors and controllers. Operating within the domain entails the use of electronics and the electromagnetic spectrum to create, store, modify, exchange and exploit information. DOD operates over 15,000 networks and 7 million computing devices across hundreds of installations in dozens of countries around the globe. The Nation relies on cyberspace for commerce, communication, transportation and energy. The military relies on it for its command, control, computers, communication and intelligence (C4I), logistics networks, and weapons systems control, among other capabilities.

Access and the global commons

Now that we have an understanding of what the littorals are, the current operating environment and the domains that need to be taken into consideration in the conduct of operations within the littorals, it is important to tie that knowledge to the concept of access. Access is what allows us to project power in the face of a hostile enemy, to respond to crises around the world, and to utilize the global commons in commerce and pursuit of our way of life. Without assured access, which is a large role of the Marine Corps in National Military Strategy, the Nation's ability to project power would be non-existent and it's economy would collapse.

Assured Access	The unhindered national use of the global commons and select sovereign territory, waters, airspace and cyberspace, achieved by projecting all the elements of national power.
Operational Access	The ability to project military force into an operational area with sufficient freedom of action to accomplish the mission. As war is the extension of politics by other means, operational access does not exist for its own sake, but rather serves our broader strategic goals, whether to ensure strategic access to commerce, demonstrate U.S. resolve by positioning forces overseas to manage crisis and prevent war, or defeat an enemy in war. Operational access is the joint force contribution to assured access, the unhindered national use of the global commons and select sovereign territory, waters, airspace and cyberspace.

As a global power with global interests, the United States must maintain the credible capability to project military force into any region of the world in support of those interests. This includes the ability to project force both into the global commons to ensure their use and into foreign territory as required. Moreover, the credible ability to do so can serve as a reassurance to U.S. partners and a powerful deterrent to those contemplating actions that threaten U.S. interests. Unfortunately, assured access is not guaranteed in today's global climate. Beyond the physical limitations to our ability to access the global commons or foreign states, such as geographic and hydrographic considerations, the are growing efforts around the world to disrupt, prevent or degrade our ability to access the global commons and thus project power around the world. Access is an enduring requirement, as is our ability to project power.

Opposition to access

It is well known that there are a lot of state and non-state actors around the world who do not want the U.S., or her allies to have access to their shores or to the global commons. After all, our Nation's status as a global power is premised on our ability to project power and influence where and when we want. Since the end of the Cold War, where developing regions of the world have the real ability to ally themselves with states beyond the U.S. and U.S.S.R. as was the case prior to and during the Cold War, these regions are becoming less likely to welcome American interests and much more likely in opposing them. Projecting U.S. military force invariably requires extensive use of international waters, international airspace, nonsovereign cyberspace, space, and the electromagnetic spectrum. U.S. access to and freedom of navigation within these global commons are vital to its national interests and as a means for projecting military force into hostile territory.

There are three current trends that are complicating and limiting our access throughout the globe. These include:

1. **The emergence of space and cyberspace as increasingly important and contested domains.**

2. **The changing U.S. overseas defense posture.**

3. **The dramatic improvement and proliferation of weapons and other technologies capable of denying access to or freedom of action within an operational area.**

Our enemies primarily aim to deny the U.S. access through the application of Antiaccess and Area Denial capabilities (A2AD), many of which have increased in effectiveness, lethality and range over the years through the proliferation of weapons, technology and anti-American sentiments. Although antiaccess and area denial are two separate concepts, it is important to understand that the line that divides them is at time hard to discern as a result of overlap between the two concepts.

The following A2AD capabilities, many once available only to powerful states, are now increasingly available to weaker states and even non-state actors. Some enemies will possess limited numbers of only a few of these capabilities, but others will deploy fully integrated and layered advanced A2AD systems comprising air, naval, land, space, and cyber forces guided by a single command and control system and employed in mutual support such that to defeat one capability an attacker must expose himself to others. In some cases this proliferation can be tied to improved and cheaper technological advancements while in other cases, particularly in the case of non-state or enemy-allied state actors, their possession of such capabilities may be tied to the political and strategic objectives of facilitator states.

Antiaccess	Those actions and capabilities, usually long-range, designed to prevent an opposing force from entering an operational area. Antiaccess actions end to target forces approaching by air and sea predominantly, but also can target the cyber, space, and other forces that support them.

Examples of antiaccess capabilities include:

- A variety of surface-, air- and submarine launched ballistic and cruisemissiles able to accurately attack forward bases and deploying U.S. forces and their supporting logistics at ranges exceeding 1,000 nautical miles.
- Long-range reconnaissance and surveillance systems that provide necessary targeting information, including satellites, aircraft, and land and ship-based radar.
- Cyber attack capabilities designed to disrupt U.S. command and control systems and critical infrastructure, both civilian and military.
- Terrorists willing to attack U.S. or partner bases and deploying forces, even at points of origin in the continental United States or other regions.

Area Denial	Those actions and capabilities, usually of shorter range, designed not to keep an opposing force out, but to limit its freedom of action within the operational area. Area-denial capabilities target forces in all domains, including land forces.

Examples of antiaccess capabilities include:
- Air forces and air defense systems, both fixed and mobile, designed to deny local U.S. air superiority.
- Shorter-range antiship missiles and submarines employing advanced torpedoes to deny U.S. maritime superiority in the objective area.
- Precision-guided rockets, artillery, missiles, and mortars (G-RAMM) designed to attack surface targets, including landing forces.
- Chemical and biological weapons to deny the use of select areas.
- Computer and electronic attack capabilities to degrade, neutralize, or destroy U.S. command and control in the operational area.
- Armed and explosives-laden small boats and craft in cluttered and restricted coastal waters and straits.
- Land maneuver forces.

Maritime Strategy

A Cooperative Strategy for 21st Century Seapower is the unified maritime strategy of the US Navy, Marine Corps, and Coast Guard. It articulates a strategic concept and implementation framework for the Naval Service's contributions to achieving enduring national strategic goals. It is envisioned as a long-term strategy that will only need to be revised if there is a significant shift in the security environment that catalyzes a change in strategic thinking on a national scale.

The strategic concept of the maritime strategy is that the sea is a vast maneuver space thatcan be used to overcome geographic, diplomatic, or military challenges to access. Six strategic imperatives describe the contribution naval forces make to prevent and, when necessary, prevail in conflicts to achieve national strategic goals.

The speed, flexibility, agility and scalability of maritime forces provide joint or combined force commanders a range of options for responding to crises. Additionally, integrated maritime operations, either within formal alliance structures (such as the North Atlantic Treaty Organization) or more informal arrangements (such as the Global Maritime Partnership initiative), send powerful messages to would-be aggressors that we will act with others to ensure collective security and prosperity. United States seapower will be globally postured to secure our homeland and citizens from direct attack and to advance our interests around the world. As our security and prosperity are inextricably linked with those of others, U.S. maritime forces will be deployed to protect and sustain the peaceful global system comprised of interdependent networks of trade, finance, information, law, people and governance.

REGIONALLY CONCENTRATED, CREDIBLE COMBAT POWER

Limit regional conflict   *Deter major-power war*   *Win our nation's wars*

Secure Our Homeland; Protect US Citizens and Interests around the World

Contribute to homeland defense in-depth   *Prevent or contain local disruptions*

Foster & sustain cooperative relationships

GLOBALLY DISTRIBUTED, MISSION-TAILORED MARITIME FORCES

The Six Strategic Imperatives of Maritime Strategy

Limit Regional Conflict	Where conflict threatens the global system and our national interests, maritime forces will be ready to respond alongside other elements of national and multi-national power, to give political leaders a range of options for deterrence, escalation and de-escalation. Maritime forces that are persistently present and combat-ready provide the Nation's primary forcible entry option in an era of declining access, even as they provide the means for this Nation to respond quickly to other crises. Whether over the horizon or powerfully arrayed in plain sight, maritime forces can deter the ambitions of regional aggressors, assure friends and allies, gain and maintain access, and protect our citizens while working to sustain the global order.
Deter Major Power War	No other disruption is as potentially disastrous to global stability as war among major powers. Maintenance and extension of this Nation's comparative seapower advantage is a key component of deterring major power war. While war with another great power strikes many as improbable, the near-certainty of its ruinous effects demands that it be actively deterred using all elements of national power.
Win Our Nation's Wars	In times of war, our ability to impose local sea control, overcome challenges to access, force entry, and project and sustain power ashore, makes our maritime forces an indispensable element of the joint or combined force. This expeditionary advantage must be maintained because it provides joint and combined force commanders with freedom of maneuver.
Contribute to Homeland Defense in Depth	Maritime forces will defend the homeland by identifying and neutralizing threats as far from our shores as possible. In concept, this is no different than the systematic approach that we apply to orchestrating a defense in depth in the tree line.
Foster Cooperative Relationships with Partners	Expanded cooperative relationships with other nations will contribute to the security and stability of the maritime domain for the benefit of all. Although our forces can surge when necessary to respond to crises, trust and cooperation cannot be surged.
Contain Local Disruptions	We must maintain security and awareness in the maritime domain. In doing so, transnational threats—terrorists and extremists; proliferators of weapons of mass destruction; pirates; traffickers in persons, drugs, and conventional weapons; and other criminals—will be constrained and un able to interfere with regional or global affairs to the extent that they would if left un-checked.

Littoral maneuver

With an understanding of the current operating environment, the littoral domains, and the capabilities that enemy's use to oppose access, the importance of littoral maneuver becomes clear. Simply defined, **Littoral Maneuver** is defined as the ability to transition ready-to-fight combat forces from the sea to the shore in order to achieve a position of advantage over the enemy. Littoral maneuver treats the sea, air and land as unified littoral maneuver space. The sea is both a protective barrier and a highway of unparalleled mobility that provides greater maneuver flexibility, surprise, and increased security for the amphibious force. And while the sea, covering 75% of the world's surface provides plenty of space with which the U.S. can maneuver it's amphibious forces to a position of advantage over the enemy, modern amphibious warfare in the littorals must leverage capabilities and overlap in each of the domains to achieve success.

The Department of Defense's (DoD) Joint Operational Access Concept (JOAC) attempts to provide a vision and strategy for countering the growing A2AD threats and prevailing in our Nation's ability to maintain access to global commons and ability to project combat power. Its central thesis is Cross-Domain Synergy—the complementary vice merely additive employment of capabilities in different domains such that each enhances the effectiveness and compensates for the vulnerabilities of the others-to establish superiority in some combination of domains that will provide the freedom of action required by the mission.

The challenge of operational access is determined largely by conditions existing prior to the onset of combat operations. Consequently, success in combat often will depend on efforts to shape favorable access conditions in advance, which in turn requires a coordinated interagency approach. The joint force will attempt to shape the operational area in advance of conflict through a variety of security and engagement activities all of which ultimately aim to facilitate access, and when required, littoral maneuver against the enemy.

These activities include but are not limited to:

- Conduct operations to gain access based on the requirements of the broader mission, while also designing subsequent operations to lessen access challenges.
- Prepare the operational area in advance to facilitate access.
- Consider a variety of basing options, to include seabasing.
- Seize the initiative by deploying and operating on multiple, independent lines of operations.
- Exploit advantages in one or more domains to disrupt or destroy enemy antiaccess/area-denial capabilities in others.
- Disrupt enemy reconnaissance and surveillance efforts while protecting friendly efforts.
- Create pockets or corridors of local domain superiority to penetrate the enemy's defenses and maintain them as required to accomplish the mission.
- Maneuver directly against key operational objectives from strategic distance.

- Attack enemy antiaccess/area-denial defenses in depth rather than rolling back those defenses from the perimeter.
- Maximize surprise through deception, stealth, and ambiguity to complicate enemy targeting.
- Protect space and cyber assets while attacking the enemy's cyber and space capabilities.

With appropriate conditions set to facilitate littoral maneuver, commanders are afforded the opportunity to make decisions as to just how to the most appropriate means to facilitate that maneuver.

Operational Maneuver from the Sea (OMFTS)

As was the case in the era between World War I and World War II, the mid 1990s found the Marine Corps looking to solve a unique problem, i.e. the recognized chaos and instability growing in the littoral regions of the world. In the year 1996, the Marine Corps released its base publication on Operational Maneuver from the Sea in an effort to provide direction for the **Operational Maneuver from the Sea (OMFTS)** is the maneuver of naval forces at the operational level, a bold bid for victory that aims at exploiting a significant enemy weakness in order to deal a decisive blow.

What distinguishes OMFTS from all other species of operational maneuver is the extensive use of the sea as a means of gaining advantage, an avenue for friendly movement that is simultaneously a barrier to the enemy and a means of avoiding disadvantageous engagements. It is the application of maneuver warfare to a maritime campaign that aims to turn the sea and the littorals into vulnerable flanks.
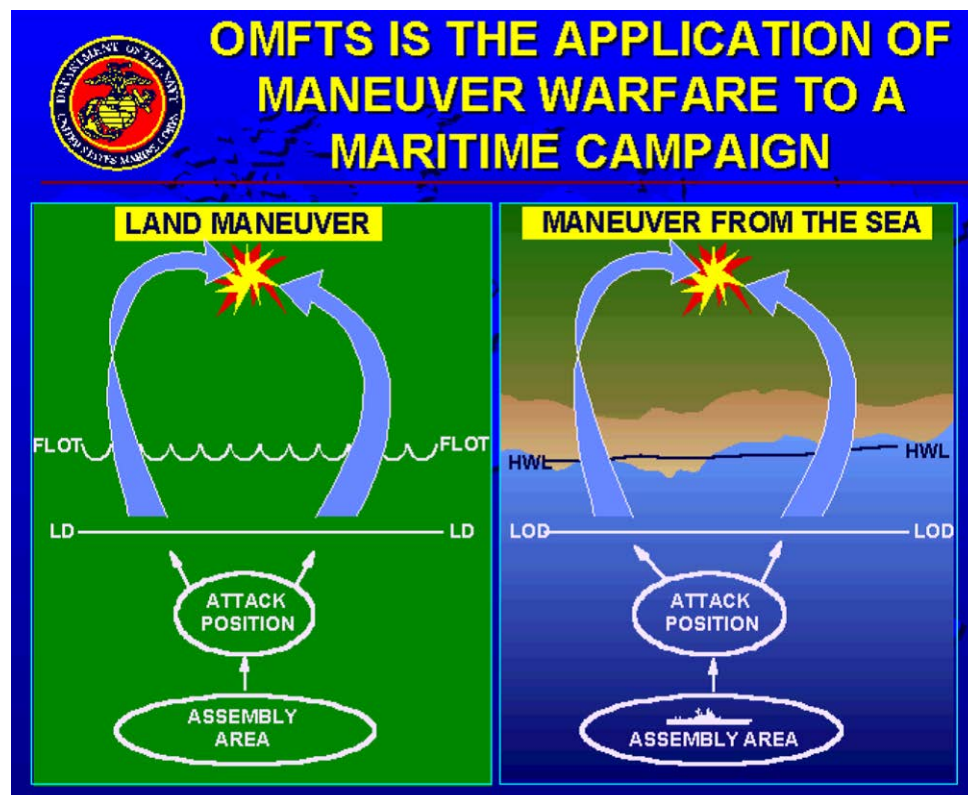
Additionally, in the concept of OMFTS, Naval forces dispense with previous amphibious methods in which operational phases, pauses, and reorganizations imposed delays and inefficiencies upon the momentum of the operation. This aspect of OMFTS may make use of, but is not limited to, such techniques as sea-based logistics, sea-based fire support. A sea base provides an inherently maneuverable, scalable aggregation of distributed, networked platforms that enables the global power projection of offensive and defensive forces from the sea and includes the ability to assemble, equip, project, support, and sustain those forces without reliance on land bases within the joint operations area. With sea-based support in place, we can leverage OMFTS to use the sea as a medium for tactical and operational movement.

While most individuals typically envision this movement as that of the ship-to-shore movement seen in large scale amphibious assaults of the past, the true nature of OMFTS embraced Ship-to-Objective Maneuver (STOM), which of course is a logical step in our progression of littoral maneuver doctrine and concepts.

Ship-to-Shore Movement

Ship-to-shore movement remains a viable option and in many cases a vitally important part of the amphibious operations. In general, MCWP 3-31.5, expands on concepts outlined in JP 3-02, and focuses specifically on the action phase of the amphibious operations. While it remains a course of action for commanders to choose, and in many cases, an inevitable portion of amphibious operations conducted in coastal regions that require movement of personnel, equipment and supplies from ship to the shoreline, many doubt that we will ever see the large amphibious assaults of WWII, which were characterized almost exclusively as ship-to-shore movement.

Ship-to-Shore Movement (Continued)

Despite a significant number of limitations, the U.S., specifically the Marine Corps, was able to achieve success in the Pacific campaign of WWII as a result of the exertion of maritime dominance which in turn facilitated the isolation and preparation of the each island prior to conducting amphibious assaults with overwhelming combat power. In the example of the landing at Inchon during the Korean War, the assault was successful largely due to surprise and boldness.

Technologies available during the early stages of modern amphibious warfare development -- particularly in the areas of mobility, navigation, and command and control -- dictated that the Navy provide both the means of landing force movement and its control. The result was frequently a slow buildup ashore as slow-speed water craft executed an intricate ship-to-shore shuttle from ships operating close to the beach. The landing force was required to secure a lodgment until combat power could be built up sufficiently to allow maneuver to the actual objective. Practical considerations in establishing such a beachhead reduced the littoral area vulnerable to attack.

Ship-to-Objective Maneuver (STOM)

In the years and decades following the Cold War, the changes in operating environment and advancement of A2/AD strategies and technologies, the U.S. Naval forces and Marine Corps began to explore the concept of STOM.

Ship-To-Objective Maneuver (STOM) is a tactical concept that can apply to all types of amphibious operations, but generally involves overcoming access challenges. These operations include assaults, raids, demonstrations, withdrawals, and amphibious support to other operations. These five types of amphibious operations support theater security cooperation, building partner capacity, crisis response, small scale contingencies and assaults to enable the joint force. Simply described, amphibious operations executed using STOM overcome access challenges, gain entry and achieve results on land. It should be viewed as the next step in the Marine Corps' development of littoral maneuver and how amphibious forces will be successfully employed in future operations.

Capabilities such as well decks and flight decks, landing vehicles and craft, rotary wing and tilt-rotor craft, billeting, communications, medical, dental, messing, planning, and command and control (C2) all give amphibious forces great utility and flexibility across the ROMO. Freed from the constraints of securing a large beachhead, STOM allows a commander to maximize advances in technology focus his decision-making and combat power on the enemy while initiating the landing force's maneuver from over the horizon (OTH). A landing force that can maintain the momentum gained by maneuver at sea is able to generate overwhelming tempo and exploit enemy gaps with its power and rapidity of execution. Tactical flexibility, combined with reliable intelligence, allows a landing force to bypass, render irrelevant, or unhinge and collapse the enemy's defensive measures.

STOM is not aimed at seizing a beach, but at thrusting combat units ashore in their fighting formations, to a decisive place, and in sufficient strength to ensure mission accomplishment. Landing forces will engage enemy units only as necessary to achieve the freedom of action to accomplish operational objectives.

It also provides the opportunity to achieve tactical as well as operational surprise, something seldom possible in past amphibious operations. Operations will begin from over the horizon and project power deeper inland than in the past, progressing with speed and flexibility of maneuver that will deny the enemy warning and reaction time. By requiring the enemy to defend a vast area against our seaborne mobility and deep power projection, naval forces will render most of his force irrelevant. The tenants of STOM further describe the advantages afforded to an amphibious force.

The Tenants of STOM

To fully exploit the sea as maneuver space in the modern era and provide greater force employment options—STOM seeks to remove the transition at the water's edge. Exploiting significant improvements in the speed, range, and command and control; it advocates a seamless littoral maneuver.

Conduct littoral maneuver	Amphibious forces may employ STOM to outflank or envelop an adversary, secure the vulnerable flanks of other friendly forces, or to remove landward threats to the maritime domain.
Continue to apply the single-battle concept	The increasing speed of information flow and reliance on distributed action requires recognition that operations or events in one part of the battlespace often have profound and unintended consequences in other areas or on other events. Therefore a commander must always treat the battlespace as an indivisible entity

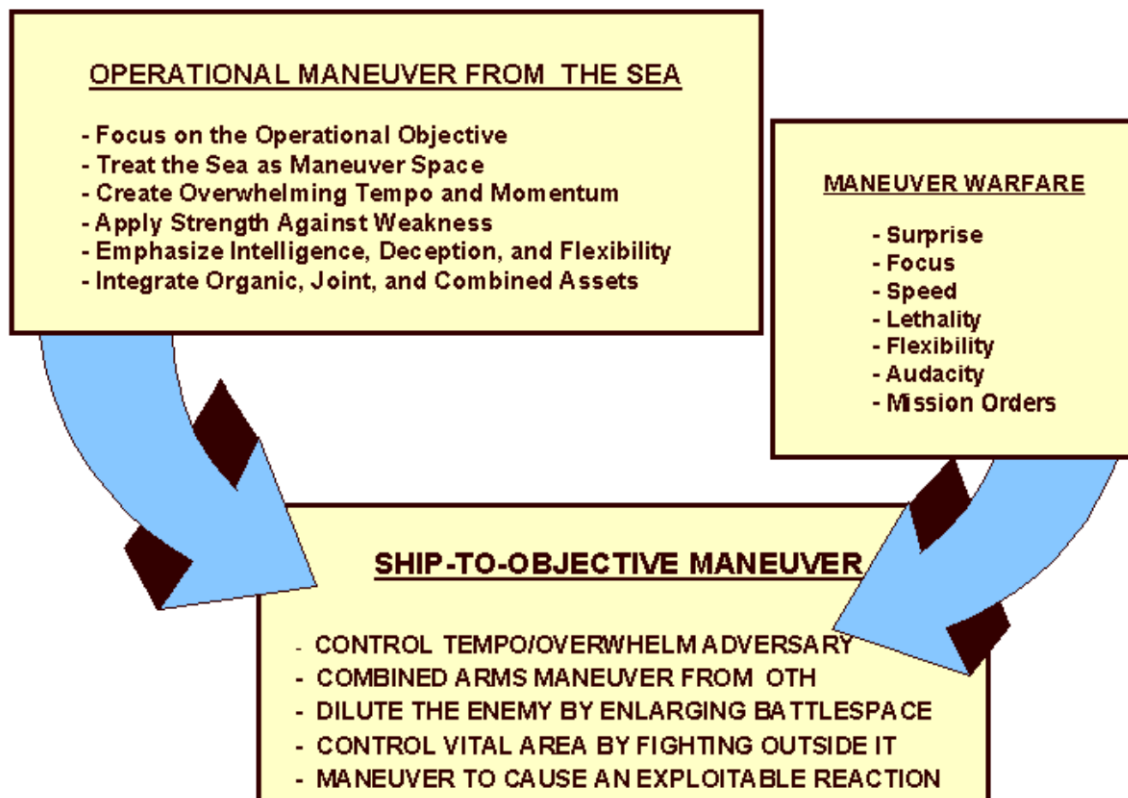|	
Improve options for joint force commanders	Not only do amphibious forces provide the ability for response across the range of military operations (ROMO), they also serve as a deterrent, ready to come ashore if required but able to loiter over the horizon indefinitely as a joint force insurance policy.
Use seabasing to limit the footprint ashore	Seabasing allows for much of the C2, intelligence, logistics, and fires functions to remain at sea while the landing force take ashore on the capabilities and personnel required to conduct a specific operation, particularly in early phases. In doing so, a landing force reduced risk to non-essential capabilities during the action phase while reducing the logistics tail.
Use a cross-domain approach	Amphibious forces leverage capabilities across all domains employing an integrated "littoral domain" approach.
Use dispersed forces	STOM aims to avoid adversaries' effects while maintaining the ability to concentrate at the right time and place to overwhelm enemy forces or achieve desired results on the objective. STOM capitalizes on littoral maneuver through the use of multiple entry points and mission-dictated force packages to provide local and time-sensitive "zones" of support; exploiting flexibility, speed and maneuver across domains. The cumulative nature of these dispersed tactical activities will more rapidly benefit the operational plan by increasing overall tempo and providing responsive effects over a wider geographical area, retaining the ability to quickly mass combat power at a decisive place and time if required.
Employ scalable landing forces	The building-block unit for future operations in the littorals will likely be the company landing team (CLT). Using small units, such as the CLT, provides a force capable of securing an entry point or aggregating as the building-block for larger power projection operations of up to two Marine Expeditionary Brigade (MEB) assault echelons.

Increase options for partnering

STOM tactically enables amphibious forces whether part of a quick-reaction-force or using general purpose forces and logistics in direct support of operations ashore. Opportunities for increased partnerships with United States Agency for International Development (USAID) promoting U.S. national security and foreign policy, as well as the U.S. Coast Guard conducting maritime missions offer mutual benefit in pursuit of Geographic Combatant Commander (GCC) requirements.

Gain local area control for periods of time

The goal is to achieve the requisite degree of area control to allow the maneuver of forces and capabilities throughout the littorals for that specific amount of time required to accomplish the mission. This can be accomplished in an uneven manner shaping adjacent areas rather than attempting to dominate an entire domain or "roll back" defenses in the entire operations area.

OPERATIONAL MANEUVER FROM THE SEA

- Focus on the Operational Objective
- Treat the Sea as Maneuver Space
- Create Overwhelming Tempo and Momentum
- Apply Strength Against Weakness
- Emphasize Intelligence, Deception, and Flexibility
- Integrate Organic, Joint, and Combined Assets

MANEUVER WARFARE

- Surprise
- Focus
- Speed
- Lethality
- Flexibility
- Audacity
- Mission Orders

SHIP-TO-OBJECTIVE MANEUVER

- CONTROL TEMPO/OVERWHELM ADVERSARY
- COMBINED ARMS MANEUVER FROM OTH
- DILUTE THE ENEMY BY ENLARGING BATTLESPACE
- CONTROL VITAL AREA BY FIGHTING OUTSIDE IT
- MANEUVER TO CAUSE AN EXPLOITABLE REACTION

Marine Corps Core Competencies

The Marine Corps' Core Competencies reflect our particular skill sets and are used to describe our legislated role as the Nation's Expeditionary Force in Readiness . The Core Competencies provide the basis for the level of expertise and effectiveness of Marine Corps forces and serve as our fundamental contribution to our Nation's defense. Though enduring, they are not static; as necessary, new competencies must be developed and honed to meet emerging challenges, particularly in the current global operating environment which is becoming increasingly chaotic in the urban littorals. Currently, Marine Corps forces have six core competencies. The first four represent enduring core competencies and reflect legislative direction and are codified in public law. The latter two reflect demonstrated skill sets that have to be raised to a higher level given the Nation's strategy, defense planning priorities, and our understanding of the emerging security environment. Ultimately, they represent a mindset and culture that must continue to be cultivated and enhanced with the passing of time. These Core Competencies can be found in MCDP1-0 and Vision and Strategy 2025.

1. The Corps conducts persistent forward naval engagement and is always prepared to respond as the Nation's force in readiness.

The Marine Corps is devoted to an expeditionary way of life. We understand that true readiness means much more than being deployable. It requires a force that is deployed with our Navy shipmates and engaged in the littorals, shaping the operational environment, and contributing to the prevention of conflict. This agile force can react rapidly across the range of military operations and must prevail, even thrive, in the uncertainty and chaos of emerging crises.

2. The Corps employs integrated combined arms across the range of military operations, and can operate as part of a joint or multinational force.

Our MAGTFs blend the art and science of executing combined arms operations from air, land, and sea. Marine employment and integration of air and ground-based capabilities reflects our innovative approach to warfighting. History has shown that this approach can be applied with effect in missions that range from security cooperation to major combat operations. Our MAGTFs are task-organized for each mission and can be employed independently, or as part of a joint or multinational force.

3. The Corps provides forces and specialized detachments for service aboard naval ships, on stations, and for operations ashore.

The Marine Corps and the Navy share a common heritage. Marines have served aboard Navy ships as marksmen, as embarked MAGTFs, as naval aviators, and as specialized detachments afloat. This heritage is reflected in our doctrine and in how we design our equipment and weapons systems. Our modernization programs for the future are being designed to allow Marine Corps forces to seamlessly deploy, project power, and fight from naval vessels or austere expeditionary bases, or any combination thereof. Our close association with the Navy continues today, along with a growing interaction with the Coast Guard. The new maritime strategy articulates a renewed emphasis on integrated naval capabilities and capacities.

4. The Corps conducts joint forcible entry operations from the sea and develops amphibious landing force capabilities and doctrine.

When access to critical regions or allies is denied or in jeopardy, forward deployed, rapidly employable Marine Corps forces are trained and ready to execute amphibious operations to overcome enemy defenses. Together, the Navy and Marine Corps provide the Nation with its primary capability to swiftly project and sustain combat power ashore in the face of armed opposition. We leverage available joint and naval capabilities, project sustainable combat power ashore, and secure entry for follow-on forces. Our sea based MAGTFs provide the Nation with expeditionary forces to conduct initial operations independent of local infrastructure, or in undeveloped, austere areas. This capability enables the accomplishment of amphibious joint forcible entry operations as well as various missions across the range of military operations. These strategic capabilities require focused amphibious resources and doctrine.

5. The Corps conducts complex expeditionary operations in the urban littorals and other challenging environments.

The Marine Corps' historical ability to conduct expeditionary operations, such as irregular warfare, against emerging threats in complex environments is well documented. These operations include counterinsurgency; counterterrorism; train, advise, and assist activities; and stability tasks. The complexity of these missions has increased due to the presence of large numbers of noncombatants, urbanization in the littorals, and the dynamics of the information environment. Marines are specifically trained and broadly educated to understand cultures and populations, to thrive in chaotic environments, and to recognize and respond creatively to demanding situations.

6. The Corps leads joint and multinational operations and enables interagency activities.

The complex nature of existing security challenges demands capabilities that harness the strengths of all the instruments of national power. Marines are well qualified to enable the introduction of follow-on forces and facilitate the integration of military and interagency efforts. This interoperability mandates the establishment of enduring relationships and the orchestration of diverse capabilities, organizations, and cultural awareness across all aspects of an operation.

Marine Corps Key Tasks

In 2010, the Marine Corps conducted a formal review of the security environment, strategic direction, public law and departmental policy and guidance to refine the organization, posture, and capabilities necessary to ensure the Marine Corps can fulfill its role as the Nation's Expeditionary force in readiness. The national strategy documents describe a geostrategic contact that has dramatically changed in the last two decades, increasing the importance of the global commons and shifting strategic focus to the littoral regions. Future adversaries are likely to employ both conventional and irregular capabilities in a hybrid form of conflict. Increased challenges to access and reductions to forward basing and strategic transportation complicate the deployment, employment and sustainment of U.S. forces overseas. Furthermore, these documents note that 21st-century security challenges cannot be solved by any single nation or by military action alone. They call for the expansion of engagement activities that leverage all elements of national power, to promote the international partnerships necessary to collectively address common security concerns.

This context demands a ready force that fills the void between special operations forces and heavy ground formations—a force that can leverage its expeditionary character to respond not only to crises, but also to proactively influence partnerships necessary to collectively address common security concerns. As a result, this formal review identified the following five interrelated tasks that the Marine Corps must be able to perform:

1. Conduct military engagement

The ability of the Marine Corps to conduct military engagement is essential to building partner capability and capacity, forging relationships across cultural barriers, and promoting diplomatic access. Sea-based military engagement also facilitates interaction while treading lightly on the sovereignty of the partner-nations, forward posture is critical to providing effective engagement and ensuring rapid response to crises.

2. Respond rapidly to crisis

Whether natural or manmade, crisis response operations alleviate or mitigate the impact of an incident or situation. In addition to those forward-postured forces, a high state of expeditionary readiness is essential to rapidly projecting additional Marine Corps capabilities in response to a crisis.

3. Project power

The Marine Corps forces leverage and contribute to a larger "whole-of-government" system of projecting **"smart" power** across the range of military operations. Smart power is the ability to selectively apply soft and hard power in combinations appropriate to a given situation to achieve national objectives. **Soft power** is the use of persuasive means such as cultural affinity, diplomacy, economic interaction, and foreign assistance to establish legitimacy and influence or attract others to align their policies, interests, or objectives with one's own. **Hard power** is the use of military/economic coercion to

influence the behavior of others. Power projection includes joint assured access operations from the sea, as enables by littoral maneuver.

4. Counter irregular threats

These operations involve military force, usually in combination with the other elements of power, in the affairs of another state whose government is unstable, inadequate, or unsatisfactory. Military measures may not, by themselves, restore peace and order because the fundamental causes of unrest may be economic, political, or social. Often these operations occur in response to the crises under the austere conditions. They are the modern manifestation of our "small wars" legacy.

5. Conduct littoral maneuver

Naval forces are uniquely capable of transitioning ready-to-fight combat forces from the sea to the shore in order to achieve a position of advantage over the enemy. Littoral maneuver may be used to deny adversaries sanctuary, destroy critical enemy capabilities, recover personnel or sensitive equipment, safeguard weapons of mass destruction or associated materials, seize lodgments for the introduction of additional joint or multinational forces, or cause an adversary to disperse his forces. We will expand on this concept later in this lesson

Influence and Maneuver Warfare

The importance of influence cannot be understated in today's operating environment and in the Marine Corps' ability to achieve success across its Key Tasks. This is particularly true when we look at influence in terms of the Marine Corps' ability to leverage littoral maneuver to satisfy or facilitate the Nation's ability to achieve objectives on the strategic, operational and tactical levels of war.

Summary

What You Have Learned: The current operating environment is extremely complex. In the future, with expansion of chaos in the urban littorals, as well as continued improvements in A2AD capabilities, the concept of littoral maneuver will become increasingly important to our Nation's partners, interests and objectives. It is on all of us to continue to build upon the future concepts and capabilities utilized in littoral maneuver. If we as a Marine Corps let this capability slip by the wayside, we will cease to have any relevancy as the Nation's expeditionary force in readiness.

References

Reference Number or Author	Reference Title
MCDP 1	Warfighting
MCDP 1-3	Tactics
MCDP 1-0	Marine Corps Operations
MCDP 3	Expeditionary Operations
MCCDC	Ship-to-Objective Maneuver
MCCP 1	Operational Maneuver from the Sea
DOD	Joint Operational Access Concept
JP 1-02	DOD Dictionary of Military and Associated Terms
JP 2-01.3	Joint Intelligence Preparation of the Operational Environment
JP 3-02	Amphibious Operations
USN	A Cooperative Strategy for 21st Century Seapower

Notes