

NOT FOR PUBLICATION UNTIL RELEASED BY THE
HOUSE ARMED SERVICES COMMITTEE
SUBCOMMITTEE ON READINESS

STATEMENT OF

LIEUTENANT GENERAL BRIAN D. BEAUDREAULT

DEPUTY COMMANDANT

PLANS, POLICIES, AND OPERATIONS

ON

AMPHIBIOUS WARFARE READINESS AND TRAINING – INTEROPERABILITY,

SHORTFALLS, AND THE WAY AHEAD

BEFORE THE

HOUSE ARMED SERVICES COMMITTEE

SUBCOMMITTEE ON READINESS

DECEMBER 1, 2017

NOT FOR PUBLICATION UNTIL RELEASED BY THE
HOUSE ARMED SERVICES COMMITTEE
SUBCOMMITTEE ON READINESS



Lieutenant General Brian D. Beaudreault
Deputy Commandant Plans, Policies, and Operations

Lieutenant General Beaudreault was commissioned in May 1983 upon graduation from the University of Massachusetts, Amherst and was designated as an infantry officer upon completion of training.

His operational assignments include: Platoon Commander and Company Executive Officer, 1st Bn, 3rd Marines, Kaneohe Bay, HI; Assistant Operations Officer, Logistics Officer, Maritime Special Purpose Force Commander and G Company Commander, Battalion

Landing Team 2/9, 15th Marine Expeditionary Unit (SOC), Camp Pendleton, CA (Operation RESTORE HOPE, Somalia); Inspector-Instructor, 3rd Battalion, 23rd Marines, Memphis, TN; Operations Officer, 31st MEU (SOC), Okinawa, Japan (Operation Stabilise, East Timor); Regimental Executive Officer, 1st Marine Regiment, Camp Pendleton, CA; Commanding Officer, Battalion Landing Team 1/1, 13th MEU (SOC)/ Expeditionary Strike Group One (Operation Iraqi Freedom); Commanding Officer, 15th MEU(SOC), Camp Pendleton, CA (Operation Iraqi Freedom); Deputy Commander, Marine Forces Central Command/Commander MARCENT (Forward), Manama, Bahrain; Commanded Task Force South in support of flood relief in Sindh Province, Pakistan; and Commanding General, 2nd Marine Division.

His Supporting Establishment assignments include service as Guard Officer, Marine Corps Security Force Company, Naval Station Roosevelt Roads, Puerto Rico and Director, Expeditionary Warfare School, Quantico, VA.

LtGen Beaudreault completed joint duty assignments as Ground Plans Officer (CCJ3-PP), Operations Directorate, US Central Command, MacDill AFB, FL; Deputy Director, Future Joint Force Development, Joint Staff (J7) and Deputy Director, Joint Training, Joint Staff (J7), Suffolk, VA; and most recently served as Director of Operations and Cyber (J3), U.S. Africa Command.

His professional military education includes the following: The Basic School; Amphibious Warfare School; US Army Command and General Staff College; Armed Forces Staff College; Naval War College (MA with Highest Distinction, National Security and Strategic Studies); Higher Command and Staff Course, UK Defence Academy; and CAPSTONE, National Defense University.

Chairman Wilson, Ranking Member Bordallo, and distinguished members of the subcommittee, we appreciate the opportunity to testify today.

Today, Sailors and Marines are at sea operating as Amphibious Ready Groups (ARGs) and Marine Expeditionary Units (MEUs); AMERICA ARG and 15th MEU in the Central Command region, BONHOMME RICHARD ARG and 31st MEU in the Pacific, IWO JIMA ARG with 26th MEU in the Atlantic, and Black Sea Rotational Marines are aboard Allied ships in the European theater. Your expeditionary forces in readiness are postured forward and accomplishing our national security objectives.

The Navy and Marine Corps have reviewed the GAO report GAO-17-477C “NAVY AND MARINE CORPS TRAINING – Further Planning Needed for Amphibious Operations Training” and agree with the study, its findings, and its recommendations. Today’s testimony provides the Navy and Marine Corps team the opportunity to inform the Readiness Subcommittee on the challenges associated with amphibious operations training, discuss our shortfalls, and describe our projected way ahead.

Foremost, the GAO report finds the Navy’s shortage of amphibious ships is the predominant factor that inhibits our ability to train for “other amphibious priorities” beyond Amphibious Ready Group / Marine Expeditionary Unit (ARG/MEU) requirements. While there are other resource shortfalls, the shortage of amphibious ships is the quintessential challenge to amphibious training. The Department of the Navy lacks a sufficient number of amphibious and expeditionary ships to execute current operations, respond to contingency operations, and conduct the necessary training for both simultaneously. Ideally, the Naval Service would have optimally trained and equipped amphibious forces that deploy when required, with the right quantity of quality forces, on the designated timeline, with a reservoir of non-deployed yet ready

forces that could surge to meet the demands of large-scale contingencies. However, today the operational availability of the amphibious fleet is insufficient to meet the global demands and consequently increases risk. While the on hand number of amphibious warships falls short of the mutually agreed upon 38-ship requirement, the current 30-year shipbuilding plan supports a 38-ship amphibious fleet.

As described in the *Joint Concept for Access and Maneuver in the Global Commons (JAM-GC)* – the joint force must maintain access to and maneuver through the global commons, project power, and defeat an adversary attempting to deny freedom of action via the employment of Anti-Access/Area Denial (A2AD) capabilities. To meet these challenges, amphibious forces must be distributable, resilient and employed in sufficient scale for ample duration. Due to amphibious lift shortfalls, the naval force is currently challenged to satisfy these basic requirements – a situation that will only worsen over time if we cannot remedy the problems noted in the report.

Today, of the 32 amphibious ships, 16 are available to support current or contingency operations. The Navy’s 2016 Force Structure Assessment established a requirement of 38 amphibious warships. The Marine Corps supports the 38-ship minimum amphibious fleet and the requisite funding to improve the readiness of the current amphibious fleet and fulfil Combatant Command (CCMD) requirements and contingency response timelines. The Navy’s plan for 38 amphibious ships provides: 12 *Wasp* and *America* Class LHD/LHAs, 13 *San Antonio* Class LPDs, and 13 LX(R) warships that will replace the *Whidbey Island* and *Harpers Ferry* Class LSDs. The GAO report correctly points out that in 1990 the Navy possessed 62 amphibious ships in contrast to the 32 we possess today. The amphibious force structure is projected to grow to a total of 34 ships starting in FY21. The Navy and Marine Corps are currently operating below

the 38-ship level and will continue to do so until FY33. While modern ships are more capable than their predecessors the Naval force lacks the capacity to conduct the necessary training when considering scheduled maintenance availabilities and current operational requirements. Former Chief of Naval Operations (CNO), ADM Greenert, stated in April 2014, that “we need about 50 amphibious gray hulls.” His conclusions are supported by evidence such as registered joint requirements, training requirements as noted in the GAO report, the recent Heritage Foundation Index of Military Strength, operational requirements as noted by the Chairman in JAM-GC; as well as requirements identified in the National Military Strategy. Yet, we remain mindful that the amphibious force is but one sub-set of the overall shortfalls in fleet capacity.

Beyond the amphibious warship shortfalls, we also are seeing significant capability and capacity gaps in mine counter-measures (MCM) and naval surface fire support (NSFS). The shortfalls in MCM and NSFS adversely impacts amphibious readiness and the Naval force’s ability to train for operations in a contested environment. We need a modern and capable mine/counter-mine (MCM) capability to facilitate access to and enable power-projection operations throughout contested littorals/near-seas. MCM shortfalls adversely impact amphibious warfare readiness and may severely limit fleet access during future contingencies.

NSFS represents another area where greater naval integration is warranted. The Marine Corps needs a modern naval surface fires capability that provides precision, range, and volume for current and future threat environments. The current 13 nautical mile range of our naval guns produces significant risk to the amphibious task force. Along with an increased role for the F-35B in supporting fleet operations and enabling the Carrier Strike Group (CSG), the Marine Corps encourages continued study on the potential introduction of vertical launch system (VLS)

capabilities aboard the LPDs to fill fire support shortfalls and further enhance the lethality and resilience of the amphibious fleet.

The Marine Corps welcomes the Navy's effort to develop an extended range munition that is capable of employment from the current inventory of naval guns, and we value the Navy's continued efforts to introduce VLS within the amphibious fleet. The desired objective capabilities includes an amphibious fleet that is capable of sinking enemy combatants and removing threats to the establishment of sea control beyond the reliance on F-35B. Of equal importance, improved lethality and force protection would facilitate the breaking of external dependencies which currently tie-down other surface combatants to protect L-class ships. Success in these endeavors would further mitigate the missile threat to surface combatants, enable a more distributable force, and provide the naval forces a new multi-mission platform that augments surface combatants.

Resourcing challenges are fueled by global requirements, delayed or extended ship maintenance cycles, competing Navy programs, the budget control act (BCA), and repetitive continuing resolutions (CRs). These factors have contributed to the shortage in amphibious ships, which has resulted in reduced training, degraded capability and increased operational risk. In the current fiscal environment, we continue to prioritize deployed and preparing to deploy units and provide them the mission critical resources to the greatest extent possible. We will continue to make tough choices and balance our available resources to meet current operational commitments and simultaneously build the readiness of non-deployed units – our “ready bench” – to respond to emergent crises.

The recent post-hurricane Defense Support of Civil Authorities (DSCA) and Foreign Disaster Relief (FDR) operations resulted in two of the three IWO JIMA ARG ships canceling

pre-deployment training, to include a sizable reduction in support for exercise BOLD ALLIGATOR which ultimately caused delays to their deployment schedule. The USS WASP, our first F-35B ready LHD, also participated in the DSCA operations and was delayed in deploying to the Pacific due to maintenance. CR funding levels may yield millions in increased readiness costs. USS GUNSTON HALL (LSD-44) had maintenance cancelled in 2011 due to CR restrictions. The ship is now receiving its delayed maintenance for which the operational and monetary costs have increased from 270 days to 696 days and from \$44.7M to \$111M. We will continue to pay these increased prices if we remain under CR constraints. The shortfall in amphibious lift is exemplified by the deployment of Special Purpose Marine Air-Ground Task Forces (SPMAGTFs) to land-based locations in Central Command (CENTCOM), Africa Command (AFRICOM), and Southern Command (SOUTHCOM). These shore based units satisfy the joint forces' demand for MAGTF capabilities but the forces do not retain the strategic flexibility and responsiveness of afloat forces and are constrained by host nation permissions.

The Navy and Marine Corps are actively integrating capabilities, synchronizing efforts, and moving forward as a unified force while preparing to meet challenges across the range of military operations. Naval integration unites Navy and Marine Corps warfighting doctrine, concept development, task organization, material acquisition programs, logistics, training and command and control. Naval integration maximizes the warfighting capabilities of the Navy surface, subsurface, aviation, cyber, and special warfare communities with the MAGTF to create a credible multi-functional Naval capability that can influence, deter, and compete in all domains. At the Service-level, this implies achieving a greater degree of interdependence in organizing, training, and equipping of the force. At the operational level, this implies a reform to

theater maritime command and control (C2) architectures; and, at the tactical level, this implies the rapid integration of amphibious forces into larger Navy formations.

Historically, sea control has been a purely Navy mission; however, integrating MAGTF air and ground fires capabilities – with the America Class LHAs – will transition this to a naval mission. Establishing sea control against a near peer competitor is an integrated naval and joint mission that leverages Marine Corps concepts and capabilities, such as the Expeditionary Advance Base Operations (EABO), the F-35B and precision rocket artillery.

Doctrinal publications have advanced efforts to increase integration. A Design for Maintaining Maritime Superiority, the Marine Corps Operating Concept (MOC) and Littoral Operations in a Contested Environment (LOCE) all illustrate the importance of an integrated force. Specifically, LOCE describes how an integrated naval force, operating from dispersed locations, both ashore and afloat, will utilize its flexibility, versatility, and mobility to achieve sea control and power projection into contested littoral areas.

Going forward, our integrated training programs require evaluation. We must continue to train as we intend to fight. The Navy and Marine Corps are establishing a Service level policy that prioritizes the limited amphibious assets and outlines Service responsibilities with regards to amphibious training, experimentation and concept development. This co-authored policy for Amphibious Operations Training will result in a Secretary of the Navy (SECNAV) Instruction to guide the Navy and Marine Corps's Campaign Plan for Amphibious Operations Training (CPAOT). This instruction will better leverage fleet resources to maximize unit level and collective amphibious training in accordance with the following priorities: (1) ARG/MEU Integrated Phase workups and deployments, (2) Expeditionary Strike Group /Marine Expeditionary Brigade exercises such as BOLD ALLIGATOR, DAWN BLITZ, and SSANG

YONG, (3) unit level training to support operational plan readiness, and (4) experimentation and concept development. The results obtained from exercises, experiments, and operations will drive changes to the Navy and Marine Corps doctrine, organization, training, materiel, leadership and education, personnel, facilities, and policy (DOTMLPF-P).

Through the CNO and CMC co-chaired Naval Board, the Services identify gaps, recommend solutions, and serve as the primary forum for future naval integration initiatives. Commander, U.S. Fleet Forces Command (USFLTFORCOM) and Commander, U.S. Marine Forces Command (MARFORCOM) established a co-led Maritime Working Group (MWG) to provide an enduring inter-service collaborative process that integrates capabilities, force development, experimentation, and emerging requirements with exercise planning, scheduling and resourcing to advance naval concepts and warfighting readiness. Commander, U.S. Pacific Fleet and Commander, U.S. Marine Forces Pacific also developed the Pacific Naval Integration Working Group (PNIWG) to incorporate PACOM issues into the MWG.

Naval integration is extant today among the forward deployed 5th Fleet, Task Force 51 where 5th Marine Expeditionary Brigade (MEB) provides operational control over the ARG/MEU. This integrated naval staff led by a Marine Corps Brigadier General is supporting Counter Violent Extremist Organization operations and ensuring the free flow of commerce through the Red Sea and Gulf of Aden. The integrated command ensures that regional naval expeditionary forces can rapidly engage threats emanating from any physical domain; land, air, surface or subsurface.

Our Service level amphibious exercises are providing Expeditionary Strike Group (ESG) and MEB commanders with valuable opportunities for the Command Element staffs to train and certify. Additional ships will be required to enlarge these exercises in order to accommodate full

MEB level training. As the amphibious ship inventory builds towards 38, the Navy and Marine Corps will continue to explore innovative ways to employ alternative platforms as a lower cost means to support training and fulfill joint requirements for afloat basing in the absence of amphibious warships. While not replacements for L-Class ships, some joint requirements in more permissive environments could temporarily be fulfilled by alternative shipping such as T-ESBs, expeditionary barges and coastal patrol boats.

Finally, USFLTFORCOM and MARFORCOM have made a dedicated effort to synchronize and optimize training with available ships. For the first time in nearly ten years II Marine Expeditionary Force (MEF) units will participate in a Type Commander Amphibious Training (TCAT) event this quarter. TCAT will go beyond training elements of 2d Marine Division's Assault Amphibian Battalion in basic crew proficiency by integrating units from across II MEF to increase MEB level amphibious readiness.

In closing, we conclude the current inventory of 32 amphibious warships is well short of the naval service's operational requirements which negatively impacts the naval forces' ability to generate readiness and negatively affects availability for training larger scale formations. The amphibious force structure is projected to grow to a total of 34 ships starting in FY21. The Marine Corps supports the 38 ship minimum amphibious fleet and the requisite funding to develop readiness while concurrently fulfilling validated joint requirements, accomplishing necessary fleet maintenance, and maintaining capacity to respond to potential contingencies. As the amphibious ship inventory builds towards 38 ships in FY33, the Marine Corps and the Navy will continue to explore innovative ways to employ alternative platforms.

On behalf of our Marines, Sailors, civilians and their families, we thank the Congress and this committee for this opportunity to discuss the key challenges your Navy and Marine Corps

face. We thank you for your support. The most important actions that Congress can take now is to immediately repeal the caps on defense spending in the Budget Control Act and provide a defense appropriation that ensures sufficient, consistent, and predictable funding to train, man, and equip the Navy and Marine Corps. With your help, we will overcome these constraints and enable your Navy and Marine Corps to meet the challenges of the 21st century.