

MARINE AIR-GROUND TASK FORCES (MAGTFs)

1. Background

The MAGTF is an integrated air-ground team, at the operational and tactical levels, under the direction and control of a single commander. The MAGTF is task organized to accomplish assigned missions and designed to exploit combat power of closely integrated air-ground operations.

2. Operational Characteristics

a. The missions assigned to MAGTFs should make use of their primary characteristics that are—

- (1) Expeditionary nature.
- (2) Strategically mobile.
- (3) Forcible entry capable.
- (4) Environmentally versatile.
- (5) Capability for independent action.
- (6) Operationally flexible.
- (7) Compatible with naval, joint, and combined operating forces.
- (8) Forward or sea based.

b. While MAGTFs are organized primarily to support naval operations, many have participated in a number of major land operations. In support of a land operation, MAGTFs are employed in the following ways:

- (1) Strategic deception forcing the opponent to disperse forces along all vulnerable littorals.

- (2) Raids destroying installations, units, or individuals which may have a significant bearing on the course of the campaign.

- (3) Forcible entry establishing beach-heads or airheads, to gain enclaves for introduction of large scale US forces.

- (4) Extractions evacuating threatened forces or individuals.

- (5) Strategic reserve exploiting opportunities and counterthreats that develop during the campaign.

- (6) Reinforcement assisting in conducting land operations as part of a joint or combined force.

- (7) Naval operations controlling a landward flank of a naval operation.

3. Types of MAGTFs

MAGTFs range in size from a SPMAGTF that can number in size from 100 to 3000 Marines, to a MEF that can number from 35,000 to 100,000 Marines. There are 4 types of MAGTFs; the MEF, the MEF (FWD), the MEU, and the SPMAGTF. The MEF (FWD) is addressed in Chapter I. This appendix addresses the remaining 3 types of MAGTFs.

a. The MEF.

A MEF is the largest and most capable MAGTF. The MEF is normally comprised of *at least* a reinforced Marine division, a MAW, FSSG, and SRIG. To effectively employ several divisions and aircraft wings with appropriate CSS, the MEF possesses the command and control organization. MEFs are capable of conducting the full range of amphibious operations as well as—

(1) Reinforcement of a committed MAGTF or other force.

(2) Sustained combat operations ashore.

(3) Seizure or defense of advance naval bases.

(4) Military operations other than war (MOOTW).

(5) Noncombatant evacuation operations.

The above elements of the MEF consist of the following subelements:

(1) Marine division.

(a) One headquarters battalion.

(b) Three infantry regiments.

(c) One artillery regiment.

(d) One tank battalion.

(e) One light armored reconnaissance battalion.

(f) One assault amphibious vehicle battalion.

(g) One combat engineer battalion,

(2) MAW.

(a) One to 4 Marine aircraft groups (fixed- and rotary-winged that include VMFA, VMFA(AW), VMA, VMAQ, VMGR, HMLA, HMH, and HMM squadrons).

(b) One Marine air control group (MACG).

(c) One Marine wing support group.

(d) One Marine wing headquarters squadron.

(e) One Marine aerial refueler transport squadron.

(f) One Marine tactical electronic warfare squadron.

(3) FSSG.

(a) One Landing support battalion.

(b) One supply battalion.

(c) One maintenance battalion.

(d) One motor transport battalion.

(e) One engineer support battalion.

(f) One medical battalion.

(g) One dental battalion.

b. MEU. A MEU is capable of conventional selected maritime special operations of duration in support of a combatant. The forward deployed MEU is organized and equipped to provide the naval or JFC with a rapidly deployable, sea-based force with 15 days of sustainment optimized for forward presence and crisis response missions. The MEU may also serve as an enabling force for follow-on MAGTFs or other larger forces (i.e., an Army corps) in the event the situation or mission requires additional capabilities and resources. The MEU is comprised of a CE, a reinforced infantry battalion, reinforced helicopter squadron, and MEU service support group (MSSG). The MEU is capable of conducting limited amphibious operations as well as—

(1) Noncombatant evacuation operations.

(2) Security operations (independent or in support of a larger force).

(3) Tactical recover of aircraft and personnel (TRAP).

- (4) Direct action.
- (5) MOOTW
- (6) In-extremis hostage rescue (limited).

The above mentioned elements of the MEU consist of the following subelements:

(1) CE.

- (a) ANGLICO detachment.
- (b) Force reconnaissance platoon.
- (c) Radio battalion detachment.
- (d) Low altitude air defense detachment.
- (e) Air support liaison team.
- (f) Seal detachment.

(2) GCE.

- (a) One reinforced rifle battalion.
- (b) One artillery battery.
- (c) One TOW section.
- (d) One AAV platoon.
- (e) One reconnaissance platoon.
- (f) One LAR platoon.
- (g) One combat engineer platoon.

(3) ACE.

- (a) One Marine medium helicopter squadron.

(b) One Marine heavy helicopter detachment.

(c) One Marine light/attack helicopter detachment.

(d) One Marine attack squadron (Harriers) detachment.

(4) MSSG.

- (a) Supply detachment.
- (b) Maintenance detachment.
- (c) Transportation detachment.
- (d) Engineer detachment.
- (e) Medical/dental detachment.
- (f) Landing support detachment.
- (g) Administrative detachment.

c. SPMAGTF. The SPMAGTF is usually a small, task-organized force configured to accomplish missions that the MEF, MEF (FWD), or MEU are not appropriate. It can be configured, trained, and equipped to conduct a wide variety of conventional and other operations. It can be deployed by a wide variety of means, to include amphibious or commercial ships and tactical or strategic airlift. These forces are typically composed of Marines highly trained in day/night operations to include insert/extract, raid, and strike operations. They may possess extensive surveillance and reconnaissance capabilities. SPMAGTF missions include mobile training teams, security assistance operations, and small independent action forces.