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Phase Zero Operations consist of long term persistent and preventive military engagements, security cooperation, and deterrence actions to assure friends and build partner capacity while promoting stability in the region selected. The Marine Corps in the FOE can tailor the leadership structure and force generation model of the Marine Rifle Company to maximize capacity to facilitate disaggregated operations to support Geographic Combatant Commanders as part of Phase Zero Operations. Additionally, forward deployed forces supporting Phase Zero Operations can enable partnership, integration, and training opportunities with USSOCOM, the inter-agency, and selected regional counterparts. Lastly, forward deployed forces can leverage the requirements and opportunities of Phase Zero Operations to fully exercise core and assigned mission essential tasks in a forward deployed setting. Phase Zero Operations can be the natural entry point to integration and enhanced training in a forward deployed setting. The Marine Corps can support the joint force by placing a greater emphasis on assisting regional partners and strengthening strategic alliances, specifically on the lower end of the spectrum of conflict.

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## **FUTURE WAR PAPER**

### ***Fighting Smart, Phase Zero and the “+1”, Preparing the US Marine Corps in the Future Operating Environment***

SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT  
OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF  
MASTER OF OPERATIONAL STUDIES

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The use of military force is a means to a higher end, a higher end meaning a political object or end state. War's salient factors are intertwined within politics, so much so, it is impossible to separate the two.<sup>1</sup> In the latest version of the National Security Strategy (NSS), dated December 2017, the current administration follows previous administrations' precedents of protecting the American people and promoting American prosperity and influence on the world stage. Additionally, the NSS provides a framework on how all elements of national power will be utilized. The National Military Strategy (NMS), currently classified, will likely reconcile the latest version of the NSS and discuss specifics regarding joint force disposition and global integration, the "4+1" threat considerations, and the challenges within the five stated domains.<sup>2</sup> To fully commit to these global challenges it is essential to understand and define what the global security situation will look like in the Future Operating Environment (FOE). How the Marine Corps supports the joint effort within this FOE will largely entail a greater emphasis on assisting regional partners and strengthening strategic alliances, specifically on the lower end of the spectrum of conflict. Getting the balance between meeting strategic emergencies and steady-state strategic demands, often referred to as the new normal operating environment, will take creativity, foresight, and resolve which bears no precedent. Relationship building, training and exercises, and institutional knowledge between Department of Defense (DOD), Department of State (DOS), regional partners, and allies will be critical in the FOE. Leveraging Phase Zero operations can balance these emergencies and steady state demands while promoting integration among the DOD, interagency, and regional partners.

**Phase Zero Operations** or shaping activities as defined by Joint Publication 3-0 (JP 3-0) *Joint Operations* consist of "long-term persistent and preventive military engagements, security cooperation, and deterrence actions to assure friends, build partner capacity and capability, and

promote regional stability.”<sup>3</sup> Leveraging Phase Zero operations to shape events across multiple theaters, as a part of a global campaign plan, prior to the activation of a specific Operational Plan (OPLAN) could be beneficial. This theater and global shaping could set the conditions for activation of an OPLAN and provide decision makers the time necessary to fully integrate all elements of national power to enable conflict resolution. Phase Zero operations can consist of urgent requirements, strategic imperatives, or directed missions supporting a broader campaign plan or OPLAN.

Phase Zero is all about prevention and shaping the environment, ideally as an economy of force mission to prevent the commitment of a large conventional force, but simultaneously setting the conditions for that commitment when absolutely necessary. Phase Zero operations, which are operations designed to dissuade an enemy while reassuring our partners, are not an entirely new concept. Forward deployed expeditionary forces, specifically in the United States Marine Corps, conduct a wide range of Theater Security Cooperation (TSC) exercises and events focused on our regional partners and allies. General purpose forces and special operating forces provide the necessary training, oversight, and in some cases direct assistance to regional partners and allies as part of the Combatant Commander's Theater Campaign Plan (TCP). These campaign plans are in close concert with the Ambassadors Engagement Plan (EP). Phase Zero operations provide an important and beneficial framework for shaping and setting the conditions for military operations in concert with diplomatic, economic, and informational elements of national power. *The United States Marine Corps, in order to meet a probable high demand for Phase Zero operations in the FOE, should modify the leadership structure and the force generation model for the Marine Rifle Company, integrate with all relevant entities, and*

*leverage the requirements and opportunities of Phase Zero operations to fully exercise mission essential tasks in a forward deployed setting.*

**Foundational Documents that provide guidance for Phase Zero operations.** The National Military Strategy outlines the strategic aims of the joint force and armed services. The document's primary source of guidance is the National Security Strategy as published by the President of the United States. The 2015 version of the NMS highlighted the global security environment, the global disorder that we face and resultant security challenges that exist from traditional state actors, transregional networks, and violent extremist organizations.<sup>4</sup> In the 2016 version, specifically the Chairman's Foreword, the "military environment and the threats it presents are increasingly transregional, multi-domain, and multi-functional in nature."<sup>5</sup> To that end the joint force and the interagency must integrate and operate globally, supporting allies and partners to ensure holistic, flexible, and responsive options to decision makers. Clearly, the current operating environment is challenging at best and poses multiple opportunities for adversaries, specifically the "4+1," to challenge our competitive advantages.<sup>6</sup> In the future, Phase Zero operations can be the entry point to integration and enhanced training in a forward deployed setting to dissuade and deter our adversaries while assuring our friends.

**Study the past, look to the future.** Phase Zero operations in the FOE cannot be fully understood without looking to the past, specifically the lessons observed through almost two decades of conflict. A 2012 study conducted by the Joint and Coalition Operational Analysis (JCOA) Division of the Joint Staff J7 provided a synopsis of strategic themes which arose from multiple studies and lessons observed from the previous decade. The study covered a wide variety of operations, from major combat operations to, counterinsurgency, counterterrorism, and humanitarian assistance while uncovering regional and global threats. The top strategic themes

were special operations forces (SOF) and general purpose forces (GPF) integration, interagency coordination, coalition operations, and host-nation partnering. The study provided solutions to mitigate these important themes highlighting the importance of integration, building habitual relationships, and establishing a robust training pipeline prior to deployment of forces.<sup>7</sup>

Another major study, conducted in 2014 by the Rand Corporation on behalf of the United States Special Operations Command, looked at the thirteen years of war (2001-2014) to identify lessons and to mitigate issues in the FOE. Not surprising are the findings regarding the character of war, and how it has changed since WWII, which has resulted in the expansion of Special Operating Forces and their utilization across the globe. This study asserts that since WWII land warfare has slowly developed from conventional combat against state actors to the current day irregular warfare led by the joint force against non-state actors.<sup>8</sup> Although myopically focused, the study highlights the changing character of war and how GPF, SOF, and the Interagency can integrate while applying lessons observed. Both of these studies highlight the re-occurring issues through almost two decades of conflict and ways to mitigate these deficiencies while promoting the joint force. These two studies underscore the premise of Phase Zero operations, specifically operations that provide a logical and peacetime entry point to integration, coordination, and partnering, ideally in a forward deployed environment.

**Forward Posture + Training = Enhanced Readiness.** Phase Zero operations can span a wide variety of venues, training, and assisting; they can also exercise the capabilities of regional partners and allies. From a force management perspective, these venues are tailored to fit the direct needs of the partnered force. These venues can be as small as individual subject matter experts conducting planning workshops, to unit planned, developed, and executed periods of instruction to be followed by deliberate evaluation through periodic exercises on an enduring

basis. Phase Zero operations, from a manning perspective, are scalable, flexible, and designed to promote both financial and operational efficiencies for a larger force in concert with the desires of the Combatant Commander and Ambassador of a particular country.

The generation of training and exercises is a delicate balance between the Combatant Commander's TCP and the Ambassadors EP. These events are closely coordinated and planned with associated US Embassy Personnel, namely Defense Attaches and the Office for Defense Cooperation (ODC). This partnership between the Combatant Commander's Staff and the ODC is pivotal in the development of training programs, exercises, and enduring relationships which are beneficial for broader American policy and are a cornerstone of Phase Zero operations.

**Relationships matter.** There are important key relationships between the Combatant Commander's Staff and the Embassy, specifically the ODC/Attaché, the Regional Security Officer (RSO), and any designated special operations liaison element. These positions within the embassy are important for the embassy staff and Ambassador and remain critical touchpoints to forward deployed forces. MAGTFs depend on the planning, foresight, and access to individuals like the RSO and subsequent Emergency Action Plans (EAP) developed in concert with Embassy personnel to safeguard US personnel and interests at a designated US Mission. Crisis response mission sets like Military Assisted Departure (MAD) and Security Reinforcement missions (SECFOR REIN) are planning and logistically intensive operations taking into account the scope, scale, and disposition of many of the US Embassies abroad. In this "new normal operating environment" access, placement, and relationship building matter to the joint force and are necessary byproducts of Phase Zero operations.

**The recent history and struggle to implement Phase Zero operations.** Forward deployed forces, specifically units like SPMAGTF-CR, who have a designated mission set for

the combatant commander in this new normal operating environment, are able to periodically conduct Phase Zero operations to maintain readiness and build relationships with selected counterparts. Although extremely limited in scope, due to competing priorities, the forward deployed nature and the access and placement of the force has resulted in some recent case studies. These specific case studies which highlight the integration within DOD and DOS are largely confined to rectifying the impending emergency instead of the deliberate focus on training and shaping of an environment as part of national policy.

**Case Study, Evacuation of USEMB Juba, South Sudan.** In January of 2014, due to increasing ethnic violence and decreasing security situation, US Ambassador Susan D. Page requested a partial MAD which would be carried out by elements of SPMAGTF-CR, United States Special Operations Command (USSOCOM), and Combined Joint Task Force-Horn of Africa (CJTF-HOA).<sup>9</sup> SPMAGTF-CR would forward deploy approximately thirty-four hundred nautical miles to forward posture in support of the MAD with organic command and control, ground combat arms personnel, and aviation assets.<sup>10</sup>

**Case Study, Evacuation of USEMB Tripoli, Libya.** In July of 2014, indirect fire landed in close proximity of the USEMB compound. With a hostile militia closing on the compound, a MAD of embassy personnel, MSG, and a SPMAGTF-CR security element was conducted overland, six-and-a-half hours, to the adjacent country of Tunisia.<sup>11</sup> Ambassador Deborah Jones requested the MAD, with a SPMAGTF-CR security element on site, and SPMAGTF-CR alert force forward postured to prepare for the contingency mission. This Combatant Command/Ambassador/Joint Force relationship ensured the 158 personnel evacuated in a 40 vehicle convoy had adequate resources to include joint enablers and fixed wing multi-role aircraft in support for the duration of the convoy.<sup>12</sup>

**Case Study, Special Purpose Marine Air-Ground Task Force-Crisis Response-Africa (SPMAGTF-CR-AF) support to USSOCOM.** In October 2014, a forward deployed MAGTF assumed primary responsibility for Recovery of Aircraft and Personnel (TRAP) and Quick Reaction Force (QRF) missions in the AFRICOM AOR.<sup>13</sup> Implied within this responsibility is the coordination with the AFRICOM, The Joint Personnel Recover Center, Theater Special Operations Command, and when necessary Diplomatic Posts and Stations.<sup>14</sup> In the short period between January 2015 and August 2016, the MAGTF forward deployed a total of eighteen times to support USSOCOM mission sets directed by the Geographic Combatant Commander (GCC).<sup>15</sup> The three previous case studies show forward deployed forces could be a natural choice to facilitate Phase Zero operations. Although, a careful balance with competing mission sets will require oversight to fully capitalize on the benefits of Phase Zero operations to support national policy.

**Current day challenges to implement Phase Zero operations.** Implementing Phase Zero operations can be difficult with numerous competing interests in a dynamic and ever-changing environment. A recent and sobering account of one MAGTF that deployed highlights the challenge to composite and train the force to support three Combatant Commanders. SPMAGTF-CR-AF 17.2's Command Element formed as an ad hoc command element from 36 different units across II Marine Expeditionary Force. The MAGTF deployed just 79 days after forming meeting "new normal" requirements for a period of 180 days forward deployed across numerous locations. During the deployment the MAGTF provided CASEVAC/TRAP/QRF standby for more than 120 partner activities in Northern Africa within the Integration, Interdependence, and Interoperability (I3) framework.<sup>16</sup> For TSC events, the MAGTF conducted 20 security cooperation engagements in 11 African countries and increased NATO

interoperability through 27 bilateral training events across USECOM AOR. Lastly, for the first time since 2014, the US Ambassador to Libya returned to Tripoli for a Strategic Senior leader Engagement with the Prime Minister and the Government of National Accord leadership. The MAGTF provided support and capabilities to the Combatant Commander and Senior State Department officials while commanding and controlling a joint force as part of the Senior Leader Engagement.<sup>17</sup> The previous three case studies and current day challenges to fully implement and capitalize on Phase Zero operations as part of a TCP have been challenging. Striking the right balance between strategic emergencies and steady-state strategic demands will not be any easier in the FOE.

**Phase Zero operations and the 2030 challenges.** Building on the current day challenges, the following vignette will demonstrate a complicated and chaotic FOE and response options the Marine Corps could provide the Combatant Commander and Ambassador within a given AOR and country. These response options include a greater capacity to deploy lighter and more mobile forces to support disaggregated operations abroad while facilitating Phase Zero operations to the greatest extent possible.

*The National Security Act of 2030 would largely entail both revisions to laws and statutes and a realignment and integration of departments and agencies to support the global war on terrorism and the continued near peer threats on a global stage. The Authorization to Use Military Force (AUMF) revision of 2030, subsequent re-alignment of Title 10, 22, and 50 authorities, and latest version of the National Security Strategy (NSS) has provided authorities in distinct countries and with regional partners to enable the Marine Corps to prioritize Small Unit Forward Deployments (SUFDD). Subsequently, the Marine Corps fully employs forward deployed personnel in accordance with the latest NMS and global campaign strategies as part of the new impetus on Phase Zero operations in concert with DOS and USSOCOM to maintain a competitive advantage.*

*The Conus Based Alert Force (CBAF) Company continues to operate aboard Sea Based Platforms to Include the USNS Puller and USNS Rowe. SPMAGTF-CR-AF Company continues to operate on both the European and African continent with selected regional partners and allies conducting train, advise, and assist missions. SPMAGTF-*

*CR-AF Platoons continue to conduct rehearsals for Military Assisted Departures (MAD) and security reinforcements in conjunction with DOS and Ambassadors/RSOs newly constructed Emergency Action Plans (EAPs) which require periodic inspection and validation due to latest terrorist attacks against High Threat/High Risk Posts and Stations (HT/HR). The Company Landing Team from the 22d MEU is currently conducting operations ashore, with the Mechanized Platoon, Small Craft Platoon, and the Small Vehicle Platoon in conjunction with the 2d MEB CE as part of Exercise AGGRESSIVE COMPOSITE. The remaining companies from 3d Battalion 2d Marines are located CONUS conducting individual and core level PTP events honing their skills in preparation for their service level exercise prior to deployment. Marine Corps units are postured to support multiple geographic combatant commands and are integrated with both USSOCOM and DOS efforts.*

*To counter the latest efforts of multiple terrorist organizations affiliated to al Qaeda, which provide a direct threat to the homeland, the DOD continues a counter-terrorism line of effort combined with conventional forward deployed forces training regional partners and allies, while benefiting from access and placement to strategic locations. On the continent of Africa, a fertile recruiting ground for extremists, an exponentially challenging and fractured security environment have posed great difficulties to multiple countries from an economic, political, and military standpoint. Globalization, severe droughts, food, water, and natural resources shortages are a factor and fuel the insurgent's informational campaign to the detriment of governments and security forces attempts to maintain a stable environment.*

*The military response begins with forward deployed MAGTFs, SPMAGTF-CR, MEUs, and MEBs, combined with SUFD who composite at designated hubs, Cooperative Security Locations (CSL), and Temporary Expeditionary Locations (TEL) to assist the regional partner to combat extremists while training and preparing local security forces. To support the US Embassy and Consulate, which continues to provide extremists opportunities to target both physical structures and DOS personnel and family members, SPMAGTF-CR inserts the forward deployed Marine Security Guard Security Augmentation Unit (MSAU)/DOS Mobile Security Deployments (MSD) at the request of the Ambassador while conducting a limited MAD of non-essential personnel and family members. The 22d MEU's Small Vehicle Platoon inserts and conducts a link-up with SUFD Platoons assisting USSOCOM COIN/counterterrorism line of effort. The Battalion Advanced Party and 2d MEB Command Element flow into an aerial point of debarkation as part of AGGRESSIVE COMPOSITE OPLAN to provide unity of command for the combatant commander and necessary touch points with the US Embassy. The PTP Company ends their service level evaluation and prepares for a 96 hour preparation to deploy order while the Basic Training Company transitions from unit level skills package to prepare for a Ten-Day preparation to deploy order.*

To fully commit to Phase Zero operations in an extremely complex and hyper-fragile FOE the Marine Corps should consider the below recommendations to adequately organize, train, evaluate, and forward deploy units as part of Combatant Commander tasks and in support of designated missions.

***Recommendation Number 1, In the FOE the United States Marine Corps should focus on developing a highly trained and educated Marine Rifle Company through both an improved leadership structure and a modified force generation model, to maintain a high level of readiness prior to deployment in support of designated Phase Zero operations.***

Increasing the level of readiness of a Marine Rifle Company can only be conducted by having a fully trained, certified, and capable force which has rigorously prepared for deployment and fully understands the operating environment. Additionally, a deliberate focus on the requisite leadership, steeped in education and experience is needed. In the FOE, shortcuts to this process are unacceptable. Fully trained rifle companies thoroughly indoctrinated in core and assigned mission essential tasks who are closely evaluated through service level evaluations, on a pre-determined timeline, is the best way to prepare Marines for deployments. This pre-determined timeline must be carefully balanced and managed to ensure the right deployment to dwell to PTP framework is allocated, resulting in the optimal time for preparation.

**Improve the Leadership Structure for the Marine Rifle Company.** In concert with previous studies and experiments, the ideal unit to forward deploy is the Marine Rifle Company, with Battalion, Division, and MEF enablers assigned as appropriate. Regardless of a SPMAGTF, MEU, or UDP deployment, the Rifle Company is the basic building block for a forward deployed unit. The 2010 revisions to the Marine Rifle Company, which included a Company Level Operations Cell and Company Level Intelligence Cell, provide a baseline for structure combined with the 2014 version of the MCWP 3-11 Marine Rifle Company table of organization. To operate in the FOE an improved leadership structure is needed which will

facilitate distributed operations and place a premium on coordination and integration with USSOCOM, Interagency, and designated partners. Table 1 provides a snapshot of the improved leadership structure, capturing the necessary training, experience, and rank requirements for key billet holders within the Marine Rifle Company.

**Table 1, Marine Rifle Company Leadership Structure 2030 Concept**

Billet	Grade/Rank	Experience Level	Training
*Company Commander	04/Major	3 deployments as Company leadership	Expeditionary Warfare School, Command and Staff College, supporting establishment tour
**Executive Officer	03/Captain	2 deployments as Platoon leadership	Expeditionary Warfare School
**Platoon Commander	02/1 <sup>st</sup> Lieutenant	1 deployment as Asst Plt Cmdr	Company level PTP
**Assistant Plt Commander	01/2 <sup>nd</sup> Lieutenant	N/A	OCS/Equivalent, The Basic School, Infantry Officers Course
***Squad Leader	E6/Staff Sergeant	Multiple deployments as Company leadership	Cpl/Sgts Course, Squad Leaders Course, Career Course, and Advanced Course
**Intelligence Analyst	E4/Corporal	1 deployment	Company level PTP
**Intelligence Analyst	E3/Lance Corporal	N/A	MOS, specialty school

\*(1) additional 04/Major billet would be needed in addition to the current standard Infantry Bn T/O

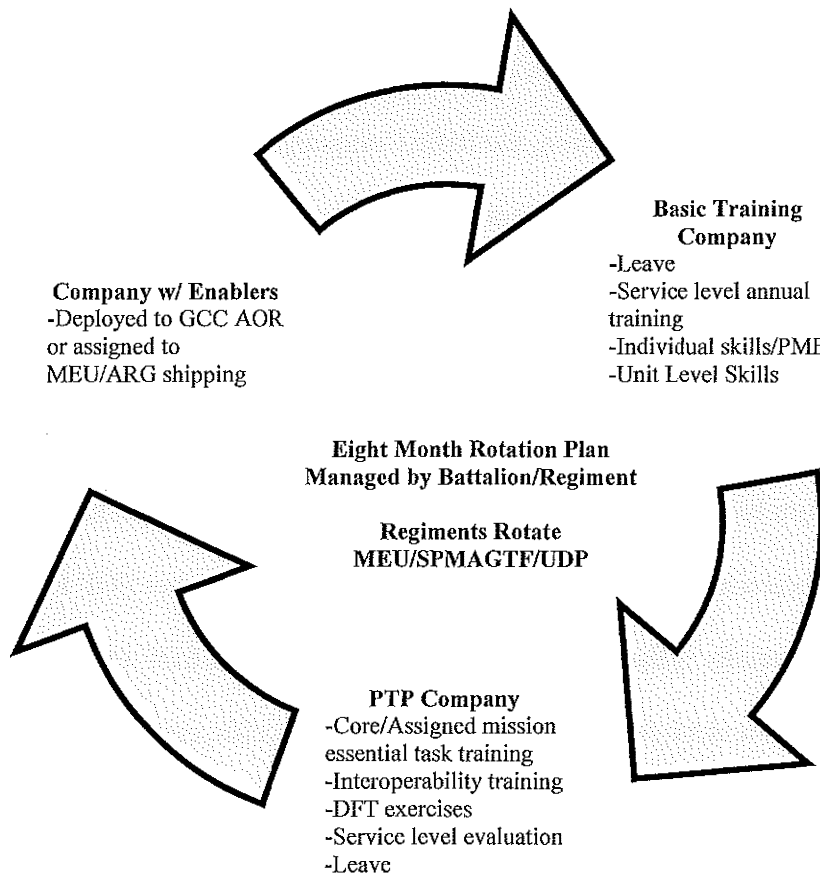
\*\*Existing Infantry Battalion structure

\*\*\* Additional structure would be needed to support the Force Generation Model depicted in Figure 1

Battalion enablers (Weapons Company) are a major consideration for both the Battalion and Company Staff depending on the deployment and scope of responsibilities. Overall, the Battalion Staff and Weapons Company as a force provider will allocate the necessary enablers to the outgoing Rifle Company prior to deployment. Division enablers, such as Tanks, AAVs, Artillery, and Battalion Reconnaissance would still provide same capabilities for MEU deployments and would be ready to task-organize for special circumstances for any other deployments. MEF enablers would still provide capabilities similar to the current day SPMAGTF and MEU packages.

**Improve the Force Generation Model for the Marine Rifle Company.** To fully provide the most capable, trained, and evaluated Rifle Company with enablers, a rotation plan is needed to ensure the adequate time is allocated to the Rifle Company and the Battalion Staff as the manager and force provider. With one Rifle Company as the main effort and priority for resources, this leaves the two remaining Rifle Companies in a training status, affording the ability to properly conduct individual, PME/local schools, collective level training, and assigned mission essential tasks. This eight month rotation plan for the Marine Rifle Company would be managed by the Battalion and Regiment. Figure 1 highlights this eight month rotation plan broken down by the Basic Training Company, PTP Company, and the Forward Deployed Company.

**Figure 1, Marine Rifle Company Force Generation Model 2030 Concept**



Training, education, and experience are intangibles that must not be overlooked in a time compressed environment when preparing Marines for deployment. Ensuring the adequate table of organization and training continuum adequately prepares the Rifle Company to operate in the FOE with partners, interagency, and USSOCOM as part of Phase Zero operations.

***Recommendation Number 2, In the FOE the United States Marine Corps should conduct Phase Zero operations to enable partnership, encourage integration, and facilitate training opportunities with Department of State, United States Special Operations Command, and selected regional counterparts.***

Training does not end with the forward deployment of a MAGTF, it is technically just beginning. Phase Zero operations provide the MAGTF the ability to maintain levels of pre-deployed readiness, the extended and deliberate PTP focused on core and assigned mission essential tasks, and interoperability training, while providing the opportunity to expand the scope and scale of the next training venue in a forward deployed setting. With these solid foundations of core and assigned mission essential tasks, combined with interoperability training with counterparts, and a service level evaluation, the Rifle Company is fully enabled to facilitate Phase Zero operations as part of the Combatant Commanders TCP.

Supporting the GCC's TCP in concert with USSOCOM would be a rather seamless event after the designated PTP. GPFs in concert with SOF can enhance the training and experience of partnered nations and provide a truly unique and diverse experience which only strengthens the partner's abilities. From basic unit level offense and defensive skills, leadership seminars, and operational planning exercises, the ability of GPF only complements what SOF forces are already conducting, especially if the partnered unit has both GPF and SOF forces. For example, ensuring partnered forces understand the concepts between a specific counterinsurgency or counterterrorism strategy will go a long way to enable the partnered force to maintain a stable security environment.

A joint force cannot operate in a given country within a GCC's TCP without fully leveraging and understanding the Ambassador's Engagement Plan. Phase Zero operations require close coordination between both the TCP and the EP to ensure unity of effort and allocation of resources. Close coordination with the RSO, additive members of the DSS, and the SOFLE who rotate through stations are the primary source of training and coordination during Phase Zero operations. Additionally, leveraging the natural relationships with the MSG and any rotating MSAU would be beneficial and provide for additional areas and venues to explore training opportunities.

***Recommendation Number 3, In the FOE the United States Marine Corps should fully leverage Phase Zero Operations to fully exercise core and assigned mission essential tasks in a forward deployed setting.***

Shaping the environment for major contingency operations if required, posturing, and fully integrating all response options at the disposal of the GCC in preparation for these contingences is the ultimate goal of Phase Zero operations. The natural economy of force mission that is the genesis of Phase Zero operations is the initial means to an end. In times of crises, where additional combat power and capabilities are needed, the composite methodology is fully implemented. This composite of forces is not something that can be conducted without detailed planning, coordination, and rehearsal of concepts on a grand scale. This forward deployed composite exercise would stress the operational reach and logistical footprint of the MAGTF, response times and forward deployment of the JTF capable MEB CE, and abilities of the additional Rifle Companies and Bn Fwd to establish PTDOs ultimately conducting reception, staging, onward movement, and integration in theater. The composite of multiple forward deployed MAGTFs, the requisite CE onto ARG/coalition shipping or APOEs is the ultimate goal. This amphibious force is trained to conduct a variety of amphibious and enabling

operations from maritime based platforms, Intermediate Staging Bases or Cooperative Security Locations, and other fixed locations abroad. A forward deployed composite exercise would leverage all of the capabilities as part of the GCC in concert with the Interagency to fully align all elements of national power against a given contingency or major operation.

Phase Zero operations that shape, influence, and build capacity in partners can set the ground work for major combat operations and could prevent large formations of US troop commitments to obscure and challenging locations.<sup>18</sup> The readiness of the MAGTF, operational mobility, and limited sustainability make the MAGTF an ideal Phase Zero force in support of the Combatant Commander. The Marine Corps will benefit from the access, placement, and building partner capacity through direct coordination, education, training, and partnering of forces. The improved leadership structure and force generation model for the Marine Rifle Company will be important for this endeavor. Close coordination between US Embassies abroad and USSOCOM conducting core activities under certain US codes will be necessary for future contingency planning or to enable the buildup of forces for contingency operations. Preparing to fight through, by, and with partners is a strategy that will be beneficial to the Marine Corps in the FOE. The benefits provided through Phase Zero operations could assist the Marine Corps with setting the conditions for OPLAN activations, enable a framework for forward deployed composite exercises, and extend and enhance the operational reach of the existing MAGTF. Lastly, it builds the necessary relationships, fosters continuity, and establishes touchpoints with partners and allies while building an understanding of the operating environment.

Forward deployed expeditionary forces are the ideal solution to facilitate Phase Zero operations in support of a geographic combatant command theater campaign plan in the FOE. The National Intelligence Council's (NIC's) Global Trends 2030: Alternative Futures Report

states “most intrastate conflict will be characterized by irregular warfare—terrorism, subversion, sabotage, insurgency, and criminal activities” and that intrastate conflict will also be increasingly irregular.<sup>19</sup> This FOE will put a premium on how we train, coordinate, and employ American resources to counter threats against the United States and its coalition partners. The latest version of the QDR discusses how the “United States will rely on our comparative advantages, including the strength of our economy, our strong network of alliances and partnerships, and our military’s human capital.”<sup>20</sup> This statement regarding human capital cannot be overlooked. To maintain that competitive advantage, the proper application of Phase Zero operations by a fully trained, educated, and prepared force is only the beginning to deter adversaries while reassuring our partners. While the character of war continues to change and the FOE is largely uncertain, the US will rely on the education, training, and innovative efforts of forward deployed forces. These expeditionary forces will operate as part of a joint and interagency force in a dynamic environment, fully understanding the inherent risks, and the strategic direction of the United States Government.<sup>21</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Thomas Waldman, “Politics and War: Clausewitz’s paradoxical Equation,” *Parameters*, Autumn (2010), 2.

<sup>2</sup> Colin Clark, “CJCS Dunford Calls For Strategic Shifts; At Peace Or At War Is Insufficient,” *Breaking Defense*, 21 September (2016): The “4+1” consists of four nation states: Russia, China, Iran, and North Korea, plus the enduring and mutating problem of Islamic extremism largely founded and implemented by al-Qaeda. The five domains are the land, sea, air, space, and cyberspace.

<sup>3</sup> Joint Staff, *Joint Publication 3-0, Joint Operations* (Suffolk, VA: 17 January 2017), V-9, [http://www.jcs.mil/Portals/36/Documents/Doctrine/pubs/jp3\\_0\\_20170117.pdf](http://www.jcs.mil/Portals/36/Documents/Doctrine/pubs/jp3_0_20170117.pdf)

<sup>4</sup> Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, *The National Military Strategy of the United States of American*, Washington, DC, (2015): i.

<sup>5</sup> Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, *The National Military Strategy of the United States of American*, Washington, DC, (2016) Chairman’s Foreword.

<sup>6</sup> Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, *Foreword to The National Military Strategy of the United States of American*, Washington, DC, (2016). The 2016 version of the NMS is classified, the foreword provided by General Joseph Dunford was unclassified and provides a synopsis on the five key challenges, domains the joint force will operate, and how the joint force must integrate to operate in a dynamic and ever-changing security environment.

<sup>7</sup> Joint Staff, *Decade of War, Volume I Enduring Lessons from the Past Decade of Operations* (Suffolk, VA: Joint and Coalition Operational Analysis Division, 2012): iii. This study reviewed 46 JCOA studies from inception of the organization, examined over 400 findings, observations, and best practices in order to identify

enduring lessons to inform future joint force development. Although the study is an important body of work and succinctly provides waypoints for future joint force development, it neither addresses every aspect of every operation over the past decades nor is a comprehensive analysis of lessons developed by other organizations.

<sup>8</sup> Rand Corporation, *Lessons from 13 Years of War Point to a Better U.S. Strategy*, Santa Monica, CA: Rand Army Research Division, (2014), xi.

<sup>9</sup> John Berry, "U.S. Marine Corps in Review," *United States Naval Institute, Proceedings* (May 2015).

<sup>10</sup> 8<sup>th</sup> Marine Regiment, Special Purpose Marine Air Ground Task Force Crisis Response-Africa 16.1, 8<sup>th</sup> Marines Special Purpose Marine Air-Ground Task Force-Crisis Response-Africa 16.1 2d MARDIV Post Deployment Brief (Quantico, VA: Marine Corps Center for Lessons Learned, 25 November 2016), Slide 2. SPMAGTF-CR-AF 16.1 would again support US Embassy Juba deploying (4) MV-22s, (3) KC-130s along with 212 personnel within 120 hours to Entebbe, Uganda in response to unrest in South Sudan. The force established and maintained a Notification +2 (N+2) alert from an expeditionary site in Uganda providing the only vertical lift capability for on call QRF and personnel evacuation support for over 60 days.

<sup>11</sup> John Berry, "U.S. Marine Corps in Review," *United States Naval Institute, Proceedings* (May 2015).

<sup>12</sup> Hope Hodge Seck, "Marines Reveal Details of Tense Embassy Evacuation from Libya," *Marine Corps Times* (September 25, 2014).

<sup>13</sup> 2d Marine Regiment, Special Purpose Marine Air-Ground Task Force-Crisis Response-Africa 15.1, *Special Purpose Marine Air-Ground Task Force Crisis Response-Africa 15.1 National Capital Region Post Deployment Brief* (Quantico, VA: Marine Corps Center for Lessons Learned, October 2015), Slide 6.

<sup>14</sup> Robert Fulford, "An Interview with Colonel Robert Fulford," interview by Steve Thompson, *Marine Corps Center for Lessons Learned* (2 March 2015), 2.

<sup>15</sup> 2d Marine Regiment, Special Purpose Marine Air-Ground Task Force-Crisis Response-Africa 15.1, *Special Purpose Marine Air-Ground Task Force Crisis Response-Africa 15.1 National Capital Region Post Deployment Brief* (Quantico, VA: Marine Corps Center for Lessons Learned, October 2015), Slide 6. 6<sup>th</sup> Marine Regiment, Special Purpose Marine Air-Ground Task Force-Crisis Response-Africa 15.2, *Special Purpose Marine Air-Ground Task Force Crisis Response-Africa 15.2 Rotation Post Deployment Brief* (Quantico, VA: Marine Corps Center for Lessons Learned, October 2015), Slide 7. 8<sup>th</sup> Marine Regiment, Special Purpose Marine Air-Ground Task Force-Crisis Response-Africa 16.1, 8<sup>th</sup> Marines Special Purpose Marine Air-Ground Task Force Crisis Response-Africa 16.1 2d MARDIV Post Deployment Brief (Quantico, VA: Marine Corps Center for Lessons Learned, October 2015), Slide 4. This number accounts for rotations 15.1, 15.2, and 16.1 rotations. 16.2, 17.1, and 17.2 activities were not publically disclosed. Historically, each rotation conducted between 5-8 forward deployments.

<sup>16</sup> The USMC and USSOCOM Concept for Integration, Interdependence, and Interoperability provides a broad framework within which the Marine and SOF operational relationship may be evaluated, strengthened, and evolved to better support GCC priorities.

<sup>17</sup> II Marine Expeditionary Force, Special Purpose Marine Air-Ground Task Force Crisis Response-Africa 17.2, *SPMAGTF-CR-AF Rotation 17.2 National Capital Region Post-Deployment Brief*, (Quantico, VA: Marine Corps Center for Lessons Learned, September 2017), Slide 9 and 11. 17.2 deployed from 4 April 2017 to 1 October 2017 to the USAFRICOM and USEUCOM AORs. The MAGTF supported operations NEW NORMAL, ODYSSEY RESOLVE, JUNIPER SHIELD, and OBSERVANT COMPASS transition.

<sup>18</sup> Rand Corporation, *Lessons from 13 Years of War Point to a Better U.S. Strategy*, Santa Monica, CA: Rand Army Research Division, (2014), xv.

<sup>19</sup> National Intelligence Council, *Global Trends 2030: Alternative Worlds*, NIC 2012-001, (December 2012), 59-60.

<sup>20</sup> Department of Defense, *Quadrennial Defense Review*, Washington, DC, (2014), III.

<sup>21</sup> LtGen James Mattis and LtCol Frank Hoffman, "Future Warfare: The Rise of Hybrid Wars." *U.S. Naval Institute, Proceedings* (November 2005), 18-19.

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