



Expeditionary Warrior 08
Seabasing
Quick Look Report
March 2008



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EXPEDITIONARY WARRIOR 2008

Quick Look Report

Seabasing is defined as the rapid deployment, assembly, command, projection, reconstitution, and re-employment of joint combat power from the sea, while providing continuous support, sustainment, and force protection to select expeditionary joint forces without reliance on land bases within the Joint Operations Area (JOA). These capabilities expand operational maneuver options, and facilitate assured access and entry from the sea. *-Seabasing JIC v1.0*

Overview

This Quick Look provides a brief, initial review of the lessons and insights developed during *Expeditionary Warrior 2008 (EW 08)*. The final assessment will provide a more detailed discussion of the war game.

EW 08 is the latest iteration of the Marine Corps Title 10 Wargaming Program. Corresponding Title 10 wargames from the other Services include the Army Unified Quest Series, the Air Force Futures/Unified Engagement Series, and the Navy Unified Course Series. Previous *EW* events focused on USMC-SOCOM interoperability (*EW 03* and *EW 04*), Distributed Operations (*EW 05*), Small Wars and Counter-Insurgency efforts (*EW 06*), and Campaign Design and the transition to Planning (*EW 07*).

At the direction of the Commandant of the Marine Corps, this year's *Expeditionary Warrior* looked at the Joint, interagency, and multinational implications of the Seabasing concept. *EW 08* focused on operations from the sea base across the spectrum of operations ranging from humanitarian assistance to the prevention of civil war. Through the use of three vignettes set in various unstable states, *EW 08* explored specific Seabasing concepts, capabilities, and the integration and sustainment of the Joint, interagency and multinational force across that range in a seminar style war game.

EW 08's objectives were to develop a common understanding of the Seabasing concept and examine the interoperability and integration issues faced in working with and from a joint sea base.

EW 08 was conducted 2-7 March 2008 at the William F. Bolger Leadership Center in Potomac, Maryland. The culmination of six months of conferences, workshops, seminars, and planning events, *EW 08* brought together a diverse team of professionals to examine the Seabasing concept. All five branches of the U.S. Armed Forces, USSOCOM, USJFCOM, TRANSCOM, representatives from the intelligence and interagency communities, academia/think-tanks, and 11 multinational partners including Australia, Canada, Germany, France, Netherlands, New Zealand, Romania, Spain, Singapore, Sweden and the United Kingdom participated.

Why Seabasing?

Seabasing is a concept that provides a solution to the challenge of conducting Joint missions across a range of operations from the sea, across the littorals, and ashore. It provides for the application of capabilities leveraging a Joint, interagency, and multinational effort.

Joint Force Commanders (JFCs) employing the seabasing concept are better able to overcome many of the access challenges present in the current post-Cold War, post-9/11 security environment. These access challenges include: 1) the challenge posed by geography, 2) the challenge associated with potential adversaries' capabilities, 3) third country concerns which inhibit access to their APODs, SPODs and territory in the pursuit of action, and 4) domestic U.S. and coalition political sentiment against large troop presence in non-permissive operating environments. Even without these challenges, Seabasing allows the U.S. and coalition partners to minimize presence ashore while expanding options and enhancing flexibility for the nation.

Game Overview: Methodology and Approach

EW 08 was a seminar-style war game in which teams explored the concept of Seabasing. Teams spent three days examining three separate Arc of Instability vignettes dealing with a complex

range of operational problems. The vignettes were set in the year 2023 and had varying access challenges stemming from geography, threat capabilities, and coalition and third country political concerns.

Seven seminar teams explored three different viewpoints of Seabasing.

- The first five teams took a broad look at Seabasing concepts and capabilities. Throughout the week they advanced and refined the Seabasing concept while identifying interoperability concerns.
- The sixth team was not constrained by the 2023 timeframe to allow for examination of more conceptual future platforms and capabilities.
- The seventh team examined operations from the sea base from an interagency perspective.

Game Insights. The following paragraphs summarize *EW 08*'s significant takeaways:

Understanding Seabasing

- *Full Range of Military Operations:* Seabasing enhances the JFC's operational flexibility across the full range of military operations—from Train/Advise/Support (T/A/S) and disaster relief operations to limited war and major combat operations. Seabasing is a forward-presence enabler for U.S. and coalition capabilities to conduct Irregular Warfare (IW) and prosecute the Global War on Terrorism (GWOT).

MYTH: Seabasing is limited to Major Combat Operations (MCO)

FACT: Seabasing supports all Joint operations

- *Complementary Basing and Presence:* Seabasing can be used independent of or in conjunction with existing land bases. It is ideally suited for situations where close proximity

MYTH: Seabasing replaces shore basing

FACT: Seabasing is a part of a flexible, global basing system

is necessary but actual presence is problematic. For example, current political sensitivities in Africa regarding the standing-up of AFRICOM as well as an ability to project presence throughout the continent makes a sea base an ideal venue to provide a forward headquarters for the

combatant command.

- *Scalability:* Unlike land bases, there is no specific duration or size for a sea base. A sea base is scalable in that it can rapidly aggregate to meet operational needs and can rapidly disperse when appropriate. The sea base also allows a commander to optimize his footprint ashore — balancing political sensitivity, flexibility and the requirement to sustain.
- *Survivability:* Operating over the horizon and using thousands of square miles of sea space, the sea base is more difficult for adversaries to target. Additionally, in the event of severe weather (typhoons, hurricanes, etc.) the sea base can move to safety and then return to an operating area unscathed and with minimal disruption to the Joint Task Force's operations.

Integration & Partnering

- *Command and Control:* Co-locating Joint, interagency and coalition command and control (C2) aboard the sea base provides many benefits for conducting operations. These benefits include increased unity of effort and a larger, sharper common operating picture. However sea-based C2 also poses challenges in providing spaces and interoperable systems.
- *Multinational Integration:* Interoperability and compatibility for a variety of multinational partners is a challenge for the sea base. Partners may not have compatible platforms for transfer of materiel between their ships and the sea base. U.S. Seabasing capabilities need to bridge that gap by providing our partners simple, cost-informed interface solutions and standards that accommodate both legacy and future multinational systems.
 - More experimentation with the synchronization of Special Operations Forces (SOF), MN forces, and interagency from the sea base is needed to identify these solutions and standards.
 - U.S. information sharing with partner nations continues to be a major obstacle to greater interoperability for those nations and their military forces. The expressed view of participating representatives from other nations was that C2 interoperability cannot be achieved until the requirement to enable information sharing is made a priority.

- *Political Enabler*: Seabasing’s inherent force protection capability eases the political sensitivities of coalition partners and increases likelihood of participation in coalition operations.
- *Special Operations Forces Integration*: Seabasing provides SOF teams the ability to use the sea as maneuver space, concealment, and a base of operations. The sea base is also an enabler for Irregular Warfare (IW) campaigns in which SOF have a central role.
 - More experimentation examining the integration of SOF forces with the sea base is needed to fully exploit this capability.
- *Interagency (IA) Integration*: The sea base provides the U.S. Chief of Mission an ability to bring a “whole of government” capability to bear without triggering host nation sensibilities over a large U.S. presence. The sea base can remain off-shore and out of sight, ready to provide a Non-combatant Evacuation Operation (NEO) or demonstrate U.S. commitment to regional security and stability on very short notice.
 - More experimentation and training is needed to fully develop and exploit the interagency’s use of the sea base.

Functional Attributes of Seabasing

- *Logistics*: The sea base provides a unique venue to stage, assemble, and deploy logistics for forces ashore. However, to enhance the sea base’s functionality and minimize the need for a large build-up of supplies ashore, the sea base must be able to selectively off-load equipment and supplies, manage its embarked inventories (asset visibility), and move equipment and supplies between ships and connectors. The size of the Joint force that ultimately can be deployed and sustained by the Joint sea base is largely dependent on the number and capability of these attributes:
 - Selective off-load: the ability to selectively retrieve and deliver specific items or equipment from a ship’s hold is essential. Current sea lift is densely packed and needs to be completely unpacked before it can be used.

MYTH: Seabasing equals MPF(F)

FACT: The sea base is tailored from a variety of Seabasing components such as CSG, ESG, MPF(F), CLF, Sister Service, and Multinational ships

- Asset visibility: real-time knowledge of what is or is not available by having the ability to track, store, and retrieve items. Asset visibility is complementary to selective offload. Asset visibility is already in use by many commercial firms.
 - Connecting Platforms: The sea base needs platforms such as the Mobile Landing Platform (MLP) to serve as the transfer point between cargo hold and surface and air connectors.
 - Connectors: Robust (capabilities and quantities) surface and air connectors are necessary to deploy and sustain forces. These connectors currently include platforms such as the Joint High Speed Vessel (JHSV), V-22 Osprey, and CH-53 Sea Stallion.
- *Service Component Enablers*: In order for non-Naval Services and partners to take full advantage of the sea base, systems and platforms need to be interoperable. This includes ensuring a common C2 architecture as well as the necessary modification of U.S. Army equipment for operations in a maritime environment. Plans and designs for the U.S. Army's Future Combat Systems and the Naval platforms carrying those systems need to address operations from and with the sea base.

Proponency of Seabasing

- *Proponency*: A single Executive Agent is needed to articulate, coordinate, integrate, and advocate the Seabasing concept at all levels in and out of the Department of Defense. Independent Service Seabasing capability development efforts (and experiments) should be coordinated through the Executive Agent to ensure unity of effort, promote integrated capabilities, and develop a truly Joint sea base.
- *Strategic Communications*: As the proponent, the Executive Agent should be in charge of strategic communications on behalf of the Seabasing community. The Executive Agent would ensure that Seabasing capabilities and capacities are well known within that community.

MYTH: Seabasing is a Navy-Marine Corps program of platforms

FACT: Seabasing is a Joint, Multinational, and Interagency enabling concept

- An important aspect of strategic communications is clarifying and highlighting how Seabasing supports the National Security Strategy (and other strategies) and during the upcoming Quadrennial Defense Review (QDR).
- *Training and Education:* Seabasing awareness and understanding needs to be promoted at all levels throughout the Services and the interagency.

Way Forward

Identify an Executive Agent for Seabasing

- *Project Oversight: The Executive Agent and his staff would be the ultimate “knowledge repository” for all aspects related to Seabasing.*
 - The Executive Agent should ensure that Seabasing capabilities and concepts are routinely reflected in the following documents (at a minimum):
 - Strategic Planning Guidance (SPG)
 - Global Development of the Force (GDF)
 - Global Employment of the Force (GEF)
 - Capstone Concept for Joint Operations (CCJO)
 - Irregular Warfare (IW) Joint Operating Concept
 - Service Operating Concepts
 - Naval Seabasing CONOPS
 - Naval Operations Concept 2008

Assess and develop platform capabilities and capacities to match future security demands.

The full range of Seabasing requirements--HA/DR through MCO--need to be defined and assessed. In particular there is a need to quantify capability and interoperability gaps. This includes:

- Understanding lift requirements by surface, air, subsurface platforms in order to sustain forces ashore.
- Holistically addressing *all* Seabasing related requirements and inventories (MSC, Maritime Administration, Coast Guard, APS, etc.).

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- Working with Combatant Commanders to better define GWOT and Theater Security Cooperation related Seabasing requirements.
- Building a master list of key partner “niche” capabilities, by country, that coalition partners can bring to a multinational operation.
- Recommending Seabasing capabilities and capacities that are most important and should be moved up in the programmed timeline by assessing what Combatant Commanders engaged in the Global War on Terrorism and Irregular Warfare operations most need.

Implement Comprehensive Exercise and Experimentation Plans. Joint Seabasing objectives within COCOM joint training plans and schedules need to be crafted:

- Gain JFCOM support for enabling Combatant Commander exercises.
- Develop closer coordination with NECC.

Leverage current Global Fleet Station experiment (APS 08) lessons and plan for a follow on in PACOM in 2009 with addition of coalition partners.

Navy Title 10 Wargame:

- Joint Seabasing themes
- Tie in to Navy’s “Global Maritime Partnership”
- Joint and Coalition concepts of employment
- Key capability gaps and potential enablers

Multinational and interagency participation needs to include:

- Briefing Allied Command Transformation (ACT) HQ and encourage planning for a European Amphibious Initiative (EAI) Seabasing exercise/experiment in the MED.
- Briefing NATO HQ and encourage to plan a NATO Response Force (NRF) exercise involving Seabasing lines of operation.
- A plan to incorporate a “CMOC Afloat” in a future exercise.

The full range of joint Seabasing experimentation efforts should be lead and coordinated by a single Executive Agent who needs to:

- Define and mitigate interoperability and “standardization” challenges in key areas such as information sharing, trans-loading, packaging, sustainment, etc.

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- Map Seabasing Capabilities Based Assessment gaps to specific exercise, R&D and S&T initiatives in the out-years.

Execute Education and Campaign Plan. A coordinated communications strategy between and among Services, COCOMs, multinational and interagency stakeholders should be implemented.

- Forming and ‘deploying’ a Joint Seabasing Presentation Team that would take Seabasing vision, concepts, definitions to key audiences:
 - Combatant Commander and service component staffs
 - Congress
 - Think Tanks/Federally Funded Research & Development Centers (FFRDCs)
 - Interagency
 - Joint Staff
 - Office of the Secretary of Defense (OSD)
 - Professional Schools (for instance, all levels of PME for service members)
 - NATO and Allied Command Transformation (ACT) Headquarters
 - Coalition Partners
- Packaging and distributing a collection of vetted, standardized products to enable spokesmen to “carry the message.”
- Developing a comparison and contrast tool to demonstrate / communicate the differences in “legacy” versus “future” Seabasing aspirations.

Contact Information

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Participating Organizations

- DOD
 - USMC
 - MCCDC, HQMC, MARFORCOM, MARFORPAC, MARFORCENT, MARFOREUR, MCIA, 4th Civil Affairs Group
 - USA
 - ARSTAFF, ARCIC, AMED
 - USN
 - OPNAV, C2F, NWDC, NAVSEA
 - USAF
 - USCG
 - JFCOM J9
 - SOCOM (WARCOM, AFSOC, MARSOC)
 - TRANSCOM
 - Military Sealift Command
 - Joint Staff: J8
 - Interagency (DoS, CIA, USAID, DOE, DOT)

- Academia / Think tanks
 - NWC, MCWAR, RAND, CNAS, CFR

- Multi-National
 - NATO HQ SACT
 - United Kingdom
 - Australia
 - New Zealand
 - Netherlands
 - Sweden
 - France
 - Romania
 - Spain
 - Singapore
 - Canada
 - Germany