A FORCE IN READINESS
MAGTF 101
Marine Air Ground Task Force

The Marine Air Ground Task Force (MAGTF) is the Marine Corps’ principle organization for conducting missions across the range of military operations. MAGTFs provide combatant commanders with scalable, versatile expeditionary forces able to respond to a broad range of contingency, crisis and conflict situations. A single commander leads and coordinates this combined-arms team from pre-deployment training through all phases of deployment and employment.

The Marines combine air, ground, and logistical forces to operate as a coherent, self-sufficient force.

MAGTFs are tailored by the mission, for rapid deployment by air and/or sea. No matter the mission, a MAGTF is comprised of four deployable elements: the Command Element (CE), Ground Combat Element (GCE), Aviation Combat Element (ACE), and Logistics Combat Element (LCE).

CE- The Command Element contains the MAGTF headquarters and units that provide intelligence, communications, and administrative support.

GCE- The Ground Combat Element is task organized to conduct ground operations and includes infantry, artillery, reconnaissance, armor, light armor, amphibious assault vehicles, engineer, and other forces.

ACE- The Aviation Combat Element conducts offensive and defense air operations and is task organized to perform the six functions of Marine aviation – Assault Support, Anti-Aircraft Warfare, Offensive Air Support, Electronic Warfare, Control of Aircraft and Missiles, and Aerial Reconnaissance.

LCE- The Logistics Combat Element is task organized to provide the full range of combat logistics functions and capabilities necessary to maintain the continued readiness and sustainability of the MAGTF as a whole.

Bases/Stations- Provides operating forces and tenant commands continuous, effective service and support to meet present and future operating force requirements.

MEF- The Marine Expeditionary Force is the principal warfighting organization during larger crises or contingencies. MEFs are the primary “standing MAGTFs” in peacetime and wartime.

MEB- The Marine Expeditionary Brigade is the mid-sized MAGTF and provides a transitional capability between a MEU and MEF. With 30 days of accompanying supplies, MEBs can conduct amphibious assault and sustained operations ashore in any geographic environment.

MEU- The forward-deployed Marine Expeditionary Units embark aboard amphibious ready groups to operate continuously in the area of responsibility of the unified combatant commander and provide a flexible sea-based MAGTF.

SPMAGTF- A Special Purpose MAGTF is task organized to accomplish a specific mission, operation, or regionally focused exercise.
III MEF
III Marine Expeditionary Force

Comanned by a lieutenant general with its headquarters at Camp Courtney, III Marine Expeditionary Force’s mission is to provide forward based and deployed forces to the commander, U.S. Pacific Command, to conduct Phase 0 engagement and theater security cooperation events, support contingencies and emergent requirements, and prepare to rapidly execute existing operations plans in support of the theater and national military strategies.

III MEF is organized as a Marine Air Ground Task Force (MAGTF) to provide a rapidly deployable, flexible self-contained fighting force. The Marines combine air, ground, and logistics forces to operate as a coherent, self-sufficient force. Each mission dictates the MAGTF’s scale and structure, giving the Marine Corps the flexibility to respond to any crisis and making it a “force in readiness.” A MEF is the largest of all MAGTFs.

III MEF is comprised of 3rd Marine Division, 1st Marine Aircraft Wing, 3rd Marine Logistics Group, 3rd Marine Expeditionary Brigade, and the 31st Marine Expeditionary Unit.

The majority of III MEF forces are located on Okinawa and at full strength total nearly 19,000 Marines and sailors at 10 camps and an air station. More than 3,200 Marines and sailors are stationed on mainland Japan at Marine Corps Air Station Iwakuni and Camp Fuji, and approximately 5,000 are stationed in Hawaii.

III MEF Marines and sailors engage in more than 65 combined, bilateral and multi-lateral training exercises annually throughout the Asia-Pacific region, in countries including treaty allies Japan, the Kingdom of Thailand, the Republic of the Philippines, the Republic of Korea and Australia. These exercises build partner capacity, develop and maintain strong regional alliances and military-to-military contacts. These exercises prepare III MEF to conduct operations ranging from major combat operations to humanitarian assistance and disaster relief.

III MEF has played a significant role in humanitarian assistance and disaster relief missions throughout the region. The MEF assisted the relief efforts led by the Government of Japan during Operation Tomodachi after an earthquake and tsunami struck Honshu March 11, 2011. III MEF also conducted HA/DR missions in Thailand in Oct. 2011, the Republic of the Philippines in Oct. 2010, and Indonesia in Oct. 2009.
Comanned by a brigadier general, with its headquarters at Camp Courtney, 3rd Marine Expeditionary Brigade provides a scalable, standing, joint capable, forward deployed headquarters that is capable of conducting amphibious operations, crisis response and limited contingency operations.

3rd MEB is also capable of enabling follow on forces and aiding in theater security cooperation to strengthen alliance relationships and support III Marine Expeditionary Force operational requirements.

The MEB is a scalable Marine Air Ground Task Force that may vary in size and assets utilized to meet the needs of an operation. The MEB is made up of a command element, ground combat element (regimental headquarters), air combat element (Marine aircraft group headquarters), and logistics combat element (combat logistics regiment headquarters). A MEB is the mid-sized force within the MAGTF. The size of each of the supporting elements is determined by the mission requirements, allowing the MEB flexibility in force structure. Based on the mission, the MEB can operate with 7,000 to 15,000 Marines.

The MEB is a force in readiness able to deploy rapidly and conduct operations across the spectrum from humanitarian assistance and disaster relief to a high intensity amphibious assault.

When responding to a crisis, the MEB can marry up with a maritime prepositioning squadron and facilitate expansion to a larger MEF-size force or form the command element of a joint task force headquarters to support an operation that is conducted in conjunction with our sister services. The flexibility of the MEB allows them to respond quickly and effectively to accomplish the mission.

3rd MEB conducts exercises and operations and training throughout the Asia-Pacific region in support of the United States Pacific Command theater security strategy. While training exercises conducted in the region are focused on military interoperability training, the MEB also focuses on civil action programs. The MEB provides medical support and engineering capabilities to the host nation to better hone its wide skill set and strengthen relationships.
Commanded by a colonel with its headquarters at Camp Hansen, the 31st Marine Expeditionary Unit is the only continually forward-deployed MEU, and remains the United States’ force-in-readiness in the Asia-Pacific region.

The most active of the III MEF contingency forces, the 31st MEU includes approximately 2,200 Marines and Sailors, and is comprised of four elements: the command element; an infantry battalion with artillery, amphibious vehicles and other attachments; an air combat element reinforced with a Harrier jet detachment; and a combat logistics battalion.

The 31st MEU is supported by the Unit Deployment Program, which rotates infantry battalions, artillery batteries and light armored vehicle and amphibious assault vehicle companies from the U.S. to Japan for six- to seven-month training cycles.

The 31st MEU regularly embarks aboard the ships of the Amphibious Ready Group, which consists of an Amphibious Assault Ship, a Dock Landing Ship, and an Amphibious Transport Dock Ship. This Navy-Marine Corps team represents the first choice in initial crisis-response options available in the region.

The MEU consistently trains for and is capable of executing rapid response to short-notice missions including amphibious raids, amphibious assaults and maritime special operations such as visit, board, search and seizure of pirated vessels and tactical recovery of downed aircraft and personnel. Additionally, the MEU regularly trains to be able to provide humanitarian assistance and disaster relief and conduct civilian evacuations as required. The MEU’s capabilities include medium and heavy-lift air transportation, ground transportation, medical and dental health services, supply distribution, power and water production, heavy equipment and construction. The 31st MEU conducted three humanitarian relief operations in 2009, one in 2010, and one in 2011 (Operation Tomodachi).

While deployed around the region, the 31st MEU is regularly tasked with conducting bilateral and multilateral exercises, partnering with our allied nations in the region. The MEU’s continually deployed presence contributes to peace and security in the Asia-Pacific.
Commanded by a major general with its headquarters at Camp Courtney, the 3rd Marine Division is the ground combat element of III Marine Expeditionary Force, and its mission is to provide task organized forces, deploy and conduct expeditionary assault operations in support of national security objectives.

Third MarDiv consists of approximately 7,500 Marines and sailors and is composed of two infantry regiments, the 3rd and 4th Marine Regiments. The Division also consists of the 12th Marine Artillery Regiment, Headquarters Battalion, 3rd Reconnaissance Battalion and Combat Assault Battalion. CAB is comprised of an Assault Amphibious Company, a Light Armored Reconnaissance Company and a Combat Engineer Company. Third MarDiv also provides instructors and staff to the Jungle Warfare Training Center on northern Okinawa, the only facility of its kind in the Department of Defense.

Third MarDiv is the primary ground multipurpose force in the Asia-Pacific region. The division’s headquarters and many of its units are located on Okinawa. One of its infantry regiments and one of its artillery battalions are stationed in Hawaii.

Third MarDiv participates in the Unit Deployment Program, which rotates infantry battalions, artillery batteries and light armored vehicle and amphibious assault vehicle companies from the U.S. to Japan for six- to seven-month training cycles.

The division trains primarily on Okinawa, mainland Japan, and Hawaii. The unit also frequently deploys throughout the Pacific in support of numerous theater security cooperation exercises with allied nations, including Japan, Thailand, the Republic of the Philippines, the Republic of Korea, and Australia.
Comanded by a major general with its headquarters at Camp Foster, the 1st Marine Aircraft Wing is the aviation combat element of III Marine Expeditionary Force and its mission is to conduct air operations in support of the Fleet Marine Forces to include offensive air support, anti-air support, aerial reconnaissance including active and passive electronic countermeasures, and control of aircraft and missiles. As a collateral function, the wing may participate as an integral component of Naval Aviation in the execution of such other Navy functions as the Fleet Commander may direct.

1st MAW consists of approximately 7,500 Marines and sailors, and is organized into a fixed wing/fighter attack group (Marine Aircraft Group 12 stationed at Marine Corps Air Station Iwakuni), two rotary assault support groups (MAG-36 stationed at MCAS Futenma; MAG-24 stationed at Marine Corps Base Kaneohe Bay, Hawaii), and an aviation command and control group (Marine Air Control Group 18 stationed at MCAS Futenma).

The Wing’s rotary-wing aircraft, air control and aviation ground support assets of MAG-36 are stationed at Marine Corps Air Station Futenma. These include the CH-53E Super Stallion and a combination of CH-46E Sea Knight helicopters and the MV-22 Osprey that is replacing the CH-46. The AH-1W Cobra attack helicopters, UH-1Y Huey helicopters and KC-130J Super Hercules, also stationed at MCAS Futenma, provide a powerful combination of firepower and assault support.

The 1st MAW is supported by the Unit Deployment Program. Detachments from two F/A-18 squadrons, one heavy-lift helicopter squadron, and one light-attack helicopter squadron deploy to Japan every six months from the United States.

The 1st Marine Aircraft Wing has distinguished itself in humanitarian relief efforts throughout the Asia-Pacific. For years, the 1st MAW has been a key player in providing aid to areas devastated by tsunamis, typhoons, mudslides and other disasters.
Comanned by a brigadier general with its headquarters at Camp Kinser, the 3rd Marine Logistics Group is the logistics combat element of III Marine Expeditionary Force and is capable of providing responsive, mission-tailored, quality logistics support through expeditionary means.

The 3rd MLG consists of approximately 6,800 Marines and sailors within subordinate commands spread over Okinawa, Hawaii and mainland Japan. They include Combat Logistics Regiments 3, 35 and 37, as well as six battalions that provide logistics, supply, maintenance, engineering, medical and dental capabilities.

3rd MLG regularly supports and conducts training exercises throughout the Asia-Pacific region, including the Kingdom of Thailand, the Republic of the Philippines and the Republic of Korea, Bangladesh, Cambodia, Australia and Mongolia. These exercises focus on increasing responsiveness to disasters in the region and to improving interoperability with allies and partner nations while enhancing regional peace and stability.

The MLG also deploys in support of humanitarian assistance and disaster relief operations, focusing on medical and dental support, engineering and maintenance capabilities, and providing the logistical backbone necessary to sustain elements during operations and exercises.

After a devastating earthquake and tsunami struck northern Japan March 11, 2011, 3rd MLG helped establish a logistics system to provide critical supplies to the victims and restore basic utilities. In October of the same year, 3rd MLG deployed a command element to oversee flood-relief operations in the Kingdom of Thailand, after heavy monsoon rains flooded 61 of the 77 provinces, affecting 8.2 million people.

3rd MLG is a Navy-Marine Corps team with professional leaders at all levels, committed to quality of life and stewardship of resources. It is fully mission-capable, providing quality logistics in the Asia-Pacific region and responding to global sourcing requirements.
Marine Corps Installations Pacific (MCIPAC) is commanded by a major general, with its headquarters residing aboard Camp Foster. Its mission is to provide the operating forces and tenant commands with the highest quality of continuous, effective service and support to meet present and future operating force requirements.

MCIPAC is the single, regional authority for accountability of regional installation management resources and services within the Pacific area of operations. MCIPAC was established to increase regional installation management effectiveness. MCIPAC implements policies, develops regional strategies and plans, prioritizes resources, and provides services, direction, and oversight to all Marine Corps installations in Japan, the Republic of Korea, and Hawaii.

Marine Corps Installations Pacific is comprised of approximately 2,600 service members, 1,200 civilian employees, and more than 3,500 Japanese and Korean workers in the Pacific Region.

Installations included under MCIPAC’s responsibility are MCB Camp Smedley D. Butler, MCB Hawaii, Marine Corps Air Station Iwakuni, MCAS Futenma, Combined Arms Training Center Camp Fuji, and Camp Mujuk, Korea.

Whether participating in operations or training exercises, MCIPAC supports units before, during, and after each deployment. The command is responsible for ensuring installations provide a number of services like training areas, work facilities, utilities and housing.

MCIPAC remains committed to enhancing operational readiness, from the individual service member to every echelon of the Marine Air Ground Task Force, while at the same time cooperating, coordinating and communicating with our regional communities, partners and allies.

MCIPAC regularly engages in bilateral planning to ensure strong, long-term and mutually beneficial partnerships with our neighbors in the region. These continually developing relationships define our community relations effort.
Marines, sailors, and their families are not only deployed here to Japan—they live, work, and raise their children here as part of the community. They strive to be great neighbors and friends, in addition to being important allies.

Through interaction with the local public, community leaders, and civil society, Marines and sailors gain a greater appreciation of Japan’s culture and diversity.

Marines in Japan participate in more than 1500 community relations events throughout the year, from annual festivals, to sporting events, to beach cleanups, music festivals, and more. One of the most popular community relations programs is the Volunteer English Language Teaching Program where Marines and Sailors help teach conversational English to elementary school children throughout Okinawa. Numerous other volunteers and charities, such as the American Women’s Welfare Association, regularly visit senior citizens’ homes and children’s shelters, and have made substantial donations of time, labor, and money to these important local organizations.

As a further way to promote human resource development and mutual exchange, Marine Corps Installations Pacific hosts Japanese university students for internships, and also sponsors an internship in the Japanese parliament for Marine officers to study about Japanese policy-making and Japanese culture.

In the wake of the March 11, 2011 earthquake and tsunami, MCIPAC hosted a summer homestay program for children and adults from Oshima Island in Miyagi Prefecture, one of the hardest hit communities. We also facilitated a “lessons learned” talk by an Oshima representative to disaster management officials from the 41 cities, towns, and villages in Okinawa. MCIPAC is also promoting information-sharing with other prefectures in Japan, including Shizuoka Prefecture, in order to strengthen mutual cooperation with each other’s capabilities in humanitarian assistance and disaster relief.

MCIPAC regularly hosts visitors interested in learning about the U.S.-Japan relationship, the bilateral alliance, and the role of the Marine Corps. The full-day Marine Corps 101 Seminar is one of the many ways we make ourselves available to educate the Japanese public about the history, organization, and role of the Marine Corps.