

Naval and Littoral Maneuver

Naval maneuver involves fighting on and from the sea and projecting and sustaining ready-to-fight combat forces. It can also involve strikes on a hostile or potentially hostile shore. Littoral maneuver is a critical subset of naval maneuver. Littoral maneuver is the ability to transition ready-to-fight combat forces from the sea to the shore in order to achieve a position of advantage over the enemy. At the outset of a campaign, Marines use the sea and EABs as maneuver space to apply power at a time and place of our choosing and, if follow-on power projection operations are required, to begin to build up and stage expeditionary combat power for subsequent operations. Amphibious capabilities provide the means to conduct littoral maneuver. While designed primarily for combat, such capabilities have wide applicability across the ROMO. Amphibious warfare ships are high-demand/low-density platforms that provide the optimal means of employing Marines from the sea. Given fiscal constraints, we will continue to fall short of the number of amphibious warfare ships to meet CCMD operational demands. To improve our ability to fight at and from the sea, we must:

- Expand the capability for maneuver in the littorals beyond existing connectors, amphibious vehicles, and assault support aviation by developing boats and small craft that enable high-speed maneuver with smaller signatures, extend our reach throughout the depth (rivers, estuaries, bays, extended coastlines) and breadth of the littorals, and increase options for sustained operations in the littorals.
- Collaborate with Navy counterparts to establish austere, scalable and agile EABs.
- Provide active protection systems for platforms and ensure amphibious warfare ships are employed within naval and Joint architectures.
- Develop alternative employment methods and augment amphibious warfare ships by modifying other vessels for sea-based littoral operations.
- Refine existing Maritime Prepositioning Force (MPF) capabilities to support afloat forces and operations short of MEB-level employment.