



31ST MARINE EXPEDITIONARY UNIT

MEDIA GUIDE 2017





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LEADERSHIP



Colonel Tye R. Wallace was commissioned in 1991 after graduating from Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute in Troy New York with a Bachelor of Science in Mechanical Engineering. He completed The Basic School before reporting to the Infantry Officer Course where he graduated in 1992. His first tour was with 2nd Battalion, 9th Marines as a rifle Platoon Commander and a Mortar Platoon Commander. He then served as the Executive Officer for Weapons Company, 2nd Battalion, 4th Marines from 1993-1995. During this time, he completed deployments in support of the 15th MEU (OPERATION RESTORE HOPE) and the 31st MEU.



From 1995-1998, Col Wallace served as an instructor, Staff Platoon Commander, and Student Company Executive Officer at the Basic School. After serving at TBS, he attended the Amphibious Warfare School graduating in 1999.

In 1999, he assumed command of Weapons Company, 2nd Battalion, 5th Marines. Post company command, Col Wallace served as the Aide de Camp to the Commanding General of 1st Marine Division. After serving as the Aide, he assumed duties as the Assistant Operations Officer for 1st Marine Regiment. From 2001-2003, he served as the Operation Officer of 2nd Battalion, 1st Marines. During this period, he deployed with the 31st MEU and the 15th MEU (OPERATION IRAQI FREEDOM).

From 2003-2005, Col Wallace graduated from the Army's Command and General Staff College and the School of Advanced Military Studies with a Master of Military Art and Science.

In 2005, Col Wallace served as the Plans Officer for I Marine Expeditionary Force (MEF)/Multi-National Force West. In 2007, he assumed the duties of Executive Officer 1st Marine Regiment. In 2008, he assumed command of 1st Battalion, 1st Marines. Following battalion command, Col Wallace served as the Future Operations Officer for 1st Marine Division (Forward). During this period, he deployed twice to OPERATION IRAQI FREEDOM, with the 13th MEU, and to OPERATION ENDURING FREEDOM.

In 2011, Col Wallace graduated with a Master of Arts in National Security and Strategic Studies from the Naval War College. From 2011-2013, he served as an instructor at the Maritime Advanced Warfighting School and as a Senior Fellow on the Chief of Naval Operations Strategic Studies Group. Starting in 2013, he served on the Joint Staff in the J-5 (Pakistan Afghanistan Coordination Cell) initially as the Division Chief of Strategic Plans and Policy and eventually as the Chief of Staff. From 2015-2016, Col Wallace served as the AC/S G-35 Future Operations / Plans Officer for I MEF.

Col Wallace assumed command of the 31st MEU on 20 May 2016.



Executive Officer
Lt. Col. Michael R. Hyde



Sergeant Major
Sgt. Maj. Jim Lanham



31ST MEU ORGANIZATION

Command Element

- Intelligence Detachment
- Communications Detachment
- Civil Affairs Detachment
- Radio Battalion Detachment
- Public Affairs
- Combat Camera
- Force Reconnaissance Platoon
- Amphibious Reconnaissance Platoon
- Air Naval Gunfire Liason Company (ANGLICO) Detachment
- Force Protection
- Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear Defense Detachment (CBRN)

Ground Combat Element

- Infantry Battalion
- Artillery Battery
- Light Armored Reconnaissance Platoon (LAR)
- Assault Amphibious Vehicle Platoon (AAV)
- Combat Engineer Platoon

Logistics Combat Element

- Headquarters Platoon
- Motor Transportation Platoon
- Supply Platoon
- Maintenance Platoon
- Engineer Platoon
- Health Service Platoon
- Military Police Platoon
- Communications Platoon
- Landing Support Platoon
- Explosive Ordnance Disposal Section

Aviation Combat Element

- MV-22B Osprey Squadron
- CH-53E Super Stallion Detachment
- UH-1Y Venom / AH-1Z Viper Detachment
- Air Control Detachment
- Marine Wing Support Squadron Detachment
- AV-8B Harrier Squadron (-)
- KC-130J Super Hercules (On Call)

COMMAND



Command Element

The command element (CE) is the headquarters for the 31st MEU. Its staff and assets provide the 31st MEU commander the ability to exercise command and control over its major subordinate elements. The primary sections include: administration, intelligence, operations, logistics, and communications. Other specialized subsections within the CE are the chaplain's office, staff judge advocate, surgeon, public affairs, and family readiness.



Ground Combat Element

Battalion Landing Team (BLT) 3/5

The ground combat element (GCE) provides the ground combat power for the 31st MEU. It is structured around a conventional infantry battalion reinforced with light-armored vehicles, artillery, combat engineers, and assault amphibious vehicles. The 31st MEU rotates BLTs every six months from units stationed on the West Coast of the U.S.



Logistics Combat Element

Combat Logistics Battalion (CLB) 31

The logistics combat element (LCE) provides movement and maintenance for MEU forces. It's composed of a variety of units to include motor transportation, landing support, postal service, supply, maintenance, engineer support, health services, financial disbursement, military police, and communications. CLB-31, based in Okinawa, Japan, is permanently assigned to the 31st MEU.



Aviation Combat Element

Marine Medium Tiltrotor Squadron (VMM) 265 (Reinforced)

The aviation combat element (ACE) provides assault transport, close air support and aviation command & control for the MEU. Its arsenal includes the MV-22B Osprey, CH-53E Super Stallion, AH-1Z Viper and UH-1Y Venom helicopters. The 31st MEU rotates its Osprey detachment every year while the reinforcing detachments rotate every six months.



Marine Attack Squadron (VMA) 311

The VMA reinforces the ACE with AV-8B Harrier jets, adding a fixed-wing offensive air element to the MEU. The VMA rotates every six months.





31ST MEU ASSETS

Aviation Combat Element



MV-22B Osprey

Medium lift assault support

Troops: 24

12,500 lbs external load

Cruise speed: 262 knots

Aerial refuel capable

Combat radius: 425 nautical miles



AV-8B Harrier

Fixed-wing close, deep air support

Vertical/Short Takeoff and

landing (V/STOL)

Max speed: 585 knots

Combat radius: 300 nautical miles



UH-1Y Venom

Command and Control

Troops: 8

Cruise speed: 137 knots

Combat radius: 125 nautical miles



CH-53E Super Stallion

Heavy-lift assault support

Troops: 30

36,000 lbs external load

Cruise speed: 150 knots

Combat radius: 225 nautical miles
without refuel (aerial refuel capable)



AH-1Z Viper

Rotary-wing close air support

Cruise speed: 152 knots

Combat radius: 125 nautical miles

31ST MEU ASSETS



Ground Combat Element



Combat Rubber Raiding Craft (CRRC)

Troops: 10
Speed: 18 knots
Range: varies depending on fuel/load
Empty weight: 322 lbs



Assault Amphibious Vehicle (AAV)

Troops: 3 crew + 21 combat Marines
Speed: 45 mph (7 knots in water)
Range: 200 miles
Armament: 12.7 mm machine gun
40 mm grenade launcher



Light Armored Vehicle (LAV)

Troops: 3 crew + 6 combat Marines
Speed: 62 mph (6 knots in water)
Range: 410 miles
Armament: M242 Bushmaster
25 mm chain gun



M327 Expeditionary Fire Support System

Range: 8 km
Caliber: 120 mil
Crew: 5



M777A2 Lightweight 155 mm Howitzer

Range: 3.0 km
Caliber: 155 mil
Crew: 7



31ST MEU ASSETS

Logistics Combat Element



Medium Tactical Vehicle Replacement

Troops: 25
Speed: 65 mph
Range: 360 miles



Tactical Water Purification System (TWPS) Lightweight Water Purification System (LWPS)

TWPS: 1,500 gallons per hour
LWPS: 150 gallons per hour
Water storage: 3,000 gallon bladders



Tractor, rubber-tired, articulated steering, multi-purpose (TRAM)

Gross weight: 40,480 lbs
Engine: 6.8 liter, turbocharged, 6 cylinder, direct injection diesel
Horsepower: 198 hp at 1800 RPM



Millennia Military Vehicle Extended Boom Fork Lift (EBFF)

Max reach: 31ft
Max lift height: 42ft 4in.
Max capacity: 11,000 lbs
Engine: Cummins turbo-diesel



Helicopter Support Team

A team of 5-6 Landing Support Specialists (0481)
Assists with equipment that needs to be externally air lifted



AMPHIBIOUS SQUADRON 11



The 31st Marine Expeditionary Unit and Amphibious Squadron 11 embarks on the ships of the USS Bonhomme Richard Amphibious Ready Group (ARG) to comprise the Bonhomme Richard Expeditionary Strike Group. Typically, the Bonhomme Richard ARG is comprised of a landing helicopter dock, an amphibious transport dock and a dock landing ship.

The current 31st MEU BHR ARG is comprised of the following ships:



USS Bonhomme Richard (LHD 6) Landing Helicopter Dock

Displacement: 40,500 tons full
Length: 844 ft (257 m)
Speed: 20+ knots (37 km/h)
Complement: ~3,000 officer and enlisted
Embarked Marine detachment: ~1,700 officer and enlisted



USS Green Bay (LPD 20) Amphibious Transport Dock

Displacement: 25,000 tons full
Length: 684 ft (208.5 m)
Speed: 22+ knots (41 km/h)
Complement: ~1,050 officer and enlisted
Embarked Marine detachment: ~750 officer and enlisted



USS Ashland (LSD 48) Dock Landing Ship

Displacement: 17,000 tons full
Length: 610 ft (190 m)
Speed: 20+ knots (37+ km/h)
Complement: ~800 officer and enlisted
Embarked Marine detachment: ~400 officer and enlisted



RECENT OPERATIONS

Operation Chinzei, Japan

From April 15-17, 2016, a series of earthquakes struck the Japanese prefecture of Kumamoto, causing 48 deaths and displacing some 100,000 people. At the request of the Government of Japan, approximately 130 Marines and Sailors of the 31st MEU provided support to operations conducted by Joint Task Force Chinzei, led by the Japanese Self-Defense Force.

From 18-23 April, 31st MEU MV-22B Ospreys operating out of Marine Corps Air Station Iwakuni, Japan, delivered more than 82,000 pounds of food, water, blankets, toiletries and other items to be distributed to earthquake victims.



Typhoon Soudelor, Saipan

From Aug. 2-3, 2015, Typhoon Soudelor devastated the island of Saipan in the Northern Mariana Islands. Approximately 600 Marines and Sailors of the 31st MEU responded to assist local and federal agencies with disaster relief efforts.



RECENT OPERATIONS



Over the course of two weeks, the 31st MEU delivered more than 19,000 gallons of packaged water and 47,000 individual meals provided by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), to five distribution sites across the island. The Marines distributed an additional 366,200 gallons of potable water to the people of Saipan, 279,375 gallons of which were purified utilizing a Light Water Purification System and a Tactical Water Purification System. The 31st MEU also distributed more than 10,000 pounds of emergency supplies provided by the Red Cross.

South Korean ferry Sewol, South Korea

On April 16, 2014, the 31st MEU on board the USS Bonhomme Richard assisted in air-sea search and rescue operations for the Korean ferry Sewol which sank near the island of Jindo, off the southwestern coast of the Republic of Korea.



Operation Damayan, Philippines

On November 8, 2013, Super Typhoon Haiyan swept through the central regions of the Republic of the Philippines, ravaging villages and cities. Approximately 6,000 people were killed and more than \$700 million worth of damage was incurred as a result of the storm.

The 31st MEU and the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), at the request of the Philippine government, delivered nearly 100,000 pounds of food and supplies via MV-22B Ospreys to isolated villages not accessible by land. In addition to delivering supplies to the villages, hundreds of displaced locals were evacuated to other locations in the Philippines.





RECENT OPERATIONS

Operation Tomodachi, Japan



On March 12, 2011, an earthquake struck off the east coast of mainland Japan, causing a tsunami that swept across the island. The nuclear power plants in Sendai and Fukushima were also affected, adding the threat of nuclear contamination in the surrounding areas. A reported 300,000 people were displaced from their homes.

The 31st MEU embarked from a port call in Malaysia and arrived off the east coast of Japan to distribute food and supplies. With debris-clearing vehicles, 200 Marines assisted the local Japanese clean up efforts for two weeks. The 31st MEU participated in Operation Tomodachi, delivering more than 164,000 pounds of food, water and relief supplies via helicopter.



HISTORY 1967 - 2017



For almost 50 years, the 31st MEU has provided combatant commanders with a highly adaptive Air-Ground Task Force able to respond to a wide range of military operations, ranging from humanitarian assistance missions to limited combat operations, at a moment's notice.

21st Century

From 18-23 April 2016, the 31st MEU assisted Joint Task Force Chinzei with Kumamoto earthquake relief efforts.

In August 2015, the 31st MEU assisted Saipan with Typhoon Soudelor relief efforts.

In November 2013, the 31st MEU assisted in disaster relief operations during Operation Damayan in the central portion of the Republic of the Philippines.

In March 2011, the 31st MEU sailed from Malaysia and Indonesia to mainland Japan to assist in Operation Tomodachi recovery efforts after the 9.0 Tohoku earthquake and subsequent tsunami. The 31st MEU participated in Operation Tomodachi, delivering more than 164,000 pounds of food, water and relief supplies via helicopter.

In October 2010, the 31st MEU conducted humanitarian assistance and disaster relief operations in northern Luzon after Super Typhoon Megi hit the Philippines.

In October 2009, the 31st MEU assisted in humanitarian assistance & disaster relief operations in Luzon, Philippines, after Typhoons Ketsana and Parma hit consecutively. Simultaneously, elements of the 31st MEU assisted in Sumatra, Indonesia, after earthquakes struck the region.

In May and June of 2008, the 31st MEU participated in Operation Caring Response after Cyclone Nargis hit Myanmar.

On 21 September 2007, the 31st MEU Command Element dedicated its headquarters building on Camp Hansen, Okinawa, to Sergeant Rafael Peralta, who was killed in action in Iraq during Operation Phantom Fury while with the 31st MEU. Sgt Peralta received the Navy Cross for his actions in Fallujah.

In February 2006, the 31st MEU was sent to the Philippines to provide relief assistance during the mudslides in southern Leyte.

With organizational changes to Marine Corps reconnaissance units in 2006, the designation of "Special Operations Capable" was no longer used. The 31st MEU then was designated as a Maritime Contingency Force, although it remains capable of conducting nearly the same variety of specialized missions on both sea and land.



HISTORY 1967 - 2017

From September 2004 to March 2005, the 31st MEU, including Battalion Landing Team 1st Battalion, 3rd Marines with attached Charlie Battery of 1st Battalion, 12th Marines, conducted combat operations in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom. Participation included a major role in Operation Phantom Fury, the clearing of Fallujah in November 2004.

East Timor

Portions of the MEU deployed to East Timor in January 2000 aboard USS Juneau (LPD10) as Special Purpose Marine Air-Ground Task Force East Timor, including Company G, Battalion Landing Team 2nd Battalion, 5th Marines, then the MEU's Battalion Landing Team; portions of the Command Element; HMM-265 and the MEU Service Support Group 31. In East Timor, the Marines and Sailors supported the transition from the Australian-led International Forces in East Timor (INTERFET) to the new United Nations Transitional Administration East Timor (UNTAET).

Iraq 1998-1999

The flexibility of the MEU was demonstrated during the Iraq crisis in late 1998 when the Iraqi regime did not comply with the U.N. weapons inspections process. All four Amphibious Ready Group ships had recently completed Exercise Foal Eagle off the coast of Korea and were heading to various ports for liberty when they received the call on 14 November 1998 to sail immediately to Okinawa to onload the 31st MEU.

A significant portion of the 31st MEU's 2000 Marines were engaged in urban warfare training in Guam when the message came to return to Okinawa. The rest were still in Okinawa, but approximately a quarter of those were a new infantry battalion just rotating in from California. The battalion had just two days to gather all their personnel in order to deploy.

The 31st MEU and ships' company personnel started their initial onload of the ships on 9 November and completed the morning of 11 November. In one night alone, they loaded more than 170 pallets of equipment, weapons, and cargo. In addition, a C-5 Galaxy from Marine Corps Air Station El Toro, originally scheduled to bring maintenance supplies and tools to Okinawa two weeks later, arrived early on 10 November in order to restock the MEU's Air Combat Element. This evolution was a part of the normal supply rotation, but the shipment arrived a week early just in time to load onto the ships before they departed.

From November 1998 to February 1999, the 31st MEU participated in operations in the Persian Gulf and Kuwait, including Operation Southern Watch and Operation Desert Fox.

1980s and 1990s

During the 80's and 90's, the 31st MEU, previously named the 31st Marine Amphibious Unit (MAU), remained the forward-deployed U.S. presence in the Western Pacific and

HISTORY 1967 - 2017



Southeast Asia. Combat operations were replaced by regional exercises, which allowed training opportunities in a variety of countries. In 1983, the 31st MAU was recalled from a combined exercise with local forces in Kenya and was positioned in the Mediterranean Sea. Its mission from September to October 1983 was to support U.S. peacekeeping forces in Beirut during an intense period of complex political and life-threatening conditions in Lebanon. It was the 31st MAU's last operation of that period and the unit was deactivated in May 1985.

The unit was reactivated as the 31st Marine Expeditionary Unit (Special Operations Capable) on 9 September 1992. In 1994, the unit was relocated to its current home station at Camp Hansen, Okinawa, Japan.

Vietnam War

The 31st Marine Expeditionary Unit was activated on 1 March 1967 as Special Landing Force Alpha for operations in Vietnam. It made the first of many amphibious deployments from Okinawa on 10 April 1967.

The first operation conducted was on 14 April 1967, when the MEU conducted a rescue of the crew of the SS Silver Peak, a Panamanian vessel run aground by Typhoon Violet in the vicinity of Minami Ko Shima Island, Japan. Days later, it was committed to Operation Union, a search and destroy mission in Vietnam.

It was during this period of intense combat that Special Landing Force Alpha earned the Presidential Unit Citation. The unit participated in continuing combat operations ashore over the next three years, including the Tet counter-offensive in 1969, while returning to Okinawa periodically for re-outfitting and the rotation of forces.

Special Landing Force Alpha was officially designated as the 31st Marine Amphibious Unit (MAU) on 24 November 1970. Once more, the unit returned to the Gulf of Tonkin. However, the 31st MAU was not committed to overt land operations as the Vietnam War was winding down. The 31st MAU performed presence missions and conducted a series of special operations through May 1971. From June 1971 until April 1975, the 31st MAU conducted numerous deployments off the coast of Vietnam.

The 31st MAU was then directed to the Gulf of Thailand for Operation Eagle Pull, the American Embassy evacuation by air of Phnom Penh, Cambodia, which took place on 12 April 1975.

This was followed by participation in Operation Frequent Wind on 29 April 1975 which was the final evacuation of Saigon as North Vietnamese forces entered the city.



For photo and video downloads, visit the 31st MEU's DVIDS page.
<http://www.dvidshub.net/unit/31MEU>

Follow us on Facebook to see the latest news about the 31st MEU.
<http://www.facebook.com/31stMEU>

<http://www.31stmeu.marines.mil/>

<http://www.youtube.com/user/the31stmeu>

POINTS OF CONTACT

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