

USAWC STRATEGY RESEARCH PROJECT

FORWARD DEPLOYED NAVAL FORCES IN JAPAN

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The views expressed in this academic research paper are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the official policy or position of the U.S. Government, the Department of Defense, or any of its agencies.

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ABSTRACT

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Over the past 50 years the Forward Deployed Naval Forces (FDF) in Japan have served as a cornerstone for executing U.S. Maritime Strategies in Asia. From the strategies of Deterrence, Power Projection, and Crisis Response, to the strategies of Littoral Operations and Engagement, the FDF has been a key contributor to these missions. However, constraints with basing policies, Japan's limits to her strategic role outside Northeast Asia, U.S. force structure constraints, and a shift in Japan's view of the U.S.-Japan Strategic Alliance have brought new challenges to the FDF. What are the emerging missions for Japan's Maritime Self Defense Force (JMSDF), in concert with the justification of maintaining the FDF in Japan? And what force structure changes should be instituted to ensure the FDF meets those missions as outlined in the National Security Strategy? The intent of this SRP is to highlight issues which confront the FDF today, and provide justification for maintaining its presence in Japan. I will further discuss emerging missions for the JMSDF, and look at basing risks which could impact the U.S./Japan alliance for the 21st century. My conclusion will offer also recommendations to be considered as the U.S. pursues its National Military Strategy in Asia.

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FORWARD DEPLOYED NAVAL PRESENCE IN JAPAN

OVERVIEW

Since the end of World War Two the presence of a Forward Deployed Naval Force (FDNF) in Japan has played an important role in the overall strategy of maintaining a balance of power in the Asia-Pacific region. Commitment to forward presence allowed not only a means to effectively conduct a Cold War strategy of containment, but provided the Commander, U.S. Pacific Command, (PACOM), a means to conduct a post Cold War policy of deterrence and engagement, while still providing crisis response capabilities. Commander-in Chief, Pacific Fleet (CINCPACFLT) further identified three pillars to enhance a strategy of cooperative engagement and enlargement-1) forward presence; 2) strong alliance; and 3) crisis response capabilities.¹ These pillars, along with a commitment for deterrence still exist today.

Segments from President Bush's National Security Strategy suggest that the aforementioned strategies set a precedence for maintaining emphasis on forward presence and alliances in the Asian region. President Bush writes: "To enhance our Asian alliances and friendships, we will: look to Japan to continue forging a leading role in regional and global affairs based on our common interests, our common values, and our close defense and diplomatic cooperation."² He further states we will: "maintain forces in the region that reflect our commitment to our allies."³

The National Military Strategy gives further clarification on the importance of overseas presence. It amplifies the key components of a containment strategy and a post Cold War engagement policy specified by CINCPACFLT, as it has existed over the past five decades- assurance to allies to secure regional stability via deterrence, exercise conflict prevention, and provide power projection during times of crisis should deterrence fail.⁴

The Quadrennial Defense Review Report makes an even more compelling argument for forward presence. Citing an array of emerging threats worldwide, counter to the United State's global interests, the report places greater emphasis on an expanding role for forward deployed forces. Beyond the needs of rapid strike and sustainable forces comes a renewed effort to ensure that forward deployed forces can deter, while maintaining a favorable balance, and if need be conduct forceable entry, thus holding adversary forces at risk. This concentration of force not only meets the U.S.'s strategic requirements to deter aggressive challenges to its own geopolitical interests, but supports allies and friends in the Northeast Asian region.⁵

Like its sister services the Navy is undergoing its own transformation. The framework of this change is built around the same tenets as discussed above: deterrence, crisis response, and projection of direct and decisive fire power.⁶ The evolution of U.S. naval power from a blue water, war at sea capability, to concentration in littoral operations, to a strategy which encompasses joint operations reflects an evolving number of threats both regionally and globally. Citing threats both at home and abroad, the Navy's Chief of Naval Operations, Admiral Vernon Clark, elaborates on new dangers: regional unrest and frequent crisis.⁷ He states, "Future enemies will attempt to deny us access to critical areas of the world, threaten vital friends and interests overseas, and even try to conduct further attacks against the American homeland. These threats will pose increasingly complex challenges to national security and future war fighting."⁸

Building on an increased need for joint war fighting capability, and re-emphasizing the Navy's maritime missions to fulfill strategic deterrence, project power, effect sea control, conduct sea lift and provide forward presence, three concepts have emerged as the basis of Sea Power 21. Sea Strike, Sea Shield, and Sea Basing represent the Navy's commitment to operational effectiveness, and allow the U.S. to project its maritime dominance into the 21st century. Each concept is based on the Navy's both present day capabilities, embraces the foundation of the Navy-Marine Corps team, and projects future force structure and mission capabilities based on expanding technologies in weapons and sensor accuracy, netted forces, and enhanced situational awareness.

AN ANALYSIS OF THE FDNF'S PRESENT DAY MISSION

Even with the emergence of Seapower 21, and despite the disappearance of its primary adversary (naval forces of the former Soviet Union), the U.S. Navy's maritime strategy for Northeast Asia has not seen too drastic a change in the last decade. Where once the strategy focused on open ocean war fighting (blue-water naval operations), increased concentration on littoral and joint operations has become the primary maritime mission. This shift to regional maritime operations has continued to allow COMMANDER, PACIFIC COMMAND (PACOM) to support both the national security strategy and national defense security of deterrence and crisis response, and concentrate its efforts in regional security.⁹ But a return to global operations, per the tenets of Sea Power 21, puts the FDNF in an advantageous position to execute all three concepts. The FDNF offers two independent striking forces; the KITTY HAWK battle group and the ESSEX amphibious ready group. When augmented with submarines from Submarine squadron FIFTEEN out of Guam, the strike potential is apparent.

While adjusting for reductions in its force structure, the Navy's mission in Northeast Asia continues to revolve around a deterrence strategy, while adapting to a changing geopolitical environment. The FDNF in Japan has been the cornerstone of this mission, and has evolved to promote U.S. interests in the western pacific, while fulfilling an active engagement policy to instill regional alliances with Japan and South Korea. This maritime strategy also implies that the FDNF will continue to exercise risk reduction by its presence. With a carrier battle force located in Yokosuka, Japan, an Amphibious Readiness Group operating from Sasebo, Japan, and a Marine Expeditionary Force located in Okinawa, the FDNF has provided the combatant commander with the means to respond to a variety of events impacting regional security. An example of this resides with the rapid sortie of the INDEPENDENCE Battle group from Yokosuka in March of 1996, in response to China's use of ballistic missiles around Taiwan. Not only did this demonstrate the value of forward presence, but shored up lack of public support for the alliance between the U.S. and Japan, following the abduction and rape of a teenage girl in Okinawa.¹⁰

FORWARD BASING AND THE FUTURE

Despite the strategic benefits of the FDNF's presence in Japan and Okinawa, and the perceived strength of the U.S.-Japan alliance, efforts to reduce the FDNF's footprint have undermined the tenets of the security agreement. This poses two interesting dilemmas for both countries. For the U.S., force readiness and basing rights are at risk, while the government of Japan faces mounting pressure from local municipal governments to reduce U.S. military presence and activities. This leaves doubt; what is the true strength of the security agreement?

OKINAWA

Of those forces forward based in Japan, The THIRD Marine Expeditionary Force represents 75 percent of the entire FDNF structure. Spread among 25 of 53 localities in Okinawa, Marine bases have been under a high degree of scrutiny by Okinawa's local government.¹¹ This stems from a variety of issues- noise hazards, pollutants, accidents and crime, but one high profile event has placed the security agreement under great strain, and leaves some doubt how much longer Japan can sustain U.S. military presence in Japan.

The focal point of heaviest debate stemmed from the location of U.S. bases at MCAF Futenma and Kadena AFB, Okinawa, and the Diet's authority to override the rights of local citizens to reclaim land taken for military use. (Article VI of the U.S.-Japanese security treaty stipulates Japan's obligation to expropriate land from private land owners for U.S. military basing.)¹² Challenges to the expropriation laws started in conjunction with the renewals of

leases for Futenma and five other facilities located throughout Okinawa, which were about to expire. In 1995 Okinawa's governor Ota Masahide refused to sign lease extensions for Futenma, and challenged the law as being unconstitutional.¹³ As Ota's civil disobedience gained popular support, the rape of a teenage Okinawan girl by three marines further undermined the U.S.'s case with regard to basing rights, and weakened the Japanese government's ability to enforce expropriation laws, without consultation.

Based on a recommendation from the Special Action Committee on Okinawa (SACO), and following approval by the government's Security Consultative Committee, the U.S. agreed to return Futenma along with five other facilities. And in an effort to reduce noise and potential accidents the USMC also agreed to adjust training and operational procedures in Okinawa.¹⁴ However, the adjustments come with a steep price on readiness. Loss of live firing exercises and helicopter night operations over the long haul will impact readiness, and undermine the very reason U.S. Forces are based in Okinawa. When efforts to build a floating heliport by Nago City were rejected due to environmental concerns, the overall loss of basing rights in Okinawa represents some unsettling prospects for basing issues on the main Japanese island of Honshu.

Even if the strength and foundation of the security agreement is intact, a question remains; how genuine is the security agreement when the Japanese government is confronted with scenarios of confrontation or risk taking? In the case of Futenma, did the lack of commitment demonstrate a failure of joint U.S.-Japan resolve, or failure of the U.S. to clearly understand Japan's strategic culture? For Japan's part in the Futenma decision, a divergence from national policy reflects aspects of Japan's strategic culture which the government follows routinely. It used debate and consultation to resolve issues and implications, took an incremental approach, avoided risk, and allowed cultural protocol to discourage debate. Japan took this same approach with the Okinawan government. However, it is possible senior leadership from the U.S. may have underestimated the ramifications of Japan's approach to the problems in Okinawa. Or worse, the U.S. clearly understood the Japanese government's delicate position, and decided to appease the Japanese government in hopes this would end any further basing issues?

The question whether to return Futenma to the Japanese, as a gesture of goodwill, was considered as early as 1995. Former secretary of defense William Perry, already familiar with the Futenma issue, sought the advice of the former ambassador to Japan, Democrat Mike Mansfield, and former assistant deputy secretary of defense Republican Richard Armitage. Both men, well versed in U.S. - Japanese affairs, especially the issue with Futenma, applauded Perry's consideration to return Futenma, and recommended that Futenma be returned.

Armitage's stronger stance may have set the precedence for appeasement, suggesting that "without a large, symbolic return of a base this time, the bilateral security relationship would be torn out by its roots."¹⁵

In February, 1996 Perry broached the topic of Futenma with his senior advisors from the Department of Defense, including the Secretary of the Navy, John Dalton and the Commandant of the Marine Corps, General John Krulak. Perry asked, why two air bases on an island the size of Okinawa? Only Krulak spoke up, saying that the Marine Corps' bases in Okinawa contributed to regional security, and were essential to Marine Corps operations.¹⁶ With none of the other senior advisors offering a reason to support two bases in Okinawa, Perry was on firm ground to exercise the gesture of returning Futenma. Its probable that Perry, bolstered by Mansfield and Armitage's earlier advice, was satisfied that Futenma was expendable. Following this meeting the agenda to return Futenma became central to both the U.S. and Japan's policy.¹⁷ Perry decided in late February that Futenma would be returned to Japan, and despite attempts by the Marine Corps to defend Futenma's worth to regional strategy, the process commenced, and the results of the SACO report led to Futenma's eventual return.

It is evident that the U.S. understood the Japanese government's predicament with the domestic issue of basing rights in Okinawa, and felt that the gesture of meeting Japan's request had greater merit than force readiness and regional security. Despite the Marine Corps' efforts to defend the importance of Futenma, the administration proceeded with SACO's policy plan. Just as the issue of basing rights in Okinawa came to the forefront of U.S. – Japanese relations, a similar scenario was occurring in the main island of Honshu. With striking similarities to Futenma, the U.S. Navy was dealing with readiness and training issues for its forward deployed air wing in Atsugi.

FLEET CARRIER LANDING PRACTICE (FCLP) AND THE CITY OF ATSUGI.

Carrier Air Wing FIVE (CVW 5) is home based at the Naval Air Facility Atsugi, Japan. Composed of seven squadrons and one C-2 GREYHOUND detachment, the wing conducts routine training and maintenance between scheduled deployments and at sea operations with the KITTY HAWK. One key training standard of flight proficiency, exercised prior to carrier qualifications, is the day and night use of Atsugi's runways, equipped with arresting gear and landing lights closely simulating carrier flight operations. Known as FCLP, CVW 5 practices takeoffs and arrested landings as a precursor to flight operations at sea. However, urbanization in the Atsugi area has resulted in concerns with noise, pollution, and accidents tied to FCLP by CVW 5's aircraft. Civilian demonstrations reflect similar events which occurred in Okinawa, and

have had a long term impact on training and readiness of the air wing's squadrons. At times protestors have created unsafe flying conditions during night portions of FCLP. (Local citizens have been known to group off the end of runways, and point high density flashlights at pilots as they make their approaches for landings, arresting "traps," or "touch and goes.")

Since 1989 use of the JSDFAF airbase in Iwo Jima has served as an interim site for CVW 5 to conduct FCLP, resulting in 26 rounds of successful completion of FCLP. But logistic movement of aircraft maintainers, and disruption by weather has precluded the satisfactory training and readiness requirements for the pilots and aircrews prior to fleet operations.¹⁸ This number does not adequately reflect attainment of the desired proficiency levels prior to carrier qualifications.

Japan's government has offered a new FCLP landing site on Miyakejima Island, but support by local inhabitants has not been secured, and recent volcanic activities suggests this may be unsuitable for practical use. Since 1999, the government, working with Commander, U.S. Forces Japan, has continued its efforts to have the Navy conduct FCLP at Iwo Jima, but the trade offs between costs and benefits of air wing readiness versus local objections by the people in Atsugi, do little to support the real argument. Why doesn't the U.S. - Japan security agreement override public criticism of U.S. basing in Japan?

INCREASING THE ROLE OF THE JAPANESE MARITIME SELF-DEFENSE FORCE

The FDNF-JMSDF bi-lateral exercise program is a success story that continues to pay large dividends for both forces. This serves several purposes besides being an adjunct to engagement. The nature of cooperation has not only helped to sustain a robust and cooperative exercise program, but has extended the roles the JMSDF is willing to pursue in the region. Efforts between the major staffs, via quarterly training working groups, allows the FDNF to routinely pursue joint and combined exercises beyond the annually scheduled events in support of CINCPACFLT's engagement policy. The scope of the exercises range from ship-to- ship underway re-fueling events, to multi-ship exercises that span the entire spectrum of maritime operations-area air defense, undersea warfare, anti-surface warfare, maritime intercept operations, and mine counter measure exercises. Of greater benefit comes a development of nation-to-nation confidence building measures, via ship visits to Japanese ports, military-to-military contacts and exchanges, (the best example being the U.S.- JMSDF Midshipman exchange program), and joint humanitarian operations.¹⁹

The aforementioned exercises reflect a willing endorsement of the U.S. - Japan security agreement. But what happens when the expectation of military presence extends beyond the

intended homeland defense of the JMSDF? How far does Japan's government commit the JMSDF to U.S. interests, when the missions are outside the region of Japan's security interests, or come into conflict with Japan's defense oriented constitution? Surprisingly, not as far as U.S. officials would think.

Japan's response to the September 11 terrorist attacks, by means of a deployment of JMSDF surface ships, was looked at in a positive light by Washington. However, the eventual use of the deployed force, albeit in a logistics role, must be taken in proper perspective, and not reflect a change in Japan's own security interests. Even if the U.S. saw Japan's deployment as a shift in its foreign policy, the fact remains economic security remains more important than the use of military action.²⁰

Before the U.S. can implore Japan to expand the role of the JMSDF, it is important to understand how Japan's employs both its economic and military power. Using a "dual hedge" approach, Japan's leadership seeks to apply either power at threats as they emerge, whether simultaneously or in singles, regardless of perceived shared interests by other allies. As senior policy advisor Okamoto Yukio stated, "America can be Japan's ally in security affairs, but I do not think it can be an ally in economic affairs."²¹

Following September 11th, how did Japan's "dual hedge" approach undermine the intent by U.S. officials that Japan share a role in operation Enduring Freedom? Citing U.N. Security Council resolution 1368, Japan's effort to contribute was initiated by Prime Minister Koizumi under a seven point plan, which would allow for Japan's Self-Defense Force to assist the U.S.'s efforts against the Taliban and Al-Qaeda. Besides increasing force protection efforts around U.S. bases in Japan and providing humanitarian relief in Afghanistan, the main effort was to send JSMDF assets, including Japan's Aegis capable destroyers, to the Indian Ocean to support intelligence collection efforts and provide air defense to Diego Garcia.²²

The seven point plan appeared to be favorable at both political and public levels. Koizumi and his cabinet, riding on a high level of popular support, had embarked on a plan that could have changed Japan's foreign policy. But lack of commitment at the party level, backed by senior government advisors, resulted in a veto to send the Japanese naval forces sought after. Citing hesitancy to commit to possible combat operations, Japan's government felt the country would be better off contributing to peaceful reconstruction of Afghanistan.²³

There is a deep seated reason behind Japan's reluctance to send the force as proposed by Koizumi. And it stems from the balance between use of economic and military strategies. For Japan it was the guarantee it would enjoy the fruits from a year long effort to secure deals for oil, natural gas, and telecommunication businesses with Iran, made prior to September 11th.

Fearing a loss of a substantial strategic advantage in the Persian Gulf, while simultaneously concerned with negative reactions by Muslim countries, Japan made a minimal military contribution to the effort.²⁴ Did Japan's decision to reduce its military role in Afghanistan undermine the U.S.-Japan security agreement? Not in a negative sense. The U.S. government was supportive of Japan's efforts, and despite Japan's distancing itself from offensive actions in Afghanistan senior U.S. officials expressed America's pleasure that the two navies were working together.²⁵

Regardless of the end result of Japan's naval deployment to the Indian Ocean, we must consider the precedence set by Japan's leadership to send JMSDF assets beyond the Northeast Asian region. (A two decade long debate whether Taiwan lies within areas surrounding Japan, out to 1000 miles, gives an idea where geographical constraints drive operational limits.²⁶) It was a unique venture to consider expanding it's role in events outside of regional interests, and reflected how much thought Japan gave towards revamping it's constitution. Of equal importance from PACOM'S perspective was the superlative record of USN-JMSDF joint proficiency, and the unity of effort to encompass all aspects of maritime operations. There was no question Japanese surface ships could operate with U.S. task forces in the Indian Ocean. And despite fulfilling strictly a logistical role in Afghanistan, a greater level of trust evolved as U.S. planners looked to the JMSDF's capability to augment FDNF assets with AEGIS class surface ships in Japan. This became especially critical while the FDNF was dealing with theater commitments, providing air defense around Guam and Diego Garcia, and conducting escort operations in the Malacca straits.

With an understanding of Japanese leadership's desires to conduct non-offensive operations re-affirmed, how can the U.S., using the FDNF's unique presence in Japan, gain support from Japan's government to increase the strength of the alliance? A year ago, it may have been debatable. Economic strategies seemed to bear more weight than military alliances. However, a recent turn of events stemming from North Korea's withdrawal from a non-nuclear proliferation treaty, a renewed effort to possess nuclear weapons, and provocative military actions may be the catalyst to galvanize the alliance. North Korea's admitted attempts to secure nuclear weapons, supported by a robust ballistic missile program, have turned Northeast Asia into a potential crucible of de-stabilization. This allows an opportunity to re-examine the alliance that not only demonstrates U.S. commitment to the Japan's security, but supports the U.S.'s deterrence strategy as part of the National Military Strategy.

It is noteworthy to recall that the JMSDF is built around a defense oriented strategy, "to defend Japan against sea-borne invasions and to secure the sea lanes in the waters

surrounding Japan.²⁷ Over the past three decades Japan has adhered to that strategy, but until the 1980s the main effort was geared towards prevention of invasion, and less towards the sea lines of communications (SLOC), mission. Part of this decision may have reflect the difficulty in defining how far Japan's SLOCS extended beyond the homeland. When Japan's Prime Minister Suzuki participated in talks with President Ronald Reagan in 1982, the resulting communiqué' offered a desire that the U.S. and Japan achieve a division of roles for ensuring peace and stability in the region.²⁸ Within the framework of the communiqué' there was no mention of how far that role would be extended beyond Japan's coasts. But discussions within Japan's defense commission hinted that a 1000 mile SLOC defense was part of a national defense policy. By 1983 a geographical reference to SLOC protection became official per the Defense White Paper 1983. The JMSDF, co-operating with the U.S. Navy would defend the SLOCs between Tokyo, Guam and the Philippines.²⁹

Working within the constraints of a defense oriented strategy, while adapting a role geared towards SLOC defense, the JMSDF concentrated on two mission roles -Anti-submarine warfare (ASW), and mine countermeasures (MCM), and its force structure was built around those missions areas. The majority of its surface combatants, submarines, and combat aircraft were optimized for ASW, while the remaining force was designed to support MCM roles. This concentration on ASW and MCM was especially prevalent when the Soviet Union maintained a significant pacific fleet.³⁰ With the demise of the Russian Navy, and Japan's commitment to defend its SLOCs, new opportunities exist to balance the roles of both the JMSDF and FDNF. Force modernization, built around the 1997 Defense White Paper, stresses improvements in leading edge technologies, including enhanced sensor systems, air defense, and wide area surveillance.

Japan's adoption of a 1999 agreement with the U.S. to cooperate on Theater Ballistic Missile Defense (TBMD) research and development of a sea based TBM system, provides one of the most important near term opportunities to maintain regional security, while advancing Japan's role towards assuming greater defense responsibility.³¹ As the initial five year program of 1999 defines a cooperative exchange in research and development of a TBMD system, it may be time to expand the program to meet the growing threat from North Korea. This requires an immediate reassessment of the threat to Japan's security, and consideration to incorporate Japan's self defense force into the U.S. Navy's transformation program, specifically the Sea Shield leg of Sea Power 21.

Designed as a multi-layered defense, Sea Shield represents a radical advancement in programs designed to counter both ballistic and cruise missile threats, for both homeland

defense and forward deployed operations in the littorals. The TBMD portion of Sea Shield requires a combined offensive and defensive system of sensors and weapons, coordinated through a network centric system that allows for rapid detection, dissemination and engagement.³² The primary platforms designed around Sea Shield are the TICONDEROGA and ARLIEGH BURKE Aegis capable cruisers (CG), and guided missile destroyers (DDG), and the E-2C Hawkeye. The network to support the layered defense is built around two systems: LINK 16 and the Cooperative Engagement Capability (CEC). Long term enhancements to Sea Shield will include introduction of the Navy's next surface combatant, DD(X), an improvement to the E-2C via the Radar Modernization Program (RMP), and an advanced radar system built around the F-18 E/F.³³ Over the next decade, space and airborne based sensors will be linked into the network, to provide a robust defense system designed for both theater and homeland defense.³⁴

With the 1999 agreement as a benchmark for further development of a TBMD system in Japan, it's time to increase the JMSDF's role in TBMD, via involvement in Sea Shield. Two of the platforms for executing the Sea Shield leg of Sea Power 21 already exist: the Aegis Capable KONGO class guided missile destroyer (which the JMSDF has four), and the E-2C. The JMSDF is also LINK 16 capable, so the introduction of CEC, RMP, and SM-2 Block 4A, (The Navy's newest generation of Standard Missile designed to engage anti-ship cruise missiles and TBMs.) sought after in the U.S. Navy's Sea Shield program, should be expanded to include Japan. A venture of this magnitude would obviously create concerns with technology transfer, and may even upset regional stabilization, particularly with China. However, the risk as demonstrated by North Korea's recent activities, may negate any hesitation to bring Japan into the TBMD role, vis-à-vis a participant in Sea Shield.

If the JMSDF were provided greater access to the U.S. Navy's Sea Shield and ForceNet programs this would open up a second mission area where the FDNF and JMSDF could conduct jointly. The benefits of a netted force of sensors, command and control (C2) platforms, and weapons platforms have shown merit in the Counter Special Operation Force (CSOF) mission. This application of network centric techniques against North Korean special operation boats, has allowed planners and war fighters a means to engage large numbers of SOF delivery platforms under remarkable time constraints, with few 'leakers' making it ashore. By netting AEGIS class DDGs, Army APACHE helicopters, U.S. Navy P-3C ORIONS, SH-60 SEA HAWK helicopters and U.S Air Force AC-130s, a shared common operational picture allowed for a unity of effort to achieve superior results.³⁵

Over the past four years these CSOF exercises have been conducted quarterly as part of the engagement and training program between U.S. military forces out of Korea, the FDNF and Republic of Korean naval forces. With a similar North Korean SOF threat posed against both Japanese and U.S. bases, the CSOF mission and associated training exercises provide an excellent role for the JMSDF. Japan has already created a special 660 man regiment to defend against amphibious assaults, with a 300 man special operations force under design to defend against guerrilla attacks.³⁶ Why not combine the effort using FDNF and JMSDF AEGIS class DDGs in the C2 role, with support from P-3Cs, SH-60s, and Japanese Ground Defense Force SUPER COBRAS?

As a result of apportionment issues the FDNF was confronted with during ENDURING FREEDOM comes a third mission for the JMSDF, enhancing its role outside the 1000 mile defense perimeter. As noted previously Japan has recognized that protection of its SLOCs has become a primary mission, mainly due to the heavy reliance on access to foreign energy resources, foods and other natural resources. Japan's economic well being is not only dependent upon security to its homeports, but to the SLOCs where the majority of its energy resources pass through. Acknowledging this, the JMSDF has improved its participation in escort duties, particularly in anti-piracy patrols. When U.S. naval forces responded to the terrorist attacks of September 2001, deployment cycles were impacted by short notice sailing orders and higher operational tempos. In an effort to maintain Global Naval Force Projection Platform (GNFPP) numbers in both south Asia and northeast Asia, the FDNF was over tasked with other missions- air defense for both Guam and Diego Garcia, fleet air defense for the carrier, and escort duties in the Strait of Malacca. In order to meet the GNFPP requirement some missions were curtailed, while CINCPACFLT sought assistance from allies to execute the less demanding missions.

As the escort duty in the Strait of Malacca was the least demanding of ongoing operations, CINCPACFLT was able to work out an agreement with India to support escort operations in the strait. This role would have suited the JMSDF well. Participation by a JMSDF surface ship would have solidified the alliance in terms of role sharing, fallen in line with the primary maritime strategy of SLOC protection, and still protected desires to avoid an outward appearance Japan was supporting offensive like operations for the U.S..

Japan's commitment to TBMD may bring up policy concerns similar to what the government faced, when debating the merits of contributing a force in support of U.S. efforts in Afghanistan. Depending on how Japan views its security agreement with the U.S., and a potential shift in the strategic balance in the region, further development of TBMD may require

internal negotiation towards what is in Japan's best interests: military security with the U.S., versus political, economic, and diplomatic reactions with China. In the case of the TBMD role as well as the CSOF and escort roles, Japan afford to review its economic strategies in the region as less more important, thus strengthening its alliance with the U.S.³⁷

RESHAPING THE FDNF

CV VERSUS CVN

The primary force of the FDNF is the KITTY HAWK Battle Group home-ported in Yokosuka. Modeled after a typical carrier battle group composed of ten surface combatants and one CARRIER AIRWING, CVW FIVE, located in Atsugi, the battle group executes operations throughout the western pacific. These include both joint and bi-lateral operations in support of CINCPACFLT's engagement and exercise programs, and response to contingency operations. Of all the ship's in the KITTY HAWK Battle Group, USS KITTY HAWK is the center piece. However, since her commissioning in 1960, at 43 years she represents the oldest of the non-nuclear carriers, and is in fact the oldest ship in the U.S. Navy. Despite a fairly consistent record of meeting her operational commitments, recent concerns with KITTY HAWK's readiness reflect two themes which have become persistent-maintenance costs and KITTY HAWK's eventual replacement with a nuclear powered carrier.

In 2002 maintenance and readiness issues came to a peak when she was given a marginal rating performance during an engineering readiness inspection, while degradation in her operating parameters resulted in an early return from sea. Despite having a robust maintenance and repair schedule, the efforts of maintaining a 43-year old ship had challenged both the leadership and the repair facility charged with KITTY HAWK's maintenance. Questions arose from Congress when similar circumstances involving USS JOHN F KENNEDY resulted in her failing to meet a deployment date, while 15 million dollars was spent on a short notice repair effort.³⁸ Senator John McCain expressed concern and inquired of the Navy the circumstances behind the incidents with both "steam-powered aircraft carriers."³⁹ Former Secretary of the Navy Gordon England, testifying in front of the House Armed Services Committee in February, 2002, suggested FY 2002 and 2003 budgets would "Ensure that readiness meets mission requirements." "However, some ships, particularly older air craft carriers and our amphibious force ships, are reaching the end of their service lives, often requiring un-programmed repairs, necessitating unplanned funds for urgent maintenance."⁴⁰

This raises the question; is it time to consider home porting a nuclear powered aircraft carrier in Japan? COMNAVAIRPAC's FY03 maintenance budget for KITTY HAWK will surpass

60 million dollars, and should support KITTY HAWK's normal 140 to 180 day operating schedule.⁴¹ But her recent departure to the Persian Gulf will likely add on to her annual operational tempo, risking further maintenance issues down the road. It remains to be seen whether KITTY HAWK will suffer further readiness degradation, as wear and tear from extended operations takes its toll. Historically her recent decline in readiness and the accompanying costs may not be as palpable, compared to conducting dialogue with the Japanese government and introducing the plan to replace KITTY HAWK.

Ironically this dialogue may be further along than some would care to admit. A January, 2003 article from the Yomiuri Shimbun indicated Japan's government had agreed to base a CVN as KITTY HAWK's replacement.⁴² However, per a follow-on article in the Navy Times, both U.S. Navy and Japanese officials denied any agreement had been reached.⁴³ Had there been dialogue between U.S. and Japanese officials? Was it possible representatives from the U.S. and the Japanese Embassy in Washington were attempting to stymie discussion which neither party was ready to divulge? Not only possible, but likely. When attempting to gain more insight into the hull swap between KITTY HAWK and a CVN, this author was told that any discussion of bringing a CVN to Yokosuka was to be conducted via classified e-mail.⁴⁴

It is apparent replacing KITTY HAWK with a CVN is inevitable. The question remains how soon? Despite attempts to down play the newspaper reports, officials from both parties are taking a cautious approach to a delicate subject. Pending agreement by the municipal government of Yokosuka to extend the quay wall at pier 12, Fleet Activities Yokosuka, (the carrier pier), the Navy needs to take a proactive approach to replacing KITTY HAWK. If the Yomiuri Shimbun article reflects greater truth than the U.S. and Japan care to acknowledge, the two parties should at least pursue the benefits of having a CVN in Japan to strengthen the bilateral alliance. (This is especially important as QDR force levels impact U.S. Navy force shaping, and apportionment issues impact future operations in Asia.)

REPLACING THE SPRUANCE CLASS DDS

Within the framework of Admiral Clark's Global Concept of Operations is the need for the Navy to redefine its means to promote global power projection. Because of technological advancements and improved accuracy in precision guided munitions, the Navy has the ability to expand its war fighting effect in a variety of means. These naval capable packages include the traditional lash up of carrier strike groups; a combination of air wing power projection packaged with TOMAHAWK (TLAM), capable surface ships and submarines. The new concept of the Expeditionary Strike Group (ESG), deviates from the carrier-air wing power projection role

common to the carrier battle group (CVBG), and relies on a combination of TLAM capable surface ships and submarines. Although the ESG does not provide as robust a package as the CVBG, it provides the combatant commander with a package that can be tailored towards lesser threat environments.⁴⁵

The third power projection package is not a new concept, but it has taken on renewed interest in its flexibility and ability to respond to international crisis quickly. The Missile-defense strike group takes the air defense capability of the AEGIS weapons system, and the TLAM strike capability to provide a superb offensive-defensive package suitable for quick reaction crisis. However, there are only two surface combatants capable of this role. The AEGIS cruiser and ARLEIGH BURKE class DDG.⁴⁶ The FDNF presently has four surface combatants capable of supporting a missile-defense strike group package. But operational commitments, deployments and apportionment issues commonly reduce the ability for the battle group commander (CCG-5), to adequately provide for either the ESG role or missile-defense strike group. The Navy's projected surface force reduction plan will expedite decommissioning dates for the remaining SPRUNACE class destroyers fleet wide. This will include the two DDs in Yokosuka; USS OBIEN will be replaced by a non-helo capable DDG in 2004, and USS CUSHING will be replaced in 2005 by one of the Navy's newer helo capable DDGs.⁴⁷

However, the swap in hulls does nothing to address the FDNF's increased operational tempo, nor account for apportionment issues as CCG-5 meets engagement requirements and contingency operations. Even with a planned increase of five DDGs in Yokosuka by 2008, it may not satisfy the intended desire of supporting the ESG or missile defense strike group concept, let alone the recommendation of the QDR to increase the number of DDGs in the western pacific.⁴⁸ I propose that CINPACFLT consider a deployment cycle of DDGs out of Pearl Harbor and San Diego. The deployments would be similar to a standard six months deployment of a CVBG, but the concentration would be common to the roles and mission undertaken by the FDNF. This would include CSOF operations and multi-lateral exercises scheduled by COMMSEVENTHFLT.

This approach is a low cost proposal. It would be advantageous for PACFLT's engagement program, would provide an increased footprint of naval assets in the western pacific, and ease any apportionment issues faced by the operational commander.

CONCLUSIONS

Following the events of September 11th, 2001 the FDNF executed a set of short notice deployments, which encompassed both traditional and new maritime operational concepts.

Apportionment issues and desires to enlarge Japan's role in the war against global terrorism, offered opportunities to not only build on the U.S.- Japanese alliance, but increase Japan's role in international maritime operations. Despite economic and political constraints, this cooperation was seen as a positive step towards strengthening the alliance, and defining new roles for the Japanese Maritime Self Defense Force.⁴⁹ For the FDNF an expansion of operational tasks, conducted jointly with the JMSDF, will enhance the alliance and improve Japan's role in regional security. Without breaching Japan's constitutional law of possessing an offensive military capability, execution of operations such as TBMD, CSOF, escort operations, anti-piracy patrols, counter narcotic patrols, humanitarian aide operations, and logistic support should be undertaken in all facets of FDNF – JMSDF training exercises.

Together with the ESSEX Amphibious Readiness group and the THIRD Marine Expeditionary Force, the KITTY HAWK Battle Group finds itself in a position to continue to effectively execute both the National and Military strategies, with continued emphasis on deterrence, regional security, and alliance building. Traditional naval operations of maritime interdiction, protection of the sea lines of communication, littoral and expeditionary warfare, and humanitarian operations remain intact. Transition to the Navy's new Sea Power 21 strategy should be seamless to the FDNF, provided its force structure is adjusted to allow for maximum adaptation to the new concepts of Sea strike, Sea Shield and Sea Basing. The force structure of the FDNF should re-evaluated to support an increasing power projection role in regional security. This would include adjustments to allow for long term sustainment and reductions in maintenance costs for its surface combatants. The Navy should also accelerate the replacement of the USS KITTY HAWK with a nuclear carrier, which will reduce maintenance costs, and allow for command and control improvements as part of the Navy's Force Net concept.⁵⁰

Finally engagement policies within the SEVENTHFLT area of operations continue to promote alliance building with Japan. This includes the annual exercise programs, port visits, exchange programs, and development of joint operational tactics and programs. If the engagement program and training programs became untenable due to basing right issues, or failure of Japan's government to honor the tenets of the security agreement for leasing land, then a commission should be established to identify alternate basing sites for the FDNF. The introduction of a submarine squadron in Apra Harbor Guam may be the catalyst, to generate an increased footprint for naval forces outside of Japan.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

The administration should:

- Continue to stress the importance of the forward basing and the role the FDNF plays in Northeast Asia.
- Commit to expanding Japan's role in regional security by promoting more non-offensive missions.
- Accelerate the transfer of the conventional carrier presently in Japan with a nuclear carrier. Swap out the remaining two SPRUANCE class destroyers with AEGIS capable combatants.
- Consider alternatives to forward bases in Japan.

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