



Navy Irregular Warfare and Counterterrorism Operations: Background and Issues for Congress

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Summary

Statements from Secretary of Defense Robert Gates and other Department of Defense (DOD) officials suggest that DOD budgets in FY2010 and subsequent fiscal years will place a certain amount of emphasis on capabilities for conducting irregular warfare (IW) operations, such as counterinsurgency operations. In addition, counterterrorism (CT) operations have been a DOD area of emphasis since the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001.

The Navy for several years has carried out a variety of IW and CT activities, and has taken some steps in recent years to strengthen its ability to conduct such activities. The Navy's IW and CT activities pose a number of potential oversight issues for Congress, including the definition of Navy IW activities, specific Navy IW budget priorities, and how much emphasis to place on IW and CT activities in future Navy budgets.

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Introduction

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The Navy for several years has carried out a variety of IW and CT activities, and has taken some steps in recent years to strengthen its ability to conduct such activities. The Navy's IW and CT activities pose a number of potential oversight issues for Congress, including the definition of Navy IW activities, specific Navy IW budget priorities, and how much emphasis to place on IW and CT activities in future Navy budgets.

Background

DOD Interest in Irregular Warfare

Statements from Secretary of Defense Robert Gates and other Department of Defense (DOD) officials suggest that DOD budgets in FY2010 and subsequent fiscal years will place a certain amount of emphasis on capabilities for conducting irregular warfare (IW) operations, such as counterinsurgency operations. For examples of such statements, see the **Appendix**.

Navy Irregular Warfare (IW) Operations¹

Operations in Iraq and Afghanistan

Among the most readily visible of the Navy's current IW operations are those being carried out by Navy sailors serving ashore in Iraq and Afghanistan. The Department of the Navy, which includes the Navy and Marine Corps, states that:

We continue to impose local sea control, sustain power ashore and represent a major strategic role in Iraq and Afghanistan by providing critical force protection requirements; training, equipment, and assistance to our coalition partners....

Our overseas force posture is shaped principally by ongoing and projected operational commitments. This participation currently involves approximately 30,000 Marines conducting counterinsurgency, security cooperation, and civil-military operations in Iraq and Afghanistan. On any given day there are approximately 14,500 Sailors ashore and another 9,200 afloat throughout the U. S. Central Command region conducting riverine operations, maritime infrastructure protection, explosive ordnance disposal, combat construction engineering, cargo handling, combat logistics, maritime security, and other forward presence

¹ Unless otherwise indicated, information in this section is taken from a Navy briefing to CRS on July 31, 2009, on Navy IW activities and capabilities.

activities. In collaboration with the U.S. Coast Guard, the Navy also conducts critical port operations, port and oil platform security, and maritime interception operations....

Strike operations are conducted to damage or destroy objectives or selected enemy capabilities. Recent examples include simultaneous close air support missions that are integrated and synchronized with coalition ground forces to protect key infrastructure, deter and disrupt extremist operations or hostile activities, and provide overwatch for reconstruction efforts in support of Operations Enduring Freedom and Iraqi Freedom.²

More specifically, the Navy states that operations performed by Navy personnel in Iraq and Afghanistan include the following:

- **close air support (CAS) and airborne reconnaissance** operations, in which Navy aircraft account for 30% of all such missions;
- **expeditionary electronic warfare** operations, including operations to defeat improvised explosive devices (IEDs), 75% of airborne electronic attack operations in Iraq, 100% of such operations in Afghanistan, and operations to counter insurgent and extremist network communications;
- **intelligence and signals intelligence** operations, including operations to identify, map, and track extremist activity, and operations involving tactical intelligence support teams that are deployed with special operations forces (SOF);
- **explosive ordnance disposal (EOD)** operations, including defusing IEDs, clearing land mines, destroying captured weapon and explosive caches, and investigating blast scenes so as to obtain evidence for later prosecution.
- **riverine warfare** operations to secure waterways such as the Tigris and Euphrates rivers and the Haditha dam;
- **maritime security** operations, including operations to intercept smugglers and extremists going to Iraq and Kuwait, and operations to guard Iraqi and U.S. infrastructure, facilities, and supply lines, such as ports and oil and gas platforms and pipelines;
- **medical and dental** services in Iraq and Afghanistan provided by a total of more than 1,800 naval medical personnel;
- **logistics** operations, including transporting of 90% of military equipment for Iraq and Afghanistan on military sealift ships, operating ports in Iraq and Kuwait, and providing contracting services and reconstruction using Iraqi firms;
- **engineering and construction** operations, such as rebuilding schools, repairing roads, reconstructing electrical, water and sewer systems, and training and equipping Iraqi engineers;
- **provincial reconstruction** operations in Iraq and Afghanistan; and
- **legal** operations, including prosecution of special-group criminals and assisting Iraqis in drafting governing documents.

² Department of the Navy. *Highlights of the Department of the Navy FY 2010 Budget*. Washington, 2009. (May 2009) pp. 2-1 to 2-2.

In addition, about 90% of equipment for operations in Iraq and Afghanistan is transported to those theaters of operation by military sealift ships.

Other Operations

In addition to participating in U.S. military operations in Iraq and Afghanistan, the Navy states that its IW operations also include the following:

- **security force assistance operations**, in which forward-deployed Navy ships exercise and work with foreign navies, coast guards, and maritime police forces, so as to improve their abilities to conduct maritime security operations;
- **civic assistance operations**, in which forward-deployed Navy units, including Navy hospital ships, expeditionary medical teams, fleet surgical teams, and naval construction units provide medical and construction services in foreign countries as a complement to other U.S. diplomatic and development activities in those countries;
- **disaster relief operations**, of which Navy forces have performed several in recent years; and
- **counter-piracy operations**, which have increased since 2008.³

The Navy states that enduring areas of focus for the Navy's role in IW include the following:

- **enhancing regional awareness**, which enables better planning, decision making, and operational agility;
- **building maritime partner capability and capacity**, so as to deny sanctuaries to violent extremists; and
- **outcome-based application of force**, so as to maintain continuous pressure on extremist groups and their supporting infrastructure.

IW Initiatives in Navy Budget

Items Mentioned in FY2010 Navy Budget Highlights Book

The Navy's FY2010 budget highlight books states the following regarding FY2010 Navy budget initiatives for irregular warfare:

- "The FY 2010 budget ensures that our contemporary wartime requirements receive steady long-term funding similar to our conventional modernization programs. The increased procurement of the Littoral Combat Ship (LCS) and Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance (ISR) Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAVs) and other programs that support irregular warfare and capacity building reflect that shift."⁴

³ For more on counter-piracy operations, see CRS Report R40528, *Piracy off the Horn of Africa*, by Lauren Ploch et al.

⁴ Department of the Navy. *Highlights of the Department of the Navy FY 2010 Budget*. Washington, 2009. (May 2009) p. 5-1. A similar statement is made on page 1-12.

- “[Navy research and development] initiatives support both traditional and irregular warfare demands in several aviation programs.”⁵
- “The FY 2010 [Navy] S&T [science and technology] portfolio is aligned to support naval S&T focus areas which consist of: power and energy; operational environments; maritime domain awareness, asymmetric and irregular warfare, information, analysis and communication; power projection; assure access and hold at risk; distributed operations; naval warrior performance and protection; survivability and self-defense; platform mobility; fleet/force sustainment; and affordability, maintainability, and reliability.”⁶

Longer List of Navy IW Budget Initiatives

The Navy states that a longer list of Navy budget initiatives for creating or expanding its IW capabilities includes the following, which are not necessarily listed in any particular order of priority:

- shifting funding for the Naval Expeditionary Combat Command (or NECC—see discussion below) from the wartime operations part of the Navy’s budget into the Navy’s “base” budget (aka, the “regular” part of the Navy’s budget);
- delivering expanded counter-IED and EOD capabilities;
- deploying riverine squadrons and maritime expeditionary support squadrons;
- training Navy personnel in foreign languages, regional affairs, and cultures;
- using the JFK Irregular Warfare Center at the Office of Navy Intelligence (ONI) to provide intelligence support to joint IW/SOF operations;
- ship operation and acquisition, including:
 - using ships (such as amphibious ships) as partnership stations, such as the Southern Partnership Station (SPS) and the Africa Partnership Station (APS) (see discussion below);
 - using ships (such as surface combatants and amphibious ships) for anti-piracy operations;
 - using hospital ships for humanitarian-assistance operations;
 - procuring Littoral Combat Ships (LCSs);⁷
 - procuring Joint High Speed Vessels (JHSVs), which are high-speed sealift ships;
 - restarting procurement of DDG-51 Aegis destroyers;

⁵ Department of the Navy. *Highlights of the Department of the Navy FY 2010 Budget*. Washington, 2009. (May 2009) p. 5-12.

⁶ Department of the Navy. *Highlights of the Department of the Navy FY 2010 Budget*. Washington, 2009. (May 2009) pp. 5-27 to 5-28.

⁷ For more on the LCS program, see CRS Report RL33741, *Navy Littoral Combat Ship (LCS) Program: Background, Issues, and Options for Congress*, by Ronald O'Rourke.

- ending procurement of DDG-1000 destroyers;⁸
- operating four Trident submarines that have been converted into cruise missile and SOF-support submarines (SSGNs);⁹
- accelerating acquisition of the P-8 multi-mission aircraft (MMA), the Navy's intended successor to the P-3 maritime patrol aircraft;
- accelerating acquisition of certain unmanned systems, including:
 - the Navy Unmanned Combat Air System (N-UCAS—an unmanned aircraft that is to be flown from Navy aircraft carriers);
 - a sea-based, medium-range unmanned aerial vehicle (UAV);
 - the small tactical unmanned aerial system (STUAS);
- expanding the Navy's sea-based ballistic missile defense (BMD) capabilities;¹⁰ and
- expanding the Navy's cyberwarfare operations force.

A separate list of Navy budgetary areas of emphasis for IW includes the following:

- ships and aircraft;
- persistent intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance (ISR) capabilities;
- unmanned systems;
- language skills, regional expertise, and cultural awareness (LREC);
- operations to build partnerships with other countries and to expand partner capacities;
- cybersecurity; and
- tools for fusing information from various sources.

In addition, the Navy states that with regard to rapidly fielding IW new capabilities, specific current items of focus include the following:

- the Center for IW and Armed Groups (CIWAG)—an 18-month pilot project at the Naval War College in Newport, RI, whose current grant funding expires in June 2010;
- a large-diameter unmanned underwater vehicle (UUV) for ISR operations;
- Saber Focus—a land-based unmanned air system (UAS) that would be established in an overseas location and used for ISR to support IW operations;

⁸ For more on the Navy's proposal to restart DDG-51 procurement and end DDG-1000 procurement, see CRS Report RL32109, *Navy DDG-51 and DDG-1000 Destroyer Programs: Background and Issues for Congress*, by Ronald O'Rourke.

⁹ For more on the converted Trident submarines, see CRS Report RS21007, *Navy Trident Submarine Conversion (SSGN) Program: Background and Issues for Congress*, by Ronald O'Rourke.

¹⁰ For more on the Navy's sea-based BMD capabilities, see CRS Report RL33745, *Sea-Based Ballistic Missile Defense—Background and Issues for Congress*, by Ronald O'Rourke.

- the use of ship-based Scan Eagle UAVs on converted Trident SSGNs for ISR operations;
- a surface ship- or submarine-based Maritime UAS that would be used for ISR operations and possibly signals intelligence operations;
- a naval intelligence fusion tool (NIFT) that is to integrate national and tactical ISR sensors so as to create real-time, actionable intelligence and targeting recommendations;
- a ship-based system called real time regional gateway (RTRG) for improved exploitation of signals intelligence to support IW operations; and
- an expansion in the size of helicopter squadrons that directly support special operations forces (SOF).

Navy Counterterrorism (CT) Operations

Navy CT operations including the following:

- Tomahawk cruise missile attacks on suspected terrorist training camps and facilities, such as those reportedly conducted in Somalia on March 3 and May 1, 2008,¹¹ and those conducted in 1998 in response to the 1998 terrorist bombings of U.S. embassies in East Africa;¹²
- operations by Navy special operations forces, known as SEALs, that are directed against terrorists;¹³
- surveillance by Navy ships and aircraft of suspected terrorists overseas;
- maritime intercept operations (MIO) aimed at identifying and intercepting terrorists or weapons of mass destruction at sea, or potentially threatening ships or aircraft that are in or approaching U.S. territorial waters—an activity that includes Navy participation in the multilateral Proliferation Security Initiative (PSI);¹⁴
- working with the Coast Guard to build maritime domain awareness (MDA)—a real-time understanding of activities on the world’s oceans;
- assisting the Coast Guard in port-security operations;¹⁵

¹¹ Edmund Sanders, “U.S. Missile Strike in Somalia Kills 6,” *Los Angeles Times*, March 4, 2008; Stephanie McCrummen and Karen DeYoung, “U.S. Airstrike Kills Somali Accused of Links to Al-Qaeda,” *Washington Post*, May 2, 2008; A12; Eric Schmitt and Jeffrey Gettleman, “Qaeda Leader Reported Killed In Somalia,” *New York Times*, May 2, 2008.

¹² For a recent article on the 1998 strikes, see Pamela Hess, “Report: 1998 Strike Built bin Laden-Taliban Tie,” *NavyTimes.com (Associated Press)*, August 22, 2008.

¹³ SEAL is an acronym that stands for Sea, Air, and Land. For further discussion of the SEALs, see CRS Report RS21048, *U.S. Special Operations Forces (SOF): Background and Issues for Congress*, by Andrew Feickert.

¹⁴ For more on the PSI, see CRS Report RL34327, *Proliferation Security Initiative (PSI)*, by Mary Beth Nikitin.

¹⁵ See, for example, Emelie Rutherford, “Navy’s Maritime Domain Awareness System ‘Up And Running’,” *Defense Daily*, September 4, 2008; and Dan Taylor, “New Network Allows Navy To Track Thousands of Ships Worldwide,” *Inside the Navy*, September 8, 2008. For more on the Coast Guard and port security, see CRS Report RL33383, *Terminal Operators and Their Role in U.S. Port and Maritime Security*, by John Frittelli and Jennifer E. Lake, and (continued...)

- protection of forward-deployed Navy ships, an activity that was intensified following the terrorist attack on the Navy Aegis destroyer Cole (DDG-67) in October 2000 in the port of Aden, Yemen;¹⁶
- protection of domestic and overseas Navy bases and facilities;
- developing Global Maritime Intelligence Integration (GMII) as part of Joint Force Maritime Component Command (JFMCC) and Maritime Domain Awareness (MDA); and
- engaging with the U.S. Coast Guard to use the National Strategy for Maritime Security to more rapidly develop capabilities for Homeland Security, particularly in the area of MDA.

The Department of the Navy states that:

While [deployed] forward, acting as the lead element of our defense-in-depth, naval forces will be positioned for increased roles in combating terrorism..... Expanded Maritime Interdiction Operations (EMIO) are authorized by the President and directed by the Secretary of Defense to intercept vessels identified to be transporting terrorists and/or terrorist-related materiel that poses an imminent threat to the United States and its allies.....

[Strike operations] have also included small, precise attacks against terrorist cells, such as the 2007 missile attacks against terrorist sanctuaries in Somalia....

The FY 2009/FY 2010 contingency operations request supports the expansion of capabilities sufficient to secure Afghanistan and prevent it from again becoming a haven for international terrorism and associated militant extremist movements.¹⁷

Recent Navy IW and CT Initiatives

The Navy in recent years has implemented a number of initiatives intended to increase its IW and CT capabilities and activities, including those discussed below.

Navy Irregular Warfare Office

The Navy in July 2008 established the Navy Irregular Warfare Office, which is intended, in the Navy's words, to "institutionalize current ad hoc efforts in IW missions of counterterrorism and counterinsurgency and the supporting missions of information operations, intelligence operations, foreign internal defense and unconventional warfare as they apply to [CT] and [counterinsurgency]." The office works closely with U.S. Special Operations Command, and reports to the Deputy Chief of Naval Operations for information, plans, and strategy.¹⁸

(...continued)

CRS Report RL33787, *Maritime Security: Potential Terrorist Attacks and Protection Priorities*, by Paul W. Parfomak and John Frittelli.

¹⁶ For a discussion of the attack on the Cole, see CRS Report RS20721, *Terrorist Attack on USS Cole: Background and Issues for Congress*, by Raphael F. Perl and Ronald O'Rourke.

¹⁷ Department of the Navy. Highlights of the Department of the Navy FY 2010 Budget. Washington, 2009. (May 2009) pp. 2-2 to 2-3.

¹⁸ Zachary M. Peterson, "New Navy Irregular Warfare Office Works to Address ISR Shortfall," *Inside the Navy*, (continued...)

Global Maritime Partnership

The Global Maritime Partnership, initially known as the 1,000-ship Navy concept, is a U.S. Navy initiative to achieve an enhanced degree of cooperation between the U.S. Navy and foreign navies, coast guards, and maritime police forces, for the purpose of ensuring global maritime security against common threats. The Navy states that

A global maritime partnership is required that unites maritime forces, port operators, commercial shippers, and international, governmental and nongovernmental agencies to address our mutual concerns. This partnership increases all of our maritime capabilities, such as response time, agility and adaptability, and is purely voluntary, with no legal or encumbering ties. It is a free-form, selforganizing network of maritime partners—good neighbors interested in using the power of the sea to unite, rather than to divide.¹⁹

Partnership Stations

The Southern Partnership Station (SPS) and the Africa Partnership Station (APS) are Navy ships, such as amphibious ships or high-speed sealift ships, that have deployed to the Caribbean and to waters off Africa, respectively, to support U.S. Navy engagement with countries in those regions, particularly for purposes of building security partnerships with those countries, and for increasing the capabilities of those countries for performing maritime-security operations. The SPS and APS can be viewed as specific measures for promoting the above-discussed global maritime partnership. A March 2, 2009, press report states:

The Navy's nascent effort to engage navies and coast guards on the East Coast of Africa is slowly ramping up with the current deployment of a frigate to the region and a planned visit by an amphibious ship later this year, the commodore leading the mission told Inside the Navy last week.

In the Gulf of Guinea in West Africa, the Navy has regularly conducted training and ship visits over the past few years, but the service has had very limited engagement on the eastern side of the continent.

“On the West Coast, they're about two years ahead of us,” Capt. Nicholas Holman, the commodore of Task Force 363, said in a Feb. 27 telephone interview from the frigate Robert G. Bradley (FFG-49) off Tanzania. “They have an international staff and they're getting more accomplished. They have high school into college-level training, while we're at the elementary-school level.”

The ongoing effort in West Africa dubbed “Africa Partnership Station” officially began in 2007. Right now, the amphibious dock ship Nashville (LPD-13) is on a six-month deployment in the Gulf of Guinea region. The effort Holman leads was recently named “African Partnership Station East” to link the two missions together.

“The training we're doing right now, basic shiphandling, boarding procedures—it's a lot of very basic things,” Holman explained.

(...continued)

September 1, 2008.

¹⁹ Department of the Navy. Highlights of the Department of the Navy FY 2010 Budget. Washington, 2009. (May 2009) p. 1-4.

The Bradley has visited Mozambique and Tanzania with a visit to Comoros for a port call and community- relations projects. Late last week, the ship was set to leave Tanzania for its last stop in Kenya.

The navies of Mozambique and Tanzania have very little capability, Holman noted, which means most of the training conducted by Bradley sailors takes place either aboard the frigate or on U.S. Navy rigid-hull inflatable boats. He noted Kenya has the most robust naval capabilities of the three countries the Bradley will train.

Due to the lack of operational navies and coast guards, maritime security in the region is “almost untouched,” the commodore said.

“We have a country like Tanzania, which has [hundreds] of miles of coastline, they don’t have anything to do patrols—it’s almost untouched,” Holman said.

Tanzania’s chief of naval operations, a brigadier general, could not authorize Holman to visit the pier where the aging Tanzanian fleet sits idle, he noted.

“I think they’re not as open as they want to be yet, I think they’re not showing us what they really have,” Holman said. He explained relations have been friendly, nonetheless.

Overall, the naval capabilities in East Africa are low, but the interest level in continued U.S. Navy engagement in the region is high, according to the commodore.

“The capabilities of the militaries and navies in this region is pretty low, they understand there are issues out in the ocean, but they really don’t have the capacity or the training to do anything about it,” Holman said.

The U.S. Navy’s goal is to build capability in East Africa in the coming years.

“From talking to the embassies and the State Department, I think we’ll see some things happening in the near future where the U.S. government is helping the coast guards and navies in the region with some small boats,” Holman said.

A visit by a U.S. Navy amphibious ship with a shallow draft to get into the ports in the region and provide a more robust capability is planned in the next seven months, he added.

In an early February interview, Rear Adm. William Loeffler, director of plans for U.S. Naval Forces Africa and Europe, told *Inside the Navy* that the interest in maritime safety and security training is high around the African continent.

“We have a ship [the Robert G. Bradley] that is moving up the eastern coast of Africa,” Loeffler said. “This ship will be providing basic maritime training in terms of basic vessel boarding and searches to increase the countries’ capacity to detect and deter illegal fishing or smuggling activities in their waters, fisheries management, oceanography as well as oil spill management technology and small boat repair and maintenance.”²⁰

²⁰ Zachary M. Peterson, “Commodore: Navy Engagement In East Africa Developing Slowly,” *Inside the Navy*, March 2, 2009. Material in brackets as in original. A February 9, 2009, press report states:

As the Navy begins another major ship deployment for its Africa Partnership Station initiative in West Africa, the service is beginning to look toward expanding the APS mission around the continent to include East Africa, according to service officials.

This week the amphibious dock ship Nashville (LPD-13) arrived in Senegal for its first stop on a (continued...)

Navy Expeditionary Combat Command (NECC)

The Navy Expeditionary Combat Command (NECC), headquartered at Naval Amphibious Base, Little Creek, VA, was established informally in October 2005 and formally on January 13, 2006. The creation of NECC consolidated and facilitated the expansion of a number of Navy organizations that have a role in IW operations. Navy functions supported by NECC include the following:

- riverine warfare;
- maritime civil affairs;
- expeditionary training;

(...continued)

six-month deployment to engage in training and community outreach activities with five nations in the Gulf of Guinea region.

The ship will spend 10 days to three weeks in Senegal, Ghana, Nigeria, Cameroon and Gabon before wrapping up the mission in Senegal, Capt. Cynthia Thebaud, who heads the APS initiative, said.

West Africa, specifically the Gulf of Guinea, is an area of interest to the U.S. military in part because of rich oil resources in a region plagued by piracy, pollution, illegal trafficking of persons, narcotics and poaching.

In late 2007, the amphibious ship Fort McHenry (LSD-43) and the high-speed vessel Swift (HSV-2) deployed to the Gulf of Guinea for the first APS mission. During the first deployment, the ships visited seven countries with an additional stop in Nigeria. This time, Nashville will go to fewer countries, but spend more time in each, Thebaud explained in an interview last month.

“Instead of going to a number of places in fairly short period of time, we are going to significantly fewer places for a longer period of time,” she said.

With the success of the initial APS deployment and regular ship visits to the region, Thebaud said the interest in training and other engagements around the African continent at large is growing.

“The interest in the APS mission is expanding from countries around the littoral of Africa,” she noted. “They ask, ‘When is APS coming to us?’”

“One of the most significant indicators we have seen is the increased desire for participation,” Thebaud added. “We have participation from 10 African countries on the staff with a total of 17 African officers as part of the APS staff, [and] new this year is a staff member from Kenya.”

Next year, the Navy is looking at expanding APS to include visits to countries on the eastern side of the continent, according to Navy officials.

Rear Adm. William Loeffler, director of plans for U.S. Naval Forces Africa and Europe, told *Inside the Navy* last week that the interest in maritime safety and security training is high around the African continent.

“We have a ship [Robert G. Bradley (FFG-49)] that is moving up the eastern coast of Africa this month,” Loeffler said. “This ship will be providing basic maritime training in terms of basic vessel boarding and searches to increase the countries’ capacity to detect and deter illegal fishing or smuggling activities in their waters, fisheries management, oceanography as well as oil spill management technology and small boat repair and maintenance.”

The purpose of the APS engagements is threefold, Thebaud said: military-to-military maritime security training, civil affairs and community outreach.

(Zachary M. Peterson, “Mission May Expand Around Continent,” *Inside the Navy*, February 9, 2009. Material in brackets as in original.)

“All events are based on requests from the partner nations,” she said. “Any training, workshops, seminars, whether on the mil-to-mil side or in the civil sector, are all things that have been specifically requested by the partner nations based on events they have done previously.”

- explosive ordnance disposal (EOD);
- expeditionary intelligence;
- naval construction (i.e., the naval construction brigades, aka CBs or “Seabee”);
- maritime expeditionary security;
- expeditionary diving;
- combat camera;
- expeditionary logistics;
- guard battalion; and
- expeditionary combat readiness.

The Department of the Navy states that NECC

is a global force provider of adaptive force packages of expeditionary capabilities to joint warfighting commanders, centrally managing the current and future readiness, resources, manning, training, and equipping of a scalable, self-sustaining and integrated expeditionary force of active and reserve sailors. Expeditionary sailors are deployed from around the globe in support of the new “Cooperative Strategy for 21st Century Seapower.” NECC forces and capabilities are integral to executing the maritime strategy which is based on expanded core capabilities of maritime power: forward presence, deterrence, sea control, power projection, maritime security, humanitarian assistance and disaster relief. To enable these, NECC provides a full spectrum of operations, including effective waterborne and ashore anti-terrorism force protection; theater security cooperation and engagement; and humanitarian assistance and disaster relief.

NECC leads the way in providing integrated active and reserve forces, highlighted by the seamlessly integrated operational forces of naval construction (Seabees), maritime expeditionary security (formerly coastal warfare), navy expeditionary logistics (Cargo Handling Battalions), explosive ordnance disposal, and the remaining mission capabilities throughout the command.

NECC is not a standalone or combat force, but rather a protection force of rapidly deployable mission specialists that agilely fill the gaps in the joint battle space and compliment coalition capabilities.²¹

The Navy also states that:

The Reserve Component expeditionary forces are integrated with the Active Component forces to provide a continuum of capabilities unique to the maritime environment within Navy Expeditionary Combat Command (NECC). The Navy Reserve trains and equips 47 percent of Sailors supporting NECC missions, including waterborne and ashore anti-terrorism force protection, in-theater security, humanitarian assistance, disaster relief, infrastructure maintenance and improvement, and other mission capabilities which are seamlessly integrated with operational forces around the world.²²

²¹ Department of the Navy. Highlights of the Department of the Navy FY 2010 Budget. Washington, 2009. (May 2009) p. 4-13.

²² Department of the Navy. Highlights of the Department of the Navy FY 2010 Budget. Washington, 2009. (May 2009) (continued...)

Riverine Force

The riverine force is intended to supplement the riverine capabilities of the SEALs and relieve Marines who have been conducting maritime security operations in ports and waterways in Iraq. The force consists of three squadrons of 12 boats each, and includes a total of about 900 sailors. The Navy established Riverine Group 1 (which oversees the three squadrons) at the Naval Amphibious Base, Little Creek, VA, in May 2006. The riverine squadrons were established in 2006-2007.

Other Initiatives

Other Navy initiatives in recent years for supporting IW and CT operations include establishing a reserve civil affairs battalion, a Navy Foreign Area Officer (FAO) community consisting of officers with specialized knowledge of foreign countries and regions, a maritime interception operation (MIO) intelligence exploitation pilot program, an intelligence data-mining capability at the National Maritime Intelligence Center (NMIC).

Potential Oversight Issues for Congress

Definition of Navy IW Activities

Potential oversight questions for Congress regarding the definition of Navy IW activities include the following:

- Should security force assistance operations, civic assistance operations, disaster relief operations, and counter-piracy operations be included in the definition of Navy IW operations?
- Should operations to build partnerships, and to build partner capacities for conducting maritime security operations, be included in the definition of Navy IW operations?
- Has the Navy included the kinds of operations listed in the two previous points in its definition of Navy IW operations in part to satisfy a perceived requirement from the Office of the Secretary of Defense (OSD) to show that the Navy is devoting a certain portion of its personnel and budgets to irregular warfare?
- Should the Navy's CT operations be considered a part of its IW operations? What is the relationship between IW operations and CT operations?

Navy IW Budget Priorities

Potential oversight questions for Congress regarding Navy IW budget priorities include the following:

(...continued)
p. 4-22.

- Is the Navy's list of IW budget items sufficiently organized and prioritized to support congressional understanding and oversight, or to permit Congress to know where any additional dollars available for Navy IW operations might best be added?
- Should items such as expanding Navy sea-based BMD capabilities, procuring DDG-51 destroyers, and Navy cyber security operations be included in a list of Navy IW budgetary initiatives?
- Are the Navy's current IW-oriented UAV/UAS programs sufficiently coordinated?

Degree of Emphasis on IW and CT in Future Navy Budgets

A third oversight issue for Congress—an issue related to, but more general than the previous one—is how much emphasis to place on IW and CT activities in future Navy budgets, and whether decisions reached by DOD on this issue in the 2009 Quadrennial Defense Review (QDR) are appropriate.

Supporters of placing increased emphasis on IW and CT activities in future Navy budgets could argue that the experience of recent years, including U.S. operations in Iraq and Afghanistan, suggests that the United States in coming years will likely need to be able to conduct IW and CT operations, that the Navy has certain specialized or unique IW and CT capabilities that need to be supported as part of an effective overall U.S. IW or CT effort, and that there are programs relating to Navy IW and CT activities that could be funded at higher levels, if additional funding were made available.

Opponents of placing an increased emphasis on IW and CT activities in future Navy budgets could argue that these activities already receive adequate emphasis on Navy budgets, and that placing an increased emphasis on these activities could reduce the amount of funding available to the Navy for programs that support the Navy's role in acting, along with the Air Force, as a strategic reserve for the United States in potential conventional inter-state conflicts.

Potential oversight questions for Congress include the following: To what degree can or should Navy IW and CT activities be used to reduce the burden on other services for conducting such activities? Are the Navy's steps to increase its role in IW and CT partly motivated by concerns about its perceived relevance, or by a desire to secure a portion of IW and CT funding? Is the Navy striking an appropriate balance between IW and CT activities and other Navy concerns, such as preparing for a potential future challenge from improved Chinese maritime military forces?²³

Regarding how issues relating to Navy IW and CT capabilities might be discussed in the QDR, an April 29, 2009 press report stated that:

The Navy and the nation need to have a lively discussion about the maritime domain and what it takes for the service to operate in that area—including the ability to support and

²³ For additional discussion of this issue, see CRS Report RL33153, *China Naval Modernization: Implications for U.S. Navy Capabilities—Background and Issues for Congress*, by Ronald O'Rourke.

maintain sailors and ships dispersed around the globe, according to [Admiral Gary Roughead,] the Chief of Naval Operations (CNO).

Additionally, the Navy is looking to flush out its requirements for the Naval Expeditionary Combat Command (NECC) during the Quadrennial Defense Review (QDR), hoping those discussions will create an opportunity to see how the NECC should evolve....

As the Navy enters into the QDR, Roughead sees the opportunity for discussions about the military at large and the role of the various components within the military, as well as, discussions on the naval capabilities the nation needs, the capacity of those capabilities and the numbers of those capabilities. "That's what we are going to be doing in QDR."

One topic Roughead is looking to discuss during the QDR is the NECC.

"Clearly, I think we are going to be looking at that under the rubric of irregular warfare... what are the components that make that up," he said. "For the first time we did a force structure assessment on the expeditionary combat command and remarkably as we went out into the COCOMs there was not a definitive requirement that came through loud and clear on riverine [capabilities]. I want to get into that."

But the lack of a definitive requirement from the combatant commands should not be seen as the possible demise of the riverine force, Roughead said.

Proof of his support for NECC was demonstrated this year as he pulled funding for the command from the supplemental and, for the first time, placed it into the Navy's baseline budget.

"My position was, if we are going to have this capability you can't be hanging it on supplemental funding because if it goes away where are you? So we are migrating NECC into the base budget," Roughead said. "We've developed some costing models for NECC that allow us to better predict what the costs are."

Roughead views the QDR as a good opportunity for the Navy to also explore where it wants to grow NECC because, in some instances, the sizing of that capability is influenced by the other services as well, he said.

For example, Roughead pointed to the Seabees. "How many do you need? Because of the work they are doing, they are pretty much exclusively focused on Iraq and Afghanistan. So what's the growth in Army engineers? That's why the QDR is going to be a good process."

If the Navy needs more combat engineers and looks to grow its force, and the Army is growing its engineering force, too, is that the optimum way to do that? Roughead said. "The QDR is going to let us get into things like that. The QDR will allow us to better flush out the riverine portion."

Roughead said the NECC is performing a really good mission and he is trying to get his arms around how much bigger it should grow.

The capability is so good, Roughead said, he has been working with his foreign counterparts to explore a riverine exchange program.

Because of the varying locales the riverine force could operate in—from operations in Iraq to densely forested or complex delta environments—Roughead wants the force to get some different experiences.

“The boats we have are great where they are operating, but how do they hold up in shallower, muddier, thick vegetation areas? I want to find out more about that,” he said.

In the past year and a half, Roughead said he has taken steps to legitimize and put in place things that portend a good future for NECC.

“A future based on getting it into our base budget, getting force structure analysis—not just what people think we should have—but where do we think the demands are going to be? And then getting in and looking at what the internal structure and manning concept should be for NECC,” he said. “I would say we are doing some good substantive work and good foundational work to really get NECC forward.”²⁴

A June 1, 2009, press report states:

Much of the current fleet has the capability to perform newer irregular warfare missions, a point which will be key as the Navy determines the right balance of the force—including amphibious lift—in the upcoming Quadrennial Defense Review, the service’s top requirements officer said last week.

“When I look at the flexibility of the naval platforms, I think they are full-spectrum platforms that can contribute across all areas,” Vice Adm. Barry McCullough, the deputy chief of naval operations for integration of capabilities and resources, said in a May 27 interview at his Pentagon office. “And so we need to fit within the prescribed guidance that [Defense Secretary Robert Gates] put out, and that’s what we’re working on for balance.”

Gates has recently called for the military force structure to be 50 percent focused on conventional warfare, 10 percent focused on irregular warfare and 40 percent focused on dual-use capability for either conventional or irregular warfare. The QDR, which is now underway, aims to review military force structure writ large.

McCullough said his worry is that the Navy’s irregular warfare capacity has become too narrowly focused on Navy Expeditionary Combat Command, an umbrella for expeditionary capabilities such as explosive ordnance disposal, riverine and naval construction units known as Seabees.

“While their contribution to irregular warfare is great, and they’re very capable and a very professional force, that’s not the sole focus of irregular warfare inside the Navy,” McCullough said.

For example, he said, while aircraft carriers are often cited as the prime example of a conventional warfare capability, the Abraham Lincoln (CVN-72) played a pivotal role in supporting relief efforts following the 2004 tsunami in Southeast Asia. The Arleigh Burke-class destroyers have also been used in recent irregular warfare capacities, such as the Bainbridge (DDG-96), which aided in the capture and killing of pirates off the coast of Somalia following the hijacking of an American cargo ship.

“That covers the spectrum of warfare,” McCullough said. “That’s not what those ships were designed for, but it just goes to show you the inherent flexibility of naval platforms.”

²⁴ Geoff Fein, “CNO Sees Need For Discussion On Maritime Domain,” *Defense Daily*, April 29, 2009: 1-2. Ellipsis in quote as in the original.

Amphibious ships are also “ideally suited” for irregular warfare missions, McCullough said, echoing a sentiment voiced by Chief of Naval Operations Adm. Gary Roughead in an April 25 meeting with reporters. The Austin-class amphibious dock ship Nashville (LPD-13) just completed a deployment to the Gulf of Guinea region of West Africa for maritime security training and outreach to several African nations, an endeavor known as Africa Partnership Station.

While some have argued that acquiring more coastal patrol boats or 178-foot patrol ships is the right approach to security cooperation missions like APS, McCullough countered that their small size and small crew are limiting.

“If you send an amphibious ship, you can interact with a multitude of people in the area where you’re trying to conduct theater security cooperation or engagement, and you can train a large a majority of those people, because you can bring their craft to your ship or their people to your ship to interact,” he said. “So then you’ve got an ability to influence a much broader spectrum of audience.”²⁵

Additional Oversight Questions

In addition to the issues discussed above, the Navy’s IW and CT activities pose some additional potential oversight issues for Congress, including the following:

- How many Navy personnel globally are involved in IW and CT activities, and where are they located? How much funding is the Navy expending each year on such activities?
- Is the Navy adequately managing its Individual Augmentee (IA) program, which provides many of the Navy personnel in Iraq and Afghanistan?²⁶
- Is the Navy devoting sufficient attention and resources to riverine warfare?²⁷
- Aside from the establishment of the riverine force and a reserve civil affairs battalion, what implications might an expanded Navy role in IW and CT have for Navy force-structure requirements (i.e., the required size and composition of the Navy)?
- Is the Navy adequately coordinating its IW and CT activities and initiatives with other organizations, such as the Special Operations Command (SOCOM) and the Coast Guard?
- Are the Navy’s recent IW and CT organizational changes appropriate? What other Navy organizational changes might be needed?

²⁵ Rebekah Gordon, “McCullough: Current Fleet Meets Many Irregular Warfare Missions,” *Inside the Navy*, June 1, 2009.

²⁶ For a discussion of the Navy’s management of the IA program, see Andrew Scutro, “Fleet Forces Takes Charge of IA Program,” *NavyTimes.com*, July 7, 2008.

²⁷ For an article that discusses this question from a critical perspective, see Daniel A. Hancock, “The Navy’s Not Serious About Riverine Warfare,” *U.S. Naval Institute Proceedings*, January 2008: 14-19.

Legislative Activity for FY2010

FY2010 Defense Authorization Bill (H.R. 2647/S. 1390)

House

The House Armed Services Committee, in its report (H.Rept. 111-166 of June 18, 2009) on H.R. 2647, states:

Interagency Responsibility for Detection, Monitoring and Information Sharing in the Maritime Domain

The committee is increasingly concerned with the complicated lines of coordination between interagency organizations in order to persistently detect, monitor and cue responses to deal with irregular threats from the maritime domain including piracy, proliferation, illicit trafficking, and terrorism. The committee notes the success of the Joint Interagency Task Forces (JIATFs) in developing an effective organization for the execution of interagency counterdrug operations. The committee notes that the scope of irregular threats to the United States in the maritime domain has increased since the creation of the JIATFs. The committee is concerned that current interagency mechanisms may not be effectively leveraging the JIATF model to ensure that detection, monitoring, early warning, and cuing for the full range of threats in the maritime domain does not lead to exploited jurisdictional seams, redundancy and inefficiency in acquisition and mission, and lack of information-sharing. Accordingly, the committee directs that the Secretary of Defense, in collaboration with the Secretary of the Navy and other interagency partners, submit a report to the congressional defense committees on interagency responsibilities for maritime threat detection, monitoring and information-sharing within 90 days of the date of enactment of this Act. (Page 377-378)

Senate

The Senate Armed Services Committee, in its report (S.Rept. 111-35 of July 2, 2009) on S. 1390, states:

Irregular warfare in the Navy

In prepared statements before the committee on the posture of the Department of Defense regarding the authorization request for fiscal year 2010, the Secretary of Defense and the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff both observed that the Department of Defense (DOD) needed to shift relative emphasis in resource allocations towards the threats we face today and will likely face tomorrow.

One of those threats encompasses the irregular warfare (IW) mission area. The committee is concerned that DOD has not shifted enough emphasis quickly enough in certain areas. One such area is in the Department of the Navy's budget for IW programs, which may be inadequate to achieve the objectives the Secretary has laid out.

A major component of the Navy's ability to contribute to the IW mission area is the Naval Expeditionary Combat Command (NECC). A large proportion of NECC force structure is ground equipment (i.e., SEABEE equipment and vehicles), underwater demolition and diving equipment, small boats, riverine craft and maritime expeditionary force equipment. These categories of equipment have seen persistent use and have been exposed to the harsh

elements in Iraq, Afghanistan, and elsewhere in the Central Command theater of operations. The committee understands that much of that equipment will be left behind or given to local forces, such as the Iraqi National Army or police forces, when the U.S. withdraws the bulk of its forces.

The committee expects that the Quadrennial Defense Review will review this situation and help inform DOD on the requirements to fully fund NECC modernization and sustainment requirements, and that the Navy will adequately apply resources to those requirements in future budgets. In addition, the committee believes that any such review of NECC requirements should account for equipment shortfalls due to: (1) transferring equipment to local forces; (2) changing force structure requirements; (3) changing threat levels requiring equipment modifications or different equipment entirely; (4) losing equipment in combat; (5) operating beyond economic service life; and (6) operating in environments which result in excessive wear and tear. (Pages 30-31)

The report also states:

Mobile intelligence and tracking systems

The budget request included \$108.0 million in PE 63114N [in the Navy's research and development account] for advanced technologies for power projection. The Navy has a science and technology objective to develop data fusion and analysis technologies for actionable intelligence generation to defeat adaptive irregular threats in complex environments. In support of that objective, the committee recommends an increase of \$4.0 million for research on data processing and fusion technologies to support multiple simultaneous detections, tracking, identification, and targeting of asymmetric and mobile threats in combat operations. (Page 63)

The report also states:

United States Joint Forces Command National Program for Small Unit Excellence

The budget request included \$8.75 million in Operation and Maintenance, Navy (OMN) for the creation of the National Program for Small Unit Excellence. The committee is encouraged by the United States Joint Forces Command's (JFCOM) intent to develop a comprehensive approach to small unit excellence by drawing upon academia, lessons learned from Iraq and Afghanistan, and the conferences held to date. However, the committee is concerned that additional steps must first be taken to evaluate small unit training doctrine in order to ensure the most efficient and effective training is developed by the appropriate agencies. The committee believes training standards, established irregular warfare doctrine, and integrated requirements are currently lacking. Additionally, the committee is not yet convinced the Center's focus is not already an established training focus within the individual Services, and that the center may be duplicative rather than complementary.

Accordingly, the committee recommends a decrease of \$7.0 million in OMN and \$3.0 of Other Procurement, Navy for the National Small Unit Center for Excellence. The committee authorizes \$10.0 million in research, development, test, and evaluation for efforts related to the proposed National Program for Small Unit Excellence. The committee directs that none of these funds be used for the establishment of a center. The committee directs that the funds be used by the Commander of JFCOM to invest in initiatives that will support the development of small unit capabilities in the services, and that the priority for funding shall be initiatives that are cost-shared with a service or defense agency. (Page 108)

Conference

The conference report (H.Rept. 111-288 of October 7, 2009) on H.R. 2647 states:

Irregular Warfare Support

The budget request included \$43.8 million in [research and development program element] PE 63121D8Z for Special Operations and Low Intensity Conflict advanced development, including funding for the Irregular Warfare Support Program (IWSP), in the base budget, and no funding in this PE in Research, Development, Test, & Evaluation for Overseas Contingency Operations (OCO).

The House bill would authorize an increase of \$100.0 million in this PE in Research, Development, Test, & Evaluation for OCO for expansion of IWSP.

The Senate amendment would authorize the budget request in PE 63121D8Z for both the base and OCO budget.

The conferees agree to authorize the requested amount in PE 63121D8Z for both the base and OCO budget. The conferees recognize the importance of enhancing the counterterrorism and counterinsurgency capabilities of the Department of Defense (DOD), and the government as a whole, through the types of innovative projects and activities undertaken and proposed by IWSP within the Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Special Operations and Low Intensity Conflict (ASD(SO/LIC)).

The conferees are aware of concerns about whether this program office within ASD(SO/LIC) is the appropriate location for a substantial effort to support the combatant commands through unconventional, creative, and multi-disciplinary (military, cultural, social, ideological, economic, and legal) approaches to counterinsurgency and counterterrorism. The conferees are more concerned, however, that: (1) this small program office in the Office of the Secretary of Defense appears to be the only entity in the Department, and perhaps in the executive branch, engaged in these types of activities; and (2) that so little funding is requested each year to sustain such activities and to scale up those that prove to be successful. The conferees are aware that the Commander of the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) in Afghanistan, General Stanley McChrystal, requested substantial, specific support from the IWSP office on an urgent basis, citing a “critical gap” in capabilities.

The conferees direct the ASD(SO/LIC) to inform the congressional defense committees, within 90 days of enactment of this Act, how DOD intends to respond to the ISAF Commander’s request. The conferees also direct the Assistant Secretary to provide a report to the congressional defense committees, coincident with the submission of the fiscal year 2011 budget request, describing all activities and programs within DOD and elsewhere in the executive branch that are similar to those projects underway or proposed by IWSP, their level of funding, and the executing organization. The report also should include an assessment of the results to date and the potential utility of the ongoing and proposed IWSP programs, at their present scope and if they were to be scaled up substantially. (Pages 691-692)

The conference report also states:

Sense of Congress on manned airborne irregular warfare platforms

The Senate amendment contained a provision (sec. 1087) that would state that it is the sense of Congress that the Secretary of Defense should, with regard to the development of manned airborne irregular warfare platforms, coordinate requirements for such weapons systems with the military services, including the reserve components.

The House bill contained no similar provision.

The Senate recesses.

The conferees agree that the Secretary should coordinate requirements for such weapon systems with the military services, including the reserve components. (Page 821)

FY2010 DOD Appropriations Bill (H.R. 3326)

House

The House Appropriations Committee, in its report (H.Rept. 111-230 on July 24, 2009) on H.R. 3326, states that:

on December 1, 2008, the Deputy Secretary of Defense issued guidance elevating the importance of irregular warfare making it as strategically important as traditional warfare. The policy requires that the Department integrate irregular warfare concepts and capabilities into doctrine, organization, training, material, leadership, personnel and facilities. But this integration has not completely occurred. It appears that the Department has focused on scaling back traditional weapons systems such as the F-22 aircraft and DDG-1000 ship class, but has not addressed the air operations and underway training requirements changes associated with a focus on irregular warfare. (Page 64)

The report also states:

AFRICA PARTNERSHIP STATION

The Committee recommends an additional \$20,500,000 in Operation and Maintenance, Navy in support of maritime security capacity building in U.S. Africa Command's (AFRICOM) area of responsibility. Since November 2007, the U.S. Navy has led joint exercises, port visits, professional training and community outreach with the coastal nations of West Africa through the Africa Partnership Station (APS). The Committee commends the Navy's effort to increase the ability of our African partners to extend the rule of law out to sea and better combat illegal fishing, human smuggling, drug trafficking, oil theft and piracy. To increase the Navy's role in AFRICOM and ensure a more predictable, robust schedule of exercises under APS, the Committee has provided \$10,500,000 for APS—West for fiscal year 2010. The Committee also strongly supports AFRICOM's plan to carry out similar exercises on the east coast of Africa, and has provided an additional \$10,000,000 for APS—East. (Page 81)

Senate

The Senate Appropriations Committee, in its report (S.Rept. 111-74 of September 10, 2009) on H.R. 3326, does not directly discuss Navy IW and CT operations.

Appendix. DOD Interest in Irregular Warfare

This appendix presents examples of statements from Secretary of Defense Robert Gates and other Department of Defense (DOD) officials suggesting that DOD budgets in FY2010 and subsequent fiscal years will place a certain amount of emphasis on capabilities for conducting irregular warfare (IW) operations, such as counterinsurgency operations.

In testimony to the Senate Armed Services committee on January 27, 2009, Secretary Gates stated:

Efforts to put the [DOD] bureaucracy on a war footing have, in my view, revealed underlying flaws in the institutional priorities, cultural preferences, and reward structures of America's defense establishment – a set of institutions largely arranged to plan for future wars, to prepare for a short war, but not to wage a protracted war. The challenge we face is how well we can institutionalize the irregular capabilities gained and means to support troops in theater that have been, for the most part, developed ad hoc and funded outside the base budget.²⁸

In an April 6, 2009, statement at a news conference on recommendations he intended to make to the president concerning the proposed FY2010 defense budget (which was submitted to Congress in early-May 2009), Gates stated:

As I told the Congress in January, our struggles to put the defense bureaucracies on a war footing these past few years have revealed underlying flaws in the priorities, cultural preferences, and reward structures of America's defense establishment – a set of institutions largely arranged to prepare for conflicts against other modern armies, navies, and air forces. Programs to directly support, protect, and care for the man or woman at the front have been developed ad hoc and funded outside the base budget. Put simply, until recently there has not been an institutional home in the Defense Department for today's warfighter. Our contemporary wartime needs must receive steady long-term funding and a bureaucratic constituency similar to conventional modernization programs. I intend to use the FY10 budget to begin this process.²⁹

In the question-and-answer portion of the April 6, 2009, news conference, Gates stated:

the reality is that – and let me put this very crudely – if you broke this [recommended FY2010] budget out, it would probably be about 10 percent for irregular warfare, about 50 percent for traditional, strategic and conventional conflict, and about 40 percent dual-purpose capabilities.

So this is not about irregular warfare putting the conventional capabilities in the shade. Quite the contrary: this is just a matter – for me, at least – of having the irregular-war constituency have a – have a seat at the table for the first time when it comes to the base budget...

²⁸ Secretary of Defense Robert M. Gates, Submitted Statement, Senate Armed Services Committee, Tuesday, January 27, 2009, 9:30 A.M., p. 12.

²⁹ Defense Budget Recommendation Statement (Arlington, VA), As Prepared for Delivery by Secretary of Defense Robert M. Gates, Arlington, VA, Monday, April 6, 2009, available online at <http://www.defenselink.mil/speeches/speech.aspx?speechid=1341>.

I think that this debate between conventional and irregular is quite artificial. Most of the people that I talk to are now increasingly talking about, instead of one or the other, a spectrum of conflict in which you may face at the same time an insurgent with an AK-47 and his supporting element with a highly sophisticated ballistic missile, where you – where you have what we have been calling in the last year or so complex hybrid warfare. And so you really need to be prepared across a spectrum to deal with these capabilities.

And that's why I – going back to my crude carve-up of the budget of 40 percent dual-purpose, I think we have to be prepared all along that spectrum. And again, I think what people have lost sight of is I'm not trying to have irregular capabilities take the place of the conventional capabilities. I'm just trying to get the irregular guys to have a seat at the table and to institutionalize some of the needs that they have so that we can get the need – so we can get what they need to them faster and so that we don't have go outside the Pentagon bureaucracy every time there's a need for the warfighter that has to be met in a relatively short period of time.³⁰

In a May 5, 2009, statement, Deputy Secretary of Defense William Lynn stated:

To better meet the needs of today's conflicts, while positioning our force for the future, Secretary Gates last month announced a reshaping of the budget and priorities of the Defense Department. As is often the case when bold action is required, some people may not agree. The decisions were based on three strategic objectives:...

- The second objective is to establish an institutional home for the warfighter in the base budget. We need to rebalance toward forces dedicated to irregular warfare, while still hedging against the longer-term risks of larger, more sophisticated adversaries. This means increasing ISR support for the warfighter, especially through unmanned aerial vehicles. It means growing our special operations forces. And it means boosting our global partnership capacity to train and equip foreign militaries to undertake counterterrorism and stability operations....

The United States today stands unsurpassed on, above, and below the high seas. In terms of tonnage, our battle fleet is far larger than any potential adversary. And, no other fleet has anything like the reach or combat power of a single American carrier strike group. One consideration, as we rebalance the department's priorities, is that the military dominance we enjoy is greater in some areas than others. We looked for ways to strengthen irregular-warfare capabilities while maintaining the overwhelming edge we enjoy in conventional capabilities.

The Navy must be ready for counterinsurgency and other irregular operations, which means dealing with non-state actors at sea or near shore, or with a swarm of speedboats sent by militia groups or countries like Iran. The requirement is for numbers, speed, and the ability to maneuver in shallow waters.

The craft that best fills that bill is the LCS [Littoral Combat Ship] which, despite its past development problems, is a versatile ship that can be turned out in quantity and go places that are either too shallow or too dangerous for the big, blue-water surface combatants. As we've seen off the coast of Somalia, it does not take a large ship to carry out antipiracy missions.³¹

³⁰ Transcript of news conference, available online at <http://www.defenselink.mil/transcripts/transcript.aspx?transcriptid=4396>

³¹ [Statement at] Navy League Sea, Air, and Space Expo, As Prepared for Delivery by Deputy Secretary of Defense (continued...)

In a May 14, 2009, statement, Lynn stated:

Even as we strengthen the Joint Force, we're doing something else. We're giving our warfighters an "institutional home:" inclusion in the base budget and the steady, long-term funding that they deserve and need. We've added nearly \$2 billion to the base budget for intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance (ISR), including the unmanned aerial vehicles so critical in Iraq and Afghanistan. We're increasing our Special Operations forces, with more personnel and more equipment. We're increasing our buy of Littoral Combat Ships.

And we're reshaping the Army's Future Combat System. We are immediately pushing out, throughout the Army, the new technologies and unmanned vehicles needed on the battlefield today. At the same time, we're halting the ground vehicle program and we'll ensure that future vehicles reflect the lessons of Iraq and Afghanistan.

Together, these changes send an unmistakable message to our armed forces and to our adversaries: from now on, irregular warfare is a regular part of America's military planning.³²

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(...continued)

William J. Lynn, National Harbor, Maryland, Tuesday, May 5, 2009, available online at <http://www.defenselink.mil/speeches/speech.aspx?speechid=1348>.

³² [Statement entitled] "A New Direction in Defense" at the 3rd Annual Joint Warfighting Conference, As Prepared for Delivery by Deputy Secretary of Defense William J. Lynn III, 3rd Annual Joint Warfighting Conference Va. Beach Convention Center, Thursday, May 14, 2009, available online at <http://www.defenselink.mil/speeches/speech.aspx?speechid=1372>.