

13th MEU Completes Realistic Urban Training, Boosts Deployment Readiness



U.S. Marine assigned to Battalion Landing Team 2/4, 13th Marine Expeditionary Unit, provides security as MV-22B Ospreys prepare to land after conducting a simulated raid during Realistic Urban Training at Blythe, California, May 31, 2026. RUT is a critical pre-deployment exercise that enables the 13th MEU to integrate its command, aviation, ground and logistics combat elements, ensuring the force is prepared to respond rapidly and effectively to crises in unfamiliar, urban environments. (U.S. Marine Corps photo by Lance Cpl. Christian Cutter)

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YUMA, Ariz. – The 13th Marine Expeditionary Unit (MEU) successfully concluded Realistic Urban Training (RUT), a major pre-deployment exercise held from May 26 to June 3, 2026, across various locations in the Southwest United States. This rigorous evolution featured diverse training missions designed to forge tactical cohesion across the Marine Air-Ground Task Force and maximize operational effectiveness in complex urban environments.

Throughout the exercise, over 1,000 Marines and Sailors from the 13th MEU's Command Element, Battalion Landing Team 2/4, Marine Medium Tiltrotor Squadron 364 (Reinforced), Marine Fighter Attack Squadron 211, and Combat Logistics Battalion 13 integrated to form a cohesive MAGTF. The training took place in challenging and unfamiliar urban environments, including Glendale, Arizona, and Blythe and Glamis, California, providing realistic settings for complex, decentralized operations. While the MEU operated from Marine Corps Air Station Yuma, training also occurred at military installations across the Southwest.

“Realistic Urban Training is a critical milestone that forges the individual elements of the 13th MEU into a unified, combat-ready MAGTF,” said Col. Richard Alvarez, commanding officer of the 13th MEU. “Operating in complex, austere and urban environments provides the realism necessary to develop the essential skills required for rapid crisis response around the globe. RUT has made the 13th MEU a better prepared, more lethal force.”

During RUT, the 13th MEU executed several core missions essential for crisis response, including two expeditionary strikes, three amphibious raids, and two Tactical Recovery of Aircraft and Personnel (TRAP) missions. Both the Maritime Raid Force, comprised primarily of Reconnaissance Marines, and Battalion Landing Team 2/4 infantry elements conducted raids supported by the full MAGTF.

The exercise showcased the full spectrum of the MEU's aviation capabilities, employing the MV-22B Osprey, CH-53E Super Stallion, AH-1Z Viper, UH-1Y Venom, F-35B Lightning II, and KC-130J Super Hercules aircraft. These platforms supported a wide range of operations, including a forward arming and refueling point (FARP) and aviation delivered ground refueling (ADGR) that extend the reach and lethality of the MEU.

By integrating its command, air, ground, and logistics elements, the 13th MEU has demonstrated its readiness to respond swiftly and effectively to any contingency. The successful completion of RUT validates the 13th MEU as a versatile expeditionary force prepared for future operations.