

Department of the Navy Hosts Climate Tabletop Exercise

WASHINGTON, D.C. – The Department of the Navy hosted a first-of-its-kind Climate Tabletop Exercise at Marine Barracks Washington to examine the impacts that climate change has on mission, readiness and warfighting capacity, the service said in a release.

The DoN convened role players from the Department of Defense, federal agencies, Congress, think tanks, non-governmental organizations and the private sector to test how critical elements of the recently released DoN strategy Climate Action 2030 comes into practice.

“As the secretary of the Navy, the commandant of the Marine Corps and the chief of naval operations have said, we are looking at the impacts of climate change because it makes us better warfighters,” said Meredith Berger, assistant secretary of the Navy for Energy, Installations, and Environment. “The Navy and Marine Corps must address climate change in our readiness and operations in order to maintain every advantage to fight and win.”

Climate Action 2030 focuses the Department of the Navy on building a climate-ready force by building climate resilience and reducing the climate threat. These factors drove the design and execution of the scenario, which was created and facilitated by war game experts at the Marine Corps Warfighting Lab.

Set in October 2030, the scenario focused on a Navy Amphibious Ready Group and an embarked Marine Expeditionary Group preparing for an amphibious exercise with a partner nation in the Western Indo-Pacific area of responsibility. A typhoon impacts the exercise, and quickly creates cascading effects on

operations. The storm came on the heels of other destructive storms which made the land and local population less resilient and more susceptible to stronger damage from ensuing mudslides, electric grid, and other key infrastructure disruptions.

Facilitators briefed players, assigned duties and challenged them to work through some of the tough questions that the Navy and Marine Corps are facing every day. Players were broken into three interrelated groups: operational forces, installations and facilities, and higher headquarters. Each table featured a Navy flag officer and Marine Corps general officer as senior mentors.

Key takeaways from the exercise were the importance of incorporating climate predictions and considerations into planning and resourcing. The group talked about the importance of logistics, both as a warfighting enabler, resilience vulnerability, and an area where the department can make strides to become more energy efficient and therefore a more capable fighting force. Additionally, the group discussed identifying single points of failure which may be undermined climate impacts and the need for redundancy as well as efficiency. The importance of collaborative planning in order to develop resilient partnerships in the face of a dynamic and evolving climate environment were also discussed.

“In order to strengthen and maintain our maritime dominance, we need to strengthen and maintain our maritime partnerships,” Berger said. “Partnership is a key driver of success and diversity of perspective is the enabler. Today we had the chance to work with a variety of partners to gain their perspectives and share ours so that we can better tackle the climate crisis together.”

The DoN released the Climate Action 2030 strategy on May 24, building on a decades-long foundation of climate action and setting the department on a course to meet national and global

targets to reduce the threat of climate change. The department's Climate Action 2030 strategy document is available for download [here](#).