

# Joint Task Force Established to Lead SOUTHCOM Counter-Narcotics Operations



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MIAMI, Fla. – U.S. Southern Command (SOUTHCOM) announced the establishment of a new Joint Task Force (JTF) under II Marine Expeditionary Force (II MEF) today to synchronize and augment counter-narcotics efforts across the Western Hemisphere.

The JTF will integrate the expeditionary capabilities of II MEF with Joint Force and U.S. interagency partners, represented by the Homeland Security Task Force.

“Transnational criminal organizations threaten the security, prosperity, and health of our hemisphere,” said Adm. Alvin Holsey, Commander, SOUTHCOM. “By forming a JTF around II MEF headquarters, we enhance our ability to detect, disrupt, and dismantle illicit trafficking networks faster and at greater depth – together with our U.S. and partner-nation counterparts.”

Key objectives of the new JTF include:

- Identifying narcotics trafficking patterns to interdict illegal shipments of narcotics before they reach the U.S. and partner-nation territories using intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance aircraft.
- Expanding real-time intelligence fusion among U.S. military, federal law enforcement, and partner-nation agencies.

- Conducting joint training to improve interoperability among U.S. military services and increase rapid-response posture.
- Enhancing partner-nation counter narcotics operations capacity through advisory teams and combined operations.

“Our team is trained, equipped, and ready to lead this Joint Task Force,” said Lt. Gen. Calvert Worth, Commanding General, II MEF and designated JTF Commander. “This is principally a maritime effort, and our team will leverage maritime patrols, aerial surveillance, precision interdictions, and intelligence sharing to counter illicit traffic, uphold the rule of law, and ultimately better protect vulnerable communities here at home.”

The JTF will report directly to SOUTHCOM. Its creation underscores SOUTHCOM’s commitment to a whole-of-government, multinational approach to defeat and dismantle criminal networks that exploit our shared borders and maritime domains.

Updates will be released as they become available.