

Navy, Marine Corps in Planning for Third Large-Scale Exercise

By Richard R. Burgess, Senior Editor

ARLINGTON, Va. – The U.S. Navy and Marine Corps are planning for execution later this month for Large-Scale Exercise (LSE) 2025, the third of such exercises since 2021. The LSE will largely be conducted through Live Virtual Construct (LVC) environment but will encompass units from around the world, including—for the first time—allies and partner nations.

LSE 2025, scheduled to begin on August 30, will be conducted “nearly fully virtual” over 22 time zones, said Rear Admiral Kenneth Blackmon, vice commander, U.S. Fleet Forces Command, during a briefing to reporters on the exercise, pointing out that LVC allows for safer exercises and conserves resources.

Approximately 880 personnel will be directly involved in the exercise, which will include personnel in six regional combatant commanders, U.S. Fleet Forces Command, the U.S. Pacific Fleet, Naval Forces Europe/Africa, Marine Forces Europe/Africa, seven numbered fleets, 10 maritime operations centers (MOCs), Marine Forces Pacific, II Marine Expeditionary Force operations center, five carrier strike groups, two amphibious ready groups, the Office of the Chief of Naval Operations (OPNAV), various systems commands and type commanders, and Reserve Forces Command, said Capt. Captain Christopher Narducci, the exercise lead who briefed the details of the upcoming exercise.

“This is the only naval exercise spanning all 10 Maritime Operations Centers (MOCs), incorporating both the Navy and Marine Corps worldwide to evaluate and address gaps and seams between fleets,” Blackmon said. Many exercises focus on a

single fleet, but LSE raises the bar by requiring coordination across all fleets, providing critical reps and sets at the operational level.”

Allied participation will include a NATO response cell, the Royal Canadian Navy, and the Japanese Maritime Self-Defense Force.

The LSE is designed to exercise such aspects as the Global Maritime Response Plan (GMRP), global contested logistics and sustainment operations, reserve mobilization, and the wartime responsibilities of the type commanders.

GMRP “is a new concept that is being developed right now,” Narducci said. “It aims to accelerate our ability to generate forces in wartime or in a crisis scenario. GMRP is about getting more players on the field sooner.”

Brigadier General Thomas M. Armas, deputy commander of U.S. Marine Corps Forces Command, also briefing reporters, said that the LSE would exercise the passing of carrier strike groups and amphibious ready groups from fleet to fleet.

“This exercise provides an incredible opportunity to hone command and control across the most lethal amphibious task forces in the world, ensuring sea lanes remain open and global commerce flows freely, maintaining peace and stability worldwide,” Armas said.

“Exercises like this help us identify and close gaps across multiple time zones, preparing our Amphibious Ready Groups (ARGs) and Carrier Strike Groups (CSGs) to seamlessly transition forces during crises. It’s challenging enough to operate within one time zone; coordinating across many, especially in adverse conditions, demands realistic practice.

“Being able to rehearse these scenarios ensures we can guarantee the lethality and readiness our nation depends on,” he said. “When our ARGs are deployed around the world during times of crisis, exercises like LSE 25 ensure those forces are

synchronized, on time, and on target. Practicing lethality guarantees we can execute it when needed.”

Narducci said the Naval Warfare Development Center will be responsible for overall exercise control, assisted by six global distributed controllers and supported by 17 flag and general officers, including retired officers.

The Navy Continuous Training Environment will be the network for the LSE, Narducci said.