
The Marines Have Landed

Eighty Years of Marine Corps Landings, 1935–2015



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Foreword

Ms. Annette Amerman, Historical Inquiries & Research Branch with History Division, has performed an important service in creating a research tool and database for scholars interested in amphibious warfare and its connection to the United States Marine Corps. It is no coincidence that the survey begins with Marine Corps landings that took place from 1935 to 2015. In fact, after several years of work by senior officers and students at Marine Corps Schools, Quantico, Virginia, the Commandant of the Marine Corps, Major General Ben H. Fuller signed off on the *Tentative Manual for Landing Operations* (1934). This pathbreaking publication became the blueprint for Marine Corps landing operations (both big and small) that took place during World War II and for years afterward. Moreover, the *Tentative Man-*

ual, along with the *Small Wars Manual* (1940) and General Alfred M. Gray's *Warfighting*, FMFM-1 (1989) arguably rank as the three most important doctrinal publications ever produced by the Marine Corps.

The Marines Have Landed represents a unique research tool, but it is not intended to be comprehensive. Rather than rehash the larger and more well-known landing operations that took place during major conflicts, such as World War II or Korea, this particular database will enable students of warfare to understand the large volume of lesser-known landing operations that are no less important for understanding the institutional history of the Marine Corps. Most people will come away amazed at just how frequently over the years the Navy/Marine Corps team has been tasked to perform these highly complex operations. It is our hope that this research tool will be given heavy use by the faculty and students at Marine Corps University. I predict it will become a valuable historical resource for years to come.

Dr. Charles P. Neimeyer
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Preface

In 1974, the U.S. Marine Corps' History and Museums Division reprinted Captain Harry A. Ellsworth's *One Hundred and Eighty Landings of United States Marines, 1800–1934*; a publication still widely used today, although woefully in need of a subsequent volume. Ellsworth's volume focused on the four basic reasons for landings: (1) political intervention; (2) punitive actions; (3) protection of diplomatic mission, nationals, and their property; and (4) humanitarian aid. Very little has changed in the 80 years since Ellsworth left off; for example, Marines may not conduct punitive actions but “show of force” operations are often used as deterrents against belligerent governments.

In this volume, the landings are identified as: (1) noncombatant evacuations, (2) humanitarian/disaster

relief operations, and (3) peacekeeping/stability operations, all of which involve Marines making landfall from either aircraft or ships. Additionally, major combat operations—World War II, Korea, Vietnam, Desert Shield/Storm, Iraq, and Afghanistan—are omitted from this work as the topics are voluminous enough to warrant a volume of their own at a future time.

This edition, unlike Ellsworth's original, is presented in chronological order and provides limited information on each operation in foreign lands. If no landing took place during a period, the year is left blank. The information herein was assembled from official records, such as command chronologies and working papers of various Headquarters Marine Corps agencies, Department of Defense and Marine Corps news releases, and the working files of the Historical Inquiries and Research Branch (formerly the Historical Reference Branch) of History Division (formerly History and Museums Division). The information presented includes the date, location, mission type, units involved, and a short synopsis of the mission.

From 1935 to 1946, excluding World War II, the

landings were often conducted by Marines that formed detachments from a ship's complement or that were part of a legation guard already stationed nearby. After World War II, the Marine Corps began "floating" a battalion landing team (BLT) on Navy ships, establishing a floating forward-deployed unit ready to make such landings. In the summer of 1946, Lieutenant General Roy S. Geiger witnessed the atomic blast tests under the cognizance of Operation Crossroads at Bikini Atoll in the Pacific Ocean. Three weeks later, General Geiger wrote the Commandant, General Archibald A. Vandegrift, with his impressions from the blasts and the lasting effects on Marine Corps doctrine, stating that ". . . I cannot visualize another landing such as was executed at Normandy or Okinawa."¹ Geiger's letter sparked a flurry of planning boards and studies instituted by the Commandant of the Marine Corps (CMC) to review force structure, equipment, and amphibious doctrine in response to the atomic weapon. The outgrowth of these boards and studies was that the helicopter became the

¹ LtCol Kenneth J. Clifford, *Progress and Purpose: A Developmental History of the United States Marine Corps, 1900–1970* (Washington, DC: History and Museums Division, Headquarters Marine Corps, 1973), 71.

tool, vertical envelopment became the doctrine, and the Marine air-ground task force (MAGTF) became the force structure needed to take the Corps into the atomic future.

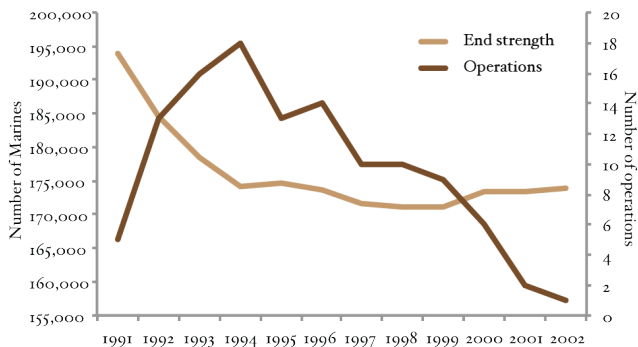
In 1953, the 1st Provisional MAGTF was activated in Marine Corps Base Kaneohe Bay, Hawaii. While the first official MAGTF had the four basic elements—command, air combat, ground combat, and combat service support—the varying sizes had not yet been established. However, by 1962, the MAGTF concept was codified to the three scalable levels we know today: the Marine expeditionary force (MEF), Marine expeditionary brigade (MEB), and Marine expeditionary unit (MEU).² The forward-deployed MEU, an outgrowth of the original “floating battalion” has been the proven workhorse of Marine Corps landing operations since their first use in the early 1960s. The combination of the battalion landing team (BLT), a reinforced helicopter squadron, and an integrated logistics unit is quite effective in assisting American citizens evacuate from hot-spots or providing humanitarian relief to victims of natural disasters.

² From 1965 to 1990, the term “expeditionary” was replaced by “amphibious.”

The MEB, while not as heavily used as the MEU in the same period, has participated when large-scale natural disasters occurred, such as typhoons striking multiple countries over great distances as seen in the Philippines in December 2012. Understanding this shift in doctrine, technology, and force structure within the Corps is essential to understanding why such landings and quick reaction military responses to unstable natural and political situations have typically fallen to the Marine Corps during the past 80 years.

Further, the information from Ellsworth's original publication has served as a useful tool for historians and analysts. This updated listing is intended to provide the same purpose for historians, force structure analysts, and policy wonks. Figure 1 represents an example of the data that can be mined from this work. The statistical illustration answers the question: "How many operations (excluding Desert Shield/Storm) did the Marine Corps participate in during the 1990s when the end strength of the Corps was dramatically reduced?" The chart clearly shows that, despite the reduction, the operational tempo increased.

Figure 1. U.S. Marine Corps operational tempo compared to end strength



Lastly, not all Marine operations warrant a lengthy narrative history or detailed analysis. Therefore, this compilation of the smaller landings and the more well-known operations serves as a starting point for possible larger works and as another method of presenting the history of the Corps over an extended period.

Annette D. Amerman
Historical Inquiries & Research Branch
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Glossary

ACE	Air combat element
BLT	Battalion Landing Team
CLB	Combat Logistics Battalion
CSSD	Combat Service Support Detachment
CSSE	Combat service support element
CV	Fleet aircraft carrier (1921–75); multipurpose aircraft carrier (1975–present)
CVS	Seaplane carrier (until 1957); antisubmarine/support carrier (post-1957)
GCE	Ground combat element
HMH	Marine Heavy Helicopter Squadron
HMLA	Marine Light Attack Helicopter Squadron

HMM	Marine Medium Helicopter Squadron
HMR	Marine Transport Squadron (rotary wing)
JTF	Joint Task Force
LCE	Logistics combat element
LHA	Amphibious assault ship (general purpose)
LHD	Amphibious assault ship (multipurpose)
LPD	Amphibious transport dock ship
LPH	Amphibious assault helicopter carrier
LSD	Dock landing ship
MAG	Marine Aircraft Group
MAGTF	Marine Air-Ground Task Force
MAW	Marine Aircraft Wing
MEF/MAF	Marine Expeditionary Force/ Marine Amphibious Force
MEB/MAB	Marine Expeditionary Brigade/ Marine Amphibious Brigade
MEU/MAU	Marine Expeditionary Unit/ Marine Amphibious Unit

MSSG	Marine Expeditionary Unit Service Support Group
NGO	Nongovernmental organization
RLT	Regimental Landing Team
SPMAGTF	Special Purpose Marine Air- Ground Task Force
SPMAGTF-CR	Special Purpose Marine Air- Ground Task Force—Crisis Response
VMA	Marine Attack Squadron
VMFA	Marine Fighter Attack Squadron
VMFA(AW)	Marine All-Weather Fighter Attack Squadron
VMGR	Marine Aerial Refueler Transport Squadron
VMM	Marine Medium Tiltrotor Squadron
VMR	Marine Transport Squadron (fixed wing)



Caribbean Sea

North Atlantic Ocean

South Atlantic Ocean

South Georgia and South Sandwich Islands

Scale 1:25,000,000
Azimuthal Equal-Area Projection

0 500 Kilometers
0 500 Miles

Boundary representation is not necessarily authoritative

AFRICA





SOUTHEAST ASIA



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The Marines Have Landed

Eighty Years of Marine Corps Landings, 1935–2015

1938

DATE: September 1937–February 1938

LOCATION: Shanghai, China

MISSION: Peacekeeping

The 6th Marines arrived in Shanghai to reinforce the 4th Marines, who had been called out to help defend the international settlement during fighting between the Japanese and Chinese.

1941

7 December 1941–2 September 1945
Second World War

1950

24 June 1950–27 July 1953
Korean War

1953

DATE: August 1953
LOCATION: Ionian Isles, Greece
MISSION: Disaster Relief
Battalion Landing Team 2/6 (BLT 2/6) provided rescue and relief missions after massive earthquake.

1954

DATE: October 1954
LOCATION: Haiti
MISSION: Disaster Relief

Operation Sante

Marine Transport Squadron 261 (HMR-261) delivered food, medicine, clothing, and other supplies after Hurricane Hazel struck on 12 October.

1955

DATE: January–February 1955
LOCATION: Tachen Islands

MISSION: Noncombatant Evacuation

The 3d Shore Party Battalion evacuated more than 26,000 people at the request of the Nationalist Chinese government as Communist forces advanced on the islands off the coast of China.

DATE: October 1955

LOCATION: Mexico

MISSION: Disaster Relief

Helicopters of Marine Aircraft Group 26 (MAG-26) and Marine Transport Squadrons 153 and 252 (VMR-153 and VMR-252) aided in rescue work at Tampico, Mexico, when floodwaters inundated the city. The helicopter crews rescued nearly 5,500 people and delivered more than 180,000 pounds of food and medical supplies.

1956

DATE: October–November 1956

LOCATION: Egypt and Israel

MISSION: Noncombatant Evacuation

BLT 3/2 arrived from Souda Bay, Crete, and evacuated 1,500 people from Alexandria, Egypt, and U.S. observers from Gaza, Israel, then occupied by Egyptian forces, who were threatened by the Anglo-French attack on Egypt.

1957

DATE: October 1957

LOCATION: Spain

MISSION: Disaster Relief

Marines from HMR-262 (Light) aided flood victims at Valencia, Spain. They evacuated victims and distributed emergency supplies.

DATE: December 1957–January 1958

LOCATION: Ceylon¹

MISSION: Disaster Relief

Marines from HMR-162 engaged in rescue work due to flooding.

1958

DATE: April 1958

LOCATION: Morocco

MISSION: Disaster Relief

Marines from VMR-252 aided earthquake victims, bringing in supplies and supporting search-and-rescue efforts.

DATE: 1 July–23 October 1958

LOCATION: Lebanon

¹ Modern day Sri Lanka.

MISSION: Stability Operation

Operation Blue Bat

In response to a political crisis caused by religious and political tensions, the government of Lebanon requested support from Western nations. The 2d Provisional Marine Force, consisting of BLTs 2/2, 3/6, and 1/8; 2d Battalion, 8th Marines; Regimental Landing Team 6 (RLT 6, with 2d Battalion, 6th Marines); as well as VMRs 153, 252, 352, and 353 landed in Lebanon throughout the period to create stability and security in the country. The Marines remained until 23 October, after the end of the Lebanese presidential term.

DATE: December 1958–January 1959

LOCATION: Ceylon

MISSION: Disaster Relief

Marines from HMR-162 (Light) and Marine Attack Squadron 332 (VMA-332) assisted flood victims.

1961

DATE: January 1961

LOCATION: Congo

MISSION: Disaster Relief

A detachment from HMR-264 offloaded foodstuffs from the USS *Hermitage* (LSD 34) in support of famine victims.

DATE: February 1961

LOCATION: Congo

MISSION: Noncombatant Evacuation

A detachment from HMR-264 supported the evacuation of United Nations (UN) troops (Guineans) from Matadi, Congo, to their home country.

DATE: May 1961

LOCATION: Turkey

MISSION: Disaster Relief

Elements of HMR-262 and 3d Battalion, 6th Marines, assisted with relief work following an earthquake in Marmaris, Turkey.

DATE: November 1961

LOCATION: British Honduras

MISSION: Disaster Relief

A detachment of Marines from HMR-264, operating off the aircraft carrier USS *Antietam* (CVS 36), aided the victims of Hurricane Hattie with medical supplies and personnel.

1962

DATE: May–August 1962

LOCATION: Thailand

MISSION: Stability Operation

The 3d Marine Expeditionary Unit (3d MEU), including BLT 3/9, HMR-262, and VMA-332, landed in Thailand to support the country due to Communist pressure from outside the country.

DATE: November 1962

LOCATION: Guam

MISSION: Disaster Relief

Four hundred Marines from 3d Battalion, 4th Marines, from Hawaii landed to provide security and salvage assistance following Typhoon Karen, which destroyed more than 90 percent of the structures on the island of Guam.

1963

DATE: October 1963

LOCATION: Haiti

MISSION: Disaster Relief

Marines from Medium Helicopter Squadron 161 (HMM-161) from the USS *Thetis Bay* (LPH 6) delivered food and supplies to hurricane-stricken Haiti.

1964

DATE: November 1964

LOCATION: Vietnam

MISSION: Disaster Relief
Marines from HMM-365 from the USS *Princeton* (LPH 5) evacuated 1,700 flood victims, while Marines from HMM-162 delivered more than 900 tons of supplies to the victims.

1965

9 March 1965–30 April 1975 Vietnam War

DATE: April 1965
LOCATION: Dominican Republic
MISSION: Noncombatant Evacuation
Marines from HMM-264 evacuated 556 American citizens from Haina, Dominican Republic, as the country deteriorated into civil war.

DATE: April 1965
LOCATION: Dominican Republic
MISSION: Stability Operation/
Noncombatant Evacuation

Operation Barrel Bottom

The 3d Battalion, 6th Marines, part of the 6th MEU, from the USS *Boxer* (CV 21) landed by helicopter to pro-

vide security around the American embassy and to protect American lives in and around Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic. The remaining portion of the MEU landed in subsequent days. The 4th Marine Expeditionary Brigade (4th MEB) landed on 1 May 1965 with more than 5,500 Marines. The Marines began withdrawing on 31 May.

1970

DATE: June 1970

LOCATION: Peru

MISSION: Disaster Relief

Company A, 1st Battalion, 2d Marines, and HMM-365 from 32d MEU transported medical teams to remote areas, brought back victims for medical treatment, and delivered more than 55 tons of relief supplies to victims of a massive earthquake.

DATE: September 1970

LOCATION: Philippines

MISSION: Disaster Relief

Elements of the 3d Marine Division set up water purification units to aid victims of Typhoon Georgia in Quezon City, Philippines.

DATE: October 1970
LOCATION: Philippines
MISSION: Disaster Relief
Marines from HMM-164 and a detachment from BLT 2/9 conducted relief operations and delivered more than 65 tons of supplies after Typhoon Joan.

1972

DATE: July 1972
LOCATION: Philippines
MISSION: Disaster Relief
Marines from HMM-165 evacuated 2,000 Filipinos in and around Luzon, the Philippines, and flew in 350 tons of relief supplies after a devastating typhoon.

1973

DATE: April 1973
LOCATION: Lebanon
MISSION: Stability Operation
The 34th Marine Amphibious Unit (34th MAU), made up of BLT 2/6 and HMM-264, entered Lebanon in response to special forces units from Israel Defense Forces (IDF) attacking several Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) targets in Beirut and Sidon, Lebanon.

DATE: December 1973

LOCATION: Tunisia

MISSION: Disaster Relief

Helicopters from 32d MAU's HMM-261 conducted refugee search and rescue, equipment deliveries, and other flood-associated missions.

1974

DATE: July 1974

LOCATION: Cyprus

MISSION: Noncombatant Evacuation

The 34th MAU, including BLT 1/8 and HMM-162, evacuated 752 personnel from the island country of Cyprus after the Turkish invasion.

DATE: August 1974

LOCATION: Philippines

MISSION: Disaster Relief

HMM-164 from 31st MAU assisted with flood-relief efforts caused by Typhoon Nadine in central Philippines.

1975

DATE: 12 April 1975

LOCATION: Cambodia

MISSION: Noncombatant Evacuation

Operation Eagle Pull

The 31st MAU, including BLT 2/4 and Marine Heavy Helicopter Squadron 462 (HMH-462), evacuated 276 American and Cambodian personnel as Khmer Rouge forces closed in on Phnom Penh, Cambodia.

DATE: 29–30 April 1975
LOCATION: Vietnam
MISSION: Noncombatant Evacuation

Operation Frequent Wind

The 9th Marine Amphibious Brigade (9th MAB), including RLT 4 and Provisional MAG-39, served as the final phase of evacuations for American civilians and at-risk Vietnamese, removing 6,968 personnel from Saigon as South Vietnam began to fall to the North Vietnamese Army.

DATE: 15 May 1975
LOCATION: Koh Tang Island, Cambodia
MISSION: Rescue
BLT 2/9 and Company D, 1st Battalion, 4th Marines, conducted the safe recovery of the SS *Mayaguez* and her 40-man crew that were captured by Cambodian gunboats. The Marines established a foothold on the island in the face of active resistance, which resulted in the loss

of three of five helos in the first wave and two damaged in the second wave. As a result, extraction of the Marines was accomplished under fire.

1976

DATE: June-July 1976

LOCATION: Lebanon

MISSION: Noncombatant Evacuation

The 32d MAU, including BLT 3/2 and HMM-263, evacuated 160 American citizens and 148 foreign nationals from Lebanon during the early days of the Lebanese Civil War.

1980

DATE: October 1980

LOCATION: Algeria

MISSION: Disaster Relief

Helicopters from HMM-264, part of 32d MAU, provided assistance following an earthquake in al-Asnam, Algeria, reported to have killed approximately 20,000 people.

1982

DATE: June 1982

LOCATION: Lebanon

MISSION: Noncombatant Evacuation

The 32d MAU, including BLT 2/8 and HMM-261, evacuated nearly 600 American citizens and foreign nationals out of Beirut due to fighting between Israel and Lebanon.

DATE: August 1982

LOCATION: Lebanon

MISSION: Evacuation

The 32d MAU, including BLT 2/8 and HMM-261, evacuated the PLO from Beirut as it was driven out of Lebanon by Israel during Israel's six-month invasion of Lebanon. The MAU withdrew on 10 September.

DATE: 29 September–30 October 1982

LOCATION: Lebanon

MISSION: Peacekeeping

The 32d MAU, including BLT 2/8 and HMM-261, landed in Beirut on 29 September 1982 at the request of the Lebanese government to assist French and Italian military units with keeping the peace in the capital city. It was relieved by 24th MAU.

DATE: 1 November 1982–15 February 1983

LOCATION: Lebanon

MISSION: Peacekeeping

In response to the ongoing violence throughout Lebanon, the 24th MAU deployed with BLT 3/8 and HMM-263, commencing the rotation of MAU's into Lebanon during the next two years. Each was headquartered in Lebanon's capital city, Beirut.

1983

DATE: 15 February–29 May 1983

LOCATION: Lebanon

MISSION: Peacekeeping

The 22d MAU, including BLT 2/6 and HMM-264, rotated into Lebanon.

DATE: 30 May 1983–18 November 1983

LOCATION: Lebanon

MISSION: Peacekeeping

The 24th MAU, including BLT 1/8 and HMM-162, rotated into Lebanon.

DATE: 25 October–2 November 1983

LOCATION: Grenada

MISSION: Noncombatant Evacuation

Operation Urgent Fury

The 22d MAU intervened to protect and evacuate American citizens and foreign nationals, to neutralize Grenadian and Cuban military forces, to maintain order, and to assist in restoring democratic government after a revolutionary coup attempt. The 22d MAU departed on 2 November when the U.S. Army 82d Airborne arrived to relieve the Marines. During this operation, two Marines were killed and three were wounded.

DATE: 17 November 1983–9 April 1984

LOCATION: Lebanon

MISSION: Peacekeeping

The 22d MAU, including BLT 2/8 and HMM-261, rotated into and completed the withdrawal from Lebanon. After nearly two years in Lebanon, a total of 240 Marines were killed and another 151 were wounded

1989

DATE: December 1989–January 1990

LOCATION: Panama

MISSION: Peacekeeping

Operation Just Cause

The 6th MEB was sent in to protect American lives in Panama City, to secure key military and canal sites,

to neutralize Panamanian Defense Forces, to establish law and order, and to support the new U.S.-recognized government. During this operation, two Marines were killed and three were wounded.

1990

DATE: May 1990–January 1991
LOCATION: Liberia
MISSION: Noncombatant Evacuation

Operation Sharp Edge

The Marines from 22d MEU, including BLT 2/4 and HMM-261, evacuated civilians and protected the U.S. embassy in Monrovia, Liberia, from warring factions during the civil war. Elements of the 26th MEU and detachments from BLT 3/8 and HMM-162 rotated in August to relieve 22d MEU.

DATE: July 1990
LOCATION: Philippines
MISSION: Disaster Relief

Marine Air-Ground Task Force 4-90 (MAGTF 4-90) deployed to assist in search-and-rescue missions and emergency relief after a massive earthquake across the entire archipelago. The MAGTF flew 313 sorties, air lifted 627,000 pounds of cargo, and evacuated 1,804 survivors.

2 August 1990–16 January 1991
Operations Desert Shield and Desert Storm

1991

DATE: January 1991
LOCATION: Somalia
MISSION: Noncombatant Evacuation

Operation Eastern Exit

The 4th MEB, including BLT 1/2, HMMs 263 and 365, and a detachment from HMH-461, evacuated 260 U.S. and foreign citizens from the American embassy in Mogadishu, Somalia, as armed militants clashed with government forces.

DATE: April–July 1991
LOCATION: Turkey/Northern Iraq
MISSION: Humanitarian Assistance

Operation Provide Comfort

In response to Kurdish refugees fleeing Iraq, the 24th MEU, including BLT 2/8 and HMM-264, established refugee camps and provided food and security across Turkey.

DATE: May–June 1991
LOCATION: Bangladesh
MISSION: Disaster Relief

Operation Sea Angel

The 5th MEB, consisting of RLT 5 (BLTs 2/5 and 3/5) and MAG-50 (HMM-265 and HMLA-169), provided tons of relief supplies following Cyclone Marian, which destroyed 80-90 percent of the structures in the coastal region of the country and killed more than 140,000 people.

DATE: June 1991
LOCATION: Philippines
MISSION: Disaster Relief

Operation Fiery Vigil

In response to the eruption of Mount Pinatubo, MAGTF 4-90 (already in the Philippines) and 15th MEU, consisting of BLT 1/9 and HMM-163, performed security augmentation, heavy equipment support, cleanup, medical, and food resupply and evacuated more than 21,000 U.S. troops and dependants in the wake of the largest eruption to impact a densely populated area.

1992

DATE: April 1992
LOCATION: Italy
MISSION: Disaster Relief

Operation Hot Rock

Helicopters from 24th MEU's HMM-266 carried

200,000 pounds of concrete slabs, each weighing 14,000 pounds, to alter the course of volcanic lava from Mount Etna on the island of Sicily.

DATE: June 1992–March 1996

LOCATION: Adriatic Sea, Balkans

MISSION: Security Operation

Operation Sharp Guard

This joint naval blockade was established to enforce UN economic sanctions against Serbia-Montenegro and the arms embargo, which was suspended after both sets of sanctions were terminated. Multiple MEUs were deployed to the area throughout the time period.

DATE: August 1992–February 1993

LOCATION: Somalia

MISSION: Humanitarian Assistance

Joint Task Force Provide Relief

A detachment of Marines from I Marine Expeditionary Force (I MEF) airlifted food and other supplies to the drought stricken areas of Somalia.

DATE: December 1992–May 1993

LOCATION: Somalia

MISSION: Peacekeeping

Operation Restore Hope

Special Purpose Marine Air-Ground Task Force-Crisis

Response-Central Command (SPMAGTF-CR), consisting of BLT 2/9, HMM-164, and Marine Expeditionary Unit Service Support Group 15 (MSSG-15), assisted in humanitarian relief and peacekeeping by creating a secure environment for the UN Operation in Somalia (UNOSOM) and nongovernmental organizations (NGOs).

1993

DATE: May 1993–March 1994

LOCATION: Somalia

MISSION: Peacekeeping

Operation Continue Hope

A follow-on of UNOSOM activities in Operation Restore Hope, the 24th and 11th MEUs were rotated in and out of the country during the period.

DATE: July–August 1993

LOCATION: Haiti

MISSION: Show of Force

Operation Support Democracy²

The 24th MEU, including BLT 3/6, HMM-266, and

² While the distinction between “support democracy” and “uphold democracy” is often blurred in literature, support democracy refers to the preinvasion/preoccupation phase, especially maritime interdiction, while uphold democracy refers to the planning for and implementation of the invasion and occupation of Haiti.

MSSG-24, supported show-of-force operations in an attempt to restore ousted President Jean-Bertrand Aristide.

1994

DATE: April 1994
LOCATION: Rwanda
MISSION: Noncombatant Evacuation

Operation Distant Runner

The 11th MEU, including BLT 2/5 and HMM-263 with a detachment from Marine Aerial Refueler Transport Squadron 252 (VMGR-252), evacuated 241 civilians and U.S. citizens after fierce fighting broke out between Hutus and Tutsis throughout the country.

DATE: August–October 1994
LOCATION: Rwanda
MISSION: Humanitarian Assistance

Operation Support Hope

In an effort to provide immediate relief for the refugees of the Rwandan genocide and allow a smooth transition to a full UN humanitarian management program, Marines from 15th MEU, including BLT 1/4 and HMM-166, provided heavy lift support of food and supplies into the city of Goma, Democratic Republic of Congo.

DATE: 20 September–1 October 1994

LOCATION: Haiti

MISSION: Stability Operation

Operation Uphold Democracy

Marines formed SPMAGTF-Caribbean with BLT 2/2, HMM-264, and Combat Service Support Detachment 29 and landed on 20 September in Port-au-Prince, Haiti, to provide stability in the wake of political upheaval.

1996

DATE: April–August 1996

LOCATION: Liberia

MISSION: Noncombatant Evacuation

Operation Assured Response

Elements from 22d MEU assisted in safeguarding and evacuating Americans from Liberia when that nation's civil war reignited.

DATE: May–June 1996

LOCATION: Central African Republic

MISSION: Noncombatant Evacuation

Operation Quick Response

Elements from 22d MEU assisted in response to civil unrest and rebellion by rogue military elements in Bangui, capital of the Central African Republic. Marine elements

of Joint Task Force Assured Response (JTF-Assured Response, which was responding in Liberia) successfully provided security to the U.S. embassy and evacuated 448 people, including between 190 and 208 Americans. The last Marines left Bangui on 22 June.

1997

DATE: March–July 1997
LOCATION: Albania
MISSION: Noncombatant Evacuation

Operation Silver Wake

The 26th MEU evacuated 877 American citizens and other civilians from Tirana, Albania, after the outbreak of a civil rebellion caused by an economic crisis.

DATE: March–May 1997
LOCATION: Zaire
MISSION: Noncombatant Evacuation

Operation Guardian Retrieval

Marines from the 26th and 22d MEUs performed military and noncombatant evacuations after tensions erupted amongst rebels in the region and across the border into Rwanda.

DATE: 29 May–5 June 1997
LOCATION: Sierra Leone

MISSION: Noncombatant Evacuation

Operation Noble Obelisk

Marines from the 22d MEU evacuated 451 American citizens and 2,058 foreign nationals due to the deteriorating security situation in Freetown, Sierra Leone.

1998

DATE: 6 June 1998

LOCATION: Eritrea

MISSION: Noncombatant Evacuation

Operation Safe Departure

Due to the escalated border dispute between Eritrea and Ethiopia, the 11th MEU with BLT 1/4 and HMM-268 evacuated 172 American citizens and foreign nationals from Asmara, Eritrea.

1999

DATE: August–September 1999

LOCATION: Turkey

MISSION: Humanitarian Assistance

Operation Avid Response

The 26th MEU, including BLT 3/8, HMM-365, and MSSG-26, provided disaster relief and humanitarian assistance to western Turkey.

DATE: September 1999–February 2000

LOCATION: East Timor

MISSION: Peacekeeping

Operation Stabilise³

This peacekeeping effort restored order in Dili, East Timor, following an independence referendum. U.S. troops did not play a combat role, but provided transportation, logistics, command and control, communications, intelligence, and sustainment support. SPMAGTF-31 with BLT 1/5 and HMM-265 were deployed until November. A portion of 11th MEU also participated.

2001

October 2001–TBD Operation Enduring Freedom

2003

March 2003–January 2010 Operation Iraqi Freedom

DATE: June 2003

LOCATION: Liberia

MISSION: Noncombatant Evacuation

³ The spelling reflects that this was an Australian-led operation.

Operation Shining Express

Elements of 2d MEB, en route to the United States after completing their deployment for Operation Iraqi Freedom, were diverted to Monrovia, Liberia, at the request of the U.S. ambassador to evacuate of American citizens and embassy personnel.

DATE: July–October 2003

LOCATION: Liberia

MISSION: Peacekeeping

Joint Task Force Liberia

In response to the crisis from the Second Liberian Civil War and the actions of President Charles G. Taylor, the 26th MEU, including BLT 1/8, HMM-264, and MSSG-26, landed in Monrovia to stabilize the region and bring in humanitarian aid.

2004

DATE: February–June 2004

LOCATION: Haiti

MISSION: Security Operation

Operation Secure Tomorrow

Marines from 3d Battalion, 8th Marines, restored security following the removal of President Aristide.

2005

DATE: January–February 2005

LOCATION: Indonesia

MISSION: Disaster Relief

Operation Unified Assistance

In response to the tsunami that struck Southeast Asia, Marines from the 15th MEU, including BLT 1/1, HMM-165, and MSSG-15, delivered more than a million pounds of humanitarian aid to the various islands of the country. HMM-262 also participated from the USS *Fort McHenry* (LSD 43).

2006

DATE: July 2006

LOCATION: Lebanon

MISSION: Noncombatant Evacuation

Marines from the 24th MEU, including BLT 1/8, HMM-365, and MSSG-24, evacuated American citizens due to continued fighting between Israel and Hezbollah.

2007

DATE: 19 November–6 December 2007

LOCATION: Bangladesh

MISSION: Disaster Relief

Operation Sea Angel II

On 22 November, 22d MEU, with BLT 3/8, HMM-261, and Combat Logistics Battalion 22 (CLB-22), arrived to assist victims of Cyclone Sidr. The 3d MEB arrived on 27 November to take control, and on 3 December 22d MEU was replaced by 11th MEU, with BLT 1/5, HMM-166, and CLB-11. The 22d MEU delivered more than 20,000 pounds of supplies and distributed 14,309 gallons of water to victims.

2008

DATE: May 2008

LOCATION: Myanmar

MISSION: Humanitarian Assistance

Operation Caring Response

In response to Cyclone Nargis, 3d MEB with 31st MEU's BLT 2/4, HMM-166, and CLR-3 and MAG-36's Marine All-Weather Fighter Attack Squadron 533 (VMFA[AW]-533), and VMA-513 delivered medical capabilities providing aid and comfort to the victims.

2009

DATE: October 2009

LOCATION: Philippines
MISSION: Disaster Relief

In response to the devastating effects of Tropical Storm Ketsana and Typhoon Parma, 31st MEU provided 1.5 million pounds of food, 39,000 bags of clothes, and 650 cases of water.

DATE: October 2009
LOCATION: Sumatra, Indonesia
MISSION: Disaster Relief

In response to a massive earthquake that struck the island of Sumatra, 31st MEU provided heavy-lift capabilities and more than 130,000 pounds of food, tools, and shelters.

2010

DATE: January–March 2010
LOCATION: Haiti
MISSION: Disaster Relief

Operation Unified Response

In response to a massive earthquake, 22d MEU's BLT3/2, HMM-461, VMM-263, and CLB-22 along with 24th MEU's BLT1/9, VMM-162, and CLB-24 provided humanitarian assistance to the victims.

DATE: August–October 2010

LOCATION: Pakistan

MISSION: Disaster Relief

The 15th MEU's helicopters from HMM-165 worked alongside the Pakistani military to provide the government of Pakistan with medium- and heavy-lift capabilities to evacuate internally displaced persons and deliver food and supplies. Throughout the 10 weeks on-station, the Navy and Marine Corps team evacuated more than 9,000 people and provided more than 5 million pounds of relief supplies to areas inaccessible by ground vehicles across the nation.

DATE: 21-23 October 2010

LOCATION: Philippines

MISSION: Disaster Relief

The 31st MEU, with BLT 1/7, HMM-262, and CLB-22, delivered food, water, and other supplies to isolated villages that were destroyed by Typhoon Megi. Marines and sailors provided air support to transport tents, food, and water to inaccessible areas as well as immediate medical aid to those who were injured.

2012

DATE: December 2012

LOCATION: Philippines

MISSION: Disaster Relief

Marines and sailors from the 3d MEB, acting as the III MEF (Forward), directed more than 750,000 pounds of relief supplies into the Philippines over an eight-day period following Typhoon Bopha.

2013

DATE: November 2013
LOCATION: Philippines
MISSION: Humanitarian Assistance

Operation Damayan

In response to Typhoon Haiyan, VMM-262 and VMM-265 were deployed immediately to assist with delivering supplies. The 3d MEB followed-on and took command of the Marines as part of JTF-505. On 20 November, 31st MEU arrived and began conducting flights to transport food, medical supplies, and dry goods.

2014

DATE: January 2014
LOCATION: South Sudan
MISSION: Noncombatant Evacuation
SPMAGTF-Crisis Response evacuated Americans in response to the violent political crisis in South Sudan.

DATE: 8 October–1 December 2014

LOCATION: Liberia/Senegal

MISSION: Humanitarian Assistance

Operation United Assistance

SPMAGTF-Crisis Response mission to help combat the Ebola virus epidemic in West Africa.

2015

DATE: 4–26 May 2015

LOCATION: Nepal

MISSION: Humanitarian Assistance

Operation Sahayogi Haat

In response to a massive earthquake, JTF-505 contributed three Bell UH-1Y Huey helicopters and four Bell Boeing MV-22B Osprey tiltrotor aircraft to the relief effort throughout Nepal. During the operation, a Marine helicopter went missing while delivering rice and tarps in Charikot, Nepal. It had dropped off supplies in one location and was en route to a second site when contact was lost. Five Marines and two Nepalese were killed in the crash.

DATE: 7–24 August 2015

LOCATION: Saipan, Northern Marianas Islands

MISSION: Humanitarian Assistance

BLT 2/5 and the CLB from 31st MEU arrived on 7 August and immediately set to work distributing emergency relief supplies in response to a devastating typhoon. The Marines distributed more than 285,700 gallons of potable water, 215,075 gallons of which were purified by the Marines, as well as 47,000 individual meals provided by Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), and distributed 10,000 pounds of emergency supplies provided by the International Red Cross.