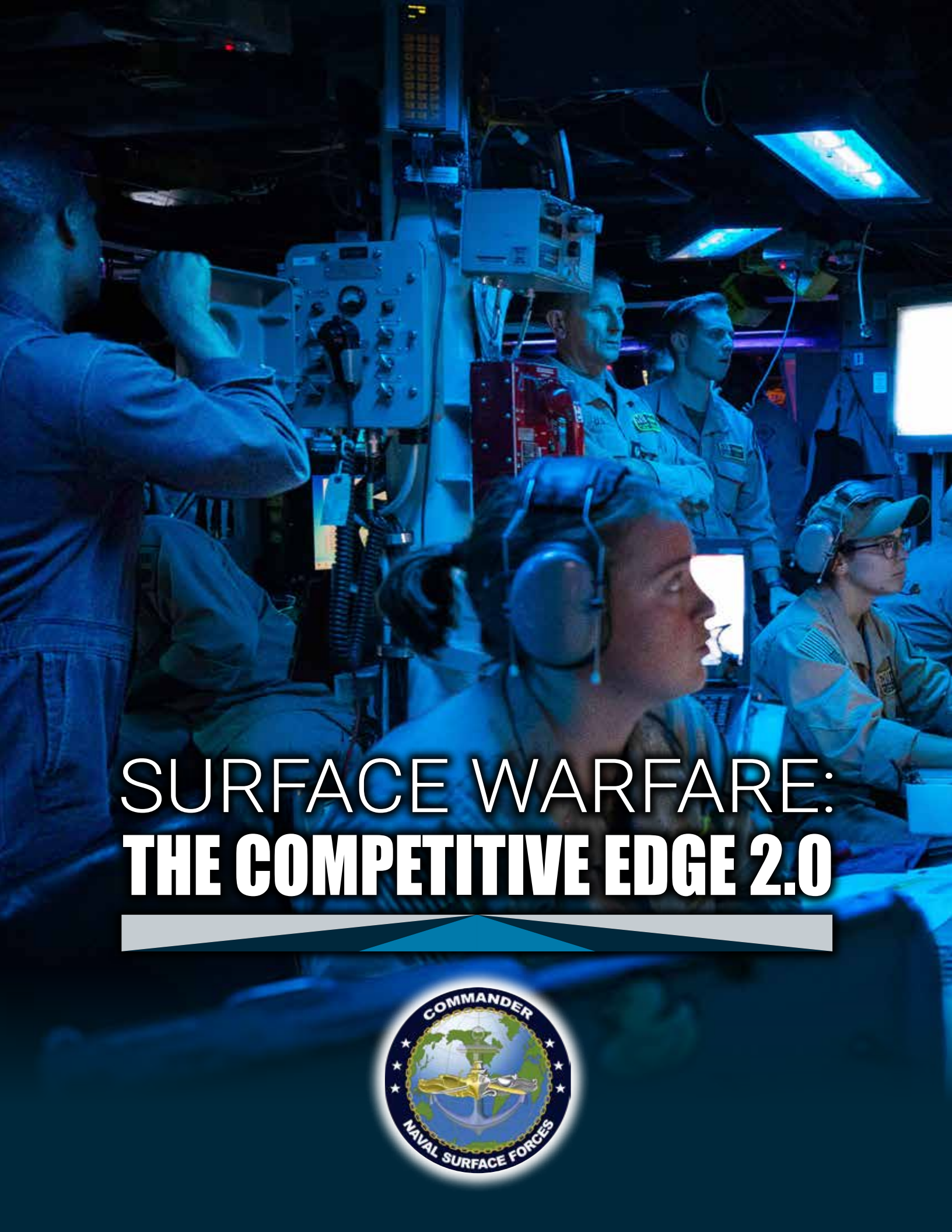


# SURFACE WARFARE:
# THE COMPETITIVE EDGE 2.0

COMMANDER
NAVAL SURFACE FORCES

## Commander's Foreword

In January 2022, Commander, Naval Surface Forces released "The Competitive Edge" to drive improvement and alignment among our stakeholders, the Surface Force, the Surface Warfare Enterprise (SWE), and most importantly, our warfighting Sailors. This strategy led to an increase in force readiness while bringing to light new challenges to overcome. As the Chief of Naval Operations (CNO) highlighted in the 2024 Navigation Plan, after we take a fix and evaluate our progress, we must be prepared to adjust course and speed. Similarly with the original Competitive Edge and our North Star Goal of 75 Mission Capable Ships, we learned and made improvements, and we also learned how prepared to adapt we must remain.

Since The Competitive Edge was released, conflict has erupted in Europe and the Middle East, the People's Republic of China (PRC) has continued to aggressively sow instability and grow combat capability in the Western Pacific, and our adversaries have increased their collaboration. This combination compounds our strategic and operational risk. Additionally, Congress altered the Navy's Title 10 mission to include not only operations incident to combat at sea, but also those activities that serve the peacetime security and prosperity of our nation.

Admiral Franchetti set our Navy on a course to contend with this challenging security environment by prioritizing Warfighting, Warfighters, and the Foundation that supports them. In the NAVPLAN, CNO has called for 80% of our warships to be combat surge ready by 2027. It will take all of us working together to achieve and sustain that goal. The Competitive Edge 2.0 (CE 2.0) is my approach to implement at speed the CNO's direction.

Taking into account our guidance in the 2024 Navigation Plan, our successes, and our shortcomings, my updated problem statement incorporates a refreshed view to address the challenges of today that we must strive to overcome collectively.

**PROBLEM STATEMENT:**

**THE SURFACE NAVY MUST ACHIEVE HIGHER FLEET READINESS WHILE SIMULTANEOUSLY INTEGRATING NEW AND UPGRADED PLATFORMS AND CAPABILITIES.**

Our ultimate destination remains the same—generating the warships, crews, concepts, and capabilities to fight and win against our adversaries. As such, the five Lines of Effort (LOE) identified in the first Competitive Edge remain the framework that will allow us to achieve our goals and CNO's Project 33 Targets. Those lines of effort are:

LOE 1: Develop the Leader, Warrior, Mariner, and Manager
- **CNO Project 33 Target: Invest in Warfighter Competency; Recruit and Retain Talent**

LOE 2: Produce More Ready Ships
- **CNO Project 33 Target: Ready Our Platforms**

LOE 3: Achieve Excellence in Capability Introduction
- **CNO Project 33 Target: Ready our Platforms; Operationalize Robotic and Autonomous Systems**

LOE 4: Create Clear and Innovative Operational Concepts
- **CNO Project 33 Target: Ready our Platforms; Operationalize Robotic and Autonomous Systems**

LOE 5: Strengthen the Foundation for the Future Force
- **CNO Project 33 Target: Restore our Critical Infrastructure; Ready our Platforms**

Appended to the end of this document is the CE 2.0 implementation plan, identifying the Surface Warfare Enterprise as the executive driver to align efforts and achieve goals. Each LOE is assigned to a single, accountable Surface Warfare Flag Officer for leadership and oversight. Discrete tasks and required accomplishment dates are assigned to other senior officers for action in support. My expectation is that these officers and their organizations will achieve results, and if they are unable to do so, in keeping with our Get Real, Get Better (GRGB) approach to problem solving, they will quickly and assertively raise the barriers standing in their way to my attention. If I can remove those barriers, I will. If I cannot, I will raise them with my leadership and identify recommended solutions to overcome.

*VADM Brendan McLane*

# The Surface Force and American National Security

***The U.S. Navy Surface Force has long been a cornerstone of America's national security and prosperity, serving as a dynamic and versatile tool in projecting power, safeguarding maritime interests, supporting global stability, and ensuring sea control. In performing these functions, the Surface Force plays a crucial role in deterring adversaries, protecting critical trade routes, responding to emerging threats and crises, and winning as a key part of the Joint Force in conflict. These vital roles and the degree to which they remain crucial to America's national security are the basis for the energy we apply to more effectively align the Surface Force.***

*The Wasp-class amphibious assault ship USS Bataan (LHD 5), Harpers Ferry-class dock landing ship USS Carter Hall (LSD 50), San Antonio-class amphibious transport dock ship USS Mesa Verde (LPD 19), and Arleigh Burke-class guided missile destroyer USS Arleigh Burke (DDG 51) transit in formation with the United Kingdom primary casualty receiving ship RFA Argus (A135) in the Mediterranean Sea.*

## Deterrence and Defense

At the heart of the U.S. Navy Surface Force's mission is the role of deterrence—preventing conflicts before they arise by demonstrating the capability and readiness to respond to any threat. Surface Force operations in strategic regions around the world send a powerful message to potential adversaries that aggression will be met with a swift and decisive response. This deterrent effect is particularly important in the Indo-Pacific where the PRC's rise as a maritime power threatens regional stability through non-adherence to the rules-based international order.

The Navy's guided-missile destroyers and cruisers equipped with the Aegis Combat System, are integral to the U.S.'s ballistic missile defense (BMD) strategy that provides protection to our forces and our allies and partners. These warships can track and intercept ballistic missiles, providing crucial defense against missile threats from adversaries like North Korea and Iran, and their proxies such as the Houthis. The ability to deploy BMD-capable ships to key regions enhances the security of U.S. allies and partners and contributes to broader regional stability. Moreover, the Surface Force's ability to operate in contested environments, such as the Red Sea, the South China Sea, or the Eastern Mediterranean, underscores our role in deterring potential conflicts. Navy warships in these areas reassure allies and partners and signal to potential adversaries that the U.S. is committed to maintaining peace and security in these critical regions. The missions and activities enabled by forward Surface Forces are essential for maintaining the credibility of U.S. commitments and ensuring that deterrence is effective. If deterrence is not achieved, our surface warships and Sailors will be ready to fight and win sustained combat operations at sea.

*The guided-missile destroyer USS Gravely (DDG 107) launches Tomahawk Land Attack Missiles in response to increased Iranian-backed Houthi malign behavior in the Red Sea Jan. 12, 2024. As a part of the USS Dwight D. Eisenhower Carrier Strike Group, Gravely deployed to the U.S. 5th Fleet area of operations to support maritime security and stability in the Middle East.*

## Power Projection and Expeditionary Operations

Key to our deterrence role, the U.S. Navy Surface Force is a critical instrument of power projection, capable of delivering military force anywhere in the world from forces already positioned nearby. For example, in the event of a regional crisis or conflict, the ability to deploy surface ships equipped with air and missile defense and long-range strike capabilities, as well as amphibious forces capable of projecting land power from the sea, provides the U.S. with flexibility to respond quickly and effectively. The Surface Force's power projection capabilities are particularly valuable in situations where rapid response is required.

Amphibious ships, such as our LHA and LHD amphibious assault ships, LPDs, and LSDs, when operating together with a Marine Expeditionary Unit (MEU) are central to Surface Force operations. These ships transport landing craft to carry forces from MEUs along with their attack and vertical lift aircraft, enabling the U.S. to project power ashore in regions where access may be limited or contested. In addition, the Marine Corps' growing ability to project lethal force from the shore into the littoral regions with precision weapons is an important step forward for the Joint Force. The ability to conduct amphibious operations is a unique and valuable capability that allows the U.S. to exert influence in littoral regions, support ground operations, and provide humanitarian assistance and disaster relief (HADR) in the aftermath of natural disasters or crises. The incredible Navy and Marine Corps partnership, and the response flexibility it provides, is a critical enabler of our national security.

*Multinational ships sail in formation July 22, off the coast of Hawaii during Exercise Rim of the Pacific (RIMPAC) 2024. Twenty-nine nations, 40 surface ships, three submarines, 14 national land forces, more than 150 aircraft and 25,000 personnel participated in RIMPAC in and around the Hawaiian Islands.*

## Maintaining Global Stability and Sea Control

The U.S. Navy Surface Force plays a vital role in maintaining global stability by supporting international maritime law, ensuring freedom of navigation, and contributing to multinational coalitions. The Surface Force's operations are often conducted in conjunction with allied and partner navies, enhancing interoperability, and fostering stronger relationships with other nations. These partnerships are critical for addressing common security challenges, such as piracy, terrorism, and the proliferation of advanced conventional weapons and weapons of mass destruction.

Freedom of navigation operations (FONOP) are a key element of the Surface Force's mission to uphold international maritime law. These operations challenge excessive maritime claims by other nations and reinforce the importance of a rules-based international order, which is essential for global stability and prosperity. By conducting FONOPs in contested waters, such as the South China Sea, the U.S. Navy asserts the principle that all nations have the right to navigate freely in international waters.

The Surface Force also leads in multinational coalition operations, such as those conducted by North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) or under United Nations mandates. These operations often involve complex missions, including counter-piracy, counterterrorism, and humanitarian assistance. Working alongside other navies to protect commercial shipping and ensure the free flow of goods through maritime chokepoints is critical to national security, as demonstrated by ongoing coalition operations in the Red Sea.

*Ships participating in exercise Baltic Operations (BALTOPS) steam in formation through the Baltic Sea, June 8, 2024. BALTOPS is the premier maritime-focused exercise in the Baltic Region. The exercise, led by U.S. Naval Forces Europe-Africa and executed by Naval Striking and Support Forces NATO, provides a unique training opportunity to strengthen combined response capabilities critical to preserving freedom of navigation and security in the Baltic Sea.*

## Supporting American Prosperity

The economic security of the United States is closely linked to the security of global maritime trade routes. The vast majority of global trade—over 80% by volume—travels by sea, making the security of maritime routes essential for global economic stability. The U.S. Navy Surface Force is instrumental in protecting these routes, ensuring that the global economy remains open and resilient. The Surface Force's global operations are critical to safeguard vital trade routes from potential disruptions.

## Adapting to Future Challenges

As the global security environment continues to evolve, the U.S. Navy Surface Force is adapting to meet new and pacing challenges. The presence of global competitors, such as the PRC and Russia, in addition to their increasing partnership with Iran and North Korea, has accelerated the proliferation of advanced technologies, including hypersonic missiles, cyber warfare, and unmanned systems. This combination requires the Surface Force to remain agile, innovative, and capable of operating in increasingly contested environments. To meet these challenges, the Surface Force continues to invest in new technologies and capabilities, such as the development of unmanned surface vessels (USV), the integration of advanced sensors and weapons systems like AEGIS SPY-6 with AEGIS Baseline 10, and Directed Energy (DE) systems. These innovations will enhance the Navy's ability to operate in complex environments, ensuring that the U.S. maintains its maritime superiority and continues to protect its national security and prosperity.

*A Triton unmanned surface vessel (USV) rests ashore in San Diego during Integrated Battle Problem (IBP) 24.1, March 08, 2024. IBP 24.1 is a U.S. Pacific Fleet experiment, executed by U.S. 3rd Fleet, operationalizing multi-domain employment of unmanned systems to create fleet warfighting advantages.*

## Threats to Our Security and Prosperity

The challenge we face as a Surface Force is that we live in an increasingly unstable world, while we operate a Force that was largely planned and built during a period of unquestioned American dominance and relative peace. This dominance permitted the physical size of the Force to decline, even as it integrated numerous capability upgrades. During this time of dominance, the Navy—especially the Surface Navy—assumed additional risk, in that we prioritized capability upgrades over both the size of the force and its readiness. We built fewer ships. We bought fewer spare parts. We accepted that repairs could be deferred until the next maintenance period. We looked at equipment redundancy as a luxury that permitted us to operate with degradations, rather than a necessity that enabled combat effectiveness. We normalized a standard that was arguably appropriate in 2005, but it is no longer appropriate in 2025.

This is why the CNO has made putting "More Ready Players on the Field" central to her leadership. ADM Franchetti is clear that we must increase readiness across the board, that ships remaining in depot maintenance past their planned end dates is unacceptable, that we must re-stock our storerooms and warehouses with critical parts, and that we must achieve basic levels of certification faster and maintain them longer. In addition, we continue to align our Reserve Force to contribute to force generation, increase material readiness, provide strategic depth, and augment ship crews and staffs as necessary. All these actions produce and maintain a higher number of ships available for naval operations in response to an increasingly unstable world. The security and prosperity of our nation and our allies is challenged primarily by threats from the PRC, Russia, Iran, and North Korea.

> **THE NAVPLAN CONTINUES WHERE MY PREDECESSOR'S NAVIGATION PLAN LEFT OFF AND SETS OUR COURSE TO RAISE OUR FLEET'S BASELINE LEVEL OF READINESS AND PUT MORE READY PLAYERS ON THE FIELD.**
>
> *– Adm. Lisa Franchetti*

*The crew of the Navy's newest Arleigh Burke-class guided-missile destroyer USS John Basilone (DDG 122) transits New York Harbor, past the Statue of Liberty for its commissioning ceremony week in New York City.*

## Threats to Our Security and Prosperity

***People's Republic of China:*** PRC's naval threat is rising due to its rapidly growing capabilities, including a modernized fleet featuring advanced destroyers, submarines, and aircraft carriers. The expansion of its naval bases, particularly in the South China Sea, coupled with its assertive territorial claims, poses a strategic challenge. The development of anti-ship ballistic and cruise missiles (ASBM/ASCM) and the continued development of sea denial strategies further threatens U.S. naval operations in the Indo-Pacific region. CNO's NAVPLAN directly addresses the PRC's challenge as a growing "integrated warfighting ecosystem" and we must be ready to counter that ecosystem.

***Russia:*** Russia presents a formidable naval threat through its robust submarine fleet, which includes nuclear-powered ballistic missile and guided missile submarines (SSBN/SSGN), and attack submarines (SSN). Its surface fleet, though smaller than during the Cold War, remains potent with advanced missile systems. Russia's actions in the Arctic, its naval exercises in the Atlantic and Pacific, and its modernization programs aim to counter U.S. naval superiority and project power globally.

***Iran:*** Iran's naval threat is characterized by asymmetric warfare tactics in the Arabian Gulf, including the use of fast attack craft, mini-submarines, and mine warfare. Its strategic location near the Strait of Hormuz allows it to threaten vital maritime chokepoints. Iran's development of anti-ship missiles and swarming tactics pose significant risks to U.S. naval forces operating in the region. Iranian support to the Houthi rebels in Yemen has been the source of missiles and uncrewed surface and air systems, to include one-way attack drones, that our forces have so skillfully countered over the past fifteen months; these efforts have been critical to preventing a broader regional war.

***North Korea:*** North Korea's naval threat is less conventional but still significant due to its focus on mini-submarines and special operations forces. Its development of submarine-launched ballistic missiles (SLBM) enhances its strategic deterrence capability. North Korea's unpredictable behavior and potential for asymmetric attacks necessitate constant vigilance from U.S. naval forces.

***Conclusion.*** The U.S. Navy Surface Force has been, and continues to be, a critical element in advancing and defending America's national security and prosperity. Through its roles in sea control, sea denial, power projection, deterrence, maritime security, and sealift, the Surface Force ensures that the United States remains a global maritime power capable of protecting its interests and promoting peace and stability around the world. As the challenges of the 21st century evolve, the Surface Force will continue to adapt and innovate, and this document guides those actions along five main LOEs.

*The Arleigh Burke-class guided-missile destroyer USS Carney (DDG 64) defeats a combination of Houthi missiles and unmanned aerial vehicles in the Red Sea.*

# LOE 1: Develop the Leader, Warrior, Mariner, and Manager

**CE 2.0 LOE 1**
**LOE Owner: COMNAVSURFOR**
**In Support: USFFC, CPF, CNPC, CNRF, N95/96, SWSC, CNSL, PERS41, SMWDC, SCSTC**

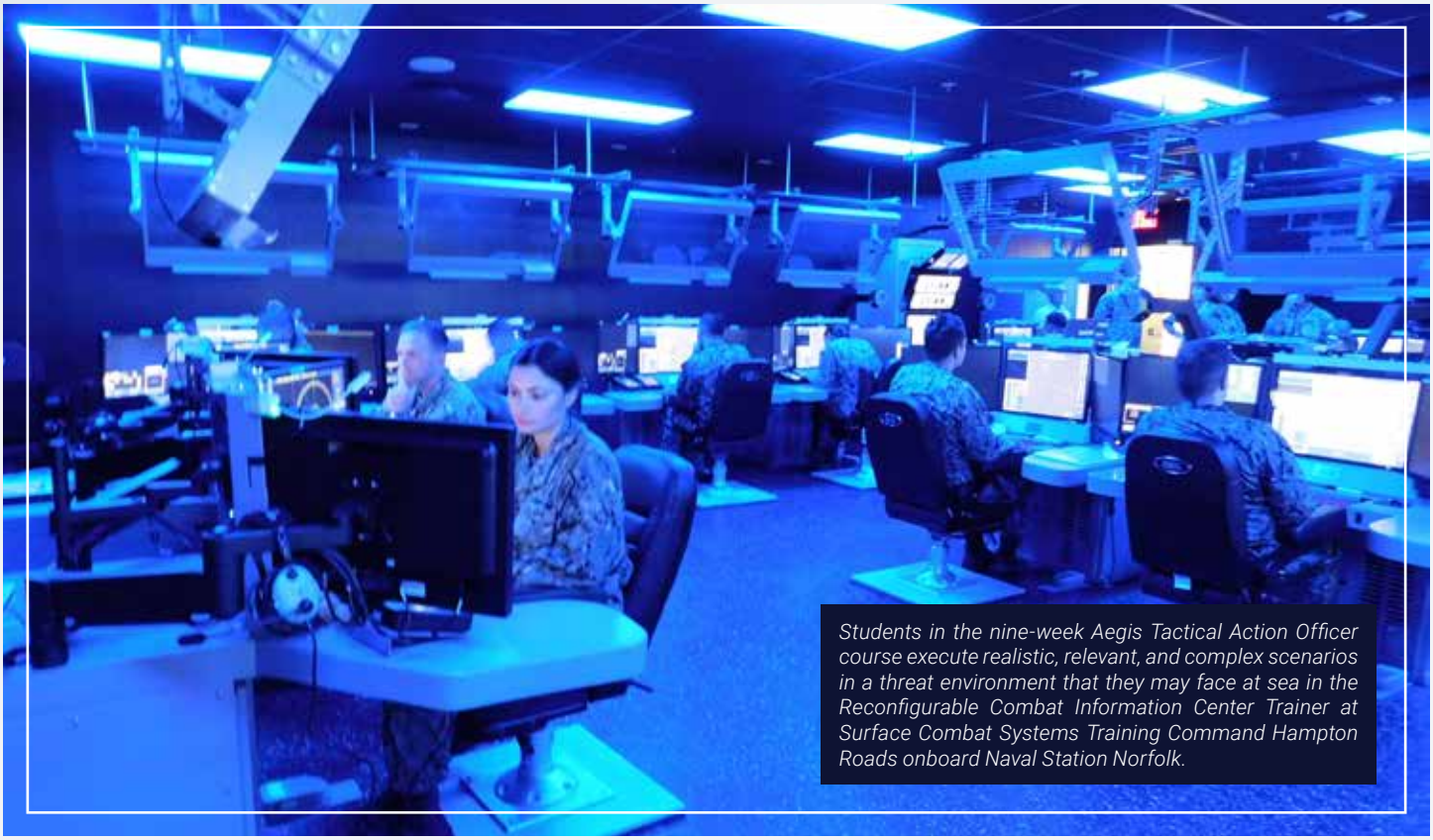
1. NLT 30 June 2025, CO SWSC will improve Maritime Warfighting and Tactical Action Officer (TAO) curriculum, complete Ready Relevant Learning (RRL) course modernization, develop a Commodore course, and bring an Elite Firefighting course to the east coast. DH and P-XO Management Course of Instruction will also be incorporated into curricula, all underpinned by Get Real, Get Better.
2. NLT 30 June 2025, CO SCSTC will develop and deliver Surface Warfare, Air Warfare, and Undersea Warfare coordinator courses to San Diego and Hampton Roads Fleet Concentration areas, update and deliver a new SSDS TAO course, deliver the USW Commander course to Hampton Roads, and deliver the Surface Warfare Commander and Aegis TAO courses to San Diego.
3. NLT 31 May 2025, CO SWSC will develop and convene a Surface Group Commander course and Advanced Engineering Instructor (AEI) courses for officers and enlisted.
4. NLT 30 Sep 2026, CO SWSC, through analysis of Mariner Skills Assessment (MSA) data collected to date, will develop a standardized evaluation process for MSAs 2, 5, and 8 to ensure uniform and consistent execution of these competency checks.
5. NLT 30 June 2025, Commander SMWDC will institute a Surface Warfare Combat Training Continuum (SWCTC) plan that improves tactical proficiency and performance throughout a Sailor's career, provides feedback to training stakeholders, and enables data-driven decision making on efficient training resource allocation to Surface Force leadership.
6. NLT 30 June 2025, CO SCSTC will develop and institute a combat systems technical proficiency model and implementation plan to improve technical proficiency and performance throughout a Sailor's career, provide feedback to training stakeholders, and enable data-driven decision making on resource allocation to Surface Force leadership.
7. NLT 31 Jan 2026, CNSP, with support from CNSL, will develop an implementation plan for enhanced enlisted leadership development for all active and reserve ranks of Petty Officer and inculcate a Get Real, Get Better culture throughout the Surface Force using Culture of Excellence 2.0 as a key enabler.
8. NLT 30 Sep 2025, the Chaplain Corps (CHC) will continue to build out Religious Ministry Teams (RMTs) placing a Chaplain on every DDG, CG, LSD, LPD, and LHD.

## LOE 1 Narrative

Leadership development is a cornerstone of the Surface Force's mission. Surface Force leaders must be effective warriors, mariners, and managers to guide their Sailors and ships to fight and win at sea. Developing talented, energetic, and virtuous leaders requires continuous training, education, and mentoring. Despite rapid technological advances, the human element underpins all warfare, and it is where we have our strongest competitive advantage. As we navigate elevated global strategic competition, it is essential to evaluate how effectively we fulfill these human functions and align them with the future of the Surface Force.

Our leader development program focuses on cultivating leaders of integrity, energy, competence, and character. We are conducting more frequent leadership assessments to identify strengths, weaknesses, and potential blind spots. Equally as important, we are coaching and mentoring our future leaders to foster personal and professional growth. We have made significant investments in reforming our leadership assessment program. Our Surface Warfare Command Leadership Assessment (SWCLA) represents a marked improvement in how we invest in the character development of our officers. Concurrent with SWCLA will be a concerted effort to enhance our Enlisted Leadership Development (ELD) program. Eighty percent of the Surface Warfare Enterprise is enlisted Sailors. Providing our Sailors with quality career-long leadership education and skills throughout their service enriches our sustained warfighting advantage.

The Surface Force, both now and in the future, will depend on sharpening our warfighting skills to ensure readiness in the face of evolving challenges. Inculcating warrior toughness throughout the force is a priority, as it builds resilience and prepares our Sailors for the demands of modern warfare. We are committed to providing high-quality tactical AND technical training opportunities, improving education in multi-domain surface warfare in the 21st century. To achieve warfighting excellence, we recognize the need for continuous investment in training resources. Through previous and future investments in the Surface Training Advanced Virtual Environment (STAVE) and Live Virtual Constructive (LVC) capable training systems, we will continue to deliver persistent, challenging, and realistic tactical and technical scenarios to enhance individual and team warfighting proficiency. Moreover, we will ensure a coherent approach to tactical training and utilize the SWCTC as the mechanism to measure individual watchstander performance and a greater



*Students in the nine-week Aegis Tactical Action Officer course execute realistic, relevant, and complex scenarios in a threat environment that they may face at sea in the Reconfigurable Combat Information Center Trainer at Surface Combat Systems Training Command Hampton Roads onboard Naval Station Norfolk.*

## LOE 1 Narrative *cont.*

holistic understanding of human performance factors.

With the establishment of the Mariner Skills Training Centers (MSTC), the Surface Force is well-positioned to provide the skills and training required to correct and improve upon previous deficiencies cited in the 2017 Comprehensive Review of Surface Force Incidents. We now have the tools, trainers, and technology to standardize and improve the way seamanship and mariner skills are developed and assessed on an individual and team basis. Our community will continue to produce warriors to serve on surface combatants possessing the requisite professional mariner skills to fulfill the Navy's mission of maintaining global maritime superiority. The creation of an AEI allows the WTI framework to enhance the lethality of our engineering warfighters by implementing a robust curriculum, producing ready graduates.

While developing leaders remains critical to the Surface Force mission, it is paramount to ensure that we provide those leaders with the management skills and tools to succeed. We must develop managers capable of the execution of new ideas, building effective processes, and applying the principles of GRGB. Our leaders must be skilled at planning, organization, coordination, and assessment to ensure that our people-focused force is also an effective force. Our management emphasis has been incorporated in the BDOC curriculum and will soon be expanded to incorporate the SWSC DH and P-XO courses of instruction (COI).

The Surface Force remains dedicated to developing leaders, warriors, mariners, and managers – in both the active and reserve components – who are prepared to face the challenges of the future. This all begins with world class onboarding, ensuring we enthusiastically welcome our newest Sailors so they are part of the team from day one. In addition, supporting our Sailors is a continual process with many key stakeholders. Chaplains and Religious Programs Specialists are dual contributors within the Religious Ministry Team (RMT) who develop the spiritual readiness for warfighters to have conviction and decisiveness for sustained combat operations. The RMT will be trained and equipped to provide faith-based services, combat destructive behaviors, and enhance the collaboration of resources for the service member and their family.

We aim to build a force that is resilient, adaptable, and ready to succeed in any operational environment. The retention of critical skills in the Navy Reserve similarly contributes to sustaining our lethal fighting force. Through continuous investment in training resources and the adoption of innovative training methodologies, we will ensure the crews of the Surface Force are ready to fight and win at sea.


*Sailors maneuver a simulated destroyer during navigation seamanship and ship handling training at Mariner Skills Training Center Pacific (MSTCPAC).*

# LOE 2: Produce More Ready Ships

**CE 2.0 LOE 2**
**LOE Owner: COMNAVSURFOR**
**In Support: USFFC, CPF, NAVSEA, NAVSUP, NAVWAR, NAVPERS, NAVAIR, NAVIFOR, CNAF, CNRF, CNSL, N95/96, PEO IWS, PEO C4I, CNRMC, SMWDC, SWSC, SCSTC**

1. NLT 15 Sep 2025, COMNAVSURFOR will evaluate the effectiveness of newly implemented Combat Surge Ready manning policies and employment of SURFMEX[1] as a risk mitigation measure. Beginning with the DDG 51 class, manning distribution will emphasize ships at the start of Basic Phase to optimize ship's company training and qualifications. Ships in the Basic Phase through Deployment will be manned at or above 88/90% if SURFMEX scores are below threshold, or 85/87% if SURMFEX scores are above deployment threshold with no department below "Ready for Training" thresholds. All ships in Optimized Fleet Response Plan (OFRP) Maintenance Phase will be manned at or above 75% Fit overall and 80% Fill in the Engineering and Combat Systems departments.
2. NLT 30 Sep 2025, COMNAVSEASYSCOM in coordination with CNSP/L N43, will complete at least 71% of all CNO Availabilities on time and reduce Days of Maintenance Delay to less than 1714 days.
3. NLT 30 Sep 2026, Supply Support Activities (COMNAVSUPSYSCOM and Defense Logistics Agency) and hardware Systems Commands will achieve and sustain zero ships Not Mission Capable (NMC) stemming from 'Supply' trips by improving retail allowancing, forward positioning critical items, and making targeted investments in the wholesale system to support the Surface Warfare Enterprise.
4. NLT 30 Jun 2025, CNSP and CNSL will accomplish training Basic Phase (BP) Tier 1 certification in an average of 15 weeks and NLT 30 Jun 2026, CNSP and CNSL will accomplish BP Tier 1 in an average of 10 weeks in accordance with the Surface Force Training and Readiness Manual.
5. NLT 30 Apr of each year, CNSF Surface Analytics Groups (SAGs) will provide a formal list of major data analytics initiatives across the surface enterprise, including but not limited to necessary data engineering, dashboard and tool development, and data modeling, clearly identifying the owner and supporters while connecting each line of effort to the expected readiness improvement for annual SWE review. NLT 31 Oct of each year, CNSF SAGs will ensure that all high priority data sources are either adequately collected to enable all critical initiatives or formally documented with key recommendations for SWE FO/SES engagement.
6. NLT 15 Sep 2025, CNSP and CNSL will complete a formal capacity assessment of all Surface Readiness Groups (SURFGRUs) to determine if they have reached sufficient capability, to include active and reserve manning, expertise, infrastructure, and funding, to sustain effective command and control over forces assigned, while also providing readiness support to deployers within their respective regions.
7. NLT 30 Apr 2025, COMNAVSURFOR, with support from NAVSEA, and SMWDC will incorporate a Combat Surge Ready Breakout Group (CSRBOG) into the established Surface Master Plan battle rhythm to analyze CSR ship requirements and develop alternative CNO Maintenance Availability strategies and Basic/Advanced Phase training plans to rapidly increase the number of CSR ships. The CSRBOG plans will be updated and formally reported semi-annually.

[1] SURFMEX or Surface Manning Experience is a quantitative and qualitative, data-driven, reliable, and predictive experience metric.

## LOE 2 Narrative

We have made significant progress since the release of The Competitive Edge and are thinking differently and applying the GRGB mindset to improving readiness. During the last several years, the Navy has implemented Performance to Plan (P2P)[2] processes to identify root causes to the challenges we face and barriers to improving outcomes. In this update to Competitive Edge, we are taking what we have learned through the iterative P2P Surface process to better align with LOE 2. Achieving more ready ships involves synchronizing stakeholders and aligning processes to meet the operational commanders' needs. I am laser-focused on moving the readiness needle to achieve the CNO's NAVPLAN goal of 80% combat surge ready by 2027.

Since 2022, all eight geographically focused SURFGRUs reached initial operating capacity or greater. These commands are the direct TYCOM representative and ADCON ISIC for our ships in each area of responsibility. This model is increasing readiness and catalyzing rapid responses to material casualties and other challenges ships experience. In addition, newly formed and aligned Reserve units were created to augment and provide bench depth to these commands and the ships they support. Whether near CONUS homeport or halfway around the globe, a SURFGRU commander is close by and available to address or prevent problems and keep crews equipped for the fight.

In the equipment pillar, the past three years saw a marked improvement for on-time completion of CNO Availabilities from 36% (FY22) to greater than 60% (FY24) and reduced Days of Maintenance Delay from 4314 (FY22) to 2633 (FY24). In addition, as a community we underinvested in spare parts for too long, often in the name of efficiency. We are now reversing this trend with NAVSUP's NSS-Supply effort to leverage innovative business processes to increase the types and number of onboard spare parts, known as Coordinated Shipboard Allowance List (COSAL) range and depth.

In addition, the Surface Force applied the principles of GRGB to amphibious warship availabilities. These maintenance periods increased 28% (187 days) over the last 11 years and led to training and deployment delays. This downward trend was a catalyst for our recently completed Amphibious Ship Maintenance Performance (ASMP) review. The top three findings highlight the need for effective command and control, strict adherence to planning milestones, and sensible long-term contracting strategies.

### CNSG Global Presence


[2] P2P Surface is an iterative DMAIC (define, measure, analyze, improve, and control) process to establish a plan and the levers needed to enable achievement of our North Star goal.

## LOE 2 Narrative *Cont.*

In the personnel pillar, we continue to treat TYCOM manning actions as a last resort for addressing critical manning issues. By prioritizing the early resolution of manning shortfalls, we successfully reduced the number of short-term manning actions by 72% for the four CNSP CSGs who deployed after December 2022, including the two CARL VINSON deployments, as well as those of THEODORE ROOSEVELT and ABRAHAM LINCOLN. For DDGs, supervisor Fit (supervisors with the right skills, experience, and specialties) averaged 3% higher while Fill increased by 12%. Journeyman Fit remained stable while Fill improved by 3%. In addition, our Reserve Force is stepping up through the Reserve Component to Sea (RC2SEA) initiative to fill critical manning gaps, to date billeting 78 reservists to sea.

In the training pillar, Root Cause Analysis identified schedule adherence gaps impacting Basic Phase execution across the force. We learned that we were not effectively integrating the multitude of requirements and stakeholders to get our ships through Basic Phase Tier 1 training in the required 10-week timeframe per the Surface Force Training and Readiness Manual (SFTRM). Tier 1 certification is the minimum standard for a ship to be considered Mission Capable and an area with the most consequential leverage for improvement, providing Fleet Commanders with more available Mission Capable ships. We will improve with aggressive coherent scheduling and investing in spare parts and material readiness so ships are ready to train.

Over the past few years, we invested heavily in data analytics to measure and improve readiness in new and innovative ways. Surface Analytics Groups (SAG) are now fully established on both coasts, consisting of uniformed, civilian, and specialized contract support, working collaboratively on low-code/no-code solutions, custom software applications, data engineering, data visualization, and data modeling. Real-time dashboards and other data-driven tools were developed and are being successfully employed by CNSP and CNSL Readiness Operations Center (ROC) personnel to better manage material, personnel, and training readiness. These dashboards automatically highlight priority casualties, provide part status information, and connect material and personnel readiness issues to planned training and certification events. This enables faster allocation of resources to optimize force generation and illuminates force employment risks while providing a common picture of key readiness data across the TYCOM, Surface Groups, and Fleet Commanders.

These accomplishments are an excellent start, and we will build upon them and strive for more. This is represented in the seven major tasks brought forward in LOE 2. These seven tasks are critical to achieving the CNO's goal of more ready players on the field and are the driving force behind our Combat Surge Ready goals. We are thinking holistically about how maintenance, training, equipment, and personnel are interrelated. We will continue to explore innovative ways to improve our processes, especially maintenance and docking cycle times, and training cycle requirements.

***Ultimately, we need on-time completion of quality maintenance, improved system reliability and redundancy, the right parts on our shelves and in-theater, while achieving crew stability earlier in the OFRP so properly manned ships can complete training for forward-deployed operations on fully functioning systems with fully functioning teams***. The preparation of warships for combat operations is an increasingly intricate undertaking with interrelated processes and certifications across multiple stakeholders – we have to think and act boldly to meet the CNO's goal of an 80% Combat Surge Ready Force by 2027.

*Maintenance technicians assigned to USS Boxer (LHD 4) weld beads onto aluminum sheet metal in the hull maintenance technician shop as the ship transits the Pacific Ocean.*

# LOE 3: Achieve Excellence In Capability Introduction

**CE 2.0 LOE 3**
**LOE Owner: COMNAVSURFLANT**
**In Support: OPNAV N2/N6/N9I/N94/N95/N96, USFFC, CPF, CNSP, NAVSEA, NAVIFOR, PEO SHIPS, PEO USC, PEO IWS, PEO C4I, SWSC, SCSTC**

1. NLT 1 Sep 2025, CNSL, in coordination with OPNAV N2/N6/N94/N95/N96, USFFC, CPF, CNSP, NAVSEA, NAVIFOR, PEO SHIPS, PEO USC, PEO IWS, and PEO C4I, will develop and implement DOTMLPF-P based gap closure plans for the introduction of critical surface capabilities that support core Navy initiatives, while informing SWE leadership and influencing excellence in new capability introduction.
2. NLT 1 Sep 2025, CNSL, in coordination with CNSP and designated stakeholders, will establish a SURFOR Capability Fleet Introduction Team (C-FIT) and associated battle rhythm to ensure specific TYCOM stakeholders are involved earlier in the process to successfully integrate future critical capabilities.
3. NLT 31 Mar 2025, CNSP, in coordination with the Robotics and Autonomous Systems NIF, CNSL, DASN Ships, USFFC, CPF, OPNAV N9/N96, NAVSEA, PEO USC, PMS 420, NAVWAR, NAVFAC, NWDC, SMWDC, SDG 1 and other C-FIT stakeholders, will develop a DOTMLPF-P approach for the rapidly developing Small Unmanned Surface Vessel (sUSV) Family of Systems (FoS). The result will ensure required sUSV capability is operationally ready by 2027.

## LOE 3 Narrative

Our ability to fight and win decisively in today's environment requires our Sailors to be the best warfighters in the world with the most lethal capabilities. We continue to sharpen our warfighting competitive edge by providing our crews with the most capable systems, weapons, and warships to ensure our Navy can defeat our adversaries. To counter the ever-evolving threat, future capabilities must be delivered on time and accelerated, if possible, with the required sustainment and training to support rapid employment. As 2027 approaches, the enterprise will prioritize through LOE 3 critical capabilities to support Fleet Commanders. Since release of The Competitive Edge, LOE 3 worked towards achieving excellence in fleet introduction of future platforms. The lessons learned through the evolution of this LOE led to the shift from platform-specific to capability-specific.

Excellence in Capability Introduction requires active SWE leadership engagement and influence early in the requirements, acquisition, and sustainment processes to set the conditions for success – many years before the traditional Surface Force Type Commander engagement windows. The Surface Force will implement a Capability Fleet Introduction Team (C-FIT) with an associated battle rhythm to better inform future Surface Force capabilities through the requirements, acquisition, and sustainment processes. To this end, SWE leadership will direct C-FIT to conduct recurring capability introduction reviews focusing on the most critical systems, being open and transparent, and boldly learning and adapting to yield continuous improvement. We will use a Doctrine, Organization, Training, Material, Leadership and Education, Personnel, Facilities, and Policy (DOTMLPF-P) lens to refine and mature capability introduction programs to deliver readiness, capacity, and training. These reviews will provide experience-based common sense insights to identify gaps and requirements, and will track actions and recommendations to monitor progress and signal risks, if necessary, to accelerate the capability. The capabilities which have the greatest impact on the lethality of the Surface Force will require an increased revisit rate with leadership.

Given our strategic priority to prepare for a high-end, sustained fight in this decade, the Surface Force is prioritizing the rapid development and fielding of threat-pacing capabilities required to fight and win at sea. Our goal is to

*Sailors aboard the Independence-variant littoral combat ship USS Canberra (LCS 30) transport an unmanned surface vessel in the ship's mission bay, as a part of the first embarkation of the Mine Countermeasures (MCM) mission package.*

## LOE 3 Narrative *Cont.*

deliver and integrate Surface Force capabilities into the Fleets with a sense of urgency, prioritizing the following specific capabilities: DDG 51 Flight III, Maritime Strike Tomahawk (MST), Littoral Combat Ships (LCS) Mine Countermeasures (MCM) mission package, FFG 62, directed energy systems, and the portfolio of unmanned surface vessels (USV) in development with a near-term focus on the small USV family of systems (sUSV FoS). We will put more lethal players on the field by working with surface program offices, systems commands, and the testing community to ensure the on-time delivery of eleven DDG 51 Flight IIIs currently under construction. We will work to develop tactics and train our crews to employ the long-range maritime engagement capability provided by MST. We will work to ensure that our Navy retains freedom of maneuver within contested waters by fielding and employing LCS MCM mission packages. And, in direct support of CNO's North Star, we will drive fielding an operational sUSV capability by 2027.

This is an exciting time for the Surface Force, as we add new platforms with lethal capabilities to the Fleet. USS Jack H. Lucas (DDG 125), the first DDG 51 Flight III, equipped with AN/SPY-6(V)1 Air and Missile Defense Radar (AMDR) and Aegis Combat System Baseline 10, provides the Fleet the most sophisticated and powerful class of warships in the world. USS Harrisburg (LPD 30) will be the first Flight II variant of the LPD San Antonio-class, replacing LSDs and incorporating SPY-6(V)2 Enterprise Air Surveillance Radar (EASR). This capability postures our amphibious force to take the fight from sea to shore. Additionally, new warship class programs Constellation-Class Guided Missile Frigate (FFG 62), the Next-Generation Guided Missile Destroyers (DDG X), and USVs are in development. Looking to the future, we will develop the tactical advantages that DE capabilities will provide to the Surface Force. Focused development of these capabilities will require close partnership across the SWE with industry and academia, ultimately delivering effective DE systems to the Fleet. Furthermore, a next generation family of radars including SPY-6 and AN/SPS-73(V)18 Next Generation Surface Search Radar (NGSSR), a new electronic warfare system, AN/SLQ-32(V)7 (SEWIP BLK III), counter-C5ISRT capabilities, and the move towards an Integrated Combat System are increasing the Fleet's lethality.

*USS Savannah (LCS 28) conducts a live-fire demonstration in the Eastern Pacific Ocean utilizing a containerized launching system that fired an SM-6 missile from the ship at a designated target. The exercise demonstrated the modularity and lethality of littoral combat ships and the ability to successfully integrate a containerized weapons system to engage a surface target.*

# LOE 4: Create Clear and Innovative Operational Concepts

**CE 2.0 LOE 4**
**LOE Owner: Naval Surface and Mine Warfighting Development Center (SMWDC)**
**In Support: CNSF, OPNAV N95/96/97/98, N2N6, USFFC, CPF, Disruptive Capabilities Office (DCO), Digital Warfare Office (DWO), CNRF, NAVAIR, NAVIFOR, NWDC, CSDS 1, SWSC, SCSTC, PERS 41**

1. NLT 1 Dec 2025, SMWDC Surface Advanced Warfighting School (SAWS) in coordination with PERS 41, prioritize placing one Department Head WTI per ship and Warfare Commander (AMDC, DESRON, PHIBRON) and fill codified WTI Production Tours.
    a. SMWDC SAWS coordinate with PERS 41 when unable to fill due to distributable inventory to create and communicate a risk assessment and a mitigation plan to TYCOM.
    b. SMWDC SAWS report number of ships / Warfare Commanders with a WTI and WTI production tour fill on a monthly basis to the TYCOM.

2. NLT 1 Sep 2025, SMWDC provide oversight of future capabilities being introduced to support the fleet.
    a. SMWDC Surface Warfare Technical Division (SWTD) complete capability introduction roadmaps for Standard Missile 6 (SM-6) IAU, Hypersonic Missiles (HPM), and Patriot Advanced Capability-3 Missile Segment Enhancement (PAC-3 MSE).
    b. SMWDC SWTD continue development of Maritime Strike Tomahawk (MST) and SLQ-32(V7) technology as test events occur.
    c. SMWDC SWTD increase in-house analytical capability by 25% through establishing access to Virtual Test Environment (VTE) and / or Combat System Test Bed (CSTB).
    d. SMWDC SAWS N5 and HQ N8/9 will support the Surface Development Group (SURFDEVGRU) in developing sUSV and C-UAS associated Tactics, Techniques, and Procedures (TTP).

3. NLT 1 Dec 2025, SMWDC Mine Countermeasure Technical Division (MCMTD) develop future MCM warfighting concepts to support surface and submarine maneuver within the battlespace through a continuous and iterative process.
    a. SMWDC MCMTD support follow-on LCS MCM Mission Package POAM.
    b. SMWDC MCMTD support OPNAV N95's Mine Warfare Strategy, MCM Next POAM.
4. NLT 1 Aug 2025, SMWDC Surface Requirements Group (SURFRG) develop a letter for CNSF signature annually, to be delivered to OPNAV, that balances tactical needs, technical feasibility, and available funding in its recommendations.
5. NLT 2033 SMWDC will create a SCIF-SAPF within the San Diego fleet concentration area. NLT 1 May 2027, SMWDC complete a special project renovation of an existing facility to create a smaller scale SAPF on a shorter timeline as an interim solution that meets the immediate needs of the Surface Enterprise.

## LOE 4 Narrative

At the core of the Surface Navy's mission to maintain strategic readiness and superiority, the Naval Surface and Mine Warfighting Development Center (SMWDC) is charged with the critical task of creating operational concepts to win decisively in tomorrow's maritime combat environment and ensure the Navy stays ahead of evolving threats. This LOE plays a pivotal role in SMWDC's broader mission to increase the lethality and tactical proficiency of the Surface Force across all domains. By continuously developing innovative warfighting Concept of Operations (CONOPS), SMWDC prepares naval forces to meet current and future challenges, building the foundation for effective integration of the best technologies and doctrines, and enabling warfighters to succeed in increasingly challenging maritime environments.

Since the inception of The Competitive Edge, SMWDC has made significant strides in bolstering the Navy's tactical proficiency. One of its most notable achievements was the expansion of the Warfare Tactics Instructors (WTI) program. WTIs play a crucial role in training ships during Surface Warfare Advanced Tactical Training (SWATT) and familiarizing crews with the latest Tactics, Techniques, and Procedures (TTP), while standing ready to provide operational support and reach-back to ships in all phases of training and operations. This builds on the invaluable feedback loop that creates rapid data collection and analysis, equipping our ship COs and their TAOs with tangible, actionable information at speed. The Surface Advanced Warfighting School (SAWS) combined all four WTI COIs into a single schoolhouse in San Diego and produced 121 WTIs in CY23, exceeding the goal of 115. In 2024, WTIs provided in-person fly-away support to ships and staffs in areas of conflict.

SMWDC CONOPS development team collaborated across the SWE, identifying and aligning DOTMLPF-P in CONOPS for DE, MST, and DDG 1000. SMWDC's Surface Requirements Group (SURFRG) proved invaluable in identifying vulnerabilities in capability by working with Numbered Fleet Commanders, OPNAV N2N6/N94/N95/N96, NAVIFOR, NAVWAR, PEO IWS, PEO Ships, SURFPAC, SURFLANT, MDA, NSWC, and others to recommend solutions to close these gaps.

Other key successes included embedding WTIs into PEO IWS to engage with industry in developing technology, thereby improving return on investment (ROI) to the Fleet by immersing the warrior in the developer's nominal processes. Additionally, Mine Countermeasures Technical Division's (MCMTD) efforts creating and maintaining capability introduction roadmaps for the LCS MCM Mission Package help monitor the integration of disparate systems through development and initial operational capability.

SMWDC aims to build on the foundation established while advancing Competitive Edge 2.0, through increased WTI production for the Surface Force to meet the growing demand for WTI support on ships, Warfare Commander staffs, and in codified WTI production tours. SAWS raised its annual production goal to 135 WTIs and is on track to produce 156

*Integrated Air and Missile Defense Warfare Tactics Instructor gives training on Drone Restricted Access using Known Electronic Warfare (DRAKE) operations to counter UAS attacks on the bridge wing of the Arleigh Burke-class guided-missile destroyer USS Stout (DDG 55).*

## LOE 4 Narrative *cont.*

WTIs in CY24. SMWDC commits to working with PERS 41 in expanding WTI production and placement on DESRON, PHIBRON, and LCSRON staffs. DESRON and PHIBRON staffs will have more time for warfighting preparation as SURFGUs fully mature through CY25. Additionally, SMWDC will continue to expand their Warfare Commander COIs for more warfighting capability across these critical tactical staff elements. Finally, SMWDC will continue to expand coordination across all Warfare Development Centers (WDC) to increase WTI community capacity (MISR, IW WTIs/SMEs) through shared lessons learned and best practices, enabling success in the Joint fight.

In follow-on years, SMWDC will conduct roadshows to Numbered Fleet concentration areas, educating operational staff and shipboard leaders about the iterative SURFRG process, its strength residing in collecting inputs straight from warfighters and operators while tying in our industry partners to develop future warfighting capabilities. SMWDC will further advance development of new CONOPS focusing on Space Domain Awareness. SWTD will continue providing technical solutions to tactical problems for the future fight through collaboration with SYSCOMs and research laboratories providing warfighter-evaluated analysis. These results and TTP updates based on real-world events and fleet requests for analysis/information provide recommendations for combat system integration of new capabilities across all assigned mission areas. Similarly, MCMTD will continue refining the LCS MCM Mission Package and developing capabilities under OPNAV N95's Mine Warfare Strategy LOE as the OCR for MCM Next, an advanced multi-year iterative endeavor resulting in the informed generation of requirements documents, the development of suitable technologies, the fielding of mature and operationally complementary systems, and the resourcing of sufficient platforms/systems in adequate numbers, all the way through fleet introduction of mature capabilities.

Finally, the expansion of Special Access Program (SAP) resources is a key enabler of the future fight. With support from CNSP and OPNAV N96, SMWDC will complete building renovations and establish an interim SAP-F facility in early FY27 and plans to establish a fully operational Controlled Training Facility (CTF) by 2033. This enables supporting surface and information warfare training at the highest levels with the most cross-domain integration possible.

SMWDC's efforts under both The Competitive Edge and this evolving 2.0 framework underscore its commitment in preparing the Navy for future conflicts. Through these efforts, SMWDC is advancing the development of clear and innovative operational concepts to increase the lethality and tactical proficiency of the fleet.




# LOE 5: Strengthen the Foundation for the Future Force

**CE 2.0 LOE 5**
**LOE Owner: OPNAV N95/N96**
**In Support: CNIC, USFFC, CPF, NAVAIR, NAVSEA, CNSP, CNSL, NAVIFOR, NAVSUP, DWO, CNRF, OPNAV N4, OPNAV N095, OPNAV N1, PEO SHIPS, PEO USC, PEO IWS, PEO C4I**

1. NLT 31 Mar 2025, OPNAV N95 will define formal requirements for Surface Force operations in contested logistics environments. Requirements working groups will provide a conduit for the SWE to shape concept of operations development, resourcing, capability development, and acquisition. To ensure alignment across multiple stakeholders, the working groups will leverage existing logistics forums such as OPNAV N4 Maritime Sustainment Vector Cross-Functional Teams and CNO's NAVPLAN Implementation Framework working groups to identify gaps and resource solutions that rearm, repair, refuel, resupply, and revive surface forces in contested environments.
2. NLT 1 Jul 2025, Task Force HOPPER will produce a revised charter outlining a new roadmap, accountable officers, and required resources to be signed by Commander Naval Surface Forces, OPNAV N95, N96, PEO IWS, and PEO C4I. This charter will include a roadmap to guide TF HOPPER efforts in digital innovation and artificial intelligence (AI), formally aligning fleet, acquisition, and resource sponsors to field digital capabilities for administrative, maintenance, and warfighting functions NLT 01 Jan 2027.
3. NLT 1 Oct 2025, SEA21 with support of OPNAV N95 and N96 will provide a Surface Ship Sustainment Wholeness Plan. This plan will outline a formal lifecycle sustainment process to evaluate system and platform performance, engage leadership on an annual basis for prioritization of surface ship sustainment issues, and inform yearly POM requirements, starting with partial implementation by 1 Nov 2025 and full implementation by 1 Nov 2026.
4. NLT 1 Jul 2025, Commander, Surface Development Group ONE (CSDG 1) will develop a Surface Navy strategy and implementation roadmap to integrate unmanned systems into hybrid manned/unmanned task groups ready for deployment IAW the Global Force Management Plan, by the end of FY26.

## LOE 5 Narrative

As the domains of warfare expand, so must our lexicon. In the original Competitive Edge, LOE 5 focused on establishing Infrastructure to support the future force. In Competitive Edge 2.0, we grow our effort to set the foundation of the future force. With this view, we focus on actions, policies, and processes we can enact now to build the footing from which the future force will launch. This effort will ensure our ships and platforms can operate continuously in contested environments, leverage advances in digital innovation like artificial intelligence and machine learning (AI/ML), sustain our ships throughout planned service life at best cost, and integrate the robust capabilities that hybrid manned-unmanned task groups can provide.

In Competitive Edge, we assessed the Navy's current repair and rearm gaps and capabilities in the high-end fight and built significant momentum in both. The surface force secured funding for additional Expeditionary Reload Company (ERC) capacity, T-AKE Vertical Launching System (VLS) reload equipment, and development of new VLS reload technologies. Additionally, the operational and maintenance teams approved a Forward Maintenance and Repair Support Plan and established methodology for executing forward-deployed repair efforts from the Ship Wartime Repair and Maintenance (SWaRM) concept and Wartime Acquisition Scalable Plan (WASP). In Competitive Edge 2.0, we expand our field of view to assess and develop our ability to conduct the "Five R's": Repair, Rearm, Refuel, Revive, and Resupply. With this broadened lens, we will continue to conduct gap analysis, develop requirements, and identify material and non-material solutions that are prioritized and aligned to the CNO's 2027 North Star. Progress will be assessed by the development of validated requirements, advocacy and resourcing for these requirements, and delivery of fleet capability.

The next war at sea will be decided by the force that can target enemy forces faster than its adversary – this will be a digital process. Accordingly, the Surface Force must develop and deploy kill-chain-enabling digital technologies faster than our adversaries change tactics. Since October 2021, Task Force (TF) HOPPER has integrated into the CNO's NAVPLAN Implementation Framework (NIF), established data nodes and governance, and identified initial workforce needs. TF HOPPER also deployed the first-ever AI large language model on a surface warship, developed by uniformed and civilian government personnel. TF HOPPER will continue to expand

*The Ticonderoga-class guided-missile cruiser USS Chosin (CG 65) steams alongside the Lewis and Clark-class dry cargo ship USNS Washington Chambers (T-AKE 11) during an at-sea demonstration of the Transferrable Reload At-sea Method (TRAM) while underway in the Pacific Ocean.*

## LOE 5 Narrative *Cont.*

the capabilities of our active and reserve forces to develop software at the speed of ingenuity through the establishment of the Surface Force Software Factory. TF HOPPER will align these activities via a surface force digital strategy.

To ensure the future force meets operational availability requirements, we must take a hard look at how we sustain our ships so they maintain design capability through their expected service life and beyond. Strong focus on depot maintenance has reduced deferred work, reduced delayed completion, and improved overall material condition. However, our reliance on costly modernization and depot maintenance has led to decreased operational availability, growing maintenance costs and schedules, and increased risk to meeting designed service life. Moving forward, we will establish a sustainment process that prioritizes investment in the full life cycle product support of our surface fleet, ensuring the largest, most capable force at best cost. This process will include a comprehensive resourcing framework that encompasses depot maintenance, capability modernization, and other essential integrated product support elements. We will develop and execute sustainment plans informed by past lessons, that leverage partnership with industry, and that prioritize the most impactful sustainment levers to enhance platform reliability and longevity.

Rapidly maturing technologies that make USVs increasingly capable provide the Navy a way to put more players on the field. In 2024 the CNO reaffirmed the Navy's goal of a larger future force that includes hundreds of USVs. We have learned from operating and deploying prototype vessels like Overlord and Seahawk, and will continue to grow and develop TTPs to generate deploying strike groups with fully integrated unmanned capabilities. We will develop the full range of material and non-material considerations across the DOTMLPF-P paradigm to ensure these vessels and the Sailors that sustain them are fully supported, resourced, and integrated. We will provide the tools and talent these strike groups will need to achieve global presence and combat lethality.

The challenges that LOE 5 will explore are key to transitioning the current force into the future. Laying the foundation now will benefit the Joint Force in the near-term but more importantly will ensure future forces serve the needs of the Navy and the nation in operations and against threats beyond the horizon.


*The Freedom-class littoral combat ship USS Indianapolis (LCS 17) sails with two T-38 Devil Ray unmanned surface vessels (USV) and an Arabian Fox MAST-13 USV, all attached to U.S. Naval Forces Central Command's (NAVCENT) Task Force 59.*

# Appendix

**COMPETITIVE EDGE (CE) 2.0**
**SURFACE WARFARE ENTERPRISE IMPLEMENTATION**

1. Surface Warfare: The Competitive Edge (CE) 2.0 directs action along five lines of effort (LOE). These LOEs contain highly complex, integrated tasks crossing multiple stakeholder organizations and echelons with key decision points that are all crucial to achieving an 80% Combat Surge Ready Surface Force by January 2027. Under the Fleet Readiness Enterprise construct established by the CNO, the Surface Warfare Enterprise (SWE) includes all commands, organizations, and readiness teams/forums across all echelons that have a stake in and contribute to the Surface Force, serving as the single integrated voice of the Surface Warfare community in pursuit of both current and future readiness goals. Therefore, the SWE and associated decision forums will be the primary vehicle to prioritize and align efforts and resources towards established CE LOEs and their associated tasks. Where appropriate, we will leverage other established decision forums, such as the Fleet Readiness Council, to address barriers, accelerate decision-making, and eliminate redundancy.
2. In execution, the success of the CE 2.0 LOEs will heavily rely on the supported/supporting relationships outlined in this document. The LOE tasks shall be planned and executed by the LOE Owners with supporting commands and organizations as designated in the Competitive Edge 2.0 document. The existing SWE governance structure and battle rhythm will be the means through which LOE Owners and Task Leads update the enterprise on the status of their efforts throughout the life cycle of CE 2.0.

   a. Each LOE will designate an LOE Manager for coordination and execution of LOE tasks and actions. LOE Managers will organize LOE Working Groups (WG) comprised of representatives of the supporting organizations identified in CE 2.0.
   b. LOE WGs will report the status of their respective tasks, action items, and overall LOE health through the SWE Council of Captains and Advisory Board as scheduled and designated by the SWE Executive Agent (EA).
   c. Semi-annual SWE decision-making forums, including Executive Committee (EXCOMM), Sustainment Summit, Maintenance and Modernization Summit, and Surface Master Plan are the primary means for formal progress reviews, barrier removal, and decision-making with respect to all CE LOEs and tasks.
   d. Our industry teammates are critical enablers to achieving our CE 2.0 goals, and we will continue to incorporate industry input, feedback, and innovation into our SWE processes.

3. We must be deliberate, but also take action with a sense of urgency commensurate with the necessity to ensure our Surface Force can fight and win over the next decade and beyond. Let's get to work.

# Acronyms and Abbreviations

| | |
|---|---|
| ADCON | Administrative Control |
| AEI | Advanced Engineering Instructor |
| AI/ML | Artificial Intelligence/Machine Learning |
| AMDC | Air and Missile Defense Commander |
| AMDR | Air and Missile Defense Radar |
| ASBM | Anti-Ship Ballistic Missile |
| ASCM | Anti-Ship Cruise Missile |
| BALTOPS | Baltic Operations |
| BDOC | Basic Division Officer Course |
| BMD | Ballistic Missile Defense |
| BP | Basic Phase |
| C5ISRT | Command, Control, Computing, Communications, Cyber, Intelligence Surveillance, Reconnaissance, and Targeting |
| CG | Guided Missile Cruiser |
| CE | Competitive Edge |
| C-FIT | Capability Fleet Introduction Team |
| C-UAS | Counter-Unmanned Aircraft Systems |
| CHC | Chaplain Corps |
| CNAF | Commander, Naval Air Forces |
| CNIC | Commander, Navy Installations Command |
| CNO | Chief of Naval Operations |
| CNPC | Commander, Navy Personnel Command |
| CNRF | Commander, Navy Reserve Force |
| CNSF | Commander, Naval Surface Forces |
| CNSL | Commander, Naval Surface Force, Atlantic |
| CNSP | Commander, Naval Surface Force, U.S. Pacific Fleet |
| COI | Course of Instruction |
| CONOPS | Concept of Operations |
| CONUS | Continental United States |
| COSAL | Coordinated Shipboard Allowance List |
| CPF | Commander, U.S. Pacific Fleet |
| CSDS | Commander, Surface Development Squadron |
| CSG | Carrier Strike Group |
| CSR | Combat Surge Ready |
| CSRBOG | Combat Surge Ready Breakout Group |
| CSTB | Combat System Test Bed |
| CTS | Controlled Training Facility |
| DASN | Deputy Assistant Secretary of the Navy |
| DCO | Disruptive Capabilities Office |
| DDG | Guided Missile Destroyer |
| DDG(X) | Next Generation Guided Missile Destroyer |
| DE | Directed Energy |
| DESRON | Destroyer Squadron |
| DH | Department Head |
| DOTMLPF-P | Doctrine, Organization, Training, Materiel, Leadership and Education, Personnel, Facilities, and Policy |
| DWO | Digital Warfare Office |
| EA | Executive Agent |
| EASR | Enterprise Air Surveillance Radar |
| ELD | Enlisted Leadership Development |
| ERC | Expeditionary Reload Company |
| EXCOMM | Executive Committee |
| FFG | Guided Missile Frigate |
| FO | Flag Officer |
| FONOP | Freedom of Navigation Operation |
| FOS | Family of Systems |
| GRGB | Get Real, Get Better |
| HADR | Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief |
| HPM | Hypersonic Missile |
| ISIC | Immediate Superior in Command |
| IW | Information Warfare |
| LCS | Littoral Combat Ship |
| LCSRON | Littoral Combat Ship Squadron |
| LOE | Line(s) of Effort |
| LHD | Landing Helicopter, Dock |
| LPD | Landing Platform, Dock |
| LSD | Landing Ship, Dock |
| LVC | Live Virtual Constructive |
| MCM | Mine Countermeasures |
| MCMTD | Mine Countermeasures Technical Division |
| MDA | Missile Defense Agency |
| MEU | Marine Expeditionary Unit |
| MISR | Maritime Intelligence Surveillance and Reconnaissance |
| MSA | Mariner Skills Assessment |
| MST | Maritime Strike Tomahawk |
| MSTC | Mariner Skills Training Center |
| NATO | North Atlantic Treaty Organization |
| NAVPLAN | Navigation Plan |
| NAVAIR | Naval Air Systems Command |
| NAVCENT | U.S. Naval Forces Central |
| NAVFAC | Naval Facilities Engineering Systems Command |
| NAVIFOR | Naval Information Forces |
| NAVPERS | Naval Personnel Command |
| NAVSEA | Naval Sea Systems Command |
| NAVSUP | Naval Supply Systems Command |
| NAVWAR | Naval Information Warfare Systems Command |
| NGSSR | Next Generation Surface Search Radar |
| NIF | Navigation Plan Implementation Framework |

# Acronyms and Abbreviations

| | |
|---|---|
| NMC | Not Mission Capable |
| NSS | Naval Sustainment System |
| NSWC | Naval Surface Warfare Center |
| NWDC | Navy Warfare Development Center |
| OCR | Office of Coordinating Responsibility |
| OFRP | Optimized Fleet Response Plan |
| OPNAV | Office of the Chief of Naval Operations |
| P2P | Performance to Plan |
| PAC-3 MSE | Patriot Advanced Capability-3 Missile Segment Enhancement |
| PEO C4I | Program Executive Office Command, Control, Communications, Computers, and Intelligence |
| PEO IWS | Program Executive Office Integrated Warfare Systems |
| PEO USC | Program Executive Office Unmanned and Small Combatants |
| PESTONI | Personnel, Equipment, Supply, Training, Ordnance, Networks, and Infrastructure |
| PHIBRON | Amphibious Squadron |
| PMS | Program/Project Manager, Sea |
| POAM | Plan of Action and Milestones |
| POM | Program Objective Memorandum |
| PRC | People's Republic of China |
| P-XO | Prospective Executive Officer |
| RC2SEA | Reserve Component to Sea |
| RMC | Regional Maintenance Center |
| RMT | Religious Ministry Team |
| ROC | Readiness Operations Center |
| ROI | Return on Investment |
| RRL | Ready Relevant Learning |
| SAG | Surface Analytics Group |
| SAP | Special Access Programs |
| SAPF | Special Access Programs Facility |
| SAWS | Surface Advanced Warfighting School |
| SCIF | Sensitive Compartmented Information Facility |
| SCSTC | Surface Combat Systems Training Command |
| SDG | Surface Development Group |
| SES | Senior Executive Service |
| SEWIP | Surface Electronic Warfare Improvement Program |
| SFTRM | Surface Force Training and Readiness Manual |
| SLBM | Submarine-Launched Ballistic Missile |
| SM | Standard Missile |
| SME | Subject Matter Expert |
| SMWDC | Surface and Mine Warfighting Developmen Center |
| SSBN | Ballistic Missile Submarine |
| SSDS | Ship Self Defense System |
| SSGN | Guided Missile Submarine |
| SSN | Attack Submarine |
| STAVE | Surface Training Advanced Virtual Environment |
| SURFDEVGRU | Surface Development Group |
| SURFGRU | Surface Readiness Group |
| SURFMEX | Surface Manning Experience |
| SURFRG | Surface Requirements Group |
| SWaRM | Ship Wartime Repair and Maintenance |
| SWATT | Surface Warfare Advanced Tactical Training |
| SWCLA | Surface Warfare Command Leadership Assessment |
| SWCTC | Surface Warfare Combat Training Continuum |
| SWE | Surface Warfare Enterprise |
| SWSC | Surface Warfare Schools Command |
| SWTD | Surface Warfare Technical Division |
| SWUP | Software Upgrade |
| T-AKE | Dry Cargo/Ammunition Ship |
| TAO | Tactical Action Officer |
| TF | Task Force |
| TRAM | Transferable Reload At-sea Method |
| TTP | Tactics, Techniques, and Procedures |
| TYCOM | Type Commander |
| USFFC | United States Fleet Forces Command |
| USV | Unmanned Surface Vessel |
| USW | Undersea Warfare |
| VLS | Vertical Launching System |
| VTE | Virtual Test Environment |
| WASP | Wartime Acquisition Scalable Plan |
| WDC | Warfare Development Center |
| WG | Working Group |
| WTI | Warfare Tactics Instructor |

*A Warfare Tactics Instructor (WTI) works with the Combat Systems Coordinator (CSC) in the Combat Information Center onboard the USS Sterett (DDG 104) during an air warfare exercise as part of Surface Warfare Advanced Tactical Training (SWATT).*

*A Standard Missile-6 (SM-6) Dual II with Software Upgrade (SWUP) is launched from the USS Preble (DDG 88) off the coast of the Pacific Missile Range Facility in Kauai, Hawaii as part of Flight Test Aegis Weapon System-32 (FTM-32).*

***Surface Warriors,***

***You are very busy doing your jobs, and I want you to know that you are doing those jobs superbly. Bottom line – YOU are our Competitive Edge and the key to our warfighting advantage! The Surface Force's performance over the past year is a credit to all of your hard work, and the work of those who support you. CE 2.0 should reassure you that we have a plan and will hold ourselves accountable for its execution. The document is written primarily for senior men and women in the Navy whose organizations are either wholly or partially devoted to Surface Force readiness. Coordinating and integrating these organizations and their efforts is MY job, and I take this job very seriously.***

***In conversations I've had over the last year on the deckplates, with wardrooms, and CPO messes, I noticed that while there was awareness of the consequences of the readiness challenges the Force faced, there was a lack of awareness of what was being done above the unit level to address those problems. This deficit contributed to frustration, uncertainty, and worst of all, misinformation. My hope is that by spending time gaining an understanding of efforts underway across the Surface Warfare Enterprise (SWE) to address those challenges, Officers, Chiefs, and Sailors will be more willing to speak up and help drive positive change. In other words, if you see in this document something leadership is working on that you have an idea to improve, or if there is something we are missing, I want to hear it.***

***The challenge we face as a Surface Force is that we live in an increasingly unstable world, while we operate a Force that was largely planned and built during an unquestioned period of American dominance and relative peace. This dominance permitted the physical size of the Force to decline, even as it integrated numerous capability upgrades. We assumed additional risk in the Surface Force with fewer ships, deferred repairs, bought fewer spare parts, and did not prioritize equipment redundancy as a necessity for combat effectiveness. We normalized a standard that was arguably appropriate in 2005, but it is no longer appropriate in 2025. ADM Franchetti is clear that we must put "More Ready Players on the Field", and our contribution to this direction is to increase readiness across the board.***

***In addressing these challenges, we retain the five Lines of Effort set out three years ago. Please review them on the back cover and post these in your spaces. I urge you to read the extended discussion of each LOE in the document and think how you can contribute to these lines of effort. I need you to focus on making sure your leadership is aware of the personal and professional challenges you face, the true material condition of your equipment, and the recommendations you have to improve our force! My job is to lead the Surface Warfare Enterprise to identify Force level problems and the resources to solve them. Transparency up and down the chain of command is the minimum condition necessary to achieve Force readiness at the levels our security requirements demand. I am counting on you, and you can count on me.***

***VADM Brendan McLane***

# Generating Combat Forces