



Another example of a mission ready ship because of a U.S. Navy Port Engineer

USS Essex ARG, 13th MEU Begin Integrated training



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From Essex Amphibious Ready Group Public Affairs

PACIFIC OCEAN (NNS) -- Sailors from Essex Amphibious Ready Group (ARG) and Marines assigned to 13th Marine Expeditionary Unit (MEU) commenced the ARG/MEU exercise (ARGMEUEX) off the coast of California, April 24.

ARGMEUEX is a Carrier Strike Group (CSG) 15 and 1st Marine Expeditionary Force, Expeditionary Operations Training Group-led exercise that provides critical training and feedback prior to the deployment certifying event, Composite Training Unit Exercise (COMPTUEX).



Essex ARG is command by Capt. Gerald Olin of Amphibious Squadron (PHIBRON) 1, and comprises amphibious assault ship USS Essex (LHD 2), amphibious transport dock USS Anchorage (LPD 23) and amphibious dock landing ship USS Rushmore (LSD 47). Embarked commands include "Blackjacks" of Helicopter Sea Combat Squadron (HSC) 21, Assault Craft Unit 5, Naval Beach Group 1, Beachmaster Unit 1, Fleet Surgical Team 3 and Tactical Air Control Squadron 11.

13th MEU is commanded by Col. Chandler Nelms and consists of the Command Element; the Aviation Combat Element, Marine Medium Tiltrotor Squadron 166 (Reinforced) and Marine Fighter Attack Squadron (VMFA) 211; the Ground Combat Element, Battalion Landing Team 3/1 (Reinforced); and the Logistics Combat Element, Combat Logistics Battalion 13.

"The ARGMEUEX training environment is designed to train the Essex ARG and 13th MEU Navy-Marine Corps team to think, plan and conduct tactical operations prior to the final deployment certifying event, COMPTUEX," said Rear Adm. Bill Byrne, CSG 15's commander.

ARGMEUEX provides fully integrated Navy-Marine Corps training across the Essex ARG/13th MEU by using training scenarios based on real-world operating events that span joint mission sets. This exercise follows the PHIBRON-MEU integration (PMINT) exercise, which concluded earlier this month.



An AV-8B Harrier, prepares to take-off aboard USS *Essex* during Amphibious Squadron/Marine Expeditionary Unit Integration Training

"During our last at-sea training evolution we, as a Navy and Marine Corps team, integrated closely to refine how we conduct operations in a maritime environment," said Nelms. "During ARGMEUEX we'll build on that foundation, executing more complex, realistic ship-to-shore training."

Training evolutions include exercises in maritime interdiction operations, anti-piracy operations, close-air support, air assaults, reconnaissance and amphibious operations.

"This underway time serves as a critical learning opportunity for the Sailors and Marines aboard Essex, Anchorage and Rushmore leading up to deployment," said Olin. "The rapid pace of ARGMEUEX flexes our combined abilities across the three ships and will ultimately maximize our deployment lethality."

The Essex ARG/13th MEU team is scheduled to deploy later this year. Upon completion of ARGMEUEX, they will move onto the next phase in the deployment certification process, COMPTUEX.

Webmaster's Note:

She is the fifth ship named for Essex County, Massachusetts.