The U.S. Navy Key Strategic Issues List (KSIL) is an informative listing of priority research topics for the Navy's community of strategists. This list should inform graduate students, and Federal Executive and National Security Fellows as they craft research projects.

U.S. Navy Key Strategic Issues List

(KSIL)

Director, Strategy and Policy Division (OPNAV N51)

Academic Year 2014-2015

Updated 24 July 2014

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U.S. NAVY

KEY STRATEGIC ISSUES LIST (KSIL)

ACADEMIC YEAR 2014-2015

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FOREWORD

The Key Strategic Issues List (KSIL) consolidates Navy research topics for graduate school students, fellows in the national security studies disciplines (national security studies, strategic studies, international relations, etc.), and other researchers who are interested in developing original strategic papers for Navy leadership.

The Director, Strategy and Policy Division (OPNAV N51) leads collaboration with the Naval War College (NWC), the Naval Postgraduate School (NPS), and the Fleet to collect strategic topics and publish the KSIL on an annual basis. This document, informed by existing maritime and defense strategies, roadmaps and concepts is intended to equip students and fellows to write papers of relevance and import that may impact OPNAV or Fleet decision-making, concept development, and strategic choices.

In particular, officers in the following Navy-funded programs are expected to reference this list:

- Federal Executive Fellowship (FEF)
- Politico-Military Master's degree program
- Arthur S. Moreau Post-Master's Study in International Relations
- Naval War College (Advanced Studies in Naval Strategy program only)
- Naval Postgraduate School (Strategic Studies program only)
- Rhodes Scholarship (national security affairs programs only)
- Olmsted Scholarship (national security affairs programs only)
- Fulbright Scholarship (national security affairs programs only)
- Voluntary Graduate Education Program (national security affairs programs only)
- Graduate Education Program (national security affairs programs only)

Having implemented two new, world-class strategy programs at NWC and the NPS, it is imperative that the Naval Strategy community integrate the work of students and fellows into Navy's strategic decision-making processes. The KSIL provides a method for orchestrating these officers' efforts, and using their strategic thought and academic rigor to greater effect. OPNAV N51 will collect the best and most relevant papers from each of the programs and forward them to cognizant process owners along with policy recommendations at the end of the academic year.

All officers are encouraged to contribute to the strategic dialogue by generating and submitting strategic issues and research papers to N51 for consideration (via the N515 strategy web page at https://www.milsuite.mil/book/groups/naval-strat).

U.S. Navy Title 10 Strategy

Maritime Strategy: Evolving Roles and Missions

The January 2012 release of *Sustaining US Global Leadership: Priorities for 21st Century Defense (DSG)*, and the subsequent Strategic Choices and Management Review (SCMR) completed in July 2013, presented major themes that inform development of Navy and maritime strategy in the coming decades.

> *"...the Joint Force will need to recalibrate its capabilities and make selective additional investments…."*
>   *- Sustaining US Global Leadership: Priorities for 21st Century Defense (DSG)*

Maritime Role in U.S. "Grand Strategy"

"The President's defense strategy, with its focus on the Pacific, particularly the western Pacific, the Arabian Gulf and on building partnerships, is a very maritime-centric strategy. In order to execute that strategy, you're going to have to keep a great Navy and a great Marine Corps to execute it worldwide, and I think we're on track to do that."
-       Secretary of the Navy, Ray Mabus (December, 2013)

Question: How does the new national-level guidance change the maritime component of the U.S. defense strategy? What changes might Navy have to make to align with this guidance?

Question: What are the right themes and messages for informing policy makers and the American public on Navy's role within the National Security Strategy? What are some political dynamics and strategic advantages/disadvantages unique to the Navy's roles in implementing the ten "Primary Missions of the U.S. Armed Forces," as outlined in the 2012 DSG?

Safeguarding the "Global System" and Strategic Commons

"The Department must work to secure strategic access to key regions, lines of communication and the 'global commons' of international waters, airspace, space and cyberspace. Defense activities must help establish security conditions favorable to the United States and its partners while working to expand the community of like-minded nations. The Department will also work to strengthen alliances and partnerships by helping other nations increase their ability to defend themselves and protect common security interests."
-       National Defense Strategy (2004)

Question: How do the Sea Services ensure stability of the "global commons?" How should the Sea Services employ to ensure effective presence and mitigation of crises? Will declining U.S. defense budgets impact our ability to influence activities in the global commons?

Question: What is the proper burden sharing for global partners in the protection of SLOCs? Does the U.S. currently bear too much of the burden, and if so, how do we shift some of the burden to international partners? What capability and/or capacity gaps do our security partners have that would impede their ability to participate in a viable way (to relieve the U.S. of some of the global security burden)?

Question: To what extent will the U.S. security paradigm in the global commons and international trading community be challenged by alternative approaches (i.e. expansion of Chinese territorial claims, Chinese direct investment in developing nations, security challenges posed by non-nation-state actors)? How should U.S. foreign policy respond to these challenges?

Question: Absent the U.S. Navy, how would the environment of the global system change? What is the difference between a security paradigm supported by the U.S. and a security paradigm without that support (or significantly less support)? Is this quantifiable? Is the U.S. investment worth the benefit (the perceived difference between the two security paradigms)?

Question: Given that access in the SLOCs has not been substantially challenged since the end of World War II, does the Navy possess the appropriate fleet to provide/augment simultaneous presence in SLOCs?

Preventing and Prosecuting War Strategies' Ends and Ways

"We believe that ***preventing wars is as important as winning wars***. There is a tension, however, between the requirements for continued peacetime engagement and maintaining proficiency in the critical skills necessary to fighting and winning in combat. Maritime forces must contribute to winning wars decisively while enhancing our ability to prevent war, win the long struggle against terrorist networks, positively influence events, and ease the impact of disasters."
- *Cooperative Strategy for 21st Century Seapower (CS21)*

Question: How can Navy assess its ability to prevent war? To what extent does a forward deployed, engaged Navy prevent war? What are the historical perspectives that indicate the effectiveness of war prevention, and are those examples applicable for today's global security environment?

Question: Are the capabilities and force structure that Navy employs for prosecuting warfare suited to "preventing war" as well?

Question: Do the U.S. Sea Services have the right mix of capabilities to prevent and contain wars? Are Navy and Marine Corps operating and employment concepts effective in this role? What alternative operating and employment methods might be utilized to increase our effectiveness at preventing war?

Tailoring Global Presence Based on Threat and Need

"Although our forces can surge when necessary to respond to crises, trust and cooperation cannot be surged."

<div align="right">

- Cooperative Strategy for 21st Century Seapower (CS21)
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Question: How will allies and partners respond to the U.S. rebalance to the Asia-Pacific? In areas where the U.S. is decreasing capacity, how will partners be affected? What are the "lost-opportunity costs" of decreased capacity in those areas?

Question: In what innovative ways can U.S. Navy and Marine Corps personnel develop long-term professional and personal relationships with our partners and allies, as well as our potential competitors? What is the benefit of these relationships? Do the traditional career paths of Sailors and Marines enable our personnel to form and maintain these relationships, or are changes to the traditional paths required?

Question: Does our fleet composition (current and projected) provide the desired balance between the capability to wage war and the capacity for providing presence and assurance?

Roles and Missions for the U.S. Navy in Strategic Deterrence

"As long as nuclear weapons remain in existence, the United States will maintain a safe, secure, and effective arsenal. We will field nuclear forces that can under any circumstances confront an adversary with the prospect of unacceptable damage, both to deter potential adversaries and to assure U.S. allies and other security partners that they can count on America's security commitments. It is possible that our deterrence goals can be achieved with a smaller nuclear force, which would reduce the number of nuclear weapons in our inventory as well as their role in U.S. national security strategy."

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- Sustaining US Global Leadership: Priorities for 21st Century Defense (DSG)
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"U.S. allies and partners are on the front lines of a changing global security environment. Some are enjoying unprecedented security and accordingly seed an acceleration of efforts to reduce reliance on nuclear deterrence. Others face new challenges to their security and look to the United States for continued partnership in safeguarding their interests. Among their neighbors are nuclear proliferators, potential smugglers of weapons of mass destruction (WMD), and weak and failing states. Some also feel the pressures of neighboring major powers asserting stronger regional roles, in some cases by nuclear means."

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- DoD Nuclear Posture Review Report (April 2010)
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Question: What is the role of U.S. nuclear deterrence in today's global security environment? How necessary and effective is our nuclear arsenal in deterring today's threats? How does this

assessment (necessity and effectiveness) compare with our deterrence efforts during the Cold War?

Question: How effectively does each of the three components of the "nuclear triad" support U.S. nuclear deterrence strategy? Are all three components still necessary? What has changed to support this assessment?

Question: Define Navy's roles in the current nuclear deterrence paradigm. Can strategic deterrence be effective against non-state actors? If so, what are the methods for creating that effective deterrent? Is the specter of conventional warfare between nuclear-armed states realistic? If so, does the nuclear deterrent limit the intensity of conventional warfare to a level past which the competing belligerents will not cross?

Question: Is the U.S. investment in nuclear deterrence in alignment with the benefits? Have we taken a nuclear "peace dividend" since the end of the Cold War? How have investments in our nuclear capability in the last twenty years impacted the nuclear force of the future? Are the desired nuclear force levels correct (are the force levels and capabilities aligned to the threat?) and is the required level of investment sustainable?

Question: Is there a theoretical level of nuclear capability the U.S. must maintain to both deter potential adversaries and assure allies? Does the Asia-Pacific rebalance, with its attendant decrement of conventional forces, change the calculus for nuclear deterrence in Europe and west-Asia and challenge our European allies' level of assurance?

Making Partnerships Last – Building Trust and Relationships

"Although our forces can surge when necessary to respond to crises, trust and cooperation cannot be surged."

- Cooperative Strategy for 21st Century Seapower (CS21)

Question: How will allies and partners respond to efforts at maintaining and expanding trust amid U.S. defense budget constriction and rebalance to the Asia-Pacific (in both the Asia-Pacific theater and other theaters of operation)? What are the opportunity costs in terms of partner relationships and capabilities?

Question: Do the Sea Services employ the correct type and amount of engagement with partner nations? What are the individual Service and combined (Navy/Marine Corps/Coast Guard) processes for collecting and prioritizing partner nation engagements?

Question: The U.S. has been reticent to divest capabilities, even when those capabilities are resident in partner nation militaries. Given the potential that partner nations may have disparate national security objectives in certain circumstances, what are the specific capabilities that the

U.S. can trust solely to our security partners? What, and how substantial are the risks of aligning with an ally to provide the sole U.S. capability? Do the benefits outweigh the risks?

Direction of Future Maritime Strategy

"The Sea Services commit to continuing the process of collaborative strategy implementation in the years ahead. United States seapower is a force for good, protecting this Nation's vital interests even as it joins with others to promote security and prosperity across the globe.
                                                 - Cooperative Strategy for 21st Century Seapower (CS21)

Question: What changes and adaptations in future maritime strategy are required? How will budget realities, and political and socio-cultural changes since CS-21, impact collaborative maritime strategy among the Sea Services (USN, USMC, USCG)?

Question: Which factors (financial, technological, political, economic, geo-political, or socio-cultural) will most influence future maritime strategy? How might these factors combine to shape future maritime strategic thinking of a "Global Force for Good"?

Future Operational Environment and Impacts on Navy

The Joint Force will accomplish missions, "in a security environment characterized by several persistent trends: the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, the rise of modern competitor states, violent extremism, regional instability, transnational criminal activity, and competition for resources. Armed conflicts will be inevitable in such an environment—as will be opportunities for cooperation and peaceful competition."
- *Capstone Concept for Joint Operations: Joint Force 2020 (CCJO, Sep 2012)*

Strategic Approaches for an Evolving Threat Environment

Question: Give specific examples of "evolving" threats that face the U.S. Navy, and suggest some strategic approaches that would better facilitate operations in this diverse environment.

Question: How will the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction influence Navy strategy in the next decade? Will "low end" armed conflicts or contingencies emerge as a larger focus area for maritime strategy, or are they better suited to land based forces?

State and Non-State Actors Contesting the Maritime Battlespace and Littorals

"The maritime domain similarly provides irregular actors with operating space and the ability to conduct the illicit flow of information, weapons, money, technicians, and cadres upon which much of their income and effectiveness relies. As such they are able to use the maritime environment to exploit, disrupt, or destabilize regions or governments, and to affect the will of civilian populations through insurgency, terrorism, crime, and the proliferation of radical ideologies."
- *U.S. Navy's Vision for Confronting Irregular Challenges (CIC, Jan 2010)*

Question: What methods will state and/or non-state actors use to contest the maritime battlespace and littorals? What approaches should Navy employ to mitigate the threat posed by these actors?

Question: Does Navy adequately assess and plan for "irregular" threats? Is Navy's force structure representative of threat assessments, vis-à-vis irregular conflict? Does Navy's "high-low mix" adequately balance the need for steady-state presence, with the requirement for high-end capabilities?

Navy Roles and Missions in the Arctic

"As an Arctic nation, the United States must be proactive and disciplined in addressing changing regional conditions and in developing adaptive strategies to protect its interests. An undisciplined approach to exploring new opportunities in this frontier could result in significant harm to the region, to our national security interests, and to the global good."

- *National Strategy for the Arctic Region (May 2013)*

Question: Discuss historical U.S. Navy contributions to Maritime Domain Awareness, environmental disaster response, search and rescue, and security cooperation that shape future roles and missions in the Arctic.

Question: Should the Nation invest in Arctic enabling capabilities (e.g. command and control, ice-hardened hulls, de-icing, etc.), and in what timeframe? What activities, national interests, or threat scenarios would compel a more substantial U.S. presence in the Arctic? Is resourcing Arctic capabilities consistent with current defense strategic aims and priorities?

Value and Employment of "Brown" and "Green" Water Navy Options

"Wholesale divestment of the capability to conduct any mission would be unwise, based on historical and projected uses of U.S. military forces and our inability to predict the future. Likewise, DoD will manage the force in ways that protect its ability to regenerate capabilities that might be needed to meet future, unforeseen demands…"

-*Sustaining US Global Leadership: Priorities for 21st Century Defense (DSG)*

Question: Navy seems to deemphasize lower end capabilities (i.e. many of the capabilities that are resident in the Navy Expeditionary Combat Command (NECC), as well as small surface vessels) in inter-war periods, and then develop them in times of conflict. Is this a deliberate divestment, or is it driven purely by budget constraints? Are these budget decisions made with the correct calculus?

Question: Is the future security environment different from other interwar periods? Will the U.S. continue to value engagement operations and steady-state presence to the level of commitment exhibited since 2001? If so, will Navy's future force structure (as planned in current budget projections) facilitate the same level of engagement? What level of presence has been divested by virtue of recent cuts to NECC forces?

Question: How easily are "brown" and "green" water capabilities regenerated in time of need? Compared with historical perspectives, how rapidly would Navy be able to reconstitute its littoral capabilities, including Navy's ground forces. Are mine warfare, coastal patrol, riverine, maritime security, explosive ordnance disposal, and civil engineering capabilities more specialized than in prior periods of reconstitution? If so, to what extent would reconstituting

these capabilities be delayed during future build-ups? What impact would projected delays have in our operational execution?

Question: To what extent does Navy factor littoral capabilities into the high-end "anti-access / area-denial" (A2/AD) fight? Is this planning assessment correct, and has it been accurately factored into the design of our future force?

Warfighting Concepts and Doctrine

"…We will also encourage innovation in concepts of operation. Over the past ten years, the United States and its coalition allies and partners have learned hard lessons and applied new operational approaches in the counter terrorism, counterinsurgency, and security force assistance arenas, most often operating in uncontested sea and air environments. Accordingly, similar work needs to be done to ensure the United States, its allies, and partners are capable of operating in A2/AD, cyber, and other contested operating environments."

> -*Sustaining US Global Leadership: Priorities for 21ˢᵗ Century Defense (DSG)*

Air-Sea Battle (ASB) as an Operational Concept

ANTI-ACCESS (A2)	AREA-DENIAL (AD)
Action intended to slow deployment of friendly forces into a theater or cause forces to operate from distances farther from the locus of conflict than they would otherwise prefer. A2 affects *movement* to a theater.	Action intended to impede friendly operations within areas where an adversary cannot or will not prevent access. AD affects *maneuver within* a theater.

"In the most challenging scenarios, the U.S. may be unable to employ forces the way it has in the past: build up combat power in an area, perform detailed rehearsals and integration activities, and then conduct operations when and where desired. By acquiring these advanced A2/AD technologies, potential adversaries are changing the conditions of warfare that the U.S. has become accustomed to in the past half century."

> *- Air-Sea Battle (Service Collaboration to Address A2 & AD Challenges, May 2013)*

Question: Discuss the impact of A2/AD threats on naval strategy. How will Navy's forces and personnel (largely developed prior to A2/AD proliferation) have to adapt to operate in a denied environment (e.g. denied communications, electro-magnetic pulse weapons, etc)?

Question: Examine the geo-political risks and opportunities of ASB. How have other countries reacted to this "concept" and the Navy's role in presenting it?

Question: The US Army, Marine Corps and Special Operations Command have begun exploring the "Strategic Landpower" concept to address the "joint application of military power at the convergence of the land, cyber and 'human domains.' What role(s) will the Navy play in such a construct and where do ASB and "Strategic Landpower" intersect?

The Future of Maritime Domain Awareness (MDA)

"No single nation or agency has the capacity to achieve MDA unilaterally. Achieving MDA requires unprecedented collaboration with international, interagency, industrial, intelligence community, academic, and non-governmental stakeholders. When working in the international arena, Navy will coordinate with appropriate joint and interagency partners to comply with applicable policy, standards, and protocols."

- *2011 Navy Maritime Domain Awareness Concept*

Question: What is the future of MDA? How will technology upgrades like unmanned vehicles (air, surface, and undersea) change how ISR and MDA information will be collected, processed and shared with partners, industry and other elements of the global maritime community?

Question: How will potential adversaries (state and non-state actors) counter current/near term U.S. advantage(s) in MDA?

Alternative Fleet Doctrine and Operating Concepts

"Doctrine guides the employment of forces during operations for the achievement of objectives. Doctrine and Tactics, Techniques and Procedures (TTP) are based on extant capabilities, proven processes, current force structures, and fielded materiel and systems."

- *OPNAVINST 5420.106A Navy Doctrine Development Policy (March, 2013)*

Question: Provide examples of how Navy doctrine and/or TTPs have changed in response to irregular threats and strategic shifts in Navy roles and missions since the release of CS-21 (2007). What future changes might be required to maintain or outpace the threat?

Question: What changes to doctrine and TTPs might enable Navy to more efficiently respond to global shifts in threats (within limited funding resources)?

Question: With Marine Corps having been heavily employed in Iraq and Afghanistan for the last 13 years, what approaches can Navy and Marine Corps take to regain proficiency in expeditionary operations?

Question: Is traditional amphibious doctrine still effective for today's threats? To what extent have Navy and Marine Corps doctrine and TTPs evolved for irregular challenges? What is the vision for amphibious operations in an A2/AD environment? Are alternative operating concepts required for the A2/AD fight? If so, what are alternative proposals?

Concept of Unmanned Naval Operations

"It is time to consider shifting our focus from platforms that rely solely on stealth to also include concepts for operating farther from adversaries using standoff weapons and unmanned systems—or employing electronic-warfare payloads to confuse or jam threat sensors rather than trying to hide from them. We need to move from 'luxury-car' platforms—with their built-in capabilities—toward dependable 'trucks' that can handle a changing payload selection."

- *CNO, Payloads over Platforms: Charting a New Course (Proceedings Magazine - July 2012 Vol. 138/7/1,313)*

Question: What roles and employment methods are envisioned for unmanned vehicles (air, surface, sub-surface) in naval operations? How might the fielding of these platforms affect naval operations and strategy?

Question: Discuss command and control concepts for dealing with the increase in unmanned platforms. Will fleets argue for local control or will the Navy adopt the Air Force model of centralized control at a CONUS location? Which method is more effective for maritime operations? Under what circumstances might different methods of command and control be required? Is a static command and control construct desired, or is a paradigm of shifting control feasible and desired?

Navy Perspectives on Joint Forcible Entry and Joint Operational Access

"The joint force will attempt to shape the operational area in advance of conflict through a variety of security and engagement activities (as described in the Capstone Concept for Joint Operations), such as multinational exercises, access and support agreements, establishment and improvement of overseas bases, prepositioning of supplies, and forward deployment of forces."

- *2012 Joint Operational Access Concept (JOAC)*

Question: With reductions in overseas basing of Army and Air Force units, should the Navy receive additional resources to increase engagement activities and forward deployed naval forces in support of these concepts (Joint Forcible Entry, Joint Operational Access)?

Question: Goldwater Nichols, developed in the depths of the Cold War, mandated "Jointness" across service roles/missions/acquisitions. Is the existing framework still the best approach for aligning the U.S. military to respond to current/future threats? What are the limitations of the law in today's programmatic, budgetary, and operational environments, and what are some suggested changes to the law that would provide greater efficiencies?

Navy-Marine Corps Operating Concepts

Navy and U.S. Marine Corps (USMC) leadership have stressed the need to increase integration between the two services, including holding a regular Naval Board, proposing synchronizing staff functions, and operating together in new ways in the fleet.

Question: How will budget pressures and operational needs shape Navy-Marine Corps Operating Concept? What goals would this Operating Concept achieve? What cultural, institutional, and programmatic changes would be required?

Navy-Coast Guard Operating Concepts

Navy and U.S. Coast Guard (USCG) leadership have stressed the need to increase integration between the two services, and both the CNO and the USCG Commandant signed a policy statement in June 2013 calling for a "National Fleet" concept to improve interoperability between the Navy and USCG.

"Navy ships, Coast Guard cutters coupled with complementary law enforcement detachments (LEDETs), and training teams are ideal instruments of soft power to effect national objectives."
- *2010 Naval Operations Concept (NOC)*

Question: How will budget pressures and operational needs shape the "National Fleet"? What goals would this National Fleet concept achieve? What cultural, institutional, and programmatic changes would be required?

Question: Could increased USN/USCG exchanges (officers/enlisted) help with security cooperation (most world navies exercise more coast guard-like authorities) and with providing proper authorities to interdict at sea illicit activities?

Navy's Strategy Innovation Cycle

Naval officers generally spend most of their careers focused on operational and tactical concerns, with tactics, techniques and procedures dominating the lion share of their intellectual attention. Innovative strategic thought will be critical in future years.

Question: What processes, institutions, and cultural adjustments would instill a more strategic, dynamic, and innovative force? Compare and contrast other services' approaches to strategy development with that of Navy.

Question: Who develops Navy strategy? Discuss the various stakeholders in Navy strategy, and devise a method for coordinating the various perspectives into a coherent strategic approach.

Discuss the roles of think tanks and academic institutions in influencing Navy strategy. How can their perspectives be integrated more closely into Navy's strategy development?

Humanitarian Assistance/Disaster Relief (HA/DR)

A major challenge to U.S. naval forces is how to enhance their ability to conduct HA/DR without degrading their capacity, capability, and proficiency for conducting more traditional naval missions. Given their forward presence, inherent mobility and flexible capabilities, U.S. naval forces are frequently the "force of choice" for such missions. However, the demands of emergent, reactive HA/DR can affect readiness, logistical sustainment, and operational dwell, and often require contingency funding in order to reset those units involved.

Question: What should Navy and USMC roles be in HA/DR and crisis response? What platforms and capabilities are most effective for HA/DR and crisis response? How should forces engaging in these missions be organized?

Navy's Role in Supporting Counter-Terrorism (CT) Efforts

CT missions will continue long after U.S. combat forces pull-out from Afghanistan at the end of 2014. As U.S. national security decision-makers weigh the political and diplomatic implications of devoting land-based forces to CT missions, Navy might be called upon to play a larger role. Asserting influence from sea, including providing a sovereign, U.S. sea base from which to operate, may become the option of choice in CT operations.

Question: What role should Navy and USMC play in current and future CT operations? What training or programmatic issues should Navy address to enable CT missions?

Ballistic Missile Defense Afloat and Ashore

SSBNs serve as the ultimate guarantor of the U.S. assured second-strike capability. They are designed specifically for stealth and the precision delivery of nuclear warheads. As a virtually undetectable and survivable launch platform, SSBNs ensure that the United States will have sufficient nuclear forces to inflict unacceptable consequences on an adversary in response to a nuclear attack.
- *2010 Naval Operations Concept (NOC)*

Question: Is Navy's vision for the SSBN program attainable? What impact will the Ohio Replacement Program (ORP) have on the Navy's surface ship procurement and the overall fleet composition? Does ORP force trade-offs, and are the trade-offs worth the costs?

Question: To what extent will new technologies decrease the SSBN's ability to maintain its stealth? Has this been incorporated as a planning factor into the next generation of submarines?

Question: How will cyber and space warfare technology impact command and control (C2) capability to deliver National Command Authority (NCA) tasking to SSBNs?

The Navy achieves operational efficiencies by stationing or basing assets in forward locations. Ballistic Missile Defense (BMD) stations ashore, like "Aegis Ashore" offer consistent and enduring Aegis capabilities to an entire region. These stations also diminish the requirement for dedicated rotational forces, enabling fleet assets to operate in other areas and conduct missions of need. Likewise, Combatant Commander's demand for BMD capable ships is increasing. In light of downward budget trends, Navy will need to carefully prioritize BMD ship employment.

Question: In addition to existing agreements, with what other countries or partners should the U.S. Navy cooperate to establish Aegis bases ashore?

Question: What are the drivers for a global BMD presence? Provide a list of drivers that prioritizes location, number of ships, and suggested presence to effectively conduct BMD.

Question: Does the Global Force Management (GFM) process accurately reflect demand for BMD maritime assets and ashore facilities in addressing potential ballistic missile threats?

Non-Conventional Platforms Challenges and Opportunities (i.e. Afloat Forward Staging Base)

In the current constrained budget environment, Navy will evaluate available options in order to maintain forward presence and crisis response. In some cases, this might mean an "alternative" platform such as the Afloat Forward Staging Base (AFSB), Joint High-Speed Vessel (JHSV), or Mobile Landing Platform (MLP) performing missions traditionally assigned to "grey hulled" vessels, thereby "freeing up" high end platforms.

Question: What are the challenges and opportunities of deploying forces from alternative platforms? What roles and missions could they provide? What are the costs associated with those platforms? What savings do alternative platforms afford with respect to high-end platforms (including capacity and operating costs for the high-end platforms)?

Impacts of Changing Deployment Constructs

With the push to operate forces from forward locations, Navy has incorporated "blue and gold" crew deployments on forward deployed LCSs, among other employment innovations. Increasingly, with a potentially smaller fleet and static or increasing demand signals, Navy may need to consider alternative force structures and deployment constructs.

Question: What deployment constructs work best for Navy to maximize forward presence? What challenges and opportunities exist? What institutional and cultural changes will have to occur to enable a more dynamic deployment construct?

Question: Among the many significant attributes that factor into the "high-low mix" of Navy's force structure are seaworthiness and self-reliance (the ability of a platform to operate on its own and traverse the blue water). What is the proper high-low mix for maintaining presence, maximizing affordability (procurement, maintenance, and operations), and achieving the desired level of high-end warfighting capability?

Force Structure, Strategic Laydown, and Dispersal

"One potential fiscal and programmatic scenario would result in a '2020 Fleet' of about 255-260 ships, about 30 less than today, and about 40 less than Navy's PB-14 submission. It would include 1-2 fewer CSG, and 1-2 fewer ARG than today. With regard to the DSG and presence, in this particular scenario the '2020 Fleet':

• Would not increase our global deployed presence, which would remain at about 95 ships in 2020. The lethality inherent in this presence, based on ship type deployed, would be less than today's 95-ship presence.

• Would not increase presence in the Asia-Pacific, which would stay at about 50 ships in 2020. This would largely negate the ship force structure portion of our plan to rebalance to the Asia Pacific region directed by the DSG."

> -   *CNO, before House Armed Services Committee (HASC), September 18, 2013*

Budget Sequestration Impacts on Force Structure, Readiness, and/or Operations

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"When budget uncertainty is combined with the mechanism and magnitude of sequestration, the consequences lead to a security gap – vulnerability against future threats to our national security interests. And, as our military power becomes less sustainable, it becomes less credible. We risk breaking commitments to our partners and allies, our defense industrial base, and our men and women in uniform and their families."

> -   *General Martin Dempsey, Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff, before the Senate Budget Committee, FY14 Department of Defense Budget (June 12, 2013)*

Question: With recent and near term budget reductions, what force structure/force design changes (if any) are recommended for the Navy and/or Marine Corps?

Question: What are the potential operational ramifications of a Navy and Marine Corps force under the full and/or partial implementation of the sequestration budget caps?

Question: What changes to organizational constructs, personnel, or force structure would help offset budget reductions?

Question: What impacts will budget reductions have on operations in terms of deployment cycles and employment? What are some solutions Navy could employ to mitigate these effects on operations, readiness and/or retention?

Question: How will forward deployment and forward stationing impact maintenance and readiness? How will the inclusion of "alternative platforms" into regular deployment cycles impact presence and lethality? Will conventional deterrence be impaired as a result?

Future Warfighting Payloads Capabilities and Requirements

"Future reductions to Navy's budget will impact our ability to maintain the overall size of our fleet, but we will ensure the force we deploy is proficient and ready."
- *CNO's Navigation Plan 2014-2018*

The Chief of Naval Operations (CNO) ADM Greenert has consistently urged Navy to start thinking in terms of "payloads" instead of "platforms."

Question: What payloads will enable Navy platforms to be relevant in an A2/AD area and/or in "low-end" operations? Will multi-purpose platforms be able to fight at the high-end of the warfighting spectrum? Are the trade-offs between flexible configurations and high-end capability worth the costs?

Question: Discuss the potential for nano-technology (i.e. "nanorobotics") to affect naval warfare operations, strategy and future capabilities/requirements.

Geography's Role in the Strategic Laydown

The U.S.'s unique geography has largely given it a "maritime" outlook, both culturally and economically. As a result of continued interest in the maritime global commons, maritime trade, and energy routes, the U.S. maintains bases and forward locations in Europe, East Africa, and the Indian and Pacific Oceans. This forward operating posture remains unmatched by any other aspiring power, and will provide an asymmetric advantage for the foreseeable future.

Question: Discuss the geographic and geopolitical vulnerabilities in the current laydown of bases? Where should the U.S. focus its posture efforts in the next 10 years?

Question: Can the U.S. use geography and geo-political alliances in "Sustaining U.S. Global Leadership" as the 2012 Defense Strategic Guidance instructs? How will powers exploit geography against the interests of the U.S. and specifically the Navy?

Forward Basing and Stationing: Concepts for Future Basing and Stationing Options

"Diminishing overseas access is another challenge anticipated in the future operating environment. Foreign sensitivities to U.S. military presence have steadily been increasing. Even close allies may be hesitant to grant access for a variety of reasons. Diminished access will complicate the maintenance of forward presence, a critical aspect of past and current U.S. military strategy, necessitating new approaches to responding quickly to developments around the world as well as more robust exploitation of existing U.S. advantages to operate at sea and in the air, space, and cyberspace. Assuring access to ports, airfields, foreign airspace, coastal

waters and host nation support in potential commitment areas will be a challenge and will require active peacetime engagement with states in volatile areas. In war, this challenge may require forcible-entry capabilities designed to seize and maintain lodgments in the face of armed resistance."

- The *Capstone Concept for Joint Operations* (CCJO)

Navy achieves operational efficiencies by stationing or basing assets in forward locations. Recent posture initiatives include rotationally deploying LCS to Singapore and permanently stationing DDGs in Rota, Spain. Forward stationing can provide more time on station for regionally focused operations and minimizes overall transit time. Decreasing budgets may require Navy to readdress the mix of forward deployed and rotationally deployed assets and personnel.

Question: Which countries will the U.S. Navy partner with in the future to establish basing or stationing agreements based on a geopolitical and geostrategic analysis? What incentives would countries respond to and what challenges/issues/risks are present with expanding foreign basing?

Question: Do our current and planned forward deployed and forward based/stationed forces reflect strategic priorities? Do they allow for maximum operational flexibility?

Concepts for Sea Basing vs. Land Basing Forward Deployed Forces

With greater emphasis on "forward deployed" assets in the rebalance to Asia-Pacific and "tailored global presence," the diplomatic and financial costs associated with operating from these forward locations are key planning factors.

Question: Discuss the pros and cons of operating forward from land or sea bases, in terms of cost, operational flexibility, and diplomatic arrangements? What current basing or forwarding stationing locations pose the most diplomatic risk to the U.S. government? What are alternative plans for achieving access to vital operational areas, while also balancing diplomatic concerns and the requirement for the U.S. to advance democracy wherever we operate?

Question: How can Navy reconcile the emphasis on forward presence and forward operations within current fiscal restraints?

Question: Can a sea base ever supplant an ashore base? What capabilities and capacities are lost by not having a facility ashore from which to operate? In what environments can a sea base operate, and for how long? Is the Sea Basing Joint Enabling Concept still valid as an operational concept? Is it valid for both steady-state operations and high-end conflict?

The Future of Navy-Marine Corps Expeditionary Forces

The Navy-Marine Corps team has excelled at projecting power and deterring conflict with a combat-credible expeditionary capability. However, some question the need for expeditionary forces in a new era of A2/AD warfare.

Question: What is the future of expeditionary warfare as a key Navy-Marine Corps capability? Specifically, what role does traditional amphibious warfare play in an A2/AD environment? What deterrent value does expeditionary warfare provide? What investments and units are needed by Navy to enable a credible expeditionary capability?

Question: What advantages (and disadvantages) does expeditionary warfare provide Combatant Commanders in terms of crisis response, operational flexibility, and security cooperation?

Disaggregated Operations

Navy and Marine Corps are exploring disaggregated operations for strike groups and Marine Expeditionary Units as a way of increasing presence and security cooperation offerings in theater. However, approaches to "re-aggregation" are perhaps the limiting factor for this concept in times of crisis.

Question: Is there one "right" composition for the ARG/MEU? Could the ARG/MEU composition change depending on employment? For instance, for steady-state operations, could Navy and Marine Corps utilize non-traditional platforms in deploying the ARG/MEU? Alternately, should the ARG/MEU ensure that it is always ready to employ at all levels of the spectrum of operations, and therefore deploy only the most capable platforms?

Question: What are possible concepts for disaggregated operations? What are the compelling reasons for the ARG/MEU to disaggregate? What are the conditions that enable the ARG/MEU commander, the Naval Component Commander, and the Geographic Combatant Commander to allow disaggregation? What is an appropriate "tether" for re-aggregation, and why?

Theater / Regional Maritime Strategy

Combatant Command Issues

"The Sea Services will establish a persistent global presence using distributed forces that are organized by mission and comprised of integrated Navy, Marine Corps, and Coast Guard capabilities…….Our maritime forces will be tailored to meet the unique and evolving requirements particular to each geographic region…."

- *Cooperative Strategy for 21st Century Seapower (CS21)*

Current and Future Security Environments in the Geographic Commands

USAFRICOM

"In recent years, analysts and U.S. policymakers have noted Africa's growing strategic importance to U.S. interests. Among those interests are the increasing importance of Africa's natural resources, particularly energy resources, and mounting concern over violent extremist activities and other potential threats posed by under-governed spaces, such as maritime piracy and illicit trafficking. In addition, there is ongoing concern for Africa's many humanitarian crises, armed conflicts, and more general challenges, such as the devastating effect of HIV/AIDS."

- *Africa Command: U.S. Strategic Interests and the Role of the U.S Military in Africa, Congressional Research Service Report (July 22, 2011)*

Question: Within the context of decreasing defense budgets are questions of major staff consolidations. One potential target of consolidations could be USAFRICOM. What are the major implications of shifting CCMD responsibilities for Africa into other combatant commands?

Question: Describe changes to the security environment in Africa. How are these changes affecting maritime security, and how is the U.S. adapting to these changes? Are we making the correct adjustments, and are the changes made soon enough? What do our African security partners require from our Sea Services in order to continue their development of maritime competencies?

Question: Africa is a large and diverse continent with many disparate security challenges. Describe a major security challenge of one specific African country or sub-region, and the role the U.S. can play to help assist our foreign partners in that area.

Question: How has understanding of African security challenges changed over time in the United States? How do the Congress, the Department of Defense, the American people, and other key actors perceive Africa and the U.S. partnership with Africa? How do these perceptions impact U.S. relations with partner nations?

USCENTCOM

"As we look to the future direction of American foreign policy, three enduring factors will keep U.S. attention anchored in this region: the U.S. relationship with Israel and our other partner nations; oil and energy resources that fuel the global economy; and the persistent threat from violent extremist organizations. U.S. Central Command's approach—working in tandem with the State Department and other agencies through a whole of government approach—is to protect our interests using fewer military resources in an era of fiscal restraint and political change."
- *U.S. Central Command: 2013 Posture Statement*

Question: What are the prioritized security challenges for USNAVCENT after the U.S. withdrawal from Afghanistan? How will the end of the two wars affect resourcing to the CENTCOM area of responsibility? Is there a resource "red line," below which USNAVCENT cannot assure U.S. allies and sufficiently deter competitor actions?

Question: What actions, threatened or real, would Iran take to advance its national security agenda, and under what conditions? How does the rhetoric of Iranian government officials differ between internal and external audiences? How does internal messaging translate into external actions (especially in terms of Iranian actions at sea)? Does the U.S. possess the capability to understand the variations between internal messaging and likely external courses of action?

Question: Describe the evolution of one or more of the U.S. alliances or security partnerships within the CENTCOM area of responsibility. How could changing sociological and political influences in Bahrain, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, and others stress relations with the United States? What impacts would this have on U.S. operations and basing agreements in the Arabian Gulf?

Question: To what extent does U.S. presence in the Arabian Gulf help or hinder partner nation governments? To what extent does U.S. presence help maintain political calm in the region? What part does the U.S. Navy play in this respect, especially with respect to presence in Bahrain?

Question: To what extent are Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) states capable of providing for their own maritime security? What capabilities should the U.S. Navy plan on maintaining in the Arabian Gulf to assist GCC efforts, and for how long?

Question: How does U.S. Navy presence impact Iran's national security decision-making? Does U.S. Navy presence influence Iran's actions in their nuclear programs? Absent U.S. Navy presence, could the economic sanctions of Iran be successful?

Question: What counter-piracy actions have been the most effective in the NAVCENT area of responsibility? What additional actions or authorities are required to further contain the problem?

USEUCOM

"…there persists in some quarters a notion that the strategic rebalance represents a zero-sum game for U.S. global posture, recalling debates from the last century pitting advocates of 'Europe first' or 'Asia first' against each other. Yet, what that century taught us, and what the 2012 Defense Strategic Guidance makes clear, is that the United States must retain its global reach, access, and prerogatives to maintain its status and influence as a global superpower, particularly in regions vital to U.S. economic wellbeing such as Europe and the Middle East. Power, like nature, abhors a vacuum. A zero-sum withdrawal or substantial diminishment of U.S. presence, influence, and supporting infrastructure across these vital regions provides opportunity for other rising powers to displace the United States, and gain the geostrategic benefits from that substitution."

> - *Testimony of Admiral James Stavridis, Commander, U.S. European Command in front of the House and Senate Armed Services Committees (113th Congress, 2013)*

Question: How is the Asia-Pacific rebalance perceived in Europe? Has U.S. Navy presence in the region actually diminished, or is this merely perception? To what extent does the forward stationing of BMD ships in Rota, Spain increase capacity, and could this type of model be applied to other capabilities?

Question: What are the threats to Europe? Is U.S. presence in the area sufficient to deter these threats, or has the Asia-Pacific rebalance harmed this balance? Are the Europeans capable of providing for their own security?

Question: Will NATO remain a viable defense organization? How have the capabilities of our European partners evolved over time, and will they remain viable in the future? If our partners will retain robust capabilities, how willing are they to use these capabilities toward mutually beneficial security objectives? What indications of this willingness have we learned from the NATO warfighting experience in Afghanistan?

Question: How stable are the U.S. and western European alliances with the former "eastern bloc" countries? Do Russian influences pose any threat to European alliances? What actions should the U.S. take to strengthen bonds with the eastern European nations?

Question: What actions should the U.S. take to assure allies in the eastern Mediterranean? How has U.S. Navy presence in the eastern Mediterranean influenced events in Syria, and has our presence helped to contain conflict within the borders of Syria?

USNORTHCOM

"U.S. Northern Command's future role and vision is based on the following precepts:
   • The vision should support national strategy and policy, and be grounded in the national interest to sustain public support.

  • The protection of America is a long-term commitment and cannot be assured without a
    conscious, dedicated effort.
  • U.S. Northern Command should find new ways to work more effectively in the interagency
    environment."
                        -   *U.S. Northern Command's Strategic Vision*

Question: What are the most significant threats to the United States homeland, now and into the
future? How is the security environment likely to change in the future, and what actions should
NORTHCOM take to respond effectively? What specific changing roles and missions should
the Sea Services implement to protect the maritime approaches to the homeland?

Question: Does Navy have sufficient capacity to provide response to Homeland Security
missions? How much assistance would Coast Guard require from Navy in varying contingencies
or crises, and can Navy provide those levels of support? As a greater percentage of the Navy
fleet becomes forward stationed or deployed, how ready is the home fleet to respond to crises?

Question: What is the long-term demand for ship escorts in and out of domestic ports for force
protection? Is the split between Coast Guard and Navy small boat missions equitable in support
of this requirement? How should Navy resource this mission in the future?

Question: Does the domestic humanitarian assistance/disaster relief (HA/DR) mission require
any specific platforms or other capabilities? Should Navy resource any capabilities that do not
also contribute to warfighting?

USPACOM

"This Strategy defines United States Pacific Command's approach to the Asia-Pacific and
reflects our contribution to U.S. efforts to rebalance to the region. In accordance with national
guidance, our desired end state is that the Asia-Pacific is secure and prosperous, underpinned by
U.S. leadership and a rules-based international order. To this end, we will strengthen alliances
and partnerships, maintain an assured presence in the region, and effectively communicate our
intent and resolve to safeguard U.S. national interests.

As we work closely with partners across the U.S. government and in the region to address shared
challenges and prevent conflict, we will ensure we are ready to respond rapidly and effectively
across the full range of military operations. United States Pacific Command is committed to be
agile, flexible, and ready to meet the challenges of an uncertain and dynamic security
environment."

                -   *Commander, U.S. Pacific Command, Admiral Samuel J. Locklear III*

Question: What are the potential major flash points in the Asia-Pacific theater? What are the
possible causes of conflict in areas of potential conflict? How should USPACOM address these
concerns, prior to and during conflict?

Question: What is the right balance of forces for continuing engagement with foreign partners, but also maintaining readiness for high-end conflict? Does USPACOM have it right?
Question: What can Navy do to assure allies in the South China Sea? What are the operational methods Navy can take to deter China from its aggressive behavior in the region? How should Navy employ in the South China Sea to maximize its effect on the situation? Do our actions there serve more to stabilize the situation or provoke further aggression? What are the diplomatic actions the U.S. government (and specifically the U.S. Navy) can take to de-escalate actions between the stakeholders?

Question: How effectively has Navy (and all Services in theater) hardened its bases against a peer threat in the Pacific? What additional actions or capabilities are required to ensure Navy forces can safely operate and sustain from its bases in theater?

USSOUTHCOM

"In our view, traditional state-on-state military conflict in the region is not likely, although not out of the question. Despite the constant ebb and flow of political tides in this hemisphere, we maintain strong professional relationships with our military and security force counterparts in almost every nation of the region. Regional militaries have made great strides in recent decades regarding professionalization, respect for human rights and subordination to civil authority. They have generally embraced new roles such as humanitarian relief and Peacekeeping Operations (PKO). We should encourage all these trends. Additionally, some militaries are taking on internal security roles. USSOUTHCOM, in conjunction with others in the U.S. interagency should help them shape these new security duties in ways that fully respect human rights and the rule of law."

- *U.S. Southern Command: Command Strategy 2020, Partnership for The Americas (July 2010)*

Question: Both USAFRICOM and USSOUTHCOM have been cited as possible targets for Combatant Commander consolidation. What are the possible impacts of consolidating USSOUTHCOM into USNORTHCOM? Are there implications for NAVSOUTH/4th Fleet in how those forces operate? How has this discussion been perceived in Latin America, and what are the tangible effects on U.S. foreign policy. Does this have any effect on the relationships between the U.S. Sea Services and the Latin American navies?

Question: How have security challenges in the SOUTHCOM area of responsibility changed over time, and what are the trends for the future? How should the U.S. (and the Sea Services in particular) respond to changing security challenges?

Question: What are the maritime requirements for the SOUTHCOM area of responsibility? NAVSOUTH/4th Fleet does not traditionally have many assets in its inventory, and dedicates most of its rotational forces to counter-trafficking operations and engagement operations. Should the U.S. Navy dedicate more forces to this region, and if so, what additional missions are envisioned? How do these priorities rank when considered among the Navy's other global responsibilities?

Question: Given the quote above ("…traditional state-on-state military conflict in the region is not likely"), should the U.S. Navy dedicate "alternative platforms" to deployments in the AOR? What missions in SOUTHCOM require warships, and what others could employ alternative platforms instead? JHSV and other platforms are already envisioned as having great utility in SOUTHCOM. Are there others? Are there different platforms not already in the Navy inventory that would be prudent investments?

Security Cooperation Goals and Methods

Question: What are the goals (ends) of security cooperation in a specific CCMD, or CCMDs in general? What are the most effective methods (ways and means) to accomplish the goal?

Question: Are CCMD security cooperation objectives understood by OPNAV, and what decisions do those objectives influence? Are the CCMD staffs and OPNAV staff sufficiently integrated with respect to requirements generation, and force planning and generation? What improvements could be made, and what would the outcomes of those improvements be?

Combatant Commander – Naval Component Commander Relationships

Question: How can Navy's relationships with the Geographic Combatant Commanders (as a group and/or for specific GCCs) be improved? What are the tangible outcomes of improving the coordination process between the NCC and GCC?

Question: What constitutes "strategy" at the NCCs and GCCs? What are the products or other tangible outcomes of strategy development? What is the time horizon used in developing strategy? How do the NCCs and GCCs inject their strategies into the Services to influence Title 10 man, train, and equip decisions? Should anything about this process change?

Global Force Management Process and Efficiencies

Question: How can the current GFM process be improved? What efficiencies could be achieved?

Question: How is the combatant commander "requirement" defined? Is the process for validating CCMD requirements effective, and does the Navy Staff adequately take the CCMD demand signal into account in its force development?

Question: Examine a particular CCMD area of responsibility and describe evolving threats or opportunities that the CCMD should address. What specialized contributions can the Sea Services make to the CCMD in addressing the security issues? What gaps exist in our capability to respond to the security issues, and what should be done?

U.S. Navy

Key Strategic Issues List

(KSIL)