Terms of Reference
Sea Basing

Objective

Identify and analyze cost effective and technically feasible high speed, high capacity connectors (to include hybrid technology) to close a Marine Expeditionary Brigade from the continental United States to a sea base and operate forces from the sea base to objectives ashore.

Background

Naval Power 21 is the Department of the Navy vision statement that includes both *Marine Corps Strategy 21* (implemented through *Expeditionary Maneuver Warfare*) and *Naval Power 21*, the individual service strategies. Each strategy contains as one of its core elements a concept of Sea Basing. A Defense Science Board report states "a sea base represents a sovereign, maneuverable capability for rapidly projecting U. S. offensive and defensive power, as well as assembling, equipping, supporting, and sustaining scalable forcible entry operations without the need for land bases in the joint area of operations."

The sea base concept includes many capabilities and is certainly a concept that will develop from the legacy amphibious capabilities of today to the fully integrated, joint capabilities of the future. Various sea basing scenarios project the sea base as the confluence of multiple platforms in an area of operation, maneuvering independently but operating synergistically in contrast to a single large platform typified by a Mobile Offshore Base (MOB). Notwithstanding the actual composition or the many operational capabilities of a sea base, in its most fundamental state, a sea base is a transshipment point. Personnel, equipment and supplies are moved from rear areasto the sea base in order to provide the appropriate assault forces and subsequent logistics support for the ashore force. The major difference between the sea base and traditional amphibious logistical footprint of today is that it is not ashore. The political and strategic advantages of not having a large logistical position ashore are many but new challenges arise with such a change in tactics. A primary challenge to be met in developing the sea basing concept is the ability to transport all of the personnel, equipment and supplies to the sea base and then more importantly into the objective area as required by the forces ashore.

Heretofore, mostamphibious assaults utilizing forcible entry have been supported by relatively nearby land bases and once entry has been made, a logistic land base is established to support further operations. The concept for sea basing recognizes that there may be no nearby land base to support the operations. All personnel, equipment and supplies may come directly from the U. S. or other friendly but distant countries. Additionally, in today's ever advancing technologically based warfare there will not be the time to establish a land based logistic site at a beachhead before inland objectives can be attacked. Today's current amphibious capability cannot support the logistic

requirements of tomorrow's warfare challenges. There are two distinct problems to be overcome. The first is the ability torapidly move large amounts of personnel and materiel, no matter how heavy, to the sea base. The second is getting that same materiel and personnel, but now combat loaded, to the proper place ashore in a timely manner. Not only does the varying distance of the sea base from the shore complicate this problem, but also the actual delivery location may be up to 200 miles inland. These problems can be grouped under the rubric of "connectors" to the sea base.

Specific Tasking

Specifically, this NRAC study will:

- Identify and analyze cost effective and technically feasible high speed, high capacity connectors (to include hybrid technology) to close a Marine Expeditionary Brigade to a sea base from the continental United States and from advanced bases closer to the sea base.
- Identify and analyze cost effective and technically feasible high speed, high capacity connectors for operational forces from the sea base to objectives ashore.
- Consider technically feasible connector-to-platform interfaces required for these connectors, both from and to the sea base, capable of operating in various sea states up to and including sea state 4.
- In addition to mobile connectors, consider (but do not necessarily require) ancillary equipment like causeways, piers or landing strips that facilitate, not bottleneck, the throughput of personnel and materiel.
- Make recommendations for near and far term technologies or equipment to be developed to provide the connector capabilities.