



UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

15TH MARINE EXPEDITIONARY UNIT TO TRAIN IN URBAN AREAS

CAMP PENDLETON, Calif. – Marines and sailors from the 15th Marine Expeditionary Unit will be training along California's central coast April 15-21 to ready the unit for its deployment to the Western Pacific and Middle East regions beginning later this year.

The unit's Maritime Raid Force, along with selected members from the unit's aviation and command elements, will base at Naval Base Ventura County, Point Mugu. Training will also be conducted on gas and oil platforms located off the coast of Carpinteria. The combination of these sites supports mission-essential training and brings a dimension of urban realism not found on a singular military base.

All aspects of this training have been coordinated with federal, state and local law enforcement agencies. As part of the training, Marine Corps helicopter pilots will practice urban flying and navigation techniques using routes and altitudes approved by the Federal Aviation Administration. Measures have been taken to reduce the amount of aircraft noise during the training, but residents near the exercise may hear the sounds of helicopters.

The Marines respectfully request that local citizens near the training venues keep a distance from the training, for their own safety and that of the service members.

The mission of the unit is to provide a rapid-response force capable of conducting conventional amphibious and selected maritime operations from the sea, surface or air.

“This realistic training allows the MEU to operate as a complete Marine Air Ground Task Force in an urban environment,” said Col. Scott D. Campbell, the unit’s commanding officer. “The importance of an exercise such as this cannot be understated; our future success depends greatly upon the amount of practice repetitions we have during relevant training exercises such as this one,” added Campbell.

The MEU is composed of a command element and three major subordinate elements. They are Battalion Landing Team 3/5, Marine Medium Helicopter Squadron 364 (Reinforced) and Combat Logistics Battalion 15, the ground, aviation and logistics elements respectively.

The 15th MEU will be conducting Visit, board, search and seizure (VBSS) training on 21 April. VBSS missions provide the MEU with the capability to capture enemy vessels, combat terrorism, piracy and smuggling. Additionally, they can conduct customs, safety and other inspections as directed.

Media that would like to cover the training are invited to attend 21 April. Please contact the 15th MEU public affairs officer, 1stLt Justin Smith at justin.e.smith@usmc.mil, (760) 846-1320 to RSVP.

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