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## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

### **EXERCISE IRON FIST 2012 BRINGS U.S. AND JAPANESE FORCES TOGETHER**

CAMP PENDLETON, Calif. – The 15th Marine Expeditionary Unit is scheduled to begin training with the Japanese Ground Self-Defense Force as part of Iron Fist 2012 at Camp Pendleton, Jan. 16. This is the seventh iteration of the exercise and is a tribute to the U.S./JGSDF relationship that provides a unique opportunity for Marines to train with their Pacific ally on U.S. soil.

Throughout Iron Fist 2012, the forces will partake in exercises including a three-day evolution where troops will rehearse making safe exits from a sinking helicopter, conduct various boat training that enables the 15<sup>th</sup> MEU to demonstrate its amphibious capability and take part in other staff planning and integration exercises.

“We are excited to participate in an exercise that promotes interoperability and cooperation between JGSDF and Marine forces,” said Col. Scott Campbell, commanding officer, 15th MEU. “This provides us the opportunity to exchange knowledge and learn from each other, as well as establish personal and professional relationships.”

Iron Fist 2012 allows for effective bilateral training across the range of military operations, and amphibious operations are common training interests for U.S. Marines and the JGSDF.

“Bilateral amphibious training events between Marines and the JGSDF provide invaluable training for our Marines and sailors and builds on an existing friendship between the U.S. Marines and Japanese forces,” said Campbell.

The Japanese GSDF unit participating in the training is the Western Army Infantry Regiment. The 15th MEU will command elements including 3rd Amphibious Assault Battalion, Marine Medium Helicopter Squadron, 1st Reconnaissance Battalion and Combat Logistics Battalion 15.

For more information, contact the 15th MEU public affairs officer, 1st Lt. Justin Smith at 760-725-0183, 760-846-1320 or visit the 15<sup>th</sup> MEU's Facebook page at <http://www.facebook.com/#!/pages/15th-Marine-Expeditionary-Unit/198517873554140>.

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