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SUBJ/C-NOTE #4: The Way We Fight//

RMKS/ 1. This C-NOte introduces how our future force design will be built upon the Golden Fleet initiative to ensure American maritime power remains credible, resilient, and lethal. The Golden Fleet organizes our forces to fight as tailored Battle Groups under the Navy Warfighting Concept - integrating a high-low mix of carriers, large and small surface combatants, submarines, aviation, and unmanned systems, synchronized through an Enhanced Mission Command Framework (EMCF) that empowers initiative while preserving unity of effort.

American naval power underwrites American power. In competition, crisis, and conflict, forward naval forces secure sea lines, blunt adversary initiative, and shape outcomes. When conflict is imposed upon us, the Navy answers the call - maneuvering globally, striking with precision and mass, and sustaining combat operations across all domains. We impose costs, seize decisive maritime terrain, and present operational dilemmas that adversaries cannot mitigate or solve.

2. The Navy Warfighting Concept codifies how the Fleet contributes to national defense by exploiting enduring advantages in mobility, agility, flexibility, and endurance. It provides the foundation for evolving naval operational concepts and Combatant Command war plans.

The concept describes a proactive approach to warfare that leverages global maritime maneuver to gain and exploit sea control at decisive points; employs asymmetric and non-traditional sea denial where cost, risk, or access limits persistent employment of main battle forces; and, once sea control is achieved, projects power ashore in support of national objectives and Joint Force requirements.

3. Central to this concept is Expanded Maritime Maneuver - early Target development, persistent sensing, asymmetric options, and the employment of traditional and non-traditional attack vectors to confuse, delay, and deny adversary objectives. The Navy's ability to maneuver globally, concentrate fires rapidly, and deliver prompt and sustained combat power at sea makes it the Nation's ultimate response option for imposing operational and strategic costs on malign actors.

4. Key elements of the Navy Warfighting Concept include: global maritime unity of effort - synchronizing effects across the worldwide maritime battlespace; seizing and maintaining initiative - compelling adversary miscalculation and accelerating decision-making across the spectrum of conflict; asymmetric maritime operations - generating disproportionate effects against adversary vulnerabilities; and prevailing in protracted

conflict - sustaining combat-credible forces while applying relentless pressure that erodes the adversary's will, capacity, and options.

5. We can no longer assume a permissive environment in any domain - space, cyberspace, land, sea, or air - nor can we assume uncontested sea control at any phase of crisis or conflict. The strategic environment is fundamentally different from that of two decades ago.

Peer and near-peer competitors now contest access, influence, and control across key maritime regions including the Red Sea, the High North, and the Western Pacific. Accordingly, the Navy's future Force Design will be anchored in the Golden Fleet initiative - a globally maneuverable, combat-credible Fleet built around our Nation's most decisive instruments of maritime power: aircraft carriers, battleships, destroyers, frigates, submarines, naval aviation, and supporting forces operating across all domains and the electromagnetic spectrum.

6. At the heart of the Golden Fleet is our ability to integrate and certify tailored forces and tailored offsets - manned and unmanned platforms, distributed long-range fires, robotic-autonomous systems, and resilient logistics - employed per the U.S. Navy's Fighting Instructions to operationalize the Hedge Strategy through scalable formations that manage risk, expand mass, and preserve combat advantage. This Fleet embodies the Navy's differentiated value to the Nation and the Joint Force: sovereign, forward, sustainable, and expeditionary power from the sea that assures access, protects sea lines of communication, imposes sea denial on the adversary, and delivers independent precision strike at scale.

7. The Navy will continue to fight as a Fleet, organized and commanded through modernized Battle Groups tailored to overmatch current and future threats. These formations - centered on carrier and battleship strike capability and reinforced by surface, subsurface, amphibious, and unmanned forces - are structured as tailored force packages that integrate offsets and counter-targeting to enhance survivability, lethality, deception, and endurance. They retain the mutual-support ethos of historical Battle Groups while incorporating distributed sensors, autonomous systems, organic repair and logistics nodes, and adaptable payload capacity that enables massing of effects when required or dispersion to complicate adversary targeting and decision cycles.

8. At the operational level, Battle Fleets aggregate multiple Battle Groups, amphibious forces, and Joint and allied enablers to achieve theater and national objectives. These formations will fight under an EMCF - a governance construct that aligns delegated autonomy level to demonstrated situational competency and empowers distributed execution under contested conditions. Through EMCF, Battle Groups and Battle Fleets employ synchronized maritime maneuver, data-enabled targeting, resilient command-and-control architectures, and coalition networks that implement the Naval Operational Architecture and JADC2 principles.

9. Globally-postured Golden Fleet formations will control decisive maritime terrain, safeguard strategic chokepoints and sea lines of communication, deter conflict, and - when required - win decisively against peer adversaries. By leveraging the Navy Warfighting Concept - particularly Expanded Maritime Maneuver, synchronized fires, and deliberate control of timing and tempo - these forces create operational dilemmas the adversary cannot solve, preserve initiative for the Joint Force, and ensure the United States Navy remains the world's preeminent seapower.

10. When conditions permit littoral operations, amphibious ships and Marine formations will integrate seamlessly into Battle Group and Battle Fleet constructs to employ the Navy's full warfighting capability. These forces clear the sea and air, seize and hold key maritime terrain, establish expeditionary bases, and sustain Joint Force operations ashore.

Reestablishing the Battle Group construct is both an operational necessity and a strategic signal - reinforcing our commitment to seapower and lethality, strengthening distributed maritime operations, energizing the defense industrial base, and providing a clear organizing framework for future force structure growth and Joint warfighting integration under the Navy Warfighting Concept.

11. While our foremost priority remains the capability and capacity to prevail in conflict, we must approach this challenge through the lens of deterrence. Much of the Navy's day-to-day activity is designed to deny adversaries opportunities for escalation. The cumulative effect of forward operations, exercises, and campaigning is deterrence in practice. By dominating adversary decision space, we preserve strategic advantage and reinforce the certainty that aggression will result in decisive and unacceptable consequences.

12. The Navy Warfighting Concept defines how we fight; we must also define how we deter. Accordingly, we are developing the Navy Deterrence Concept to integrate and elevate the deterrent impact of daily naval operations. This concept will align national, Joint, and coalition efforts; clearly communicate the Navy's unique deterrent contribution; and ensure our operational posture constrains adversary behavior, prevents miscalculation, and reduces the likelihood of conflict. It will also provide the analytical framework to assess deterrence value, campaigning activities, and posture investments as they relate to shaping behavior and achieving strategic outcomes.

13. Seapower has always been central to America's security, prosperity, and strategic influence. History is clear: world-class powers require world-class navies. Through these concepts, we will strengthen the Navy's role as our Nation's most decisive instrument of maritime power - defending the homeland, safeguarding our way of life, and ensuring no adversary ever believes they can challenge us at sea or prevail in combat when the Nation calls us to fight.

14. Built in the Foundry - Tempered in the Fleet - Forged to Fight.

15. ADM Daryl Caudle, 34th Chief of Naval Operations sends.//

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