



Army

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Army in a Joint Archipelagic
Manoeuvre Concept

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The Threat. Analysis of emerging technology and other trends in military development indicate that an Anti-Access and Area Denial (A2AD) ability is likely to be within the capabilities of future irregular, hybrid and state based adversaries. While state based adversaries will maintain the most sophisticated suite of denial capabilities, irregular or hybrid adversaries are likely to also develop sufficient capability to deny key maritime choke points, threaten Australia's strategic interests and deny the ADF's ability to execute expeditionary stability operations in the region.

Archipelagic Manoeuvre: Ends – Ways – Means.

Ends: The *Australian Maritime Strategy 2013* for the Australian Defence Force seeks to address strategic turmoil or major conflict by contributing substantial efforts to ensure free and unfettered access to the maritime global commons, stability in the immediate, regional and global security environments and maintenance of the existing international rules based global order.

Ways: The *Strategy* acknowledges the complex archipelagic nature of our near region and highlights the importance of the littoral environment for future operations by the Australian Defence Force. It implicitly requires the ADF to hold a balanced force structure that is capable of "Joint Archipelagic Manoeuvre". Specifically, it must be capable of applying focused maritime control operations that deny an adversary's access to, or ability to control, the key routes within a maritime archipelagic environment, and mounting and leading expeditionary stability operations in our immediate region. It must also provide scalable responsive options for Government to make contributions to any actions required to preserve our national interests.

This leads to a complementary Joint Archipelagic Manoeuvre concept that incorporates air, naval and land force elements required to achieve both **Anti-Access and Area Denial** and **Urban Littoral Control** effects. Within this concept the principle role of land power is to achieve an **Urban Littoral Control** effect that can exert persistent control over population centres, forward base locations and other key terrain that contributes to the securing of maritime transit lanes. Together, these enable the ADF to conduct Joint Archipelagic Manoeuvre and provide the 'ways' to achieve the 'ends' articulated within the *Australian Military Strategy*. A medium weight army that is equipped for Joint Archipelagic Manoeuvre will possess sufficient combat weight and highly survivable land based capabilities that can contribute to sea and air control bubbles adjacent to key strategic maritime choke points, but also provide a range of credible options for Government for other contingencies such as stabilisation missions in the crowded, connected urban (and peri-urban) littoral.

Advances in land based long-range precision-strike systems (missiles, cruise missiles, UAV); littoral anti-ship capabilities; air defence capabilities; long-range artillery and rocket systems raise the potential for land forces to provide significant support to sea and air control operations. Illustrative examples of this include the employment of land based ISR and strike from congested littoral environments in support of sea strike and sea denial; land based air and missile defence in support of a joint integrated air and missile defence plan; and the employment land manoeuvre enabled by long range air and sea force projection platforms to secure key airfields and ports and deny the enemy the ability to generate localised air defence or sea control effects. Land forces employed in this way will free air and maritime forces for other tasks where their capabilities are optimised.

Means. The following key future land force capabilities will be required to support a Joint Archipelagic Manoeuvre concept:

- **Intelligence, Surveillance, Reconnaissance and Networking.** The Enhanced Land Network will link land networks with wider Defence networks and enable shared intelligence and targeting information. The Tactical Aerial Reconnaissance & Persistent Surveillance System will consolidate Army manned and unmanned platforms with links to land and joint digital networks. Armed platforms will allow detection and strike to occur in high threat environments. Special Forces will provide multi-role forces to support the land force future capabilities in detect and strike operations.

- **Land and amphibious manoeuvre.** Capabilities like the M1 Abrams tank and planned L400 AFV platforms will significantly enhance Army's capability to execute land manoeuvre in high threat congested urban environments. A dedicated riverine capability will further enhance options for land manoeuvre and allow forces to exploit the terrain typically found in the urban littoral to their advantage. Amphibious manoeuvre support and sustainment will provide the ability to move and sustain combat ready land forces directly to the shore and reduce the requirement to use infrastructure that is vulnerable to precision strike.
- **Enhanced land engagement systems.** Multi-role land fires system will provide precision fire support at extended ranges that will allow the land force to support sea strike and sea denial functions in the littoral environment. Integrated Air and Missile Defence & Counter Unmanned Aerial Systems / Rocket Artillery and Mortar systems will provide air defence to assets on land and contribute to joint integrated air and missile defence. This system would be optimised to defeat small, low and fast threats such as cruise missiles, rockets, mortars, Unmanned Aerial Systems and helicopters. This would allow land based air defence to release air and maritime forces for operations elsewhere.
- **Aviation.** Tactical rotary wing airlift will allow land forces to manoeuvre against objectives from extended distances and access congested urban environments. Their ability to operate from austere, unimproved airfields rather than fixed bases will negate some of the effects of enemy precision strike. Longer range, more capable Vertical Take Off & Landing systems will provide strategic flexibility for the rapid deployment of Special Forces and conventional land forces, should large amphibious platforms either be unavailable or not capable of reaching objective areas in a suitable timeframe.

Joint Enablers. *Strategic Lift* will provide the means from which land forces are able to undertake inter and intra-theatre movement (including ship to shore projection), provide sustainment bridges and, where tactically sensible, enable land forces to base outside of the high threat littoral environments. *Joint Fires* will provide integration of the land fires system with sea, air and space based precision fire support. *Joint ISR systems* – and the strategic analytical workforce – will allow the collection and analysis of the joint and national intelligence and Electronic Warfare capabilities to support joint force decision superiority. *Cyber effects* will provide a defensive cyber capability to ensure the integrity of land systems and

should leverage off national offensive cyber to support denial operations. *Logistic sustainment* from elements of the joint force will ensure the endurance of land force operations.

Additional Considerations. Execution of a Joint Archipelagic Manoeuvre concept would be underpinned by support of regional partners while also aligning with the United States Joint Operational Access Concept. It allows a credible ADF contribution (such as an independent Joint Task Force or Single Service capabilities) to a coalition force in a geographic area that is in Australia's direct national interest. 'Urban Littoral Control' could also contribute to either an alliance framework or a unilateral Australian operation. Peacetime engagement can considerably ease the difficulties of implementing these concepts during a crisis. Since land forces dominate many regional militaries, Army is well positioned to shape and influence regional partners.

Conclusion. Advances in precision and lethality will allow Army to develop land based capabilities that allow it to significantly contribute to a Joint Archipelagic Manoeuvre concept as part of Australia's Maritime Strategy. A medium weight army that is equipped for Joint Archipelagic Manoeuvre will possess sufficient combat weight and capabilities to provide credible options for Government for the widest possible range of contingencies.