

# Responsive Warrior

Volume Two



**Marine Corps Forces Europe and Africa**  
**January-June 2016**



# Marine Corps Forces Europe and Africa

*The crisis response force of choice*

**Responsive Warrior** is a visual representation of Marine Corps operations, exercises, and engagement activities across two continents. Our Marines continue to provide the geographic combatant commanders at U.S. European Command (EUCOM) and U.S. Africa Command (AFRICOM) with a force whose capabilities are relevant and ready for deployment at a moment's notice. We are the right force in the right place and always at the right time.

## U.S. Marine Corps Forces Europe and Africa Headquarters

Our headquarters based in Stuttgart, Germany, provides support to our deployed rotational units and the EUCOM and AFRICOM commanders across all warfighting functions. Planning efforts from this headquarters translate strategic objectives into operational objectives which will be achieved by our rotational forces - Special Purpose Marine Air Ground Task Force-Crisis Response-Africa and the Black Sea Rotational Force.

## Special Purpose Marine Air Ground Task Force-Crisis Response-Africa

This team of Marines and Sailors is forward deployed to Morón Air Base, Spain and Naval Air Station Sigonella, Italy. While allocated to AFRICOM, they provide crisis response options for both Combatant Commanders. SPMAGTF-CR-AF may be directed to operate anywhere within the combatant command's geographic scope. They regularly train in Africa at Cooperative Security Locations, and engage with European partners which provide a powerful presence and enable timely response to crises.

## Black Sea Rotational Force

Based in Romania, this contingent of Marines and Sailors train in the Black Sea, Balkans and Caucasus regions maintaining their readiness and strategic partnerships. Their efforts improve interoperability, promote collective security, and provide the capability for rapid crisis response as directed by EUCOM and U.S. Marine Corps Forces Europe and Africa.

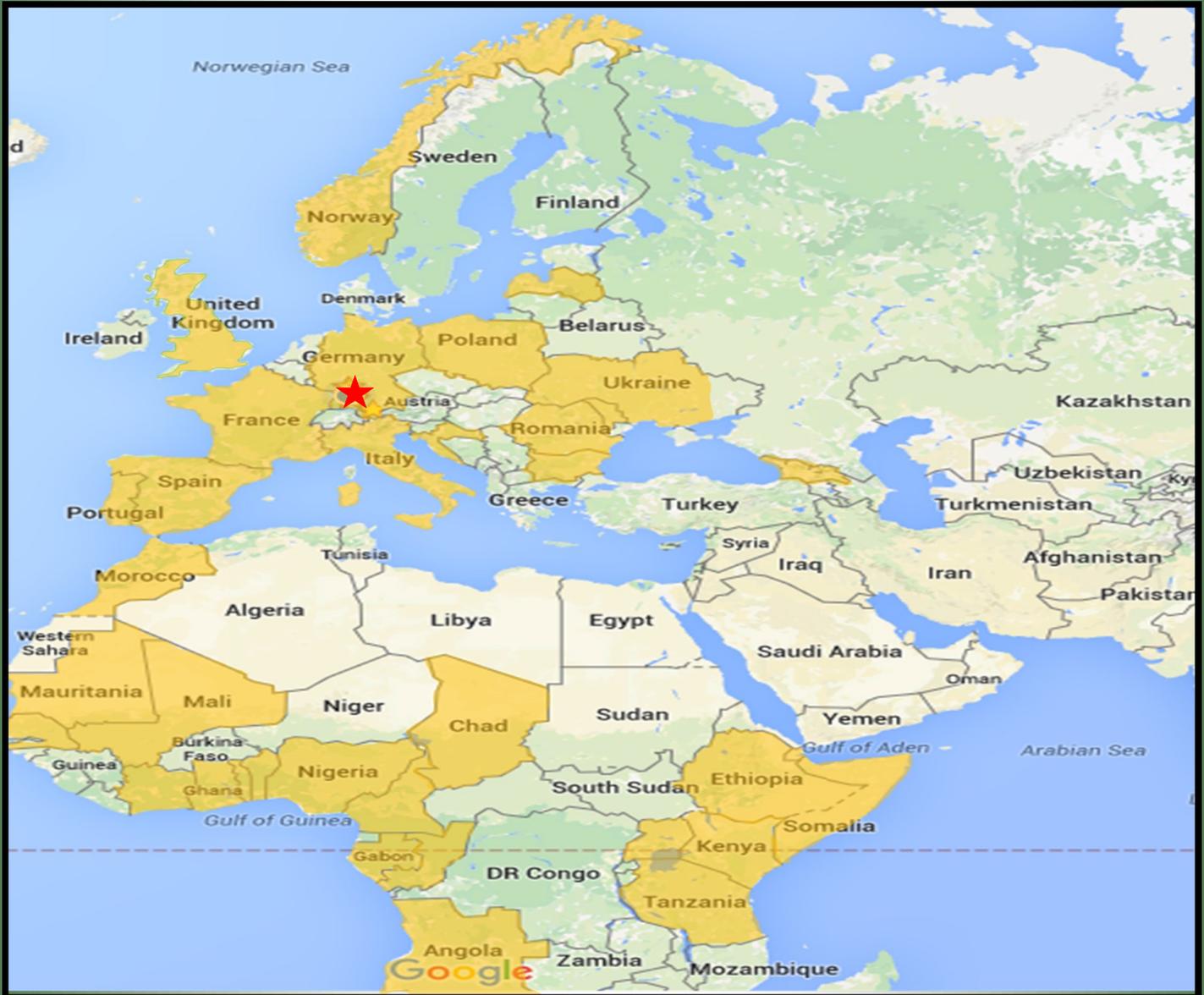
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# Marine Corps Forces Europe and Africa

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## Operational Highlights:

January - June 2016

18 Exercises

118 Theater Security Cooperation / Military-2-Military Events

In 37 Countries with 4874 PAX

*Two Continents. One Force.*



# Cold Response 2016

(February 29 – March 9, 2016)

This exercise highlighted Marine Corps contributions to a Combined Joint Task Force, while also demonstrating the ability to bring together forces from the U.S. and Europe to defend NATO’s northern flank during a crisis. The Marines used equipment from the caves in Norway, part of the Marine Corps Prepositioning Program, to support operations and comprised the core of the multinational Headquarters providing command and control.



Photo by: Lance Cpl. Brianna Gaudi



Photo by: Master Sgt. Chad McMeen



Photo by: Lance Cpl. Brianna Gaudi



Photo by: Master Sgt. Chad McMeen

Top: Marines bivouac in the snow during the exercise facing subzero temperatures.  
Middle Left: Marines brace the rotor wash prior to a helicopter extract.  
Middle Right: Marine Corps AAVs assault an enemy through a fjord.  
Bottom: Marines train in extreme cold weather temperatures during the exercise.



## Cold Weather Mountain Training (Norway)

(February 1–25, 2016)

Marines deployed from Romania to the Arctic Circle for cold weather mountain training. The training, which included infantry tactics, maneuver, and survival in arctic weather conditions, highlighted the Marine Corps' ability to support and deploy to multiple nations from a single position in the region.



Photo by: Cpl. Immanuel Johnson



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Photo by: Cpl. Immanuel Johnson

Top Left: A UK Royal Commando instructs U.S. Marines on survival in the extreme cold weather.

Above: U.S. Marines learned to control their breathing while swimming in sub-zero temperatures.

Middle Left: Marines conduct a patrol in the Arctic Circle.

Bottom: Marines practice engaging enemy targets while using cold weather gear necessary when operating in the Arctic.



# STRATEGIC LIFT OF AIRCRAFT

(Feb—Mar, 2016)

Helicopters belonging to II Marine Aircraft Wing were placed on U.S. Air Force aircraft and flown from the eastern coast of the United States to Norway. The CH-53E and AH-1W helicopters provided aviation support to U.S. Marines, U.K. Royal Marines, and Norwegian soldiers during Exercise Cold Response. The use of strategic lift for this exercise demonstrated the Marine Corps' ability to get warfighting assets to the European continent as needed.



Photos by: Lance Cpl. Brianna Gaudi

Top Left: U.S. Marines unload a CH-53E in Norway to be used during Exercise Cold Response.

Top Right: A CH-53E is unloaded by U.S. Marines in Norway during Exercise Cold Response.

Middle: An airmen with U.S. Air Force aids in the delivery of CH-53Es and AH-1Ws to Norway.

Bottom Left: A CH-53E awaits maintenance following its flight from the U.S. to Norway.

Bottom Right: Marines and Airmen unload aircraft in Norway for exercise Cold Response.





# French Commando Bi-Lateral Training

(Apr. 1-10, 2016)

Marines built familiarity with different techniques employed by the French Armed Forces for rappelling and negotiating obstacles. The Commanding Officer of the School expressed interest in future iterations of Marines attending the entire 6 week Commando training course. The training aided Marines in galvanizing relationships with French forces who are also involved in Crisis Response missions in Mali and other countries in the AFRICOM AO.



Photo by Sgt. Kassie McDole



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U.S. Marines with Bravo company, 1st Battalion, 8th Marine Regiment, Special Purpose Marine Air-Ground Task Force-Crisis Response-Africa and French Commandos of 1st Commando battalion, National Commando Training Center various French Commando training events throughout a week aboard Fort-Miradu, France.

# Saber Strike 2016

(May 30 – June 22, 2016)

This exercise highlighted the aggregation of forces from the continental US into Allied territory in Europe; promoted regional stability and security; and fostered trust while improving interoperability with NATO Partners. The overarching exercise concept focused on preparation of HQs and troops for the NATO Response Force (NRF). The Marine Corps supported with more than 200 Marines providing infantry tactics, a Supporting Arms Liaison Team (SALT) and Fire Control Team (FCT), to support the Multinational Battalion HQ and maneuver units in the combined arms live fire FTX.



Photo by Army Capt. Jennifer Cruz



Photo by Lance Cpl. Luke Hoogendam

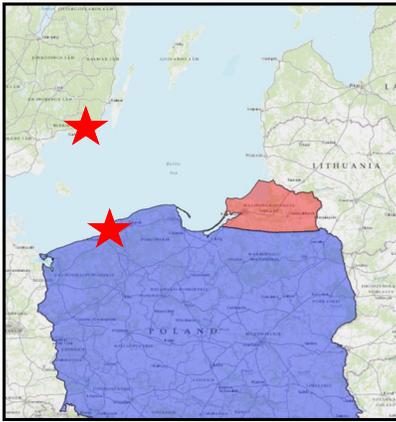
Top Left: U.S. Marine equipment prepositioned in Norwegian caves is transported by a British vessel to the Port of Riga, Latvia. Top Right: Thirteen countries conduct the exercise's opening ceremony. Middle: Marines and allies demonstrate their collective capability to rapidly amass forces and move equipment across the theater to defend the region. Bottom: Marine Corps tanks and other rolling stock are loaded onto a British ship to be transported back to Norwegian caves where the equipment will be stored until the next exercise or crisis.



Photo by Army Master Sgt. A.J. Coyne



Photo by Staff Sgt. Daniel Jacobson



# BaltOps 2016

(June 3–18, 2016)

The premier maritime exercise in the Baltic Sea region and one of the largest exercises in northern Europe. A multinational force, including U.S. Marines, demonstrated the interoperability of NATO allies and partners while assuring nations of NATO's commitment to security and stability in the Baltic Sea region. BALTOPS 16 also delivered high-end training across the entire spectrum of naval warfare.



Photo by Petty Officer 2nd Class Brittney Cannady



Photo by Cpl. Lucas Hopkins



Photo by Cpl. Lucas Hopkins



Photo by Cpl. Immanuel Johnson



Photo by Cpl. Lucas Hopkins

Left: Utilizing Finnish vessels, a multinational force, including U.S. Marines, came ashore from the Baltic Sea. Middle Left: U.S. Marines disembark a Finnish vessel in the Baltic Sea. Middle Right: An Allied force takes control of key terrain utilizing dismounted anti-armor capabilities. Bottom Left: U.S. Marines based in the U.S. and across Europe came together with prepositioned equipment from Norwegian caves to address a large-scale threat to the Baltics. Bottom right: Familiarity is key to interoperability. Interoperability is key to success.



# Air-to-Air Refueling with Spain

(Mar. 29, 2016)

Interoperability is only effective when it exists across every domain of warfare. Marines provided aerial refueling to Spanish aircraft demonstrating an Allied ability to dominate the skies during a crisis or large-scale conflict.



Photo by Sgt. Tia Nagle



Photo by Sgt. Tia Nagle



Photo by Sgt. Tia Nagle

Spanish Air Force F/A-18 Hornets with 462 Squadron conduct an air-to-air refuel mission with a U.S. Marine Corps KC-130J with Marine Aerial Refueler Transport Squadron 252, Special-Purpose Marine Air-Ground Task Force-Crisis Response- Africa, Gran Canaria, Spain. The Marines and Spanish airmen conducted the missions in order to enhance crisis response readiness and help build relationships between the two militaries.



# Amphibious Operations with Spain

(April 18—May 2, 2016)

The training improved interoperability between U.S. and Spanish Marines focusing on operations at sea aboard the Spanish Juan Carlos I. The US-Spanish team also conducted aerial assault training launching from the ship utilizing MV-22 Ospreys. Success during a crisis is achieved during interoperability training before the crisis takes place. Interoperability improves our familiarization with Allied forces. This familiarization will be central to our success.



Photo by Sgt. Kassie McDole



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Photo by Sgt. Kassie McDole

U.S. Marines with Charlie company, 1st Battalion, 8th Marine Regiment, Special Purpose Marine Air-Ground Task Force-Crisis Response-Africa, and Spanish Marines with 7th company, 2nd Battalion conduct a deck shoot aboard the LHD Juan Carlos I, helicopter insertion of troops and other familiarization training during Amphibious Exercise 16.1. AMPHIBEX is designed to reinforce and refine the SPMAGTF-CR-AF and host nation forces' execution of mission essential tasks in the event of a future crisis.



# African Lion 2016

(April 18–27, 2016)

The exercise focused on UN Mandated Peace Operations in order to improve U.S. military interoperability with Royal Moroccan Armed Forces. AL-16 consisted of a U.S./ Moroccan CJTF CPX linked with an Intelligence Capacity Building Workshop, Public Affairs Workshop, and a Peace Support Operations FTX. More than 800 U.S., Moroccan, African and European service members participated.



Photo by Senior Airman Krystal Ardrey



Photo by Senior Airman Krystal Ardrey



Photo by Lance Cpl. Melissa Martens Photo by Lance Cpl. Melissa Martens



Photo by Lance Cpl. Melissa Martens

Top: Marines load an MV-22 during a capabilities demonstration in Tifnit, Morocco. Others: The annually-scheduled exercise included riot control training, field training exercises, convoy operations and other events to improve understanding and proficiency of military tactics and procedures.





# Platinum Lion

(Jan. 11–16, 2016)

Platinum Lion is an exercise designed to increase readiness and enhance Allied capabilities through realistic combat scenarios and objective-focused training. The allied forces orchestrated integrated squad offensive operations, maneuver training, and mechanized integration aimed at increasing combined arms skills, anti-armor tactics and other capabilities needed for combat. Marines from the Combined Arms Company comprised the U.S. force.



Photo by: Cpl. Justin T. Updegraff



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Top Left: Romanian soldiers teach U.S. Marines about their weapon systems' capabilities and attributes. Top Right: U.S. Marines instruct their Romanian allies on American weapon systems. Bottom Left: Romanian soldiers take time to speak to and learn more about their American allies. Bottom Right: Romanian T-55 tanks wait for the signal to attack alongside the Marines and their M1A1 Abrams tanks.



# Platinum Lynx

(April 15–21, 2016)

Improving readiness and increasing the Marines' ability to work seamlessly with other NATO allies and partner nations were accomplished during the exercise. The training focused on mechanized integration, breaching techniques, dismounted live-fire tactics, indirect fire procedures and practical application. Marines from the Black Sea Rotational Force based in Romania comprised the U.S. force.



Photo by Cpl. Tyler Andersen



Photo by Cpl. Immanuel M. Johnson



Photo by Cpl. Tyler Andersen

Top Left: U.S. Marines with Black Sea Rotational Force fire an M252 81mm Mortar System at the Babadag Training Area.

Top Right: Romanian soldiers from the 911th Infantry Battalion fire downrange during live-fire. Middle Right: Marine and Romanian tank officers discuss the capabilities of the M1A1 Abrams tank. Bottom Right: U.S. Marines with Black Sea Rotational Force & Romanian soldiers with 911th Infantry Battalion and 912th Tank Battalion salute during the National Anthems.



Photo by Cpl. Immanuel M. Johnson



# Belleau Wood Memorial 2016

(May 28-29, 2016)

The 98th Belleau Wood Memorial Day Ceremony is an annual World War One commemoration that serves to remind all audiences of the enormous sacrifices made by the Second U.S. Army Division and 4th Marine Brigade during the Battle of Belleau Wood, which took place in June 1918. The main ceremony takes place at the Aisne-Marne American Cemetery in Belleau, France with a Memorial Day service at Oise-Aisne American Cemetery in Fère-en-Tardenois, France.



Photo by Sgt. Kirstin Merrimarahajara



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Top Right: Members of the official party, including General Robert B. Neller, Commandant of the Marine Corps, salute during a Memorial Day ceremony in which U.S. Marines performed alongside the French Army at the Aisne-Marne American Memorial Cemetery in Belleau, France. The French and the Americans gathered together, as they do every year, to honor those service members from both countries who have fallen in WWI, Belleau Wood and throughout history, fighting side by side. Center Left: Marines from the 2nd Marine Division band and 6th Marine Regiment also visited Château-Thierry and other locations during the trip.



## Community Relations in Sicily

(May 25, 2016)

Marines conduct community relations regularly each week in towns across Sicily learning about the Sicilian culture and educating our hosts on the U.S. Marine Corps. The Marines visit orphanages engaging with children playing games. The Marines cleanup cultural areas restoring the sites' luster. The Marines also visit local schools interacting with the students which usually involve tours of the city and questions to the Marines from the students.



Photo by Cpl. Alexander Mitchell



Photo by Cpl. Alexander Mitchell



Photo by Cpl. Alexander Mitchell

Top: U.S. Marines and Sailors with Special Purpose Marine Air-Ground Task Force Crisis Response-Africa, stand with students and faculty for a group photo in front of an American and Italian cake during a community project in Nicosia, Italy.

Middle: Dr. Luigi Salvatore Bonelli, the mayor of Nicosia, Italy, hands off an award to Navy Lt. Arthur Briggs, the chaplain and 1st Lt. Eric Abrams, the public affairs officer for SPMAGTF-CR-AF, in the Plazzo de Centro.



Photo by Cpl. Alexander Mitchell



# SPMAGTF-CR-AF RIP/TOA

(Jan. 25-29 2016)

Special Purpose Marine Air Ground Task Force-Crisis Response-Africa conducted a pre-planned Relieve In Place/Transfer of Authority ceremony. While allocated to AFRICOM, the force provide crisis response options for both Combatant Commanders. SPMAGTF-CR-AF may be directed to operate anywhere within the combatant command's geographic scope.



Photo by Sgt Kassie L. McDole



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Photo by Sgt Kassie L. McDole

Top Left: Marines stand in formation during the Transfer of Authority ceremony. Top Right: Col. Calvert J. Worth Jr gives a speech as he departs as the commander of the crisis response force. Bottom Left: The color guard await the start of the ceremony. Bottom Middle: Col Worth hands over the colors to Col Martin F. Wetterauer III. Bottom Right: Col. Wetterauer inspires the newest Marines of the crisis response force.



# BSRF RIP/TOA

(Jan. 18-22, 2016)

Black Sea Rotational Force conducted a pre-planned Relieve In Place/ Transfer of Authority ceremony. this contingent of Marines and Sailors train in the Black Sea, Balkans and Caucasus regions maintaining their readiness and strategic partnerships. Their efforts improve interoperability, promote collective security, and provide the capability for rapid crisis response as directed by EUCOM and U.S. Marine Corps Forces Europe and Africa.



Photo by Cpl. Kelly L. Street



Photo by Cpl. Kelly L. Street

Above (left): The Commanding Officer and Sergeants Major of 1st Battalion, 8th Marines post the unit's colors. (right) The Commanding Officer and Sergeants Major of 3rd Battalion, 8th Marines retire their unit's colors. Below: Romanian Armed Forces stand with U.S. Marines welcoming the new rotation of Black Sea Rotational Force.



Photo by Cpl. Kelly L. Street



Photo by Cpl. Kelly L. Street



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