



## **Commander, Expeditionary Strike Group 2**

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### **ESG 2 To Participate in Joint Task Force Exercise**

By Lieutenant John Fage, Expeditionary Strike Group 2 Public Affairs

NORFOLK, Va. – Expeditionary Strike Group Two will operate as the Combined Maritime Force Component Command in a joint task force exercise taking place off the US east coast - from the waters off Virginia to Florida - later this month.

JTFEX 08-4 is a joint and combined exercise designed to provide realistic training environments for US and coalition forces that closely replicate the operational challenges routinely encountered during military operations around the world.

As the CFMCC, ESG Two will be responsible for nearly all coalition maritime assets participating in the exercise.

“The primary purpose of this year’s exercise is to certify Commander, Second Fleet as a combined joint task force and to provide pre-deployment certification for USS Theodore Roosevelt (CVN 71) Carrier Strike Group, the Iwo Jima Expeditionary Strike Group and Navy Expeditionary Combat Command,” said Maj. Guy West, Marine and a lead planner for the exercise.

“It provides realistic training environments and helps make sure our forces are ready to support any type of mission they are called to perform,” he added.

An additional benefit of the exercise will be the opportunity to train with coalition partners while sharpening skills to successfully support the Chief of Naval Operations’ Maritime Strategy.

“Executing the core capabilities of the Maritime Strategy – forward presence, deterrence, sea control, power projection, maritime security, humanitarian assistance and disaster response may come from a U.S. Navy

plan, but it's not just a Navy and Marine Corps responsibility," said Rear Admiral Terry McKnight, commander, ESG Two and maritime component commander for the exercise. "Keeping the waters safe is an international responsibility and we're glad to have our coalition partners with us for JTFEX."

British Commodore Robert Mansergh, Second Fleet's deputy director, said he's looking forward to the opportunity he'll have as the deputy CFMCC for JTFEX.

**"To be ready for real world contingencies, you have to practice like it's a real world contingency," he said. "If a major contingency were to take place, it would most likely involve other countries, not just the U.S. This gives the U.K., Brazil, France, and others a chance to practice and hone their skills right alongside each other, as if it were the real thing to make sure we're ready if and when the time comes."**

A force of more than 15,000 US and coalition partners, including the Theodore Roosevelt Carrier Strike Group (Commander Carrier Strike Group 2) and the Iwo Jima Expeditionary Strike Group (Commander Amphibious Squadron 4), which will also include the British aircraft carrier HMS Ark Royal, will participate in the exercise.

Participating U.S. Marine Corps units include the 26th Marine Expeditionary Unit and Marine Medium Helicopter Squadron 264.

ESG Two (ESG 2) is a flexible, scalable, adaptable and deployable Navy and Marine Corps staff designed to function as the core staff element for Navy component commands, numbered fleet commanders and the Joint Force Maritime Component Commander.

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*For further questions, please contact Commander, Expeditionary Strike Group 2 Public Affairs Office at 757-412-5805 or [fage@navy](mailto:fage@navy).*