

Naval Surface Fire Support

Discussion

OMFTS places unprecedented demands on Naval Surface Fire Support (NSFS) for range, accuracy, and responsiveness. Seabased fires will be challenged to support expeditionary operations and integrate its fires with the joint force over an extended battlespace. The Navy has developed a two-phase modernization program to upgrade its NSFS capabilities. Phase one includes improving and upgrading the capability on existing ships. Phase two is the new land attack destroyer, DD 21, and associated weapons systems.

The first phase of the Navy's modernization program includes modification of the current 5 inch gun mount, improvements in supporting arms coordination and fire control systems, and the development of Extended Range Guided Munitions (ERGM) and Land Attack Standard Missile (LASM). ERGM is a guided projectile fired from the 5 inch 62 caliber gun mount with a range up to 63 nautical miles. LASM will have a range far in excess of naval guns. It is intended to provide a highly responsive, accurate, all-weather means of addressing high pay-off targets and support to Marines deployed outside the protective range fan of naval gunfire. C2 system improvements include the Naval Fires Control System (NFCS) on shooters and command platforms and initiatives to integrate Navy and Marine supporting arms coordination systems on the command platforms.

For the second phase, the DD 21, although still a multi-warfare platform, is being developed from the keel up, with a focus on enhancement of land attack capabilities. It will be armed with the Advanced Gun System (AGS) and the Advanced Land Attack Missile (ALAM). The AGS will be a 155mm system capable of firing twelve rounds per minute to ranges beyond 63 nautical miles. The ALAM, a land attack missile tailored to meet the needs of the MAGTF commander, will provide increased range, accuracy, lethality, and responsiveness over LASM.

Marine Corps Position

Phase one of the Navy's modernization program will provide an interim NSFS capability. Phase two will provide increased range, accuracy, lethality and responsiveness required to support NSFS. These improvements will give the MAGTF commander an essential capability in executing expeditionary operations.