



RHUMB LINES

Straight Lines to Navigate By



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The Undersea Mission

"Superiority in undersea warfare means exploiting the concealment offered by the undersea environment for our advantage while rendering ineffective any undersea advantage an adversary might seek."

– **RADM Frank Drennan, Commander Naval Mine and ASW Command**

Superiority in the undersea environment is key to the Maritime Strategy and critical to the success of joint force operations. The U.S. Navy possesses a unique range of capabilities to address the challenges and opportunities of the undersea environment. Navy undersea forces directly support five of the six Maritime Strategy core capabilities including forward presence, strategic deterrence, sea control, power projection and maritime security.

Exploiting the undersea environment

- For 50 years, strategic ballistic missile submarines, as the most survivable component of U.S. strategic forces, have used the undersea environment to defend the nation.
- U.S. Navy submarines use the concealment of the undersea environment in concert with unmatched stealth, speed, payload and flexibility in direct support of Maritime Strategy missions including anti-submarine warfare (ASW), anti-surface warfare, strike warfare, special operations, irregular warfare, strike group support, mine warfare, and intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance.

Ensuring freedom of maneuver and freedom of access

- A key principle of the Maritime Strategy is that the United States will ensure freedom of maneuver and access for our forces while ensuring vital sea-lanes of communication and commerce remain open.
- U.S. forces face potential adversaries operating in increasingly stealthy submarines and capable of deploying sophisticated mines that can threaten freedom of maneuver and access for our forces, as well as disrupt the global supply chain.
- U.S. Navy air, surface and subsurface forces, along with our allies and partners, stand ready to deter and, when necessary, decisively neutralize submarine and mine threats.
- The Navy has forward deployed mine countermeasures and anti-submarine forces to assure allies of our commitment to freedom of the seas and to ensure the ability to respond rapidly in time of crisis.

Undersea forces in transition

- The U.S. Navy is committed to fielding preeminent undersea forces. Significant efforts are underway to modernize the force with increased capability, capacity and technological superiority. Examples include the Virginia-class submarine, the advanced P-8A *Poseidon*, the Littoral Combat Ship and its ASW Mission Module, and the MH-60R helicopter.

Key Messages	Facts & Figures
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Undersea superiority is key to ensuring freedom of maneuver and freedom of access for the joint force. • Exploiting the undersea domain and defeating adversary undersea forces and weapons are uniquely Navy missions. • The SSBN force is the most survivable leg of the strategic deterrence triad. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Since WWII, mines have damaged 14 U.S. Navy ships. • On any given day, an average of 30 U.S. submarines are underway. • Nearly 40 countries operate more than 300 submarines worldwide. • More than 60 countries have maritime mine stockpiles.