

**SEVENTEENTH CONGRESS OF THE REPUBLIC)
OF THE PHILIPPINES)
Second Regular Session)**



18 MAR 15 A11 :03

SENATE
S.B. No. 1748

Introduced by Senator Juan Miguel F. Zubiri

**AN ACT
ESTABLISHING THE PHILIPPINE MARINE CORPS, DEFINING ITS POWERS AND
FUNCTIONS, APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES**

EXPLANATORY NOTE

With more than 7,107 islands composing its archipelagic geography, the Philippines requires an extensive yet rapidly deployable amphibious force. The amphibious force must be able to conduct both seaborne and on-land operations, especially those that require unified transition between land and sea.

Under the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) General Orders No. 319, s.1950, the Philippine Marine Corps (PMC) was initially established to combat insurgents in far-flung locations and has transformed into a military force sent for overseas deployment. As a highly specialized yet interdisciplinary force, they are tasked to protect the country's territories, communities, and populace, which they have ably accomplished as seen in their efforts in securing the Spratly Islands in 1971 and in combating separatist forces in Mindanao from the 1990s to the 2000s.

In the last few years, the PMC has seen a rise in war activity, the most recent of which being the Marawi Siege, an attack that was mounted by the Maute pro-Islamic State group in 2017. From the conflict, thirteen Marines¹ were killed in the battle for Marawi who are part of the 168 military death toll.² Amidst lacking a legislated charter, the PMC continues their service to the nation through their readiness to help and ongoing efforts to develop their skills and knowledge of amphibious warfare. Given their active duty to protect the country, it is only appropriate that the PMC is given not only recognition but also support for its efforts not only to maintain peace and order in the country but also to protect the territorial integrity of the Philippines.

Currently, the Constitution only mandates that there be an Army, Air Force, and a Navy in the AFP. However, given the country's archipelagic nature, the PMC has become an integral part of the AFP in bridging the forces between sea and land even with its status as a sub-unit of the Philippine Navy.

As such, the bill seeks to establish a Charter that will institutionalize the Philippine Marine Corps as a branch of the AFP. Under the Charter, the PMC will

¹ Reyes, J., Marine killed in Marawi was set to marry childhood sweetheart (<http://news.abs-cbn.com/news/06/12/17/marine-killed-in-marawi-was-set-to-marry-childhood-sweetheart>)

² *The Manila Times*, 3 more soldiers added to list of dead from Marawi siege (<http://www.manilatimes.net/3-soldiers-added-list-dead-marawi-siege-military/373429/>)

operate distinctly, autonomously, and yet complementarily with the other branches of the AFP. Moving forward, the bill aims to generate an initiative to guarantee peace and security in the entire Philippines.

In view of the foregoing, immediate passage of this bill is earnestly sought.



JUAN MIGUEL F. ZUBIRI

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AN ACT
ESTABLISHING THE PHILIPPINE MARINE CORPS, DEFINING ITS POWERS AND
FUNCTIONS, APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

*Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the Philippines in
Congress assembled:*

1 **SECTION 1. Short Title.** – This Act shall be known as the “*Philippine Marine*
2 *Corps Act.*”

3 **SEC. 2. Declaration of Policy.** – In accordance with Section 3, Article II of the
4 Constitution that mandates the supremacy of civilian authority over the military, and
5 Section 4, Article XVI of the same that provides “the Armed Forces of the Philippines
6 (AFP) shall be composed of a citizen armed force that shall undergo military training
7 and serve, as may be provided by law”, it is hereby declared the policy of the State to
8 maintain, organize, and enhance the AFP for the continuing development of national
9 defense to maintain peace and order.

10 **SEC. 3. Establishment.** - The Philippine Marine Corps (PMC) is hereby
11 established as an armed uniformed service, amphibious in character; distinct,
12 autonomous, but complementary to the Army, the Air Force and the Navy, as an
13 independent branch of service of the AFP.

14 The PMC shall include ground combat, combat support, combat service support,
15 aviation component, and such other units as may be necessary for the pursuit of its
16 mandate.

The organizational and operational structures of the AFP shall be adjusted
accordingly.

1 **SEC. 4. Powers and Functions.** – The PMC shall have the following powers
2 and functions:

- 3 (a) To conduct combined arms operations in the littoral battle space and
4 beyond under the AFP;
- 5 (b) To coordinate with the other branches of service in developing various
6 phases of amphibious operations, which pertain to the tactics,
7 techniques, and procedures with the necessary equipment employed
8 by landing forces and that of a joint maneuver force;
- 9 (c) To organize, train, equip, maintain, develop, deploy, and supervise the
10 PMC Reserve Force (PMCRF) for the purpose of assisting the PMC in
11 carrying out its functions;
- 12 (d) To formulate and develop doctrines, concepts, systems, policies,
13 procedures, strategies, tactics, and techniques for operations peculiar
14 to the Marines;
- 15 (e) To develop its capabilities for seaborne maneuvers; sustain maneuver
16 ashore; and multinational cooperation and engagement that is
17 amphibious in character, multi-role in nature, a seaborne arms force
18 with on-shore defense capability possessing combined arms with
19 supporting air components ensuring its capability and effectiveness as
20 a major combatant in the protection of the islands of the Philippine
21 Archipelago;
- 22 (f) To deploy such forces necessary for strategic defense under the Joint
23 Defense Force and for employment of operational commands;
- 24 (g) To deploy forces for disaster response, relief, and rehabilitation efforts
25 of the AFP;
- 26 (h) To deploy forces in support to the law enforcement agencies in the
27 performance of their duties and responsibilities in implementing the
28 laws of the land;
- 29 (i) To perform such other functions that may be necessary in the
30 attainment of the objectives of this Act; and
- 31 (j) To determine its requirements which shall be addressed by a fiscal
32 allocation and modernization efforts of the Department of National
33 Defense (DND).

34 **SEC. 5. Philippine Marine Corps Bases and Facilities.** – To carry out the
35 powers and functions of the PMC and the enhancement of its capabilities, three (3)
36 PMC Headquarters shall be established—one (1) in Luzon, one (1) in Visayas, and one
37 (1) in Mindanao. The PMC Headquarters in Mindanao shall serve as the National

1 Headquarters of the PMC. All of the PMC Headquarters shall be in strategic locations
2 where it can sustain its deployed forces given both spectrums of war condition. A
3 Marine Division may be established to effectively respond to the needs of the
4 operational commands based on its distinct characteristics and operating concept, as
5 may be deemed necessary.

6 **SEC. 6. *PMC Commandant.*** – The Commandant shall head the PMC, and shall
7 carry the rank of Lieutenant General. The Commandant shall be directly appointed by
8 the President from among its Marine Corps Generals, upon the recommendation of the
9 AFP Chief-of-Staff and the Secretary of the DND.

10 **SEC. 7. *Creation of the Marine Reserve Component.*** – The PMC shall
11 maintain, supervise, develop and train the PMC Reservists as a reserve force under the
12 direct control and supervision of the PMC Commandant and shall assist the PMC in the
13 conduct of efforts on force development as a whole.

14 **SEC. 8. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.*** – The Commandant of the PMC
15 shall promulgate rules and regulations for the implementation of this Act, as well as the
16 provision of acts, decrees, and orders, related to the implementation of the PMC
17 functions, for approval by the President and the Commander-in-Chief, upon the
18 recommendation of the Chief-of-Staff of the AFP and conformity of the Secretary of the
19 DND.

20 **SEC. 9. *Appropriations.*** – The PMC Commandant shall immediately prepare
21 the necessary guidelines to cover the establishment of the PMC as a service branch of
22 the AFP, the initial funding of which shall be charged against the current year's
23 appropriations of the PMC and, thereafter, in the Annual General Appropriations Act.

24 **SEC 10. *Transitory Provisions.*** –The incumbent two-star officer Major General
25 shall be the Acting PMC Commandant, pending the appointment by the President.
26 Likewise, the existing organizational structure of the PMC shall be followed until new
27 rules and regulations have been promulgated, and approved by the President.

28 Further, this Act shall not diminish, reduce, or remove the existing benefits and
29 privileges of PMC personnel under existing laws, rules, and regulations.

1 **SEC. 11. Separability Clause.** – If for any reason any provision of this Act is
2 declared unconstitutional or invalid, such parts not affected thereby shall remain in full
3 force and effect.

4 **SEC. 12. Repealing Clause.** – All laws, decrees, executive orders, rules and
5 regulations and other issuance's or parts thereof which are inconsistent with this Act are
6 hereby repealed, amended or modified accordingly.

7 **SEC. 13. Effectivity.** – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its
8 publication in the Official Gazette or in any two (2) newspapers of general circulation.

Approved,

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