



**NORTHERN LUZON COMMAND**  
**ARMED FORCES OF THE PHILIPPINES**  
Camp General, Servillano Aquino, San Miguel, Tarlac City

NLC3

16 May 2016

**STANDING OPERATING PROCEDURE**  
**NUMBER** 03 - 2016

**CONDUCT OF MARITIME AIR PATROL (MARPAT)**

**I. GENERAL:**

NOLCOM is mandated to conduct joint operations against all national security threats within its area of responsibility. This is to ensure and secure national sovereignty and territorial integrity. Currently, NOLCOM'S distinct operational focus is Territorial Defense Operations across a defined maritime domain. The conduct of maritime patrols through PAF and PN air assets is deemed vital to the attainment of Maritime Domain Awareness (MDA) and in order to accomplish its mission. It is therefore important to coordinate, integrate, synchronize, optimize the effects and outcomes of maritime air patrols through an institutionalized and systematic approach as embodied by this policy.

**II. PURPOSE:**

This SOP aims to establish policies and procedures in the conduct of Maritime Air Patrols in support of any of NOLCOM's Four (4) mission areas within the AOR.

**III. OBJECTIVES:**

1. Coordinate, integrate, and synchronize all maritime air patrols conducted in NOLCOM's AOR.
2. Set the required standards during all phases of maritime air patrol, (pre-mission, execution and post mission).
3. Enhance NOLCOM's air operations and maximize the employment of its air assets.

**IV. SCOPE:**

This SOP covers the important terminologies, policies and procedures to be followed in the conduct of MARPAT in NOLCOM AOR. Likewise, it provides general guidelines to units in monitoring allied foreign aircrafts/vessels conducting MARPAT within the NOLCOM Maritime Areas.

## **V. APPLICABILITY:**

SOP applies to all aircraft of OPCOM/OPCON/TACON to this Command. Likewise, foreign allied aircraft conducting air operations within NOLCOM's AOR are covered by this SOP. Further, this also includes the non-flying units involved in support of air operations specifically during MARPATs undertaken by this Command.

## **VI. OPERATIONAL DEFINITION OF TERMS:**

1. **Maritime Air Patrol (MARPAT)** – is the method of monitoring the maritime domain from the air. Generally conducted by military and law enforcement agencies, maritime air patrol is usually aimed at identifying human activities and environmental anomalies.

It is an air mission component of MARPAT undertaken to monitor areas within the maritime domain of NOLCOM. Generally, this is conducted by air assets of Philippine Air Force (PAF) and Philippine Navy (PN) within the NOLCOM Area of Responsibility (AOR).

MARPAT refers to active patrol of an area extended to the Two hundred (200) nautical mile Exclusive Economic Zone, as opposed to passive monitoring system such as land-based RADARs, sound-detection fixtures or land-based spotters. A maritime patrol package consists of a primary aircraft and can be supported by a ship/surface asset, submarine, satellite or another aircraft examining the patrolled area and seeking out activities and anomalies to be identified and reported. Maritime air patrol is critical in wartime and peacetime situations, specifically, for ISR to locate enemy. Moreover, during peacetime, maritime air patrols is important for search and rescue, environmental protection and support to maritime governance particularly for ensuring legal use of waters.

A typical MARPAT is generally a non-hostile patrol by an air asset aimed at providing inputs to achieve a common operational picture (COP) of the AOR or specific areas of interest (AI) of NOLCOM.

Appropriate documentation instruments and procedures are to be carried out in the conduct of MARPAT.

2. **Maritime Domain** – all areas and things of, on, under, relating to, adjacent to, or bordering on a sea, ocean, or other navigable waterway, including bays, estuaries, islands, coastal areas, and the littorals.

3. **Maritime Operations** – actions performed by forces on, under, or over the sea to gain or exploit control of the sea or to deny its use to the enemy. It seeks to protect strategic maritime interests by deterring and preventing activities in Philippine maritime territories and jurisdictions that are prejudicial the nation's security.

4. **Maritime Patrols** – is the task of monitoring areas of water. Generally conducted by military and law enforcement agencies, maritime patrol is usually aimed at identifying human activities. Maritime patrol refers to active patrol of an

area, as opposed to passive monitoring systems such as sound-detection fixtures or land-based spotters. A patrol consists of a ship, submarine, aircraft, unmanned vehicle or satellite examining the patrolled area and seeking out activities to be identified and reported.

5. **Maritime Air Surveillance (MAS)** – it is a component of MARPAT conducted by air assets of the Command. It includes the examination or observation of an area territory or airspace from the air either visually or with the aid of photography or electronic devices in order to accrue information or to take actions when situation warrants.

6. **Maritime Air Reconnaissance (MAR)** – it is a component of MARPAT conducted by the air assets of the Command. MAR is a mission undertaken to obtain, by visual observation or other detection methods, information about the activities of an enemy or adversary or to secure data concerning the meteorological, hydrographic, or geographic characteristics of a particular area to enhance the conduct of maritime operations in the West Philippine sea (WPS) or Northern Luzon Waters. Appropriate documentation is also conducted during MAR thru collection of information imagery intel, observation on enemy maneuvers and artillery spotting via specific mission usually conducted over limited period and directed against specific targets.

7. **West Philippine Sea (WPS)** – it is the maritime domain extending from the Western territorial sea limits up to the EEZ and/ or the Western boundaries of the Kalayaan Island Group (KIG) as prescribed in Presidential Decree 1596, Whichever is Applicable. Essentially, WPS Includes the part of the South China Sea that is closest, and of vital interest, to the Philippines. It is comprised of the Luzon sea, that includes Bajo de Masinloc, also known as Scarborough shoal; as well as the waters around, within and adjacent to the Kalayaan Island Group (KIG).

8. **NOLCOM Maritime AOR** – also called the North Luzon Waters and covers the territorial waters up to the 200 NM EEZ at the Western and Eastern Seaboard of Luzon to include the Benham Rise which is an extension of the Philippine Continental Shelf. This is further subdivided into three Maritime Areas;

a. **Maritime Area 1** – Starts along the 12NM Territorial water of Bataan and extends westward up to the 200NM EEZ line (covering the Bajo de Masinloc (BDM)) then extends northward following the EEZ line until it intersects with the 315-degree line which starts from the Mayraira Pt, Pagudpud, Ilocos Norte (Coordinates N 18 deg 38.941 min, E 120 deg 51.094 min or 51Q TA 73404 63434).

b. **Maritime Area 2** – Starts from the Mayraira Pt which intersects with the PH EEZ and follows the EEZ line boundary with Taiwan (covering the Babuyan and Batanes Group of Islands) going eastward until it intersects with the 45-degree line which starts from Siniguian Point, Santa Ana, Cagayan (Coordinates N 18 deg 31.371 min, E 122 deg 13.508 min or 51Q VA 18229 48216).

c. **Maritime Area 3** – Starts from the 45-deg line from Siniguian Point and follows the 200NM EEZ line southward to include the Benham Rise until it intersects with the horizontal boundary line which starts at the Provincial boundary of Quezon Province and Aurora Province.



9. **Territorial Defense Operations (TDO)** – Operations that involves the protection of Philippine Territory, sovereignty, domestic population, and critical infrastructure against external threat and aggression. It requires presence of force that exhibits competence to defend, govern, and manage contested features along and within the Philippine Territory; effective and real time surveillance and monitoring system for quick response operations; and, synergized efforts with civilian agencies in addressing the traditional and non-traditional aspects of maritime security.

10. **Maritime Situational Awareness** – refers to the 24/7 knowledge obtained from the integrated collection, analysis and exchange of information that relates to the maritime environment which are all used to support decision-making for governance, development and security undertakings or an enabling capability which seeks to deliver the required Information Superiority in the maritime environment to achieve a common understanding of the maritime situation in order to increase effectiveness in the planning and conduct of operations.

11. **Maritime Domain Awareness** – the effective understanding of anything associated with the maritime domain that could impact the security, safety, economy, or environment.

12. **Common Operational Picture** - a single identical display of relevant (operational) information (e.g. position of own troops and enemy troops, position and status of important infrastructure such as bridges, roads, etc.) shared by more than one Command.

13. **National Waters** – include all the water or maritime zones under Philippine sovereignty and sovereign rights. It extends or include the 24 NM Contiguous Zone and the 200 NM EEZ. In case of extended Continental Shelf like Benham Rise, the water above it can be part of national waters that extend to 350 NMs. Sovereign rights over natural resources is exercised outside of the Contiguous Zone up to the EEZ or Extended Continental Shelf.

14. **Territorial Waters** – is measured 12 NM from the baseline which are reckoned from the mean low water mark from the shore per provisions from the UNCLOS and the RA 9522. Full sovereignty is exercised over the Territorial Waters while sovereignty is limited to Customs, Immigration and Quarantine (CIQ) Regulations over the Contiguous Zone.

## **VII. POLICIES:**

1. As specified in Annex “D” of AFPSRROE dated 01 March 2015, the conduct of Maritime Patrol operations may be joint or unilateral operations. It is meant to facilitate the conduct of homogeneous Maritime Air Patrol operations, safeguard the security, safety and interest of the republic of the Philippines and the people and set the extent of NOLCOM responsibility in the conduct of crisis and peacetime Maritime Patrol operations.

2. To ensure that the conduct of MARPAT adheres to the “ONE AFP TEAM POLICY” this must be cleared and approved at the NOLCOM level. This is to enhance jointness and synergy of operations.

3. During MARPAT, appropriate documentation scheme (imagery, spotting, etc) must be conducted by units in order to provide this Command a common operational picture of the area and as future references. As such, a written After Flight Mission Report with photos taken must be rendered to this Command within six (6) hours after the completion of the Flight mission.

4. During the flight, ensure that location, radio frequencies and cell phone number of friendly forces including floating assets are identified and updated. As far as practicable, conduct radio checks with units within range of the aircraft. If available, Satellite Phones must be used as back-up means of communications. The principle of documentation is highly encouraged.

5. During the execution of the MARPAT mission, NOLCOM COC must be informed on all the relevant information pertaining to the flight of the aircraft.

6. SAR aircraft and medical team must be alerted by the NFNL or 1st Air Division PAF during scheduled MARPAT missions.

7. Usage of military aircraft for non-military mission is permitted provided it is only jibed with MARPAT mission and it does not hamper operational requirements. Such flights must be approved by COMNOLCOM or competent authority.

8. NOLCOM COC shall be responsible in coordination with other law enforcement agencies in order to draw operational information that may affect air operation in the AOR. Air units will be informed of air operations to be undertaken by other government and private agencies with air asset in AOR.

9. In cases where there are jibed "riders" or passengers during the MARPAT other than the mission team, the PIC is responsible to ensure the OPSEC Integrity of the mission.

10. As part of maritime situational awareness, the 1<sup>st</sup> Air Division, PAF and the NFNL shall institute measures for timely reporting of air/sea traffic through our emplaced monitoring systems (radars/LOS/LMD) which will be transmitted to COC, NOLCOM for appropriate action of the Command.

### **VIII. PROCEDURES:**

To ensure that the conduct of MARPAT will be undertaken in accordance with the properly constituted authority, the following procedures must be observed in all phases:

1. Pre-mission Phase:

During pre-mission phase, the following activities must be undertaken:

a. Conduct of flight synchronization conference to synchronize the movement of all air assets. During the flight synchronization meeting, the following objectives must be achieved:

1) Essential Elements of Information (EEl)s for the different flights to be conducted is gathered and disseminated to flying units. EEl)s will be the basis for the conduct of MARPAT.

2) Review of previous flights to determine priorities and assess lessons learned.

b. Conduct of coordination with concerned units/stakeholders and submit flight plan to this Command prior to departure.

c. Conduct of pre-flight briefing prior to the mission. This includes weather update, areas of interest/target, aircraft capability and limitations, and other relevant data.

d. Mission abort criteria is drawn prior to execution.

e. The official source of weather updates is the 900<sup>th</sup> Air Force Weather Group.

f. The details of a SAR Plan.

g. Emergency Landing Plan.

2. Execution:

Execution starts from the time the aircraft takes off until the completion of the mission. During the execution, the following must be observed:

a. Ensure that the Rules of the Air are observed.

b. Aircraft to conduct radio check with all friendly forces at designated reporting points and continuously monitor radio communication.

c. In case of challenges from foreign vessels such as the experiences in West Philippine Sea, **"Foreign Airplane you are approaching my military security area, please go away quickly in order to avoid misjudgment. Foreign aircraft you are approaching my area, please go away quickly to avoid wrong judgment"**:

1) When challenged over the radio within international airspace, reply in this standard format: **"This is PAF/PN aircraft transiting over international airspace. We are proceeding along our planned route, over."**

2) When challenged over BDM, the reply should be: **"This is PAF/PN aircraft, we are flying over our National Airspace, over."**

3) When challenged over Philippine EEZ, the reply should be: **"This is PAF/PN aircraft, we are flying over our Exclusive Economic Zone, over."**



4) When challenged over a distance of 12NM from the shoreline of Batanes Group of Islands, the reply should be: **"This is PAF/PN aircraft flying over Philippine Territorial Airspace, over."**

5) After the standard reply, PAF/PN aircraft will continue to fly straight on its planned route and prevent any action that may be misinterpreted as aggressive.

6) In cases where a foreign aircraft flies dangerously close or manifests hostile intent, the MARPAT mission must be immediately aborted and withdraw to a safe distance to avoid escalation while documenting the incident.

d. Report the incident immediately to NOLCOM via satphone or any communications system available.

e. Submit spot report one (1) hour upon landing. Said document will be treated as **"SECRET"** and transmitted as **ZULU** message.

f. All actions while airborne are to be recorded/documented and submitted to NOLCOM ASAP.

3. Post Mission/Report Generation:

a. Conduct debriefing regarding the MARPAT mission.

b. Submit After Flight Mission Report (AFMR) with accompanying photos within and not later than six (6) hours after the mission. However significant findings must be reported immediately upon visual contact. Priority for AFMR/photo submission is NOLCOM.

c. Photos must be of acceptable quality and completeness in details. Otherwise, a re-take of the mission must be undertaken to ensure compliance.

d. After Flight Mission report shall follow the prescribed format with the following details:

1) Mission data which includes:

- Pilots, crew and intel personnel/passengers;
- Mission;
- Type of aircraft and tail number;
- Date and time of mission;
- Hours flown and number of sorties;
- Itinerary; and
- Call signs.

2) Operations/events/sightings.

3) Photos Taken during the mission.

e. After Flight Mission Reports will be the basis of issuance awards for personnel directly involved in the MARPATs/sorties.

**IX. RESPONSIBILITY:**

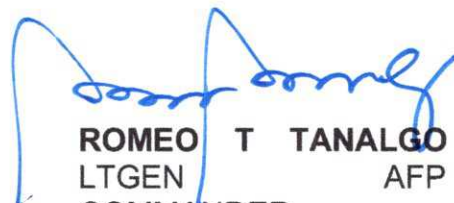
All Commanders of Organic/OPCOM/OPCON and TACON units of this Command are responsible for the strict implementation of this SOP.

**X. RESCISSION:**

All other publications in conflict with this SOP are hereby rescinded

**XI. EFFECTIVITY:**

This SOP shall take effect upon publication.



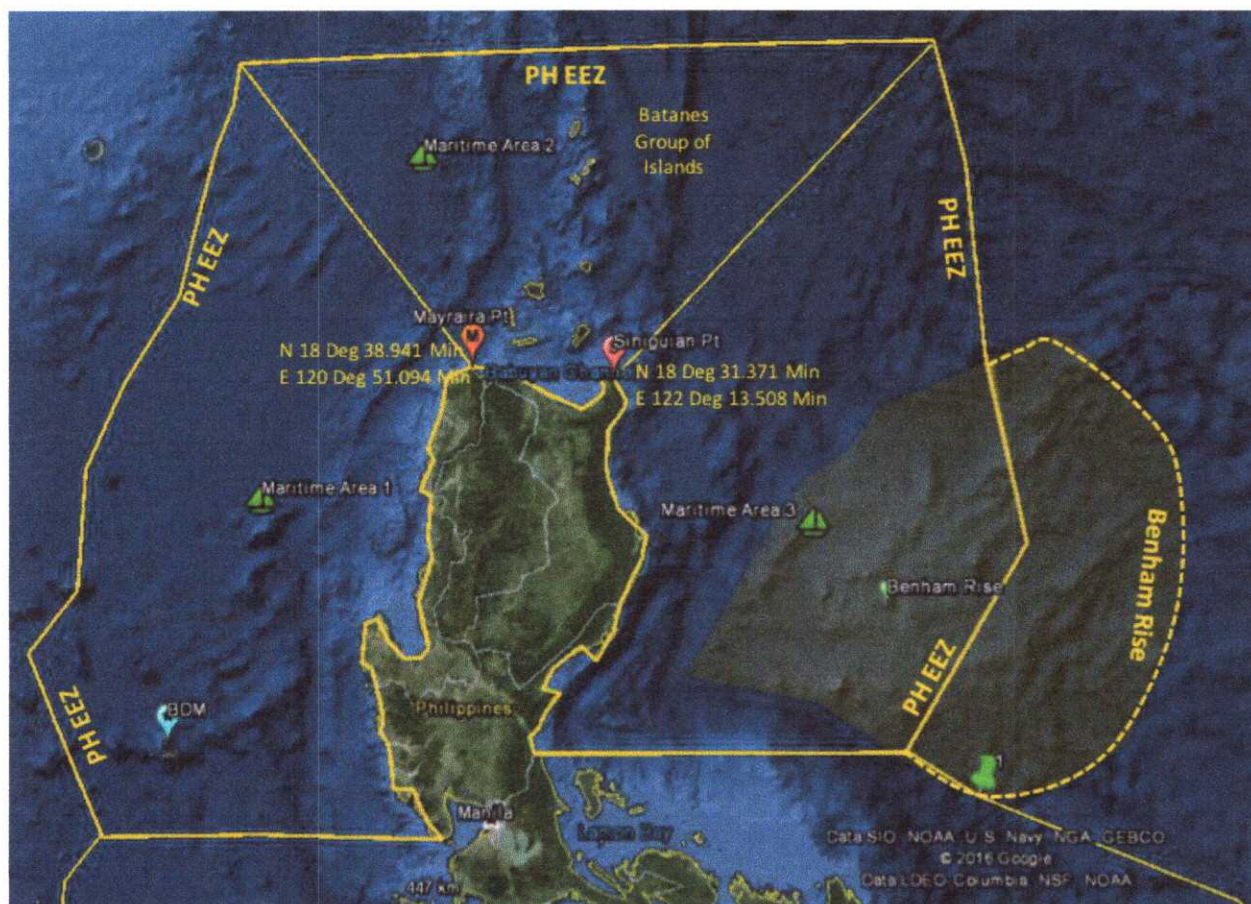
**ROMEO T TANALGO**  
LTGEN AFP  
COMMANDER

**Attachments:**

- A – NOLCOM Maritime AOR Sketch
- B – MARPAT Reporting Format
- C – Flight Synchronization Cycle



Annex A- NOLCOM Maritime AOR Sketch



ACKNOWLEDGE.

  
TANALGO  
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**Annex B- Reporting Format**

Headquarters

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Date:

SUBJECT: AFTER FLIGHT MISSION REPORT

TO: COMMANDER, NOLCOM  
Camp Aquino, San Miguel, Tarlac City  
(Attn: U2/U3)

1. Personnel Involved:

Designation	Name	Remarks
Pilot		
Co-Pilot		
Crew Members	1.	
Passengers	1.	

2. Mission:

3. Type of aircraft and tail number:

4. Date and time of mission:

5. Hours flown and number of sorties:

6. Itinerary:

7. Call signs:

8. Result of MARPAT:

- a. Operational activities:
- b. Sightings/Findings:

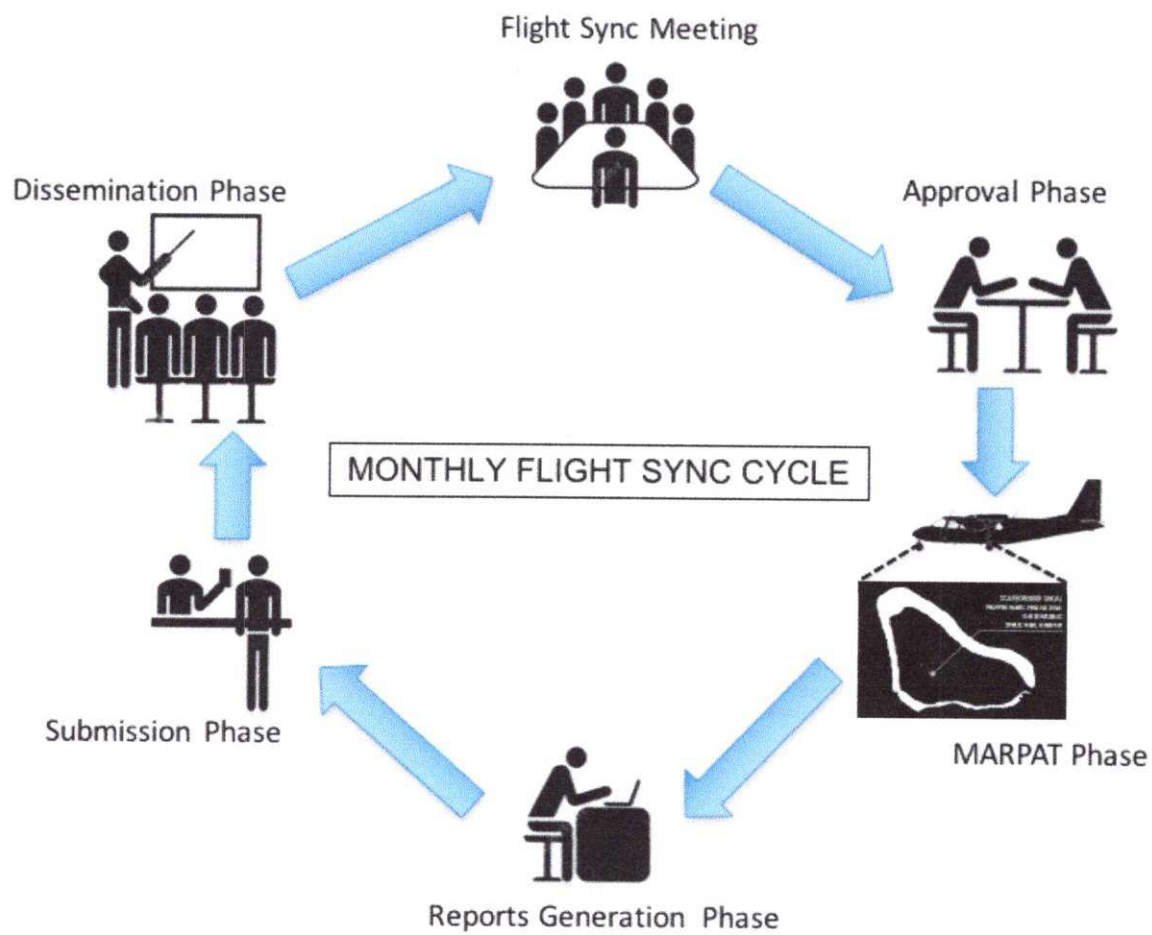
9. Attachments:

- a. Photos Taken during the mission.
- b. Sketches of identified foreign aircrafts/ships (if obtained)

Signed by:

MARPAT Commander

## Annex C – Flight Synchronization Cycle



ACKNOWLEDGE.

  
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