

SENSITIZATION LECTURE ON NIGERIAN NAVY DOCTRINE

INTRODUCTION

1. The effectiveness of any navy does not rest on platforms and weapons alone, but on a shared understanding of how to think, act, and fight as a coordinated force. This shared understanding is what we refer to as doctrine. In today's rapidly changing security environment, shaped by evolving threats, advancing technology, and complex maritime challenges, it is essential that every naval personnel understand the guiding principles that underpin our operations. Doctrine ensures that, regardless of rank or role, we operate with unity of purpose and clarity of action. Technological advancements, organizational dynamics, political considerations and cultural factors usually exert combined influence on doctrine and strategy formulations. Technological innovations fuelled by a vision of mechanized warfare and the idea of strategic containment, drove the development of Western military doctrine for Limited War after World War I and for the Cold War that followed World War II. Thus, doctrine is developed appropriately for the available weapons and technologies and for the people who must operate and maintain them, as well as the prevailing circumstances and conditions in the security environment.

2. The NN Doctrine serves as the foundation for naval operations, providing a framework for achieving its mission of protecting Nigeria's maritime interests and contributing to national security. The Doctrine is built around the navy's core values and is guided by the Nigeria's national interest, maritime strategy and international law. This lecture therefore seeks to sensitize personnel on the key elements of the NN Doctrine, including its structure, relevance, legal context, and practical application in operations. By the end of this lecture, it is expected that all personnel will have a clearer understanding of their role within the doctrinal

framework and how their individual contributions support the overall mission of the NN.

AIM

3. To provide an understanding of the NN Doctrine, its underlying principles and its role in protecting Nigeria's maritime interest and national security.

SCOPE

4. The lecture will cover the following:
- a. The need for personnel to understand NN doctrine.
 - b. Sources of NN doctrine.
 - c. Legal context.
 - d. Overview of NN doctrine.
 - e. Employment of NN assets.

THE NEED FOR PERSONNEL TO UNDERSTAND NN DOCTRINE

5. NN doctrine exists to provide a standardized framework for how a navy organizes, trains, and fights. It translates high-level national security strategy into specific principles and procedures for sailors and commanders at sea. The NN doctrine ensures the following:

- a. **Operational Consistency.** It ensures that different units, ships, and aircraft can work together seamlessly by following shared concepts and techniques.
- b. **Professionalism and Training.** It serves as the foundation for training curricula and professional development, ensuring personnel are "operationally ready" and competent.

- c. **Resource Management.** It guides the "fleet renewal" process, helping the NN decide what types of ships or weapons to acquire based on its intended way of fighting.
- d. **Strategic Alignment.** It bridges the gap between political goals and tactical actions, ensuring every mission supports the nation's broader interests.

SOURCES OF NN DOCTRINE

6. The sources of NN Doctrine influences are National aim and interest, Grand National Strategy, National Security Strategy, National Defence Policy and Armed Forces of Nigeria Joint Defence Doctrine. These will be discussed below.

- a. **National Aim and Interest.** Nigeria's National Aim, as derived from the Nigerian Constitution, is the unhindered economic progress and socio-political development of the nation and its citizens. National Interest on the other hand, is built around a nation's core values, goals and ideologies. National Interest is used to evaluate, appraise or explain a country's behaviour on the international scene. Nigeria's goals and values, on which her National Interests are based could be categorized as political, economic, scientific and socio-cultural. These interests have also been classified as vital, strategic and peripheral.
- b. **Grand National Strategy.** The Grand National Strategy (GNS) is that plan of action at the grand strategic level that spells out the movement and use of large national resources available to a nation in pursuit of national ends. It has considerable overlap with foreign policy, but GNS focuses primarily on the implications of policy on the elements of national power (one of which is military). It involves purposive action

and comprises the state's deliberate effort to harness political, military, diplomatic, economic, legal, financial, science and technology tools to advance the state's national interest. The GNS is determined at the National Security Council (NSC) level. The over-arching strategic vision of the GNS is to make Nigeria a violence-free, safe, peaceful, self-reliant, prosperous and strong nation.

c. **National Security Strategy.** The National Security Strategy (NSS) is drawn from the GNS. It is prepared periodically by the Executive Branch of the Government, outlining the major national security concerns of Nigeria and the administration's plans to deal with them. It is intended to be a comprehensive statement articulating the worldwide interests, goals and objectives of Nigeria that are important to her security. The inherent objective is to apply all elements of national power to ensure human security, build individual and collective prosperity, cause national development and promote Nigeria's influence in regional, continental and global affairs. Nigeria's NSS is within the diplomatic, economic, military, legal, financial, science and technology contexts. Therefore, formulating and executing the NN Doctrine is dynamic and interactive. Unexpected events and crisis could also radically change national strategy, requiring the military to operate outside of previous planning assumptions and Defence Policy.

d. **National Defence Policy.** The overall objective of the National Defence Policy (NDP) is to protect Nigeria's interests, her people and core values. The NDP emanates from the extant NSS and focuses on the preservation of the safety of Nigerians at home and abroad as well as the protection of her critical assets. It enunciates general guidelines for the employment of the AFN in particular and national resources in general to maintain the country's territorial integrity and protect her from external

aggression. It is aimed at providing a compact, flexible, cost effective and above all, war winning Armed Forces. It provides direction for the development of the defence organization together with other elements of national power for the security of Nigeria.

e. **Armed Forces of Nigeria Joint Defence Doctrine.** The Armed Forces of Nigeria Joint Defence Doctrine (AFN JDD) draws from the NDP and NSS. It seeks to provide a description of concept and purpose, levels, types, application, hierarchy and interoperability of doctrine. It also outlines the main features of Nigeria's strategic policy that supports her national interests, and how the AFN contributes to the achievement of the nation's strategic policy objectives. The AFN JDD is based upon a long history of service to Nigeria and enduring principles that have been developed and tested over time. Combined with an analysis of the emerging theories and trends that will shape the future security environment, the AFN JDD provides the military strategic guidance essential for the development and employment of the full range of AFN capabilities across the spectrum of operations in response to government directives.

LEGAL CONTEXT OF NN DOCTRINE

7. The NN operates within established international and domestic legal frameworks. UNCLOS provides the basis for sovereignty, jurisdiction, and rights within Nigeria's maritime zones. Innocent Passage allows foreign vessels to transit territorial waters so long as their actions are not prejudicial to national peace, good order, or security. Activities such as weapons exercises, intelligence gathering, pollution, illegal fishing, and unauthorized research invalidate innocent passage. Within the EEZ, Nigeria exercises sovereign rights over natural

resources, marine scientific research, environmental protection, and the establishment of installations.

8. The concept of Hot Pursuit allows Nigerian authorities to pursue offending vessels beyond territorial waters under defined conditions. International Humanitarian Law governs armed conflict and emphasizes the principles of military necessity, humanity, proportionality, and distinction. Rules of Engagement guide commanders on the lawful use of force and ensure control during transitions from peace to conflict.

OVERVIEW OF NN DOCTRINE

9. The NN Doctrine was promulgated in 2021 and has been in use for about 5 years. The First Edition of the NN Doctrine is divided into 9 chapters. The Chapters give a background of the evolution of doctrine from the World Wars and Cold War era to first generation naval maritime doctrines traceable to Rear Admiral Alfred Thayer Mahan's extensive discourse on sea power in the late Nineteenth Century which led to the promulgation of various editions of the British Maritime Doctrine (BR 1806). This cascaded down to the various naval and maritime doctrines used by many navies including the NN. Also, it explains naval doctrine in context, showing the relationship between maritime and naval doctrines as well as the relationship between policy, strategy and doctrine. Additionally, it highlights national documented sources of doctrinal influences. The doctrine further talks about the general concept of armed conflict, understanding Nigeria's maritime environment and interests. Furthermore, the legal context of the Doctrine which includes the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea and the International Humanitarian Law/Law of Armed Conflict were discussed.

10. The NN Doctrine also covers concept and application of maritime power, NN responsibilities across the spectrum of conflict and laid the foundation for the employment of NN assets and forces in peace time and in conflict. It also stipulates planning and conducting campaign or operations. The Doctrine also highlighted future trends which focused on maritime terrorism, doctrinal capacity, network enabled capability of MDA architecture, sustaining NN Fleet, cooperative engagement strategy, and the evolving blue economy; most of which are no longer future trends in today's context. Accordingly, the NN Doctrine is presently undergoing a review to reflect contemporary developments in naval warfare and the NN expansion through fleet renewal and organizational establishments.

EMPLOYMENT OF NN ASSETS

11. Doctrine lays foundation for the employment of naval forces in peace time and conflict. Specifically, the NN is that arm of the AFN that is tasked with the maritime defence of the country. Accordingly, the capability and force level of the NN needs to be built around a balanced fleet with adequate reach and combat power, to meet the national objectives. Drawing from the AFN JDD, the concept of Proactive Offensive Doctrine forms the basis for the conduct of naval warfare for current and future situations. This places operational/tactical commanders on sound footing on how to plan exercises/operations at their levels.

12. The NN has grown into a multi-dimensional force with capability to operate on the sea surface, in the air, on land and, to a limited extent, within the sub surface environment. The NN carries out assigned tasks and missions through its organizational structure, strategic communication, policy/doctrinal inputs, decision making processes, feedback system, C2, cooperation with maritime stakeholders, and strategic partnership.

CONCLUSION

13. The NN Doctrine serves as the foundation for the navy's operations, providing a framework for achieving its mission of protecting Nigeria's maritime interests and contributing to national security. The Doctrine is built around the navy's core values and is guided by Nigeria's national interest, maritime strategy and international law. The First Edition of the NN Doctrine is divided into 9 chapters. The Chapters give a background of the evolution of doctrine from the World Wars and Cold War era to first generation naval maritime doctrines. It explains naval doctrine in context, showing the relationship between maritime and naval doctrines as well as the relationship between policy, strategy and doctrine. It further highlights sources of NN Doctrine influences. The Doctrine further talks about the general concept of armed conflict, understanding Nigeria's maritime environment and interests. Furthermore, the legal context of the Doctrine which includes the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea and the International Humanitarian Law/Law of Armed Conflict were discussed.

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BY

HQ NAVDOC

2026



INTRODUCTION



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- **THE EFFECTIVENESS OF ANY NAVY DOES NOT REST ON PLATFORMS AND WEAPONS ALONE, BUT ON A SHARED UNDERSTANDING OF HOW TO THINK, ACT, AND FIGHT AS A COORDINATED FORCE**
- **TECHNOLOGICAL ADVANCEMENTS, ORGANIZATIONAL DYNAMICS, POLITICAL CONSIDERATIONS AND CULTURAL FACTORS USUALLY EXERT COMBINED INFLUENCE ON DOCTRINE AND STRATEGY FORMULATIONS**
- **THE NN DOCTRINE SERVES AS THE FOUNDATION FOR THE NAVY'S OPERATIONS, PROVIDING A FRAMEWORK FOR ACHIEVING ITS MISSION OF PROTECTING NIGERIA'S MARITIME INTERESTS AND CONTRIBUTING TO NATIONAL SECURITY**



RESTRICTED



AIM

**TO PROVIDE AN UNDERSTANDING OF THE NN
DOCTRINE ITS UNDERLYING PRINCIPLES AND
ROLE IN PROTECTING NIGERIA'S MARITIME
INTEREST AND NATIONAL SECURITY**

RESTRICTED



SCOPE

- ❖ **THE NEED FOR PERSONNEL TO UNDERSTAND NN DOCTRINE**
- ❖ **SOURCES OF NN DOCTRINE**
- ❖ **LEGAL CONTEXT**
- ❖ **OVERVIEW OF NN DOCTRINE**
- ❖ **EMPLOYMENT OF NN ASSETS**



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THE NEED FOR PERSONNEL TO UNDERSTAND NN DOCTRINE



THE NEED FOR PERSONNEL TO UNDERSTAND NN DOCTRINE

NN DOCTRINE EXISTS TO PROVIDE A STANDARDIZED FRAMEWORK FOR HOW A NAVY ORGANIZES, TRAINS, AND FIGHTS. THE NN DOCTRINE ENSURES THE FOLLOWING:

- **OPERATIONAL CONSISTENCY**
- **PROFESSIONALISM AND TRAINING**
- **RESOURCE MANAGEMENT**
- **STRATEGIC ALIGNMENT**



SCOPE

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SOURCES OF NN DOCTRINE

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- **NATIONAL AIM AND INTEREST**
- **GRAND NATIONAL STRATEGY**
- **NATIONAL SECURITY STRATEGY**
- **NATIONAL DEFENCE POLICY**
- **ARMED FORCES OF NIGERIA JOINT DEFENCE DOCTRINE**



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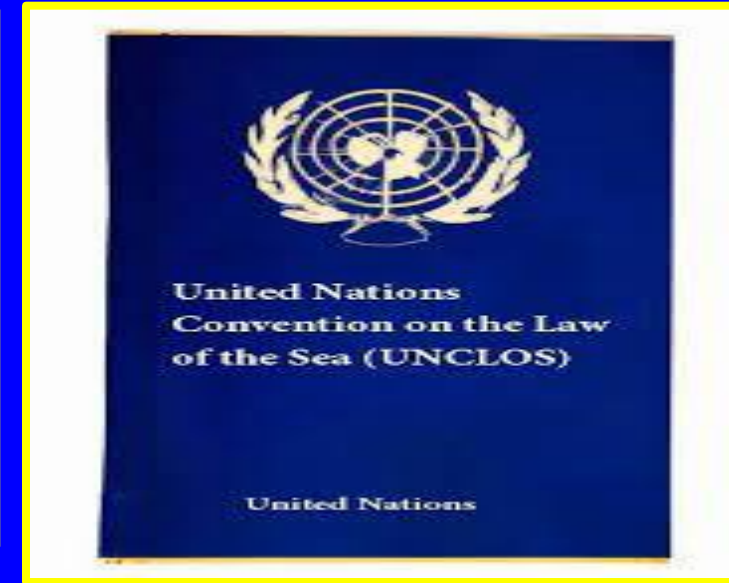


LEGAL CONTEXT

LEGAL CONTEXT

**THE NN OPERATES WITHIN
ESTABLISHED INTERNATIONAL AND
DOMESTIC LEGAL FRAMEWORKS**

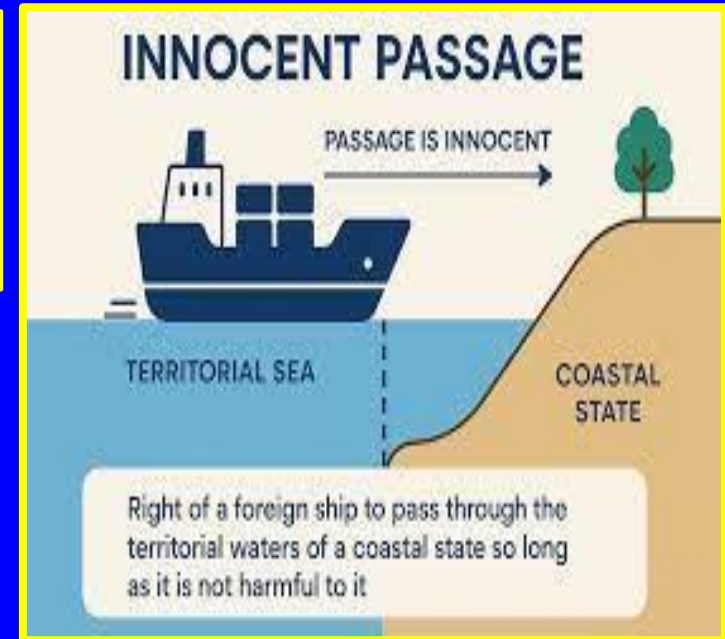
**UNCLOS PROVIDES THE BASIS FOR
SOVEREIGNTY, JURISDICTION, AND
RIGHTS WITHIN NIGERIA'S MARITIME
ZONES**



Source: <https://www.globalsecurity.or>

HOT PURSUIT

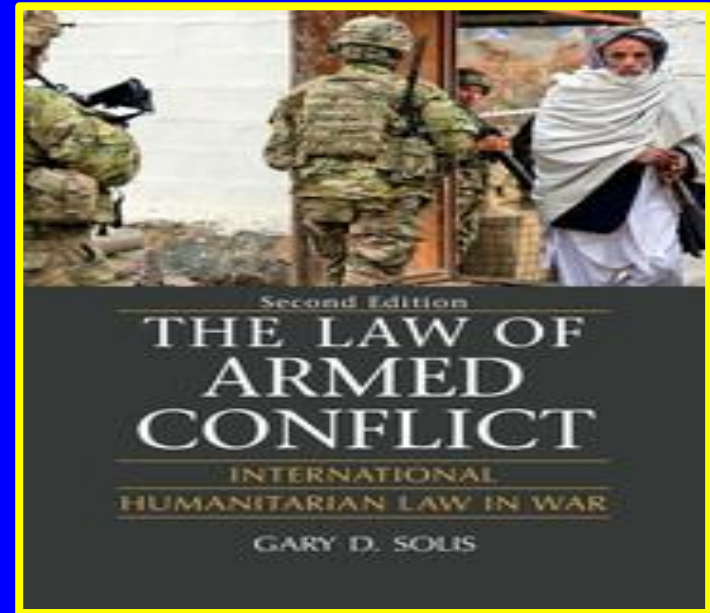
CONCEPT OF HOT PURSUIT ALLOWS NIGERIAN AUTHORITIES TO PURSUE OFFENDING VESSELS BEYOND TERRITORIAL WATERS UNDER DEFINED CONDITIONS.



Source: <https://www.military>

INTERNATIONAL HUMANITARIAN LAW/LAW OF ARMED CONFLICT

**INTERNATIONAL HUMANITARIAN LAW
GOVERNS ARMED CONFLICT AND
EMPHASIZES THE PRINCIPLES OF MILITARY
NECESSITY, HUMANITY, PROPORTIONALITY,
AND DISTINCTION.**



COVER PAGE OF LAC

Source: <https://www.cambridge.org/highereducation/books/the-law-of-armed>

RULES OF ENGAGEMENT

RULES OF ENGAGEMENT GUIDE COMMANDERS ON THE LAWFUL USE OF FORCE AND ENSURE CONTROL DURING TRANSITIONS FROM PEACE TO CONFLICT



RULES OF ENGAGEMENT

Source: <https://www.tvinsider.com/show/rules-of-engagement>



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OVERVIEW OF NN DOCTRINE

OVERVIEW OF NN DOCTRINE

**THE NN DOCTRINE WAS PROMULGATED
IN 2021 AND HAS BEEN IN USE FOR
ABOUT 5 YEARS**



Source: NAVDOC PHOTO ALBUM

OVERVIEW OF NN DOCTRINE (CONT)

REAR ADMIRAL ALFRED THAYER MAHAN'S EXTENSIVE DISCOURSE ON SEA POWER IN THE LATE NINETEENTH CENTURY WHICH LED TO THE PROMULGATION OF VARIOUS EDITIONS OF THE BRITISH MARITIME DOCTRINE (BR 1806)



REAR ADM ALFRED THAYER MAHAN'S

Source: <https://www.history.navy.mil/research/library/research-guides/>

OVERVIEW OF NN DOCTRINE (CONT)

THIS CASCADED DOWN TO THE VARIOUS NAVAL AND MARITIME DOCTRINES USED BY MANY NAVIES INCLUDING THE NIGERIAN NAVY



**COVER PAGES OF VARIOUS EDITIONS OF
BRITISH MARITIME DOCTRINE**

Source: <https://www.abebooks.com/British-Maritime-Doctrine>

OVERVIEW OF NN DOCTRINE (CONT)

**DOCTRINE TALKS ABOUT THE
GENERAL CONCEPT OF ARMED
CONFLICT, UNDERSTANDING
NIGERIA'S MARITIME
ENVIRONMENT AND INTERESTS**

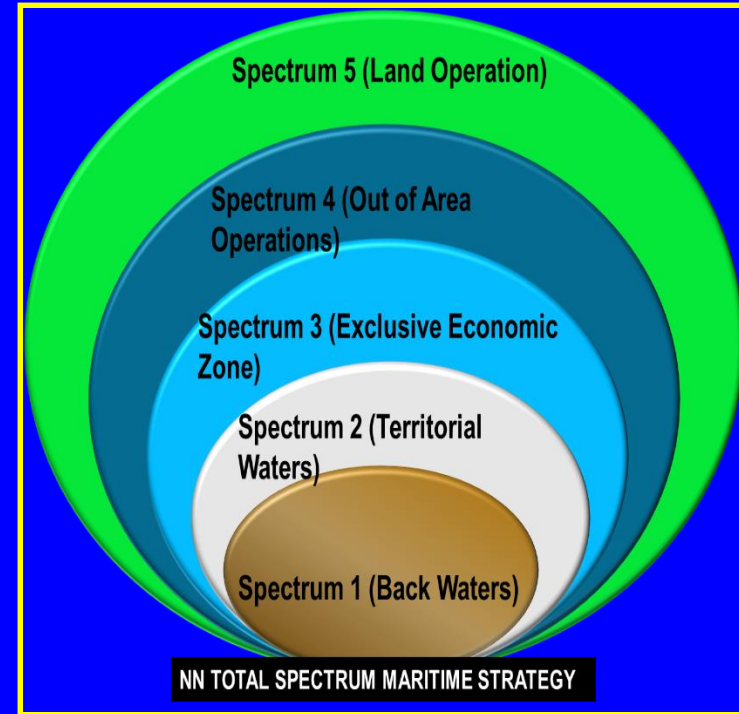


MAP SHOWING LOCATION OF NIGERIA IN GOG

Source: <https://www.researchgate.net/figure/Map-of-the-Gulf>

OVERVIEW OF NN DOCTRINE (CONT)

**THE NN DOCTRINE ALSO COVERS
CONCEPT AND APPLICATION OF
MARITIME POWER NN
RESPONSIBILITIES ACROSS THE
SPECTRUM OF CONFLICT**



SOURCE: NN ARCHIVE

OVERVIEW OF NN DOCTRINE (CONT)

NN MDA INFRASTRUCTURE: RMAC/FALCON EYE



SOURCE: NN ARCHIVE



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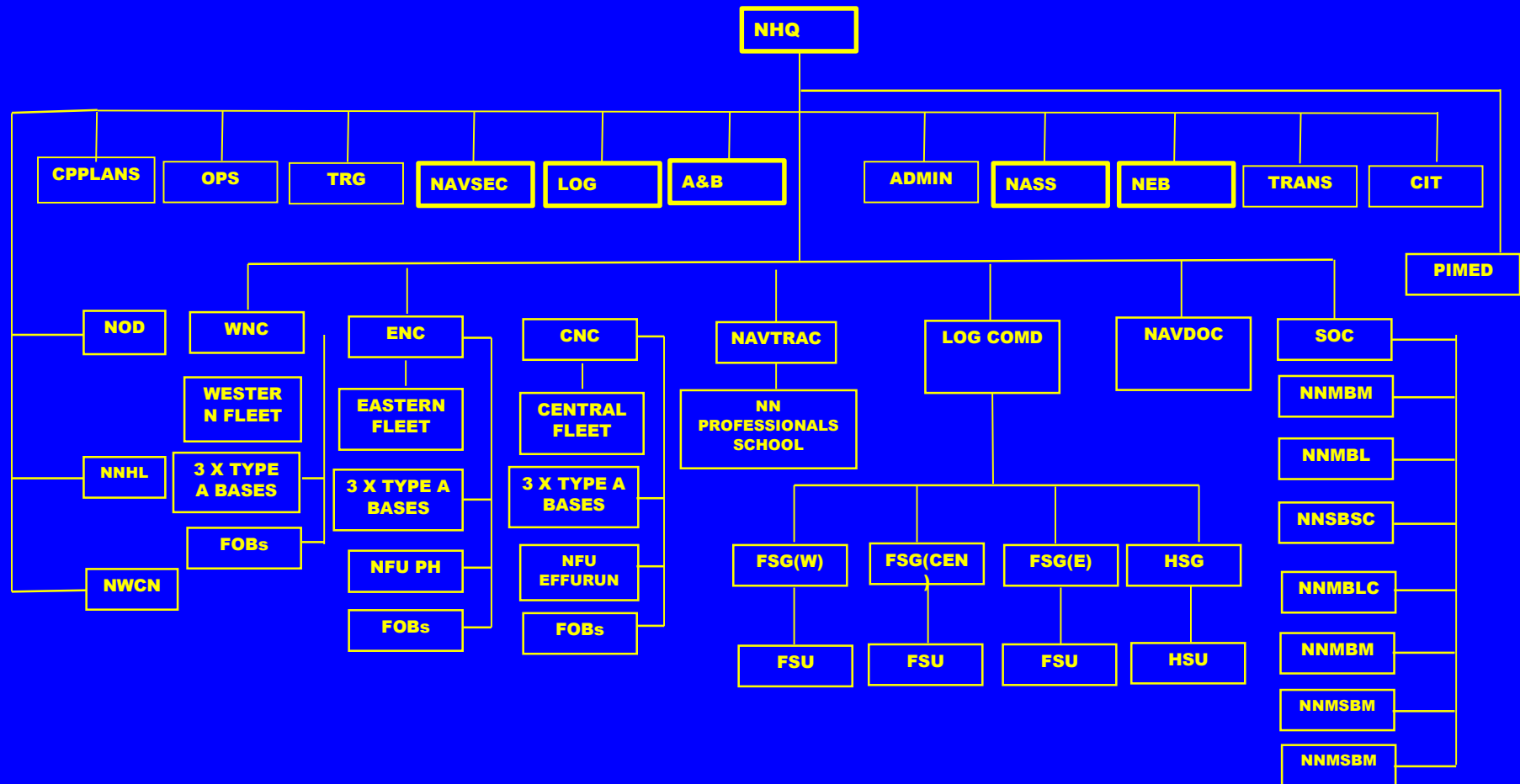
EMPLOYMENT OF NN ASSETS



EMPLOYMENT OF NN ASSETS

- **DOCTRINE LAYS FOUNDATION FOR THE EMPLOYMENT OF NAVAL FORCES IN PEACE TIME AND CONFLICT. SPECIFICALLY, THE NN IS THAT ARM OF THE AFN THAT IS TASKED WITH THE MARITIME DEFENCE OF THE COUNTRY**
- **THE NN HAS GROWN INTO A MULTI-DIMENSIONAL FORCE WITH CAPABILITY TO OPERATE ON THE SEA SURFACE, IN THE AIR, ON LAND**

EMPLOYMENT OF NIGERIAN NAVY ASSETS/FORCES



Source: NN DOCTRINE



CONCLUSION



**THANK YOU FOR
LISTENING**



INTERACTIVE SESSION