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VENEZUELA

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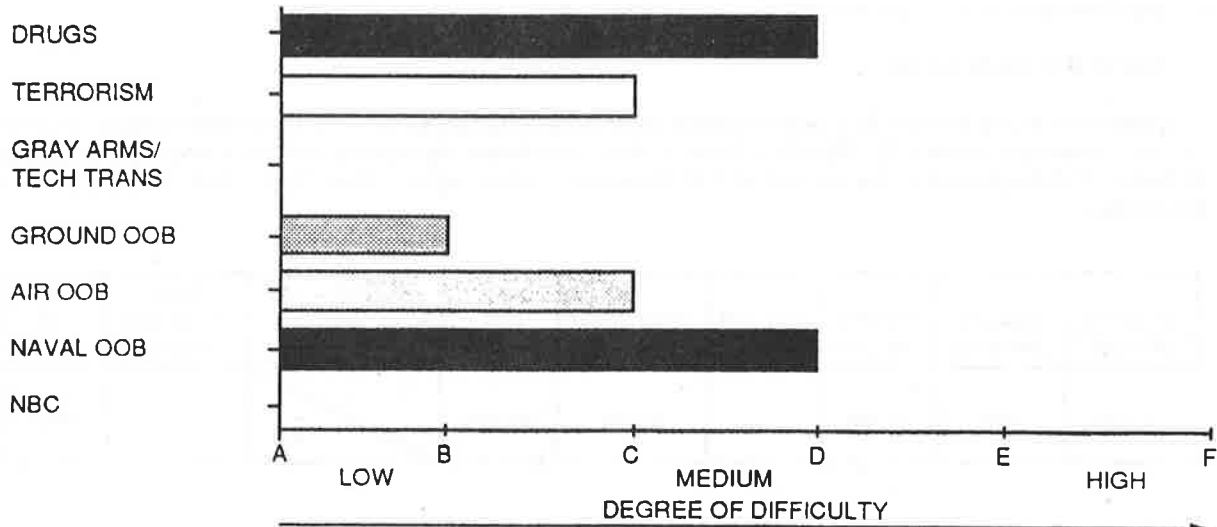


SUMMARY

Venezuela occupies a strategic position on major sea and air routes between North and South America. The U.S. and Venezuela share common objectives of strengthening democratic institutions and overall U.S. equity in this country is high. Venezuela is a major trading partner with the U.S. and exports significant amounts of oil. The U.S. has about \$2.1 billion in direct investment in Venezuela and over 20,000 U.S. citizens live there. Venezuela is a transit point for precursor chemicals and cocaine moving to and from South America. It is also a producer of as much as 2,000 metric tons of marijuana. The terrorist group Bondera Roja operates in Eastern Venezuela to attack Government installations and spread disorder. This group also coordinates with Colombian insurgents to pursue terrorist goals throughout the region. Because of its involvement in both drugs and terrorism, Venezuela deserves special attention by military planners. Venezuela has moderate size armed forces which has developed into one of the most modern and professional among Latin American countries.

The topography of Venezuela ranges from the Andes Mountains in the northwest, to plains extending south and east, to high plateaus, and rolling hills in the far south and east. The climate varies from tropical along the coast and inland river valleys, to temperate at the higher elevations. About 80 percent of the population lives in cities and towns along the coast and in the Andes. Over half of the country, mainly in the coastal and plain regions, is suited for cross-country movement of tracked vehicles. The average standoff distance for engagement by line of sight weapons (intervisibility) generally ranges from 1,000 to 2,000 meters. While hydrographic conditions would permit NGF platforms to approach the coast and provide adequate support for operations ashore, they would be out-gunned by Venezuelan coastal defense weapons. Coverage by 1:50,000 scale maps is limited to portions of the Caribbean coastal area. Airfields and ports are quite satisfactory to handle strategic lift. Key installations include oil fields as well as numerous modern and expanding communications, transportation, and industrial facilities. The time required for a MEU to move to Venezuela from the U.S. east coast is estimated to be in excess of six days. NEO conducted by a MEU under normal conditions in Venezuela would be very difficult due to over 20,000 potential evacuees.

VENEZUELA - THREAT SUMMARY

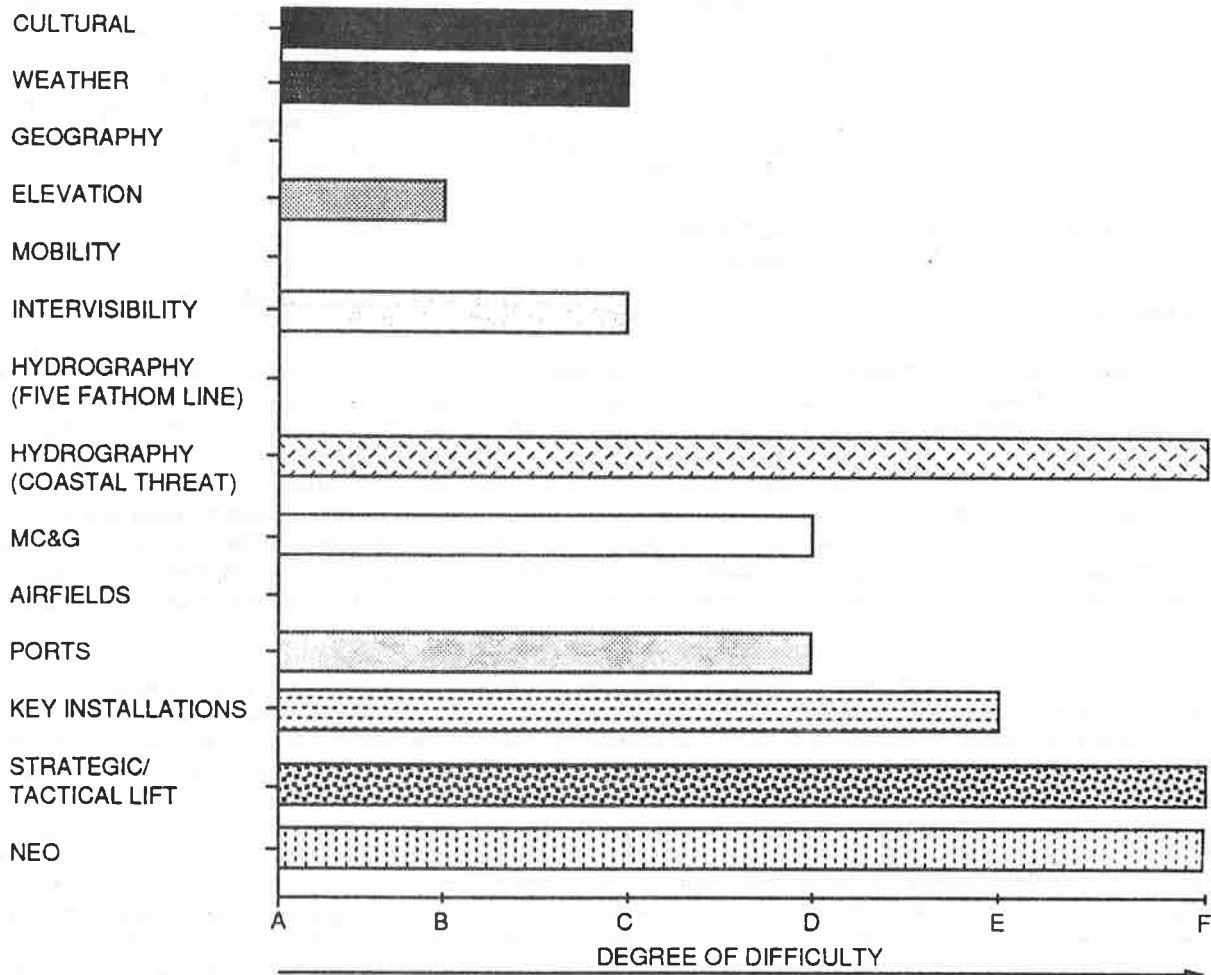


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VENEZUELA - TERRAIN AND LOGISTICS SUMMARY



U.S. Equities in Venezuela

- Important location on major sea and air routes between **North** and **South America**.
- Overall **U.S.** equity is high.

Venezuela is one of the **U.S.**'s most important **Latin American** trading partners and a major supplier of oil and petroleum products to the **U.S.** With \$2.1 billion in direct investment, **Venezuela** ranks fifth after **Brazil**, **Mexico**, **Panama**, and **Argentina** in the amount of **U.S.** investment in the region. Over 20,000 **U.S.** citizens reside in **Venezuela**.

Direct Inv (Mil of \$)	Exports (Mil of \$)	Imports (Mil of \$)	U.S. Aid (Mil of \$)	Total Equity (Mil of \$)	U.S. Citizens	\$ Rating Rating	Total Numerical Rating	Overall U.S. Equity
2,124	650	7,000	-	9,774	20,600	5 6	11	High

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Drug Threat

Drug Production	Drug Processing	Precursor Chemicals	Money Laundering	Transit Point
X				X

- Transit point for precursor chemicals and cocaine.
- Suspected large quantities of marijuana are produced and sent to **Colombia**.

Venezuela is an important point for the transit of precursor chemicals and cocaine. Marijuana is cultivated along the border with **Colombia**, apparently by **Colombian** traffickers; as much as 3,000 metric tons of cannabis may be grown in **Venezuela** and exported via **Colombia**.

Terrorism

The Bandera Roja (Red Flag - GBR) operates in eastern **Venezuela** and along the **Venezuela-Colombia** border. It engages in kidnappings and hijackings as well as raids on small towns. The Red Flag sometimes coordinates with the **Colombia** group M-19 and the National Liberation Army.

Consolidated Threat

In the **Western Hemisphere**, **Venezuela** constitutes a serious concern due to its involvement in narcotics trafficking and terrorism.

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General Ground OOB

Infantry	Tank OOB	Artillery	Army Size (Thousands)	Quality	Total Capability Value	Rating
Draft/TR	LAV	Howitzers/SP	34	4	78	B

Ground OOB consists of 34,000 troops. Conscripts from the rural and urban poor areas form the majority of the army strength. Officers and NCOs are all regulars. Training for enlisted men is accomplished in the infantry battalions. Officers attend various **Venezuelan** military schools, the **U.S. Army School of the Americas**, and the **Inter-American Defense College in Washington, D. C.** Tanks: AMX-13, AMX-30, M-18; Artillery: 160 mm MRS, M-56, M-101, M-109, M-114.

General Air OOB

Air OOB	Close Air	AAW (IAD)	Air Force Size (Thousands)	Quality	Total Capability Value	Rating
Early Radar	Early Smart	EW Radar	5	4	99	C

Fighter Aircraft: CF-5A, F-5E/F, F-16A, F-86K, Mirage IIIEV; Close Air: Canberra B82/88, Mirage 5, OV-10E, T-2D; Air Defense: Roland and RBS-70 SAMs; 18 Signal Flycatcher radars form the Guardian air defense system. It is reported that **Venezuela** has acquired other long-range air defense radars such as the AN/TPS-43. There are **Italian** and **Swedish** AA guns.

General Naval OOB

Naval OOB	S/S Missiles	Patrol Craft	Navy Size (Thousands)	Quality	Total Capability Value	Rating
ASUW/Air/ASW	HE	ASUW/Anti-air	11	4	95	D

Ships: 8 Frigates with SSMS, SAMs, guns, and torpedoes; SSM: Otomat; Patrol Craft: 6 Fast Attack Craft-Missile and Gun with Otomat SSMS, guns, fire control, and radars.

Culture (Language and Religion)

Primary language - Spanish

Primary religion - Catholic

There is a relatively small cultural difference between **Venezuela** and the **U.S.**

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Weather

Average Temperature (Degrees Fahrenheit)	Average Relative Humidity (Percent)	Average Annual Rainfall (Inches)	Rating
60-92	62	23-71	Mixed

The climate varies from tropical to temperate depending on the elevation.

General Geographic Conditions

URBAN	DESERT	JUNGLE	MOUNTAINOUS
X			

Operational Elevation

<2,000 FT	<4,000 FT	<6,000 FT	>6,000 FT	>9,000 FT	>12,000 FT
	X				

The topography of **Venezuela** is varied. The **Andes Mountains** and adjacent hill country are in the northwest. There is a coastal zone north of the mountains bordering **Lake Maracaibo** and the **Caribbean Sea**. The plains or "llanos" extend from the mountains south and east to the **Orinico River**. The **Guyana Highlands**, a vast area of high plateaus and rolling plains, extend south and east of the **Orinico River**. Eighty percent of the population lives in cities and towns.

General Cross-Country Mobility

- **Venezuela** is generally suited for cross-country movement of tracked vehicles.

Cross-country tracked movement would be possible in about half of **Venezuela**. In the remaining portions of the country, tracked movement would be difficult due to the rough terrain and greatly restricted in direction in many places by deep, unfordable streams.

Intervisibility (Line of Sight)

- Restricted, with line of sight distances generally ranging between 1,000 and 2,000 meters.

Line of sight distances of from 1,000 to 2,000 meters are considered feasible in about half of **Venezuela** primarily in the coastal zone bordering **Lake Maracaibo** and the plains in the south and east. In the regions of the **Andes Mountains** and **Guyana Highlands**, line of sight visibility would be limited to under 1,000 meters.

Hydrography (Five Fathom Line)

- NGF platforms are able to approach the coast to provide satisfactory support for operations ashore.

DMA Chart #	5 Fathom Line from Shore (Meters)	NFG Rating
24452	500	Good

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Hydrography (Coastal Threat)

- Significant coastal threat.

Maximum Capability Coastal Defense Weapon	Maximum Range of Weapon (Meters)	Rating (Compared with 5"/54-cal)
160 mm MRS	30,000	Threat Advantage

MC&G Shortfalls

- Limited map coverage.

1:50 New	1:50 Old	Some 1:50	MSI Avail	1:250 New	None
		X			

1:50,000 scale map coverage is limited to portions of the coastal area bordering the **Caribbean Sea**.

Airfields

- Highly accessible by air, with more than one airfield that can handle C-5 aircraft.

Number of Airfields	Type Aircraft (C-5, C-141B, C-130) Accommodated	Airfield Utility (Unconstrained/Constrained)	Rating
8	3 C-5 3 C-141B 1 C-130 1 None	3/5	>1/C-5

Airfields	Type Aircraft	Comments
Barquisimeto	C-130	-
Del Caribe International	C-5, C-141B, C-130	-
El Libertador	C-141B, C-130	VFR only.
General Francisco de Miranda	None	-
Josefa Camejo	C-141B, C-130	Daylight/VFR only.
La Chinita	C-5, C-141B, C-130	Taxiway narrow for C-5s.
La Fria	C-141B, C-130	Daylight/VFR only.
Simon Bolivar International (Caracas)	C-5, C-141B, C-130	-

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Ports

- Several moderate size ports which can accommodate strategic sealift.

Major Ports	Harbor Size	Channel/Anchorage Depths (Feet)	Cargo Pier Depth (Feet)	Cranes
Maracaibo	Small	36-40/31-35	21-25	Yes
La Salina	Small	41-45/36-40	-	-
Punto de Palmas	Small	41-45/-	-	-
Puerto Miranda	Small	36-40/31-35	41-45	-
La Estacada	Small	41-45/-	-	-
Amuay	Small	46-50/36-40	41-45	Yes
El Palito	Small	36-40/-	-	-
Puerto Cabello	Small	41-45/36-40	26-30	Yes
La Guaira	Medium	36-40/46-50	36-40	Yes
Puerto de Hierro	Small	-/over 76	41-45	Yes

Key Installations

Oil fields are found in the **Maracaibo** basin (along and under the northeast part of **Lake Maracaibo** and the **Maracaibo** and **Mara** districts, northwest of the lake), the **Orinoco** basin (numerous widely scattered fields south of **Puerto La Cruz**), and the **Barinas** basin.

U.S. Embassy	Communications	Highways	Railroads	Major Ports	Primary Airfields	Pipeline	Oil Field	NBC
Caracas	- Modern and expanding telecomm - 204 Radio stations - 59 TV stations - 4 Satellite stations	77,785 km	439 km	10	8	- Crude oil - Refined products - Natural gas	Yes	None

Strategic and Tactical Lift

The time required for a MEU on the **U.S.** east coast to embark on amphibious ships and sail to **Venezuela** is in excess of six days. The AAF/ACB can arrive within 24 hours but these elements do not possess a forcible entry capability.

NEO

NEO conducted by a MEU under normal conditions in **Venezuela** would be very difficult due to the large number of potential evacuees (20,600).

Embassy Staff	Evacuees	Inland Objective (nm)	Rating
608	20,600	10 (Caracas)	F

Note: In **Venezuela** the following factors are of little significance:

Gray Arms/Technology Transfer
NBC