



**ESTABLISHING A MARITIME AIR WING IN SRI LANKA NAVY: AN ANALYSIS ON
OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES**

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ABSTRACT

Ocean is a vital domain for an island nation like Sri Lanka. It is important to many economic activities and more important for national security. As a coastal nation it is obvious that Sri Lanka is facing both traditional and non-traditional security threats in the maritime domain. To ensure the national security, Sri Lanka Navy has been tirelessly working to ensure maritime security of the country. Not only the maritime security, as a coastal nation, Sri Lanka is responsible of other aspects such as Search and Rescue, Maritime Disaster Response and Preventing Maritime Pollution. Air Power in maritime domain is a critical capability in present context to face many of these challenges. However, Sri Lanka has hardly exploited the air dimension of maritime domain. This study emphasizes the requirement of a maritime air wing for the Sri Lanka Navy and identifies the role that maritime air wing should perform, opportunities that it provides and challenges of establishing a maritime air wing through a quantitative and qualitative analysis. The study focused on the research questions, What are the key opportunities and challenges in establishing a maritime air wing within the Sri Lanka Navy, and what are the roles it could play in enhancing national maritime security? The final outcomes are being further discussed and in conclusion, identifies in which roles that maritime air wing should focus on. Finally, this research recommends 'Duo Approach' for the future development of a maritime air wing for Sri Lanka Navy.

Key Words- Maritime Security, Maritime Air Wing, Opportunities, Challenges, Sri Lanka Navy

INTRODUCTION

A maritime air wing is an extensive, structured group of aircraft groups that is meant to support naval and maritime missions. Aircraft have been employed for military and non-military purposes all throughout the world. According to Lepore (1994) aircraft were frequently employed in military operations and peace-time applications. Aircraft provide various types of operational capabilities in the maritime environment, by virtue of the speed,

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range and altitude they can achieve, which can be incorporated into various mission profiles. In attack functions, these traits can be engaged quickly and flexibly. Modern sensors in aerial platforms are better at the maritime domain awareness by allowing faster, wider coverage of the sea than on ships as part of surveillance. Helicopters, with their high maneuverability, vertical landing and takeoff and hovering capabilities are key to search and rescue operations in the sea as well as in land. Further, maritime planes and helicopters with dipping sonar and sonar buoys, as well as anti-submarine weapons are useful in anti-submarine warfare in the quest to recognize and decommission underwater threats.

For a coastal nation, it is vital to protect critical maritime infrastructure that support the energy supply and communication systems, such as the internet and maritime aviation is important for the protection of those structures. In addition, Fixed-wing aircraft and rotary aircraft also are used in transport and logistical support whereas transport planes provide time-sensitive logistical support, and helicopters transport troops and cargo. Also, aerial platforms are very important in pollution control in the sea as they monitor the spills and the efforts of environmental response. A combination of these functions highlights the versatility of the role played by aircraft in improving maritime security, safety, and management of the environment.

Maritime air power is a vital component for maritime power projection. According to Watson et al., (2019) maritime air wings provide strike capabilities. Further, it is highly supportive for amphibious operations. In addition, it is highly useful in developing Anti-Access and Area Denial (A2AD) capabilities, which is required for maritime border protection. Further, rotor wing aircraft provides an irreplaceable platform for law enforcement in the sea (Zhang et al., 2020). In the Sri Lankan context, in order to face modern challenges, Sri Lanka Navy Maritime Strategy 2025, advocates to improve its offshore patrol capabilities. Most of the offshore platforms currently in service and about to be acquired by SLN include Helidecks and Heli-bays, which can accommodate maritime helicopters. Incorporating air capabilities to offshore patrol vessels will be a paradigm shift in maritime security in Sri Lanka.

LITERATURE REVIEW

According to Ho and Bateman (2012), allowing nations to pursue their maritime interests and develop their marine resources in conformity with established rules of international law, good



order at sea guarantees the safety and security of ships. Threats to maritime law and order encompass armed robberies and pirate attacks on ships, maritime terrorism, illegal drug and weapon trafficking, people-smuggling, pollution, unlawful fishing, marine natural hazards, and interstate maritime conflicts. Further, Paleri (2012) argues that in the current context non-military threats are more common in maritime domain. He further emphasizes the responsibility toward coastal state and even the landlock countries which maintain maritime entities to ensure the safety and freedom of navigation on oceans.

Due to these increasing activities in the waters around South Asia, there is a significant increase in non-traditional threats. For several reasons, the Indian Ocean region has been accurately referred to as a "sea of troubles." Numerous factors, including nation-state and terrorist threats, transnational crime and pirate threats, theft, etc., could jeopardize the security of this ocean. These include, but are not limited to, non-traditional maritime security issues like piracy and sea robbery, maritime terrorist activities, trafficking and smuggling of weapons, people, and drugs, as well as natural disasters. The spread of contagious diseases, food security, and energy security are all pressing problems with important marine implications (Kumar et al., 2016).

According to Premarathna (2021) Piracy, Drug Trafficking, Maritime Terrorism and Human smuggling have been major issues to Sri Lanka as a coastal nation in Indian Ocean. Piracy is now an issue for mariners in the current era. The most potent force among the few terrorist groups with marine capabilities was the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE). When it comes to the creation and widespread application of suicide bombing as a terrorist tactic, the LTTE was a pioneer. The military demise of the LTTE and the destruction of its infrastructure have significantly decreased South Asia's security risks. The LTTE's tactics have been widely adopted and imitated by other terrorist groups, making them a threat not only to foreign countries but also to Sri Lanka (Premarathna, 2021). The LTTE has established traffic routes to transport armaments back to Sri Lanka, including China, North Korea, and Hong Kong. Arms from Cambodia, Vietnam, Burma, Eastern Europe, Ukraine, and Middle East pass through Thailand, the Suez Canal, and the Horn of Africa before reaching Sri Lanka. Arms from Africa are smuggled back to the LTTE jungle strongholds via Madagascar (Biswas, 2008).

The situation of small weapons trafficking is especially dangerous in South and South-East Asia. There are several reasons for this. Perhaps the greatest concentration of illicit weaponry

in the world is found in the Afghanistan–Pakistan region. They are being smuggled to other countries in the region through sea routes. The other reason is the geographic location of the Indian sub-continent. Since located between the Arabian Sea and Bay of Bengal, this region has been a hotspot for all kind of smuggling, arms and drugs (Biswas, 2008).

In the meantime, drug trafficking from the Golden Crescent has made Sri Lanka a major transit point. The Indian cities of Tuticorine and Kochi, along with Pakistan and Iran, have become major hubs for illicit drug trade via fishing vessels into Sri Lanka and the Maldives (Premarathna, 2021).



Figure 2.1: Golden Crescent and Golden Triangle (Testbook, n.d.)

As Madhubhashani & Hejran (2020) argues, in the last ten years, drug trafficking has exploited Sri Lanka as a transshipment hub, and the country is now responsible for a disproportionately high number of arrests. These illicit drugs are transported to Sri Lanka by fishing boats or by plane, when couriers pose as tourists and travel through Pakistan, Iran, and India.

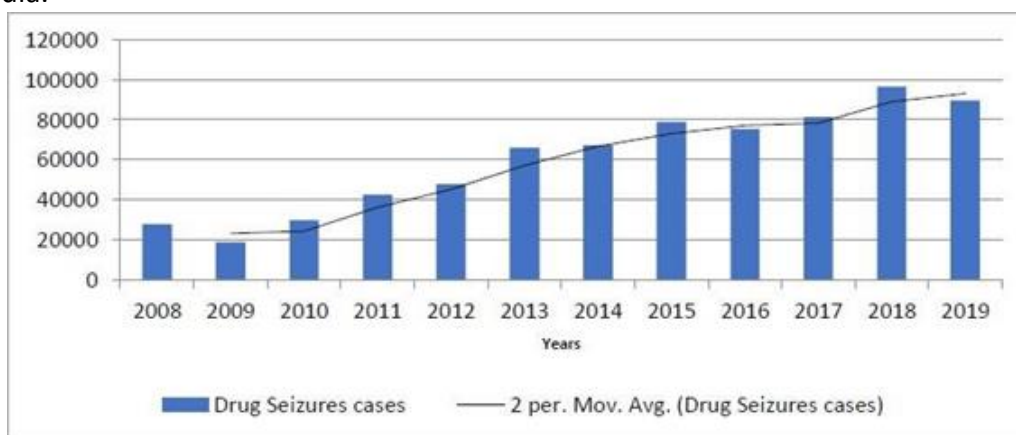


Figure 2.2: Drug Trafficking cases in Sri Lanka (Police Narcotic Bureau, 2019)



Human Trafficking is referred as slavery at sea. It is a form of modern slavery. The increasing trend of women being trafficked in Asia over the last ten years is not new. The global criminal sector is expanding quickly. It is a very profitable sector globally, generating between \$5 and \$9 billion in revenue annually. One overlooked slave trade route is the Indian Ocean. The world's second-largest illicit industry is the trafficking of women (Magsi & Mir, 2023). Further, they emphasise that human trafficking is one of the most dangerous security threats in the Indian Ocean region. Kaumada (2019) highlights that, Sri Lanka's illicit human trafficking, immigrants from India enter the country illegally through several landing sites like Mannar, Jaffna, and Negombo, where smugglers and fishing captains operate.

Another issue in the maritime domain is illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing (IUU fishing). According to Madanayake (2015) IUU fishing by Indian fishermen in the Mannar bay, Palk Strait and Northern waters has been a problem not only to local fishermen, but also to the sovereignty of Sri Lanka.

On September 3, 2020, the crude oil taker "MT New Diamond" caught fire within the EEZ over the coast of Southeast. This served as a wake-up call regarding the potential harm that incidents in our nearby waterways could do to our national interests. The episode made clear how inadequate our resources and knowledge on how to lessen and manage catastrophes like this (Walakuluge, 2022).

In order to counter these non-traditional threats, Sri Lanka Navy is constantly upgrading its vision and capabilities. According to Admiral Wijegunaratna (2024), The Navy clearly saw itself as the maritime arm that would eventually guard the astounding 1,738,062.24 km² Search and Rescue territory as well as the 200 nm Exclusive Economic Zone. If the Sri Lankan Navy is to become a force capable of exploring the deep blue waters, it is imperative that it acquire large ships and boats equipped with cutting edge technologies. The "Sri Lanka Navy's Maritime Strategy 2025" lays out the precise plan to equip the Navy with 20 ships by that time.

As Abeysekara (2020) emphasises, Sri Lanka is under a lot of non-traditional security challenges due to its developing strategic environment in the Indian Ocean Region (IOR), which calls for comprehensive response. However as of presently, Sri Lanka lacks MDA systems and works with the Sri Lanka Air Force to coordinate a number of surveillance



activities. However, the Sri Lanka Navy currently uses a number of techniques, including human intelligence, coastal observation posts (radar stations), and maritime patrols, to keep an eye on and stop illicit maritime activity in Sri Lanka's littoral regions.

The aviation branch of the Bangladesh Navy is called Bangladesh Naval Aviation. Two Dornier class Maritime Patrol Aircraft (MPA) from Germany and two Augusta Westland Helicopters from Italy are now being flown by Bangladesh Naval Aviation. Further, Bangladesh has a visionary plan to develop their Naval aviation capabilities according to their vision of becoming more relevant to maritime security of Indian Ocean Region (Bangladesh Naval Aviation, 2023). In contrast, Ghana Air Force conducting all types of maritime air operations in support of Navy (Ghana Air Force, 2023). Meantime, Ghana Navy is developing their drone capabilities to enhance their ISR capabilities in maritime domain (Ghanapeace, 2024).

As emphasized in Maritime Doctrine of Sri Lanka (2020), the current strategic environment necessitates real-time information exchange and prompt and efficient information collecting. Thus, it is appropriate that the SLN start up the process of creating the Naval Air Arm. The SLN now has five helicopter landing platforms, and as its Maritime Strategy 2025 progresses, a few more will be added to the inventory (BBC Vietnam, 2013).

Sri Lanka Air Force No. 3 Maritime Squadron is currently flying Beech King Air B-200 and Dornier 228 aircraft. These aircraft are used for maritime and land air surveillance and reconnaissance missions, Search and Rescue (SAR), Medical Evacuation (MEDEVAC), Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HADR), Maritime Pollution Monitoring and Control Flying Operations, and other flying necessities assigned by the AFHQ to protect the sovereignty of the motherland in line with the SLAF vision (Sri Lanka Air Force, 2023).

METHODOLOGY

This research adopts a post-positivist philosophy with both inductive and deductive approaches, using a mixed method to explore the formation of a maritime air wing from two perspectives. Quantitatively, it surveys 120 purposively sampled middle-level Navy and Air Force officers involved in maritime security, analyzing their views on key roles, opportunities, and challenges influencing establishment of maritime air wing in SL Navy. From Five scaled Likert scale survey was used to identify and filter the most prominent roles, opportunities and challenges. Qualitatively, it gathers expert opinions from national security and policy



professionals. Semi-structured interviews are being conducted to capture insights on necessity, opportunities, and implementation challenges. Quantitative data were analyzed and presented using MS Excel for interpretation, while thematic analysis will identify core themes from qualitative data. The combined results aim to inform policy and strategic recommendations for stakeholders.

DISCUSSION

Roles of a Maritime Air Wing

The analysis of quantitative data indicates that majority of the sample population either strongly agrees or agree for the roles stated in the questionnaire. Percentage who have indicated disagree or strongly disagree is insignificant. However, it is important to identify the most prominent roles of a maritime air wing. Hence, accumulated percentages of ‘Strongly agree’ and ‘Agree’ will be used as an indication to identify that.

<u>Role</u>	<u>Accumulated Agree Percentage</u>
Improve Surveillance	95.80%
Improve emergency respond times	92.40%
Enhance the attack capabilities	90.80%
Search and rescue operations	90.80%
monitoring maritime crimes	89.20%
Security of key maritime installations	88.20%
Improve offensive capabilities	82.50%
Protect critical maritime infrastructure	79.80%
Help control maritime pollution	73.30%
Enhance logistic operations	72.50%
efficiency of supply chain management	68.10%
Submarine detection and neutralization	66.60%
Environmental protection	65%
Strength the anti-submarine warfare capabilities	63.90%

Table 4.1: Accumulated Agree Percentage

(Source: Author constructed, 2025).



As per the survey, the main roles of a maritime air wing focus on improving surveillance to ensure comprehensive maritime domain awareness, enhancing emergency response times to quickly address crises, and boosting attack capabilities to effectively counter threats. Additionally, the air wing plays a vital role in search and rescue operations, providing timely assistance to those in distress at sea. Monitoring maritime crimes is another critical function, enabling the identification and prevention of illegal activities, thereby contributing to overall maritime security and enforcement. Together, these roles ensure the effective protection and operational readiness of maritime forces.

The qualitative analysis shed light on the importance of Search and Rescue (SAR) operations, maritime surveillance and patrol. Sri Lanka's responsibility for a vast Flight Information Region (FIR) and Search and Rescue Region (SRR) under the 1974 SOLAS convention. Hence, improving SAR capabilities enhance the credibility as a nation in the international arena. A maritime air wing will indeed complement the SAR capabilities of the Navy. A maritime air wing certainly complements the Navy's enforcement capabilities by providing an aerial view of the maritime domain. That helps in monitoring illegal activities such as drug trafficking, human smuggling, and illegal, unreported, and unregulated (IUU) fishing, which are been the prominent none-traditional threats in Sri Lankan waters in the recent history.

Further, qualitative data reveals that a maritime air wing will significantly contribute in maintaining law and order at sea. This includes preventing illegal activities, protecting maritime boundaries, and ensuring the security of vital economic assets such as the Colombo port, which plays a key role in regional transshipment. Hence, it is a major contributor for the safety toward the blue economy that Sri Lanka is heading.

Opportunities Provides by a Maritime Air Wing

Quantitative analysis indicates that majority of the sample population either strongly agree or agree with the opportunities stated in the questionnaire. Percentage who have indicated disagree or strongly disagree is insignificant. However, it is important to identify the most prominent opportunities provided by a maritime air wing. Hence, accumulated percentages of 'Strongly agree' and 'Agree' will be used as an indication to identify that.



<u>Opportunity</u>	<u>Accumulated Percentage</u>
Increase the operational reach	91.60%
Offer flexibility and adaptive mission support	89.70%
Boost the strategic influence	89.10%
Drive the technological advancement	89.10%
Enhance power projection capabilities	88.30%
Provide versatility to Naval Operations	88.10%
Be a force multiplier for Sri Lanka Navy	86.40%
Increase the range of naval operations	86.40%
Enhance the operational capabilities	85.80%
Encourage innovation and technical improvement	83.90%

Table 4.2: Accumulated Percentage (Author constructed, 2025)

The most significant opportunity offered by a maritime air wing is the increase in operational reach, which plays a crucial role in enhancing various naval operations. This extended reach allows the navy to conduct search and rescue (SAR) missions, surveillance, and monitoring over vast oceanic areas, ensuring effective situational awareness and rapid response. Moreover, it strengthens efforts to combat non-traditional threats such as piracy, smuggling, and illegal fishing, which require persistent presence and coverage over wide maritime regions. By extending the operational range beyond the capabilities of surface vessels alone, a maritime air wing significantly improves the navy's ability to maintain security, project power, and respond flexibly to dynamic challenges across the maritime domain.

The results of the qualitative analysis emphasize that a maritime air wing will enhance the reach to provide humanitarian assistance to regional countries in case of natural disasters. Further, it could position Sri Lanka as a regional leader in maritime security, contributing to stability in the Indian Ocean. This could also lead to increased international cooperation in areas such as combating illegal fishing and drug trafficking. Hence, in many ways it elevates Sri Lanka's credibility as a responsible maritime state. Furthermore, providing natural disaster relief and provide relief in ship accidents are crucial responsibilities of a Navy and aircraft's ability to rapidly respond to incidents at sea is highlighted as a critical opportunity, especially



for lifesaving operations. Aircraft could provide timely initial assessments of crises or accidents, contributing to faster decision-making and action.

In this study two questions raised, “Do Sri Lanka Navy actually need a power projection capability in the present context or in near future?” and the other question in “Against whom that we are projecting power?”. Therefore, power projection should not be an immediate requirement of a maritime air wing. However, it has been identified that the maritime air wing would be a force multiplier for Sri Lanka Navy in many operational aspects. It drastically improves both offensive and defensive capabilities of the Navy since aircraft are more efficient when operating in vast areas in the maritime domain.

It has been identified that maritime air wing extends the operational reach of the Navy and improve maritime domain awareness. Further, for countering human smuggling, drug trafficking, and search and rescue operations it gives more reach from the shore. CASEVAC and MEDIVAC in deep seas would also be possible from a maritime air wing with limited time period. In addition, it would give more reach for logistic operations. In addition, maritime air wing would enhance the ability to monitor and respond to activities in the maritime domain enhances the Navy’s role in ensuring the security of sea lanes. It can provide a wider maritime picture for operational purposes.

As per the study, maritime air wing could significantly enhance Sri Lanka’s ability to safeguard its sea routes, protect vital maritime infrastructure like the Colombo port, and prevent illegal activities at sea. Further, air assets would allow for faster response times and broader coverage of the maritime domain, improving the overall efficiency of naval operations.

Challenges to the Establishment of Maritime Air Wing

This analysis indicates that majority of the sample population of the quantitative study either ‘strongly agree’ or ‘agree’ for the challenges identified and stated in the questionnaire. Percentage who have indicated disagree or strongly disagree is insignificant. However, it is important to identify the most prominent challenges to a maritime air wing. Hence, accumulated percentages of ‘Strongly agree’ and ‘Agree’ will be used as an indication to identify that.



<u>Challenge</u>	<u>Accumulated percentage</u>
Comprehensive training programs	95.80%
Procurement and maintenance	93.30%
Establishing adequate infrastructure facilities	93.20%
Procuring and maintaining air assets	91.60%
Ensuring sustainability and cost-effectiveness	89.10%
Providing effective training and development	86.50%
Establishing building and maintaining infrastructure like hangers and workshops	82%
Acquiring highly skilled personnel	79%
Retaining skilled experts	79%
Balancing cost and maintaining long-term sustainability	77.30%

Table 4.3: Accumulated percentage (Author constructed, 2025)

Establishing a maritime air wing in Sri Lanka faces significant challenges, with comprehensive training programs identified as the most difficult due to the lack of current facilities in the Navy and Air Force. Additionally, acquiring the necessary aerial platforms, sensors, equipment, and naval platforms is costly and complex, requiring considerable time and strong diplomatic ties with manufacturing countries despite financial constraints. Initial procurement would not be the end of that challenge, continuously sustaining air operations require regular maintenance and spare parts. Procuring requires items for the sustainment is also identified as a significant challenge. Though Sri Lanka Air Force is having facilities to sustain air operations, in the present context SLN has no required infrastructure facilities to carry out air operations. Hence, developing such facilities would require massive funding and will take years to develop.

Sustaining a maritime air wing is equally challenging as establishing it. In that case, cost effectiveness of the operations to be considered and requires a sustainable plan to long run maritime air operations cost effectively. According to the qualitative analysis, the primary challenge is the cost associated with acquiring and maintaining shipborne aircraft and maritime patrol aircraft. With limited financial resources and recent economic difficulties, the allocation of funds for such an initiative remains a significant hurdle. There were many



attempts in history to form an air wing for the Navy, but all had gone in vain due to financial constraints. The current economic context in Sri Lanka also poses significant challenges in financing such an initiative.

Procuring and maintaining air platforms with the necessary avionics and sensors is a costly endeavour. However, the need for advanced sensors, cameras, and other electronic systems further complicates the establishment of a maritime air wing. Due to financial constraints procuring suitable platforms with on suitable avionics, weapon systems, and the payload has become a significant challenge to for a maritime air wing. There are limited financial resources to sustain a high-cost operation in a maritime air wing. Hence, maritime air assets should only be deployed in unavoidable circumstances.

Technological advancement is also critical for the effective operation of a maritime air wing, especially in overcoming challenges such as downlinking data from aircraft to naval platforms. Without efficient data-sharing capabilities, the operational reach and responsiveness of the air wing would be severely limited. Advanced technologies are essential not only for data transmission but also for the overall functioning of the maritime air wing, making their acquisition a significant challenge for countries like Sri Lanka. Additionally, a robust communication system is vital to ensure seamless information sharing with other agencies and regional partners. Constant coordination among the Navy, Air Force, and Coast Guard is necessary to maintain operational effectiveness and foster collaboration in maritime security efforts.

Human resource development is essential for the success of a maritime air wing, as personnel need to be thoroughly trained not only in operating advanced equipment but also in understanding the complex maritime environment. Providing such specialized training is challenging, especially in Sri Lanka, where opportunities and facilities for developing comprehensive training programs are limited. Additionally, crew fatigue is a significant factor to consider due to the demanding and often extended nature of maritime operations, which can impact performance and operational safety, making effective personnel management and support crucial for sustaining readiness.

One of the significant challenges in establishing a maritime air wing lies in the mindset and vision within governance and military leadership. Such an initiative is expensive and complex



but represents a visionary aspiration crucial for future maritime capabilities. For a country like Sri Lanka, balancing the high costs and strategic importance demands committed leadership, long-term planning, and a clear understanding of its transformative potential for national security and regional influence.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

In order to achieve above objectives a literature review was conducted and through those certain roles of a maritime air wing, opportunities it provides for Sri Lanka Navy and challenges on establishing a maritime air wing for Navy has been identified. Base on those identifications a quantitative analysis was carried out by taking middle grade officers of Sri Lanka Navy and Sri Lanka Air Force who has experiences in maritime air operations as sample population. Further, a qualitative analysis has been conducted by interviewing experts in the field of defence, naval strategies and air operations. The outcome of both qualitative and quantitative analysis was illustrated and discussed in order to get the final outcome of the research. Through the above-mentioned process surveillance and monitoring of maritime domain for military and law enforcement purposes has been identified as the main role of a maritime air wing foe Sri Lanka Navy and Search and Rescue is the other role of a future maritime air wing. Further, three opportunities are been identified as the opportunities that a maritime air wing in Sri Lanka Navy will provide to the country. The first one is the Operational Reach that a maritime air wing provides. Operational reach enables Sri Lanka Navy to conduct various types of operations in distance away from the shore. The next most important opportunity is flexibility and adaptiveness. It complements disaster respond capabilities, maritime security and operational efficiency of Sri Lanka Navy. Further, a maritime air wing provides an opportunity of regional influence and cooperation for the country. Furthermore, there are certain challenges been identified from this research for establishing a maritime air wing. The greatest challenge for the establishment of a maritime air wing is financing it. Due to the economic situation of the country financing such endeavour would be difficult and would not be highlighted as a priority. Further, even with the finance, procuring platforms, sensors and technologies would be a challenge as well. In addition, maintenance of such assets and related infrastructure facilities would be a huge challenge too. Finally, maintaining cost-effectiveness and sustainability of a maritime air wing is also

identified as a challenge. Based on the findings of the research, following recommendations can be made for establishing a maritime air wing for Sri Lanka Navy.

Duo Faced Approach

First of all, the attitude towards establishing a maritime air wing is to be changed. It is not a distant dream and for a country like Sri Lanka it is a necessity. Hence, through a meticulous approach it can be achieved. To make this dream a reality it is to be recommend to have a “Duo Faced Approach”. Duo Approach is an interdepending approach which mutually complement each other. That consists of individual approach by Navy to develop an own maritime air wing while engaging with Joint approach which is a cooperative effort by multiple entities.

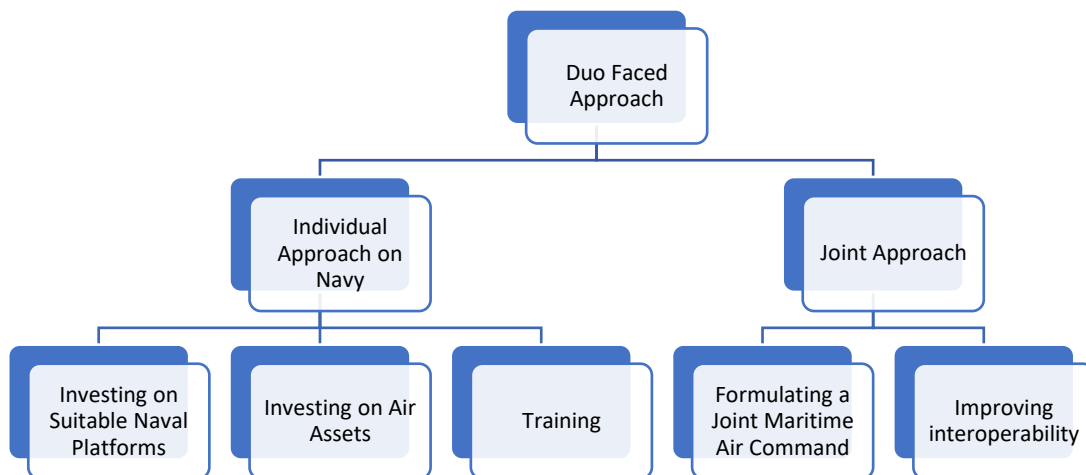


Figure 6.1: Duo Approach (Author constructed, 2025)

Individual Approach by Navy

In this approach, Navy is to meticulously utilize the budget allocation to procure and maintain necessary naval platforms and air assets while developing the human resource by training naval personnel. This is a long-term effort with a vision forward. It can be started with employing maritime helicopters which can be accommodated in OPVs operated by Navy. Then it can be expanded into drone operations and fixed-wing aircraft operation. On the initial stage the main roles of the maritime air wing should be surveillance and monitoring,



and search and rescue. Gradually it can be developed to carry out operations in other roles as well.

Joint Approach

Since due to the current challenges, Navy cannot develop a fully fledged maritime air wing with required operational capabilities. Hence, with collaboration of other entities, such as Sri Lanka Air Force, Coast Guard etc. Developing a 'Maritime Air Command' would be more practical and reasonable to cater required operational requirement. By collaborating with this unified maritime command, Navy can enhance their maritime air capabilities while contributing their assets to the maritime air command. The resources available in other entities such as training, maintenance and infrastructure facilities of Sri Lanka Air Force could be used by Navy to fulfill their operational requirement. This interoperable environment not only satisfy the operational requirements, but also provides necessary experiences to naval personnel to develop their air capabilities until Navy would able to independently conduct all sorts of maritime air operations.



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