

CRO MIL

CROATIAN MILITARY MAGAZINE

Nº 17

YEAR 9

MAY 2017

INTERNATIONAL CO-OPERATION

**"FRECCIE TRICOLORI" AND
"WINGS OF STORM" PREPARE
JOINTLY FOR THE SEASON 2017**

**PzH 2000
IN SERVICE
WITH THE CAF**

CROATIAN AIR FORCE AND AIR DEFENCE

TRIAL FLIGHTS ON KIOWA WARRIOR HELICOPTERS

ARMS AND MILITARY EQUIPMENT EXHIBITION

ASDA 2017

**GATHERS A RECORD NUMBER
OF EXHIBITORS AND VISITING
DELEGATIONS**

ISSN 1847 - 2036

PRINTED IN CROATIA

0 7 2 1 7



9

The **HRVATSKI VOJNIK** magazine was founded in 1991.
It is now available on social networks too.



Turn to us for information,
whatever you interest may be...
hvojnik@mah.hr

PAGE 8

PAGE 22

PAGE 32

PAGE 34

- 4 **INTERVIEW**
DAMIR KRSTIČEVIĆ, DEFENCE MINISTER
- 8 **ARMS AND MILITARY EQUIPMENT EXHIBITION**
ASDA 2017 GATHERS A RECORD NUMBER OF EXHIBITORS
AND VISITING DELEGATIONS
- 14 **CROATIAN AIR FORCE**
CROATIAN CANADAIRS FIGHT THE FIRES IN ISRAEL
- 18 **INTERVIEW**
HEINRICH BRAUSS, NATO ASSISTANT SECRETARY GENERAL
FOR DEFENCE POLICY AND PLANNING
- 22 **INTERNATIONAL CO-OPERATION**
"FRECE TRICOLORI" AND "WINGS OF STORM" PREPARE JOINTLY
FOR THE SEASON 2017
- 26 **UN – LED MISSIONS**
REINFORCED ENGINEER COMPANY READY FOR UN MISSION
- 29 **THE CROATIAN NAVY**
THE REMUS 100 UNDERWATER VEHICLES UPGRADING
THE NAVY'S COUNTERMINE CAPABILITIES
- 32 **THE CROATIAN ARMY**
PzH 2000 IN SERVICE WITH THE CAF
- 34 **CROATIAN AIR FORCE AND AIR DEFENCE**
TRIAL FLIGHTS ON KIOWA WARRIOR HELICOPTERS
- 38 **ANNIVERSARY**
25 YEARS OF "HRVATSKI VOJNIK" – THE MAGAZINE OF THE
INVINCIBLE
- 42 **CROATIAN DEFENCE ACADEMY**
CADET CLUB – A MULTIFUNCTIONAL AND
MULTICONTE/MULTIFOLD PROJECT
- 44 **FILM**
HOMELAND WAR THROUGH THE WAR HISTORY OF
GENERAL GOTOVINA
- 47 **OUR PRIDE PROJECTS**



Damir Krstičević,
Defence Minister

KNOWLEDGE, EXPERIENCE, ENERGY AND MOTIVATION OF THE MEMBERS OF OUR ARMED FORCES MAKE THE QUALITY DIFFERENCE AND THE SOUL OF THE VICTORIOUS MILITARY OF WHICH I AM HIGHLY PROUD. WE NEED TO CONTINUOUSLY PROVIDE BETTER STANDARDS FOR OUR ARMED FORCES AND THEIR PERSONNEL WHO IN ADDITION TO THEIR TRADITIONAL MILITARY TASKS ARE AT ALL TIMES AND UNRESERVEDLY AT THE SERVICE OF THE CIVILIAN COMMUNITY, AND IT IS ONE OF MY PRIORITIES DURING THE OFFICE...

MUTUAL TRUST, KEY TO

"My focus is on the human component – on enlisted soldiers, NCOs and officers as they make the difference, which brought peace and freedom in the Homeland War" said Damir Krstičević taking the office as Defence Minister. The Minister stressed that he would lead the Ministry in an honest and transparent way. We had this interview shortly after he assumed the demanding duty and touched on several current topics related to the military.

Minister, soon after taking the office You delivered a very emotional address to the Ministry employees in which you called on for maximal responsibility, honesty, mutual trust and teamwork and true patriotism and pledged to lead by Your own example. Do You see that as the key to successful and efficient operation and management?

I am proud to be at the head of this Ministry, built by my friends from wartime, the members of the victorious military and I can never forget that. It is through



Our lasting mission is to keep the historic feats of the valorous, determined and honourable people – the Croatian defenders – from falling into oblivion.

Authors: Željko Stipanović, Vesna Pintarić, Photos by: Josip Kopi

CROATIAN MILITARY MAGAZINE

unreserved investing of entire capabilities to fulfill the demanding tasks placed before us all that we redeem all those friends who sacrificed their health and lives for the modern Croatia. We often appeal to the victorious spirit of our military and it rests on mutual trust, co-operation and patriotism, as proved by the historical achievements and victories during the Homeland War. There is no excuse for acting otherwise than in a victorious manner, neither me or any employee of the Ministry of Defence or member of the Armed Forces. The Ministry of Defence is a well-known area for me – I have been a part of it and followed it closely for years and am well familiar with its operation. I am ready to my knowledge and experience at its service, to listen, learn and work the best I can and also expect the same from my co-workers – a serious, responsible and motivated approach to work. In my view all members of the system which is of national relevance importance have to go the extra mile and invest more efforts and hard work.

involved ministries, institutions and organisations, civil society, concerned public, private sector and citizens. This intention of the system is not to seek enemies but to identify the risks to the security of the citizens. It is by no means aimed at militarisation but at partnership of all segments of the Croatian society and is envisaged to effectively integrate all resources, capabilities, the defence and security aspects. It will enable us to better prepare to identify and respond to potential risks and threats that today are far more complex than before and include hybrid warfare, information operations, terrorism, cyber terrorism, migrant crises, unemployment, demographic trends and disasters.

The strategic environment has evolved and each country has to adapt and set up better integrated and more effective and quicker operating systems. Our permanent task will be to identify potential risks, respond adequately and timely and with adequate force.

CO-OPERATION AND PATRIOTISM SUCCESS

I am convinced that all of us, at various levels shall give a visible contribution to the prosperity of the Ministry and of the Armed Forces. There will be always challenges, room for development and for improvements.

In one of Your first public addresses You underlined the importance of the National Security Strategy, as a pre-condition to define a broader concept of homeland security, brought about the emerging threats and risks of today we are faced with...

As I have announced, the preparation of the new National Security Strategy, the Act on the Homeland Security System and a system of homeland security feature among the first activities of the Croatian Government and me as its Deputy Prime Minister and Defence Minister. What I mean is a Croatian model, characterised by a synergy of all

The homeland security system implies the strength obtained through the synergy of all segments of the security and defence system, and of every citizen as well. And citizens are in our focus – the organisations are there to serve the citizens as it takes satisfied and safe citizens and a safe society to make a stabler, stronger and prosperous country.



INTERVIEW

The upgrade of defence capabilities implies continued investment into the equipment and modernisation of the Croatian Armed Forces. Can we expect increased defence budget in the current year?

It is our permanent mission in the Ministry of Defence, particularly in view of new challenges I spoke about earlier, is to create the conditions to enhance the defence capabilities and potentials. I am aware that it demands considerable funds and I shall insist on achieving optimal defence budget to allow new projects. The decreasing trend of defence budget (from 2008 to 2016 it was reduced by more than 25%, which is equivalent to 1.4 billion HRK.

Within the period 2008 – 2015 the portion of the defence budget decreased from 1.58 % to 1.55 % and 1.17 % GDP respectively. Such a trend needs to be reversed, in view of the new time, new threats and risks demanding new responses. I believe though that the Government of the Republic of Croatia will set the priorities and ensure further strengthening of the acquired defence capabilities as well as the investment into the human resources, the enlisted soldiers, NCOs and officers and enable them to pursue continuous education and upgrade their working and living conditions. Investment into the human potential brings safe return

On the other hand, cost-effective and wise investment into modernisation of the Croatian defence sector is primarily in our own interest and enhances our credibility within NATO.



I would propose more interactive contents and dialogues available on our communication platforms, and as many details from the life and work of the Croatian enlisted leaders, NCOs and officers, who are the engine of our system, and are the guarantee of the stability and security of the citizens of the Republic of Croatia.

////////////////////

As defence minister I would definitely like to see quicker progress in that regard, but it depends on the growth of the economy in Croatia. We need to accommodate NATO commitments on the required amount of defence budget. We must not forget the assistance provided from our allies in a variety of projects, primarily the United States which donated us weapons, equipment, education and training. The assistance is worth billions HRK and definitely accelerates the existing modernisation processes.

You pledged to focus during Your office on enlisted soldiers, NCOs and officers, as the winning force in the Homeland War. Do You agree that nowadays, with all technological and military achievements the human factor continues to be the decisive factor?

I am fully aware, although these may sound empty words. Throughout my life and military career I have realised how strong a man, a fellow combatant can be. The times are changing and bring new technologies, but the knowledge, experience, energy, motivation of the Croatian Armed Forces members still make the quality difference and the soul of the victorious military of which I am highly proud.

What in Your view should be done to improve the living and working conditions of the soldiers?

We need to continuously provide better standards for our armed forces who, along with performing the





Minister, You were a wartime commander of one of the elite guards brigades and You said the Croatian Army was a brand to keep. What else do we have to or can do to best convey the truth about the glorious military victories to the generations to come?

It should be said that the values and achievements from the Homeland War were during the past years belittled. However, I know that the Croatian people is aware that the freedom was not granted but hard won, by my fellow combatants and my brothers from east Slavonia all the way to the southernmost part of Croatia. I witnessed myself to togetherness by sacrificing everything we had. We had created the victorious Croatian spirit from the early days. It is our lasting mission now to not let the historic achievements of the valorous, determined and honourable people – the Croatian defenders – fall into oblivion.

The rapid spread of information and various communication platforms and new technologies prompted the need for adaptation and keeping with the trends in media and audio and video platforms. In Your view, where the focus of a military magazine and other forms of communication with the public should be today?

The use of all available communication channels and platforms is a necessity of the moment. We are aware that they help us abridge distances and time. The information are available in real time, which is at once a challenge and a possibility. I would propose more interactive contents and dialogues available on our communication platforms, and as many details from the life and work of the Croatian enlisted leaders, NCOs and officers, who are the engine of our system, and are the guarantee of the stability and security of the citizens of the Republic of Croatia.

traditional military tasks, are constantly and wholeheartedly at the service of the civilian community and it is one of my priorities during my office. We also need to provide optimal living and working conditions for all individuals doing their best to enhance our defence capacities and to execute all tasks at home and abroad, which takes time. Speaking as soldier I can say that we shall within a short period scan the situation and come up with effective solutions in this domain too.

Re-organisation is a permanent process aimed at building new capabilities and upgrading the efficiency of the armed forces. What are the most important and biggest challenges currently faced by the members of the Croatian Armed Forces?

It is a fact that every time brings new challenges as well. The defence system needs to be tailored and adapted accordingly, receiving new capabilities to respond efficiently to them.

In my view the biggest challenge of the re-organisation – a permanent process as you mentioned – will be to identify new tasks, threats and challenges. A cost-effective, efficient and logical management of the most valuable segment of our system – the human resources – offers a solution for an efficient and focussed response to the security issues. It is the true purpose of the Croatian Armed Forces and of the defence and security system as a whole. The efficient solutions in this domain lie in their members – skilled, competent, motivated and patriotic – who always made the difference and were the decisive component of our system.



ARMS AND MILITARY EQUIPMENT EXHIBITION



ASDA 2017

AS MANY AS 63 CROATIAN AND 68 FOREIGN EXHIBITORS OF ARMS, MILITARY EQUIPMENT AND OTHER PRODUCTS AND SERVICES IN DEFENCE AND SECURITY SECTOR REGISTERED FOR ASDA 2017. THE NUMBER OF EXHIBITORS (WHO WERE FROM 22 COUNTRIES) EXCEEDED 130, AS WAS THE CASE AT ASDA 2011

The ASDA (full title: Adriatic Sea Defense and Aerospace Exhibition) 2017 international exhibition, held in Split from 26-28 April, was the fourth event in a row, held biannually since 2011. The Exhibition was organised by the U.S.-based TNT Productions Inc., under the auspices of the Government and with the support from the Ministry of Defence of the Republic of Croatia. As many as 63 Croatian and 68 foreign exhibitors of arms, military equipment and other products and services in defence and security sector from 22 countries registered for ASDA 2017. The number of exhibitors (from as many as 22 countries) exceeded 130, as was the case at ASDA 2011.

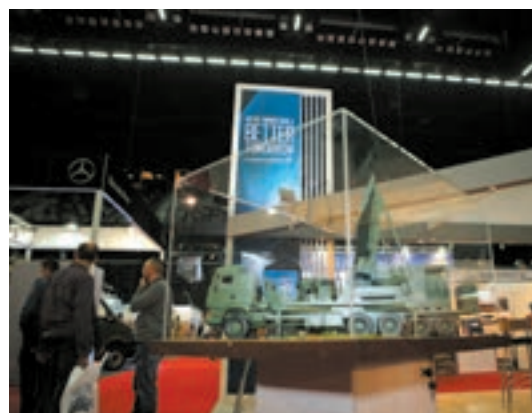
The biggest number of domestic exhibitors so far indicates an expansion of the Croatian defence industry and the economic recovery in general. The exhibitors included some renowned Croatian firms such as HS Produkt, Šestan-Busch, DOK-ING and Đuro Đaković.

The biggest number of domestic exhibitors so far instilled much optimism, indicating an expansion of the Croatian defence industry and the economic recovery in general. The exhibitors included the prominent Croatian companies and firms, such as HS Produkt, Šestan-Busch, DOK-ING and Đuro Đaković. ASDA offers a forum to present their business at home together with the renowned international companies - the Swedish Saab, the South Korean KAI, the Israeli IAI and Elbit Systems, the US Bell Helicopter, the German Mercedes Trucks and for the first time the U.S. based Lockheed Martin, the international defence industry leader - which attend the IDEX and Eurosatory.



Author: Domagoj Vlahović, Photos by: Josip Kopi, Stjepan Brigljević

CROATIAN MILITARY MAGAZINE



GATHERS A RECORD NUMBER OF EXHIBITORS AND VISITING DELEGATIONS

Another record from the Exhibition is the number of the visiting state and military delegations – as many as 33 delegations from European, Asian and African countries and the U.S – showing an increased interest in the event and the supply of the Croatian defence industry, as well as the intent to meet and hold bilateral contacts with the Croatian civilian and military officials. The ASDA exhibitions are an activity of international defence and security relations, increasingly important under the present circumstances. As an illustration to that, the Croatian Defence Minister Damir Krstičević and the representatives of the Ministry of Defence and of the Croatian Armed Forces held a series of bilateral meetings with the delegations of Iraq, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, Macedonia, Albania, the United States, Israel, Kuwait, Azerbaijan and others .

The figures indicate the demand; increased demand in turn boosts expansion, and the ASDA

The ASDA hosted the Swedish Saab, the South Korean KAI, izraelski IAI and Elbit Systems, the U.S. Bell Helicopter, the German Mercedes Trucks and for the first time the U.S.-based Lockheed Martin, the international defence industry leader.

is the adequate place for the firms to display their range of products and expertise”, said the Director of the Government Agency “Alan” Ivica Nekić. The Agency mediates in the exports for the Croatian companies and foreign customers and is engaged in the presentation of the Croatian defence industry at international fairs, the ASDA included. “Hosting the ASDA is in the interest of Croatia, as it is an opportunity to sell products and present the Croatian military industry. It is a must for a country committed to its security”. “ Although the event abounds in various activities, it is the usually the opening that is in the public focus the most. Indeed, it was attended by the President of the Republic of Croatia as Supreme Commander of the Croatian Armed Forces, Kolinda Grabar-Kitarović, by the Deputy Prime Minister and Defence Minister Damir Krstičević, the Deputy Chief of the General Staff of the Croatian Armed Forces Lieutenant General Drago Matanović, the representatives of the ministries and other government administration bodies and defence and security institutions, the diplomatic and the military diplomatic corps. The President underlined that the ASDA was organised as an exhibition indicating the future relationships and synergy between the state and the private sector. “ASDA is organised through a public-private partnership, the co-operation of businesses with the government bodies to realise the projects

“Šestan-Busch”, a firm with a years-long reputation in the manufacturing of combat helmets, exhibited the multi-purpose helmet BK-ACH, available in three sizes (depending on head coverage): the high and medium “cut” for special forces, and the conventional helmet for the regular units.

ARMS AND MILITARY EQUIPMENT EXHIBITION



of recognised common interest”. Speaking of the prominent participation of the Croatian firms and companies, the President underlined that ASDA was a unique opportunity for them to presenting their products, whose quality stands up to competition at the global level.

The Croatian Defence Minister said the ASDA had become highly respectable business event, a forum presenting new products and technologies and new trends in the military industry. The Minister expressed satisfaction over the attendance of the exhibitors and delegations and praised the production quality and the international reputation of the Croatian defence industry, stating that the innovative manufacturers would always enjoy partnership and support from the Croatian Government and the Ministry of Defence. ASDA is also a place for dialogue, a spot of exchange of views on the defence and security-related issues. ASDA 17 will have an important place in the joint efforts towards the global and state security”, said the Minister.

The Director of TNT Productions Justin Webb extended appreciation to the Ministry of Defence for the continuous and warm support provided, and to the participants, and visitors coming from Europe and wider.

The “HS Produkt”, a world-renowned pistol, gun and grenade launcher manufacturer, presented the VHS 2 rifle, which competed at the tender for the French Army. The firm presented the pistol models designed for XD mod.2 and XD (M) 4.5 silencer support

////////////////

Looking at the regional economic and geo-political situation we believe ASDA will develop and will increase the number of local and international companies exhibiting and will be a good opportunity for the local industry to promote itself, to get in touch with the worldwide defence & aerospace leaders and to find out what the Croatian government is doing to protecting its borders and its citizens.



JOINT DEMONSTRATION EXERCISE OF THE CROATIAN ARMED FORCES UNITS, HOSTING THE MEMBER OF THE U.S. NAVAL AIR FORCE

Each time the ASDA demonstrated to Croatian officials, foreign visitors and the media some of the capabilities of the Croatian Armed Forces. The Croatian soldiers are equipped mostly with the products of the exhibiting firms and are their best international promoters, and the promoters of the Republic of Croatia as a NATO nation, which takes an active part in the operations towards global security and stability. The ASDA 2017 featured eye-catching programmes for the visitors; immediately following the opening the visitors attended the demonstration exercise in the Barracks "Sveti Nikola" in Split, featuring the joint military-security capabilities of the Croatian Armed Forces – the three services reinforced by the Special Forces Command – joined by the members of the U.S. Naval Air Force operating the MH-60 Sea-hawk helicopter. The objective of the exercise was to display the interoperability of the forces engaged in the monitoring and protection of the maritime security in the Adriatic Sea.

The ASDA displayed the capacities of the Croatian shipbuilding industry. The focus was placed on "Brodosplit", which prepared a large and informative stand and won large attention with the presentation of the inshore patrol vessel, whose prototype of which is being built in Split for the Croatian Coast Guard and which is hoped to be the new exporting line of "Brodosplit" for navies.

////////////////////

The demonstration exercise was followed by other attractive programmes – the Croatian Air Force's Aerobatic Team "Wings of Storm" who displayed a part of their programme, and the fights by the MiGs 21 of the Croatian Air Force and two U.S.'s F-16 aircraft in the Split skyline.

THE CROATIAN DEFENCE INDUSTRY PRESENTS NOVELTIES

Among the most interesting novelties in the Croatian defence industry presented at the ASDA 2017, the "HS Produkt", a world-renowned pistol, gun and grenade launcher manufacturer, presented the VHS 2 rifle, which competed at the tender for the French Army.

The firm also presented the pistol models designed for XD mod.2 and XD (M) 4.5 silencer support. "Šestan-Busch", a firm with a years-long reputation in the manufacturing of combat helmets, exhibited the multi-purpose helmet BK-ACH, available in three sizes (depending on head coverage): the high and medium "cut" for special forces, and the conventional helmet for the regular units. The representatives of the firm proudly presented the

During the joint Croatian – U.S. demonstration exercise in the Lora Navy Port the members of the Special Forces Command were wearing – for the first time – the Kroko-made uniforms with MultiCam pattern, adopted by many special forces given the very good camouflaging features.

ARMS AND MILITARY EQUIPMENT EXHIBITION

multi-purpose helmet recently winning tender for the French Police, which has been developed to meet the respective high standards.

DOK-ING, the regular exhibitor at the ASDA, displayed its MV-4 mine clearing system, which is used by the U.S. Army too.

One of the dominant and largest exhibits was the Modular Armoured Vehicle "Patria", constructed by "Đuro Đaković" Special Vehicles, this time the classic olive drab vehicle (as opposed to the desert variant exhibited in 2015 immediately after the testing in Kuwait, or the amphibian variant displayed in 2013). The visitors also had the opportunity to try operating the simulator of the remotely controlled weapon station. Another MoD's partner company and a successful exporter, Kroko International, displayed its products outside the Spaladium Arena Hall, during the joint Croatian-U.S. demonstration exercise, as the members of the Special Forces Command were wearing – for the first time – the Kroko-made uniforms with MultiCam pattern, adopted by many special forces given the very good camouflaging features.

"Kroko" also presented the new range of backpacks, made of new fabrics, and the "way distribution adapter" system distributing the weight on the hips to load off the back.

The "Čateks" textile company excelled in the presentation of its products. Having exported their military uniform programmes to Lithuania and Kuwait, the firm elaborated and displayed the uniforms made of fabrics with Tri/Pat camouflage pattern. Combined with the CORDURA NyCO Extreme, the pattern enhances the features of military uniforms, claim the Čateks's experts.

The ASDA would be far from representative without displaying the capacities of the Croatian shipbuilding industry. The focus was placed on "Brodosplit" and its eye catching and informative stand, presenting the inshore patrol vessel, whose prototype is being built in Split for the Croatian Coast Guard and which is hoped to be the new exporting line of "Brodosplit" for navies. The length is 43.5 m, the beam 8 m and the speed 28 knots; its main armament consists in a 30-mm naval gun and the 12.7- mm machine guns. In addition to the inshore patrol vessel "Brodosplit" also promoted the midget submarines (88T and 99T), as well as underwater diversionary submersibles (Type R1 and R2), and the respective training, education and specialisation programmes for shipbuilders.

The exhibits of M Adler D. caught everybody's attention. This family-owned business, started in Istria some years ago, in short time reaped good export results, manufacturing the modernised versions of the Croatian weapon systems – the towed 107-mm and 128-mm multiple missile launcher RAK-12, the light 128-mm missile launcher LRL-128, the 40-mm RBR-70 anti-armour system, the RBG-6 40x46-mm hand grenade launcher, which was the firm's sole product and the exhibit at the past ASDA held in 2015.

The three days in Split justified the organisation of the Exhibition and the support provided by the Croatian Ministry of Defence. The most renowned Croatian manufacturers have gradually been joined by new firms. Our hoping is that we shall receive the information on successful export deals and that the next ASDA will feature even more firms, products and interesting performances.





Justin WEBB,
Director of TNT Productions

INTERVIEW

ASDA EXHIBITIONS ARE INCREASINGLY SUCCESSFUL

The town of Split and its Spaladium Arena are hosting the Adriatic Sea Defense and Aeronautic Exhibition for the first time. The Exhibition is taking place biannually – each odd year in late April – each time with more exhibitors. In the days preceding ASDA 2017 we talked to Mr. Justin Webb, the Director of the U.S. TNT Productions, a firm specialised in organising the fairs of the kind, which is the organiser of the Exhibition.

What is Your conclusion after ASDA events organised so far?

In my opinion these events have become increasingly successful. Each edition has built on the success of the previous edition and the worldwide defence industry is now aware that in April of the odd years, there is a major defence exhibition held in Croatia. Many Croatian companies are already achieving great export success and the ASDA exhibition allows these companies to invite their customers to come and visit them on the Croatian soil.

What is Your idea of the ASDA for the future?

In looking at the regional economic and geo-political situation we believe ASDA will develop and will increase the number of local and international companies exhibiting and will be a good opportunity for the local industry to promote itself, to get in touch

with the worldwide defence & aerospace leaders and to find out what the Croatian Government is doing to protecting its borders and its citizens.

The “TNT Productions” has gained references from other defence exhibitions – to what extent does the organisation vary from country to country?

Behind an event like this the work is the same everywhere, but what makes each event to be different is the country needs for defence and security, the venue location, the local industry level of development and the local Government support.

What are the main trends in the international defence industry; what are its present characteristics?

I think that one of the main trends within the international defence industry is the increasing focus that all countries are having on bringing technology and high quality jobs to their countries. Đuro Đaković Special Vehicles is a good example of this trend. “Đuro Đaković” has made co-operation with both the Finnish company Patria and the Norwegian company Kongsberg to make land 8x8's for the Croatian MOD. These vehicles are constructed in Croatia bringing with them good quality jobs. But the agreements with these companies also allows for Croatia to export these vehicles to other countries.





CROATIAN

"ON BEHALF OF THE PEOPLE OF ISRAEL I AM EXTENDING OUR DEEP APPRECIATION FOR YOUR COURAGE AND GENEROSITY. YOU HAVE SHOWN TRUE FRIENDSHIP. AND IF YOU HAVE SO FAR BEEN HEROES IN YOUR COUNTRIES AS OF NOW YOU ARE HEROES IN ISRAEL TOO", SAID THE ISRAELI PRESIDENT REUVEN RIVLIN TO THE INTERNATIONAL CREWS WHO ASSISTED IN FIGHTING THE LARGE FIRES IN HIS COUNTRY...

Two Canadair CL-415 firefighter aircraft of the Fire-fighter Squadron of the 93rd Air Base of the Croatian Air Force and Air Defence with 14 crew members and technicians on 24 November 2016 took off from the Barracks "Zemunik" to Israel to provide assistance extinguishing the large forest fires in the northern and central parts of the country, pursuant to the Decision of the Government of the Republic of Croatia dated 23 November 2016, in response to the request from the Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu. The assistance was also provided by firefighter forces of Greece, Cyprus, Italy, Turkey, Russia, the U.S., Ukraine, Azerbaijan, France, Spain and Romania.

The Croatian teams led by captains, Lt. Col. Davor Turković and Lt. Col. Goran Vlahović and Maj. Tomislav Slavica and Maj. Željko Žugaj, were stationed in

Visiting the crews of two Croatian firefighter CL-415 aircraft the Prime Minister of Israel Benjamin Netanyahu expressed gratitude to the Republic of Croatia for responding immediately and dispatching the firefighter forces to Israel.

////////////////////

the Base "Hatzor" in central Israel. On the first day of their engagement they logged 13 hours fighting the fires in the area of Haifa and Mount of Jerusalem, dropping ca 150 tons of water. Defying the demanding conditions of scooping the water in the open Mediterranean and strong winds, the crews invested major efforts to put the fires under control and contain them. The following day the Croatian teams flew 10 hours fighting the fires in the urban area of Nafat, dropping ca 110 tons of water. In four days of engagement they logged a total of 35 flying hours and dropped ca 280 tons of water on the fire sites. "The fires around Haifa and Mount of Jerusalem broke out one after another, and the conditions for firefighting were unfavourable, which is why the swift reaction and the our ability to fly throughout the day were met with enthusiasm and gratitude of



Author: Marinko Karačić
Photos: photo archive of the 93rd Air Base

CROATIAN MILITARY MAGAZINE

Addressing the international firefighter forces arriving to in Israel to assist with the large forest fires the President of Israel Reuven Rivlin said that he returned from the village of Nataf which was threatened by fire and whose residents were grateful to the fire-fighters for protecting them. "On behalf of the people of Israel I am extending our deep appreciation for your courage and generosity. You have shown true friendship. And if you have so far been heroes in your countries as of now you are heroes in Israel too. You left your families and countries to get aboard the aircraft and lend a helping hand to save lives and I am reiterating my expressions of gratitude", said President Rivlin.

CANADAIR FIGHT THE FIRES IN ISRAEL

the citizens and the government of Israel", said the Commander of the Firefighter Squadron and of the Croatian contingent to Israel Lt. Col. Davor Turković. He stressed that in addition to having a humanitarian mission and demonstrating the developed capability of providing assistance to other countries, the mission in Israel enhanced the reputation and promoted the capabilities of the Republic of Croatia and its Armed Forces in the world. "We encounter the gratitude of the Israeli people for the assistance provided. It is even reinforced on witnessing our tireless crews in action until sunset".

The respect and gratitude for the assistance were expressed by Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and President of Israel Reuven Rivlin, who visited the international flying crews during their humanitarian engagement in Israel.



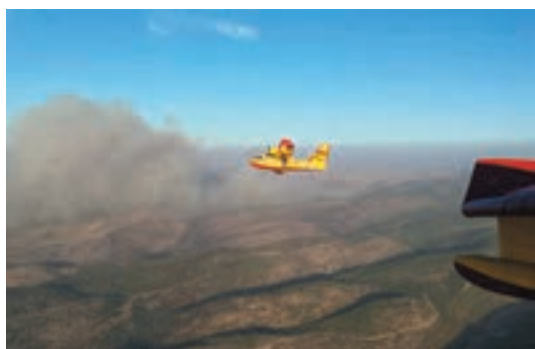
CROATIAN AIR FORCE



The crews of the Croatian firefighter aircraft engaged in the international humanitarian firefighting mission in Israel were received by the President of the Republic Kolinda Grabar-Kitarović as Supreme Commander of the Croatian Armed Forces, who congratulated them on the unreserved engagement and extended appreciation for representing Croatia in a most honourable way. The President underlined the developed capabilities and the sufficient technical and material support for the conduct of non-traditional military tasks and reminded of other international firefighting or flood relief engagements of Croatian forces in Greece, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, Macedonia, Serbia and Portugal. President Grabar-Kitarović extended appreciation to the Ambassador of Israel to the Republic of Croatia, H.E. Zina Kalay Kleitman for the trust placed by her country into the Republic of Croatia by inviting the Croatian pilots to the humanitarian mission, as well as for the warm reception of the Croatian pilots and crew members during their sojourn in Israel.



Prime Minister Netanyahu extended the appreciation to the crews of the Canadairs of the Croatian Air Force and Air Defence and to the Republic of Croatia for responding quickly to the request sent by Israel. President Rivlin stated: "On behalf of the people of Israel I am extending appreciation to you for your courage and generosity. I shall address the gratitude to your heads of state and government for acting readily. Croatia has demonstrated true friendship and if you have so far been heroes in your country you have now become heroes in Israel as well". Lt. Col. Turković said the Croatian forces were among the first to arrive and provide aerial fire-





fighting despite the geographical distance between the two countries. Having put the fires under the control, the Croatian team attended the appreciation reception organised by the heads of state and government of Israel – President Rivlin and Prime Minister Netanyahu – expressing the recognition of the Israeli people to all international firefighter forces for providing immediate assistance in the central and north part of the country.

The Croatian Canadair was given a visible place in the display staged on the occasion, as a symbolic recognition of the role and contribution of the Croatian air forces, said Lt. Col. Turković.



The Croatian forces had been on a firefighter mission in Israel before - in December 2010, with one Canadair dispatched. The Croatian crews were presented with the Award of the State of Israel, by the then President of Israel Shimon Peres, at a ceremony in recognition of the readiness of the Republic of Croatia to assist, which was also attended by the Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu.

////////////////



THE HOMECOMING FOR THE FIREFIGHTER FORCES IN THE 93RD BASE

On their return to their home base at Zemunik on 6 December 2016, the two crews of the Firefighter Squadron were welcomed by the Deputy Prime Minister and Defence Minister Damir Krstičević, the special advisor to the Deputy Prime Minister, General Ante Gotovina, the Commander of the Croatian Air Force and Air Defence, Brigadier General Miroslav Kovač and the Commander of the 93rd Air Base, Colonel Karol Lučan. Minister Krstičević congratulated the firefighter crews: "You have displayed superior capabilities, resoluteness and readiness to assist in the moment of need. You were among the first to arrive to Israel and had a decisive role in extinguishing the fires and have become heroes in Israel, to my pride and the pride of the people of Croatia. "You demonstrated the focussed, responsible and humane approach of the Croatian soldiers, members of the victorious Croatian Armed Forces, to the tasks, for which we are recognisable and a brand", said the Minister.

General Ante Gotovina, special advisor to the Deputy Prime Minister and Defence Minister addressed the crews as well: "We are happy to see our crews back home and I am glad to be here to welcome them. They gave a helping hand and demonstrated the dexterity and capability of firefighting outside the territory of the Republic of Croatia". The Commander of the Firefighter Squadron and of the Croatian contingent to Israel Lt. Col. Davor Turković said they returned from Israel with multifold impressions. "We responded immediately and provided assistance to Israel in a critical moment. The Israeli Prime Minister visited us, observed our aircraft and talked to us; the Croatian experience in firefighting has definitely earned recognition as useful to Israel in building firefighting safety too.



INTERVIEW

Heinrich BRAUSS,
NATO Assistant Secretary General
for Defence Policy and Planning

The Republic of Croatia is valued Ally, whose shared values and contribution to our collective security and defence and to NATO's evolving posture are all important. Situated within the Balkans and southeast Europe, the Republic of Croatia has an important part to play in maintaining and enhancing regional stability and cooperation.



In an interview with the NATO Assistant Secretary General for Defence Policy and Planning Heinrich Brauss during his stay in Croatia we discussed the current situation and the future of the Alliance.

Do you think NATO has accurately anticipated the recent major developments on the global security scene, and has it developed adequate and timely response and adaptation mechanisms to address them?

In a recent speech Secretary General Stoltenberg remarked that the world changes, and so NATO needs to evolve as well. It has done so since its inception.

Before 1989, it was all about collective defence. Over the last two decades, NATO has primarily been focussed on its crisis management task, first in the Balkans and later also in Afghanistan, the Horn of Africa and other locations. But today, given the changes in the security environment both in our Eastern and Southern neighbourhood, NATO has rebalanced efforts amongst its core tasks and has put more emphasis on Collective Defence and Deterrence, while retaining the ability to conduct Crisis Management operations and engage with partners in Cooperative Security efforts.

The year 2014 was a sea change year. In the East, we saw a change of borders in Europe perpetrated

by Russia by force for the first time since the end of the Cold War. In the South, we saw the rise of ISIL/Daesh, and the start of the massive wave of migrants, escaping civil wars and poverty, and we saw terrorist attacks shake cities across the Alliance. NATO has responded very quickly. At the Wales Summit in 2014, NATO agreed on the Readiness Action Plan – to assure Allies, but also to improve the political and military responsiveness of the Alliance, and raise the readiness of NATO forces. It has since been implemented. For example, we have tripled the size of NATO Response Force, introduced a new Very High Readiness Joint Task Force that can respond to any crisis in days, formed new command and control elements on the territory of eight Eastern Allies (NATO Force Integration Units), increased the readiness of Headquarters Multinational Corps, Northeast in Szczecin, Poland, reviewed and improved our advance planning and speeded up our decision making. At the Warsaw Summit in July the Allies' heads of state and government agreed to build on the achievements of the Readiness Action Plan, and directed us to further strengthen the Alliance's deterrence and defence posture, as well as NATO's ability to support the international community's efforts to project stability to our neighborhood, beyond NATO's borders. This applies to threats and challenges from all directions.

All of this work continues to be implemented and is resulting in a new, more agile and robust posture for NATO.

Following up to the Warsaw Summit decisions, what are the most important milestones reached so far and which strands of work in your opinion would require further consideration and additional efforts from the Allies?

At Warsaw, summit Allies agreed to strengthen the Alliance's deterrence and defence posture; and to do more collectively to project stability outside of our territory using all NATO's tools and experience, from crisis management, through partnerships, to capacity building programmes.

They also agreed to provide in-country NATO training to Iraqi security and military forces and direct NATO AWACS support to the Counter-ISIL Coalition. Our leaders decided to step up support to NATO partners, in particular those that face difficult security challenges, such as Ukraine, Georgia and Moldova in the east; and Jordan and Tunisia in the south. We will also continue preparatory work to support Libya's defence institution building, if and when Libyan authorities request NATO support. Related to this, our Operation ACTIVE ENDEAVOUR has been transitioned to a Maritime Security Operation SEA GUARDIAN.

JOINT EFFORTS TOWARDS GLOBAL SECURITY

The most visible decision on the Alliance's deterrence and defence posture was to establish an enhanced Forward Presence in Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania and Poland. A rotational and multinational combat force will make it clear that an attack against one Ally will immediately be met by forces from across the Alliance. Commencing in 2017, it will be based on four robust battalion-sized groupings provided by four framework nations (Canada, Germany, the United Kingdom and the United States). This enhanced forward presence will be complemented by tailored forward presence in the southeast of Alliance territory. And our posture will be backed up by a viable reinforcement strategy based on highly capable and prepared follow-on forces.

In late October we will achieve our first key milestone. When Defence Ministers meet, they will discuss the detailed composition and employment of these forces. Together they will comprise some thousands of troops and their equipment, working together with National Home Defence Forces. It is important to note that NATO's enhanced Forward Presence is underpinned by a viable reinforcement strategy.

As part of the Alliance's approach to projecting stability, Allies reaffirmed NATO's enduring commitment to Afghanistan through Allied presence to provide training, advice and assistance.

Which of the key defence capabilities do you think will be given priority in the future, both from the NATO and Allies' perspective, and would you agree there is a need for greater specialization in that sense?

The Alliance's reinforcement strategy is central to our deterrence and defence posture. NATO's ability to successfully defend any Ally against a potential conventional attack depends on the readiness and preparedness of its reinforcement forces.

In this sense, multinational large combat formations including maritime and air forces are increasingly important in the changed security environment. This means that the training, readiness and logistics demands for these forces to support a major defence operation are key. At the same time, NATO's ability to deploy forces in support of crisis management operations continues to be needed.

Accordingly, it is important that all Allies maintain and enhance those capabilities and forces requested by NATO for the full range of NATO's missions and tasks. While specialisation, if well-coordinated, can be useful for specific capability areas, I do not agree that there is a greater need for it. Every Ally needs to contribute forces to NATO that are fully capable to operate across the combat spectrum, including high-intensity operations. That said, we should continue to take full advantage of and promote

INTERVIEW

multinational cooperation and initiatives such as Smart Defence and the Framework Nation Concept to develop multinational capabilities.

In the context of a renewed emphasis on conventional security challenges, has NATO, together with its individual member nations, developed sufficient assets and mechanisms to respond efficiently to both conventional and hybrid threats?

Yes. Countering hybrid threats is one of the Readiness Action Plan's Adaptation Measures. It led to the development of a Strategy on NATO's role in Countering Hybrid Warfare, which was already agreed at the end of last year. The strategy has three pillars – Prepare, Deter and Defend.

With respect to the latter two, NATO's posture was bolstered significantly with the implementation of the Readiness Action Plan and the decisions taken at the Warsaw Summit to strengthen the Alliance Deterrence and Defence Posture. The necessary conventional capabilities are available for this posture. So implementing NATO's hybrid warfare strategy is focussed on the Prepare function. This includes improvements in the following areas:

- Recognising and attributing hybrid warfare, which requires understanding and situational awareness with an emphasis on intelligence surveillance and reconnaissance capabilities;
- Rapid situation assessment and decision-making, which is supported by rapidly executable advance planning, and exercises; and
- Building resilience at both national and NATO levels and the readiness to resist and respond.

A lot has been said about the NRF, VJTF and other elements of adaptation measures developed for enhancing Allied forward presence at the eastern borders of the Alliance. As for the Southern flank, what is the added value that the Operation Sea Guardian could bring to the security of the Alliance's Southern borders and the Mediterranean?

At the Warsaw Summit, NATO announced the transition of its Operation ACTIVE ENDEAVOUR (OAE) from a collective defence operation into a non-Article V Maritime Security Operation (MSO). This MSO is called Operation SEA GUARDIAN, and is expected to be activated very soon. As in the case of OAE, the Operation SEA GUARDIAN will operate in the Mediterranean.

Operation SEA GUARDIAN will provide 'Support to Maritime Situational Awareness', 'Support Maritime Counter-Terrorism' and 'Contribute to Maritime Security Capacity Building'. We are currently planning how NATO can support and complement the European Union's Operation SOPHIA in the Central Mediterranean by Operation SEA GUARDIAN. Mari-



time security is an important area of co-operation, coordination and complementarity with the EU, as demonstrated in the Indian Ocean and the Aegean Sea, and soon in the Central Mediterranean.

If, hypothetically speaking, the member nations that are currently below NATO guideline manage to increase the defence expenditure to 2% GDP in a short term, which capability areas should be given a priority for capability development and delivery?

At the Wales Summit in 2014, all Allies' Heads of State and Government subscribed to the NATO Defence Investment Pledge. This means halting the decline in defence spending, demonstrating real increases, and moving towards the NATO benchmarks of 2 percent of Gross Domestic Product spent on defence and 20 % of national defence spending allocated to major equipment.

Each Ally has a set of NATO Capability Targets with which together will provide the forces and capabilities needed to meet the Alliance's Level of Ambition. These forces and capabilities need to be modern, combat capable, interoperable with other Allies, deployable and capable of sustained operations. These are key principles, which apply to each and every Ally. Irrespective of the percentage of GDP spent on defence, each Ally should allocate resources to meet its targets. This is about our collective credibility. However, the Alliance does develop a list of defence



planning priorities to help guide Allies to target resources towards those capabilities that can have the greatest effect in the short term. The overall list, is unsurprisingly, classified. However, it is safe to say that there are recurring themes such as, but not limited to: joint intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance, cyber defence, ballistic missile defence and medical support and fully manned, fully equipped and fully trained combat ready units.

Would you say high technology defence industry represents a significant asset to NATO? To which extent are the latest trends in advanced manufacturing embedded in defence planning considerations?

Technology is very important for NATO. Equally important is NATO's capacity to build interoperable and effective forces and capabilities. And for that we need budgets, and we need capable industry.

We are using our dialogue with industry, for example through the NATO-Industry Forum, which by the way, was hosted by Croatia two years ago, to anticipate technological trends and incorporate them into our capability development process. The existing technologies, such as additive manufacturing, also known as 3D-printing, artificial intelligence, quantum computing will be part of our operations sooner or later. The challenge is to anticipate technologies that will occur 10-20 years from now, and include them in NATO's long-term planning considerations. These, and national initiatives, such as the U.S. Third Offset Strategy and the EU innovation developments rep-

resent significant inputs to our long term-thinking. Allied Command Transformation, the Science and Technology Organisation and the Defence Investment Division of NATO Headquarters, together are at the forefront of innovation for NATO as an organisation and all play a role in NATO's relationship with industry. The EU's efforts to strengthen the European Defence Technological and Industrial Base are also important in this respect.

What makes the Republic of Croatia recognisable within NATO and what are the Alliance's expectations in that regard?

The Republic of Croatia is valued Ally, whose shared values and whose contribution to our collective security and defence, and to NATO's evolving posture, are all important. Accordingly, it is key that Croatia aims to reach its 2 % defence expenditure guideline. Currently, Croatia's defence spending is less than 1.4 % of its Gross Domestic Product. Expenditures on major equipment are forecast at just over 8 percent of defence spending, for which the guideline is 20 %. Increased defence spending and dedicating more of it to major equipment will be essential if Croatia is to provide forces that are fully capable of participating in high-intensity operations. The Alliance will be seeking more land and maritime forces from Croatia. Situated within the Balkans and southeast Europe, the Republic of Croatia has an important part to play in maintaining and enhancing regional stability and co-operation.

“FRECCIE TRICOLORI” **AND** **“WINGS OF STORM”** **PREPARE JOINTLY FOR THE SEASON 2017**

WHAT THE PILOTS OF THE “WINGS OF STORM” VALUE THE MOST ARE THE COMMENDATIONS AND THE RESPECT FROM THE PILOTS OF OTHER INTERNATIONAL AEROBATIC GROUPS, WITH WHOM THEY ONLY SHARE THE FLYING SKILLS AND AEROBATIC PERFORMANCE. A REASON TO ENJOY THE SUCCESSFUL CO-OPERATION AND JOINT PRACTICE FLIGHTS WITH THE PILOTS OF THE WORLD’S MOST FAMOUS AEROBATIC TEAM – THE ITALIAN AIR FORCE’S “FRECCIE TRICOLORI” AND THE MUTUALLY EXPRESSED WISH FOR THE CO-OPERATION TO TURN INTO A TRADITION.

The visits of pilots and joint performances and exchange of experience are a common thing for aerobatic groups; a number of them have during their careers established such co-operation models. "Wings of Storm" adopted the practice with the visit to the Turkish aerobatic team "Turkish Stars" in the air base in Konya in spring 2009. The two groups exchanged the experiences and promoted the already good relations, but did not perform joint flights and overflights.

In the coming seasons and during the air shows the Croatian aerobatic team explored the possibilities of co-operation with the Italian aerobatic group. In summer 2016, the Team Leader of "Wings of Storm" initiated the formal procedure agreed on by the Team Leader of the "Frecce Tricolori" group, for official one-day visits with practice flights and joint preparation for the performance programmes. The visits offer highly useful pre-season practice opportunities for aerobatic teams at minimal cost. A 30-min flying distance between the respective home bases (Rivolto Air Base and Zadar Air Base) enabled the groups to conduct the complex activities within one-day time span. In laymen's eyes the manoeuvres are the most complex segment of the performance in airshows but pilots claim to the contrary. The manoeuvres are the easiest part for them, as they are well prepared and continuously trained for. What they find much more unpredictable and stressful is the planning and safe conduct of international overflights in often unfavourable weather conditions, as well as landing on foreign airports to attend the aircraft in time constraint and quick adapting to unfamiliar performance locations (in the sense of identifying the reference and landmarks, they are impossible to simulate within the regular preparations at home airports and within the national air space. The opportunity to train the procedures at such proximity from the home airports was of great benefit for both aerobatic groups.

“FRECCIE TRICOLORI” FLYING OVER THE WATERFRONT IN ZADAR

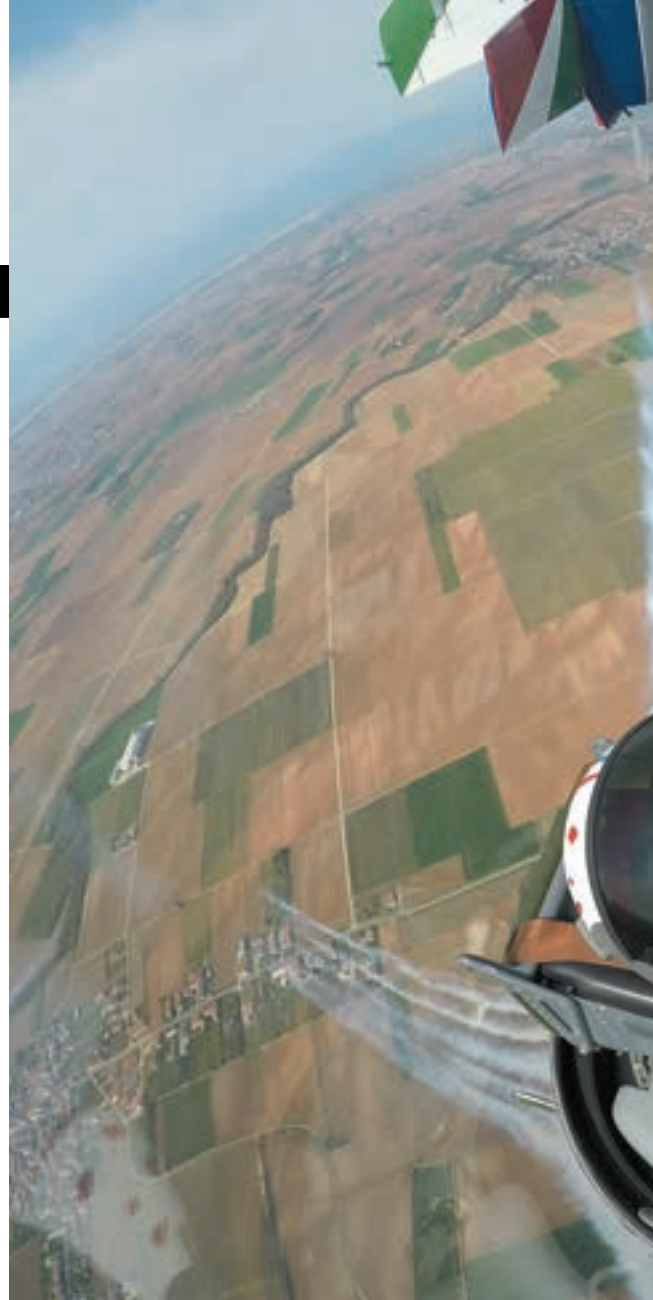
The groups agreed on 22 March as the acceptable date for the Italian group to attend the ceremony marking the 25th anniversary of the 93rd Air Base, the home unit of “Wings of Storm”.

Unfortunately, due to dense fog in northern Italy “Freccie Tricolori” arrived to Zadar the following day. The peak moment of the interesting and productive day was the practice flight performed by “Freccie” over the Zadar waterfront. Although flying in a reduced formation (seven aircraft) and programme the most famous Italian aerobatic group drew the attention and delighted the large audience. Two pilots of the “Wings of Storm” had the privilege to fly with them on that occasion, although it had been planned to take place during the Croatian visit to Rivilto. Prior to departing, the Commander of the Italian group, Major Mirco Caffeli expressed satisfaction over all segments of the visit to the Croatian aerobatic group, and praised the opportunity his group had to practice the programme over the sea surface, in the ideal conditions provided by the Zadar Channel, with superbly prepared referent marks at sea.

The latter part of the activity was scheduled on 4 April, when the “Wings of Storm” took off towards the Rivilto Air Base. The Group performed two practice flights, to give all 11 Italian pilots the opportunity to fly with their Croatian colleagues, and one flight by “Freccie Tricolori” with the six pilots who did not fly with them in Zadar. It was hard to tell whether it was the Croatian pilots that were more impressed by the performance of the “Freccie Tricolori”, particularly the precisely performed breaks and rejoins or the Italian pilots by the demanding negative G manoeuvres which are the specialty of the “Wings of Storm”.



It was the second visit of the “Wings of Storm” to the Air Base Rivilto, a - the first occurring at a large international air show marking the 50th anniversary of “Freccie Tricolori”



In summer 2016, the Team Leader of “Wings of Storm”, initiated the formal procedure agreed on by the Team Leader of the “Freccie Tricolori” group, for official one-day visits entailing practice flights and joint preparation for the performance of programmes.

“WINGS OF STORM” VISIT RIVILTO

It was the second visit of the “Wings of Storm” to the Air Base Rivilto, the first occurring at a large international air show marking the 50th anniversary of “Freccie Tricolori”. “Wings of Storm” performed for 500,000 spectators, which was the largest audience for them and the moment when the Group earned a place among the world’s best known aerobatic groups. The Team Leader, Lt. Col. Damir Barišić and 1st Lt. Darko Belančić as Team Commentator from the present line-up took part at the show.

For all other pilots the visit to Rivilto was a first opportunity to familiarise with the daily routine of a foreign aerobatic group. They may share similari-



Once landed, it was hard to tell whether it was the Croatian pilots that were more impressed by the performance of the "Frecce Tricolori", particularly the precise breaks or formations or the Italian pilots by the demanding negative G manoeuvres which are the specialty of the "Wings of Storm".

to the characteristics of the aircraft assigned to them. They perform two to three practice flights each flying day. It has been the Group's routine for the past 57 years, whereas for the "Wings of Storm" the situation has been quite different. They are not a squadron but a group of six selected and specially trained pilots of the Fixed-wing Squadron of the 93rd Air Base in Zadar. They are primarily instructors to pilots of various profiles and it is often hard to gather them all to practice. They spend one 20-min flight per week to practice for the sequences, flying the aircraft of the Fixed-wing Squadron available for the purpose. The Squadron's primary tasks have precedence over the Group's aerobatic practice. Furthermore, the airspace over the Zadar Airport is crowded by the aircraft from several squadrons. Also the commercial airlines have the priority and in high season their flights multiply and limit the use of the airspace for the "Wings of Storm". However, over the past decade of its existence the "Wings of Storm" have won the attention of millions of enthusiasts across Europe with their skillful performance of eye-catching manoeuvres, the prizes at most prestigious airshows and acted as one of the most recognisable and widely known ambassadors of Croatia. With all the prizes won, what the pilots of the Group value the most are the commendations and the respect from the pilots of other international aerobatic groups, with whom they only share flying skills and aerobatic performance. Therefore, the successful co-operation and joint flying of the two world's probably best known aerobatic groups, the enthusiasm of the pilots and the expressed wish to see it turn into a tradition is comparable to "Wings of Storm"'s last year's winning the main prize at the RIAT in the United Kingdom. Until a new encounter, be it in Zadar or in Rivolto, it only remains to wish the two groups a successful performance season 2017.



ties with many of them, including the Italian Group, in terms of flying skills, pilot selection and training modalities, sequences design and performance planning, but the insight into their daily routines and living and working conditions reveals many background differences.

The "Frecce Tricolori" are the only user of the Air Base Rivolto and also of the respective air space. Structured as squadron the Group comprises various functional areas – logistics, support, public affairs, photo and video production unit, fitness facilities and are focussed on practicing and performing the programme, for which they use particular aircraft to enable the pilots adapt





REINFORCED ENGINEER COMPANY READY FOR UN MISSION

The barracks “Kamensko” and “Skakavac”, the training range “Cerovac” and training ground “Kupa” are teeming with engineer troops working and training to maintain the level and the reputation enjoyed within both the Croatian Armed Forces and the citizens of the Republic of Croatia. The training areas are somewhat different than usual – the recognisable UN-blue on the helmets, caps and protective vests of the members of the Engineer Regiment of the Croatian Army and other units assigned to the 1st HRVCON to UN.

With the elements from other units of the Croatian Armed Forces they compose a reinforced Croatian Engineer Company declared for the missions and registered to Peacekeeping Capability Readiness System.

The 1st HRVCON to UN is composed of the Engineer Platoon, the Infrastructure Platoon and the Engineer Support Platoon. In mid-2016 the Contingent was expanded with a Real Life Support Platoon, manned by the Support Command personnel.

On the office door of Captain Dražen Brkić in the Barracks “Kamensko” there is a UN sign. Cpt Brkić is the Commander of the General Logistic Support Company and the Commander of the 1st HRVCON to UN, and is wearing the UN-marked items of the uniform and insignia, same as others, saying: “We wish to get used to the details of the future mission in all segments, the insignia being one of them”. The core of the 1st HRVCON to UN comprises three engineer platoons – the Engineer Platoon, the Infrastructure Platoon and the Engineer Support Platoon, say Captain Brkić and the Deputy, 1st Lieutenant Jure Jajčanin. In mid-2016 the unit was expanded with the a Real Life Support Platoon, manned by the members of the Support Command. We spoke to the Commander, Captain Ivan



Author: Domagoj VLAHOVIĆ;
Photos by: Tomislav BRANDT, Josip KOPI,
Archive of the Engineer Regiment

CROATIAN MILITARY MAGAZINE

The engineer component of the Company, followed by the component from the Support Command, in July 2016 had its first line-up before the representatives of the UN. "The company has been established and the personnel trained. We need additional equipment. Some equipment is still due, which can be procured through the UN special programme for support and we expect to reach full readiness by mid-2017, says Captain Brkić



MONTHS OF TRAINING AND PREPARATIONS FOR THE MEMBERS OF THE REINFORCED CROATIAN ENGINEER COMPANY DECLARED FOR MISSIONS AND REGISTERED INTO THE UN PEACEKEEPING CAPABILITY READINESS SYSTEM. THEIR TASK WILL BE TO KEEP THE PEACE AND SUPPORT THE MISSION AND PROVIDE ASSISTANCE TO THE LOCAL POPULATION...

"As we speak, the engineer platoon is building the road, the infrastructure platoon is building the canopy and the Support Platoon is storing their equipment and handles repairs or spare parts. The RLS Platoon and the Protection Platoon are also performing their routine tasks in their barracks or in the field", explains the Company Commander. The force declaration for the UN mission (September 2015) was followed by the administrative phase (establishment of the unit and selection of the personnel), and by the intensive military skills refreshment training for the engineer personnel since early 2016.

Špoljar. The Protection Platoon, manned by the members of the Battalion "Vukovi" of the Guards Mechanised Brigade – a highly important unit – was joined too. The Croatian contingent to the UN is a reinforced company capable of executing horizontal construction and other engineer tasks and is self-sustainable. The declaration, generation and manning of the platoons was a responsibility of the main units, and so is the sustainment, the training and practice. The members practice for their routine tasks, only with some added tasks and procedures characteristic for the international missions. The training and practice cycle is ongoing and that is why you'll notice the engineers wearing blue helmets across the military installations around Karlovac.



UN — LED MISSIONS

In addition to the protection task assigned to the platoon of the "Vukovi" Battalion, all Company members have to undergo the standard military drill (including the weapon handling ability). June 2016 saw the kickoff the training as designed by the International Military Operations Training Centre, the authority responsible for the pre-deployment training.

The plan comprises eight modules containing all elements specific for the UN operations. The UN training is conducted in the International Military Operations Training Centre at Rakitje or its instructors visit the units and administer contents necessary for a sensitive and professionally demanding yet essentially humanitarian mission.

"Wherever we go our job is to maintain peace and support the operation and provide assistance to the local population through infrastructure works - building schools or roads and supply water; it is a motivating task for us", says 1st Lt. Jajčanin.

The engineer component of the Company, followed by the component from the Support Command, in July 2016 had its first line-up before the representatives of the UN. "The company has been established and the personnel trained. We need additional equipment. Some equipment is still due, which can be procured through the UN special programme for support and we expect to reach full readiness by mid-2017. The platoons have to be synchronised and develop interoperability as in the mission they will operate as one unit

So from 21 November to 2 December 2017 the components conducted the first joint training at the engineer training range "Cerovac". "We began with simpler procedures and practiced the standard military drills to get to realistic tasks - we rehabilitated the road and the village, the Real Life Support Platoon was in charge of the food and fuel delivery, the construction of the camp and the Protection Platoon provided safety for all activities", said Captain Brkić, who goes on to describe a typical day in a UN mission.



The Protection Platoon, manned by the members of the Battalion "Vukovi" of the Guards Mechanised Brigade - a highly important unit - was joined too. The Croatian contingent to the UN is a reinforced company capable of executing horizontal construction and other engineer tasks, self-sustainable and able to ensure its own safety.

The key engineer equipment includes excavators, dozers, rollers, loaders, low-loading trailers and trailers. The platoon of the "Vukovi" Battalion will operate its standard infantry equipment and the M-ATV vehicles. The Commander of the Real Life Support Platoon elaborated on its tasks and equipment: "At the joint training we displayed our capabilities, necessary to execute our main task - provide the working and living conditions in the area of operations. The same is with in-field tasks. We protect the accommodation and storage capacities, provide messing and fuel, conduct water purification and medical care (ROLE 1 capability) veterinarian food inspection", says Cpt Špoljar. The engineer personnel of the Engineer Regiment and logisticians of the Support Command have demonstrated repeatedly to be able to operate efficiently together in real situations: while constructing the transit camp during the migrant crisis in Croatia in September 2015. Indeed, among the personnel of the 1st HRVCON to UN are many of those who were engaged on the task.

"The possibility of the deployment is anticipated with enthusiasm by all members of the Company and is seen as major compliment for the Engineer Regiment and a recognition of its performance so far. We had several engineer elements of the Croatian Armed Forces declared within the partner goals and capability targets but only individuals were engaged in the missions, never the entire units. In conclusion, the 1st HRVCON to UN will be ready to conduct any mission in any area", says Captain Brkić. The Company will take joint training events in the course of 2017, crowned with a large-scale exercise to demonstrate all the acquired capabilities.



Author: Vesna Pintarić, Photos by: Vesna Pintarić

THE CROATIAN NAVY



TWO AUTONOMOUS UNDERWATER VEHICLES - REMUS 100 WERE RECEIVED IN OCTOBER 2016 BY THE MINE WARFARE SECTION OF THE CROATIAN NAVY FLOTILLA THE UNDERWATER COUNTERMINE VEHICLES ARE USED FOR SEARCHING THE SEABED, OPTIMISED TO SEARCH LARGE AREAS OF SHALLOW WATERS. SIX MEMBERS OF THE MCM DIVER PLATOON HAVE BEEN TRAINED TO OPERATE THE VEHICLES, WHICH THEY DEMONSTRATED DURING THE RECENT PRACTICE EVENT...

THE REMUS 100

UNDERWATER VEHICLES UPGRADING THE NAVY'S COUNTERMINE CAPABILITIES

In mid-October 2016 the Croatian Navy received two autonomous Remus 100 underwater vehicles, donated by the United States within the Foreign Military Financing military assistance programme. The vehicles are intended for seabed search, and optimised to search large areas of shallow seas and require only scarce infrastructure in support. The state-of-the-art makes were manufactured in 2016 and equipped with sophisticated sensors and navigation that enable the detailed search; the vehicles are user-friendly and produce highly accurate data.

OPERATOR TRAINING

The vehicles have been assigned to the Mine Warfare Centre of the Croatian Navy's Flotilla, and its Commander, Commander (N) Damir Poklepović, and members of the MCM diver platoon - Lt. Junior Grade Tino Mrčelić, chief petty officers Vatroslav Mlinar and Željko Stanković and Petty Officer First Class Žan Marsel Bušić described the system, the use and the operating modality of the vehicles for our magazine. Commander Poklepović says the MCM divers are the specialty trained to conduct



the countermine search of the seabed and detect suspect objects using various sonar and scanners, and with the introduction of the Remus 100 vehicle their capabilities have been significantly enhanced the unit's detection and identification capabilities. Immediately upon the handover by the Navy six operators of the Mine Warfare Centre took the training administered by an instructor from the manufacturing firm - Hydroid-Kongsberg. The operators emphasised that they were familiar with the type of the vehicle, having undergone a training on the autonomous underwater vehicle IVER 2, in a cooperative pilot- project with the Faculty of Electronic Engineering and Computing. It facilitated the mastering of the procedures with the Remus 100. The instructor indeed commended the speed and the ability of the Croatian operators to master the respective procedures, comprising the mission preparation, the preparation of the submersible and post-mission analysis of the acquired data. Following the completion of the second part of the training the operators will be able to perform basic maintenance to reduce the expenses. The Croatian Armed Forces are among ten militaries in the world to have introduced the Remus 100 vehicles and to have developed the respective operating capabilities.



Commander (N) of the Mine Warfare Centre
DAMIR POKLEPIĆ

The REMUS has been configured as a "closed" system. The vehicle is programmed by the data from a mission retrieved and the battery recharged through a connector on the hull.

////////////////

SEABED INVESTIGATION

Given the operational capabilities the vehicle is used for search of shallow surfaces (maximum operating depth up to 100 m, as indicated in the brand designation), which makes it optimal for the control of ports or access routes and also far more cost-effective than employing divers for the same purpose, in view of the speed and far larger range of search. For instance, what divers scan and search in a few days for the vehicle is a matter of hours.

The vehicle's operational autonomy (battery life) depends on a number of parameters, but in optimal conditions, depth and speed of operating it extends to eight hours, which is the time sufficient to search up to 800 m². Its operation is programmed and controlled on a laptop, and following the immersion it scans the seabed according to the pre-set co-ordinates.

The vehicle is equipped with various sensors (visibility sensor, temperature sensor, depth sensor) and the side scan sonar (SSS) which films the seabed and saves imagery to the hard disk, for later comparison and analysis. The vehicle can also contain a video camera, and the digitised recording is retrieved from the hard disk. The suspect objects can be accurately detected



REMUS RANGER

Each vehicle is equipped with a REMUS Ranger. The vehicle incorporates an Emergency transponder, which can be alerted at any moment from the outer unit (installed aboard the ship, base or coast).

The Ranger is independent from other vehicle's systems and continues to operate regardless of the error, except for sinking. The REMUS Ranger is a small-sized water-resistant deck unit configured to enable control over the vehicle advancing during the underwater mission. The transponder is highly useful in emergency localisation and in the maintenance of the underwater vehicle. The vehicle is configured to take regular inputs from the external sources; if it does not receive them within the set time period (usually 10 min) the vehicle halts the mission and resurfaces.



from the distance of a few meters. The collected and detected data are used to identify and classify the encountered objects; the suspect or explosive devices are neutralised, which is a task for MCM divers.

LTJG Mrčelić, the Commander of the MCM Divers Platoon, summarizes that detection-identification-classification and neutralisation are indeed the main procedures in operating the Remus vehicles and stresses that the camera installed on the vehicle facilitates the identification of the objects on the seabed.

Petty Officer 3rd Class Bušić stresses that the operators also determine major maritime routes and corridors subject to constant monitoring, particularly the access routes to the ports (they are presently focussed on the maritime communications in front of the port of Split, the access through the Kaštela Bay and the entrance to the Lora Navy Port, and will follow the same procedure in other important Adriatic ports).

The charts of the examined areas are saved and entered into databases to compare with in later searches. The assumed NATO commitments require periodical reviews of the access routes to the ports, also in order to prevent terrorist attacks.

All REMUS systems incorporate graphic user interface (GUI) facilitating the vehicle maintenance, mission planning, vehicle testing and data analysis. The users need only to click on the "target" on the map to edit the mission parameters (e.g. the height, speed, depth and navigation mode).

////////////////////



Hence the importance of the use of the REMUS vehicles for both military and civilian purposes, as they contribute to the safety of the navigable routes in the Adriatic for military and merchant fleets and of the safe undersea from the perspective of Croatia as a tourist country. .

What matters the most are the significantly upgraded the countermeasure capabilities of the Croatian Navy thanks to the introduction of the Remus 100 vehicles into operational service. Our interlocutors who operate the vehicles described the progress by the following simile: "We ran in the Paris-Dhakar rally before, this now is Formula 1".





PZH 2000

IN SERVICE WITH THE CAF

"TODAY'S PRESENTATION LAUNCHES THE DELIVERY OF THIS POWERFUL WEAPON WORTH SOME 55 MIL EUR, WHICH WILL IMPROVE SIGNIFICANTLY THE ARTILLERY CAPABILITIES OF THE CROATIAN ARMED FORCES AND PLACE IT AMONG THE BEST EQUIPPED ARTILLERY FORCES IN NATO", SAID THE CROATIAN DEFENCE MINISTER DAMIR KRSTIČEVIĆ

The first two delivered PzH 2000 Howitzers procured from the Federal Ministry of Defence of the Federal Republic of Germany were presented in the Croatian Armed Forces' Maintenance Depot in Zagreb on 13 April 2017. Twelve out of a total of 16 German-produced howitzers will be in the operational service, one howitzer will be used for training while the remaining three will be kept for spare parts.

Expressing satisfaction over the introduction of the PzH2000 howitzers into the Croatian Armed Forces, Defence Minister Damir Krstičević stated "Today's presentation launches the delivery of this powerful weapon worth some 55 mil EUR, which will improve significantly the artillery capabilities of the Croatian Armed Forces and place it among the best equipped artillery forces in NATO. The Federal Republic of Germany is a strategic partner

The first two delivered howitzers will be housed in the Training Range "Eugen Kvaternik" near Slunj and the Training Range "Cеровec" near Karlovac.

////////////////////



of the Republic of Croatia, and the two countries share the same goals".

The Chief of the General Staff of the Croatian Armed Forces, General Mirko Šundov underlined the importance of the introduction of the procured howitzers into the operational service as they "multiply the firepower and significantly upgrade the level of equippedness of the Croatian Armed Forces, placing them among the best equipped militaries in NATO and beyond...The self-propelled howitzers enhance the Croatian Armed Forces' capabilities for deterrence and efficient response to any threat posed to the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Republic of Croatia; the capabilities whereby Croatia contributes to international security and stability", said General Šundov.

The project "Equipping the Croatian Armed Forces with the PzH2000 self-propelled howitzers" was



Author: Lada Puljizević, Photos by: Tomislav Brandt

CROATIAN MILITARY MAGAZINE



FIREPOWER

The PzH 2000 self-propelled howitzers were manufactured by the Krauss-Maffei Wegmann (KMW) Rheinmetall of Germany. The length is 11.70m, the width 3.5 m, the height 3.46 m and weight 55 tons. They are attended by crews of three (commander, gunner, driver) which can be reinforced by two more members (gunner and ammunition loader). The main armament consists in the Rheinmetall 155-mm L52 long-range artillery gun with elevation range from -2.5 to 65 degrees and the traverse range of 360 degrees and the maximum rate of fire is 8-10 rpm.

The fire range with the standard projectiles is 30 km, and if using rocket-assisted projectiles can reach up to 80 km. The PzH2000 howitzer is a self-propelled and high-power modern NATO artillery weapon. It boasts high mobility and multiple rounds (as many as five shells engaging the target simultaneously).

ACQUIRED CAPABILITY OF SWIFT AND EFFICIENT ARTILLERY SUPPORT

By procuring the PzH2000 self-propelled howitzers the Croatian Armed Forces have met the requirements for modernisation and equipment of the Croatian Army units with modern self-propelled artillery weapons capable of providing indirect fire support and the use of precision-guided munitions, which is one of the assumed NATO capability targets. The project provides the Croatian Armed Forces with the capability of swift and efficient artillery support, employing state-of-the-art fire control systems and technology to detect targets.

CROATIA - SIXTH NATO NATION TO USE THE PZH 2000

Croatia is now the sixth NATO nation to introduce the PzH Howitzers into its weapon system, along with Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, Greece and Lithuania. Prior to the delivery itself, the howitzers underwent the mandatory service and adaptations, namely the installation of the communications equipment, the establishment of the artillery system, coating and other works that have been conducted through NATO Support and Procurement Agency (NSPA), of which Croatia is a full member.

incepted by an agreement signed between the Ministry of Defence of the Republic of Croatia and the Federal Ministry of Defence of the Federal Republic of Germany in late 2014, aimed at equipping the Croatian Armed Forces with the 155-mm L52 artillery systems effective at the ranges exceeding 40 km, using assisted projectiles and is capable of multiple rounds simultaneous impact.

The project meets the needs of modernisation and equipment of the Croatian Army with state-of-the-art self-propelled artillery weapons and enables fulfilling of the adopted NATO capability targets. The first two delivered howitzers will be housed in the Training Range "Eugen Kvaternik" near Slunj and the Training Range "Cerovec" near Karlovac. As stipulated in the Agreement, the delivery of the remainder of the howitzers is due by the end of 2017.

The delivery of the remainder of the howitzers is due by the end of 2017, as stipulated in the Agreement between the two ministries.

////////////////

CROATIAN AIR FORCE AND AIR DEFENCE

The flight training on the OH-58D Kiowa Warrior helicopters kicked off in the Helicopter Squadron of the 93rd Air Base of the Croatian Air Force and Air Defence Barracks "Pukovnik Mirko Vukušić" at Zemunik in early May 2017.

The training for the Croatian pilots is administered by the U.S. flight instructors and air maintenance technicians, on the 16 OH-58D Kiowa Warriors procured within the project of equipment of the Croatian Armed Forces, supported by the U.S.



The first group of the Croatian Air Force and Air Force pilots is taking the initial training cycle, to prepare and receive certification to autonomously train other pilots. The training for air technicians will follow the same principle.

The Commander of the Helicopter Squadron, Lieutenant Colonel Krešimir Ražov said that the Kiowa training for pilots has introduced a new mission and role of the Squadron "The project is a challenge - we are being trained to operate new and modern tech-



TRIAL FLIGHTS ON KIOWA

MONTHS-LONG TRAINING ON THE RECENTLY INTRODUCED 16 OH-58D KIOWA HELICOPTERS IS ADMINISTERED BY THE U.S. FLIGHT INSTRUCTORS AND AIR MAINTENANCE TECHNICIANS. IT ALSO INCLUDES TRAINING OF THE FIRST TEST PILOTS. THE FIRST GROUP OF THE CROATIAN PILOTS IS TAKING THE INITIAL TRAINING CYCLE...





Author: Marinko Karačić, Photos by: Tomislav Brandt

CROATIAN MILITARY MAGAZINE



nology and to apply modern techniques and tactics. We cherished the idea of mastering the use of the state-of-the-art equipment incorporated in armed reconnaissance helicopters. That was our motive to become pilots in the first place - to do things of the kind. Learning to fly the helicopters with such a broad range of operational capabilities is a major moment for our pilots and Squadron alike; the Kiowas are the best reconnaissance and real-time data collection and transfer helicopters. They will probably also see employment in civilian search-and-rescue missions at land and sea or in the border control in day/night and in any weather conditions.

WARRIOR HELICOPTERS





We are therefore taking pride to become Kiowa helicopter pilots; not only we advance our training – we are also developing and acquiring new capabilities for the Croatian Armed Forces”, says Lt. Col. Ražov.

TRAINING OF AIR TECHNICIANS

The training of pilots was preceded by the training in the Kiowa engine maintenance and inspection for air technicians, who had already passed the examinations in the basic module, including the line maintenance (technical specifications, documentation, systems, fault correction etc.).

The basic module has been completed so far by the technicians specialised in aircraft engine and radio electronics/avionics (covering the flight instruments, radio and electronic equipment and armament); the technicians will still receive the instruction in maintaining the M250-C30R Turboshaft engine by the Rolls-Royce experts.

The final module contains the expert supervision and armament systems, to round off the air techni-

The first group of the Croatian Air Force and Air Force pilots is taking the initial training to prepare and receive certification to autonomously train other pilots. The training for air technicians will follow the same principle.

////////////////////



cian training. They will autonomously receive and maintain the equipment, with expert assistance from the U.S. Kiowa maintenance expert teams.

The chief aircraft engineer of the 93rd Air Base, Lt. Col. Marin Žunić said the training of air technicians was facilitated by their existing expertise with the maintenance of similar helicopters – the Bells 206B. “The American teams praised the level of expertise and practical skills of our air technicians and adapted the training programme accordingly,



LT. COL. KREŠIMIR RAŽOV,
COMMANDER OF THE HELICOPTER SQUADRON

The Kiowa training for pilots has introduced a new mission and role of the Squadron "The project is a challenge - we are being trained to operate new and modern technology and to apply modern techniques and tactics. We cherished the idea of mastering the use of the state-of-the-art equipment incorporated in armed reconnaissance helicopters. That was our motive to become pilots in the first place - to do things of the kind. Learning to fly the helicopters with such a broad range of operational capabilities is a major moment for our pilots and Squadron.

LT. COL. MARIN ŽUNIĆ,
CHIEF AIRCRAFT ENGINEER OF THE 93RD AIR BASE

The training of air technicians was facilitated by their existing expertise with the maintenance of similar helicopters - the Bells 206B. "The American teams praised the level of the expertise and practical skills of our air technicians and adapted the training programme accordingly, leaving out the already acquired content.

Given the superior manoeuvring capabilities, resistance to detection and counterattack by the adversary, the night/day operability, high adaptability to tasks and various operating conditions and the dual use capacity (the support to civilian institutions), the introduction of the OH-58D Kiowa Warrior helicopters has significantly enhanced the capabilities of the Croatian Armed Forces.

leaving out the already acquired content. It applies primarily to the technicians specialised for aircraft engine, while the radio electronics and avionics technicians need to acquire practical experience as Bell helicopters do not have the equipment. Also, the upcoming lectures and guidance of the visiting experts from Rolls-Royce, which manufactures the engines for the Kiowa helicopters, will be very useful and relevant for us. We will have the privilege of learning from the best instructors and experts in all aspects of the maintenance of OH -58D Kiowa Warrior.

The OH-58D Kiowa Warrior Helicopters are armed reconnaissance helicopters, employed in anti-tank warfare, close and very close air support, convoy escort, correction and adjustment of precision fire as well as aerial command and control with the aid of digital modems and protected channels. They are also used for civilian purposes, e.g. search actions, border control, disaster relief and observation and filming of incidents.





The first issue of "Hrvatski vojnik" was released as a 50-page monthly in November 1991, with a circulation of 60,000 copies.

25 YEARS OF

"HRVATSKI THE MAGAZINE

THE MAGAZINE HAS PROUDLY BORN THE NAME THROUGHOUT THE PERIOD AND THE BOARD IS ENTHUSIASTIC ABOUT IT. THE ANNIVERSARY HIGHLIGHTS THE CONTINUITY AND THE FACT THAT WE WERE DOING THE RIGHT THING. "HRVATSKI VOJNIK" IS A SUCCESS STORY, WITH GOOD PROSPECTS FOR GROWING IN THE FUTURE ...

The first issue of "Hrvatski vojnik" was released amidst some of the most horrifying as well as some of the most glorious moments of the nightmare and a groundbreaking year 1991. The magazine was intended primarily for the Croatian defenders at battlefields throughout Croatia, to provide them with moral, psychological, political and educational support.

Whatever the perspective of the analysis of the reasons for launching the magazine, its role, importance and the achievements in the wartime and later, it emerged in the year of the establishment of the Croatian armed forces and became a part of the victory in the Homeland War.

THE RELEASE OF THE FIRST ISSUE

The first issue of "Hrvatski vojnik" was released as a 50-page monthly in November 1991, with a circulation of 60,000 copies. In the preface to the first issue the magazine published the words of the President of the Republic of Croatia Franjo Tuđman ("The Croatian military in the defence war for freedom and territorial integrity of Croatia".

"It is a common thing that defence ministries and

We have recently uploaded the book "25 Years of the Croatian Armed Forces", published on the important occasion. It is available for reading online.

institutions release publications aimed at studying the entire subject of the military and the defence of the country. We are now faced with the same need, establishing a Croatian military in wartime circumstances to defend the country and its democracy, which was the motive for launching of "Hrvatski vojnik" – a magazine promoting the awareness of the existence and importance of the Croatian past and present and of the combat tradition of Croats". The President concluded with a visionary statement: "Our armed forces are growing stronger, better organised and trained day by day, and it will not be long, aided also by "Hrvatski vojnik", before they will be capable to expel the aggressor from the territory of our homeland".

Another article in the same issue, titled "Fight bravely and wisely", in which the then Defence Minister RH Gojko Šušak explained the motives for the founding of the magazine: "'Hrvatski vojnik' is another form of our fight for the authentic presentation of the war against Croatia. Valiant Croatian soldiers, this is your magazine and yet another effort to complete the picture of our shared battle for a sovereign and free Croatia".

The first Editor-in-Chief Stjepan Adanić recalled



"Hrvatski vojnik" is present in social networks daily, including weekends and holidays, to provide important information to the followers and public timely, either in the written, video or photo form. Nurturing the 25-year long printed matter tradition, our posts today reach large publics worldwide almost readily.

Authors: Lada Puljizević, Željko Stipanović, Vesna Pintarić, Photo archive of "Hrvatski vojnik"

CROATIAN MILITARY MAGAZINE

The magazine "Hrvatski vojnik" and other editions (CROMIL) can be browsed as PDF from anywhere, and the web-archive is available online as well.



VOJNIK”

OF THE INVINCIBLE



the time of the emergence of "Hrvatski vojnik" – a huge morale and psychological encouragement and a surprise warmly welcomed by Croatian soldiers. The first editorial board was located in the building of the former military court seized a few days earlier.

The incredible efforts by launchers and first contributors to cover as many topics as possible amidst the chaotic war time and lack of the assets are worth respect. Adapting to the wartime conditions, in a rush and with modest conditions, undermanned and underequipped compensating them with the energy, persistence and strong motivation, the small editorial board created a magazine, facing both delight and disappointment.

The first issue of "Hrvatski vojnik" brought articles witnessing to the historical moment, the establishment of the Croatian military units and heroic acts by soldiers, as well as feature stories and interviews from the frontlines. It also aims to fulfill the education purpose.

Until late 1992 "Hrvatski vojnik" was published bi-weekly and had 66 pages. The constant efforts by its editorial board to reach the best combination of content and dynamics and to

The magazine "Hrvatski vojnik" has gradually gained the status of brand in the Croatian Armed Forces and a magazine recognised beyond the borders of Croatia and member of the European Military Press Association (EMPA), promoting the Croatian Armed Forces for the past 15 years.



meet the growing expectations placed before the magazine, and following the trends in the European and other international military magazines.

MILITARY MAGAZINE AND EDUCATIONAL AND INFORMAT

The new series of "Hrvatski vojnik", now designed as an expert military magazine, more up-to-date, richer in content and quality – was presented in May 1995.

The informative tradition of "Hrvatski vojnik" was continued by the new weekly "Velebit" launched concurrently, by the unchanged editorial and contributor staff.

In 2000 "Velebit" changed the name (henceforth "Obrana") and was redesigned to offer new columns. It was published as a weekly until 2004, the year when the informative weekly "Obrana" and the military magazine "Hrvatski vojnik" were merged into one magazine, which kept the name "Hrvatski vojnik" maintaining the continuity and combining the informative and expert contents, first as a weekly and bi-weekly to this date.



CORRESPONDING WITH THE TIME

The editorial board of "Hrvatski vojnik" gradually expanded the range of activities beyond the magazine, which remained the primary mission though, to edit and publish books, monographs and photomonographs, multimedia, audio- and video-editions and presenting hundreds of modern graphic solutions which have become its brand.

The editorial board ventured also into video production, aware of its importance. The very first product "Profession – Military Working Dog" won the first prize of the international jury at the international film festival "The Military and the People" (Bracciano, Italy). The first international prize paved the way to the international recognition, as proved by the prize of the Speaker of the Italian Parliament – one of the three main Festival prizes - won by the film on the Croatian Army. The video-production has grown year by year and found its way among the standard editorial tasks, launching tens of video editions and films presenting the capabilities and capacities of the Croatian Armed Forces have won international recognition for their quality.

A new pride project was the successful integration



The editorial board of "Hrvatski vojnik" gradually expanded the range of activities beyond the magazine, which remained the primary mission though, to edit and publish books, monographs and photomonographs, multimedia, audio- and video-editions and presenting hundreds of modern graphic solutions which have become its brand.



of the previous products into a multi-media interactive CD conceived as a "multi-media identity card" presenting the entire Croatian Armed Forces with a multitude of information, photos and videos. Concurrently the first CD of the Croatian Navy's new Vocal Ensemble "Sv. Juraj" became a success and was sold out, finding its way to Australia, Canada and Germany. We are taking pride in the music clips of the Ensemble produced by our Board.

IN THE COMPANY OF EUROPEAN COUNTRIES

The magazine "Hrvatski vojnik" has gradually gained the status of brand in the Croatian Armed Forces and a magazine recognised beyond the borders of Croatia and member of the European Military Press Association (EMPA), promoting the Croatian Armed Forces for the past 15 years. The membership in EMPA has enabled us to follow the trends in other armed forces and confirmed the value of our magazine, whose quality earned it a place among the best editions within the renowned association. The international experience encouraged us to start a magazine in the English language too, wishing

Keeping up with the global trends “Hrvatski vojnik” has since 2015 been present on social networks – Facebook, Twitter and Youtube. Within a very short time the re-designed website, presenting the contributions of the journalists and press photographers of “Hrvatski vojnik” as well as other products of the Military Publications Department and of the Multimedia Department of the Public Affairs Service of the Croatian Ministry of Defence has won a lot of followers.



to spread the story of the successes and achievements of the Croatian Armed Forces outside the national borders. So the year 2009 saw the release of the first issue of the semestral magazine titled CROMIL, with a brand new design and visual identity, 44 pages depicting the most important and internationally relevant events in the Croatian Armed Forces, their capabilities and specialties as well as the potentials of the Croatian military industry. The magazine soon proved its potential and is now distributed worldwide, wherever Croatian soldiers are deployed and engaged, in international military

A strong step towards new media and social networks as an important add-on was made in June 2015, with the launching of a modernised website, containing a host of multimedia contents produced daily by the editorial board at one place.

CROATIAN MILITARY MAGAZINE

operations and mission, military diplomatic representations, NATO commands or on the occasions of international military exercises hosted by the Republic of Croatia.

VIRTUAL PRESENCE

Keeping up with the trends we have entered the virtual world of the Internet. Hrvatski vojnik began its virtual expansion with the launching of the website in April 2000. A strong step towards new media and social networks as an important add-on was made in June 2015, with the launching of a modernised website, containing a host of multimedia contents produced daily by the editorial board at one place.

In addition to the possibility to view the current printed issues online, the website (maintained in Croatian and English) is updated with novelties daily and enables viewing and sharing the photos and video-materials.

We are highly proud of the digitalised archive from the first issue of “Hrvatski vojnik” and available online, offering the possibility of downloading a desired issue. The available data reveal 80,000 monthly views of the new website of “Hrvatski vojnik”, in addition to the high level of activity on the social networks (Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn and YouTube).



Video-materials are among the most interesting new products of the “Hrvatski vojnik” multimedia section, Tens of released DVDs are presented on the magazine’s Youtube channel, registering nearly half a million views, numerous likes and shares. The cited products are a fruit of hard work, energy and enthusiasm of the rather small editorial board, constantly on the outlook for new and better projects. “Hrvatski vojnik” confirms the continuity and the success story, with good prospects for growing in the future.



CADET CLUB

A MULTIFUNCTIONAL AND MULTICONTENT/MULTIFOLD PROJECT

THE CADET CLUB TITLED "FOUR PILLARS" WAS OPENED IN THE OLD MILITARY SHOP IN THE CROATIAN DEFENCE ACADEMY "PETAR ZRINSKI", CONVERTED AND REFURBISHED BY THE CADETS THEMSELVES. IT WAS CONCEIVED AS A SPACE FOR CADETS TO SPEND FREE TIME AND SOCIALISE, STUDY AND STAGE PRESENTATIONS OF EXTRA-CURRICULAR AND EXTRA-ACADEMY ACTIVITIES AND SUCCESSES

The visit of the President of the Republic of Croatia Kolinda Grabar-Kitarović in late December, on the occasion of the marking of the 25th anniversary of the Croatian Defence Academy "Dr. Franjo Tuđman", opening formally the Cadet Club, was a day to remember.

The story that preceded the opening itself is much older, the need for the cadets to have a space of theirs, to spend free time socialise, study and stage presentations of extracurricular and extra-Academy activities and successes.

The core idea soon expanded, translated into a concrete space and project documents and schemes to eventually become a real ambitious project

It was managed by the Chairman of the Cadet Corps, Staff Sergeant Anto Tomić and overseen by Colonel Tihomir Tandarić. They enjoyed the understanding and the support from the Croatian Defence Academy Command and the Commander, Lieutenant General Slavko Barić and from the Commander of the Cadet Battalion, Lt. Col. Tomislav Kasumović.

The Cadet Club titled "Four pillars" was opened in the old military shop in the Croatian Defence Academy "Petar Zrinski", and the cadets themselves took part in the refurbishment, overseen by their mentors from the Support Command (the Maintenance Depot, Support Battalion and the General Logistic Support Battalion). The works kicked off



WHY "FOUR PILLARS"?

The club was named after the four pillars as the central construction of the Club, but it has another meaning too - the four pillars of the training administered by the Cadet Battalion - the academic, military, psychological and physical and moral and ethic pillar, which constitute the values desirable in a modern officer. So we decided to name the club in respect of these principles. The project was managed by the Chairman of the Cadet Corps, Staff Sergeant Anto Tomić and overseen by Colonel Tihomir Tandarić.

////////////////////



in spring 2016 and lasted until December, often at night time. The cadets – one hundred in all - took turns executing the works. During our visit to the spacious premises of the Club, still smelling of fresh paint we talked to St. Sgt. Anto Tomić, a cadet, a project manager and a dedicated participant who spent most of the time at the Club in the last months before opening, and to the main mentor on the project – Colonel Tihomir Tandarić, the Head of the Logistic Department of the Croatian Defence Academy "Dr Franjo Tuđman". For both of them past months and the achieved results meant much more than just a work or military assignment to be done.

COLONEL TIHOMIR TANDARIĆ,
THE HEAD OF THE LOGISTIC DEPARTMENT OF THE
CROATIAN DEFENCE ACADEMY, THE MENTOR ON
THE PROJECT

THE MOTIVES TO OPEN THE CADET CLUB...

The Cadet Club was inceptioned to respond to the problem of the lack of space to be used by cadets for their many activities. The Club is presently occupying only a third of the available space, will prospectively accomodate the sport groups, a cadet bulletin editorial board, a multimedia space, creative workshops and will enable the launching of other useful and necessary projects. Last but not least, the Club offers the space and the solutions for the cadets' free time socialising and joint activities with the students of other components of the University, hosting foreign colleagues and the like.



THE CHALLENGES BEFORE THE CADET CLUB MANAGEMENT...

The constructing and architectural works were carried out by the cadets who showed the interest, guided by the mentors – repairmen of the Support Command of the Croatian Armed Forces (the Maintenance Depot, the Support Battalion, the General Logistic Support Battalion). In that way the cadets jointly practiced and mastered various craftsmanship (carpentry, the painting work, electrical installation and other finishing works).

The difficult part was to fit in the architecture of the existing space, which required a specific design, with minimal interventions to preserve the spirit of the place and at the same time convert the space to fit the needs of the users. The central part was furnished into a multi-purpose and easily adaptable space, The interior was designed to make maximal use of the written off and discarded items found in the Barracks and of military artifacts. It was mostly done by the cadets, who had the opportunity to show creativity, innovation and resourcefulness.

They indeed decorated the space with unique designer compounds, such as the bar assembled with the elements of the T-55 tank and resembling one.



CROATIAN DEFENCE ACADEMY

Cadet Anto Tomić recalls the condition of the space before the refurbishment and the course of works, and shows a unique design of the bar (placed on the base made of tank wheels and caterpillars).

"I am most proud of how we made the bar. A lot of those who saw it thought somebody had brought it and assembled on the spot for us, but it's not the way it was built - we constructed it step by step, item by item, using hammers and our own hands", says St Sgt Tomić. Col. Tandarić is visibly proud himself, describing the conversion of a workshop disused for 30 years into a multi-purpose space comprising several units. "The cadets wanted to refurbish the space and preserve its present identity and we were seeking solutions consulting the industrial design trends. It was a massive work, keeping expenses down, so the interior was designed by "recycling" old items and parts which would otherwise be thrown to waste.

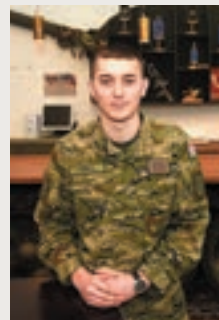


CADET CORPORAL MATEJ HOHOŠ

We worked hard - in the past few days before the opening we were here around the clock, painting the platforms and the dome, constructing the bar, placing the protective net, designing the seats from the pallets by ourselves and the tables using tank containers which we ground and painted. We implemented our own ideas, and as cadet myself I very much enjoyed working to refurbish the Cadet Club, even if it kept us until 4 am, and eventually we are very proud of it.

////////////////

STAFF SERGEANT ANTO TOMIĆ, CHAIRMAN OF THE CADET CORPS



The Cadet Corps which I chair engages in extra-curricular and extra-training problems and projects of the cadets. This is how the project of the Cadet Club "Four Pillars" was launched. We designed the entire space and improved it to its present condition, aided by all interested cadets and the mentoring officers. I managed the works and executed them

too, and I spent a long time here.

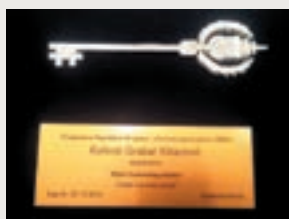
One of the first activities to be hosted by the Club will be the visit by the representatives of all faculties of the University of Zagreb - they are our colleagues who do not know much about our life and activities as cadets.

We shall also present our projects there; for example, we continuously manage a project of humanitarian donations from us to the children without proper parent care or other possible beneficiaries. The Club is envisaged to grow, and each next generation will have the opportunity to build on, improve and leave its own mark.



THE CADETS' GIFT FOR THE PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC

The cadets decided to make an exception to the no-admittance rule for others and made the "Key to the Cadet Club" as a symbolic gift for the President of the Republic Kolinda Grabar-Kitarović and a sign of welcome to her, in recognition for officially opening the Club. The key was designed by Cadet St. Sgt and Cadet Srđan Boschi and St Sgt Tomić made a computer model which was printed in 3D in collaboration with the Faculty of Mechanical Engineering and Naval Architecture of the University of Zagreb. The polymer version of the key was used as prototype for casting into a mold using aluminium, executed by the same Faculty.



The film was conceived to demonstrate to the Hague Tribunal that General Gotovina enjoyed the support from his country and from the crew that was making a film about him in which the Tribunal was assigned the role of a villain.

Author: Lada Puljizević, Photos by: Josip Kopl

FILM



HOMELAND WAR

TOLD THROUGH THE WAR HISTORY OF GENERAL GOTOVINA

THE FEATURE FILM AND TV SERIES TITLED "GENERAL" WILL RE-ENACT THE HOMELAND WAR AND THE WAR HISTORY OF GENERAL ANTE GOTOVINA, A MAN WHO BECAME ITS SYMBOL AND A HERO

"Roll sound, roll camera, action", echoed through the woods around Sveti Rok on 20 February as the first shots were made of the feature film "General", long-concieved and prepared and first takes were shot. Talking to the director of the film, Antun Vrdoljak shortly before, that we asked him what destiny he wanted for his film once released. The director shrugs at first, then admits: "All I wish for this film is to win the attention of the audience, which is most important for any other film".

The feature film and TV series titled "General" will re-enact the Homeland War and the war history of General Ante Gotovina, a man who became its symbol and a hero.

ANTUN VRDOLJAK,
scriptwriter and film
director

**It is only when you
begin "digging"
through the memo-
ries and documents
that you realise
the essence of the
Homeland War. It
was magnificent,
yet with an awful
price paid".**

The script was written by the director himself based on the novel by Nenad Ivanković "A Warrior, Adventurer and General" ("Ratnik, pustolov i general"). The film will be shot at various locations until late June, engaging more than 1,000 extras and a cast of 100, with 15 major roles, among whom the Croatian success in Hollywood - Goran Višnjić - in the title role.

Andrija Vrdoljak, the film and series producer, emphasises the film story being inspired by the life of General Ante Gotovina, although not in a documentary manner but a combination of fiction and historical facts.



The film will be shot at various locations until late June, and will engage more than 1,000 extras.

FILM

GORAN VIŠNJIĆ, ACTOR, LEADING ROLE

I have stage fright before acting in this film, because I haven't had the opportunity to portray a character of such importance before. I have concentrated on it a lot, kept thinking about it and recalled the year 1991, and the course of history Croatia has seen since then. General Gotovina has become a symbol of the Croatian people and I compared him to Krsto Frankopan and Zrinski, given the strange coincidence between their conspiracy and the imprisonment of General Gotovina in the Hague. But while Zrinski and Frankopan and the Vice-roy Josip Jelačić as historic figures about whom we learned in school, General Gotovina is the sole character alongside President Tuđman that had the magnitude. And I witnessed to that in The Hague, I was there to visit him.

On the acting side, it would definitely be easier to portray a character who lived 50, 100 or 150 years ago. To avoid the trap, we decided not to imitate the characters and their mimics, also in view of our different physiognomies, but to enact the situations and General's reactions and conduct.



"It is a story about the Homeland War and some of the major campaigns, such as the operations "Maslenica" and "Oluja". The campaigns will be presented factually, with some documentary frames inserted, whereas the fictional and creative part will refer to some dialogues and characters not necessarily based on the real ones. The Croatian Army and its growth from zero are most inspirational, which we intend to portray credibly, but we also had to deal with some quite demanding tasks while filming. It is mostly an outdoor film, shot at difficult terrain parts, making it very hard to achieve the desired effect. The script previews some mass scenes, such as battles. The film contains some stunning visual scenes, which I hope we shall get right", says producer Andrija Vrdoljak.

The preparations for the film date back to the year 2005 and the arresting of General Gotovina. Director Antun Vrdoljak says he thought of helping General by making a good film to tell the truth about the Homeland War.

Now, behind the filming camera on the coveted project, overseeing attentively all preparatory steps, the director concludes: "No one wants to create a world with injustice, war, killing and unjust indictments but this is what the world is like and you need to react if you see any of these happen. The artists have a mission to react to imperfections and injustice".

That was the idea at the moment of the pronouncing of the first-instance verdict, but when the General was acquitted we hesitated about making the film at all. So we changed the idea and decided to follow General through his life story, which is really a story about the Homeland War. We are concurrently shooting a TV series as well, containing some scenes that are not associated with General Gotovina.

////////////////////



Our pride products



THE CONCERT OF THE CROATIAN NAVY'S VOCAL ENSEMBLE - LIVE CD

The Multi-media Department of the Public Affairs and Publishing Service of the Ministry of Defence released a live CD from the charity concert held by the Croatian Navy's Vocal Ensemble "Sv. Juraj" and the Navy Orchestra on the occasion of the 15th anniversary of the Ensemble and the 25th anniversary of the Navy Orchestra respectively.



MULTI-MEDIA DEPARTMENT



CATALOGUE OF THE CROATIAN DEFENCE INDUSTRY

On the occasion of the 4th Adriatic Sea Defense and Aerospace Exhibition, the Croatian Military Press and Publishing Department of the Public Affairs and Publishing Service of the Ministry of Defence of the Republic published the Catalogue of the Croatian defence industry, presenting sixty most important firms and their products.



BOOK "15 YEARS OF THE SUPPORT COMMAND"

Marking the 15th anniversary of the establishment of the Support Command, the Croatian Military Press and Publishing Department published the monograph on the operation of the Command and of its components which constituted the logistical support in the Croatian Armed Forces.

EDITORIAL BOARD:

Publisher:

Ministry of Defence of the Republic of Croatia
Public Affairs and Publishing Service
The Croatian Military Press and Publications Dept.

Approved by: Dražen Jonjić, Head of Public Affairs and Publishing Service
www.morh.hr

<http://www.hrvatski.vojnik.hr>
e-mail: hrvojn@morh.hr

Editor-In-Chief:

Željko Stipanović (zeljko.stipanovic@morh.hr)

Deputy Editor-in-Chief:

Vesna Pintarić (vpintar@morh.hr)

Journalists:

Domagoj Vlahović (domagoj.vlahovic@yahoo.com)

Lada Puljizević (ladapuljizevic@yahoo.com)

Petra Kostanjšak (petra.kostanjsak@morh.hr)

Photographer:

Tomislav Brandt

Translation and proofreading:

Dubravka Marić

Layout:

Predrag Belušić

Marketing and finance:

Igor Vitanović (igor.vitanovic@morh.hr)

Print:

Print Office Zelina

Title of the Editorial Board:

P.P. 252, 10002 Zagreb, Republic of Croatia



THE CROATIAN MILITARY PRESS
AND PUBLICATIONS DIVISION

The views expressed in this Magazine are not necessarily those of the Ministry of Defence.



