

CROMIL

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INTERVIEW

ADMIRAL JAMES G. STAVRIDIS, COMMANDER, US EUROPEAN
COMMAND AND NATO SUPREME ALLIED COMMANDER EUROPE

**I AM HAPPY ABOUT THE
POSITIVE APPROACH CROATIA
BROUGHT TO NATO**

THE SPECIAL
OPERATIONS BATTALION

THE "GREEN BERET"

HONOUR,
COMMITMENT,
RESPONSIBILITY

THE CROATIAN ARMY
AND SOCIETY

AT THE SERVICE
OF THOSE IN NEED
24 HOURS A DAY

THE CROATIAN
AIR FORCE

HELICOPTER PILOTS
TRAINED FOR

NIGHT FLYING

INTERNATIONAL EXERCISE

BLACK BEAR 10

THE MILITARY INTELLIGENCE BATTALION

A TEAM READY FOR ALL
CHALLENGES



FUTURE SOLDIER

HEAD-UP DISPLAY (LOOK THROUGH)

The Head-up (or look through) display is very important part of the Future soldier. It means that the Soldier does not need to stare in to SDT's computer display instead to do his task. The display could be mounted on to a helmet and used when necessarily only. Certain audio signals have been used for basic communication with the Soldier to have the Soldier's activities maximum time concentrated on the battlefield.

PERSONAL ROLE RADIO

The development of the system has led to use of the PRR (Personal Role Radio). This is a module that enables networking with other members of the unit with data and voice (voice over IP - VoIP) capabilities, with spectrum for high speed data transfer enabling real-time video features. For budget saving purposes, SDT-T and SDT-P computers could have wireless capabilities: in this case PRRs functions will be done by SDTs software and radios.



SOLDIER's COMPUTER and PRR

Typically, the Future soldiers has been equipped with a version of the SDT (Soldier Data Terminal). The SDT is available in a two formats:

- Commander's Planning System (SDT-P)
- Tactical terminal (SDT-T)

Both the SDT-P and the SDT-T utilise a mature and highly intuitive human-computer interface (HCI). The SDT-T differs from the standard SDT in that it is physically smaller and much lighter, with a display reduced to reflect the area of interest (AOI) applicable to a tactical operation.

MOUSE-LIKE INTERFACE

To have much more soldier-friendly man-machine interface, mouse-like interface has been installed.

OTHER PRODUCTS/PROJECTS DEVELOPED BY SDT SUSTAV:

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MORTAR FIRE CONTROL COMPUTER/SYSTEM

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FOR MBTs AND AFVs (INCLUDING DISMOUNTED SOLDIERS)

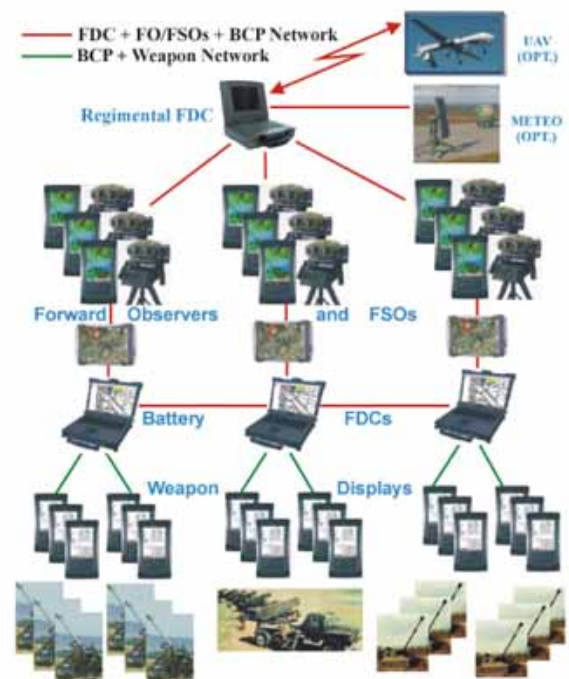
SPECIAL MILITARY SOFTWARE FOR:

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AD HOCK MASH NETWORKING

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PAGE 18



PAGE 30



PAGE 34



PAGE 36

- 4 **INTERVIEW**
ADMIRAL JAMES G. STAVRIDIS, COMMANDER, US EUROPEAN
COMMAND AND NATO SUPREME ALLIED COMMANDER EUROPE
- 8 **15TH ANNIVERSARY OF MILITARY-POLICE OPERATION STORM**
PROUD OF THE PAST, UNITED IN THE FUTURE
- 10 **AN INTERNATIONAL EXERCISE**
BLACK BEAR 10
- 14 **INTERVIEW**
GENERAL HÅKAN SYRÉN,
CHAIRMAN OF THE EUROPEAN UNION MILITARY COMMITTEE
- 17 **INTERNATIONAL PEACE SUPPORT OPERATIONS**
BRILLIANT SUCCESS OF CROATIAN OFFICERS
IN THE MISSION OF UNFICYP
- 18 **FIRE-FIGHTING SQUADRON**
FIRE-EXTINGUISHING TACTICS FROM THE AIR
- 24 **NATO'S ALLIED LAND CORPS COMMANDERS' CONFERENCE**
THE ALLIANCE'S TESTIMONY OF SUPPORT AND FAITH IN CROATIA
- 26 **AN INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION**
CROATIAN-HUNGARIAN LOGISTICS TEAM FOR TRAINING
ANA MEMBERS
- 28 **THE ANNUAL MARITIME COMMANDER MEETING**
MARCOMET 2010
- 30 **SPECIAL OPERATIONS BATTALION**
MULTIPURPOSE SUBMERSIBLES
- 32 **THE CROATIAN AIR FORCE**
HELICOPTER PILOTS TRAINED FOR NIGHT FLYING
- 34 **THE MILITARY INTELLIGENCE BATTALION**
A TEAM READY FOR ALL CHALLENGES
- 38 **SPECIAL OPERATIONS BATTALION**
THE "GREEN BERET" - HONOUR, COMMITMENT, RESPONSIBILITY
- 40 **THE CROATIAN ARMY AND SOCIETY**
AT THE SERVICE OF THOSE IN NEED 24 HOURS A DAY
- 42 **THE CROATIAN ARMY AND SOCIETY**
ARMY PROTECTS FLOODED AREAS
- 44 **CROATIAN MILITARY ATHLETES**
CAF LIEUTENANTS AND WORLD-CLASS WRESTLERS





I want to congratulate Croatia on a superb first year of membership. Croatia has been in the Alliance just over one year but they have the energy and enthusiasm of a nation that has been in for twenty or thirty years. It is a nation that is clearly excited and positive about its NATO membership and we are excited and positive about having Croatia in the Alliance. I could not be happier with the support and the positive approach Croatia takes to this Alliance.

ADMIRAL JAMES G. STAVRIDIS,
COMMANDER, US EUROPEAN
COMMAND AND NATO SUPREME
ALLIED COMMANDER EUROPE

Allied Supreme Commander Europe, Admiral James Stavridis visited Croatia at the beginning of October where he said that Croatia, its NATO accession and the recent EU membership was kind of a model which other countries in the region should strive for. The Admiral also expressed his appreciation for the commitment and contribution of the CAF in the ISAF mission, particularly pointing out the excellent achievements of members of the Croatian Armed Forces in training of the Afghan army and police. We have done an exclusive interview with the Admiral on this occasion and he spoke on Croatia's NATO engagement with refined words.

CROATIAN MILITARY MAGAZINE

It has been just over a year now since you assumed your current duty. How do you characterize the time past and have your expectations been fulfilled? Also, what areas have you worked on the most since you took this position?

My key focus over the last year has been on Afghanistan, the Balkans -- which should not surprise any of us here in Croatia -- relationships with Russia, counter piracy, and NATO reform. Overall, I feel we are making progress, in a positive way, in all those areas. Afghanistan is the top operational priority of the Alliance. We have today all 28 of the NATO members working together in Afghanistan. Moreover, we have 21 additional nations contributing, for a total of 49 nations in Afghanistan and

of cooperation with Russia, which the Secretary General has said is a strategic partner for NATO. In terms of piracy, we have an ongoing operation off the coast of Africa which has reduced the number of pirate attacks. We are a partner with the European Union there, as well as finding representatives from Russia, China, India and many other states working together. As for NATO reform, we have put together a very coherent proposal to reduce the overall size of the command structure, create more efficiencies, and provide a better return on investment to the Alliance. I apologize for such a long answer, but it's a very important question and I feel, overall, that progress has been steady in the key areas upon which I have focused.

I AM HAPPY ABOUT THE POSITIVE APPROACH CROATIA BROUGHT TO NATO

progress is steady. In terms of the Balkans, I feel very good about progress in Kosovo. We have reduced from 15 000 troops to today we have about 9 000 troops. I am very close to recommending that we reduce to 5 000 troops because I think we have been capable of providing a safe and secure environment there. With respect to relations with Russia, they have improved over the last year. I will go on a trip to Moscow in October/November and I am looking forward to exploring grounds

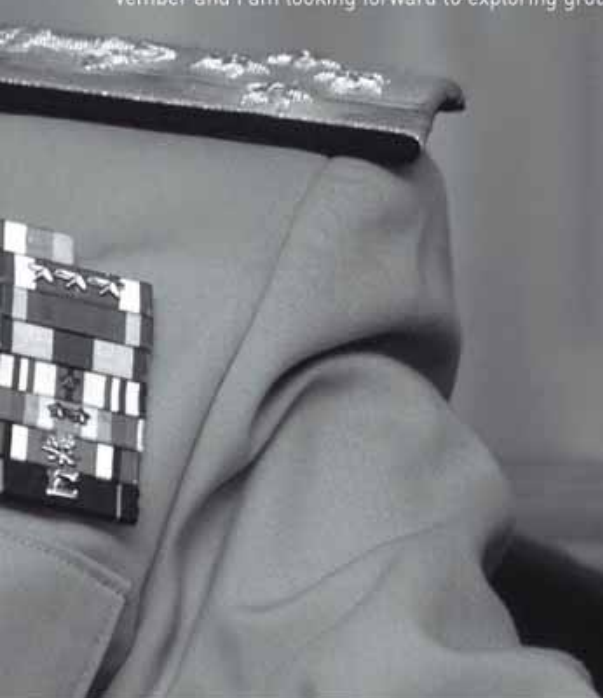
In Afghanistan, we see well over 300 brave Croatian soldiers who are participating in training both of police and army. They are extraordinary and effective and professional

You are the first Navy officer at this duty. Can we read between the lines a bit here and ask if the Navy is becoming increasingly important for the joint operations?

Well, I think the Navy has always been important, so has the Air Force, so has the Army, so have Special Operations. In today's world it's all about joint operations and I would argue it is about the comprehensive approach, which is bringing together all of the Services along with our inter-agency partners as well as private sector actors like humanitarian organizations. It's putting all that together that creates security in this 21st century. When I look at the role of maritime forces, they have a distinct advantage in stopping illegal trafficking which flows across many maritime areas. Here in Europe, we are concerned principally, of course, with the Mediterranean. But really, throughout the world, maritime forces have an important role to play in counter trafficking. That is the comparative advantage that maritime forces bring to the table.

There is no doubt that the Navy plays an important role in global security. Yet, in order for the Navy to be efficient against threats such as piracy, maritime terrorism, organized crime, etc., cooperation within the Alliance and also with non-NATO countries is of essence. Is that cooperation a satisfactory one?

Meeting today's security challenges for trans-national, non-traditional threats requires a wide spectrum of civilian and military capabilities and cooperation well beyond



INTERVIEW

the framework of the Alliance. Governance, development and security among all actors from the International Community are inextricably linked. NATO is committed to implementing a Comprehensive Approach for crisis management.

The mission in Afghanistan, along with experiences in the Balkans, has emphasized the necessity to align security with governance and development activities to achieve stability. For example, NATO and the EU are already working together as part of the "Berlin-Plus" arrangements included in the 2003 framework for cooperation. This framework provides the basis for NATO-EU cooperation in crisis management by allowing NATO to support EU-led operations in which the Alliance as a whole is not engaged. This has included missions in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, Afghanistan, Darfur, and most recently, in counter-piracy operations off the coast of Africa.

The lessons learned through these experiences have positioned the Alliance ideally to contribute as a part of the International Community's Comprehensive Approach to a wide range of missions: fighting terrorism, supporting peace and stability, improving energy security, preventing proliferation of weapons and dangerous materials, protecting against cyber attacks, countering illicit trafficking and confronting piracy.

What is, in your opinion, the role of Croatia and its Armed Forces in NATO led operations?

Let's look at the areas that I mentioned we're focused on. In Afghanistan, we see well over 300 brave Croatian soldiers who are participating in training both of police and army. They are extraordinary and effective and professional. Everywhere I go in Afghanistan, when I see your very distinctive flag on the shoulder of a Croatian soldier, I know I am encountering a professional and someone who has real experience in an armed force; someone that has -- let's face it -- a significant amount of combat experience from its own history here in the Balkans. Secondly, I want to commend the Croatian forces, specifically for their work in the military police category. They provide excellent security and so we see our Croatian soldiers operating across the spectrum of operations, but particularly on training, which is job one for all of us. Here in the Balkans, we have excellent Croatian work in Kosovo, where we see two very professional MI-171 helicopters and 20 Croatian maintainers supporting the mission. Flying and mobility is our number one asset in Kosovo, so that contribution is very welcome and it is a tribute to the work of the Armed Forces of Croatia. And then lastly, it's not a NATO exercise, but Croatia works on the Golan Heights for the UN. So I see a nation from Europe that is working in its region, in the Balkans, with NATO in Afghanistan, and with the UN in the Golan Heights mission. Overall I think it's very clear that Croatian military is performing superbly across the entire spectrum of global missions.

The spectrum of support from Croatia to all of our NATO operations -- particularly Afghanistan, here in the Balkans, on our Command staffs -- has been superb

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How significant is Croatia's contribution to the ISAF mission in Afghanistan?

I think I mentioned and I will underscore the importance of training because this fall we will unveil the transition plan for Afghanistan, which is the plan by which we will turn over security to the Afghan security forces, district by district, province by province, institution by institution, function by function. We will step back while Afghan security forces step up. In order to accomplish that transition we must train the Afghans. The training is going very well. I think it is one of the bright spots in the entire campaign and Croatian soldiers are very involved in that training. I would like some more Croatian soldiers to focus on training and I have discussed that with your leadership here today.

Talking about Afghanistan, what is, currently, the main focus of that operation?

Well, as I said, training is at the top of the list so that we can have this effective transition. Secondly, we are working very hard to protect the people of Afghanistan, to reduce civilian casualties, and to capture any of the Taliban that are threatening the local Afghan population. Thirdly, we are working to balance civil and military. In other words, we are helping to establish schools; we are helping build clinics for medical support; we are working on digging wells; we are concluding the ring road around Afghanistan; we are improving infrastructure; we are working on the economy; we are working on detention facilities and judicial system. Getting that balance of civil and military is the third big thing we must do. And then fourth, and I think as important as all of that, is instilling a sense through strategic communications of why we are there, how we're going to succeed, and communicating that in Afghanistan and also in capitals like Zagreb.

What is the role of NATO military component in the process of crisis resolution? How does it fit in the comprehensive approach you have already mentioned?

As we look at the treaty that established NATO, there are two important clauses in it that are worth mentioning. One is Article 5, which says that an attack on one nation is regarded as an attack on all. It is the article that shows that we stand together. The other important article is Article 4, which states that the nations will consult together whenever they face a crisis. So crisis management is an important step before employing military force, and in that area of crisis management I think we find the most effective use of the comprehensive approach. The goal is to bring together not only security but political, economic, cultural, linguistic -- all elements -- of capability -- before

Everywhere I go in Afghanistan when I see your very distinctive flag on the shoulder of a Croatian soldier I know I am encountering a professional and someone who has real experience in an armed force that has, let's face it, a significant amount of combat experience from its own history here in the Balkans

a crisis becomes a kinetic shooting event. That is in many ways the most important function that NATO can serve.

How do you evaluate Croatia's role in the NATO? Are you satisfied with the cooperation with our country and are there, if any, areas in which Croatian Armed Forces could be more engaged, according to its capabilities and potentials?

First of all, I want to congratulate Croatia on a superb first year of membership. We're now well into the second year. As I said to the President and Prime Minister of Croatia today, Croatia has been in the Alliance just over one year but they have the energy and enthusiasm of a nation that has been in for twenty or thirty years. It is a nation that is clearly excited and positive about its NATO membership and we are excited and positive about having Croatia in the Alliance. As we have talked about, the spectrum of support from Croatia to all of our NATO operations -- particularly Afghanistan, here in the Balkans, on our Command staffs -- has been superb. I could not be happier with the support and the positive approach Croatia takes to this Alliance.

Since you participated in a mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina you are familiar with the situation in the region. Through history it has not been a very stable place so could you tell us about situation in southeast Europe? What is, according to your opinion, Croatia's role in southeast Europe or in the Balkan region?

Let's go back 15 years and let's think about what the Balkans looked like 15 years ago. We had a whole series of conflicts here in the Balkans which killed tens of thousands of people and found millions of people displaced and moved across borders. At the time, it was a very chaotic, very dangerous part of the world. Now, here we are today. Croatia, Albania, and Slovenia are members of NATO. Montenegro is working rapidly toward membership. The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia is moving quickly and, I think, as soon as the name controversy is resolved, will be a very strong candidate for membership. Bosnia and Herzegovina has a MAP program (Membership Action Plan) and is working hard to try and make itself eligible for membership. We have what I would categorize as good relations between NATO and Serbia. I went personally to Serbia six months ago, the first SACEUR to go there, and had a warm reception. We had a good dialog and I applaud the excellent work between Croatia and Serbia in maintaining an open dialog and looking at challenges in the region. So, I think this part of the world has made enormous progress. Let's look at Croatia alone. Ten million tourists come every year to this beautiful country. This is a long way from a region where there was the conflict and war that we saw 15 years ago. Today the challenge in the summertime is getting a hotel room in Split. It's so busy and so wonderful to see it full of tourists. So as I look at this region, the future is bright. The economy has been growing, and while it may be a

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little slower more recently, it will be back and I am convinced that this region will continue to be an exporter of security. That's the story of Croatia. Fifteen years ago, we had troops coming into this region, into the Balkans, to help stabilize it. Now troops from the Balkans are going into the world to create stability in the world. This is an extraordinary success, in my view.

Croatia is one step to the EU so could you tell us more about cooperation between the NATO and the EU in the areas of defense and security? Is the new NATO Strategic Concept going to be a novelty in those relations?

First of all, I would like to say good luck on EU membership for Croatia. I think it will happen and I think it will be an excellent thing for Croatia and for the region. Secondly, we, today, see the EU missions and NATO missions side by side. They are complementary. This is true in Afghanistan, it's true in Kosovo, and it is true in other regions of the world, including counter piracy operations off the coast of Africa. I think the two organizations work very well side by side. I think that Strategic Concept will emphasize the need for more complementary operations together between the two, and I look for a strong EU and a strong NATO working together.

Can you tell us something about your impressions about this visit to Croatia?

I have come many times to Croatia. As a US naval officer I have had port visits all along the Dalmatian coast for over twenty years. This is my second visit to Croatia as SACEUR. I have had the chance, for the first time as SACEUR, to come to Zagreb and meet with the most senior leadership of the country. What I have discovered is a nation that is enthusiastic and positive about its NATO membership. I have discovered a nation which has professional, capable military and I have discovered a nation that makes excellent red wine. I always depart Croatia with a couple of good bottles of wine in my suitcase and this trip will be no exception.



● **CROATIAN PRESIDENT IVO JOSIPOVIC**

"Storm was the largest military operation on European soil since the Second World War. It was lead under all rules of warfare and complied with all international conventions"

THE CROATIAN MILITARY

Vesna Pintarić, photos by Tomislav Brandt

15TH ANNIVERSARY OF MILITARY-POLICE OPERATION STORM

PROUD OF THE PAST, UNITED IN THE FUTURE

"No one will revise Croatian history nor erase historical facts. We had the right to protect and free and defend our homeland. We will allow no one to touch things we hold sacred, and Operation Storm is one of those things," said Prime Minister Jadranka Kosor in Knin



OPERATION STORM-THE ONLY REMAINING OPTION...

Historical events cannot be objectively represented or understood if we ignore the context of time, that is, the entirety of the historical process in which they took place. Thus, no discussion about the liberation operation "Storm" can be restricted to the events which happened between July and August of 1995. The operation was the result of Serbian aggression and occupation of parts of Croatia, and of the long sequence of unsuccessful negotiations and ineffective action on the behalf of the international community. Given that situation, the military option showed itself to be the only remaining possibility left that would resolve the un-



sustainable situation... The police and military liberation operation "Storm" ended the war in the Republic of Croatia and prevented the realisation of the new Greater Serbian project of the creating a unified Serbian state with western borders deep into Croatian territories, on the imaginary border consisting of Virovitica-Pakrac-Karlovac-Ogulin-part of Gorski Kotar and Karlobag. To Greater Serbia ideologists this project was the alternative in case of the dissolution of Yugoslavia, and preparations for its implementation can be traced back to the mid-80s of the last century. So it is no coincidence that after democratic, multi-party elections



The central event marking Victory and National Thanksgiving Day, Veteran's Day and the 15th anniversary of the Storm military police operation was held on the 15th of August in Knin. The marking of one of the most important days in recent Croatian history was held under the slogan "All Together" this year, and 13 formal echelons lined up in the NK Dinara city stadium during the central ceremony.

In their speeches, the highest state officials drew attention to the greatness and importance of the military-police operation Storm, as well as to the historical role of the first Croatian president Dr. Franjo Tuđman.

Prime Minister Jadranka Kosor gave her congratulations on the behalf of the Government of the Republic of Croatia, pointing out that the 5th of August is a date that will forever be engraved in our memories as a great day of pride. First she paid homage to the 174 killed and the 1430 wounded Croatian soldiers who participated in Operation Storm, calling upon all citizens to use the soldier's faith in Croatia's victory as a source of strength in times where new challenges are faced. In Knin, the Prime Minister also said that no one will revise Croatian history nor erase historical facts. "We had the right to protect and free and defend our homeland. We will allow no one to touch things we hold sacred, and Operation Storm is one of those things".

Luka Bebić also sent greetings on the behalf of all MPs on the anniversary, telling the veterans: "In celebrating Operation Storm we celebrate you, your bravery, determination and professionalism, your success and your immense patriotism. Croatia has already been living in complete freedom, peace and stability for 15 years and has been taking steps towards the future primarily thanks to you, veterans".

The President of the Republic of Croatia and Supreme Commander of the CAF Dr. Ivo Josipović reminded us all once more that Operation Storm, in the military sense, was an exquisitely prepared operation and the crowning glory of the Croatian victory. "Operation Storm was the largest military operation on European soil since the Second World War. It was lead under all rules of warfare and complied with all international conventions," said President Josipović.

in Croatia in June of 1990, Serbs began performing unconstitutional and terroristic acts in Croatia, and then in August had an armed rebellion, which in the summer of 1991 grew into an open Serbian aggression against the Republic of Croatia. Since then part of Croatia had been under an occupation which threatened Croatia's sovereignty and territorial integrity. The occupation of parts of the Republic of Croatia were carried out with the intention of splitting off the occupied territory from the rest of Croatia and merging this territory with the Republic of Serbia, that is, with the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia.

Operation Storm rightly is held as on of the symbols of the Homeland War

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Operation Storm rightly is held as on of the symbols of the Homeland War. It is without a doubt the most famous of all of the Croatian army's operations and is a symbol for the end of the war. For the average Croat it meant the end of a five-year frustration which was most felt with the blockade of roads and bare economic subsistence of Dalmatia. In Bosnia and Herzegovina, Storm was an indicator of the outcome which quickly and impressively came about at the end of over four years of agony in the Bihac pocket area, which gives the operation important humanitarian meaning..

This was the third MNMP-BAT exercise in a row, and all its members – Poland, Slovakia, the Czech Republic and Croatia – participated in it. The exercise was strictly of a military-police nature, and its aim was to exhibit the capabilities of the military police as well the assignments it can carry out in NATO missions



AN INTERNATIONAL EXERCISE

BLACK

From the 13th to the 22nd of September, the Republic of Croatia was host to the important international military-police exercise of the MNMPBAT Multinational Military Police Battalion, Black Bear 10. This was the third MNMPBAT exercise in a row, and all its members – Poland, Slovakia, the Czech Republic and Croatia – participated in it. The exercise was strictly of a military-police nature, and its aim was to exhibit the capabilities of the military police as well the assignments it can carry out in NATO missions.

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Through over 70 events, all of the military police's basic, founding, criminal and special assignments were gone over – securing convoys, VIPs and mobile checkpoints, the arrestment of vehicles, traffic control, background checks, criminal investigations, work with detainees, cooperation with civil structures and with the civilian police, reactions to attacks during the implementation of patrols and monitoring, searching vehicles with military police dogs during ambush set-ups, quick arrest of protesters, secur-





ing bases, and others. The work of the operative battalion was monitored throughout all these activities, as was the work of Battalion Command, which had to independently plan the assignments and activity plans and had to make decisions independently. The exercise was in fact designed in such a way that the Battalion had to plan its arrival into the area of the operation unaided, had to independently organise all of camp life and camp work and had to be operatively capable of carrying out missions it is to receive from higher command. This is why Black Bear 10 was considerably more complex than the first two exercises.

The aim of the first exercise held in Poland was to assemble a unit in one place, deploy the forces to the area of the operation and to practice movement capabilities or, in other words, the arrival on the area of the operation and to see the national readiness of the units in the Battalion. In last year's exercise in the Czech Republic, national units began to meld into a multinational unit, in order for assignments to be established by the units of two nations. This year things were taken one step further: the Battalion had to prove that it was ready and prepared enough to function completely independently and to carry out assignments in NATO-led operations.

In order for a greater reality to be achieved in the potential engagements in a mission and in the simu-

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lations of realistic situations in the area of the deployment and of where the operation takes place, the operative unit's assignments were held in the "Gašnici" military artillery range, and exercise Command, i.e. the directorate by which it operates, were held in the "Dračice" barracks in Đakovo.

Within the exercises, Distinguished Visitor's Day, which was attended by senior military representatives from countries that are part of a MNMPBAT, as well as by representatives from NATO's MNC NE Command, was also observed.

During the exercise, four points were worked on (the ambush on a MP patrol and crime scene investigation, cordon and search, quick stopping of vehicles and riot control) and the military police showed their fundamental and specialist skills. The dynamic, interesting but also demanding exercise was realistic in every aspect, with its extremely well-trained military police teams.

Military police teams from two countries worked together on each of the points: Slovakia and Poland on the first, Croatian and the Czech Republic on the second, Poland and Croatia on the third and Slovakia and the Czech Republic on the fourth.

In terms of command, MNMPBAT operates on the principle of rotating power, which means that key command personnel changes each year. This year



➔ The commander of the Battalion was also satisfied: "The Battalion's members were very busy here. This was a great opportunity to show the capabilities of the Battalion," said Colonel Marek Gryga who thanked his Croatian colleagues for the excellent organisation of the exercise

CROATIAN MILITARY MAGAZINE



the commander was Polish Colonel Marek Gryga, while the director of the exercise was Colonel Tihomir Zebec, Head of the CAF's Military Police Department. After the completion of the exercise held during the VIP days, its director Colonel Zebec claimed that the exercise showed that all components of the Multinational Battalion are ready to carry out their assignments in the mission. The commander of the Battalion was also satisfied: "The Battalion's members were very busy here. This was a great opportunity to show the capabilities of the Battalion," said Colonel Marek Gryga, who thanked his Croatian colleagues for the excellent organisation of the exercise. Colonel Jos Govaarts, the NATO Commander Military Police Advisor, also monitored the exercise. "I am very impressed by this joint work of four nations in one unit," he said.

MNMPBAT's first assessment, which was conducted by assessment teams from all countries, was also conducted for the first time during this exercise. The CERVAL program was used for the assessment, but not completely and not entirely because this was the very first assessment and a preparation for the certification of the unit which is only set to take place in 2012. Representatives from four countries were on the team, and together they assessed all the procedures and task implementations of MNMPBAT as

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a whole. This assessment will paint a picture of just how qualified MNMPBAT is to participate in international operations.

All the activities and workings of the Multinational Military Police Battalion are specifically defined in the Memorandum of Understanding. Among other things, equality is guaranteed and is a top priority. All four countries enjoy the same rights in the decision making process. Everything has to be agreed upon. When activities are carried out in one of the countries, the laws of the host country must be respected. MNMPBAT's operational units train at a national level whereas staff and key command staff train at a multinational level, and each year the exercise is conducted in another country.

Next year the exercise will be held in Slovakia, and once again an assessment will be conducted but with observers from NATO also participating. The series of exercises will end in 2012 in Poland when MNMPBAT's certification will take place, where it will be decided whether the unit is completely ready to carry out assignments in missions along with other units.

It must also be mentioned that the host of the organisation of the exercise was the GS of the CAF's Military Police Department, and that other organisational units of the Armed Forces also successfully participated in its organization and implementation.

A portrait of General Håkan Syrén, a middle-aged man with short, light brown hair and glasses. He is wearing a dark blue military uniform jacket over a white shirt and a dark tie. On his left chest, there are several colorful ribbons representing military decorations. The background is a plain, light-colored wall.

GENERAL HÅKAN SYRÉN,
CHAIRMAN OF THE EUROPEAN
UNION MILITARY COMMITTEE

Croatia is contributing to a number of operations and missions and is also preparing for a role in one of the future EU Battle Groups. Even if the contributions in numerical terms are fairly small, the political significance of a broad international should never be underestimated. However, I would say that the most important aspect of the Croatian contributions right now is that they are important in preparing your country for a future more active role as an EU Member State

General Håkan Syrén, Chairman of the European Union Military Committee has recently paid an official visit to the Croatian Ministry of Defence. On this occasion, General Syrén pointed out that Croatia, even now in the status of candidate country for full membership in the European Union, contributes to security and to the defence policy of the European Union, including the active engagement of members of the Croatian Armed Forces in the EU and NATO peacekeeping missions. After the meetings, General Syrén briefly spoke in his interview to our magazine about the security challenges that the EU faces, as well as on the role of Croatia in past, current and future EU peacekeeping missions.

CROATIAN MILITARY MAGAZINE

It will be a year these days since you were formally appointed chairman of the EUMC. What do you consider to be the most important moments in that period of time?

→ It is difficult to pinpoint any moments of particular significance. Much of the political energy in Brussels this last year for obvious reasons has been devoted to the implementation of the new Treaty. As Chairman of the Military Committee my role is to guide and coordinate the continuous cooperation and interaction between the Chiefs of Defence of the 27 Member States. The two annual meetings with the Chiefs of Defence here in Brussels of course are of special significance.

and military. A major strength in today's world, is that the EU can use its civil and military tools in a comprehensive manner. This comprehensive capacity is now further enhanced as the Lisbon Treaty is implemented.

How many PSOs do the EU forces currently participate in? Which one do you consider to be the riskiest and the most demanding one?

→ The EU is currently engaged in three military CSDP operation and missions. For many years we have been engaged in operations ALTHEA in Bosnia-Herzegovina, and for about two years we have been engaged in EU NAVFOR ATALANTA outside the coast of Somalia. Finally, since

CROATIAN CONTRIBUTION TO THE COMMON SECURITY AND DEFENCE POLICY (CSDP)

At the meeting in May the Chiefs of Defence agreed on a set of five priorities for the work of the EUMC during the next years, operations, capability development, implementing the Lisbon Treaty, implementing a comprehensive approach and finally developing strategic partnerships.

Linked to the last priority, strategic partnerships, I would particularly like to highlight the great interest in developing cooperation that I have met by high level military representatives from a broad range of states. The EU counter-piracy operation ATALANTA outside the Somali coast no doubt serves as an important catalyst for fostering partnerships and broader cooperation.

As Chairman of the EU Military Committee, my hope and expectation is that the economic crisis will act as an efficient catalyst for enhanced cooperation among the Member States

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spring of this year we have also been engaged in a training mission in Uganda to support the strengthening of the security functions in Somalia. The three tasks are very different and I do not find it meaningful to directly compare them. They are all challenging and important in different ways.

ALTHEA represents a successful operation, and a challenge for the EU is to sustain the effort in spite of the fact that the military current requirements are quite limited in scope.

ATALANTA is the first EU-led naval operation. At the same time this operation is also establishing mechanisms for a much wider cooperation with other organisations as well as with a large number of third states. It is also linked to a number of challenges outside of the maritime arena. A permanent solution to the piracy problem can only be established by complementary measures that deprive the pirates of safe havens ashore. Furthermore, the counter-piracy actions at sea have to be complemented by legal measures bringing the apprehended pirates to civilian courts.

Finally, the training mission in Uganda is certainly quite limited in scope as the total EU contribution is less than 150 troops. Nevertheless, it introduces a number of new tasks pointing at an increasingly important dimension in building long term stability in areas with weak governance structures. Talking about risks, I would say that our ambition of course is to eliminate

In your own opinion, what are the major threats to European security today? To what extent is the EU able to prevent such threats and challenges, using its forces and mechanisms?

→ Europe is part of an increasingly interlinked world and most of the security threats we are sharing with large parts of the world community. The European Security Strategy from 2003, together with the 2008 update, provides a comprehensive overview of the complex set of threats and risks, which is still largely relevant. The EU is one important actor but most of the threats of course have to be met by concerted actions by the whole world community. The EU can contribute significant resources, civilian



risks as far as as it is possible. Risks can never be totally eliminated but I would be very hesitant to say that any of our three tasks is riskier than the others.

Could you depict the cooperation between the EU and NATO, in terms of security and defence?

→ The efforts and capabilities of the EU and NATO are complementary. NATO of course is the major framework for military cooperation between its members on both sides of the Atlantic. The security and defence role of the EU is in the field of crisis management and largely builds on its capacity to take on a comprehensive civil-military approach.

The fact that 21 of the 27 EU Member States are members also in NATO of course means that EU- security efforts almost by definition runs in line with what is agreed in NATO. Since the establishment of the EU Security and Defence Policy ten years ago, we have had a special mechanism, the so called Berlin plus arrangement, through which the EU can draw on NATO collective assets and capabilities. The ALTHEA operation in Bosnia-Herzegovina builds on this arrangement.

In the field the EU and NATO have established pragmatic mechanisms for cooperation when they are both engaged in the same endeavours. The working processes in Brussels no doubt can be further developed. Since long we have established institutional links between the relevant political and military bodies, but for political reasons linked to the differences in membership, it is still difficult to give full effect to these mechanisms.

As a Member, Croatia would be fully engaged in the political processes and thus fully committed to the full range of CSDP operations and missions. It would also be fully committed to the EU capability building efforts. My presumption thus is that as a Member State Croatia would be ready to play its role in much the same way as all other EU Member States

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In which way can Croatia and its Armed Forces contribute to EU and to European security and defence policies at the moment? Although the Republic of Croatia is still not a member of the EU, our Armed Forces have already been engaged in certain international missions lead by the EU. How do you evaluate Croatia's contribution in those missions?

→ The CSDP is open to contributions also from third states, that is from Non-Member States. Croatia, as you rightly mention, is contributing to a number of operations and missions and is also preparing for a role in one of the future EU Battle Groups. Even if the contributions in numerical terms are fairly small, the political significance of a broad international commitment should never be underestimated.

However, I would say that the most important aspect of the Croatian contributions right now is that they are important in preparing your country for a future more active role as an EU Member State.

What, if anything, may change in terms of the strength of our troops in the current or future EU led PSOs once Croatia becomes a full EU member?

→ The decisions on contributions to the individual operations and missions are taken by the individual Member States. As a Member, Croatia would be fully engaged in the political processes and thus be fully committed to the full range of CSDP operations and missions. It would also be fully committed to the EU capability building efforts. My presumption thus is that as a Member State, Croatia would be ready to play its role in much the same way as all other EU Member States.

To what extent does the global economy situation make conducting the Union's tasks more difficult in the areas of security, peace enforcement and support, and resolvment of different criseses?

→ The economic crisis presents difficulties as well as opportunities. The economic crisis no doubt represents a major challenge to most EU Member States as defence budgets are hard-pressed. At the same time, the crisis may become a catalyst for taking bold new cooperative initiatives as the need for fundamental change is becoming increasingly evident. Whether nationalistic reflexes or new cooperative steps will get the upper hand remains to be seen. As Chairman of the EU Military Committee, my hope and expectation is that the economic crisis will act as an efficient catalyst for enhanced cooperation among the Member States. We simply cannot go on doing business as before!



Lead by Captain Zečević-Tadić as Contingent Commander, the team has performed its duties to the highest professional standards, successfully promoting the Republic of Croatia and always having in mind that the image of their small country with a big heart in the mission area depends on them.

BRILLIANT SUCCESS

OF CROATIAN OFFICERS IN THE MISSION OF UNFICYP

The three members of the CROCON were presented the first class medal for the outstanding service in the UNFICYP Slovak contingent, in that way becoming the only three Croatians ever to be given this honor

UNFICYP is one of the longest-running UN Peace-keeping missions, set up in 1964 to prevent further fighting between the Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot communities and to return the island to normal condition. Since the ceasefire agreement in 1974, UNFICYP has supervised the ceasefire lines, provided humanitarian assistance and maintained a status quo in the buffer zone between the Turkish and Turkish Cypriot forces in the north and the Greek Cypriot forces in the

south of the island. Efforts are made to assist the parties in reaching the settlement, while UNFICYP's troops and police officers deal with incidents on a daily basis. UNFICYP also provides humanitarian aid to displaced persons on the island, and supports the resumption of normal civilian activity in the buffer zone. The Chief of Mission is Lisa M. Bittenheim of the United States, and the current Force Commander (FC) is Rear Admiral Mario Sanchez Debernardi of Peru.

In September of 2009, Captain Ivan Zečević-Tadić, Major Dalibor Borković and Captain Marina Jurčić came to Cyprus as members of the UNFICYP Croatian Contingent (CROCON). Lead by Captain Zečević-Tadić as Contingent Commander, the team has performed its duties to the highest professional standards, successfully promoting the Republic of Croatia and always having in mind that the image of their small country with a big heart in the mission area depends on them. Serving as a part of the Slovak-Hungarian contingent, their contribution was in the end of their mission in September of 2009 recognized by the Slovak Government. The three members of the CROCON were presented the first class medal for outstanding service in the UNFICYP Slovak contingent, in that way becoming the only three Croatians ever to be given this honor. The proud recipients of the medal returned to their homeland, fulfilled after the job well done; by the words of UNFICYP FC Rear Admiral Mario Sanchez: "Bravo Zulu!"

The Republic of Cyprus, a Eurasian island country in the Eastern Mediterranean, being a strategic location in the gate between Middle East and Europe, has in the past been a host to various different occupiers. Different events throughout history resulted in Turkey launching a full-scale military invasion of the island in 1974. In 1983, Turkish Cypriots proclaimed the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus, up to this date recognized only by Turkey. The invasion led to the displacement of hundreds of thousands of Cypriots. As a result, today the island is subdivided into four main segments. The Republic of Cyprus is an internationally recognized government and occupies the southern two-thirds of the island. The Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus occupies the northern third of the island, is recognized only by Turkey, and consists of the Turkish-occupied areas. The United Nations-controlled Green Line is a buffer zone that separates the two and covers 2.67% of the island. There are also two bases under British sovereignty located on the island, covering 2.74%.

➤ THE MOST EFFECTIVE FIRE PROTECTION SERVICE

is one which extinguishes all fires from their origin while they are still small. Burned areas and extinguishing costs are then minimal. The surest way to limit the size of the fire is to attack it before it has time to spread, with all available forces under the principle of "attack it quickly, often, and vehemently".

FIRE-FIGHTING SQUADRON

Davor Turković, photos from Archives



FIRE-EXTINGUISHING FROM THE AIR

Sometimes fire is unpredictable and assumes the role of master, endangering lives and material goods. That's when man is forced to use advanced instruments and procedures to regain control over fire. These procedures in short are called fire extinguishing procedures, and one of the instruments used for their implementation is air forces. The fire site is a world of its own, and above it arise phenomena that pertain to air forces, whose pilots do not experience anything quite so intense anywhere else (the heat and turbulence of the surrounding atmosphere, the significantly reduced visibility due to smoke, the reduced amount of oxygen in the air, flying in loaded planes at extremely low altitudes, etc.). The purpose of this article is to provide basic theoretical assumptions about fire, to present the capabilities of the Air Force, to define tactical operations and manoeuvres and the use of air forces in extinguishing fires.

When a fire occurs, the caught amount of combustible is small, and the amount of heat is only slightly higher than the heat that causes the fire to start in the first place

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When is it necessary to use aircrafts in extinguishing a fire?

The basic features of air forces, particularly their speed, give them a significant advantage over other forces. That is why the development and production of specialised fire fighting aircrafts has been precipitated, and their use is all the more intensive in a large number of countries.

When a fire occurs, the caught amount of combustible is small, and the amount of heat is only slightly higher than the heat that causes the fire to start in the first place. Over time, more and more chemical energy from the combustible goes into the heat, which additionally heats the surrounding combustible, releasing flammable gasses from it, causing the fire to spread. Therefore, the first few minutes after a fire breaks out is when it is best to put it out, because the burnt area is small and the cumulative heat is low, so there are few combustibles, and this makes the fire site visible

"FIRE IS A GOOD SERVANT BUT A BAD MASTER"

CROATIAN MILITARY MAGAZINE



SHING TACTICS

and less smoky. In this phase, the fire is accessible for extinguishing, is easier to approach (the amount of heat doesn't endanger fire-fighters), and it is easier to determine the optimal area of action and to extinguish it with a small amount of extinguishing agents.

However, a fire may break out on rugged terrain, where it is difficult to notice it in time and therefore to warn fire-fighters, who can not get to it (in Croatia there are many such places – Velebit, Bikovo, Snježnica). That's when it is necessary to use aircrafts, which are agile and can quickly reach even the most remote areas of the fire and begin the extinguishing process well before the arrival of ground forces.

Observation/attack planes allow for a fire to be spotted in its early phases; they immediately give timely information about the use of forces in the extinguishing of fires and can also independently work on the fire. The combined effort of air and ground forces is what gives the best results.

The most effective fire protection service is one which extinguishes all fires from their origin while they are still small

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A fire must be attacked quickly, often and vehemently

The most effective fire protection service is one which extinguishes all fires from their origin while they are still small. Burned areas and extinguishing costs are then minimal. The surest way to limit the size of the fire is to attack it before it has time to spread with all available forces under the principle of "attack it quickly, often and vehemently".

Therefore, in extinguishing fires it must be taken into consideration that fire, in time, does not spread linearly but rather exponentially (cumulatively) and this is why the initial extinguishing time is a critical factor, particularly in fires that are on a slope. Ground and air forces must be alarmed simultaneously and as soon as possible for fires to be attacked with all available forces, because the extinguishing effect is then greater and the extinguishment is less expensive. There must also be a centralised command and

→ **IN THE OPERATIONAL USE OF AIR FORCES** it is important to know that in fire-fighting tactics the axiom "more is less" applies because of the cumulative effects in the event of fighting a fire. Using the minimal number of estimated planes needed must be avoided because of the unpredictability of fires, because of potential faults/failures on the planes and because of the appearance of many fires on different locations at once in the protected area

FIRE-FIGHTING SQUADRON



control system with standard operating procedures based on the tactical use of ground and air forces.

A quicker reaction is accomplished by the timely use of air forces, whose attack on the fire slows or stops it from spreading, thus creating the ideal conditions for ground fire-fighting forces in terms of the organisation, extinguishing and protection of fire sites. Helicopters as well as airplanes offer support in this phase by transporting fire-fighters and extinguishing devices to hard to reach areas. Besides providing support, helicopters also directly participate in extinguishing fires by spraying water from hanging or belly tanks. They also have the ability to rapidly transport fire-fighters and equipment to the site of the fire.

To reduce the total cost of extinguishing a fire, airplanes extinguish the fire until the arrival or use of ground forces. The extinguishing process does not have a linear function of time, namely two airplanes per unit of time have an extinguishing capacity which is more than double in relation to one plane. Increasing the number of airplanes rapidly increases this ability, so it is an empirical fact that four airplanes

To reduce the total cost of extinguishing a fire, airplanes extinguish the fire until the arrival or use of ground forces

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have up to eight times the extinguishing power of one airplane, not four times as it might be wrongly assumed.

This is why: the period of time between throwing water-bombs is 4 times shorter, which means the potency at which the fire is spreading is 4 times lesser, the amount of water which simultaneously lowers the temperature, soaks combustibles and raises the humidity of the atmosphere is 4 times greater, the effect of preheating unaffected combustible matter is 4 times lesser because the matter is now isolated from the source of the energy, and, in the end, the total extinguishing time is shorter because the fire does not have the time to grow on a larger scale, and the smaller the scale, the smaller the fire's cumulativeness, which in turn leads the fire to spread more slowly.

Ways to use fire-fighting aircrafts

The above statement is a piece of aerial fire-fighting wisdom. Attack the fire while it is in its earliest developmental phase, quickly and with everything you've got, before it grows so big you can't even get close to it.

More air forces must initially be employed, and then eventually be reduced accordingly; this is more effective than reinforcing the initial air forces with reservists as it saves precious time and ultimately the costs are lower and the effect is greater.

"RESERVE FORCES BROUGHT AFTER THE CULMINATION OF THE FIRE ARE A USELESS RESERVE"



The Croatian Air Force and Air Defence have respectable aerial fire-fighting forces, both in terms of types of aircrafts and their number. The proper selection and use of TT features and type of aircraft allows for every fire to be extinguished at a minimal cost.

In the operational use of air forces, it is important to know that in fire-fighting tactics the axiom "more is less" applies because of the cumulative effects in the event of fighting a fire. Using the minimal number of estimated planes needed must be avoided because of the unpredictability of fires, because of potential faults/failures on the planes and because of the appearance of many fires on different locations at once in the protected area. More air forces must initially be employed, and then eventually be reduced accordingly; this is more effective than reinforcing the initial air forces with reservists as it saves precious time, and ultimately the costs are lower and the effect is greater.

Every flight hour is justified because training is also simultaneously being undergone, as are reconnaissance missions and, if needed, immediate action.

There are many ways to use air forces, including

There are many ways to use air forces, including the use of forces on full alert and the use of forces in fire-fighting reconnaissance, whose goal is to gather information about the state of a given area with visual or technical reconnaissance devices in order to be able to undertake fire-fighting measures

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the use of forces on full alert and the use of forces in fire-fighting reconnaissance, whose goal is to gather information about the state of a given area with visual or technical reconnaissance devices in order to be able to undertake fire-fighting measures. Fire-fighting reconnaissance (FFR) can be conducted with full or empty airplanes. If the FFR assignment is being carried out by CL 415 or AT 802 A planes and its route goes along the sea coast, it is more convenient to scout with an empty plane, because it can be filled with water at any moment after spotting a fire, and no time is significantly lost as water is nearby.

If the scouting is being done over land near which there are no suitable locations for filling up with water, the FFR should be done with a full plane.

The use of forces by redirecting planes from fire to fire takes place when there are no reserve air forces and part of the active forces are redirected from one fire to another, or when the top-priority fire is located and the focus is then shifted onto the lower-priority fire. The assessment of the superior headquarters is important in applying this procedure. The opposite effect must be avoided (reducing the fire-fighting forces at the top-priority fire, because this can lead to larger fires).

Extinguishing large fires with a single plane should be avoided, namely because the overall extinguishing process is usually done with many planes.

Extinguishing with many planes – The optimal number of planes in a tactical group is 4, and should there be need for more planes, more tactical groups must be formed and used. Experience gained from assignments completed so far shows that for every fire which quickly spreads, a tactical group of planes must be sent at every phase. If not all air forces involved are needed for the completion of the task (this is determined by the commander of the tactical group), the group may be reduced or restructured to put out the fire in a chain.



→ THE INITIAL ATTACK

is considered to be the first attack on a fire which is still in its initial phases because it prevents the fire from expanding and developing onto a larger scale



FIRE-FIGHTING SQUADRON



THE SPECIFICITIES OF FIRE-FIGHTING IN THE REPUBLIC OF CROATIA

- a limited number of available fire-fighting planes and helicopters,
- ground forces are less technically equipped,
- there are no means of fire-fighting communications in most forested areas,
- low overall level of prevention,
- a narrow coastal strip, bordered by the sea and mountains, which is extremely important for tourism,
- there are many important key points (settlements, camps, hotels, olive groves, vineyards),
- there are many islands which are poorly connected to land and whose overall infrastructure is insufficiently developed,
- a small number of bases for fire-fighting planes and of operational airports,
- a limited number of places where water can be drawn in the continental area,
- a large number of nature and national parks,
- Mediterranean climate and vegetation,
- neighbouring countries have extremely poorly developed fire-fighting protection (Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro) and threats of fires coming from them are constant.

Cooperation with ground forces

Independent fire extinguishing entails the use of one or more aircrafts. Its main feature is that there are no ground forces, so the plane must locate, extinguish or localise the fire, which is a complicated and expensive process; there are no coordinates or insight into the situation coming from the ground (for example, whether the transmission line is off, etc), there is no way of knowing whether there is a risk of danger coming from unknown obstacles and LEDs, if the fire-fighters are in danger of being sprayed or injured or the status of the evaluation of the fire site (when to stop extinguishing or spraying water).

Ground force support entails the simultaneous and well-coordinated execution of tasks with ground forces. The aircraft crew determines the main area of action, and the ground forces commence extinguishing right after the conditions are favourable. This method is most often applied in hilly or mountainous regions. Fire-fighters extinguish the accessible parts of the fire (access roads exist) and air forces extinguish the mountainous and/or inaccessible part of the fire site.

Air forces as the main fire-fighting force entails the presence and activity of ground forces, but their scope of action and capacity availability is for one reason or another too insufficient to have an important impact on the extinguishment of a fire. In this case, air forces are the main fighting force. Examples of such cases are: when the fires are too large to be reached by fire-fighters, fires that surround fire-fighters or fires in which the independent actions of ground forces would not lead to the necessary effect/localising in the optimal amount of time. This type of cooperation and participation differs from independent extinguishing in that ground forces are present in the active part of

The extinguishing process does not have a linear function of time, namely two airplanes per unit of time have an extinguishing capacity which is more than double in relation to one plane. Increasing the number of airplanes rapidly increases this ability, so it is an empirical fact that four airplanes have up to eight times the extinguishing power of one airplane, a not four times as it might be wrongly assumed



the fire site, but the role of the air forces is still crucial as is the case in independent extinguishing.

Methods and tactics for dealing with fires

The initial attack is considered to be the first attack on a fire which is still in its initial phases because it prevents the fire from expanding and developing onto a larger scale. It most often takes place during the FFR or during the active fire extinguishing assignment, as most fires are only noticed at that point.

The purpose of the initial attack is to localise the fire and to prevent it from spreading by throwing the minimal amount of water on it (one water-bomb) until the arrival of ground forces or of the refilled planes which conducted the initial attack. In practice, in most cases, it is desirable for the initial attack to completely eliminate the open flame and to soak the immediate area surrounding the fire site.

The plane that extinguished the active fire (assuming that key areas are not endangered in that fire), must at all times be free to perform the initial attack on the newly emergent fire if it is less than a 5 minute flight away from any point the plane is circling at that moment. Like this a new fire can be eliminated with a minimal loss of efficiency on the active fire. Under exceptional circumstances, according to the crew's judgement, the initial attack can be made on a fire which is more than a 5 minute flight away from any circling point. This applies only when a newly emergent fire presents a greater danger than the active fire (for example, when the active fire is far away from a settlement but the newly emergent fire endangers some key point or structure).

A direct attack entails throwing a water-bomb on the most active part of the fire, which is its head. The

goal of the direct attack is to limit the spread of the fire and to localise it. This method must be used whenever possible, as the extinguishing effect is maximal, and the burnt area is minimal. The method involves separating "the black from the green", in other words, the parts that are aflame from those that aren't, then throwing a water-bomb in such a way that one half of the bomb falls on the blazing area and the other half on the unaffected area. It is best to conduct a direct attack with pure water or with foam that has a low concentration of foaming agents, like this the water-bomb penetrates vegetation more easily and the extinguishment is less costly.

When it is not possible to apply the direct attack method, forces must wait at the protective line, which is perpendicular to the direction in which the fire is spreading and parallel to the front, and is best if it coincides with natural or artificial structures which can slow the spreading of the fire (a cliff, bend, road or river). The protective lines must be soaked with a combustible substance and be reinforced with a natural or artificial barrier for the fire to be brought to a halt. The protective line is formed of foam with a medium or high concentration of foaming agents or retardants, because of water's negative properties (it slips off vegetation before the front's arrival).

The key points protection method – In case there is too inadequate a number of forces dealing with a large fire for localising or for a direct attack, key points (protection priorities) must be chosen and actions must be focused on them. Key points are considered to be people, buildings, material goods and

When it is not possible to apply the direct attack method, forces must wait at the protective line, which is perpendicular to the direction in which the fire is spreading and parallel to the front, and is best if it coincides with natural or artificial structures which can slow the spreading of the fire

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particularly important areas (nature parks, national parks, valuable forest and agricultural areas). The assignment is performed by creating many overlapping protective lines between the structure and the fire, going from the structure towards the part of the fire which poses the greatest threat to it. Like this the fire is prevented from constantly skipping over the protective line while the plane is coming back from refilling with water, and the negative effects of a potential miss during the throwing of the water bomb are eliminated. After the protection phase, the next step is to throw water bombs on the upcoming front.

Throughout all this, ongoing tactical adjustments are necessary, along with the combined efforts of the air and ground forces. Whenever possible, the head of the fire must be attacked and protection must be undertaken. In practice, in most cases, especially with large fires in which many types of planes are used, several tactical procedures are used simultaneously to extinguish the fire.

With regard to the TT features of each type of plane and to the kind of systems it can carry, when dealing with various types of planes, each must perform the tactical procedure it is tactically superior in. Whereas Airtractor AT 802 F planes have a tactical advantage in drawing protective lines with retardant, CL 415 planes have a tactical advantage in attacking the fire at its head or flank. In terms of efficiency, a tactical approach which is not natural for a specific type of plane must be avoided; for example, extinguishing the head of a large fire with a plane that has small attacking capacities or with a helicopter.



NATO'S ALLIED LAND CORPS COMMANDERS' CONFERENCE

THE ALLIANCE'S TESTIMONY OF SUPPORT AND FAITH IN CROATIA

From the 15th to the 17th of June, the Croatian Army was host to NATO's annual Allied Land Corps Commanders' Conference in Zagreb. The highest ranking land forces officers from NATO member countries and representatives from NATO as well as from the Croatian Ministry of Defence, from the CAF and from the Croatian Ground Army participated in the conference.

NATO's Allied Land Corps Commanders' Conference can be considered a testament to the Alliance's support of and faith in Croatia as a new member of the Alliance. This is the conclusion that the President of the Republic of Croatia and Supreme Commander of the CAF Ivo Josipovic came to during his speech at the opening of the Conference. The conference was organized by HQ Force Command Madrid, and hosting duties were entrusted to the Croatian Army Command, headed by Lieutenant General Mladen Kruljac. Initially, confer-

The Allied Land Corps NATO Commanders' Conference can be considered a testament to the Alliance's support of and faith in Croatia as a new member of the Alliance...

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ences at this level were held in one of the Alliance's regional headquarters, while over the past years hosts have been full NATO members. The last conference was held in Canada in 2009. According to the Croatian Ground Army, the Conference is proof that NATO highly values the overall reform successes which have been achieved during Croatia's road towards integration.

During the part of the Conference that was open to the media, the Commander of the Alliance's Allied Forces Command Madrid, lieutenant general Alfredo Cardona Torres from Spain, had a few interesting things to say, claiming that the quality of Croatia's participation in NATO is reflected in the extraordinary organisation of the conference. Commander of the Allied Force Command Heidelberg, Lieutenant General John W. Morgan III of the USA, also paid his compliments, saying he believes that Croatian aid and support help create a stronger Alliance.

INTERVIEW - LIEUTENANT GENERAL ALFREDO CARDONA TORRES

I DEEPLY VALUE THE COMBAT SKILLS AND PROF



We took the opportunity to speak with the Commander of the Alliance's Allied Forces Command Madrid, lieutenant general Alfredo Cardona Torres from Spain, during the events that were held over the course of the annual Allied Land Corps Commanders' Conference, whose host was the Croatian Army Command. Along with praising the organisation of the Conference, General Torres also commented on the changes ahead for Headquarters in Madrid.

How much can experience gained from conferences such as the one in Zagreb help in the reform of NATO forces and in the more efficient functioning of your Command?



The exchange of opinions and experience at this level is always extremely helpful because of the outstanding qualifications of the participants in such conferences. They basically help us in taking common positions, and even if it wasn't planned to make any specific decisions during this conference, I am sure



PROFESSIONALISM OF THE CROATIAN ARMED FORCES

that these organisers will be of great help in the modernisation of the new reconstruction plans. These talks will also serve as an opportunity to express our opinions. We mustn't forget that reconstruction is still in its early phases, so the opinions expressed at the conference are of great importance.

How familiar are you with the CAF, particularly with the Croatian Ground Army?



I have known the CAF since 1992 when I was a member of the UNPROFOR mission, and I further familiarised myself with it later as a member of SFOR in 1995. Since then I have been following their development and have now established closer contacts than I had in the past, due to my new function as Commander of the Alliance's Allied Forces Command Madrid. I deeply value the combat skills and professionalism of the Croatian Armed Forces, as well as their magnificent

organisational skills which have made the integration of the CAF into the Alliance exemplary.

Members of the Croatian Ground Army are participating in several important peacekeeping missions. How familiar are you with their participation and role in these missions?



Since proclaiming their independence, Croats have shown an open and cooperative attitude towards the international community, and the CAF have done their job very professionally when contributing in various areas of conflict. In most cases Croatia had deployed military observers who participated in UN missions, for example in the mission during the Indian-Pakistani conflict, in the Golan Heights, and, most recently, in Haiti. Also, the generous involvement of Croatian forces in operation ISAF in Afghanistan and in Kosovo must be mentioned.



➔ **RECRUITS** who must undergo training for driving, maintenance, supplying and all other logistic specialties receive their training in the ANA's Logistics school.



THE CROATIAN ARMY



For the first time, as part of the 16th HRVCON in the ISAF mission, a team was sent to the Logistics School of the Afghan National Army's (ANA) Combat Service Support Branch School in Kabul. This is a joint Croatian-Hungarian team which consists of 17 Hungarian and 8 Croatian logisticians. All CAF members in the team are from Support Command units, more specifically from the Logistics Operation Centre, the Logistics Support Battalion, the Service Battalion and the Supply Battalion.



AN INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION

CROATIAN-HUNGARIAN LOGISTICS TEAM FOR TRAINING

According to Colonel Zlatan Sever, head of the Department for IMO support in Support Command and the man who was responsible for preparing this team as well as all other logistics elements of the Support Command Unit for the ISAF operation, the whole activity is the result of the Afghan National Army's (ANA) effort to become qualified in autonomously training its own members. In order for this to happen, international forces from operation ISAF are setting up various mentoring teams whose goal is to help the ANA in its training activities. This is precisely how the Logistics School was designed. In collaboration with the Military Training Centre in Kabul, the Logistics School

Three of the CAF members had already been in Afghanistan as part of earlier contingents, while this will be the first experience in the ISAF operation for the others



has been operating for two years within the organisation of the German Armed Forces and members of the MPRI program. Taking into consideration that the ANA plans on increasing the number of members it will train in that school, the Germans suggested that the number of advisers in the school be increased and requested that the training centre be moved from the Kabul centre to the Afghan army's artillery range, only a few kilometres from Camp Warehouse, where many members of the Croatian contingent in Kabul reside. This is how members from our armed forces as well as from the Hungarian armed forces received the chance to organise and conduct these activities.

A team of 6 of our officers are the leaders of the training in the areas of maintenance and supplying, while our NCOs are involved in trainings related to various logistics fields, such as supplying and handling fuels and lubricants, using a field kitchen when in the field, basic vehicle maintenance, weapons maintenance, UBS handling and traffic. The team's task primarily involves consulting.



Along with the specialised part of the training, they also had training in handling communication devices, in NBC defence systems, in safe driving, they were familiarised with improvised landmines and had a training in methodology

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and the task of the Hungarian and Croatian logisticians is to oversee the implementation of the training and, if need be, to participate in the practical part of the training and to assist in the development of training plans and programs. All courses, except the one for drivers, last six weeks. They are all basic courses, that is, the first activities that ANA soldiers experience when they join the army. All work is done with the aid of translators, as the Afghani part of the training is conducted in Dari.

An excellent cooperation with the Hungarian logisticians

Before heading out on the mission, both our and the Hungarian logisticians went through a complex training which was comprised of two parts; a national training which each side underwent in their own country and a joint training. In the national part of the logistician's Command Support training, they underwent a training which was related to that of all components of the Croatian contingent and contained general topics whose goal was to give an overall picture of the situation of the operation, of the composition of the contingent, of the rules of engagement, of international law of war, of the health-epidemiological situation... Along with the specialised part of the training, they also had training in handling communication devices, in NBC defence systems, in safe driving, they were familiarised with improvised landmines and had a training in methodology.

Three of the CAF members had already been in Afghanistan as part of earlier contingents, while this will be the first experience in the ISAF operation for the others.

ANA MEMBERS

Training in all logistic specialties

Recruits who must undergo training for driving, maintenance, supplying and all other logistic specialties receive their training in the ANA's Logistics school. A team of 6 of our officers are the leaders of the training in the areas of maintenance and supplying, while our NCOs are involved in trainings related to various logistics fields, such as supplying and handling fuels and lubricants, using a field kitchen when in the field, basic vehicle maintenance, weapons maintenance, UBS handling and traffic. The team's task primarily involves consulting. The idea, according to Colonel Sever, is that the Afghanis train their own soldiers,



Colonel Sever said the collaboration with the Hungarian party in the organisation of this joint assignment was excellent. Along with the national support element (NSE), which from the very beginning has given logistical and health support to Croatian contingents in the ISAF operation and to the OMLT garrison (G OMLT), which mentors ANA members, the engagement in the ANA's School of Logistics is another one of the actions in the mission, whose host is the CAF's Support Command. "This, for us," said Colonel Sever, "is a great responsibility and duty, but also a sort of recognition of the successful work we have done up to present in the ISAF mission".

THE ANNUAL MARITIME COMMANDER MEETING

MARCOMET

For the first time, this year the Croatian Navy hosted the most important annual maritime commander meeting – MARCOMET 2010. NATO's Naples maritime command (MC Naples) organised the meeting, and commanders and senior officials from navies from 27 countries from all the continents participated in the meeting which was held in Split in May. Apart from NATO member countries, countries that are members of the Partnership for Peace, the Mediterranean Dialogue, the Istanbul Cooperation Initiative and other partner countries that actively contribute to the preservation of maritime security also participated in the meeting.

The role of annual maritime commander meetings is particularly significant in the strengthening of the

The role of annual maritime commander meetings is particularly significant in the strengthening of the cooperation between countries for which maritime security is a top priority...

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cooperation between countries for which maritime security is a top priority. The theme of MARCOMET 2010 was "Working towards the delivery and sustainment of a truly 'comprehensive approach' to secure the Maritime Environment". NATO's contribution to the maritime domain, maritime security operations, safety at sea, the cooperation of naval forces, the contribution of naval forces in joint operations, the importance of the navy in international systems and the need for a comprehensive approach are just some of the themes which were discussed at the three-day-long meeting.

After the end of the meeting, MARCOMET 2010's chairman, NATO's Allied Maritime Commander in Naples Vice Admiral Maurizio Gemignani, stated that

NATO'S ALLIED MARITIME COMMANDER IN NAPLES
VICE ADMIRAL MAURIZIO GEMIGNANI



2010

maritime security can no longer be approached with traditional surveillance, and threats on security are based on global factors such as the economy, natural and energetic sources, climate change, reliance on networking and criminal activities such as piracy. "The involvement of non-NATO leaders and experts in discussing maritime challenges demonstrates our commitment and focus towards engaging other partners and organizations to broaden the scope and effectiveness of mutual efforts to assure maritime security. This is what we meant by 'a comprehensive approach'. The thoughts offered during the meeting have broadened our maritime perspectives and will be precious in developing policies and concepts" claimed Vice Admiral Maurizio Gemignani.



RECOGNITION OF THE CONTRIBUTION THE CROATIAN NAVY GIVES TO MARITIME SAFETY

MARCOMET is among the most important periodical meetings for naval commanders in the Mediterranean. This conference has in the long run expanded its area of interest and now representatives from all the oceans of the world participate in it. To be the host of such an important event is recognition of the contribution the Croatian Navy gives to maritime safety. Vice Admiral Maurizio Gemignani stated in his interview that this is further evidence of the active role which Croatia intends to play within the Alliance.

What are your impressions of MARCOMET 2010 which for the first time was held in Croatia?



I couldn't have been more satisfied, and many of the guests expressed their appreciation because of the level of the discussions and the relevance of the issues, but also because of the excellent organisation. What Croatia had to offer was key in the effort to make this conference a success: the turning point in our approach towards overcoming present and future challenges. Conversing with Croatian military leaders served as a preparation for our discussion. Your State Secretary Mate Raboteg clearly summed up the importance of maritime security when he said that "Navies in regards to today's security challenges are becoming an important global provider of security and an effective mechanism for the implementation of international law".

What does organising MARCOMET 2010 mean for Croatia?



MARCOMET is among the most important periodic meetings for naval commanders on the Mediterranean. This conference has in the long run expanded its area of interest and now representatives from all the oceans of the world participate in it. To be the host of such an important event is recognition of the contribution the Croatian Navy gives to maritime safety. This is further evidence of the active role which Croatia intends to play within the Alliance.

As a naval officer, how do you see the future of the Navy in military operations?



Globalisation has affected all areas of our lives, and has affected the economy as well as security. At the same time, technology allows non-state participants to be threats which traditional military powers can no longer come to grips with. Because of this, there exists a convergence of factors which urge the development of security systems which are agile, technologically advanced and can be transferred as a part of joint efforts. These are all features which can easily develop within modern navies. In the future we see more ships with sophisticated structures, maybe with robotic aircrafts and Modular Weapon Systems. I am sure, though, that in a world which is more than 70% covered in oceans, navies will continue to have a crucial role in insuring protected and secure maritime routes and will continue to contribute to greater safety at sea and on shore.

→ AIR AUTONOMY

The submersible is equipped with 11 bottles of air, each containing 11 dm per 200 bars, which gives it autonomy for 4 hours of diving with a normal consumption of 18 to 20 cubic dm per diver at a working depth of 15 meters. Diving at lesser working depths increases the air autonomy.

THE CROATIAN ARMY

Marija Alvir, photos by Davor Kirin

The R2-M submersible is designed for the execution of diversionary attacks on enemy vessels at anchor and at port and coastal installations. It is intended for the transport of a pair of divers, whose ultimate goal is to attack the object, and can also be used to search the bottom of the sea with its sonar's special setting

SPECIAL OPERATIONS BATTALION

MULTIPURPOSE SUBMERSIBLES

Most people probably know what a submarine is, but for most the term submersible is probably unknown, as is the fact that the Armed Forces of the Republic of Croatia have them within its structure. To be more precise, two submersibles which were once part of the naval demolition squad are now part of the Special Operations Battalion. With the integration of the naval demolition squad into that battalion in 2007, the submersibles became part of the 3rd (diving) company of the SOB. Over the last year were modernised and since September of 2009 they have been fully ready for operational use.



The vehicle's purpose and training

The submersibles are in the "Kovcanje" barracks on Mali Losinj, where the decompression device is also kept. We found out how they function and what their purpose is in a conversation with the commander of the diving company of the SOB, lieutenant Nenad Kontri, who is both a trainer and a an instructor for vehicle operation. The R2-M submersible is designed for the execution of diversionary attacks on enemy vessels at anchor and at port and coastal installations. It is intended for the transport of a pair of divers, whose ultimate goal is to attack an object, and



its autonomy allows it to cover greater areas. After anchoring, divers "self-propel" themselves into the final part of the task, that is, they swim with the aid of fins, and use underwater navigation for attacks and retrievals from the areas of activity. In addition, the submersible can also be used for searching the bottom of the sea with its sonar's special setting, and for such assignments it can be used in depths of up to 40 meters. The new system, which was modernized and with which both submersibles were equipped, has a wireless link which enables computers to be linked to a NU 20 navigation cylinder, then the appropriate

The submersible has three navigation modes: submersion, navigating and navigating under exceptional circumstances (when maximum speed is reached)

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route on which the submersibles will navigate is sent to the computer and transferred to the submersible's navigation system.

Training for handling the submersible regularly takes place for some members of the diving company of the SOB. Students master theory and practice over 95 hours, the regular length of the training. Once they have become familiar with the structure of the submersible and the electronic and navigation systems, as well as with other details related to the management of the submersible, what comes next is an audit, followed by the practical application of the acquired knowledge. Before the first runs made with the help of an instructor, students go through the navigation plans of the drive. First the "drivers" or submersible operators are trained, and then the "co-drivers".



After the end of the drive and after the submersible is removed from the sea (which, as with the lowering, is done with a crane), the operators hand the vehicle over to the mechanics who thoroughly clean and store the submersibles. After returning from the assigned voyage, by connecting the computer to the navigation system, the instructor downloads all the parameters that were registered during the voyage and checks to see whether the student adhered to the assigned parameters or if he had exceeded the maximally allowed slope. Like this the instructor can supervise the student even when he isn't in the submersible. For the "driver" and "co-driver" to be "operationally usable", they must pass an advanced level of submersible handling, which is a training for navigation in difficult conditions primarily related to diving at night, after they have passed the theory test and the test-dive. Only after that exam is successfully passed are the students qualified to operate the submersible autonomously. All students are professional divers of course. The submersibles are used to cover a given distance as quickly and easily as possible, and within the body of the submersible there is storage space for the transport of anti-ship mines, underwater containers with equipment and weapons, explosives, and more. When the divers reach the designated underwater navigation target, the divers set anchor at the bottom of the sea, and with the help of their gear swim to the spot where they are to execute their tasks. They always go in pairs, and while the "driver" operates the submersible while the "co-driver" reads the map on the navigator and resets the time when there is a change in direction.

HELICOPTER PILOTS TRAINED FOR NIGHT FLYING

Croatian Air Force crews were recently trained for flying in night conditions with Night Vision Goggles night vision equipment. This is modern and high quality equipment which enables safer night flights and landings on unlit grounds.

In the tactical sense, the CAF and Air Defence are now trained for a more effective pursuance of its activities in night conditions. The freedom to manoeuvre a helicopter as a "vulnerable" aircraft during the night is of great importance, not only in carrying out military but also civilian tasks, such as search and rescue missions, medical flights, landing on rugged terrains, etc. This new capability of the Croatian Air Force is a product of a good Croatian-American collaboration. The cost of the equipment and training was bore by the Americans, who also provided instructors who carried out the training with Croatian crews.

The flight training of MI-171 Sh and BELL 206 B Croatian Air Force helicopter crews was held at the 93rd Airbase near Zadar. Croatian pilots and technicians were trained by experienced American instruc-



tors, retired U.S. Army pilots and flight technician instructors, who have over a thousand flight hours. The "NVG Training Event" night flying training was conducted in English and primarily involved practical work, namely, night flying with the aid of Night Vision Goggles. Each training cycle lasted three weeks. Basic training took place the first two weeks, and advanced technical training took place the third. In basic training, the emphasis was on the mastering of basic procedures in helicopter manoeuvring in NOE flight using a night vision device, and in advanced training actions related to the technical use of helicopters were drilled. Tactical navigation, navigation at low altitudes, off-airport landings and takeoffs and search methods were practiced with BELL pilots/instructors. The activities would begin at 10 pm and would unfold until 3 or 4 am. Nevertheless, all gave their maximum effort and the results did not disappoint.

Bernard Brumfield, one of the American instructors who conducted the training, said that working with Croatian Air Force and Air Defence pilots was

➔ **BERNARD BRUMFIELD,**

one of the American instructors who conducted the training, said that working with Croatian Air Force and Air Defence pilots was one of the best experiences of his career. And experience is definitely something he and his colleagues have. **"You have excellent pilots and great potential and possibilities,"** said Brumfield after working with Croatian Air Force pilots.

CROATIAN MILITARY MAGAZINE



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Training Croatian Air Force helicopter crews in night flying will contribute to more effective assistance to civilians, as it will enable easier and safer medical flights and search and rescue missions at night and on rough terrains, and it will also contribute to Croatian Air Force members' more effective participation in the KFOR mission as well as to achieving a higher compatibility with other NATO forces. Both parties are extremely satisfied with the organisation and implementation of the training. The new competency of the Croatian helicopter crew is the end-result of the financial and organisational support and experience of the USA on the one hand, and of the readiness of the Croatian Air Force and Air Defence's 93rd airbase to accept other forces and accept support in the implementation of trainings on the other hand.

Croatian Air Force pilots who have completed training received a licence, became instructors themselves and are now trained to be able to continue to independently conduct trainings with other pilots



Croatian Air Force pilots who have completed training received a licence, became instructors themselves and are trained to be able to continue to independently conduct trainings with other pilots.

During the first training cycle in the 93rd airbase, Colonel Charles Davis, head of the defence co-operation department of the US military delegation in Croatia, was in attendance. In the name of the American Embassy, he expressed his satisfaction with the American-Croatian collaboration: "I am proud that we are able to help Croatia in such a way. This is part of our effort to help the Croatian Armed Forces and their members outside of the country, especially those in the KFOR mission". He mentioned that after the first contingent's return from Kosovo, they asked how they could help out and learned that this kind of training would be welcome. Along with the importance of high quality instructors and training processes, which were able to be secured in a matter of months, Colonel Davis also noted the high level of Croatian pilots' training.

The Military Intelligence Battalion is a unit of the CAF which deals with intelligence matters at operative and strategic levels. It is a part of the Croatian Ground Army and does not operate on its own; rather, it offers support to all other CAF units. It is a modernly organized unit which conforms to the ISTAR concept (Intelligence, Surveillance Target Acquisition), and has four basic intelligence disciplines: HUMINT, SIGINT, OSINT and IMINT. Its members are qualified and highly-trained for performing many specialist tasks.

A military intelligence officer must in real situations gather the critical information needed by the commander to make decisions. The more information there is, the better-quality the decision. On the field, the intelligence officer must already know how to differentiate important from unimportant information. Most often, almost always in fact, it is a matter of details, little things which appear to be ir-

A TEAM READY FOR ALL

relevant. Depending on the nature of the information from the field, officers with specific specialities are used. To reach the needed information they must be trained in entering the opponent's territory up to 70 km in depth, in putting the target under surveillance, in not coming into contact with the opponents and in avoiding conflicts and withdrawing unnoticeably.

Everything they do, they do as a team. And each team is only as strong as its weakest link. But in the MIB, there must not be a weakest link. Each member has his place on the team, but in the end they must function as one...



CROATIAN MILITARY MAGAZINE

CHALLENGES

Training according to the highest standards

At the beginning and at the end of every intelligence process, along with all the technology, no matter how sophisticated it may be, stand people. Being fully aware of this in the MIB, much attention is paid to training. In accordance with their specialities, members of the battalion undergo a series of special trainings. As they need to be trained in infiltrating the opponent's territory via ground, air and sea, parachuting, mountain climbing, combat swimming and diving are just some of the skills members must master on their own. In every training activity, the individual as well as the combat readiness of the team is examined, as is the familiarity with special equipment and the ability to quickly adapt to situations on the terrain. They must know how to manage stress, which, if it is positive, does not lessen their capabilities. Far from

➔SPECIAL TRAINING

Each special training undergone by intelligence officers requires extremely good physical and mental preparation. Training takes place throughout the whole year, with the goal of bettering the altogether skills and capabilities of the members of the MIB.



THE MILITARY INTELLIGENCE BATTALION



that, it can actually push them to be at their best. With MIB trainings, quality, not quantity, always comes first. Each special training undergone by intelligence officers requires extremely good physical and mental preparation. Training takes place throughout the whole year, with the goal of bettering the altogether skills and capabilities of the members of the MIB. Everything they do, they do as a team. And each team is only as strong as its weakest link. But in the MIB, there must not be a weakest link. Each member has his place on the team, but in the end they must function as one. Each training is conducted in realistic conditions which can be expected in real situations.

How to become a member of the MIB

The acceptance of new members into the battalion is done through a Selection training. Those who have voluntarily been in the Armed Forces for three to five years can go through the selection. The candidates at the selection must prove themselves, make an effort, show their knowledge and prove that they have enough potential to carry out military-intelligence operations. Training lasts four weeks. As the MIB is not a typical unit, the selection process is also very specific. The balance between physical fitness and technical knowledge is one of the preconditions which must be met by anyone who wants to work in this unit. After basic military knowledge, physical fit-

Members of the MIB proved how well-trained and physically prepared they are during the ISAF mission in Afghanistan. MIB members were in fact the first Croatian soldiers who filled our MLOT teams which carry out one of the most demanding tasks in the ISAF mission.

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ness, psychomotor abilities, weaponry knowledge, first aid knowledge and martial arts knowledge are checked, and psychological and other types of tests are undergone during the special training. All the training's activities, the dynamics, the thematic areas and all necessary materials are designed in the unit. An effort is made for the selection to be all the more realistic and dynamic, in order for the candidates to understand what it truly means to be a military intelligence officer from the very start.

International missions

Members of the MIB proved how well-trained and physically prepared they are during the ISAF mission in Afghanistan. MIB members were in fact the first Croatian soldiers who filled our MLOT teams which carry out one of the most demanding tasks in the ISAF mission; they are a part of the operative part of the military component of Provincial Reconstructive teams. In addition to MIB members having been a part of MLOT teams, they also trained other members of the Armed Forces for participation in missions in Afghanistan. Besides MLOT, MIB members also take part in other components of HRVCON in the ISAF mission. All this speaks of their level of training readiness and their determination to perform each task flawlessly regardless of where it takes place and how difficult it may be.

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Pictures may not represent actual model of MV-4.



All soldiers who decide to become specialists in any of the world's armies know better than anything that what lies ahead of them is a difficult training and constant physical and mental strains which bring them to the edge of human endurance. Such is the case with the Special Operations Battalion. Its members are trained for operations on land, at sea and in the air, in all meteorological conditions and on all terrains – in getting troupes behind enemy lines or extracting them by air, sea and land, in anti-terrorist operations, in VIP protection, in the implementation of special



THE SPECIAL OPERATIONS BATTALION

THE "GREEN BERET"

HONOUR, COMMITMENT, RESPONSIBILITY

activities in military and non-military operations... They are recognizable by their green berets. To receive a green beret is a great honour, but also a great commitment and responsibility. All who wear it are trained in accomplishing the most demanding tasks, and this in the most difficult and extreme conditions, with minimal logistical support; in other words, most often they rely only on themselves. The motto "All are called, few are chosen" truly stands for this unit. On average about 40 percent of the candidates who go through the SOB's training and selection pass. Candidates who come for the selection must undergo training for over a year at one of the CAF's units.



Survival Training

None of the activities carried out is easy. However, there is one which drives them to the edge and doesn't leave even the most experienced indifferent: survival training. Any specialist from any of the world's armies must eventually go through with it first hand. Survival training lasts about twenty days. Difficult, unfamiliar, challenging, isolated terrains, extremely high or low temperatures, poor visibility and sleeping in the open air are all just part of the obstacles with which they must be able to cope. All they carry with themselves is their personal equipment which weighs approximately twenty kilograms and which is a set of only



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CROATIAN MILITARY MAGAZINE

if they know that it's an exercise, the situation is actually very realistic. Adrenaline sees them through. They must do everything in silence, imperceptibly, without a sound, and remain alert. Water is the only thing they get every day. They receive food every third day at specific checkpoints which they must find according to the coordinates they were given. Physically, they are sufficiently prepared to withstand these strains. However, mental stability, composure, and the ability to make quick decisions are just as important as good physical conditioning. Team work. A soldier never works alone. Everyone has their consort. They mutually complete each other. Without trust and socialising no special team can function well. All members of the SOB combat unit must undergo this training and be qualified for exhaustive operations. Each year, camps with refresher trainings are organised. Weekly survivals in extreme conditions are an integral part of their regular training, which each company conducts according to its specialty. Where does the motivation come from? People come to the SOB voluntarily. The soldiers' goal is to become specialists and 90 percent of those who set that goal reach it without a problem. Those for whom this is no more than adventure fail.

Self-confidence and confidence

Besides knowledge and skills, with this training members of the SOB also gain self-confidence and confidence in the equipment they carry. Every year the training standards are raised to a higher level. Experience in international missions is gained in the



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the most essential survival tools, and, depending on the assignment they must complete, ammunition or explosives. They are in danger the whole time. Opponents are seeking them, they must hide, remain undetected, find food, water... and survive and complete the assignment. Only being allowed ten minutes of sleep at a time is what is most exhausting. They eat only what they have hunted or found themselves. This is a true test of knowledge, skill, physical fitness and mental stability. Find water, make a fire, find and trap food with the help of bait... Only the poisonous mushrooms are inedible. When they find themselves in that kind of situation, either they adapt or they don't. Even



training; so is knowledge from the many joint-training activities which are conducted with allied troupes from armed forces from other countries. When asked how members of his unit manage to withstand all those strains, Commander of the SOB Colonel Nikola Zupanic answered that all SOB members must be extremely well physically prepared. They pay much attention to this in the unit. Work on their physical conditioning is part of their everyday life. People are pushed to their physical limits, according to the commander of one of the most unique units of the CAF, because this brings on the mental stability which is necessary for the completion of all assignments.



AT THE SERVICE OF THOSE

Helping the civilian population in case of various natural or other types of disasters is one of the CAF's tasks during times of peace. There are various forms of civil-military cooperation, and one of those is the medical transport of the sick and injured. The aim of this activity is to ensure residents and tourists on our islands adequate medical care that is delivered as fast as possible. The rapid response forces for the medical transport of the sick and injured are a part of the composition of the Transport Helicopter Squadron of the Air Force and Air Defence, which is located near the largest Dalmatian city, Split. The helicopters that are used for transport and its personnel are on duty 24 hours a day. During the summer tourist season, an emergency medical team from the Split Hospital that is dedicated to interventions is also on duty with them. The greatest number of interventions takes place in the mid-Dalmatian islands. Four or more medical flights take place daily. The Squadron performs the secondary medical helicopter sanitary transport of the sick and injured who have already received primary care from medical officials on the islands. Each flight is specific. The number of assignments

The helicopters that are used for transport and its personnel are on duty 24 hours a day. During the summer tourist season, an emergency medical team from the Split Hospital that is dedicated to interventions is also on duty with them

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and activities throughout the day can not be planned, but at any given moment what the crew does have control over is the readiness of its members and its techniques. Every day, the validity of the techniques and the crew's health status is checked. Island doctors send requests for medical transport via the 112 Centre. The Centre then calls the Squadron's Operative Centre in order to inform them of the medical flight and to give them time to prepare themselves. Parallel to that, the 122 Centre sends a request for a medical flight to the CAF's Operative Command Centre which issues orders for a specific assignment. Extremely quick action is taken in every assignment that Transport Helicopter Squadron forces are involved in. Although the regulation book prescribes that the crew must take-off within a half hour during the day and within one hour during the night, in practice take-off occurs much sooner. From the time they receive the call and all the necessary approvals to when they take-off, in regular meteorological conditions, about ten to fifteen minutes usually pass. There is no improvising, though there are rapid changes, which is something they all are used to.



In the first eight months of this year, the Squadron had 820 medical transport flights. 302 people were transported and 195,25 flight hours were accumulated. There were 13 search and rescue flights that accumulated 6,10 flight hours and saved 20 people

CROATIAN MILITARY MAGAZINE



IN NEED 24 HOURS A DAY

A calling, not a job

The Squadron's pilots and technicians like to say that what they have is a calling, not a job. These are experienced people who love their work and above all are proud of the fact that in carrying out their daily duties they help other people. The most stressful period is the time they receive the call for an intervention to the take-off itself. It is up to them to arrive to their destination as quickly as possible, without ever putting anyone's safety in jeopardy. Even though these are all experienced top professionals, they can not always completely keep their emotions in check; transporting sick children is what is most difficult for them. There are many things they must pay attention to in order to carry out their assignments carefully. Most often, they land on small heliports and not airports. The technicians keep an eye on what is happening in the cargo cabin, and ensure the area around the helicopter during take-offs and landings. The manoeuvring areas are usually crowded; sometimes there are a number medical vehicles, medical staff, patients and family members in the area. The

Besides medical transport, the staff from the Transport Helicopter Squadron is also trained in search and rescue activities on rugged terrain. The Squadron also participates in fire-fighting activities, that is, in fire-extinguishing, in transporting fire-fighters to the fire site, in transporting various loads and the like

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staff must always bear in mind that a person that is in emotional shock can react unpredictably.

Search and rescue

Besides medical transport, the staff from the Transport Helicopter Squadron is also trained in search and rescue activities on rugged terrain. These activities are particularly frequent in mountainous regions when nature lovers, lead by their adventurous spirits, put themselves in life-threatening situations. In all activities, but especially in search and rescue activities, it is important that the helicopter crew work as a team.

These are just some of the Transport Helicopter's Squadron tasks, but there are also other tasks which the Squadron carries out in aid of the civilian population. The Squadron also participates in fire-fighting activities, that is, in fire-extinguishing, in transporting fire-fighters to the fire site, in transporting various loads and the like. This is a complex and stressful job, but with it comes the satisfaction of knowing that you have participated in saving someone's life, and that is priceless.



THE CROATIAN ARMY AND CROATIAN SOCIETY

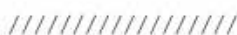
The damage caused from this year's flood is great, but, with their contribution, CAF members have made sure that the result was not worse than it could have been. The army fortifies dams, repairs landslides, evacuates the most vulnerable segments of the population and provides them with basic provisions, organises emergency medical transportation...



ARMY PROTECTS

The primary and most important task of the Republic of Croatia's Armed Forces is the defence of its territory and of its population. Circumstances, i.e. the natural disasters that have hit our country twice this year, forced the Army to leave its barracks and go out and defend Croatia against an atypical opponent – floods. The torrential rains that hit Croatia in late May, early June and mid-September of this year caused soils to saturate and riverbeds to spill. The consequences are clear: damage to homes and fields, difficulties with roads, dangerous landslides... In the spring, the region of Slavonia was most affected by the floods (the area around the city of Slavonski Brod in western Sla-

It is important to note that the Armed Forces do not play a decisive role in flood control strategy; other government agencies are more crucial in this area



vonja and the Baranja province in the east of the country) and in the fall it was central Croatia and Istria. In both cases, Defence Minister Branko Vukelic made the decision to send CAF's Task Forces out on the field. The implementation of flood control is usually under the jurisdiction of the Croatian Ground Army Command, which is formed by Task Forces, namely by members of two Guard Brigades and the Engineer Regiment. Soldiers are equipped with the appropriate engineering devices and with boats. Simply put, the CAF was efficient: on the terrain, the army was excellently coordinated with civilian structures, through a joint headquarters for flood protection. Also involved



Domagoj Vlahović, photos by Josip Kopi



In the spring, the region of Slavonia was most affected by the floods (the area around the city of Slavonski Brod in western Slavonia and the Baranja province in the east of the country) and in the fall it was central Croatia and Istria. In both cases, the CAF's Task Forces were sent out on the field

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The effectiveness of CAF members is best illustrated in the springtime story of the people who in one shift on the Orljava River near Slavonski Brod filled and placed 20 000 sandbags! Theirs is a difficult job, but "we carry out our missions, and will not talk about our individual efforts" is a typical comment for soldiers and their commanders.

Military coordination and sternness, which are at the forefront in such situations, immediately bring optimism to the segments of the population which face danger. "The Army helps us commendably," "we are working together and get along great," "their presence means a lot to us," "we were bent out of shape, the Army arrived at the right moment" ... Those were just some of the locals' comments that support the claims that were made. It is true, in these moments locals and soldiers work together, one moment they are shoveling sand into bags and the next they are riding a military vehicle or a regular tractor, all in the aim of protecting some of the houses from the upcoming water. The damage caused from this year's flood is great, but, with their contribution, CAF members have made sure that the result was not worse than it could have been. Without diminishing the impact and contribution of all other people, we dare say the CAF's role was key. Some may say that the military had no place in this type of work. But the reply to this is simple: the knowledge, professionalism, level of training and level of equipment of the CAF were all of a great help to the segments of the population which were in danger. This work fulfils one of the key tasks of the military. This was confirmed by Minister of Defence Branko Vukelic during a tour of the affected areas near Zagreb. "The Army is always here; it defends and rushes to help whenever necessary. This is what is expected from the Army and this is what the Army will always deliver," concluded the Minister.

FLOODED AREAS

were county, city and municipality representatives, members from the State Administration for Protection and Rescue, police officers and Croatian Waters representatives... It is important to note that the Armed Forces do not play a decisive role in flood control strategy; other government agencies are more crucial in this area. The CAF only come in when they are called by other civil authorities, but work done on the field in difficult situations is often performed by people in camouflage. The army fortifies dams, repairs landslides, evacuates the most vulnerable segments of the population and provides it with basic provisions, organises emergency medical transportation...

"The Army is always here; it defends and rushes to help whenever necessary. This is what is expected from the Army and this is what the Army will always deliver," concluded the Minister

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The Zugaj brothers, officers in the CAF, have been with the Croatian Armed Forces since September of 2007. The two wrestlers, otherwise members of the Lika club out of Zagreb, are among the best wrestlers in the world in their categories. They have won medals in European, World and Mediterranean games...

THE CROATIAN ARMY

Domagoj Vlahović, photos by Davor Kirin



CROATIAN MILITARY ATHLETES

CAF LIEUTENANTS AND WORLD-CLASS

At the beginning of September Nenad Zugaj came back to Zagreb from Moscow, where he had won the bronze medal in the World Wrestling Championships in the Greco-roman style in the up to 84 kilogram category. An impressive welcome awaited him at the airport in Zagreb. It was well deserved! Nenad won the first world medal for Croatia since it had become an independent country. However, although the wrestler with a medal around his neck was the one in the centre of attention that day, all who know a little bit about wrestling and about his brother Neven, who had also landed from the Russian capital where he had reached a very good eighth

All sports lovers in the CAF enthusiastically saluted the successes of the officer-twins

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place, understood that the medals were also a success for Neven. The Zugaj brothers are twins, born in 1983, and Nenad is the elder by only three minutes. Together they attended and graduated from the same elementary and high schools, as well as from the Faculty of Kinesiology in Zagreb. In their native Brezovica near Zagreb they began to train wrestling together and became the best Croatian wrestlers of the past two decades, both being decorated with numerous medals. Furthermore, the Zugaj brothers are CAF officers, lieutenants employed in the Personnel Management Centre, and have been with the CAF since September of 2007.



The first major successes at the World Military Championships

Although a job and a top-level career in sports do not normally go hand in hand, it is as though the CAF helped them both in their sport careers. However, it would not be fair to not mention their success prior to their adorning uniforms. There is not enough room to mention all the Croatian titles the two carry, but the most impressive is Neven's bronze medal from the European Championships in 2005. The brothers' first great success as officers came in 2008 during the World Military Championships that were held in Solin, a small Croatian town near Split. This was a competition whose competitors and reputation measured up to the greatest "civilian" wrestling events. This ancient sport was always closely tied to the military, and even today many top wrestlers are members of armed forces or police units from their respective countries. On their home mats, Neven had then won the gold and Nenad the bronze medal. All sports lovers in the CAF enthusiastically saluted the successes of the officer-twins. Croatian military sport had not recorded better results at an

One thing is for sure, and that is that Neven and Nenad Zugaj are still looking ahead. Along with wrestling, they want to further develop their military careers

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military-applicable sports, but also people who are diligent, disciplined and have orderly lifestyle. But the benefit is mutual, and Neven and Nenad know fellow wrestlers who are interested in the military calling. "If you are sacrificing your job or your education because of your career in sports, you risk having your entire existence ruined by one injury or by poor results," say the Zugajs. And we mustn't forget that you can not make a living sports that are tied to the army they way you could with football, basketball or handball. A greater number of top athletes and their influence in training processes in the CAF would most certainly heighten the physical and combat readiness as well as the general health conditions of Croatian soldiers, and it would also popularize military-sports competitions. They are superb wrestlers, as well as superb officers.

Among the best wrestlers in the world

The two wrestlers, otherwise members of the Lika club out of Zagreb, are among the best wrestlers in the world in their categories. They have won medals in European, World and Mediterranean games (gold for Nenad and bronze for Neven in 2009 in Pescara in Italy). What is missing? The Olympics, of course. Neven and Nenad have never been residents in the Olympic Village. This was due to injuries, but also to the fact that the competition is enormous. Qualifying for the Olympics is more difficult than winning a medal. Not even Nenad, a World bronze medallist, is definitely destined for London in 2012.

"EVERY OFFICER MUST CONTINUOUSLY RENEW HIS EDUCATION, KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS. IT IS LIKE TRAINING WRESTLING – THE MORE YOU TRAIN, THE BETTER THE RESULTS," AGREE THE TWINS

WRESTLERS

international level since the World Military Games that were held in Zagreb 1999. The Brezovica natives' medals were then marked as a "sports milestone in the CAF". Simply put, the army needs athletes and athletes need the army. "The advantage is that you can do your job normally and have commanders who value athletes, our efforts and successes, and that are understanding in terms of our trainings and competitions," claim the brothers. They know that this is also the case in other armies in the world and as well as in those from NATO. An army with top athletes also gets quality people, not only people who are physically well-prepared and skilled in martial arts and other



Nevertheless, it seems, at least for the time being, that the Zugajs are not worried about this, as qualifications only begin next year. Their heads are completely clear and they are only thinking about the present, "from fight to fight, competition to competition". Which is the right approach to take. But one thing is for sure, and that is that Neven and Nenad Zugaj are still looking ahead. Along with wrestling, they want to further develop their military careers. "Every officer must continuously renew his education, knowledge and skills. It is like training wrestling – the more you train, the better the results," agree the twins.



STORM

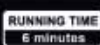
THE MILITARY OPERATION

STORM - THE MILITARY OPERATION



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Producer: MINISTRY OF DEFENCE OF THE REPUBLIC OF CROATIA
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5 MINUTES
FOR MEMORY

PROJECTS that WE ARE PROUD of...

For a number of years already, the Department of Croatian Military Press has been involved in video production in the aims of promoting its Armed Forces. So far it has released dozens of promotional films on a wide range of activities in the Armed Forces as well on the Forces' participation in international missions, and has made several short videos about the Croatian Armed Forces.

For a few years now our films have been receiving awards at the International Military Film Festival in Bracciano, Italy. A film

which we are particularly proud of is the five-minute long "Military Operation Storm", which has won a special jury's prize in the "History" category.

"Military Operation Storm" is a short historical overview of one of the CAF's largest and most important military operations of the Homeland War, which released territories in the Republic of Croatia that had previously been under occupation. The film was released in honour of the 15th Anniversary of Military Operation Storm.

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Views expressed in this Magazine are not necessarily those of the Ministry of Defense.



With our various programmes, we at Werkos respond to the needs of the broad community. Our innovations are the result of our experience and our commitment to field-testing. Our products have earned us the image of a recognisable company specialized in engineering and in a range of specific products. The Mobile Units for Military and Civil Purpose Programme includes the equipment for the needs of the domestic market, yet it also shows our global orientation and our commitment to respond to increasing challenges of the unpredictable powers of nature - not to harness them, but to protect ourselves against them or to adjust to them. Mounting and assembly of Mobile Units is easy, quick and simple. The equipment including the lining, the cabin and the floor enables the usability of the tent even in some extreme situations, such as for medical corps and decontamination purposes. Spacious and airy, the tent can take in a large number of people (depending on its size): the wounded, the sick and the isolated. It is also suitable for safe storage of various types of goods.



M-01-W

TENT M-01-W is a tent type most frequently used to accommodate a small number of people for the following purposes: military, civil protection, the Red-Cross, fire department and scouts.

- material: cotton
- structure: aluminium pipes and joints
- width: 3 m
- length: 2.5 m
- crown height: 2.5 m
- lateral side height: 1.7 m
- floor surface: 7.5 m²
- accommodation for: 3 beds



BOX BARRIER

Box Barrier is a foldable mesh structure, made of heavy galvanized, double-braided wire. The internal structure is lined with geotextile, and has no bottom or lid. It can be filled with any available material: gravel, sand, soil.

Dimension of the Box Barrier are:

- Width: 1 m
- Length: 3-5 m
- Height: 1 m

• TENTS AND TENT EQUIPMENT • FOLD-UP BED • SYSTEMS FOR QUICK CONSTRUCTION OF MILITARY FORTS



tent for H.Q.



warehouse tent

V-01-W

TENT V-01-W is a general name for the tent type which, when combined with certain components, can be used as follows:

- For H.Q. (military) use : 28 m²
- As warehouse tent: 70 m²
- For medical use (it has lining and a floor): 70 m²
- For decontamination (it has a cabin, and can have a floor as well): 84 m²
- For kitchen (trailer): 14 m²

- material: cotton
- structure: aluminium pipes and joints
- width: 5.6 m
- length: 2.5 m
- crown height: 2.8 m
- lateral side height: 1.8 m
- floor surface: 14 m²
- accommodation for: 6 beds

* Dimensions refer to one tent section



FOLD-UP BED L-04-W

What seems to be an ordinary bag, easily turns into a comfortable foldable bed that is easy to transport or carry. The bed is delivered in a bag provided with a zipper and synthetic strap for carrying.

FOLD-UP BED L-04-W

In 2004 Werkos has been awarded the NCAGE code A009B (NATO Commercial and Government Entity Code) and the NATO Stock numbers (NSN) for Small Tent and Large Tent products, including all respective spare parts. The Codification into the NATO system is a proof of high quality and significance of the Werkos Mobile Units programme and of our recognisability in military and civil practice, on both domestic and foreign markets. FEEL FREE TO CONTACT US AND ASK FOR MOBILE UNITS BROCHURE...

100% CROATIAN INNOVATIVE PRODUCT - UNIFORM OF THE CROATIAN SOLDIER

OSRH

HAT

Additional breathability with size microregulation and embroidered tag.
Development and production:
MORH and Sešir d.o.o. Zagreb

DIGITALLY PRINTED CAMOUFLAGE PATTERN

Digitally printed pattern consisting of four components has a recognisable geographical presentation of Croatia and the watermark with the OSHR inscription.

Colours remain fast even after a substantial number of washes with reduced visibility under IC night vision devices.

The uniform does not reflect light and the pattern ensures good camouflage in all conditions.

Front side of the shirt: basis for rank and surname labels.

FABRIC

The uniform is made of a special fabric with the compositions polyamide fibre/cotton ensuring highly technical properties and comfort for the wearer. The polyamide fibre with the registered name CORDURA® is the best solution with a proven high fibre strength. The fabric is made in the form of the specific top ribs embroidery and printed with high-quality colours.
Producer: Cateks d.d.

SHIRT

The shirt has a specific military standard zip fastener. From the outside the zip fastener is covered with a Velcro strip.

The lower part of the shirt presents no pockets in order to allow the use of a belt with equipment.

TROUSERS

Regular fit medium waist trousers, comfortable and elegant with reinforced hems and seams. Specially developed and adapted women's fit. Two pockets on the upper front side. Reinforcements on the backside and the crotch area. Large lateral pockets on both legs with the possibility to increase their volume, with a zip fastener and a Velcro cover. Pockets for the insertion of knee-pads in the knee area. Strap ankle adjuster on the lower part.
Development and production:
MORH and Kroko International d.o.o., Zagreb.

SHIRT

Modulated collar with the possibility to adjust the opening.

Sleeves: basis for the flag, formation or mission indication tag.

Square pockets on both sleeves, with zip fasteners and a pen pocket.

Armed forces indication tag

Air vets under armpits

Inclined pocket in the breast area with Velcro fastening

Pockets for the insertion of elbow and forearm pads

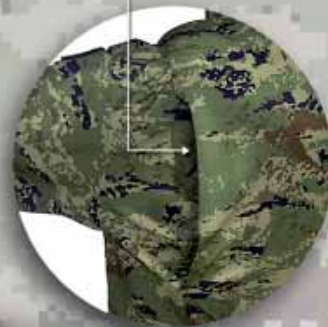
Velcro strap wrist adjuster

Shirt structure: with slightly slim waistline following the body contours, which is important for a more uniform rank-closing. Provides excellent mobility, breathable and comfortable.

The cut of the shirt is in accordance with the remaining parts of the uniform and equipment. The shirt presents no buttons, which may behave as bullets in case of a trauma transfer from the protection vest.

Development and production:
MORH and Kroko International d.o.o. Zagreb

Backside of the shirt: with a large hem for more comfort and free mobility in every body position.



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