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The Baltic Amber  
Multinational Corps Northeast Magazine



## ISAF 10/1

Mission preparation process  
MNC NE on the mission  
Lessons learned

Editor-in-Chief  
Lieutenant Colonel Wojciech  
Wiśniewski

## road to Afghanistan

“Mission preparation process” sounds proudly and seriously. It hides mystery and the unknown: will I be able to cope? Will my preparations be sufficient for what I will face in theatre? Will my job be exactly as I have thought? Each soldier tries to answer these questions before going on mission. Each soldier wants to prove high capabilities and expertise. Each soldier wants to be irreplaceable and unique.

The mission preparation process for the staff of the Multinational Corps Northeast (MNC NE) took several months. Similarly to the case of the first deployment to Afghanistan, they were planned to man positions in new structures of the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) in Afghanistan. Again, they had to cope with several challenges, devour countless documents,



articles and books and learn as much as possible about their future jobs and Afghanistan itself. But this is what a soldier’s life looks like – to be on mission, come back, share what he or she has learned and then learn even more to go back on the mission again.

This issue of the Baltic Amber Magazine shows the mission preparation process of the MNC NE staff along with major training events. It also presents how the MNC NE personnel coped with the mission reality in Afghanistan and what their tasks really were, not to forget gained knowledge and mission experiences that for sure will not vanish away. This Baltic Amber will give you, the Reader, a little bit of insight into the upmost soldier’s task: service in theatre, with all the issues involved.



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 Road to Afghanistan

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*The name Baltic Amber is derived from  
 the natural resin amber that can be found  
 on the beaches of the Baltic Sea close  
 to Szczecin. It is well known in Poland,  
 the host country of the Headquarters  
 Multinational Corps Northeast.*

*Opinions expressed in The Baltic Amber  
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Photo by: Marian Cihon

# from afghanistan to afghanistan



Written by: Anna Galyga

Some say you should avoid entering the same river twice. Surprisingly enough, it is easier to enter that river for the first time rather than to come there back with at least the same level of competence. Therefore, just like in 2007, the 2010 mission in Afghanistan sets for the personnel of the Multinational Corps Northeast a vast array of challenges.



As soon as the last serviceman left the mission area in 2007, the Corps shifted into “between-the-mission” stage, during which the main focus was placed on maintaining and developing the Corps’ capabilities and structures as well as systemizing so-called lessons learned, all valuable experiences and conclusions drew during the preparation process and the mission for future use of other units and the Corps itself.

In 2008, several months after the successful redeployment, when everybody was thinking rather of the previous than the next mission, **Major Ole Reith**, an officer responsible for a mission preparation process in the Headquarters, took part in the planning conference held in Norway. The NATO Rapid Deployable Corps–Italy was preparing for its deployment to Afghanistan and shared ideas with sister headquarters. It was the first hint for directing the MNC NE’s attention to the subsequent mission.

Afterwards, there was a series of meetings conducted between representatives of the Szczecin Headquarters and Joint Force Command Brunssum, the higher NATO command bearing the overall responsibility for the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF)

mission. *“We received so-called training specifications, a document of approximately 140 pages,”* recalled Major Reith and explained it defined the end state of the whole mission preparation process and the knowledge an officer and a non-commissioned officer should possess.

Even though the Joint Force Command Brunssum sets goals, there are always two main players who make sure these goals are achieved – the Headquarters that prepares for a mission and the Joint Warfare Centre in Stavanger, Norway, where the final exercise takes place.

### Walking the paved path

*“Our last mission preparation process proved to be effective and efficient and it was taken by NATO as a kind of blueprint for mission preparations for other corps,”* proudly stated former MNC NE Chief of Staff, **Brigadier General Josef Heinrichs**. Indeed, the Joint Warfare Centre found the overall training schedule the MNC NE personnel underwent in 2006 good enough to introduce it into their training plans. *“That is why we can recognize a lot of things we did in 2006,”* said Major Ole Reith. Obviously, there have also been several amendments and enhancements to the schedule, one of them being e.g. the introduction of computer-based Advanced Distributed Learning.

### A line of progress

Despite having encountered several typologies of a mission preparation process, let us quote Major Ole Reith, who identified three main phases within the process. First: individual training conducted by the Headquarters and in the Headquarters. Second: Mission Rehearsal Training and Exercise held at the Joint Warfare Centre in Stavanger. And, finally, the third one: handover-takeover phase in theatre.

The first stage was the most extended and it encompassed e.g. medical check-up, physical training and acquiring knowledge needed for a given post. Every person was obliged to read certain documents common for ISAF and pass the pre-deployment course (Advanced Distributed Learning), train within their functional area and get familiarized with Standing Operating Procedures and Instructions assigned to given posts (individual process including Functional Area Training 1 [FAT 1]) to finally learn to use the knowledge in context and interact with people from other branches (FAT Eagle exercise). These preparations were also complemented with several Mission Preparation Lectures, not to mention specific courses or key leaders’ training. All these elements were still labelled as “individual” because they focused on personal development even if they resulted from a group work.

As the ISAF jobs ceased to be completely unfamiliar and the personnel started to feel more comfortable with their future tasks, the time for the second phase came. Closely replicated ISAF procedures and working environment at the Joint Warfare Centre in Norway made the Mission Rehearsal Training and Exercise an excellent opportunity for servicemen to work and release products as if they were in Afghanistan.

Having used real ISAF data during the Mission Rehearsal Exercise, it was still a scripted training event, therefore, the third phase of the preparations taking place right in theatre is considered by some the most important. Needless to say, if one element of the whole preparation puzzle were missing, the third phase would inevitably flounder.

National training is another point to add. Conducted in parallel to the Headquarters’ training schedule, it complemented the training offered to every officer and non-commissioned officer.

# two Eagles

**FAT stands for Functional Area Training.** These three words mean a lot to those who will eventually do the job within a given branch or cell (or functional area, if to use this apt expression). It is like being thrown into water without being taught how to swim. You either manage to grasp yourself how to swim, or not... To avoid such an analogy in the military context, all servicemen preparing for the ISAF mission learn as much as possible about the assigned functional area so that when they finally arrive in theatre, they can feel a strong swimmer.



Written by: Anna Gatyga

## FAT facts

The main idea of the Functional Area Training 1 (FAT 1) conducted from 19th to 23rd October 2009 was to systemize the knowledge of basic documents as well as to ensure the understanding of the ISAF structure and the role each person within a given functional area has to play. After individual exploring of basic mission-related documents, Standing Operating Procedures and Instructions, there were discussions in narrow circles, and, again, a lot of reading. This time, the appointed chiefs of different functional areas made sure everybody was on the right track. A part of the Functional Area Training 1 was a set of briefings on, for instance, the ISAF Operational Plan or the Commander ISAF's Tactical Directive, in other words, on topics affecting all servicemen in Afghanistan.

## From FAT to Eagle

*“There are always some documents attached to a post in ISAF, so you sit together with people within your functional area, you read and discuss them. Now you have an idea what your job in ISAF would be. Then you implement your knowledge into given contexts, working with the others who have been doing exactly the same within their own areas”* – **Major Ole Reith**, Danish Army, said about the transition from FAT 1 to FAT Eagle. It was the first time in the process when tasks were solved across functional teams. *“It was not about concentrating on your own functional area but integrating different competences to make solutions as comprehensive as possible”*, noticed **Brigadier General Josef Heinrichs**, who acted as Chief of Directing Staff during the FAT Eagle exercise.

FAT Eagle held in Baltic Barracks from 2nd to 9th November 2009 was in fact the biggest training event organised by the Headquarters within the whole mission preparation process.

**Lieutenant Colonel Maciej Galazka**, Polish Army, responsible for its planning, explained there were two overall aims set for the exercise: to gain necessary knowledge about the mission in Afghanistan and procedures used at the ISAF Headquarters and ISAF Joint Command as well as to build team relations. Moreover, every serviceman was expected to learn about interactions between different cells and branches at all levels.

Contrary to its equivalent from the previous mission preparation process, this FAT Eagle exercise was completely reshaped. It was based on work in ten syndicate groups, each of them consisting of representatives of different

functional areas, and reinforced by Subject Matter Experts from the HQ MNC NE and the NATO Rapid Deployable Corps-Italy – **Lieutenant Colonel Pietro Caporello** and **Major Alfons Cascioni**. As a result, the main focus was placed on sharing information rather than checking procedures. This kind of training goes very much in line with the current organisation of work within the ISAF Joint Command, where cross-functional teams have been created to approach mission tasks on a permanent basis.

Even though the training audience was divided into syndicates, the pace of work was managed by elements typical of any other exercises, such as Directing Staff or Exercise Centre. Each syndicate was given a number of problems, in other words vignettes, to solve. They all referred to the actual situation in Afghanistan. The presence of experts from different areas steered discussions in quest for possible solutions. What is important, it was not about finding the right solution or creating a final product; it was all about sharing experiences and comparing different approaches to a task. *“Each serviceman could learn about possibilities of other functional areas to get to know from whom, in what time and what kind of information he can get to solve his task,”* summarized Lieutenant Colonel Maciej Gałazka.

Only then, an officer or non-commissioned officer would be able to create a final product effectively and in due time.

In spite of the fact that there was no final product released at the end of the exercise, like an order or operational plan, each syndicate was obliged to prepare a report on their findings to share them with members from other syndicates. Even though there was no replication of command posts or troops maneuvering or even typical of other exercises use of computers, all participants seemed to enjoy the syndicate organisation of the FAT Eagle. One of the Subject Matter Experts, Lieutenant Colonel Pietro

Caporello from the NATO Rapid Deployable Corps-Italy said he was used to this type of training, too. He also explained the overall focus on staff work within the whole mission preparation process: *“Keep in mind that we are not an infantry battalion or special forces unit; we are staff and our main task is to support the Commander. Our weapons or tools are not pistols or rifles – they are only for our self-defence in case of emergency; our first tools are letters, papers, memorandums and maybe power-point presentations. And if you are able to transform your ideas and recommendations through these documents, you achieve your mission.”*



Photo by: Marian Chion

# two sides of the coin



Two Generals, two approaches and one mission – to provide best possible training opportunities for the audience.

## Sirs, what are your functions during the FAT Eagle exercise?

### Major General Ole Køppen:

I am the Exercise Director and the Commander of the Land Component Command. As we have changed the exercise from an ordinary command post exercise with the battle rhythm into a weeklong discussion period, my function is actually one very much in the background. I have chosen to listen to what is going on and take part in back briefs. I am also the one to sum up the lessons learned. So from my perspective, it has been an easy week, which does not mean it has been less interesting to me.

### Brigadier General Josef Heinrichs:

I am the Chief of the Directing Staff. Since we are doing this exercise in the syndicate way, the main focus of our efforts is making sure that syndicates are provided with the required materials and connectivity to the respective networks. My job also comprises monitoring the work within the syndicates to identify requirements for adjustments or clarification of vignettes. Moreover, I take the back briefs and recognize areas for further training.

## What is the greatest benefit of the exercise whose training audience is mainly exchanging ideas while working in syndicates?

**MajGen Køppen:** It is actually people sitting together in relatively

small syndicates and encouraging them to participate in discussions. They are all interested in learning more to better perform their jobs in Afghanistan. It is my clear impression that this discussion-based method is much better than an ordinary exercise. Of course, to make it 150% perfect, we should have Subject Matter Experts represented in all the areas addressed in the syndicates. Nevertheless, we have been lucky enough to have officers from the NATO Rapid Deployable Corps-Italy and our own experts, so you can always go to the neighbouring syndicate and “borrow” a specialist in a given field for half an hour or so.

**BrigGen Heinrichs:** They do learn and you can see people “growing” over the time. They get a feeling of what inputs from other branches are necessary to answer specific questions, to make an order or guidance. That is why it is called cross-functional training. We have a lot of newcomers at the Headquarters who have been dealing with this kind of challenges for the first time. And those who attended the mission in Afghanistan in 2007 have a lot of experiences to share. You cannot write everything down. During this exercise I am walking around and listening to people working in syndicates, too. I always identify the need to tell them: I have this experience from our last mission and I would like to share it with you.

## What do you consider your greatest personal advantage?

**MajGen Køppen:** One thing is that I can learn more for my personal use and the other is that I can demonstrate the importance of what is going on by attending discussions and back briefs. The valuable presence of a general should not be underestimated.

**BrigGen Heinrichs:** It is learning how to avoid approaching a challenge from a single perspective. It will be especially important when we go to Stavanger and, later on, in theatre, where you will never find challenges that can only be dealt with from a single perspective. You always need a comprehensive view of a task to get the best solution possible. This integration, this cross-functional integration is a real challenge for this exercise and everyone needs to learn it.

## How would you assess the exercise?

**MajGen Køppen:** You would always be satisfied when people reach a higher level of training and acquire new skills.

**BrigGen Heinrichs:** This exercise is an important step you should not miss because it is a link between the individual training and the mission rehearsal exercise – it starts the cross-functional cooperation. I am satisfied with the progress our servicemen have been making over the last days and I am also confident that this is the right preparation for the final exercise in Stavanger.

# two sides of the coin



Two syndicate leaders, two approaches, one mission – to guide co-members of the syndicate and benefit as much as possible.

## What does it mean that you are a syndicate leader?

**Lieutenant Colonel Søren Host:** It means that I do not have all the answers. My responsibility is to make the syndicate work and discuss. I am a facilitator that hopefully brings out all the knowledge from syndicate members so that in the end we are able to deliver a briefing.

**Lieutenant Colonel Thorsten Fries:** I am responsible for the preparations and fruitful discussions within the syndicate. Secondly, of course, we have the responsibility to prepare a presentation of each vignette.

## How does your syndicate work?

**LtCol Host:** When we get a task to produce a briefing on a certain topic, we analyze it first and then we dig into the information available – the documents and also the experience of other staff members. We bring it all together, discuss some of the critical issues, and in the end we deliver a briefing for a representative from the Exercise Control pretending that we are in Afghanistan. Then we discuss what went good or wrong, and crack on the next vignette.

**LtCol Fries:** If there is someone with previous ISAF experience in our syndicate, he usually begins with giving us some background information. If not, we request some Subject Matter Experts from other

syndicates. We discuss the vignette to the extent possible and then refer to documents. Afterwards, we prepare a back brief with some recommendation or an overview of the situation.

## What kind of situations or vignettes have you dealt with?

**LtCol Host:** Right now we have been working on an event involving the Afghan National Security Forces and their possible support in clear-hold-build type of operations for one of the regional commands. Another one referred to countering Improvised Explosive Device threat.

**LtCol Fries:** For example, we have planned special operations within the borderline between two regional commands requiring a lot of coordination and Afghan involvement.

## What would you consider the greatest challenge of this exercise?

**LtCol Host:** The biggest challenge is to gain knowledge in a very short time from your syndicate members on a subject you know absolute nothing about, memorize it, get on the podium and brief about it.

**LtCol Fries:** Even though we are on the exercise, there is still some exercise-unrelated staff work to do so our minds are not 100% free. The biggest challenge for me is to keep the right balance between those two things. Besides, to conclude

a vignette with more knowledge gained.

## What is the most valuable benefit of this exercise?

**LtCol Host:** I like working in syndicates to be honest. This is a good way to easily get a lot of people involved in discussions; people share experience and knowledge in a more informal way. You as an individual are responsible for your own benefit; if you are active in discussions, you profit from it. Hopefully, we all enhance our knowledge, develop ourselves and share information about ISAF. As a syndicate leader, I also get into routine in how to analyze and solve a task.

**LtCol Fries:** I started the exercise being a little bit irritated about its organisation but now I am very happy because it translates into a considerably greater benefit for everybody than if it was a typical command post exercise. We are discussing vignettes in small groups without looking at ranks. We have the possibility to bring in our experiences and exchange information. We will all leave this FAT Eagle 2009 with better understanding of the current situation in ISAF, and our job in theatre.



Interviewed by: Anna Galyga  
Photos by: MNC NE

# ADL boxes

- The Joint Advanced Distributed Learning is NATO's response to the technological progress and possibilities that information and remote communication technologies offer.
- The Allied Command Transformation was given the leading role in establishing and promoting Advanced Distributed Learning (ADL), which would complement traditional training & education offered by NATO.
- With online and computer-based courses, NATO's eLearning of highest quality is tailored to the students' need and it is available to everybody everywhere. Everybody refers to deployees granted a password by or on behalf of the Joint Force Command Brunssum.
- Among several ADL courses available, there is a special ISAF pre-deployment course encompassing different modules a trainee can choose from, focusing on

e.g. the ISAF Headquarters, Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRT) mission, Operational Mentor and Liaison Teams mission, Regional Command South or North.

- The pre-deployment course includes 17 lessons common to the whole mission with general, unclassified information about the Afghan culture, geography and International Security Assistance Force. Additionally, there are always several more lessons attached to each module which provide more in-depth analysis of a given area of operation, e.g. the PRT mission.
- Flexibility is the key issue: a course participant can take the course in preferable time and place, spending as much time as he needs. Each lesson ends with a short test, the passing of which opens the door to the next lesson. This ensures the participant gains the required knowledge.

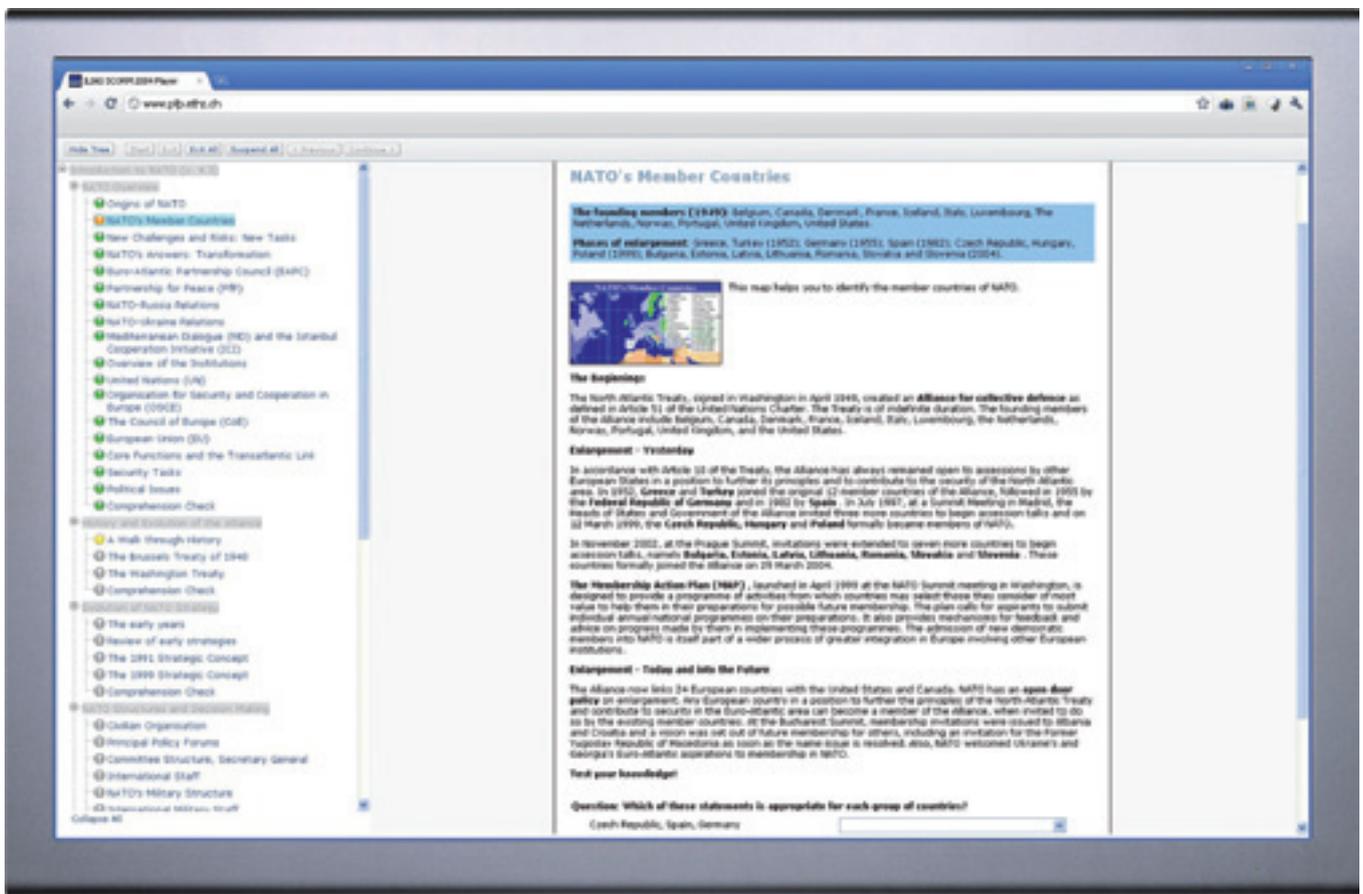
■ The progress of each student taking the ADL course can be monitored, reported and assessed. Each participant of the exercise receives also a certificate.

■ An ADL certificate is a prerequisite for attending the final element of the mission preparation process, the Mission Rehearsal Training/Exercise at the Joint Warfare Centre in Stavanger, Norway. Due to the fact that some individual augmentees do not manage to be admitted to the course, some compensatory courses need to be arranged to ensure the equal level of knowledge.

■ The Allied Command Transformation, in close cooperation with the Joint Force Command Brunssum and its subordinate commands, bears the overall responsibility for sustaining and updating the ISAF pre-deployment course. Changes rapidly occurring in theatre and identified by the Joint Force Command Brunssum are forwarded to the Allied Command Transformation to be included in the content of the course.



Expert:  
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Graphics: internet

# NATO or oil?



Written by: Anna Galyga  
Photo by: Marian Cihon  
Special thanks to: MS Raphael Baekler

Stavanger, the fourth largest city of Norway. The capital of the Norwegian oil industry and the seat of the NATO Joint Warfare Centre. For that reason you may often hear “NATO or oil?” instead of simply “What’s your job?”

It takes about 1.5 hours to get from Szczecin-Goleniów Airport to Stavanger by plane. If the weather is fine, you can see how the Polish coastline is left behind. Then, just a small nap later, you can see beautifully shaped fjords from small plane windows. Snow adds character to all those cracks and cliffs looking like wrinkles from above. It is breathtaking.

November in Stavanger, which is located on the western coast of Norway, welcomed the staff of Multinational Corps Northeast with more autumn than winter weather. With high moistness of air or even rain combined with biting wind, it was sometimes frightfully cold, though. But as some say, there is no such thing as bad weather, only bad clothing, so no-one really complained. It was Norway anyway, a country in the north. Therefore, it was a nice surprise to many that rumours about 3 hours of sun a day were highly exaggerated, at least in Stavanger.

Cosy and calm were first connotations with the city of Stavanger that have appeared. No-

one seemed to be in a hurry driving along narrow streets and round hundreds of small roundabouts. The old Stavanger with small, wooden houses and cobblestone roads was especially charming. Looking at the harbour, one regretted it was not summer. One could only imagine how busy it is with ships, yachts and ferries moored at the quay and how beautiful it is with their sails sparkling in the sun and with tourists, people selling fish, and inhabitants of Stavanger. In the distance of a short stroll the second oil museum of the world is located in a very unconventional, modern building. Stavanger is situated partly on mainland, partly on islands; consequently, several bridges are permanent features of the city’s scenery. The view stretching from them upon the city slowly getting ready to sleep is simply magnificent, especially at dusk.

Just a few kilometres from the city centre three bronze swords planted in solid rocks proudly shoot up above the bay. The monument commemorates the battle of Hafrsfjord when Fairheaded Harald united Norway into one kingdom

in 872. Since exercise participants finished their duties late in the evening, many of them saw the 10-metre high swords bathed in the moonlight, but the view was no less spectacular either.

The more you move away from city centre, the greater the appetite for exploring the Norwegian nature you have. It seems that Norway would not be a good choice for trips like “10 capitals in 3 days”. Large distances, strict speed limits and natural obstacles make it impossible to move fast from one place to another. So you have to taste it bit by bit, slowly, and with humbleness. Several roads are simply closed for winter. Famous lighthouses may completely disappear in thick fog and you have to take it for granted they are still there. The beauty of the Lysefjord, the southernmost major fjord in Norway, can also be fully admired in fine weather. It is remarkable that Norwegians do not seem to notice the harshness of nature. Their summer cottages have been built in the most inaccessible, distant places with only one possible reason for selection of the location: the splendid view.



# transformate All

The Commander of the Joint Warfare Centre (JWC) Lieutenant General Wolfgang Korte explains how servicemen deploying to ISAF get adequate mission training at the Centre and how his team contributes to the overall transformation of NATO.



Photo by: Martin O'Brien

## **The Joint Warfare Centre (JWC) is quite a unique organisation in NATO, how would you summarize its role?**

The Joint Warfare Centre is the only training organisation in NATO that trains operational level headquarters. But as part of the Allied Command Transformation (ACT) we are not only a pure training organisation. The training we do is embedded in the concept and doctrine development, like the Comprehensive Approach or Effects Based Approach to Operations (EBAO), experimentations and another very important part – lessons learned. All our lessons identified and observations are forwarded to the Joint Analysis and Lessons Learned Centre in Portugal and our higher command ACT in Norfolk. We also collect what we call the “best practices”. Since we probably have the best insight into all headquarters in NATO, we make our experiences available to all the others. And if there is a concept missing or still under development, like for example in case of EBAO, we produce handbooks and operational guidelines for the use of other headquarters.

## **Can you give us some examples of experiments conducted by JWC?**

We do experiments once or twice a year. It is almost as big as an exercise and it requires a lot of preparations and the involvement of external experts. For example, on behalf of ACT, we did an experiment on knowledge development. That is a big issue in NATO because along with the Comprehensive Approach we need to have more detailed information on the whole

environment, not only on the military side of operations. How to collect information? How to analyze it and find out what is important to the military? How to store it and make it available to others? That is a huge management task and we have tested that in our experiment.

Another experiment was on counter Improvised Explosive Device (IED), which is a big concern to all NATO troops on operations. There are a lot of ideas for preventing an explosion or a terrorist attack. The experiment resulted in a report sent to ACT. We also produced a handbook on counter IED telling other headquarters what we have learnt by now and what is being introduced by others.

## **Which experiments conducted by JWC have been put into life?**

As long as I have been here, all experimentations have been related to still ongoing operations. But the new structure which is now being introduced in NATO at the Joint Force Command level is the result of the experiment made by JWC.

## **Where does JWC take ideas from to conduct such experiments?**

We do not develop concepts ourselves, it is being done with our support either at ACT if it is a transformational issue or at Allied Command Operations when it comes to forces and force planning. When the first theoretical concept is created, there are different possibilities to check if that might work: you can model a simulation in battle labs or you can do an experiment if the concept is well developed.

## **Sir, during your military career you were the Commander of the 14th Division in Germany that was affiliated to MNC NE; what were your relations to the Corps like?**

I have actually had very good relations to the Multinational Corps Northeast. During my time as Division Commander I was in regular contact with the Corps and participated in a lot of exercises and conferences. It was my first experience with multinationality at all because it had been before I went to KFOR and ISAF. I appreciate that experience very much. I was invited for the 10th Anniversary of the Multinational Corps Northeast in 2009 and met a lot of friends. Unfortunately, the rotation is very fast so when you come after some time, you hardly know anyone. But General Korff, a good friend of mine, is the commanding general now so I wish to show up in Szczecin more often.

## **From your perspective as the JWC Commander, how much is NATO evolving?**

A lot, actually. You see transformation in almost all areas; the biggest one probably being based on the strategic concept of Comprehensive Approach, recognizing that the military is not the problem solver and we have to cooperate more closely with non-military actors. In parallel to developing this concept at the strategic, operational and tactical levels, we are changing the structure and procedures. We have just developed a completely new comprehensive operational planning directive focusing on a broader perspective of Comprehensive Approach, taking into consideration contributions of the non-military side – nations, non-military, international and non-governmental organisations. That is more or less a revolution within the NATO doctrine and concept, and it will take some time until we have rearranged and restructured everything to fully implement this concept. You only need to go to Afghanistan to see the new strategic headquarters focusing “up and out” to nations, governments, organisations and the more battlefield oriented tactical headquarters. This is clearly a result of this new thinking.

## **How about the Joint Warfare Centre, is it also changing?**

Our new training and exercise building at Jättå is going to be state of the art in terms of technique, modulation and simulation and Communication Information Systems where we will be able to host a big training audience in one building. But this will not change our mission. Actually, we would like to make use of both: the new building with all its possibilities at Jättå and the training facility at Ulsnes when it comes to more expeditionary type of training.

We are facing a new Peace Establishment structure, unfortunately, when it comes to manning, it is always less and goes down from 280 to 256. That means

we will have to restructure our processes and procedures because we will not be able to do the same amount of tasks. And when we do an exercise like this, about 70 to 80% of our personnel are actively involved. We cannot share the burden: this part is doing NATO Response Force training, that one ISAF training, another – concept development or experimentation. We need them all as subject matter experts, as trainers and even to draw lessons learned so it will be a real challenge.

## **What other developments are you planning?**

When I took command of JWC, my predecessor told me that the following year would be a transformation year. And since I have been here, I had only transformation years. Training requirements change with request for more comprehensive training on the operational and tactical level with the same intensity. And we always have to explain that we train the jointness. ISAF is a good example. As soon as ISAF has changed its structure, we have to train two headquarters in parallel. We try to develop some kind of two-tier exercise to train two headquarters and provide the scenario and environment to make them interact.

## **What do you expect soldiers taking part in ISAF training to benefit from most?**

We want them to feel comfortable when they deploy to ISAF. The feedback from the 1st German-Netherlands Corps that participated in the exercise last time was that they had no problems in finding their place in ISAF. It is because we try to copy the reality of ISAF headquarters as closely as possible. If you work in the Combined Joint Operations Centre (CJOC) here, it is almost designed like CJOC in ISAF Joint Command Headquarters. You know exactly what your mission is going to be and who you have to talk to. When you switch on the computer in Stavanger you see the same information in the same layout like in ISAF. This kind of feeling

provides confidence and trust in your own performance because it is not all new to you. Team building is clearly the most important point. This is much more that you can achieve by just providing procedures. Multinational Corps Northeast has obviously done an excellent job in preparing soldiers for this exercise and for ISAF. They already have a high standard in what they are doing so it is just to integrate the individual augmentees and do some kind of team building so that they feel comfortable with whoever is around.

## **And talking about your function during this exercise – what does it encompass?**

The Officer Scheduling the Exercise, who is the Commander Joint Force Command Brunssum, sets up the exercise and provides exercise and training objectives. The task of my team and me as the Officer Directing the Exercise is to transform these training objectives into real work. I take care that Exercise Control provides the environment, Computer Assisted Exercise support, Communication Information Systems, the opposing forces etc. On the other side there are trainers and Subject Matter Experts in specific areas who interact directly with the Training Audience. They are all under the command of the Officer Directing the Exercise. I also make sure that the training and exercise objectives are achieved in the end.

## **Is there anything you would like to say to the Training Audience who is almost in the middle of the exercise?**

I always say to the Training Audience that this is not about testing, evaluating or checking on you. This is about getting you ready as best as possible for what you have to do when you deploy to ISAF. This is an ideal place to make mistakes because you can learn from them and it is not hurting anybody. At the end you, hopefully, will have an idea what needs to be done when you join the team in ISAF.



General interviewed in December 2009 by: Anna Galyga



On behest of the Allied Command Transformation, Joint Warfare Centre (JWC) trains NATO forces for military missions and conducts joint and combined experimentation and doctrine development to ensure NATO's interoperability and capability enhancement. It is the only place in NATO where officers and non-commissioned officers train for posts at both ISAF Headquarters and ISAF Joint Command. Apart from biannual ISAF pre-deployment training, the Centre conducts NATO Response Force/Combined Joint Task Force exercises for NATO operational commands, Iraqi Key Leader Training to Iraqi Security Forces as well as experiments, computer assisted exercises and research developmental work on new technologies, Modelling and Simulation and capabilities of Communication Information Systems.

The Centre was founded in 2003 and achieved Full Operational Capability 3 years later. 22 NATO nations and 3 member states of the Partnership for Peace Programme contribute to the Centre promoting NATO's widespread development.

### Jåttå – Ulsnes – Madla

The JWC Headquarters is located at Jåttå in Stavanger but training events are conducted at the interim training facility at Ulsnes on Hundvåg Island until the new complex at Jåttå is completed. Ulsnes used to be a Norwegian naval base, as Lieutenant Colonel Bjarne Korsgaard from JWC explained. During World War II, Wehrmacht occupied the base and fortified it with a number of bunkers. The stronghold was part of the naval fortress system in Lysefjord the aim of which was to defend the area against an attack from the sea. After the war, the Norwegian Navy administered the area until it was rented to the Joint Warfare Centre.

Most buildings at Ulsnes are named after the purposes they served in the past. For instance, the Boathouse was really a boathouse where boats were painted or fixed. But it used to be longer and bigger. The School Building was the place where new navy recruits were trained. Many buildings at Ulsnes were built by Germans, like for instance the Gym or the Admin Building. The name of the Combi building constructed by Norwegians reflected the following combination: officers occupied the upper floor, whereas the ground floor housed a garage. The Ydalir building connotes to the Norwegian mythological god Ullr who is currently known as the snow god. Ydalir was simply a place where Ullr lived. The Holmen building denotes its original location: "holmen" means "an island" in Norwegian. Originally, the building was raised on an island, only later a bridge was made to link it with the mainland.

In order to provide convenient training, exercise participants are often accommodated just 5 km outside Stavanger at Madla, where

the Norwegian Naval Training Establishment HnoMS Harald Haarfagre is located.

### Getting ready for ISAF

The Mission Rehearsal Training/ Mission Rehearsal Exercise conducted from 30th November to 11th December 2009 was designed to prepare the staff of the Multinational Corps Northeast (MNC NE), Headquarters Land Component Command Heidelberg and individuals (individual augmentees) for their mission posts in Afghanistan.

As a consequence of a structural reorganisation in ISAF, the training was offered to personnel assigned to both commands – the ISAF Headquarters and the ISAF Joint Command Headquarters, with a slightly bigger focus on the latter one. It was the first training of such kind ever organised. The challenging spirit of having to face this change was felt in the air. With the main focus being placed on simulating the operational environment, however, the change did not affect the script in terms of the content, but how it was delivered and to whom.

Out of about 130 MNC NE personnel planned for deployment 102 servicemen took part in the Mission Rehearsal Training/Mission Rehearsal Exercise. Most of them have been assigned to the ISAF Joint Command Headquarters.

The Joint Force Command Brunssum bore the overall burden of responsibility for the mission preparation process. It had formulated specific objectives for the training that the Joint Warfare Centre put into practice throughout the training.

The main idea of the Mission Rehearsal Training, the final step of the preparations, was to train within the replicated Afghan environment. As a result, instead of following an artificial scenario as in case of NATO Response Force exercises, the ISAF training was based on real-life events taking place in



Written by: Anna Galyga  
Photos by: Marian Cihon



# NATO training NATO



.....➤ Afghanistan. Thus the challenge for the organisers was to keep the content of the training as up-to-date and close to reality as possible.

## Step by step

Mission Rehearsal Training was divided into several stages to ensure an adequate level of preparedness and knowledge of all personnel deploying into the mission area. The tempo was steadily gaining momentum in accordance with the motto of the training: “crawl, walk and run”. First, all servicemen received Mission Specific Lectures, which developed the accomplished Advanced Distributed Learning course with most current data from theatre. The topics touched upon issues such as general overview of the ISAF operations, the Afghan National Security Forces, the Air Operations, Strategic Communications etc. It was like laying the ground. For each serviceman taking part in the training, a videoconference with the ISAF Commander General Stanley McChrystal was definitely a highlight. In his short address, he expressed his great support for the new staff training for the upcoming mission.

While some of lectures were still ongoing, the Functional Area Training and Electronic Working Practices were initiated. Already within given branches and cells, the servicemen learned about the ISAF Commander’s intent referring to given functional area as well

as about procedures, tasks and responsibilities involved. Senior Mentors and Subject Matter Experts, who shared their expertise and explained how things work in theatre, played a very important role within the process.

The next stage was Battle Staff Training, which served as a prelude to the main Mission Rehearsal Exercise. During the two-day event, the Training Team speeded up and initiated a series of “injects” requiring reactions from the Training Audience. The main idea was to show how the theory works in practice and what the cooperation among different cells and branches really looks like. Injects encompassed either tested action-reaction procedures or involved more complex planning process, which were to be continued throughout the exercise.

Having ensured a smooth shift from more academic-like lectures, self-study and discussions to inject-based training during the Battle Staff Training, the Mission Rehearsal Exercise was launched on Sunday morning, 5th December. With the use of incidents derived directly from Afghanistan, the Training Team made sure the training tempo reflected the real course of action in theatre. More than two hundred exercise participants, including a hundred MNC NE personnel, worked as if they were in Afghanistan. First of all, the replicated reality included the script which covered topics

e.g. operational planning, force protection, Improvised Explosive Device ambushes or strikes, crashed or missing aircraft or personnel recovery. Secondly, it simulated other actors present in theatre, like the regional commands, higher headquarters, Afghan authorities or non-governmental and international organisations which interacted with the Training Audience.

## Outcome

The result of the five-day Mission Rehearsal Exercise was that having learned to “crawl” and “walk” first, the participants eventually started to “run”. The exercise did not produce any kind of certificate or evaluation. It was all about making people confident and know what their tasks really are when they are deployed to Afghanistan. They ended up familiarized with the new systems, new procedures, they understood what the cooperation looked like and, above all, they integrated themselves as a team.

BEs to profit best from the training and have a good mission spent in Afghanistan (based on Colonel Charles Sevin’s tips):

- Be professional**
- Be ready**
- Be pro-active**
- Be part of the team**
- Be flexible**
- Be aware of the last news**
- Be able to have fun**



**Colonel Torsten Squarr**, German Army: The progress, the team building, the understanding are very good. It is the best training I have ever seen. The Multinational Corps Northeast is very well prepared.

**Captain (Navy) Stuart Furness**, British Royal Navy: Everything is made to look and feel like Kabul for three reasons. The first one I call the physical environment – if you are going to the gymnasium, it is now being made to look like the Combined Joint Operations Centre in Kabul. Second, every piece of information we have got is downloaded from every computer down there so people are looking at the real information. And then, the real people from theatre are doing the training. The only thing we cannot replicate is the weather.

**Colonel Charles Sevin**, French Army, Chief Training Team: The aim of this training is very simple. We are not doing any certification; we are not testing or judging. We would like the officers and staff officers to leave this training as comfortable as possible with their future working environment in Kabul. We want them to know exactly what is going to appear on the screen when they sit behind the computer, we want them to know Standing Operating Procedures, where they can find things, with whom they have to interact. The second aim of this exercise is team bonding. They get to know the people they are going to work with. It makes things easier to get some information or just to have things done when you have a known face working in another part of the headquarters.



# how it's made

An exercise is like a huge machine consisting of distinctive overlapping mechanics. Breaking it down into constituent parts does not always help to understand how it works. You just have to feel it.

People engaged in the exercise can easily be divided into two groups: those who are trained (Training Audience) and those who conduct and support the training (Exercise Control). Unfortunately, it is not as simple as that. The deeper you go into it, the more complex it becomes. Let the numbers speak for themselves to prove the scale of the whole training – 200 exercise participants and more than 400 organisers, trainers and other facilitators.

Exercise Control (EXCON), which runs the whole exercise, is the main counterbalance to the Training Audience. Its structure reflects three areas of action. First of all, there are elements ensuring the conduct of the exercise in terms of real life issues, security, visits or running

Communication Information Systems. Two other parts, namely the Exercise Centre and the Training Team, are directly involved in managing the exercise.

## Behind the scenes

The Exercise Centre provides all necessary means to interact indirectly with the Training Audience. It encompasses all that is taking place “behind the scenes”, according to the Chief of the Centre, Captain (Navy) Stuart Furness. These are the people who are like the power behind the throne, sending information to the Training Audience. And when the Audience eventually reacts, there are others ready to respond (the Response Cells partnering the Exercise Centre). This way, the wheel has

come round full circle.

About 150 people within the Exercise Centre make sure the exercise is running properly. The flow of information is managed and administered by the Situation Centre that controls what kind of information, in what way, in what frequency and to whom is being released. “The Bible” of the exercise where everything is written down is always the exercise script.

## Captain (Navy) Stuart

**Furness**, British Royal Navy: We are under the cycle: people come to the training to look at it, they do the exercise, they deploy to theatre, then we ask them to come back as SMEs for the exercise, and when they recently redeploy, we ask them to come back to the response cells. .....

## Life writes scenarios best

The exercise script was fully based on real operation data from theatre which were transferred to the computer network at the Joint Warfare Centre. Consequently, all exercise participants had a chance to deal with real events, which took place in Afghanistan within a given week preceding the exercise. Additionally, if there were any incidents happening before or after that time frame that would allow for drawing good lessons learned by the Training Audience, they were incorporated into the script as well and played as if they had occurred during that week.

**Colonel John Cullen**, Canadian Army: We have created a content which will cause the particular MNC NE training audience to learn to command and control the regional commands for the first time and to try to understand the new Commander ISAF's Tactical Directive and Counter Insurgency Directive. The script will also give MNC NE the chance to interact with the ISAF Headquarters on a regular basis.

The content of the scenario was built around themes, such as Counter Insurgency, partnering, Strategic Communication, elections, humanitarian assistance, counter narcotics or border areas. These themes were like threads jointing five main events or areas scripted for the exercise, which were to create a similar operational environment that the Training Audience would be exposed to in Kabul. They were as follows: security operations, joint fires targeting in air support, planning reconstruction and development, information dominance and intelligence and battle rhythm, indicating more routine staff functions. "It will be exactly like it is in theatre," stressed Colonel John Cullen who was responsible for the scenario. With the help of the special computer software called Joint Exercise Management Module (JEMM), about 1750 injects within 160 different storylines

were preprogrammed to reach the Training Audience through different communication tools used in ISAF as well as media reports. Real events like bombing the Indian Embassy in Kabul or fuel tankers bombing in the area of Kunduz were just examples of situations the Training Audience had to deal with. If the number of incidents were too high or too low, the personnel of the Situation Centre would adjust it, proving an interactive character of the scripting. "In a large part it depends on how much the Training Audience wants to invest in making it real. People get used to the operational environment, the scenario, they get used to the names and the terminology, but during the 5 days interaction on the exercise, understanding what the battle rhythm is and how the headquarters work tends to be difficult," Colonel John Cullen identified main challenges for the Training Audience. But he also stressed he met people in Kabul who had undergone the training in Stavanger and admitted to having found it very useful for a faster and easier adaptation to the situation in Afghanistan.

### Is anybody there? Over.

The Situation Centre as the machinery in the background "feeds" the Training Audience with injects and triggers activities in various areas. To complement the process, to react to actions and give some kind of feedback, an organisation is required to simulate these responses. The Response Cells headed by Colonel Torsten Squarr replicates all players the Headquarters ISAF or the IJC work with in theatre. They simulate the Regional Commands, higher commands, the air component, the special operations part, the Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan and any other civilian players from theatre. "For example, if you have a convoy bombing somewhere in Afghanistan, this triggers a huge action including the air force recovery. It requires constant coordination with the regional command in the area where

this happened. Of course, it must be played so that the Training Audience gets a feeling about the amount of information and the coordination requirements," explained Colonel Squarr.

**Colonel Torsten Squarr**, German Army: In theatre, for example, the Combined Joint Operations Centre, where the current operation is running, would communicate with the Regional Commands. We cannot bring them over here, so we must have a solution to respond as the Headquarters in Mazar-e-Sharif or in Helmand would do in the real life operation. And this is done by my organisation.

The overall Response Cells organisation includes around 100 people with up to 70% having fresh expertise from theatre and others who have been to Afghanistan recently. They come from various headquarters all over Europe including Joint Force Command Brunssum, Heidelberg or the Air Component in Ramstein as well as other civilian players or organisations involved in the situation in Afghanistan.

### SME is the key!

The Training Team was composed of Subject Matter Experts (SMEs), observers, role-players, analysts, and moderators, all in all about 110 people who had an immediate contact with the Training Audience. As a matter of fact, the involvement of SMEs throughout the planning and execution of the exercise was simply crucial. 101 Subject Matter Experts, including more than 50% coming directly from theatre, greatly facilitated the training. "That is the best coverage we have ever had," pointed out Lieutenant Colonel Lars Christensen, Deputy Chief Training Team and SME Coordinator. In most cases, SMEs had recent experience from Afghanistan.

**Lieutenant Colonel Christensen**, Danish Army: SMEs are everything. No SMEs, no exercise.

“First we have the main planning conference when we decide on the coverage we should have from SMEs. We identify SMEs by posts, not names. When this is approved by the Joint Force Command Brunssum, the headquarters in Kabul starts to appoint the SMEs. When we have a refinement conference in Kabul, we finally set up a name list,” he said. Likewise in the typical military structure, the SMEs have their own hierarchy. Senior Mentors are at the very top. These are often generals with extraordinary mission experience. Senior SMEs supporting Senior Mentors come from branches which are typically the engines of the Headquarters like CJ35 (short-term planning) or CJ2 (intelligence). Finally, the remaining group are the SMEs covering any other areas of expertise.

The SMEs performed several functions during the exercise. They arrived three days prior the training to prepare themselves. During the Mission Specific Lectures and Functional Area Training, they trained and coached the Training Audience, sharing valuable experiences. When the Battle Staff Training began, they did more coaching than training. Finally, during the Mission Rehearsal Exercise, they became observers. They also coached if that was required or even role-played.

SMEs have a substantial impact not only upon the conduct of the exercise, but also upon its script. The recently redeployed SMEs usually take part in the scripting conference. When the scenario is ready, it is sent to the ISAF Headquarters and ISAF Joint Command so that the SMEs currently working in theatre can check its validity. The team from the Joint Warfare Centre arrives in Kabul for the refinement conference, during which the script is finally refined with the help of the SMEs. The whole process usually takes three to four months.



Written by: Anna Gahya  
Photos by: Marian Cihon



# Meet SMEs



**Colonel George Uribe** is serving at Combined Joint Operations Centre at IJC.

**My task...**

... was giving briefings to let the training audience know what the staff of Deputy Chief of Staff Air (DCOS Air) do. Since then it has been more one-on-one education with mostly air personnel to let to know how the interaction goes and what capabilities the DCOS Air personnel have.

**My personal benefit is...**

... building personal relations to people that will work in the Combined Joint Operations Centre when I am still there.

**Challenge for servicemen who are about to deploy will be...**

... to realize that sometimes a lot happens at a time and insurgents do not work in compliance with our time schedule.

**If I were to give a piece of advice I would say ...**

... gather information actively instead of waiting for it to come out. You need to establish relationships with people at regional commands or in the task forces to know whom to address to get the kind of information you need.

**Group Captain Steve Thornber**

is a Senior Mentor in CJ2 area.

**I am here as ...**

... the senior intelligence analyst. I have two functions here: to mentor the intelligence cadre and lead on the Information Dominance Centre training.

**This training ...**

... is a superb opportunity to bring together at least half of the next population for the Headquarters to share the attitude, skills, the lexicon we use, the understanding of some of the principles and concepts, so when they arrive in theatre, they feel comfortable and capable of keeping up and adding value.

**What we do here ...**

... is the technical training of how the battle rhythm works in Afghanistan, where the information is and how to use the software... We are trying to develop their critical thinking; we tell the audience how we would approach the problem but that does not necessarily mean it is the only way to do it.

**In Afghanistan...**

... the fundamental intellectual shift has been made from a focus on defeating the Taliban to helping the Afghan government in winning the people. It is more about countering the reasons that cause and sustain the insurgency, not individual insurgents. The military personnel have key roles to support the decisive things that are about economic and social changes, especially at the local district level.



**Brigadier General Otto van Wigen**

is an expert in CJ3 area coming directly from Headquarters ISAF.

**Being the Senior Mentor means...**

... an honour to me but it is also important that it is performed by someone who has experience in theatre. We have experienced this exercise ourselves before deploying to theatre: we were mentored and coached by people from theatre. I think it gave us really the right flavour and background information we needed.

**My task...**

... was giving briefings; now I role-play more when various staff products are presented to me. I judge their contributions and ask questions they would normally hear if they were in theatre. I also help them develop their products; I tell them: this is the procedure but in theatre it works like this, so it is coaching and mentoring.

**My personal benefit is...**

... that my successor will be appropriately trained. I can give him an enormous amount of background information so the handover-takeover will be better and faster.

**My own share in the mission...**

... is just to be there and try not only to execute the strategy but also explain it to other people. And you have to be modest; you can never change the mission in just a few months solely by yourself. That is a joint effort.

**Challenge for servicemen who are about to deploy will be...**

... to understand that things take time before they are resolved and they should not expect considerable results within just a few months.



Texts on pages 20-21 by: Anna Gayga  
Photos by: Marian Cihon

# Colourful Grey Cell

It used to be white. Then it turned grey.  
In fact, it comprises all colours of the palette.  
In other words: Grey Cell.

The most important thing is probably to avoid unnecessary limitations when referring to the Grey Cell. The traditionally used term “white” indicated only international and non-governmental organisations. The Grey Cell went beyond and expanded over the Host Nation, other militaries, other governments and any other sort of civilian actors present in theatre.

**Lieutenant Colonel George Deakin:** “The idea is that we communicate with everybody and the name change is just to give it a wider scope. Another idea is that we should be calling it the colourful cell because it actually adds colour to an exercise, it introduces characters outside the normal line of work.”

The Grey Cell is obviously not able to replicate the whole civilian environment, but it does offer a great deal of expertise in various areas. There are experts in Afghan culture who can freely talk about anything from religious to tribal issues, treatment of women in Afghanistan, human trafficking, drugs smuggling, anticorruption to counter narcotics. Typically, there are also people who specialize in matters relating to the United Nations, International Organisations, and Non-Governmental Organisations. All experts in the Grey Cell have recent experience from theatre. Some are Afghans themselves coming directly from their country. For instance, representatives of the Afghan National Police and Army took part in the exercise fully integrated in the Combined Joint Operations Centre. Others also of Afghan origin



Photos by: Marian Cihon

facilitated the efforts of the Grey Cell. Finally, media representatives belong to the Cell too, as they systematically report on the military actions in theatre.

The Grey Cell is virtually a part of the Response Cells; therefore, depending on the incident scripted in the exercise play, it also receives different tasks. Sometimes it may mean picking up a telephone call by a Grey Cell member and requesting some information or “adding colour” to incidents in any other way. The majority of the work, however, is supporting planning groups. For instance, if the Joint Operational Planning Group is studying anticorruption, people from the Grey Cell would be invited to add expertise. Furthermore, the Afghan cultural experts offer tuition in how to conduct oneself at meetings, how to make introductions to Afghan players and become acquainted with Afghan customs of how to hold a meeting.

## 3 questions to Mr James Brown, Civil Military Coordination Advisor

### 1. What is your role during the ISAF 09/02 training event?

To represent the United Nations (UN) in its various forms and elements in Kabul, ranging from UNAMA (United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan) to UN departments of Safety and Security, food programme etc.

### 2. What is your experience related to that topic?

I spent a year and a half working in Kabul for UNAMA as a Civil Military Coordination Officer and another 17 years doing disaster relief work around the world, working closely with the UN. I left Kabul in April 2009 so I contacted old colleagues to get up to date of what is happening in Kabul.

### 3. How do you share your experience and knowledge with the Training Audience?

In direct meetings, sideline talks and briefings, I give it informally in the restaurant and the kitchen when we all have meals together. I think sometimes it is difficult for the military to interact with civilians effectively. I am quite keen on trying to facilitate better cooperation and coordination, which was also my role in Kabul. The military overclassify information quite often. However, we have moved from the information protection era into the new era of information sharing and we need to learn how to do it.

Photo: internet

Photo by: CPL Michal Miszta



**Sir, does a general's mission preparation process differ any way from courses for other officers and non-commissioned officers?**

In general, it is the same. It is about overall information on the mission, the Afghan population, culture, history, religion, and ethnics. It is also about the preparations for the functional area each of us is going to work in, which is the same for everybody. There are only a few additions for general officers. One of them was the Steadfast Pyramid exercise in The Hague, the Netherlands, that I attended in September 2009. It trained general officers in their roles in the operational planning process concentrating on their functions

along the approval line. Then we had the key leaders' training for general officers and full colonels. The first part of it was conducted at the Joint Force Command Brunssum in October 2009, whereas the second one – in Kabul and Masare-Sharif. Additionally, but this is different from one nation to another, I got comprehensive national introductions at the German Operational Command in Potsdam and, later on, at the German Ministry of Defence in Berlin.

**How useful was the mission preparation process for you? Can you decide which elements of it were most valuable?**

The mission preparation process is something you must not miss; otherwise you will not be able to live up to the expectations. If you fail to take advantage of a single piece, the value of the entire programme decreases tremendously. Therefore, I would not like to decide which element of the process was more valuable than the others.

**Your post at the ISAF Joint Command (IJC) as Chief Logistics is different than the last time. How have you prepared yourself for the position?**

Even though I have not had much of the specialist background in this area, I feel well prepared. I am

grateful to our servicemen from G4 Division who have done a great job providing me with a specialist reading list and offering advice. I am also happy that most of the CJ4 branch will be our Headquarters' personnel whom I know and can rely on.

Since September 2009 we have attended the weekly ISAF logistics videoconference to get familiar with all the players not only at the IJC, but also at the Headquarters ISAF, Joint Force Command Brunssum, SHAPE and others. This way we could also keep up with the current challenges in the logistics area.

**What kind of challenges will you have to face as Chief CJ4 then?**

Even though the troops contributing nations are responsible for most areas of logistics, there are some spheres in which ISAF, meaning I as Chief Logistics and my team are in charge of. My task has to do with supply, as maintenance and medical issues have been established as separate branches within the IJC. My job is mainly about food, water and fuel. One challenge is to get it all to the right place at the right time. The other one is to manage the cooperation with the Afghan authorities in terms of procedures and document handling. Any shortages of food, water or fuel, become critical immediately.

**2.5 years have passed since the MNC NE team left Afghanistan. Is it still the same Afghanistan?**

ISAF is a very, very fast developing mission. I have been following the development in Afghanistan quite intensively over the last years and there are a lot of changes. You will mostly find reports in media about the worsening situation in Afghanistan but seldom articles about progress in the reconstruction, medical or education areas. But I have just seen a survey produced by the BBC and

Brigadier General Josef Heinrichs, former MNC NE Chief of Staff, talks about preparations for the ISAF mission.

Photo: internet



**food  
water  
and fuel**

the German TV ARD showing the Afghan people can easily judge the situation and notice huge positive developments.

**One of topics recently present in media has been the new Counter Insurgency tactics of General Stanley McChrystal. What do you think about the direction the ISAF operation is heading for?**

It is a considerable shift to make the mission more population-centered and to concentrate more on the Afghan National Security Forces to get them ready to ensure security on their own. I think it is also the challenge for those who do the planning in whatever area, including logistics. We need to better assess and analyze effects of actions we may achieve to avoid undesired and unintended results, which in turn, may not be well perceived by the Afghan population. And we need to keep in mind that the intention of ISAF is really to help the Afghans to take control of their own country.

**Referring to what you have said, Sir, it is going to be quite a different mission in Afghanistan. What challenges do you think the MNC NE soldiers may encounter?**

Most of us are going to work at the new IJC. Its internal structure is very much based on cross-functional teams, which is different from a traditional NATO headquarters structure. Even though the J-structure still exists, for example, planners from the CJ4 area have been delegated to cross-functional teams on a permanent basis. As a result, I have to learn to coordinate their work even though they are not directly under my lead all the time. We all need to fit into this framework. We have already trained that during our FAT Eagle exercise in Szczecin and also during the Mission Rehearsal Exercise in Stavanger.

Since the IJC is quite a young headquarters, we will also contribute to the further development and refinement of all Standing Operating Procedures and

Instructions to improve the smooth staff work and differentiate the areas of responsibility of the IJC and ISAF HQ, as I think there is still some need for adjustment and definition. Due to the geographical separation of the ISAF Joint Command and ISAF Headquarters, there is also a physical threat put on everybody travelling from one headquarters to another. That was not much the case during our previous deployment.

Another challenge can also be the embedded partnering with the Afghan National Security Forces, representatives of which are integrated within the IJC structure on a daily basis. This was much different three years ago when just a small liaison team acted as an advisory body to ISAF. I remember the first steps of that cooperation three years ago when I, as Chief Operations, initiated regular meetings with Chiefs of the National Military and Police Coordination Centres. We briefed about ISAF operations and picked up their ideas. But it was more about the de-confliction of actions. Now, the deep integration of Afghans within the ISAF structure is a great step forward to hand over more responsibility to the Afghans and a challenge in a daily staff work, too. There are Afghan-led operations executed by ISAF. That is a considerable change.

**Talking about both the commands you have mentioned, what implications does this division actually have?**

The ISAF Headquarters grew up to some 1500 personnel over the years. With a lot of slots unmanned and growing responsibilities at the same time, the idea was born to separate it into the ISAF Headquarters and the IJC and divide responsibilities between them. Consequently, the ISAF Headquarters is responsible for “up and out”, whereas the ISAF Joint Command remains in charge of “in and down”. The “up” means representing the ISAF authorities up the chain of command within NATO to e.g. the Joint Force Command Brunssum or SHAPE

but also other NATO headquarters. The ISAF Headquarters is also the point of contact for all the troops contributing nations. The “out” means the cooperation with the Afghan government, UNAMA and other international, governmental and non-governmental organisations as well as the neighbouring countries. Talking about the IJC, the “in and down” concentrates on the actual implementation of the mission through the chain of command down to regional commands. It is the job of IJC, a tactical body superior to regional commands, to lead them. As a result, both headquarters are now smaller than before and both concentrate on different areas.

**The ISAF Joint Command is still a huge headquarters of about 800 personnel. How will you as the highest-ranking officer keep the MNC NE spirit out there?**

This is one of the biggest leadership challenges I am facing as the head of the standing headquarters in Kabul. My aim is to keep the MNC NE identity. It is especially important for those individuals assigned to branches with no other MNC NE members. Some solutions have already been found, as, for instance, the decision that all MNC NE servicemen will wear on their shoulders the sand toned MNC NE crests to match desert uniforms, apart from IJC or HQ ISAF crests. This way, the sign “I am a member of Multinational Corps Northeast” will be visible to everybody. My intention is also to have a place somewhere at the headquarters that we could call “MNC NE home”, where we could all convene. We have also decided to organise two, maybe three internal MNC NE social events for all MNC NE members serving both at the ISAF Joint Command and ISAF Headquarters. Altogether, I hope we can keep the MNC NE corporate identity.



General was interviewed in January 2010 by: Anna Galyga

# back to basics



**Master Sergeant Christian Waldow**  
German Army, MNC NE

I am a staff assistant in the Force Protection Branch. I am preparing threat assessments, briefings and making analyses. I am also a subject matter expert for CBRN (Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear) issues. The spectrum of force protection is starting from security up to CBRN. It is about the secured environment for troops, installations like headquarters or airports, compounds as well as convoys. The Improvised Explosive Device is also one of the big issues. Making threat assessments means travelling and checking the level of protection and assessing what we can do to improve it. You have to work very closely as a team and share the tasks regardless of the rank; otherwise, you are not able to do it. And in case of an incident, you have to stay cool and think twice because your advice or order must be the right one.



**Major Marcel Janiga**  
Slovak Army, MNC NE

I am a movement plans officer within the Joint Theatre Movement Staff. I have also been assigned to a cross functional team for future operations. We are analyzing operations from a logistic point of view i.e. requirements for food, water, fuel or beds for ISAF soldiers as well as Afghan soldiers and police, but also civilians. I have been doing logistics for 16 years but this is something different; I have not done this kind of planning before. I gather information from the logistic branch and share it with other members of the cross functional team. There is always something to learn and I can establish relationships with people I will work with in theatre. I also get a lot of information from Subject Matter Experts and this is the most important part of the training from my point of view.



**Lieutenant Colonel George Markos**, US Army, MNC NE

I am currently working at the Tripartite Joint Intelligence Operations Centre in which Afghan and Pakistani military officers cooperate with officers from the Coalition. I think the long-term solution is working with them directly and helping them build their capacity because it is their country and their region. My job is more about diplomacy rather than tactics: the person from another country may see the best way to proceed in a different way that we do and I have to tactfully express our point of view, achieve compromise and get the job done. We run a series of working groups and meetings, the most important one being the Tripartite Commission, and we talk about important issues like border security, counter IED, sharing military intelligence or information operations.



**Major Marek Kopoluch**  
Polish Army, MNC NE

I am a watch-keeper at the Afghan Defence Ministry's National Military Coordination Centre, an Afghan counterpart of Combined Joint Operations Centre. This post entailed greater challenges than the one I had during previous mission; it covers a larger spectrum of knowledge that reflects the entire theatre area. The Centre coordinates the Afghan Army's operations; my task is to ensure information exchange between CJOC and the National Defence Ministry, and if necessary I take steps to the procedures concerning air support or medical evacuation. This exercise is mainly designed to build up teamwork as our future working basis in the operation theatre; we have had our first contacts with Afghan officers and the fact we are aware of how they work will produce benefits at a later stage.



**Lieutenant Colonel Carsten Mørkenborg**, Danish Army, MNC NE

I am a Chief Current Operations Plans at Combined Joint Operations Centre doing the planning, developing orders or guidance that need to be issued and executed within 72 hours. I am also supervising the Civilian Casualty Tracking Cell that monitors all incidents involving civilian casualties alleged to have been caused by ISAF. The population is the centre of gravity for ISAF operations and we want to avoid any sort of civilian casualties but we also need accurate information to be able to counter or answer any allegations of civilian casualties. A special team is sent out to find out what has happened, provide direct guidance to the Commander of the Regional Command and report back to us and also deal with media on the spot.



**Major Aleksandras Petrulis**  
Lithuanian Army, MNC NE

I am a staff officer Operations Analysis in the Counter Improvised Explosive Device (C-IED) branch. Our overall tasks are to enable the Afghan National Security Forces to counter IED; defeat the IED network, destroy the device and train our own forces. Information Operations is also part of our branch activities. This is intellectual work, very interesting and challenging. It is important to find logic in how to pull out a fact or answer from the database because at first you may receive several thousand answers whereas only a few are really possible. You need to be able to draw conclusions to say "so what?". It is especially difficult if there are events which do not have anything in common. I personally consider this exercise a good possibility to meet people we will be working with in theatre and to get familiar with the computer software.



**Master Sergeant Ivo Kask**  
Estonian Army, MNC NE

I am a member of an Intelligence Analyst team. It is a totally new job for me but the more new things you learn, the better it is for you because you do not get bored. When something happens, we analyze it by going into more detail to provide an overview of the situation and give assessment for the future, too. The most difficult part of my work is to find the right information and the right persons who can help. It is also hard because we are constantly working under pressure. I think this exercise is very useful because the Exercise Control personnel are advising us on how to do this job; if there is anything I do not know, I can freely ask.



**Major Adrian Silaeanu**  
Romanian Army, MNC NE

I am a staff officer in the Logistic Operations cell. I am preparing inputs for Commander's update and react on different injects related to Class 1 "Food and Water", Class 3 "Fuel" and Class 5 "Ammunition". Maintaining the supply flow into Afghanistan is very demanding considering all factors such as the weather, the insurgents etc. I also take part in some cross functional teams, so I deal with troops search or Improvised Explosive Device threat. If I used a scale between "1" to "5" with "5" – completely useful, I would give this training "5" without any doubts. Subject Matter Experts provide us with a huge amount of information and we have the opportunity to link it with the reality because some of the injects we are playing are still ongoing issues in Afghanistan.



**Lieutenant Colonel Ojdana Zuzul**  
Croatian Army, JFC Brunssum

I will be a stability operations officer dealing with civil-military operations. Currently I am posted at the Intelligence Dominance Centre. I find this exercise very useful; I have learnt a lot about the mission, the working load, procedures and organisation. We are using the real life data and some of the situations we have dealt with we will face ourselves in theatre. We have also experienced first face-to-face contacts with people we will work with later on. My duty will involve visiting 6 Provincial Reconstruction Teams at least once a quarter. I am very interested to see how the things are going on and how the people live there. From a professional point of view that will be a great challenge and experience, but from my personal view, since I am coming from a country which has suffered from a war, I am really glad that I will have opportunity to contribute to the better life of the Afghan people. That will really be my great satisfaction.



**Master Sergeant Major Morreels**  
Belgian Army, LCC Heidelberg

I was training within the Public Affairs (PA) area but not as the main target audience. Then I was moved up to the Exercise Control (EXCON) where I could play PA injects. I am acting as PA officer from higher commands, Regional Commands or even a regular journalist requesting information. To be honest, being the EXCON is the easier side because you reply to answers you already know; then you simply react on that what the training audience is giving to you. Being part of EXCON gives me a pretty good overview of what is going on in Afghanistan. During the mission I will deal with office supply so people will come to me when they need paper or new equipment. But this is not going to be my first deployment and my experience tells me I will have to switch with other people and do their jobs every now and then.



**Master Sergeant Dusan Ivancic**  
Slovenian Army, MNC NE

I am in the Counter Improvised Explosive Device (C-IED) Branch working on different posts; I was already at the Combined Joint Operations Centre, at the moment I am working on an analysis of IED constructors, financiers and facilitators networks. My post in Kabul will be completely different, as I will be a chief clerk dealing with regular clerk job including office supply, organisation of flights or document handling but at least I will have a wider view of the situation in Afghanistan. I have learnt a lot of interesting things so far and met great persons with whom we have created a good team. They are all coming from various countries so the different Englishes we are all using might sometimes be a challenge. A big number of computer applications to be used is another thing; you are able to focus on a few at a time to learn to use them appropriately.



**Major Patrik Tabacek**  
Czech Army, MNC NE

I am a movement officer visibility of the Joint Theatre Movement Staff. I basically keep track of logistic convoys and analyze the situation as regards the freedom of movement on main supply roads used by ISAF and civilian companies. It will be exactly the same job I will do in Afghanistan. There is nothing better than using real situations or incidents for an exercise like this, there is nothing artificial. I do not think such incidents take place so often in real life so to be on time and do everything correctly is quite challenging about this training. Due to the frequent briefings and inputs, time runs very fast here.



Two producers, four technicians, two civilians, several boxes of equipment and one dog called Lucky. Lucky is always there where the news is. And the rest of the broadcast team, too.

# where is Lucky?

Since media report military operations in detail and each piece of information can go around the world in a second, this aspect needs to be an integral part of an exercise scenario to create true-to-life training reality. In case of the Mission Rehearsal Training/Mission Rehearsal Exercise (MRT/MRE), the Media Cell was made part of the Grey Cell. As a response cell, media representatives interacted with the Training Audience on a daily basis.

In general, there are various ways the Media Cell gets involved in the Mission Rehearsal Training or any other training project organised by Joint Warfare Centre. First of all, representatives of the Cell participate in planning and scripting conferences, since media as such can be a fine tool used to “inject” an incident for the Training Audience. When the Mission Rehearsal Training starts, media training is conducted to prepare key leaders for effective cooperation with the media. Tips and hints turn out to be very useful when the exercise is finally launched. Pete and Laura DuBois’ job is to prepare the “World News Today” broadcast. These BBC or CNN-like fake news rely on statements given by exercise participants and, in this way, shape the exercise reality. Not too much

can be prepared in advance because a lot depends on how the Training Audience actually reacts to an inject. It is important to prepare video coverage for the right incident; therefore, the media team closely cooperates with the scenario management.

*LAURA DUBOIS: “The key is that we talk to the Training Audience and then we present the media consequences of what they have said. After the exercise, when we see those people on CNN, BBC, Sky News or wherever, if they do a good job in their interview, we like to say that is thanks to us and if they do a bad job we say that obviously they have not paid attention.”*

It takes them up to 10 hours to prepare a 5- to 6-minute newscast. It starts with reviewing injects in the database and choosing those which are good for television. Afterwards, they write a script and need to have it approved by the scenario manager. Having received the green light, they contact the Training Audience and conduct all necessary interviews. The last part is the production; the whole process – a race against time to be ready for 1800 hours sharp when all screens at Combined Joint Operations Centre switch over to

the “World News Today”.

*PETE DUBOIS: “It is a lot of fun, it is always different, the scenario is always different, we are dealing with different personalities trying to help them open their eyes a little bit more to the media environment and shape their messages accordingly. We are also an important tool for EXCON people. During the exercise, we can tone down a little bit or focus more on a subject and turn up the heat. We can be a lot tougher if we have to be.”*

Apart from broadcasting media engaged in the training reality, there are also print media simulating friendly or unfriendly agencies. A webpage is like a bridge joining all kinds of media where all their products are published. A novelty during this particular exercise was a poll published on the webpage, in which the Training Audience and EXCON people could have their votes counted.

The media teams are having their share in all kinds of training events organised by the Joint Warfare Centre, swiftly adjusting their involvement. If needed, they deploy to remote places to provide adequate media coverage and leave no doubt to exercise participants that media is not there. Real or fake, it is always there. Like in real life.

Written by: Anna Galyga





Photo: ISAF

Interviews by: Anna Galyga



# afghans speak themselves for themselves

Colonel Waseel from the Afghan National Army and Lieutenant Colonel Noorullah from the Afghan National Police both work as liaison officers at the Combined Joint Operations Centre in ISAF Joint Command.

## Development of the Afghan National Security Forces

*The Afghan National Army is taking a great pride in improving lives of the Afghans and their security situation. We have had a great improvement of our forces and a great deal of training. We have also been very successful in choosing proper locations for headquarters of our corps. We will continue to improve both the number and quality of our forces.*

We are very happy with the progress and a lot of our officers are helped to get the training outside Afghanistan and that really helps improve their skills even more.

## Challenges

*The biggest challenge is related to our economic situation; we are unable to afford a lot of things in terms of*

*equipment and other facilities. We are still dependent on help of our friends from the Coalition Forces.*

They have to deal with the logistical issues, the shortage of equipment and other logistic facilities. We want to be at the higher level so the quality of our training demands some improvement, too.

## Afghan perception of ANSF

*The Afghan people have a good perception of our forces because we are where all of their hopes lie; they are hoping to have a peaceful, quiet and fruitful life, they are dreaming of the time when there is no war and they are all living in peace. The Afghan National Security Forces are the only ones who can provide that; we know of that responsibility and we treasure it.*

## Training

*The soldiers go through 3 to 4 week preliminary training at the Kabul Military Training Centre. The training itself is conducted by special ISAF training teams that are embedded within our units. Our Military Academy has been operating for 5 years now. The most*

*important thing for the soldiers is to learn professional combat skills but we also require them to be very flexible and adapt to different situations: to switch roles from combat to maintaining security and vice versa.*

There is a refresher training for existing police officers who are sent to different police zones; it is about a month and a half of training. Then, the Police Academy offers a five-year programme for officers during which they get the general training plus the specialized training in different areas, such as criminal investigation, ballistics, anti-narcotics and many others.

## Recruitment

If anyone wants to join the Afghan National Police, they have to be between 18 and 32 years old, they have to be healthy individuals not addicted to drugs with no criminal background. There could be much more people who would want to join the Afghan National Police if we were able to compensate them better. *It is very similar for the Afghan National Army, the illegibility requirements are the same but the only difference is that we have recruitment centres in all provinces.*

## Future

*I am personally very optimistic about the future of the ANSF, currently they are in the struggle because of the situation in Afghanistan but I believe that the issue with the Taliban can be solved with the combination of fighting and negotiating with them, however, the Ai-Kaida is a problem for the world community and I am sure that the countries that are participating in this struggle are not going to leave it unfinished. I am of the opinion that the ANSF will become a very important institution in our country responsible for keeping us safe and sovereign. If it were up to me, I would develop the ANA to the level where it can be as efficient as NATO forces and I would like to see them going to trouble spots in the world to help.*



# mission: Afghanistan

The louder the plane engines are at the take-off, the more overwhelming silence comes afterwards. Officers and non-commissioned officers of the Multinational Corps Northeast left Poland in two chocks, on 2nd and 9th February 2010, heading for Afghanistan.

## Mission specifics:

**Mission:** ISAF 10/1

**Part of the world:** Afghanistan

**Place:** IJC, HQ ISAF and regional headquarters

**Time:** February – August 2010

**Number of participants:** 130

*"Put your fingerprint upon that headquarters in Kabul and come back with lots of experiences to share. And be close friends with each other,"* said Major General Ole Køppen, at that time the MNC NE Deputy Commander, to the group of 70 Corps' soldiers going to Afghanistan on 2nd February. *"I am convinced that you will perform your duty as professionally as always and that you will do an excellent job representing our Corps,"* said the MNC NE Commander Lieutenant General Rainer Korff already a day before. Nevertheless, the most emotional were those words said within the families and secret to them, useful telephone numbers written on pieces of paper in a rash, packing almost forgotten but essential things

and tears in eyes. Everyone would admit that deployment means a mission for whole families, not only for soldiers. Families were also there at the Szczecin-Goleniów airport, despite the icy wind and the snow blurring the view. They were there until the giant C-17 aircraft took their husbands and fathers up to the sky, leaving the blizzard behind. A week later, the second group of the MNC NE personnel gathered at the airport ready for departure. The MNC NE Commander Lieutenant General Rainer Korff shook hands with every deployer wishing him good luck. Nine hours later the second group of MNC NE members landed in Kabul where the rest of the team was already waiting for them. The mission in Afghanistan has started.



Text by: Anna Galyga  
Photo by: Marian Cihon

# in afghanistan

International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) was founded in 2001 in accordance with Bonn Conference and under the provisions of Chapter VII of the United Nations Charter to assist the newly established Afghanistan Transitional Authority and create a secure environment in and around Kabul as well as to support the reconstruction of Afghanistan. Soon thereafter, in 2003, NATO assumed the overall leadership of ISAF mission in Afghanistan, the mandate of which was extended by UN to cover the whole country.

Over 10 years after the initial launch of multinational assistance to Afghanistan, the ISAF mission has proved to be well established having undergone major transformations to keep up with the development of the situation in Afghanistan. Even though security is still an issue, governance and development often lead the way.

A comprehensive approach and active partnership with the Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan (GIROA), non-governmental and international organisations and all other participants active in the region have turned out to be a prerequisite for making noticeable progress. Far beyond the concept of close cooperation with all civilian players in the region goes the idea of partnering between ISAF troops and Afghan National Security Forces: “live, eat, train, plan, and operate together”, as Commander ISAF’s guidance states. Partnering is stretched across the whole structure from higher commands down to field units as one of trademarks of the combined mission in Afghanistan. The more Afghan National Security Forces are in lead of operations, the more vistas are open for a complete transfer of responsibility for security in Afghanistan into Afghan hands.

Partnering is closely related to Counter Insurgency (COIN) Strategy which places Afghan population in the centre of gravity. All operations focus on protecting Afghan people, especially in areas where insurgents have well established positions. Reducing influences of insurgents and separating them from the society give way to Afghan governance and a sustainable security environment. Moreover, reconciliation and reintegration programmes address all former insurgents who decide to accept the Afghan law helping them come back into the society.

Shifted focus in strategy resulted in reorganisation of the ISAF structure to ensure better effectiveness and unity of action. The ISAF Joint Command (IJC), which achieved its full operational capability in November 2009, was created in order to conduct all COIN and stability operations on behalf of ISAF Commander, releasing ISAF Headquarters from direct supervision over actions in theatre and Regional Commands. This allows Headquarters ISAF to focus more on strategic partnership with international community, Government of Islamic Republic of Afghanistan as well as all civilian agencies and organisations involved in the mission in Afghanistan.



# INNOVATION is our domain



## Priority belongs to the first

The history of Multinational Corps Northeast, including the two missions abroad, has always been related to introducing or testing new solutions. In 2007, only one year after receiving the certification of Full Operational Capability from the NATO Council, this most eastern NATO Headquarters sent 80% of its military personnel to Afghanistan for 6 months. It was not without significance that a headquarters of low readiness status had been selected a standing headquarters for the ISAF mission for the first time. The deployment was preceded by an intensive mission preparation process, which encompassed individual and collective training at Baltic Barracks, courses, national training and a final mission rehearsal exercise at Joint Warfare Centre in Stavanger, Norway.

The MNC NE personnel manned key positions within the newly formed composite International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) Headquarters, consisting of staff from NATO standing headquarters and individuals provided by NATO nations. Having been spread among

practically all branches, the MNC NE personnel held important positions, among others Deputy Chief of Staff Operations and Chief Operations.

## New mission, new challenge

With a well developed framework of the preparation process, enriched with mission experiences and in fact recognized as a model in NATO, the Corps' personnel followed an already paved path in 2009 getting ready for the second mission in Afghanistan. Again, the process included individual and collective training within and across the functional areas, national training, courses, key leaders training and a rehearsal exercise at Joint Warfare Centre in Stavanger. The main focus was put on working out linkages between cells to streamline the planning process up to the conduct and assessment of an operation. The main factor behind was the upcoming change within the ISAF structure.

For MNC NE personnel, the mission started in February 2010. Just a few months after the structural reorganisation of the

ISAF command, most of the Corps' personnel manned positions within the newly established three-star ISAF Joint Command (IJC), a direct superior to all Regional Commands. Some officers and non-commissioned officers served at the four-star ISAF Headquarters and just a few within regional headquarters. Consequently, the MNC NE staff found themselves in a completely new environment, fulfilling tasks at often newly created posts and contributing to the synchronization of the cooperation and mutual relations between the two higher Commands and Regional Commands.

## Two gives more than one

The two Commands share responsibilities evenly. The ISAF HQ as a strategic command reach "up and out", developing cooperation with civilian organisations, Afghan authorities, the neighbouring countries and participating states as well as coordinating the direction ISAF head for with the higher NATO commands. IJC subordinated to HQ ISAF look "down and in", meaning they directly oversee the operation of the Regional Commands.

The organisation of the four-star Headquarters was very much based on the former Headquarters ISAF, whereas IJC was a completely new headquarters, located at the area of Kabul International Airport (KAIA) North. It resulted in a bunch of purely organisational challenges, including accommodation, office surface, meal and recreation facilities. Moreover, IJC was built around a new structural concept: vertically arranged divisions have been intersected by cross functional teams encompassing experts from various branches and cells. The MNC NE personnel were among pioneers who put the new organisational solution into practice, actively contributing to establishing efficient relations among all branches and cells, thus considerably improving cooperation and coordination of tasks within the HQ.

**Current Operations cover actions in theatre lasting up to 72 hours. Going beyond this time span belongs to Future Operations planners. Operations scheduled for more than 60 days in advance lie within the area of responsibility of Future Plans. Everything is linked by the Information Dominance Centre.**

# information networks

Each cross functional team at IJC is formed by people from various branches. When planning any operation, voice of each subject matter expert is heard, thus facilitating cooperation and coordination among branches. Parallel to work in cross functional teams, regular work in divisions and branches is continued. Four cross functional teams of IJC: Information Dominance Centre, Current Operations, Future Operations and Future Plans are to ensure the effective flow of information, contributing to the overall operational capabilities of the Headquarters.

"It is to shape the environment of the future," says about his work in Future Plans Lieutenant Colonel Peter Sims, Australian Army.

"Some of the things I am dealing with is security operations for support of construction activities, for instance Highway 1," he says. It is the road going around Afghanistan, built over the years, that is completed now in 70%. In order to finish the construction, an adequate level of security and governance needs to be ensured. It is an Afghan-led project, assisted by the Coalition Forces. A challenging task is to get through the foothills of the Hindu Kush Mountains, along the historical Silk Road. The whole effort makes sense only if the result is not destroyed by hostile forces. Building the highway is one of the foremost undertakings, but there are many other development projects too, ranging from building houses, business locations ending up with airports.

"When you look at the operation, it is a population-centric effort, we cover more areas than just security," says Brigadier General Dariusz Łukowski, Polish Army, about the wide range of the operation in Afghanistan. "What does it mean? We are dealing with governance and development. We have to face tasks that are unusual because we need to look how the health system is developed, how we can support the development in terms of engineering and logistics."

Major Ramon Macias, Spanish Army, is working at Combined Joint Operations Centre (CJOC)

**The idea of the District Delivery Program (DDP) is to promote and reestablish good governance through providing district government facilities and civil servants and, among other things, improving health system, judicial and educational services. DDP is coordinated by the Independent Directorate of Local Government and supported by the relevant GIROA ministries, international agencies and ISAF.**

floor within the area of stabilization operations. "Stability branch is in charge of development and governance," he says. The task is to measure the development and gather all the relevant pieces of information, for instance about new governors nominated in the regions, and assess the possible impact these changes might have on the operation. The stability branch is "in the middle" of the process since Headquarters ISAF and IJC are responsible for contacting Afghan officials, whereas establishing working relations is the Regional Commands' domain. But stability

officers keep track of what is going on, they receive reports from all the regions covering areas of improvements, also resulting from actions of the Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan (GIROA), non-governmental and international organisations and donors. It is the right cell to address to check the exact number of new schools, bazaars, bridges or roads that have been built in a given region. Lieutenant Colonel Paraskevas Tsekrekos, Greek Army, is focusing on Regional Commands East and Capital. "I work in cooperation with international

organisations not only for development and governance but also in disaster management, for example flooding," he says.

ISAF and GIROA have identified about 80 key districts that accumulate the efforts in terms of governance and development. Baghlan in the northern Afghanistan is a good example. "We

believe it is an important place to make a difference and make things better," says Lieutenant Colonel Søren Host, Danish Army, who is a future planner at the cross functional team for the Regional Command North.

How to make things better in the region? The message on what is needed comes from the very bottom: from the Afghans themselves. It is the Provincial Reconstruction Teams operating in the field who address the elders, the Afghans, asking about their needs. The information is afterwards

forwarded to the nations sending a given PRT or further, to IJC or ISAF HQ. "It is important to realize that a lot of people, countries and organisations are spending a whole lot of money in this country so one of the key tasks for this Headquarters is to coordinate that so that we do not step on each other's toes," says Lieutenant Colonel Host. For that reason, assigned personnel in cross functional teams, like Lieutenant Colonel Host, coordinate issues related to specific Regional Command. [Lieutenant Colonel Sten Allik](#), Estonian Army, is for instance leading a team working for Regional Command East, preparing fragmentary orders (FRAGOs) and coordinating all that is necessary.

The information wheel turns full circle with the Information Dominance Centre. [Captain Daniel Drogomirecki](#), Polish Army, is an analyst for Regional Command North, working with Warrant Officer Alan H. Sander on shifts. "We have three key districts and we are focusing on them. Our daily routine is that we analyze reports which come from the Provincial Reconstruction Teams and their mutual interactions." Their findings contribute to the overall picture of Afghanistan prepared by Information Dominance Centre. The Centre is closely cooperating with the Intelligence Division (CJ2) at IJC. [Colonel Søren Bojesen](#), Danish Army, as Deputy Chief CJ2 has a wide range of responsibilities: "I deal with manning, I deal with security for the whole HQ, internal training and IT systems – command control and information system and information tools used by the intelligence branch." He is also involved in a number of coordination meetings, huddles and conferences, during which intelligence staff exchange information. This is gathered through different sources. For instance, [Lieutenant Colonel Peter Christensen](#), Danish Army, is working at the CJOC floor: "I am following minute after minute what is happening around Afghanistan. I gather all the information and combine it into a summary report," he says and also admits that his

second area of responsibility is to provide computer software for people in CJ2 area. "Start early and end late," is the maxim he follows to cope with all the tasks. An important part of intelligence work is done by a mysterious CJ2 X branch, where X stands for execution. "It is a kind of coordination: HUMINIT (Human Intelligence), counterintelligence and a little bit of security," says [Lieutenant Colonel Thomas Czaplá](#), German Army, who is the Deputy Chief monitoring HUMINIT and counterintelligence actions at IJC.

The best example that illustrates how all the specialties merge is CJOC. This is the heart of IJC. "It is a big community, every branch is there and we all share the information we need on all operations going on," says [Major Pieter van der Endt](#), Dutch Army, Shift Director at CJOC. The communication lines go across all branches, Regional Commands and higher commands. "It is very busy, it is streamlined and contradictory pieces of information; the information goes through a lot of levels and we have our Afghan partners who also provide us with information so it is very difficult to make sure that the information that goes from both ways – our lines and their lines – is the same. That is our job so that we can react in a proper way," he says. There is one way though to ensure the accurate flow of information: to talk to each other.

[Captain Mauro Pica](#), Italian Army, is a member of CJOC team dealing with Public Affairs issues. "I have to monitor Public Affairs information, answer to journalists' queries and follow the news that could be of interest from local or international perspective," he says. [Warrant Officer Ivan Hladik](#) and [Major Marek Snasel](#) from the Czech Army are also working at CJOC floor dealing with distribution and publication of fragmentary orders (FRAGOs). They are usually working on 3 to 4 FRAGOs per day whereas each of them can be up to 20 pages making their job challenging. "I have seen some 340 FRAGOs since January and I am not counting daily FRAGOs, warning orders or

operational orders," says one of them.

## Work to enable others work

"It is a big organisation but everything is actually working and what is most important for me is that our troops from the ground get the information they need in time, that is absolutely crucial," says [Lieutenant Colonel Kent B. Jensen](#), Danish Army, about IJC. As Deputy Director of Staff, he seems to be one of best informed persons at IJC, being among other things responsible for the information flow within the HQ's all cells and branches.

Another key issue in ensuring the Headquarters' functionality and capability to complete all missions assigned is to have the appropriate personnel assigned to appropriate posts. This and other things related to personnel issues are managed by CJ1. "One of the greatest challenges is to make sure that the rotation of personnel happens at the right time so that the Headquarters does not lose its capability. In addition to that we have to make sure that rotations are preceded by proper handover periods," explains [Colonel Sylvain Bedard](#), Canadian Army, Chief CJ1. The post of [Sergeant Major Michael Frøslev](#), Danish Army, was created specially to monitor the manning situation at Regional Commands. "There has been a big change concerning their tasks because the Counter Insurgency Strategy was developed. Secondly, we have the IJC which has grown from ashes and all of the sudden the Regional Commands have become units of a bigger HQ but they did not change their structures," Sergeant Major Frøslev explains the reasons for adjustments within the organisation of Regional Commands.

There are more branches making sure IJC smoothly completes its tasks. "I have seen almost every street in Kabul," says [Sergeant Webster](#), US Army. "We do the transportation for the IJC; we transport people for different meetings from one camp to the

next," he says. The team is also responsible for teaching others how to drive and what roads to take. Sergeant Webster is a member of Headquarter Support Group, whose tasks go far beyond transportation of personnel. "We are trying to meet every need the Headquarters has; we are providing almost everything – paper, furniture and we also ensure movement for people," explains [Major Tomasz Borowczyk, Polish Army](#), from the Headquarters Support Group. [Major Jacek Chabecki, Polish Army](#), is responsible for a number of signal projects. "We provide the land forces with means of communication, aviation, we deal with some communications structures e.g. we install some antennas to monitor the situation," he mentions some of his duties. "It is communications and information services, so computers, videoconferencing, radios, mobiles phones, Internet," elaborates [Captain Ian Kirk, British Army](#), explaining he is dealing with current projects.

[Colonel Jacek Pawlewicz, Polish Army](#), is a financial controller of an operational and maintenance budget. Being a subordinate of HQ ISAF implies that all the bookkeeping directly goes to JFC Brunssum. The budget is mostly spent on duty travels as well as office supplies and furniture. "We have a small office with two people: me and Major Tynkiewicz who is a purchasing and contracting adviser," he says.



Pages 32-35 by: Anna Galyga  
Graphics: internet



Photo by: CPL Michal Miszta

# highest protection

You may feel it is like a military construction and management simulation game. You need to treat security in broader sense thinking about the thickness of walls, air defence systems, convoys and thousands of other procedures. The only difference is that this time it is for real.

Security is an important physiological need to be satisfied, in accordance with Maslov's hierarchy of needs. No wonder highest measures are taken to ensure safe and secure environment for all soldiers in theatre. [Captain Frank Wirths, German Air Force](#), explains his cell does not do force protection for a certain camp but rather oversees force protection cells or teams under companies or battalions serving as a link between these units and the higher command. Force protection is a very broad area starting with patrolling on the ground, through escalation of force up to airport security. It is mainly about procedures specifying e.g. the way patrols are conducted, the required equipment, possible reactions leading to the escalation of force etc. It is the right cell which, after brainstorming and discussions, is able to submit specific pieces of advice or recommendations. "I also work in CBRN defence so we are dealing with the whole Afghanistan, every Regional Command has assets to react against a possible threat and I am here to coordinate all that," adds [Master Sergeant C. Waldow, German Army](#).

Security needs to be ensured in the camps as well. [Lieutenant Colonel Claus Jeske, German Army](#), and [Sergeant First Class Derek Standifer, US Army](#), work as Force Provost Marshals dealing with Military Police issues. "It is not a new story that Military Police is

needed in a camp with 2500 people," says Lieutenant Colonel Jeske. People need to report to someone when they e.g. lose things, destroy something or participate in a car accident. "I work on the policy level: I discuss with the ISAF Command Group what the rules of ISAF shall be. You cannot only state the rule, someone has to enforce it," he explains. A lot of coordination work has to be done with the Afghan side too, for instance with the Ministry of Interior or National Directorate of Security. Sergeant First Class Standifer also underlines the issue of detainees Military Police is dealing with. "A lot of Regional Commands are using bio-measures and it gives reports of who has been detained, so they have pictures and certain information about them," he says. As Colonel Jeske stresses, they also try to explain to the Afghans how to prepare prisoners for the reintegration into the community so that they would not come back to prison. "This is a start but it is promising," he says.

A high number of problematic issues do not reach the Military Police. "We solve problems on the door's level," says [Sergeant Major Michael Frøslev, Danish Army](#), about the internal organisation of all non-commissioned officers (NCOs) at IJC. There is the top Senior NCO Board created by Command Sergeant Majors IJC, KAIA and Headquarters Support Group and a standing headquarters representative who have a direct access to the Commanders, and the ordinary Senior NCO Board. "This board is to discuss some problems; it could be traffic control or disciplinary things, we bring this forward to our nations without writing big letters. It is just going the short way," explains [Sergeant Major Andreas Neuhaus, German Army](#).



## does anybody know where I can get LOGobster?

Logistics is an enormous task to manage having almost 150 000 troops in theatre. Every single soldier needs food and bottled water (Class 1). Soldier's actions in theatre require equipment (Class 2), fuel (Class 3) and ammunition (Class 5). Only the engineering (Class 4) is managed by a separate combined joint engineering branch. With [Brigadier General Josef Heinrichs](#) as Chief CJ4, two section chiefs from HQ MNC NE – [Colonel Bogdan Dawidczyk](#) and [Lieutenant Colonel Jarosław Kopaczka](#), and a great number of MNC NE personnel, logistics at ISAF Joint Command (IJC) for sure was the MNC NE domain.

Some claim fuel is the most important supply powering the engines of the ISAF operation. There is much truth in that. With around 2 billion litres of fuel used this year in Afghanistan, managing fuel coming into Afghanistan is quite a challenge. [Lieutenant Colonel Eric Cannon](#), US Army, the Chief of the Fuel's Team in IJC admits tracking fuel status and managing the resupply is a demanding job: "We feel we are making a direct difference in the success of the operation." The challenge is first of all to deliver fuel into Afghanistan either via trucks or rail, which can be risky in the context of insurgent or criminal activities. A volume of paper work to manage is also enormous. Fuel

is delivered to Afghanistan based on multinational contracts (NATO Fuel Basic Ordering Agreement) or national ones. As soon as fuel stored in bladders crosses the Afghan border, it goes to all Headquarters and Regional Commands, from where it is further distributed among the Forward Operating Bases.

Class 1 means food and bottled water. The resupply of these goods lies in the area of responsibility of [Major Adrian Sileanu](#), Romanian Army. Alike fuel, water and food are brought into Afghanistan along the same ground lines of communication and stored in huge warehouses. Fresh food, however, is flown into Afghanistan. Water is usually imported from the surrounding countries, but bottles with Afghan labels are easy to be found too. Major Sileanu admits that it has a double effect – it helps the Afghan economy and it is much easier to get it and spread around the country.

Food is imported into Afghanistan by civilian companies but the military staff monitors the import channels to avoid any shortages. After all, there are more than 30 million litres of water and more than 15000 tons of food needed per month. Going into more detail, civilian companies are responsible for a great deal of logistic support at IJC. In accordance with the Integrated Logistics System introduced at Kabul International Airport (KAIA) in April 2010, civilian contractors who have made contracts with NATO Maintenance and Supply Agency (NAMSA) acting on behalf of Joint Force Command Brunssum, provide services within the three major areas - Airfield Support Services, Airport Facility and Infrastructure and Real Life Support. The first two encompass the practical operation of the airport and its infrastructure, whereas Real Life Support refers to food service and laundry. [Major Krzysztof Kociuba](#), Polish Army, originally assigned as Chief Logistics Support Group, has been delegated to Headquarters Kabul International Airport (HQ KAIA) to assist in providing logistic support to all the

forces based at KAIA. In practice, Major Kociuba coordinates the cooperation among IJC, KAIA HQ, National Support Elements, the French Hospital and civilian contractors as well as other units. All convoys bringing in goods need to be monitored. [Lieutenant Colonel Jose Garcia](#), US Army, is one of those who keep an eye on convoys' movement. "I make sure they depart from the right location and arrive to the destination. And if there is a detour, I inform the higher staff about that," he explains. It gives better visibility of the supplies brought into Afghanistan. Visibility is in fact a key motto for logisticians belonging to the Joint Theatre Movement Staff (JTMS), which tracks, deconflicts and monitors all sustainment and humanitarian convoys. The cell also collects road status and threat assessment from all regional commands in order to have a complete picture on the situation.

JTMS is not only about convoys. [Lieutenant Colonel Torsten Stolp](#), German Air Force, is responsible for bringing personnel of IJC, ISAF HQ, Regional Commands and other NATO members in and out of Afghanistan. There are usually between 180 and 400 people coming in and going out of Kabul International Airport (KAIA) every day and Lieutenant Colonel Stolp's office placed in the middle of the passengers' terminal is probably the busiest place where all the pieces of information concerning arrivals and departures meet.

As for the whole area of operation, the number of passengers airlifted via Intra Theatre Airlift System (ITAS) is up to 600 and cargo – 40 tons per day. Since not all nations participating in the ISAF operation have their own aircraft in theatre, Chief of ITAS [Lieutenant Colonel Jorg Botta](#), German Army, prepares daily schedule of flights available to everybody, also to the Afghans. In fact, ITAS encompasses only about 20% of the airlift in Afghanistan; the rest is covered by national and commercial flights. As a result, the air about Afghanistan is very busy indeed.

# rush in golden hour

60 minutes – the Golden Hour – is the maximum time given to medical evacuation (MEDEVAC) teams to reach injured soldiers in the Afghan theatre and transport them to the nearest medical facility.

The system of medical service in Afghanistan is built around facilities providing basic medical treatment, codenamed Role 1, Role 2 medical facilities and fully equipped Role 3 hospitals. Medical assistance is offered not only to the Coalition Forces, but also to Afghan National Security Forces, civilians, detainees and others in need.

Undoubtedly the issue of MEDEVAC missions transporting the injured to hospitals is one of the most sensitive topics. **Warrant Officer Jacek Kuchlewski**, Polish Army, works at the Patients' Coordination Operation Centre keeping track of all MEDEVAC missions as well as monitoring the situation in hospitals and transferring patients from one medical facility to another. "We just monitor MEDEVAC within the

region, but if we are talking about crossing borders of the region, we are the authority to choose the hospital and coordinate this," he says. Transporting patients from one hospital to another may be necessary when a patient needs for instance a neurosurgery available in another facility, when a hospital is overcrowded or when it is closer to cross the border of the region to get to the nearest facility.

**Master Sergeant Michael Wiese**, German Army, who works at the Combined Joint Operations Centre (CJOC), is also involved in monitoring MEDEVAC missions but he is focusing on aeromedical evacuation only. "We do not have air assets to send, but nations do have them, so we are observing and assisting them," he explains. As Master Sergeant Wiese says, ISAF and Afghan medical facilities work hand in hand carrying out a number of joint projects; moreover, MEDEVAC missions are conducted for the Afghans, too. **Captain Aurore Guigon**, French Army, a dentist at the Kabul International Airport Hospital, admits she treats not only soldiers of the Coalition Forces but also Afghans, for instance children sent by Afghan doctors. "Some of them speak English and French and we also have interpreters so we can communicate without problems," she says. The presence of Afghans at ISAF medical facilities can also be explained by the general rule that any Afghan citizen affected by an incident receives treatment from ISAF.

To cope with diseases unrelated to warfare in Afghanistan, there are among others theatre preventive medical officers, like **Lieutenant Colonel Ratimir Bencic**, Croatian Army, working for the Medical Adviser to the Commander IJC: "Most nations have a continuous vaccination policy but there are some special vaccines necessary for this region. We do all the medical support policy for our troops so that our troops are healthy to be able to fulfill the tasks in Afghanistan." **Lieutenant Colonel Rainer Hesse**, German Army, a medical operations officer at ISAF Headquarters, has also an overall view on medical aspects. He prepares reports to higher commands and Joint Force Command Brunssum in particular, covering medical situation in the whole area of operation. "We are reporting about ISAF treatment facilities Role 2 and 3 – the number of beds, intensive care units, number of surgical operations etc.," he says.

All in all, medical service in such a distant country like Afghanistan is a very complex machinery to manage but it is indispensable. Apart from serious treatment resulting from warfare, even simple pharyngitis, toothache or appendicitis could be a problem in theatre. Everyone would undoubtedly agree that because health is the greatest wealth one can have, no investment in medical infrastructure or equipment is superfluous.



Foreign missions in dangerous areas of the world are depicted into soldier's duty. Armoured in a strong body, they have to protect their gentle souls from negative experiences affecting them.

There are different sources of stress on mission and different reactions to it. Most soldiers find it uncomfortable to be separated from their families. It causes the feeling of powerlessness when they cannot assist spouses or children in everyday challenges or solving problems. For that reason, the role of the Family Care Centre organised at Baltic Barracks cannot be underestimated. It allowed to substantially reduce such discomfort giving the deployed soldiers confidence that their families were not left alone.

Tension, anxiety and worrying may also be caused by the new environment to which a soldier has to adapt. This is why it is crucial to prepare adequately for the mission, learning about climate, terrain, culture or living conditions in the area of operation.

However, a great deal of strong stress reactions is related to traumatic mission experiences. It is a passing syndrome of shock, daze, anxiety and many other possible reactions that usually last up to several days after the dramatic situation a soldier experiences. In some cases, stress is so strong that it may cause a delayed or prolonged reaction in the form of a post-traumatic disorder, emerging

# soldier's psyche

Soldier is the epitome of physical and psychological strength. Soldier serves as a model of bravery, devotion and honour. But most of all, soldier is a human being.



several months after the occurrence. It is often connected with some psychological predispositions or lower reaction threshold. The soldier may go through the experience over and over again, for instance in dreams, face outbursts of fear or anger, suffer from insomnia or depression and other symptoms. Hopefully, most of them pass with time.

To what degree a stressful situation affects a soldier very much depends on the personality profile. Task-oriented people will focus on

accomplishing the assigned mission, putting the emotions aside; others will try to dodge the possible problems, whereas some people will solely focus on the emotional going back to the negative experience they have faced.

Nevertheless, the key point is not to leave a soldier's psyche alone. Already prior to the mission, soldiers usually have meetings with psychologists who make them watchful over their body and mind reactions. During a deployment, the crucial issue is to ensure a regular contact with the family. Moreover, relations among the group of the military are very important, too. The possibility to confide in other soldiers who share similar experiences often helps to release the tension. Finally, sports activities producing hormones of happiness are a fine way of soothing stressful situations.

It shall be underlined that beyond a number of reasons motivating soldiers to go on a mission, there is also place for

adrenaline connected with strong mission experiences, which for some people become a necessary reinforcement for the psyche to make life complete. It proves the complexity of human soul hiding riddles and unanswered questions. What may make someone weak, may give a boost to others.



Both pages written by: Anna Gahyga  
Graphics, page 37: Corbis Images  
Photo, page 36: ISAF

A huge kite attached to the wall peeks from behind its green wings at all visitors to the Combined Joint Psychological Operations Task Force (CJPOTF).

It is just one out of many products created by this unit and a very good example that not all actions taken by ISAF require kinetic engagement.

On the contrary, a huge part of ISAF activities involves non-kinetic actions covering areas such as civil-military cooperation, psychological and information operations, key leader engagement or electronic warfare, lists *Captain Thomas Hesselholt*, Danish Army, who is an Information Operations planner in Future Plans team.

Among others, his area of responsibility involves combined planning for September elections in Afghanistan.

# closer to afghans



Both pages written by: Anna Galyga



One of the projects has been to install an aerostat flying above Kabul. This buoyant balloon or a blimp is equipped with cameras to monitor the area. "It provides security for the people in the city; it is for their protection, keeping them aware of who is coming into and out of cities so that they can defend themselves," clarifies **Major John Gardner**, US Army, who is working on the project. "They like it," he says about the reaction of the people. "We explained to them what it is and what it does; they appreciate the fact that they have been watched over and taken care of," he adds. Addressing the local people is a joint effort of different cells and branches, says **Major Jens Alsing**, Danish Army who advises on strategic communication at the Combined Joint Operations Centre (CJOC): "I monitor all the operations and whenever there is a need for guidance to CJOC Director or the Commander, I provide that."

In case of the aerostat project, they also have been addressing the local population and explaining the benefits of the system.

"We are the voice of Commander ISAF and Commander IJC in Dari and Pashtu," says Commander of CJPOTF **Colonel Bader**, German Army, explaining that his organisation provides mass media products to the Afghans. TV, print media and radio are more traditional means to reach the audiences; nevertheless, there is also place for new media, too. Colonel Bader admits that younger and better educated generations of Afghans are the main target audience for their products but the more tradition-bound and often illiterate parts of the society are also addressed.

Mass media products created by CJPOTF are made for Afghans and mostly by Afghans themselves. Less than one-fifth of the CJPOTF team is constituted by non-Afghan personnel. Such proportion has a considerable influence upon what these products are like. The Sada-e-Azari (Voice of Freedom) Radio broadcasts their programmes 24/7 evenly 50% in Pashtu and 50% in Dari. You will not hear much of the European music either. The most popular programmes are about the Afghan culture. And poetry is a must. Two TV teams travel around Afghanistan and record spots broadcasted afterwards on TV. The Sada-e-Azari newspaper is the best known printed media in Afghanistan. Written in three languages: English, Dari and Pashtu, it is even used at schools to teach languages. And there is an Internet section, too, where the CJPOTF products start their virtual life.

With high illiteracy rate in Afghanistan, a question can be raised whether these products have a chance to reach a high number of Afghans. The truth is that they do not have to. The idea is to reach Afghans who will be multipliers, in other words messengers, conveying knowledge to the rest of the society. The concept is very much in line with the way how the Afghan society is organised, with the well-settled position of recognized authorities. Therefore, an important part of CJPOTF mission is to inform the Afghan society about development projects, education opportunities and the planned operations. Having explained "why" considerably shortens the way to gain support from ordinary Afghans.



Photo: ISAF



## Partners in making Afghanistan better

It is about making Afghanistan a better place on Earth. For Afghans themselves, for their neighbouring countries and the rest of the world's community. To make it happen, it has to be a common effort.

### Borders that join

The Tripartite Joint Intelligence Operations Centre staff is made up of Afghan, Pakistani and ISAF soldiers. Attached to the Headquarters ISAF, it is the highest level of military to military cooperation. It is about maintaining good relations among all the three parties, and ensuring trust and transparency. "We are facing a common enemy and the more we work together and each of us understands what the other is doing, the better it is for everybody," says **Lieutenant Colonel George Markos**, US Army, Deputy Chief of the Centre.

The cooperation reaches different levels – it goes from the top Tripartite Commission Plenary Meeting with the participation of Commander ISAF, Chief of the Army Staff of the Pakistani Army and Chief of the Afghan General Staff, through daily meetings at the Centre down to working groups: the military intelligence sharing working group, the information operations working group, the Counter Improvised Explosive Devices (C-IED) working group and the executive working group. The cooperation encompasses four major areas, such as intelligence, counter IED, information operations and operations. As noticed by **Major Grzegorz Brysz**, Polish Army, the Centre has a particular opportunity to go beyond the area of operation of ISAF, namely Afghanistan, and focus on the border area as well.

"Sometimes it is difficult, sometimes it is funny," Major Brysz says about the multinational cooperation at the Centre and mentions the Afghans, Croatians, Czechs, French, Canadians, Pakistanis,

Poles and Singaporeans working together. Everyone has the impression of contributing to something important. It is like creating the background for further cooperation and building trust since the Centre is not a prime mover. "The success is that we are here together talking. Things are resolved gradually," says Lieutenant Colonel Markos stressing that the Centre provides the chance to integrate the Afghans and Pakistanis into the ISAF HQ staff procedures and routines. Things are done together proving that the idea of "Mosharak" (in Dari "together") is not only implemented in the battlefield.

### One team, one goal

The Operation Moshtarak is conducted by the combined forces of Afghan National Army, Police, ISAF and the Helmand Provincial Reconstruction Team and aims at supporting the Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan (GIROA) in asserting its authority in central Helmand Province. It is just one out of many examples of planned and conducted joint operations from the field level of units up the chain of command. Not only does it improve the mutual relations but also gives strength to both sides and leads to achieving a common goal: improving the situation of Afghanistan. The advantages of joint operations are considerable since ISAF troops win credibility in the eyes of the Afghan citizens and learn much of the Afghan culture, whereas the Afghans gain experiences and have the opportunity to use ISAF equipment. The Afghan soldiers enter the villages first. It is their land and they know best how to talk to their people. More and more ISAF plays a supportive role.

Partnering goes far beyond the execution of orders and conducting joint operations. The doors to joint planning have been wide open for the Afghans from the very beginning. The Afghan National Security Partnering Centre is the cell coordinating the exchange of Afghan liaison officers. Right in the centre of ISAF Joint Command (IJC), at

the Combined Joint Operations Centre (CJOC), representatives of the Afghan National Army (ANA) and Police work shoulder to shoulder with the ISAF soldiers. In the downtown, ISAF soldiers enhance planning and operations capabilities of ANA cooperating with the soldiers from the National Military Coordination (Command) Centre (NMCC), an Afghan mirror organisation of CJOC, and the Planning Department. The same parallel procedure applies to the Afghan National Police (ANP) and its National Police Coordination (Command) Centre (NPCC) and the Planning Department.

### Colonel Abdul Maqsud, ANA representative, and First Lieutenant Obaid Hamdard, ANP representative, explain that

Afghans work in 24-hour shifts at CJOC. They all live in Kabul and come to IJC every third day. Their work means transferring information from CJOC to the Afghan organisations and backwards so that the communication lines are maintained. Topics cover mainly the operations. "The only thing we have asked for from the beginning is that the Afghans should be the ones dealing with the locals. That has brought about some good reactions from the people," says Colonel Maqsud. "Right now when the Coalition Forces conduct the operations, they can understand the traditions and customs of our people," adds First Lieutenant Hamdard.

Even though many Afghans freely communicate in English and ISAF soldiers often learn Dari and Pashtu, interpreters remain a key element in the partnering jigsaw. Especially in field units, where one interpreter falls on ten soldiers, ensuring understanding of operation goals and priorities is crucial.

Is partnering the magic solution for Afghanistan? With all the challenges involved resulting most of all cultural differences, for sure it draws away the international community from acting on their own in Afghanistan. And it is certain, one cannot help Afghans without Afghans.



# be a friend to the Afghans

Interview with Lieutenant General David Rodriguez conducted in June 2010, during which Commander ISAF Joint Command (IJC) talked about Afghanistan, the development of ISAF mission and Multinational Corps Northeast.

**Sir, how do you perceive the contribution of MNC NE staff in fulfilling tasks of ISAF Joint Command (IJC)?**

Lieutenant General David Rodriguez: First of all, I would just like to personally thank you and all of the leadership that makes up Multinational Corps Northeast for all the hard work and training that went into getting the team of 130 soldiers ready and deployed here. They were able to begin work immediately.

In just four months since the soldiers of *Multinational Corps Northeast* arrived, they have established themselves within ISAF as *hardworking, dedicated professionals and contributing members of the ISAF team*.

They are having a positive impact on operations in a fast moving, high-intensity command environment. You can be proud of the performance of your Corps' personnel. I am truly glad they are here and we really appreciate the work they have been doing. *Thank you.*

**You served in Afghanistan as Commander of US Forces in 2007 and now, how different or similar is Afghanistan back in 2007 and now?**

The primary difference is the impact or the perception of the Afghan people, their frustrations with the Afghan leadership, all the way around. The Afghan government and the people have to have trust and confidence in their government and their security forces; and I think the longer that goes on with the unmet expectations the more



frustrated they become and the more uncertain they are in which way this thing will go.

This has allowed the Taliban to get between the government and the people; down to the lowest level.

The impact of governance is really the overriding factor in everything else. It leads to better security, it leads to better development, it is about government leadership.

Through NATO's comprehensive approach that Multinational Corps Northeast is helping us execute, we plan to help the Afghan government and people by partnering with them to better provide security for the Afghan people, so we can create the time and space required in order to build government institutions that serve the Afghan people in an Afghan way, not an American

or European way, that meets the people's perceived expectations of what should be provided to them by their government.

**One may approach several different topics when discussing Afghanistan; like the COIN strategy, ideas of partnering and reconciliation. What is the main effort of the ISAF operation in Afghanistan at the moment?**

Our strategic main effort is helping Afghan security forces to grow, and our operational priority is to stabilize the security situation in the South.

The building of the Afghan National Security Forces of sufficient quality and size to assume the responsibility as the primary provider of security for the Afghan population is the key. The Afghan government's approach to security in Central Helmand, Kandahar City and its surrounding districts is to protect the Afghan population from insurgent intimidation and violence. This will provide the time and space to improve both economic opportunity and governance.

Progress will be measured over months rather than days, and there will be tough days ahead. But we are committed to see this effort through as part of our strategic partnership with the Afghan people – which President Obama emphasized during President Karzai's recent visit to Washington.

**What were the reasons for dividing responsibilities over the southern part of Afghanistan and the creation of an additional Regional Command? What are possible consequences?**

To optimize the command and control of a Regional Command that has grown exponentially since its transfer to NATO's command in 2006. With more than 50,000 ISAF troops and eight Afghan National Army brigades operating in six different provinces, the strain on the

span of control would have been too high for Regional Command South in its present configuration. The new structure will ease the burden of Regional Command South and enable more adapted and efficient counter-insurgency operations at the local level.

**Several countries have set dates for the beginning of withdrawal of troops from Afghanistan. How will that influence the operation in the country?**

First of all, we praise the efforts and sacrifices of those countries that have contributed to the coalition. We appreciate their hard work and commitment they have shown; each nation needs to determine their appropriate commitment as we move forward.

Recently, President Obama stated in his press conference with President Karzai that beginning in July 2011, the United States will start bringing the troop numbers down and turning over more and more responsibility to Afghan security forces that we are building up. But that does not mean we are suddenly finished with Afghanistan as of July 2011. In fact to the contrary, this is a long-term partnership that is not simply defined by our military presence.

Nations are committed to Afghanistan in more ways than providing troops.

After July 2011, there will still be an interest in making sure that Afghanistan is secure, that economic development is taking place and good governance is being promoted.

And resources are still going to be put into Afghanistan, and we are still going to be a friend to the Afghan people. So that is something I want to make absolutely clear.



Questions by: Anna Galyga  
Photo by: Marian Cihon

# afghanistan 2007

# afghanistan 2010

The first difference is that three years ago we worked for Headquarters ISAF; now we are working for ISAF Joint Command. In 2007, I was mainly in the centre of the operations as the Chief CJ3 Division, this time, as the Chief CJ4, I have to enable the conduct of operations providing forces with fuel, water, food and ammunition.



BG Josef Heinrichs  
Photo: ISAF

When you browse through European newspapers, you may get the impression that the situation is getting worse in Afghanistan. But three years ago we had less than 40 000 forces; now we are close to 150 000. It gives more opportunities to get in contact with the opponent and explains the increased number of incidents. But my personal assessment is that the situation is slowly getting better. Three years ago the Afghan people did not expect much from their government, now there is a high level of expectations. The critical issue is whether the government is able to meet those expectations or not. We do not want to stay here for decades but it also does not make sense to leave the country in an unstable situation, otherwise we would have to answer the question: why have you been here for so long?

## Challenges

The biggest challenge for logistics during my tour of duty is to ensure the uplift of forces, which involves the

available infrastructure and must be very closely coordinated. Another issue is the daily resupply: the soldiers need to eat and drink; they need ammunition and fuel to move around. In the country with a high level of insurgency and criminal activity, sometimes you may not know who your opponent is.

## Mission Preparation Process

We took on the assignments very smoothly because our preparation proved to be almost perfect. Our expectations and those of our superiors were met. Our personnel jumped into a functioning Headquarters with no interruption of the workflow. Anytime I ask other general officers about our staff, I get only positive assessments.

## Mission experiences

Now our challenge will be to keep this experience and it is going to be difficult

because of a 3.5 year time period in between two deployments with the low probability that someone who participated in the current mission would be still serving with the Headquarters. We are going to write our lessons learnt down but, of course, not everything can be written down. Because the development of the mission in Afghanistan is so fast, I think we can support other staffs as Subject Matter Experts only for the first half a year after the redeployment. But at my next post I will share my experiences with others supporting line units in their preparation of mission capabilities.

## MNC NE spirit in Afghanistan

We all wear our MNC NE badge which is the most visible sign of our community. We established a group address to all MNC NE staff in Kabul so that everybody can be in touch all the time. We also did some social events, which was quite difficult because there was no place for such events and our staff worked at different locations.



# COMmander in Afghanistan

The Commander of the Multinational Corps Northeast (MNC NE) traversed 8000 km from Szczecin to Kabul to meet the MNC NE staff contributing to the ISAF mission in Afghanistan.

The four-day visit started on 12 June 2010 as soon as the military aircraft landed at the Kabul International Airport (KAIA) in the heart of Kabul. The Commander was welcomed by the MNC NE delegation led by Brigadier General Josef Heinrichs, the highest-ranking MNC NE personnel member in Afghanistan, and the merciless Afghan sun. It was already the fifth visit of General Korff to Afghanistan but the first as Commander of Szczecin-based Corps.

Bringing best regards from the families and latest news from the Headquarters in Szczecin were main ideas lying behind the Commander's visit to Afghanistan. A very demanding schedule had been arranged for those 4 days but on top of it was talking to MNC NE staff. General Korff met most of MNC NE staff during common dinner organised in the evening. Apart from updating the Corps' personnel on ongoing issues, General Korff reassured the depoyers that their families were taken care of by the Family Care Centre and other members of the Garrison Headquarters. The highlight of the evening was awarding General Heinrichs with the Corps Medal of the Multinational Corps Northeast for his substantial contribution to the development of the Corps. In fact, it was General Heinrichs' second mission with the staff of the

Multinational Corps Northeast in Afghanistan.

During these four days General Korff evenly shared his time with all MNC NE members. He made a tour around KAIA North visiting his staff at their working places and checking their accommodation. Even though most of MNC NE personnel served at IJC, he also went to ISAF Headquarters located downtown. Among others General Korff visited the Combined Joint Psychological Operations Task Force, where he listened to a briefing on tasks and projects of this particular unit and talked to MNC NE personnel working there.

General Korff was very interested in the evaluation of MNC NE performance. This topic was raised during his discussions with General Stanley McChrystal, at that time the ISAF Commander, as well as Lieutenant General Bruno Kasdorf, the ISAF Chief of Staff. "They are doing a great job," the MNC NE Commander heard from Lieutenant General David Rodriguez, the Commander of IJC, about the quality of work provided by MNC NE staff. "I am really proud of what I have learnt. Szczecin guys have been very successful and fully integrated in the staff work. Our assistance and support in the two headquarters is highly appreciated," said the MNC NE Commander afterwards.

General Korff was also very inquisitive about the development of the situation in Afghanistan. Not only did he listen to a series of specialist briefings, but also discussed the issue with General Rodriguez. Moreover, General Korff visited the National Military Coordination (Command) Centre in the downtown and met the command group of the centre, MNC NE staff cooperating with the Afghans and General Karimi, General Staff Chief Operations Afghan National Army. Following the Afghan tradition, they had a nice chat and obligatory green tea. "Our enemy is growing, but we are growing, too," among other things said General Karimi. Afterwards, General Korff also visited the National Police Coordination (Command) Centre and talked to the command group.

In the evening, General Korff had a meeting at the German Embassy in Kabul with the Ambassador of Germany Mr. Werner Hans Lauk, the Ambassador of Poland Mr. Maciej Lang, Deputy Head of the Mission of the Danish Embassy Mr. Jesper Moeller Soerensen, Chief of Staff of ISAF Lieutenant General Bruno Kasdorf and Commander of the German Forces in Afghanistan Colonel Kaatz and Military Attachés of Denmark and Germany. In fact, it was the last evening spent in dusty Kabul. The next morning, after last farewell to MNC NE staff, Commander MNC NE left Afghanistan heading for Poland.



Text: Anna Galiya, photo: Marjan Chon

# We R there 4U

and Support. Apart from that, National Support Elements as well as Headquarters Company dealt with regular businesses.

The Corps Commander put the main effort towards supporting the families of the deployed personnel, which was carried out by the Family Care Centre. Reactivated in November 2009, the Centre offered assistance in solving everyday problems such as a car breakdown or power supply failure; it employed nannies to take care of the children and activated the families through common events, such as monthly brunches or trips. The Family Care Centre provided patronage for “the trusted friend” programme in which selected persons assisted the families directly and were authorized, for instance, to pick up children from school. “The absence from home quarters” programme ensured safety of flats or houses in case of longer absence of household members.

The Family Care Centre was one of the pillars of the assistance offered to families of the deployed personnel. A great deal of support was provided by the National Support Elements and Senior National Officers. Effective means of supporting families, especially those coming from abroad and currently living in Poland, had been developed long before the mission in Afghanistan and would be continued throughout any deployment. It also needs to be underlined that each nation has its own regulations to follow in terms of supporting the families. A respective Senior National Officer takes the overall responsibility for the families living in Szczecin, and in case of emergency, the final word always belongs to him. “The families can choose to be on their own or with us, and we are here to support them,” **Lieutenant Colonel Siegmar Plonka**, German Army, the Centre’s Chairman, explains the role of Family Care Centre.

An additional element of the whole jigsaw was the Operations Centre (OPSCEN) which was

like a bridge combining all the elements. “OPSCEN is a special cell organised within the Garrison Headquarters structure, the aim of which is to operate as the centre of information. We are the point of contact between the Garrison Headquarters in Szczecin and our servicemen deployed to ISAF mission in Afghanistan,” explains the Chief **Lieutenant Colonel Jarosław Przybyła**, Polish Army. “The other purpose of OPSCEN is to monitor the situation in Afghanistan with a special focus on Kabul and its surrounding area. We



collect information, analyze it and disseminate it among the respective key personnel. We also monitor the situation here in Szczecin and report it back to our staff in Afghanistan,” he adds.

Just like in case of the Family Care Centre, it was the second time when OPSCEN was organised. Lieutenant Colonel Przybyła was the Chief OPSCEN already in 2007 and could compare both organisations. “The functions of OPSCEN and procedures we follow are the same; the difference lies in small details. For instance, we did not have so many Commander’s extended updates or detailed morning briefings. We have improved the organisation a little bit and incorporated more personnel into OPSCEN. We have also developed our workstations and equipment. One of the amendments to the standing operating procedures is the resignation from duties held at OPSCEN after working hours and making duty officers operational via mobile phone,” lists Lieutenant Colonel Przybyła.

The Garrison Headquarters, implemented as a temporary structure, provided the minimum capabilities to tackle all tasks and missions of the Headquarters Multinational Corps Northeast whilst about 130 personnel of the Headquarters were on the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) mission in Afghanistan for half a year.

You would probably not be able to see the difference at first sight. There were regular meetings, people doing their business, General Officers endorsing orders and representing the Corps outside the Barracks. Only when approaching closer, could you see that lots of meetings focused on Afghanistan and the ongoing ISAF mission, the number of personnel was actually lower, and more often than usual Baltic Barracks hosted children and their mothers. The mission time had come. The reduced manning triggered off restructuring of the Headquarters and complementing it with new elements to cope with more mission-oriented challenges, above all the Operations Centre (OPSCEN) and Family Care Centre (FCC). The seven staff divisions were reorganised into three major Divisions – Personnel, Operations

# FAMILY (CARE) DIARY

## 19TH NOVEMBER 2009

The Family Care Centre was reborn after three years of sleep. It helped the soldiers' families already in 2007 during the Corps' first mission in Afghanistan, but we were not members of the Headquarters at that time. So I am just wondering what the Family Care Centre is.

## 21ST NOVEMBER 2009

We received an invitation for the Family Day event at Baltic Barracks; we met the team of the Family Care Centre for the first time. Lieutenant Colonel Siegmur Plonka, the Chairman, explained how they would assist us. I also saw the colourful children room at the Centre where all the kids can play together. It is still two months before the mission starts but I like the idea that I will not be left to my own devices.

## 2ND & 9TH FEBRUARY 2010

We bid farewell to all deployers. It was hard to say goodbye knowing we would not see each other for six months. It seems that it is going to be the longest half a year ever.

## 27TH FEBRUARY

There were more than a hundred of us – kids, wives and friends of those who went to Afghanistan on the mission. We all met at the Allied Officers' Club for the Family Care Centre event, where an excellent multinational atmosphere was guaranteed. There was a brunch and a carnival party for children. It was a nice time spent together on chatting and my children also made new friends. I can feel we are the Corps' family now.

## 2ND MARCH

My car broke down in the middle of a busy street. The only number I got was of the Family Care Centre. I called them. They arranged everything. I am picking

up the repaired car tomorrow. I am glad it did not take long to fix it.

## 6TH MARCH

It was so enjoyable to spend a few hours in the aqua park together with friends from the HQ. The kids kept sliding down over and over again. I must admit I also planned to go shopping in the nearby shopping mall but I could not resist looking at the children cheerfully playing together. I will do the shopping next time.

## 28TH MARCH

We attended the Easter Brunch organised by the Family Care Centre with mixed feelings because any family events spent without all the loved ones being present felt somewhat amiss. But it turned out to be a pleasant time for everybody, indeed. The children were mostly attracted by an egg hunt arranged in Jutland Garden. And there was a videoconference with the deployed to Afghanistan. The kids could wave to their daddies sitting on the other side of the screen in Kabul. It was very emotional.

## 20TH APRIL

It was planned by the Family Care Centre as an ordinary trip to the Zoo but when one of the monkeys escaped and all the kids set off in pursuit of the runaway, it became more than that.

## 25TH APRIL

The spring came to Baltic Barracks making the Sunday brunch sunny and cheerful. I could enjoy the fine weather and tasty grilled food while the nannies were taking care of my children.

## 28TH APRIL

First, I saw a huge bunch of flowers, only then did I see the smiling faces of two officers who came to my home to give me flowers on my birthday. It was a touching surprise.

## 16TH MAY

We have just come back from Miedzywodzie where we spent three days on our common trip organised by the Family Care Centre. It was simply fantastic.

## 22ND MAY

All children were enchanted by a performance given by a musician; I was enchanted by conversations with ladies

from other countries. We were talking about our trip to Miedzywodzie and plans for the summer.

## 31ST MAY

I had to leave the flat for a couple of days. Fortunately, we had our "Friend in need". Not only did he water the plants, but also helped us with the luggage. I would not have been able to do it on my own.

## 1ST JUNE

All kids could not wait until this special day comes. Gifts, giant slides, police vehicles, body and face painting or even karate training. Everything was there. It was Their Day.

## 15TH JUNE

Today we had the last English lesson I attended at Baltic Barracks. I think I will be able to better communicate now, I do feel more comfortable and relaxed when talking to someone from another country.

## 19TH JUNE

It was not an ordinary family brunch. The Corps Commander Lieutenant General Rainer Korff told us about his trip to Afghanistan. I watched all the photos and thought about the upcoming two months before the mission would finally be over. We will make it.

## 25TH JUNE

It was the last Family Care Centre event. I will miss all those meetings, common brunches and our Family Care Centre team wearing red T-shirts. Thank you, Friends!

## 5TH & 11TH AUGUST

We have been waiting for this day so long. The mission is finally over and all our deployers came back home, among them my dearest person. The children were very impatient waiting at the airport but the Family Care Centre prepared some attractions to make the time pass faster.



# my mission



I am a staff officer movement visibility being responsible for the overall situation concerning movement and transportation; I am also a logistic functional area systems manager. It is not so difficult for me to understand the different nations as we have the mixture of nations in our Division in HQ MNC NE too. To be honest, we just continue our jobs we performed in Szczecin but we learn new procedures and have new tasks. But I am satisfied with it.



You can see how we and our Headquarters have been prepared, what the missing things are so it is self-development every day. I think it is a different life to be in a peacetime establishment and here where we have to adapt ourselves to high operational tempo and not to lose anything important in this environment. I think it is a big takeaway to know how we can do better.



I think it is the ability to learn from 46 different nations that bring their background, their experience, their history and putting that all together and making it work, it is quite impressive to be able to do that. We still have our nations and we have to respond to their wishes but at the end the mission is accomplished by 46 nations working together.



One of the major things I have learnt here is to ask the right question to get the right answer; it is a little bit different from the way we work in Szczecin. For me it is a very good experience, I learnt a lot about the intelligence business and cooperation in a multinational environment.



I would like to talk about our collective experience as a standing headquarters. We are some 10% at ISAF Joint Command but I can tell we really make a difference; it is a huge benefit to come here as personnel trained together who know and trust each other. IJC is the most innovative major command as we are talking, we work in cross functional teams, and we are breaking new boundaries. All experiences we bring home are a huge benefit for the future of our Headquarters.



I work at the Joint Theatre Movement Staff; we are responsible for all air and ground movement within the ISAF operation. I am a mover plans which means I am planning all issues regarding the moving staff, convoys etc; I am also deputizing my chief. Originally I am a logistic officer so it is a little bit different and I had to learn a lot the first weeks but now I am more than satisfied. You need to be flexible.



**Lieutenant Colonel Peter Sims**  
Australian Army

It is all about people, we tend to have a common sense of humour, we have common technology and understanding. Everybody has good ideas and strength. You could change a bunch of things from an Australian or any other perspective. Would that actually change the final result? Probably not a lot. So make the most of the environment, it is unique with 46 nations involved. The most dangerous thing you can do is come here with the mindset that you are going to be right. There is always more than one option.



**Major Andrzej Blaszyński**  
Polish Air Force

Back in Szczecin I was involved in air space management, ground base air defence but now I am also responsible for close air support, which is new for me. It is the whole process just to close the loop between ground and air forces. It is impossible to support all operations; therefore we need to prioritize requests for close air support and send all requests to the Combined Air Operations Centre. It is a big challenge for me but I really like this job.



**Colonel Bogdan Dawidozyk**  
Polish Army

I am the link with multinational logistics in ISAF operations; other commands report to us how big stocks they have, how big the consumption is and if they have any problems with it. We cooperate not only within our MNC NE environment but also with other nations and we have to find a common language with them. The language is a challenge, especially for those who are not familiar with specialist vocabulary.

## Afghanistan: yesterday, today and tomorrow

**Major Jens Alsing, Danish Army:** We have an extraordinary window of opportunity which will not come again. With what we are doing at the moment, the dedication, a lot of financial effort that is put in Afghanistan, I think we can make a difference and I think what we are doing is working slowly but steadily. We can see improvements coming up, we will not change the situation over a year but we are going the right way.

**Master Sergeant Christian Waldow, German Army:** It is my second time in Afghanistan, the last time I was on mission in the northern part of Afghanistan. This country is very beautiful in some parts and very destroyed by war in others but the saddest thing for me is when I see poor children in the streets. It is very interesting that in Europe you need a contract for everything; what I like in here is that you make just a handshake instead.

**Warrant Officer Jacek Kuchlewski, Polish Army:** When I think of Afghanistan in 2007 and right now, there is an improvement, for example Kabul looks different – new buildings, new roads, electricity which was maybe for 6 hours in 2007 now is 24/7. I believe the same happens in provinces, but maybe not that fast like in the capital. There are still the insurgents' activities but the Afghan people are looking forward to get stability and due to the presence of Coalition Forces there is some kind of, not full, stability.

**Sergeant Webster, US Army:** This is my second time in Afghanistan. I have seen a lot of improvement, a lot of buildings have been put up, the roads are being fixed, and trees are being planted. The kids are more reactive to us, they are brave enough to walk up to us, talk to us, and shake hands. Even women in Afghanistan would talk to foreigners; this is still on a small scale but the difference is visible.

**Lieutenant Colonel Kent B. Jensen, Danish Army:** I believe we will still be here in 10 years from now to support the Afghans in whatever way they would like us to; we are here to help them obtain freedom and democracy perceived from their angle. I would not be surprised if we were here in 20 years but we are talking about a completely different type of help at that time, maybe some political advisors.

**Captain Mauro Pica, Italian Army:** I think the world media have a good comprehension of the situation in Afghanistan. I monitor every piece of Public Affairs information coming to Combined Joint Operations Centre, answer to journalists' queries and follow the news that could be of interest from a local or international perspective. I think Afghanistan may develop considerably because they have a great culture; they have a lot of resources so in 10 years from now they can make a lot of progress.



**Lieutenant Colonel Jose Garcia**  
US Army

I think one of the lessons learnt here is having a representative in different sections, for example CJ4 has representatives in Combined Joint Operations Centre plans section so we can help expedite the future planning process. I think that is something that we may want to implement in Poland, to replicate what we are trying to do here because we are coming back here in the future and we have to be better organised with regard to the planning process and the information sharing.

# home, sweet home!

*"All of us, especially your families, are very proud of you. You've done a great job!"* - said the Commander of the Multinational Corps Northeast Lieutenant General Rainer Korff to his soldiers shortly after the NATO aircraft C-17 touched the ground on 5 August 2010 bringing the first group of deployers back home. The second group of MNC NE staff arrived in Poland a few days later, on 11 August. Multinational Corps Northeast personnel have successfully completed their mission in Afghanistan.





Text by: Anna Galyga  
Photo by: Marian Cihon



# MNC NE Subject Matter Experts

They have been there. They have been members of the team. They have been given the honourable name of Subject Matter Experts. And they have been sharing with others what they know.



Written by: Anna Galyga

The key issue in a proper mission preparation process is getting first-hand, most current package of information, the know-how possible to be transferred from one person to another. Just like the Multinational Corps Northeast (MNC NE) staff profited from guidance and pieces of advice given to them prior to the mission from experts coming directly from Afghan theatre or recently redeployed from it, the MNC NE personnel as Subject Matter Experts (SMEs) have been enhancing mission preparations of others.

Already during the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) mission, several MNC NE personnel left Afghan theatre and went to Joint Warfare Centre (JWC), Norway, to take part in the Mission Rehearsal Training and Exercise (MRT/MRE) of the French Rapid Reaction Corps, the MNC NE substitutes to ISAF Joint Command (IJC) and ISAF Headquarters. After the mission, the MNC NE staff got also actively involved in a mission preparation process of the Allied Rapid Reaction Corps (ARRC), other civilian or military organisations such as the Headquarters Force Commander Heidelberg, 1 (UK) Armed Division and 1 (DEU) Panzer Division as well as Individual Augmentees who were going to be deployed to Afghan theatre beginning 2011.

## Arrcade Spear



Written by: MAJ Marcin Czekalski, POL Army

Several MNC NE personnel enhanced the pre-deployment training of Arrcade Spear 1 & 2 held in Great Britain from 4 to 15 October 2010. Representatives of different areas of expertise, such

as Engineers, Force Protection, Air Operations Coordination Centre, Training and Exercise Branch, as well as Public Affairs and Logistics, supported and mentored the preparations of ARRC personnel and other partnering organisations for the final MRT/MRE at JWC in Stavanger, Norway, and, consequently, the mission in Afghanistan.

The first phase of the exercise held in Innsworth Barracks, Gloucester, from 4 to 8 October, provided training within functional areas (Functional Area Training – FAT) to familiarize ARRC staff with procedures and instructions perimeter to their future posts in Afghanistan. MNC NE experts along with other SMEs led by Senior Mentor General (Ret'd) David D. McKiernan, former ISAF Commander, shared their own experiences from the ISAF mission. The Arrcade Spear 2, conducted at the Royal Air Force Base in St Mawgan, Cornwall, from 10 to 15 October, was a deployed Command Post Exercise. The purpose of it was to train the ARRC staff within the cross functional aspects of IJC preparing them for the MRT/MRE in Norway, which would close up the whole mission preparation process.

## MRT/MRE



Written by: LTC Jose Garcia, US Army

Nineteen SMEs from the Multinational Corps Northeast supported the ARRC training for the ISAF Training Event 10/02 (ISAF TE 10/02) held at JWC from 31 October to 12 November 2010.

These SMEs were a selected group of recently redeployed officers and non-commissioned officers of various specialties, such as Logistics, Public Affairs, Engineers,

Communications, and many others. Their primary role was to set the conditions for the preparation and success of the ISAF Training Event 10/02 and train the ARRC personnel on procedures and duties for their upcoming ISAF rotation. During the exercise the SMEs were able to share their experience, knowledge, teach the ARRC on IJC procedures, and explain the IJC document handling process used to elaborate staff products. In addition, the SMEs



Photo by: MAJ Marcin Walczak, POL Army

developed real world scenarios, which were used to train the ARRC in procedures and their future functions.

The Mission Rehearsal Exercise simulated the ISAF/IJC working environment using real world incidents of July and August 2010. Automated systems and technology currently implemented in theatre were used to replicate the working environment. The exercise also incorporated the Individual Augmentees (IAs) and exposed them to IJC/ISAF procedures and practices. The exercise allowed the SMEs to provide their expertise and recommendations to the ARRC before they would begin their deployment to Afghanistan and allowed the ARRC to continue building their team, integrating

their IAs, build confidence, and fine tuning their skills. At the end the SMEs were able to provide valuable information to the training audience and were an important part of ISAF TE 10/02 success.

### **Lessons Identified and Lessons Learned**

The two above mentioned exercises serve as a fine example of training events the MNC NE SMEs have taken part in. The key point is to transfer valuable experiences to others so that they smoothly hand over duties and responsibilities. However, wide and specialist knowledge gathered in Afghan theatre is also used for the Headquarters' sake. A number of Lessons Identified and Lessons Learned drawn by HQ MNC NE

members have been constantly facilitating the MNC NE mission preparation process for future deployments – its content, main areas to be developed and the overall structure. They will also be used during the HQ MNC NE exercise Crystal Eagle 2012 which will be a perfect platform for knowledge and experience sharing with divisions and brigades nominated by the Framework Nations and Participating States. Taking into consideration the rotation of personnel within the Headquarters, it is of vital importance to keep as much as possible of the valuable ISAF experiences and the mission spirit within the Baltic Barracks so that the next mission preparation process will be at least as good as the previous one.



# BA

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