

The Baltic Amber

Multinational Corps Northeast Magazine



CRYSTAL EAGLE

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2008



Military Know-how in Continuous Demand

A good soldier is a skilful soldier, a real professional, who knows his line of work perfectly. It is also a person, who does not rest on his or her laurels, but works hard to become better and better.

There are several things a soldier can do to improve his or her skills and professionalism. The first and the very basic one is doing his or her best in a national training and proving all this in service afterwards. The continuous enhancement of skills remains a necessity, though.

Development encompasses different areas of activities. It involves keeping in perfect physical shape and developing basic soldier skills, like marksmanship, behaviour on the battlefield, mine awareness, giving first aid and others. Occupying staff positions requires additional skills that need to be improved. Education at that level encompasses taking part in seminars and conferences, enhancement training and courses. It is acquiring skills to operate new computer software or machines. It may

also assume a practical form of informative trips to places where important military campaigns were conducted.

Naturally, one can observe and learn from colleagues taking an active part in the life of the unit. This becomes especially beneficial for soldiers who serve at multinational units or headquarters. Exchange of experiences and getting to know different approaches used by colleagues from other nations becomes a natural part of everyday life.

Life is a continuous trial, whereas the Army is constant training...

The first and foremost test of soldiers' skills is a real operation in the battlefield. It is the fastest, the most effective way of training, but it is extremely dangerous to send soldiers whose experiences are not sufficient. Therefore, the only way to provide conditions for the soldiers' development, to broaden military spirit and to adequately prepare them for facing tasks during missions are exercises of different types. They are the source

of enormous knowledge and guidance for military know-how. It is a perfect way of acquiring skills and receiving practical tips, but, most of all, a means to gain this special kind of sensitivity in the military sense, which makes a soldier not just a tool executing orders, but a thinking tactician, who can strategically lead his people in the meanders of military operations.

The Crystal Eagle exercise, conducted from 18th to 26th September 2008 in Wildflecken, Germany, was an example of such a comprehensive way of testing and improving military skills. The HQ MNC NE personnel, having been supported by different national forces commands and NATO Corps, acted as a higher headquarters for the soldiers from 1st Estonian, 37th German, 1st Latvian and 7th Polish Brigades, who were the Training Audience. The overall aim of the exercise was to train planning, preparing, executing, commanding and assessing Peace Support Operations.

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The Baltic Amber is the authorized official magazine of the Headquarters Multinational Corps Northeast, which shall be a fruitful source of information on the Corps-related issues for members of the Headquarters, assigned formations as well as international visitors and individuals.

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 HQ MNC NE.

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The Baltic Amber Crystal Eagle 2008

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IT IS ALL ABOUT PEACE

About Crystal Eagle

Crystal Eagle is all about Peace Support Operation which is taking place in an Afghanistan-like environment. We are training four Brigades from Estonia, Germany, Latvia and Poland. We have chosen to be geographically located in the southern part of Spain, but we have changed all the names and invented fictional countries as well as the whole political and military situation.

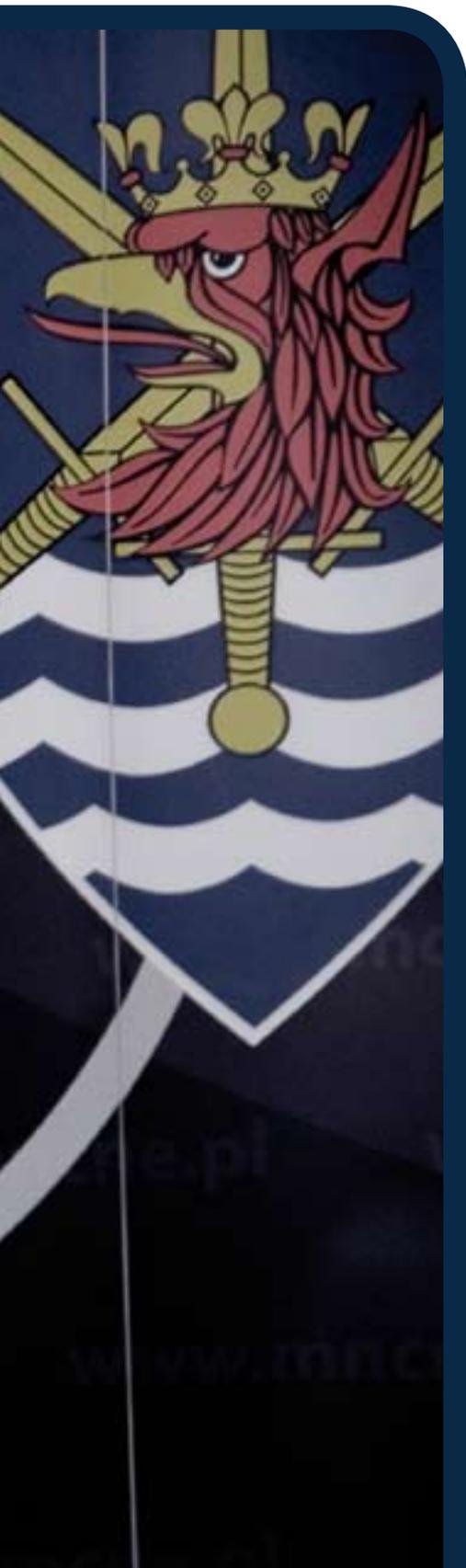
Experience

I was a little bit concerned before I came down here to Wildflecken because I have never been an Exercise Director of an exercise of that size. But the Directing Staff and the Evaluation Centre are giving me outstanding support so I have not been actually lying sleepless in my bed. I feel very confident as Exercise Director. In principle, it is difficult to be the Exercise Director because I

Major General Ole Køppen, MNC NE Deputy Commander, Exercise Director during Crystal Eagle Exercise



am responsible for the practical execution of the exercise. We discuss the play for the next 24 to 48 hours and not a single incident is launched before I have approved it. But it has actually been quite easy, since the Scenario Management Cell is closely following the sequence of events; we are also listening to the Chief Evaluation for recommendations. In fact, we had to change very little.



Structure

We have created an exercise organisation in order to train the Brigades. The Higher Control is giving orders and injections, and answering questions. We also have the Lower Control, which portrays the units belonging to the Brigade staffs so when they give orders to their battalions, there is always someone responding. If the Brigades want to talk, for example, to local mayors or other members of civilian organisations, somebody from the White Cell wearing civilian clothes, but still with an identification tag, will actually play this role to make things as realistic as possible.

Simulation versus reality

It is a balance. The German simulation system KORA we use in the exercise generates the development of situations. This is balanced off by human input via the Joint Exercise Management Module (JEMM). I have to stress that this is a Computer Assisted Exercise – the computers are not the ones that steer and guide the whole job, but only assist us.

It's like a game...

We have tried to produce a play to optimize the Brigades' learning. Everybody has to live up to his or her role and know exactly which part to play. We had a very long preparation for this and people actually quickly got into the rhythm and things got settled. I visited four Brigades and they actually feel they are now in Auriga doing their Peace Support Operation, dealing with roadside bombs, toxic releases from factories or coming under indirect fire. You can see that even people who initially had difficulties are doing very well now because it is so interesting for them to play their roles. They simply enjoy themselves.

Visits to Brigades

I would really like to be a fly on the wall just sitting and observing when nobody is noticing me...But a two-star general cannot go unnoticed. So I usually have a short briefing and some feedback on how they are dealing with the

tasks. I am also there to show interest in what they are doing.

Like in the mission

You should be very careful – even if you have been to Afghanistan for six months, it does not necessarily mean that you have discovered the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth. But we are trying to make this exercise as realistic as possible, and from my knowledge of the scenario and the conditions in Afghanistan, this exercise reflects the reality to the very last degree. We are giving some basic lessons to Brigade staffs. For the German 37th Brigade it is very relevant because they are actually going to Afghanistan next year to perform their responsibilities as Regional Command North.

We train the Brigades to do things in real. By injecting them all those incidents, like roadside bombs, which are unfortunately part of everyday life in Afghanistan, we are trying to set their minds on this environment they are going to work in. Everything is aimed at turning their minds to being in a situation they might face one day. When they try to get some information and meet key leaders during the exercise, in reality they will also talk to a mayor or a clan leader. Also, the video-conferences we are performing seem to be a common part of everyday life in the mission because distances are so great in Afghanistan. We are trying to train some of them to act naturally during a video-conference situation.

Who gains what

The exercise is primarily aimed at training the Brigades, but we will also have some feedback from their behaviour for the benefit of the Headquarters. Our Headquarters staff learn while observing the Brigades planning their operations. This may perhaps differ from what they had expected so they can realize that things can also be done in a different way and maybe not the way we saw it done when we were in Afghanistan. So I think this is working both ways.

MAKING CORPS' EAGLE FLY

Headquarters Multinational Corps Northeast as a NATO Headquarters of Lower Readiness is obliged to train units provided by the framework nations and participating states of the Corps at least once in a three-year Training and Exercise Cycle. **In the Crystal Eagle Exercise conducted from 18th to 26th September 2008, the 1st Estonian, 1st Latvian, 37th German and 7th Polish Brigades acted as a Training Audience whereas the Corps played the role of a higher headquarters.** The main concept was to train those formations in their capabilities for planning, preparing, executing, commanding and evaluating joint and combined Peace Support and Stabilizing Operations. A generic scenario included the Corps' lessons learned from the mission in Afghanistan in which the Corps staff participated in 2007. Moreover, the exercise provided an opportunity to test the Corps' Command and Control Information System (C2IS) Szafran and to support the German Joint Fires Experimentation Project.

From Frozen to Crystal Eagle

The idea of conducting the Crystal Eagle Exercise in an Afghanistan-like scenario, which would constitute part of the mission preparation process, was born in 2006. It was the time when the Corps' staff was

scheduled to go on a mission to Afghanistan in the second half of 2007. Due to the fact that the Corps was eventually deployed half a year before it had been planned, there was not enough time to prepare the exercise. The preparations for Crystal Eagle were stopped, or in other words, frozen. "We stored all the documents and papers we had developed", explained Lieutenant Colonel Roland Schultz, responsible for this process. Therefore, it was decided to re-activate the exercise again in 2008, but this time with the experience from the Afghan mission included.

On the way to Eagle's nest

It took about a year to prepare the Crystal Eagle Exercise 2008 and it was "a hell of a lot of work". Planning was being conducted simultaneously at different levels. Several conferences took place; during the Initial Planning Conference the very basic concept of the exercise was presented, which was further developed during the Main Planning Conference, whereas the Final Coordination Conference was to check if everything was on the right track. Apart from that, there were Core Planning Team meetings conducted internally, seminars, workshops,

reconnaissance trips to the exercise location and a manning conference. An important part of the preparations constituted exercises like Cool Gasket (February 2008), Little Eagle I (March 2008) and Little Eagle II (June 2008).

The preparations also required creating necessary documents for the exercise. They specified the aims of the exercise, a who-is-who section covering the overall exercise structure, issues referring to Real Life Support or ways to evaluate the exercise. It was necessary to invent the whole virtual world in which the exercise play was to take place, including the geographical description of the fictional country Auriga, its history and culture, political situation, details of the operation as well as the scenario of the whole play. However, the time schedule for all this was rather limited. "Our intent was to have it all before the summer when the leave period starts. The second reason was that the rotation of personnel was taking place around the leave period, too", explained Lieutenant Colonel Schultz. Otherwise, the preparations would have lasted much longer.

The Training and Exercise Branch of G-3 Division was in lead of the preparation process, but in fact all respective branches were obliged to produce papers referring to their functional areas. In that process, the preparations made in 2006 turned out to be very useful as were documents received from the Eurocorps, like the country book describing the fictional country. Their exercise "Common Tenacity" served as an inspiration for Crystal Eagle.

This explains why, according to the scenario, the Corps took over the responsibilities from the Eurocorps. When the Eurocorps completed their exercise, which was a Stabilization Operation, the Multinational Corps Northeast "entered" Auriga initiating a Peace Support Operation.



IN THE MEANDERS OF THE EXERCISE STRUCTURE

Crystal Eagle 2008 assumed a form of a "war game" mostly played on computer screens. It very much resembled strategy games with a detailed scenario to be followed. Soldiers had distinctive roles to play and moved across both the real and virtual worlds.

"The Crystal Eagle exercise reflects missions up to 100%. The injections we choose are unfortunately the same that appear in the real world, so you might find Improvised Explosive Devices strikes, sniper attacks, demonstrations, but you might also find press conferences or meetings with local mayors or clan chiefs".
Colonel Klaus Finck, Chief DISTAFF

Crystal Eagle was a Computer Assisted Exercise, in which Lieutenant General Zdzislaw Goral, Commander MNC NE, acted as **Officer Scheduling and Conducting the Exercise** being in charge of the overall control of the exercise. His Deputy, Major General Ole Köppen performed as **Exercise Director**, who executed the Commander's decisions and directed the exercise. He was supported in his work by a **Directing Staff (DISTAFF)** headed by Colonel Klaus Finck.

In order to train four Brigades it was necessary to create an exercise control structure, which would, first of all, replicate the respective players for the **Brigades** and, secondly, controlled, directed and evaluated the exercise. Lieutenant Colonel Carsten Mørkenborg nicely illustrated the overall exercise structure. If four Brigades being the **Training Audience** constituted one layer of cake, they needed a layer above them, which was giving them orders or guidance – this would be **Higher Control (HICON)** replicating a virtual **Aurigan Forces (AUFOR)** Headquarters at the Land Component Command

level. The Training Audience also needed a layer below to task and give orders to. The role of subordinate formations was performed by **Lower Control (LOCON)**. Obviously, the structure was more complicated. It also included **Real Life Support and Communication Information Support, Visitors and Observers' Bureau** and elements, which, in a real mission environment, would not be part of the structure, like **Scenario Management Cell** – driving the exercise play, **White Cells** portraying Aurigan Forces and other civilian role-players or **DISTAFF Support**. All those elements together with HICON and LOCON were controlled by DISTAFF, which was like a steering wheel for the exercise.

A distinctive part within the exercise control structure was the **Evaluation Centre** headed by Brigadier General Josef Heinrichs, Chief of Staff MNC NE, which was directly subordinated to the Exercise Director. Finally, there was also a so-called Flanking Control depicting neighbouring forces, in this case the **Szafran Theatre Task Force**.

THE DEVIL IS IN THE NUMBERS:

SOLDIERS IN THE EXERCISE: 945
NATIONS INVOLVED: 18
VEHICLES BROUGHT TO WILDFLECKEN BY CSB: 95
BUILDINGS OCCUPIED BY EXERCISE SETUP: 19
CABLES: ALMOST 26 KM
TABLES: 1,000
CHAIRS: 2,000
TELEPHONE SETS: 500
FAXES: 9
COMPUTERS: 550
PRINTERS: 53
BEAMERS: 32
VTC TERMINALS: 6
COPY MACHINES: 25
SHREDDERS: 24
MAP BOARDS: 40
INFO BOARDS: 60
PARTITION WALLS: 350
ROLLS PER DAY: 4,000
BREAD PER DAY: 280
MEAT PER DAY: 200 KG
POTATOES PER DAY: 300 KG
DRINKS (WATER, TEA, JUICE, MILK) PER DAY: 1,500 LITRES

AURIGA



PERSEUS



VULPECULA



AQUILA



sometimes the number of potential reactions was indefinite. Therefore, so-called dynamic scripting was used, which allowed for controlling the pace of the play, for adding new incidents, cancelling or repeating some of them if necessary, so that the training objectives could be met. The priority was coherence as the most important feature of a good scenario. Actually, there cannot be a good exercise with an incoherent scenario.

Each day, there were about 150 to 200 planned injected incidents, not counting those dynamically scripted, said Lieutenant Colonel George Markos, Chief of the Scenario Management Cell. All actions were listed in so-called Main Events List and Main Incident List (MEL/MIL), which were managed by the Joint Exercise Management Module (JEMM). It was an electronic database, which helped to control the injected incidents. At a certain time and place, a given piece of information, in other words an injected input, had to reach the Brigades through a phone call, an e-mail or a personal message. Since the heaviest traffic was between the Brigades and Lower Control portraying subordinates to the Brigades, it could, for example, be a report from a unit about an Improvised Explosive Device (IED) attack resulting in some casualties. This provoked the Brigades to take action. Injections could be also initiated by Higher Control or the White Cell.

Another system that enhanced the control of the exercise play was KORA. As long as JEMM was an electronic database of events and incidents, KORA was a computer simulation system. This explains why the exercise was called Computer Assisted Exercise (CAX). With the use of digital maps, it illustrated, for example, both friendly and enemy units, which came into contact and it generated possible results. "We use CAX as an aid to deconflict time and space", says Lieutenant Colonel George Markos. But it seems important to underline the fact that if CAX provided an outcome by which the training objectives would not be accomplished, it would simply be modified and the play would go into another direction. "So the exercise is MEL/MIL driven and CAX

NATO gets involved

"NATO forces enter Auriga to stabilize the situation and prevent further escalation of the conflict"



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supported", summarizes the Chief of the Scenario Management Cell.

Mission Driven

The main idea behind scripting the scenario was making it as realistic as possible. "If we want to integrate lessons learned from Afghanistan, if we want to prepare ourselves and the Brigades for an Afghanistan-like mission, instead of arraying forces on a big map, we selected cities and zoomed in on them", explained Lieutenant Colonel George Markos. Four main cities – Almeria, Cordoba, Grenada and Jaen – were capitals of zones, which remained under the control of a given Brigade. The operations were actually conducted in those cities because nowadays a war is fought on a smaller scale, in the streets, in people's hearts and minds. "If the population feels you are acting in their best interest, they will support you, they are not going to hide the insurgents in their houses and let them operate. But if the population thinks you don't have their best interest in heart, they are going to be like the ocean for the insurgents to swim in", adds Lieutenant Colonel Markos.

Real events happening, for example, in Afghanistan served as an inspiration for the scenario. Therefore, Improvised Explosive Devices strikes, suicide bombers,

LtCol. Markos: "What you want is to dry up this ocean and you want people to support your efforts. Then the insurgents don't have anywhere to go, they will be exposed"

indirect fire, mortar and rocket launchers were included. The Brigades had to interact with key leaders from the community or separatists and conduct real meetings. One of the themes was capturing leaders of the insurgents, which required some intelligence preparations. Furthermore, the Brigades were to prevent sectarian violence from erupting and deal with protests of the local population against the legitimate government failing to provide security to the people and protests of the Bataries against the same government.



NAME: 37TH ARMoured INFANTRY BRIGADE

DATE OF ESTABLISHMENT: 1ST JANUARY 1995

HEADQUARTERS' LOCATION: FRANKENBERG, GERMANY

COMMANDER: BRIGADIER GENERAL JÖRG VOLLMER

NUMBER OF SOLDIERS IN CRYSTAL EAGLE 2008: -100

The 37th Armoured Infantry Brigade was created in 1995 as a successor of the 37th Homeland Security Brigade and placed under NATO administration. Currently, there are almost 7,000 soldiers in the Brigade and its subordinated seven battalions and a company. It is stationed in the "Wittinger" Barracks in Frankenberg, Germany. Its superior command is the 13th Armoured Infantry Division. The Brigade's mission is to train land operations of various intensity.



HAVE YOU NOTICED THE MNC NE EXPERIENCE IMPLEMENTED IN THE EXERCISE?

Brigadier General Jörg Vollmer: You can feel it and sense it in the whole exercise that HQ MNC NE brought in the experience from its Afghan deployment. Even though it is a fictional exercise, the scenario and inputs are very close to reality.

WHAT IS THE IMPORTANCE OF THIS EXERCISE FOR THE BRIGADE?

This is a very valuable experience. We are preparing for the mission in Afghanistan next year and this is the final exercise in a series of exercises we have done for the last two years. It is a great challenge for us to check if we are ready.

WHAT EXACTLY DO YOUR SOLDIERS TRAIN?

We are doing Stabilization Operations, so we are training in a very similar scenario to what we will find at the Regional Command North in Afghanistan next year. We train key leader meetings, Information Operations or patrol engagements to train proper reactions. It is also language training for us. We are practicing using NATO and staff procedures and working together within a multinational environment.



**SCENARIO
MINIMAP**



NAME: 1ST ESTONIAN INFANTRY BRIGADE

DATE OF ESTABLISHMENT: 1ST FEBRUARY 2003

HEADQUARTERS' LOCATION: HARJU COUNTY, ESTONIA

COMMANDER: COLONEL ARTUR TIGANIK

NUMBER OF SOLDIERS IN CRYSTAL EAGLE 2008: 61

The 1st Estonian Infantry Brigade is a light infantry force, which was established on February 1st, 2003. The Brigade's mission is to work in conjunction with territorial defence units to engage, halt and destroy enemy forces in all battle types through deep, close and rear operations. It has to be capable of operating independently and in cooperation with territorial units on the territory of Estonia.



WHAT ARE THE CURRENT PLANS OF THE BRIGADE?

Colonel Artur Tiganik: Back in Estonia, we are going to have another exercise led by the Danish Advisory Training Team based on the same scenario like Crystal Eagle. We will take all our subordinated units and conduct the exercise once again. It will still be a command post exercise with a headquarters represented and no soldiers operating on the battlefields.

WHAT HAS BEEN THE GREATEST CHALLENGE FOR YOUR BRIGADE?

The greatest challenge is the coordination with other Brigades and working under a Land Component Command, using all assets like aviation, intelligence resources and so on. Besides, in the peacetime structure, we are smaller, which makes it easier to work day by day with the same people beside you. Here, we are working in the wartime structure with people who support us only during exercises taking place three, four times a year.

CAN YOU GIVE ME AN EXAMPLE OF THINGS YOUR SOLDIERS ARE DOING IN THE EXERCISE?

They are making analyses of received orders, planning the conduct of operations in Peace Support Operation scenarios, giving orders, instructions and guidance to the subordinated units and, after executing an operation, they are evaluating it and make changes in the plans. There are a lot of experiences from ISAF in the exercise that the Corps is showing us, like the Effects Based Approach to Operations, Information Operations and non-lethal means to defeat the insurgents.



SCENARIO MINIMAP



NAME: 1ST LATVIAN INFANTRY BRIGADE
DATE OF ESTABLISHMENT: 31ST MAY 2004
HEADQUARTERS' LOCATION: RIGA, LATVIA
COMMANDER: COLONEL DZINTARS ROGA
NUMBER OF SOLDIERS IN CRYSTAL EAGLE 2008: 50

The mission of the 1st Latvian Infantry Brigade is to conduct operations within the national defence concept and in the event of internal crises. It also contributes to NATO or coalition-led missions with a long-term goal of creating a combat capable, self-sustainable unit, fully interoperable with NATO. The Brigade commands two Light Infantry Battalions, an Engineer Company and a Combat Service Support Company. The total strength of the Brigade is around 1,100 soldiers.



WHAT ARE YOUR SOLDIERS EXACTLY TRAINING IN THE EXERCISE?

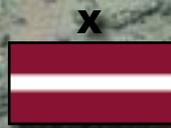
Colonel Dzintars Roga: We are conducting Stability Support Operations for the government of Auriga. We are conducting clear-hold-build operations in the cities; we have three cities in our area of responsibility – Almeria, Gadex and Blaza. We are also ensuring freedom of movement along main supply roads and, of course, reacting to incidents the insurgents do to us.

WHAT DO YOU EXPECT YOUR SOLDIERS TO LEARN IN THE EXERCISE?

First of all, to have a common understanding and capability of working in a multinational environment. Secondly, to plan and carry out tasks and manage how the units and its subordinates operate. The soldier can learn from the Corps' experiences in ISAF – how CIMIC is working, how to use the power and indirect support assets as well as force protection, which is a completely new system for us, but we begin to understand it.

HOW WILL YOU USE THE EXPERIENCE GAINED IN THE EXERCISE?

We will try to integrate the experiences in Standard Operating Procedures back home, also at the national Armed Forces' level, and maybe we will also make some changes in our staff organisational structure. We are not going to be deployed as a brigade soon, like the German Brigade, but we continue to contribute to missions at a tactical level, sending staff officers for international missions. In October 2008, the Brigade is sending personnel to the Operational Mentoring and Liaison Team in Afghanistan.



SCENARIO MINIMAP



NAME: 7TH POLISH COASTAL DEFENCE BRIGADE

DATE OF ESTABLISHMENT: 2001 WITH ROOTS DATING BACK TO THE 18TH CENTURY

HEADQUARTERS' LOCATION: SLUPSK, POLAND

COMMANDER: SINCE 17TH OCTOBER, BRIGGEN JANUSZ SOBOLEWSKI; DURING THE EXERCISE, COLONEL DARIUSZ GÓRNIAK

NUMBER OF SOLDIERS IN CRYSTAL EAGLE 2008: 7

The roots of the 7th Polish Coastal Defence Brigade are related to the 7th National Cavalry Brigade from the 18th century. The Brigade's direct predecessor was the 7th Mechanized Brigade created in 1994, which was renamed 7th Polish Coastal Defence Brigade in 2001. It is one of three Brigades belonging to the 12th Mechanized Division. The Brigade consists of the Brigade staff, six battalions and five companies, altogether 2,300 soldiers. Its insignia – the anchor – cultivates the unit's naval traditions.



WHAT MAY THE PERSONNEL LEARN FROM AN EXERCISE SUCH AS THE CRYSTAL EAGLE?

Colonel Dariusz Górniak: This is chiefly a practical operation of personnel in their functional areas and getting them used to working together particularly in the cells which are exclusively established for a mission such as the Operations Centre, whose personnel work together for the first time. The very process of exercise preparation, participation in conferences and training were kind of a test for us.

WHAT AIMS DOES THE BRIGADE WANT TO ACHIEVE BY TAKING PART IN THE EXERCISE CRYSTAL EAGLE 2008?

We want to prepare our staff for participation in stabilisation and peace missions in which our officers and non-commissioned officers will take part as EUFOR in Bosnia and Herzegovina in 2009. Although the scope of tasks is going to be different than the one trained during the exercise as the situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina is calmer, our personnel are certainly going to benefit from it.

WHAT DO THE PERSONNEL DO IN PRACTICAL TERMS? WHAT DO THEY TRAIN?

They carry out duties as if they were deployed to a mission. The Brigade headquarters coordinate and command operations of the sub-units based in various provinces. Such operations may for instance involve a response to an attack of an IED against a convoy, evacuation of the injured and removal of unexploded bombs. CIMIC cells carry out a number of projects for the civilian population. A great challenge for the PsyOps cell is the preparation and promotion of free and democratic elections.



SCENARIO MINIMAP

Higher Control (HICON)

Part of an organisational structure, which portrays a higher headquarters for the Brigades, in this case Aurigan Forces Headquarters. HICON issues orders and commands the Brigades, it coordinates their inputs and the play itself in close cooperation with the Scenario Management Cell. HICON consists of Current Plans and Current Operations (both creating the Combined Joint Operations Centre), Intelligence and the Logistic Cell.

Battle rhythm – a fixed schedule of meetings for each exercise day, starting with strictly real life related issues, through organisational and technical exercise management, ending up with meetings reflecting AUFOR operations.

A room of information

There was a need for an operational part that would deal, among other things, with reports from the Brigades and forward them to their superior command. It was the Combined Joint Operations Centre (CJOC), a centre, which normally functions in any operation. CJOC is a place where all kind of information is received. This applies not only to the Brigades' reporting, but also to information coming from International Organisations, Non-Governmental Organisations, from the Ministry level, Ambassadors' level and many others. Chief Operations, Lieutenant Colonel Carsten Mørkenborg, was in charge of the CJOC. There were two sections the CJOC consisted of, namely the Current Plans Section doing all short-term planning called fragmentary orders issued for single operations and the Current Operations Section, which was in charge of their execution.

Reminiscence of ISAF experience

Generally speaking, the exercise CJOC area mirrored the one in ISAF. "Of course CJOC in ISAF was a little bit bigger, but we took all our experience from ISAF and implemented it in the exercise CJOC. The procedures are the same, the setup is the same and the means of communications are

"In the sequence of planning – refinement – execution I am the last one, but I may also say that I am the first one because the assessment goes to the table first" – commented LtCol. Schipke.

also the same to the extent possible", explained Lieutenant Colonel Ralf Schipke, Shift Director.

Watchkeepers, just like in ISAF, were the first point of contact. Any kind of information that reached CJOC had to land on their desk. The presence of representatives of all functional areas, liaison officers from different organisations in CJOC ensured the

appropriate influx of information. In fact, information management was considered by Lieutenant Colonel Ralf Schipke as the most challenging task in CJOC "but I think we found a good

"Once you join the evening update in our CJOC and close your eyes, you would have an impression you were still on a mission; it is exactly the same, only the names are different", summarized Col. Finck, Chief DISTAFF.

way with the means we saw in ISAF", he quickly added.

Obviously, for the needs of the exercise there was no reason to run day and night shifts, as is usually done during missions. There was an extended day shift instead. Nevertheless, due to a number of new personnel at the HQ MNC NE, shift changes did take place, for which all necessary procedures applied. In accordance with the battle rhythm, a morning briefing took place that was more related to the exercise organisation, whereas an evening update was more exercise play focused. The idea was to ensure the right reporting from the subordinate units so there was no information loss as well as to monitor the ongoing operations and provide support for the units, if necessary.

Despite the fact that HQ MNC NE personnel were not the Training Audience, they benefited from the exercise a lot. It was because the exercise was very much inspired by the ISAF mission, including Standard Operating Procedures, functionality/structure of the Headquarters, reporting system, communication means or even the use of video-conferences, which are a comfortable tool of contact over large distances. They could test themselves in performing a given function, being challenged by questions they might face during a mission. Moreover, it was a great chance to introduce new HQ MNC NE personnel to exercises like Crystal Eagle 2008.

Multiplication of response cells

Individual parts of LOCON are called response cells, which can be of different types. The first type of response cells replicate major units subordinated to the Brigades, like battalions or companies, everything that the Brigade has actually under its command. Each Brigade has its own response cell.

Land Component Command troops constitute the second block of response cells within LOCON. These are formations subordinated to Higher Control (HICON), which cooperate with the Training Audience. For example, if the Brigade requests Explosive Ordinance Disposal support, an appropriate response cell gets involved.

Finally, National Support Elements constitute the last part of LOCON. In real missions, those elements are responsible for connecting troops with the home nation, ensuring the national chain of command and providing, for example, logistic support.

All in all, 126 people created LOCON. Each response cell consisted of approximately 20 to 30 people. Apart from the Chief of LOCON, Colonel Jerzy Fela, his Deputy, Major Tomasz Garbarczyk and a clerk Warrant

**Maj. Garbarczyk:
“LOCON provides role players – battalion commanders, national commanders, whatever is necessary to make the exercise play as real as possible.”**

Officer, Jarosław Byjoś, who were HQ MNC NE members, the rest of the personnel were coming from different units and nations. The greatest challenge for them was to find their roles in the exercise. “They saw each other for the first time during this exercise so it was very crucial at the beginning to prepare them and to train them for the first day of the exercise”, admitted Major

Garbarczyk, who was also in position of Staff Officer Coordination and Simulation Operator.

“LOCON provides role players – battalion commanders, national commanders, whatever is necessary to make the exercise play as real as possible.”

Workload in LOCON

In each response cell, people had to perform various functions. For example, in response cells portraying units subordinated to Brigades there were battalion commanders played for example by company commanders, there were Subject Matter Experts in different functional areas like artillery, logistics, army aviation and many others. In addition, some people were trained as operators of the simulation system KORA, which was a necessary tool to follow the movements of troops on the battlefield and forward orders to units. That was the reason for having 20, 30 people in each response cell, explained Major Garbarczyk.

LOCON had to inject approximately 100 incidents per day. All of them were managed by the Joint Exercise Management Module (JEMM) system. They could, for example, be a request from a platoon in the field for close air support. This prompted the given Brigade to do some planning and to eventually react.

How different elements of the exercise play overlap and intermingle can be exemplified by the coordination of the injections with the Scenario Management Cell or cooperation with the White Cells, which portrayed a civilian part of the world. “We had a demonstration in Andudzar and the injected incident actually started in LOCON because we reported that the leader of the demonstration wanted to talk to the Brigades, and the White Cell actually had to organise a key leader meeting. They provided a role player for this leader whom the Brigade Commander was able to talk to and it was actually taking place

Lower Control (LOCON)

In real life, the Brigades co-exist with national or governmental institutions, civil organisations and other military formations. In the exercise reality, it is not possible to have them all involved. Therefore, the task of Lower Control (LOCON) is to replicate some of those elements of the world to create an impression of credibility and reality for the Brigades.

IN THE SHADE OF WHITE

“Our task is to provide additional support, constraints or information for the Training Audience to make the exercise more realistic” – with these words, Lieutenant Colonel Lothar Hoffmann, Chief of the White Cell, summarized the essence of the that part of the exercise organisation.

The White Cell, similarly to LOCON, illustrated those parts of the world, which would be a natural environment for the Brigades in a real mission. Therefore, there were Aurigan National Security role players, CIMIC role players and role players of civilian organisations, Information Operations role players as well as media players supported by the Media Information Centre. Those numerous roles were performed by the HQ MNC NE personnel, Danish and German reservists, an officer from the NATO Rapid Deployable Corps - Greece and even a representative of the International Red Cross, 17 people altogether. Working at the White Cell seemed to be both inspiring and demanding. Due to a limited number of personnel, they had to perform varied roles at a time. They were like actors wearing different masks. The spectrum of roles played by the White Cell was really impressive.

ACTING MISSION PREPARATION

It turned out that being a good actor and a good soldier does not differ so much, at least in the sphere of preparations. Entering into the role is crucial. As a result, it took a lot of time for White Cell members to prepare for playing their roles. Sometimes it was enough to make a phone call, answer an email, while in other cases White Cell members had to go to real meetings with representatives of the Brigades. The very basic source of information

was a co-called Country Book. Knowledge of the history, culture and ethic specifics was simply essential.

Then, there was the studying of all documents related to the play, which gave a detailed picture of the situation. Obviously, following day-to-day news referring to the area of interest was necessary. The exchange of curricula vitae of key leaders engaged in a meeting was also a common practice. Sometimes preparation of possible questions and responses was useful, even though some ad hoc issues have always emerged. The final element of preparations was changing a uniform into civilian clothes so that even the appearance was coherent with the role. A role player was ready to meet Brigades' representatives real live.

It is important to notice that all standard procedures in organising meetings were adhered to, like sending and accepting invitations, making formal arrangements of meetings as well as all issues related to so-called cultural awareness. As a result, representatives of the Brigades and host nation always started their meeting with small talk on family or country issues. In real life, this might take long hours. Only when a friendly relationship had been established, they addressed topics, which were the main reason for the meeting.

In this area, a very valuable source of information was the experience a lot of White Cell members had gathered in the Afghan mission. Therefore, they usually knew from their own records or their colleagues' shared understanding how their characters should behave, what they would normally do and what should be avoided. Nevertheless, it was interesting for them to compare their views with those presented by the Brigades, as all people have different experiences and may act differently in the same situations.



LTC HOFFMANN:

“Traditionally, the White Cell is everything between the own forces (good guys) and the opposing forces (bad guys). The White Cell gives the play a “real touch” depicting the political part of the international community, the Host Nation acting in the theatre and media representatives. In this way, the White Cell can restrict or widen the training options and, therefore, increase or decrease the training demands and pressure exerted by the exercise play on the Training Audience.”



MAJ HARACEWICZ:

“I was not only the mayor of Almeria, but also the Governor of Almeria province as well as Senator to the Aurigan Parliament, so I had a meeting with the Commander of the Latvian Brigade. Now I am in the phase of preparing to be the mayor of a small town of more or less 25,000 people in the German Brigade area of responsibility.”



MAJ GACKENHOLTZ:

“Yesterday, I played the minority leader of Almeria, so my job was to talk to the Commander of the Latvian Brigade. It was our first meeting so we tried to find out how we can work together.”



LTCOL KARL:

"I worked as a cultural adviser in Afghanistan, but I know just the position of the other side of the table so this was interesting now to be a Batari leader, for example, or mayor. It is like looking in the mirror."



MAJ TORBICKI:

"The White Cell is the most entertaining part of this exercise. We not only support the play in a serious way, but we also have fun meeting people from the Training Audience. This is like a movie, we prepare for players many challenging and unexpected situations the Training Audience might encounter in the mission area. We play the local leaders, representatives of various organisations and ordinary citizens. Sometimes, we are playing the bad guys as well. We try to provide not only valuable information, but sometimes we pretend to do business with them, sell a mobile phone or buy a cigarette."



CAPT KIRIAKOREZIS:

"I am playing many roles - the commander of the Cordoba Second Brigade, Commander of the First Brigade in Granada or Commander of the 4th Brigade in Almeria."



Working title of the play: Meeting with the Aurigan National Security Forces

Release date: 22 September 2008

Genre: drama

Production: White Cell

Director: Lieutenant Colonel Hoffmann

Screenplay: based on the exercise scenario play

Starring: Chief of the Aurigan Police; representatives of the German 37th Brigade and Polish 7th Brigade

Stage props: a square table, chairs, maps of Auriga on the wall, soft drinks and fruit prepared for the participants of the meeting

Tagline: the second meeting at the working level between the Chief of the Aurigan Police and representatives of the German 37th Brigade and Polish 7th Brigade to foster cooperation

Script summary: Shaking hands and greetings start the meeting. A few nice words will create a pleasant, friendly atmosphere to break the ice. The participants will find their seats at the table. Before the agenda of the meeting is presented, everybody introduces themselves. But it is not going to be such an official meeting like the first one. An invitation for tea initiates the small talk. The people become relaxed.

As soon as good grounds for more serious talks are established, the participants touch on the topics this meeting has been arranged for. In fact, the cooperation between the Brigades and the Aurigan Border Police has already started. This meeting provides the first chance to summarize its effects and to set the stage for its further development. The Chief of the Border Police requests for more support, as it is difficult to repel attacks being equipped with light weapons only. This support will also apply to training - "We will support you", replies the German Brigade and presents the schedule of the training. The Polish Brigade and the Border Police discuss sending joint patrols to the border area. The meeting is concluded with the Chief of the Border Police saying "Thank you very much. I am very satisfied with the results of this meeting". It means that the door for subsequent meetings has been left open.



HQ MNC NE PERSONNEL & TR



TRAINING BRIGADES' REPRESENTATIVES

GET YOUR FREE SUPPORT TODAY!

“Real Life Support means everything what is around the exercise, starting from messing, accommodation, throughout transportation, even to garbage disposal...”

Colonel Jacek Rolak
Deputy Commander and Chief of Staff
of the Command Support Brigade

It is important to differentiate those parts of the exercise, which have been created to purely fulfil training objectives and those, which refer to real life and shall ensure the well-being of the soldiers stationed in the exercise area.

Really in support

The main task of the Command Support Brigade (CSB) is to provide the Real Life Support as well as the Real Life Communication Information Systems for the Multinational Corps Northeast. Therefore, the personnel of the Headquarters CSB and its subordinated battalions filled the majority of the posts in a so-called Real Life Support Coordination Centre, created for the needs of the exercise. Additionally, the Centre was reinforced by members of the Headquarters Multinational Corps Northeast as well as the German 37th Brigade as the host nation.

“The Command Support Brigade provides people to the Real Life Support Coordination Centre, Theatre Task Force Szafran, or people for trouble shooting in the helpdesk. From my perspective, it is all Real Life Support because even a team trying to repair a telephone is not doing it for a paper play, but for real”, Colonel Jacek Rolak describes the involvement of the CSB people in Real Life Support.

Basically speaking, there were two areas the Real Life Support Coordination Centre focused on. First of all, it was Real Life Support, such as messing, accommodation, daily business and transportation. Secondly, it was ensuring Real Life Support in Communication Information Systems, which meant providing equipment, communication and provision of logistic support. The Command Support Brigade also provided medical support for the exercise participants.

How to prepare?

“The Command Support Brigade was attending all conferences and meetings leading to the exercise starting with the Initial Planning Conference, through Main Planning Conference up to the Final Coordination Conference. In the meantime, we conducted three reconnaissance trips to Wildflecken to reconnoiter the area and even measure the buildings and rooms”, explains Colonel Jacek Rolak. Afterwards, special sketches were prepared to allot rooms and adequately arrange desks or computers.

The soldiers of the German 37th Brigade were the first ones that reached Wildflecken. Their initial task was to prepare conditions for the CSB team to start working.

When the soldiers from the Command Support Brigade arrived, totally empty

buildings and rooms were waiting for them. Together with their German colleagues from the 37th Brigade, they had to prepare everything. For instance, chairs and tables were taken from the Army Warfighting Simulation Centre, but they had to be brought into the buildings and arranged according to the sketches. A lot of equipment had to be transported to Wildflecken, such as Remus Cabins, transmission shelters, computer equipment, telephones, printers, beamers and many others. They all had to be installed in the right places. The most challenging situation was, as Colonel Rolak remarked, when the arrangements were changed at the very last moment and required a swap of rooms or moving pieces of equipment to other places.

If it were not for the host nation support, a lot of things would not have been possible. In fact, they were in charge of bringing in security forces, providing telephone lines or preparing accommodation for the soldiers. The CSB had to check if everything was prepared in the right way and complete the preparations until the first exercise participants arrived. They had just one week to ready 19 buildings for the exercise setup and prepare working space for 945 soldiers.

“I am personally very happy with the job done by the CSB and the battalions. I was also told that everybody was satisfied with the support provided.”



DO NOT TAKE ANYTHING WITH YOU THAT YOU COULD SHARE WITH YOUR SUCCESSORS

Commander of the Multinational Corps Northeast

Lieutenant General Zdzisław Goral, an Officer Scheduling and Conducting the Exercise, talks about the exercise, changes in the Corps and the development of the soldierly art.

Aнна Gatyga: General, what does it mean that you are an Officer Scheduling and Conducting the Exercise?

My most important task is connected with achieving goals set for the exercise, which means that I have to control all the matters starting from regrouping, deployment, setting everything in the proper place, commencing the exercise from the operational point of view, reacting to everything that takes place during the exercise and discussing the results of the exercise when it is finished.

This exercise is a part of a bigger training cycle, the purpose of which is to guarantee continuity and improving of soldiers' abilities. What is the rank of Crystal Eagle in that context?

The significance of the exercise is enormous. NATO corps are required to conduct appropriate number of exercises and assume the role of the land component headquarters within their 3-year cycles. In 2006 Crystal Eagle exercise was not organised as the Corps had to focus on preparation

of the personnel for the mission in Afghanistan, which was scheduled for 2007. Our purpose was to conduct in 2008 such a big exercise with the participation of formations attached for the time of the operation. The other purpose of this exercise is to implement all the experiences gained in Afghanistan and introduction of those experiences into practical life. Additionally, it helps the Corps to prepare to the subsequent mission in Afghanistan in 2010.

What is the benefit for the servicemen of the Corps if the Brigades are the Training Audience during the exercise?

The benefit refers mainly to the organisational experience and training experience as we all learn during such events, especially as we are abroad. Moreover, a part of the personnel plays the role of the training audience in HICON or LOCON implementing training tasks as elements of land component command. For instance, for Combined Joint Operations Centre and Joint Intelligence Centre it is a perfect practical exercise which constitutes a form of repetition of what was taking place in Afghanistan. I, my Deputy and Chief of Staff control this exercise.

In general terms a soldier should constantly develop their skills. What elements are most important in training servicemen?

Some people say that a person goes to the army to learn how to handle arms. However, it is not all. A serviceman acquires in the army many other abilities, such as the ability to stay in a group, to cooperate, cope with difficult situations and stress, etc.

What kind of training is most beneficial for the personnel of the Corps?

An exercise or training with the use of developed organisational structure of the unit is the most advanced form of training. Command Post Exercise is a practical exercise and the example of such a most advanced form. A serviceman is supposed to train and present how he is prepared to perform tasks related to his post during crises, Peace Support Operations as well as W time.

And apart from exercises and training, where a serviceman can learn new abilities?

A serviceman learns in his own unit and subunit where he undergoes a specified training program.

Is there any difference between development route of a serviceman in a national unit and multinational unit, as for instance the Corps?

A considerable difference is related to the fact that in multinational units the serviceman shall concentrate how to cooperate and communicate using NATO Standard Operating Procedures, which are the basis for understanding and exercising. Language aspects play a significant role in that case. Whereas, combat preparation constitutes mainly a national aspect, although there are also common field exercises where the servicemen are acquainted with, for instance, equipment of their colleagues from other armies.

On one hand the army is trying to continue certain manner of operation and on the other hand the army must respond to political changes, new challenges, new equipment. How does the Corps cope with such a wide range of changes?

Security is related to the constant process of changes. New threats such as terrorism or ethnic conflicts appear in various regions. NATO, all its commands and armies must adjust, which finally means that they are subject to the process of constant changes.

NATO for the first time changed its concept of action after the Cold War ended in 1991 and then almost a decade later in 1999. Subsequent change of concept appeared after a terrorist attack against the World Trade Centre in 2001. NATO Response Force, that is rapid reaction forces, were created then. Our Corps also needs to respond to such changes. That is why we take into consideration the situation, for instance in Afghanistan, while training. It is reflected for example in the scenario of our exercise. Additionally, we have to take into account new technology. That is why we implement Szafran, the new Command and Control Information System. We need a good Command and Control Information System which will enable us communication with all NATO headquarters and formations.

What is the effect of constant rotation of personnel in the Corps? At this moment almost half of the personnel is new...

Obviously for the Commander the most convenient solution would be to have personnel on the constant basis, however, life is different. That is why it is important that personnel leaving the Corps shall share their experience gained in the Corps and during the mission with their colleagues who will assume their posts.

It has become a rule that the staff of the Corps like ours reaches a very high level of operational preparation and then there is a certain decrease in performance pertaining to the fact that qualified personnel leave and their positions are held by new personnel. After some time the level is increasing again.

During the last seating of the Corps Committee a document concerning new training concept of the Corps was signed. What is it about?

In relation to our 3-year training cycle the Corps should undergo a certain number of trainings as a NATO Corps, however due to the participation in the mission in Afghanistan we are not able to comply with these requirements. That is why, new training directive has been elaborated. According to the directive the Corps implements the programme of preparations for the mission and afterwards an exercise for nominated formations will be conducted. The benefit is that experience gained during the mission will again be used during the exercise.

Will the activities of the Corps be more mission-oriented?

Yes, because it is almost certain that every three years we will go for missions on a rotational basis. That is why we should focus our efforts on training for missions: from one mission to the next one, with a major exercise as for instance Crystal Eagle in between, where we

will participate as Land Component Command. As a headquarters we need to provide training in order to be efficient as the corps headquarters or as the land component headquarters. The exercise will be concentrated on subsequent mission with implementation of the experience gained during the previous mission.

All NATO corps implement such a concept. Art. 5 relating to the collective defence is no longer talked about in NATO. It is rather other tasks such as Crisis Response Operations and consultancy, cooperation that are mainly referred to. Obviously we may not forget our obligations stemming from Art. 5 as sooner or later there will be the need to deal according to it and for sure we will plan some exercise with selected aspects of high intensity warfare.

How is the Corps going to develop? What is going to change?

I have discussed the issues concerning our goals in the field of training. I will attempt to develop the structure of our Headquarters so that additional divisions of G-7 and G-9 should be formed.

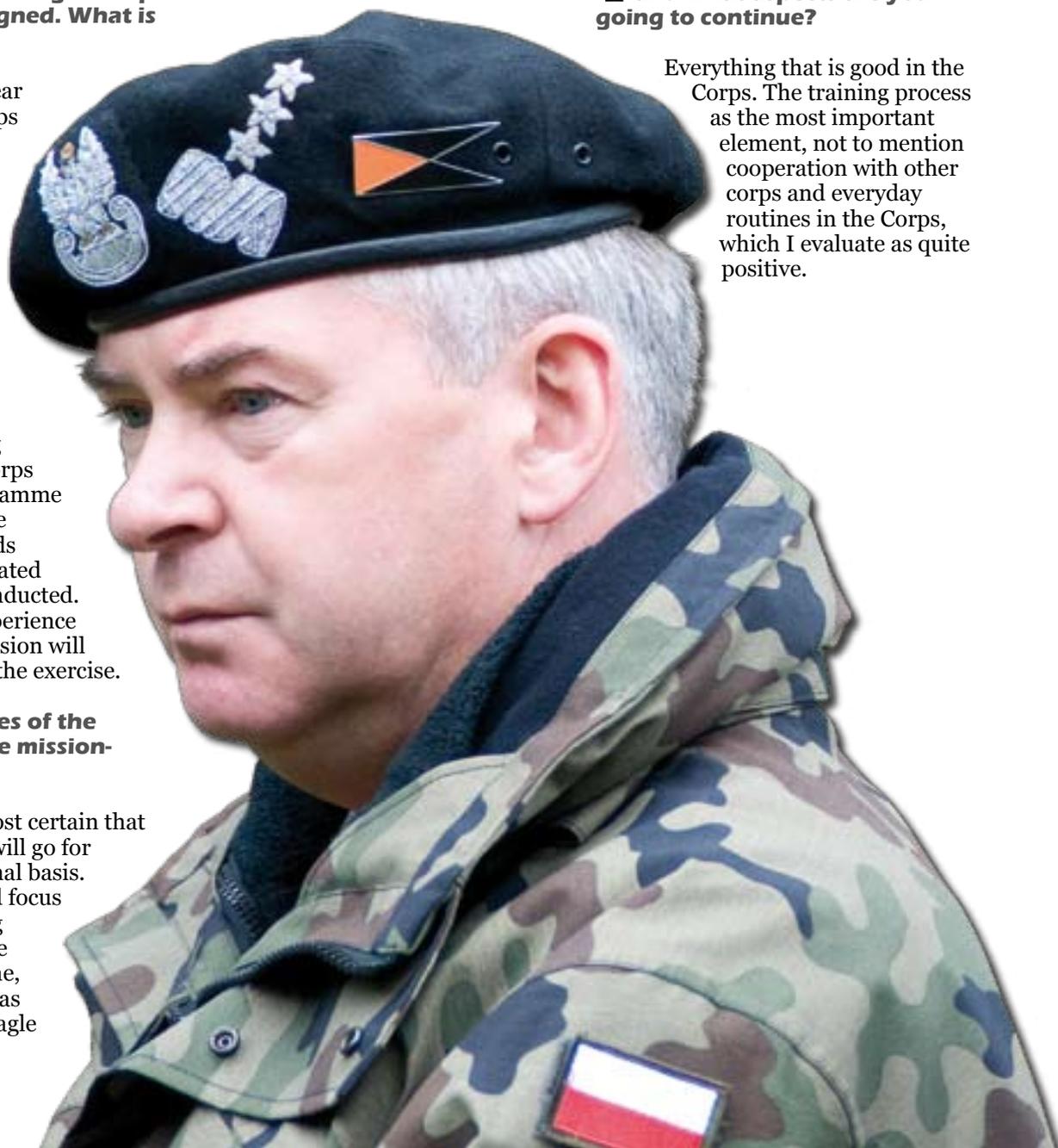
What else? The training goal for the next year is preparation for the mission in Afghanistan, where the Headquarters' personnel will be deployed in 2010.

A new building in the barracks is under construction. Additional offices will be constructed; we will have a real conference room and space to conduct various trainings and conferences.

Moreover, we have already started the preparations of the 10th anniversary of the operation of the Corps; we are on a good way for the solemn ceremony of the anniversary.

They are the planned changes and what aspects are you going to continue?

Everything that is good in the Corps. The training process as the most important element, not to mention cooperation with other corps and everyday routines in the Corps, which I evaluate as quite positive.



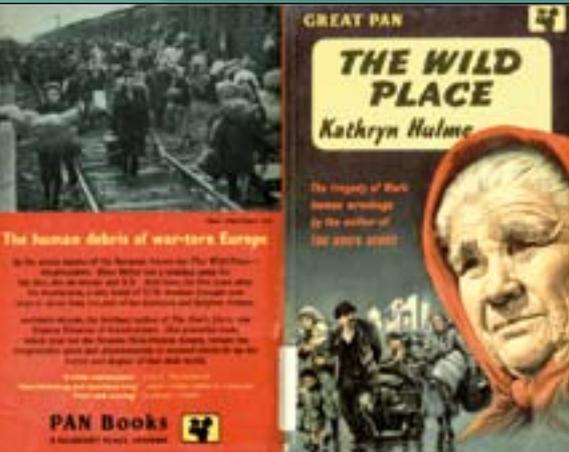
IN WILDFLECKEN



A small town located in the northern part of Bavaria attracts people's interest due to its quietness, beauty of the Rhön hills, trim houses and interesting military history.

This inconspicuous town has been a military base for years. Its history goes back to 1937 when a large training area was established there. The camp was originally designed for 9,000 soldiers and 1,500 horses. The Wildflecken Training Area was used by the Wehrmacht and the Waffen-SS until the end of the World War II.

After the war, the base was transformed into a Displaced Persons' Camp under the auspices of the United Nations Relief Rehabilitation Administration (UNRRA) and, later, the International Refugee Organisation (IRO). It housed approximately 20,000 people, primarily Poles. The camp named by the Poles "Burzyn" was functioning until 1951. The memento of that time is a Polish cemetery located nearby.



Kathryn Hulme in her book "The Wild Place" described her experiences while working as a UNRRA officer at the Displaced Persons' Camp in Wildflecken. The book won the Atlantic Non-fiction Prize Award. Her subsequent book "The Nun's story" inspired by her friend's experiences was made into a Hollywood film with Audrey Hepburn.

When the camp was disbanded, the base was used by the United States as a training camp. Among the soldiers serving at Wildflecken was also Elvis Presley. Over the years, more than 4.5 million soldiers from the USA and NATO units conducted training there to maintain their combat readiness.

In 1994 the U.S. forces left Wildflecken. Shortly thereafter, the German Bundeswehr assumed control of the camp. Subsequently, the Rhön Barracks became the home of the Army Warfighting Simulation Centre.



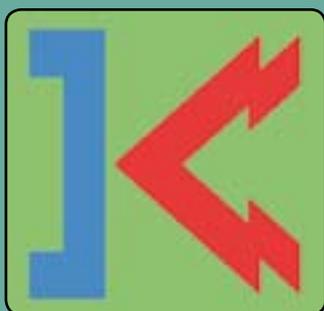
WILDFLECKEN!

Located in Wildflecken, in the middle of Germany, in the middle of Europe, easily accessible from all directions, undisturbed by extreme weather, the Army Warfighting Simulation Centre trains soldiers of the German Bundeswehr as well as other NATO members.

The Army Warfighting Simulation Centre (AWSC) is a training centre for higher staffs from brigade level upwards. It has been operating since 1998. Until now, it assisted in about 100 exercises, which means that there are approximately 8 to 12 exercises per year organised at the Centre. In most cases these are German exercises, however, about one third of them are multinational exercises at the NATO level.

The Centre can be described more like a supporting Centre in preparing, running and evaluating exercises. First of all, the Centre prepares the

simulation system's functioning and supports its operation during the exercise. Due to this system, there is no need for training staffs of brigades, divisions or component commands to act in the terrain. Moreover, the Centre offers assistance in Real Life Support issues. With the assistance of the Army Warfighting Simulation Centre, it was possible to organise the Corps exercise Crystal Eagle 2008



in the form it was conducted. The German simulation system KORA/OA was used in the exercise to display the movements of troops in the terrain. Moreover, the Centre supported the

Corps in several issues including preparing accommodation for soldiers or providing some furniture for the buildings.

Living history of the Rhön Barracks

Mr Adolf Kreutzpaintner knows every exhibited item in the museum located inside the Rhön Barracks. He knows the human history hidden behind it. He can describe the background of any picture displayed in the museum. He is not only the person taking care of the museum, but also the soul of the place.

The museum was established in 1993. Most of the exhibited items are Mr Kreutzpaintner's private property. Nevertheless, he is fond of any person who comes to see the collection. The visitors can learn about the camp from static displays. But the collection of objects related to different stages of the camp's history is probably the most interesting. There are parts of uniforms and military equipment, rifles, gas masks, old telephones, ammunition and many others. There are also old books, like the one devoted to the artillery from 1905, which contains colour pictures, pocket dictionaries for soldiers and even prayer books.

As Mr Kreutzpaintner states, between 5,000 – 6,000 people visit the museum per year. They are both soldiers and civilians from all over the world, sometimes they are people who were even born in Wildflecken in the period when the camp had hosted displaced persons.

“We are simulating the real world. In former times, this was done in the terrain, now the terrain is simulated, the tanks in the terrain and weapon systems are simulated as well as day and night, the weather and many other things”, explains Colonel Peter Schütz, the Commander of the AWSC.

MAJOR JAN MATULA, CZECH ARMY, JOINT INTELLIGENCE CENTRE



The Startex Briefing took place at the cinema, which is inside the Rhön Barracks. There were a lot of participants so the place was rather crowded. But it was interesting. We received a clear picture of the exercise – the things we needed to know, what we could expect from this exercise, how it would be conducted and what the main task to achieve was. Obviously, the scenario of the exercise was mentioned as well. But there was not anything that was useful for my area of interests – GEO/MET. The main job of my branch is to support the exercise participants. Therefore, prior to the exercise, we had to prepare a lot of geographic data. In Wildflecken, we only adjusted it in accordance to the participants' needs.

Like many of my colleagues I took a coach to Wildflecken. All in all, 6 coaches travelled from Szczecin to Wildflecken within 3 days. I was lucky to get a seat on a VIP coach. Later it turned out that the coach differed from other coaches in that the seats were slightly longer. And so the number of seats was the same but there was less space... Fortunately, we were only 30 so the trip was quite comfortable. We had stops every second hour. After 8-hour trip on German motorways we reached Wildflecken. It was 6 p.m. We went for in-processing...

MAJOR ROBERT MORDAK, POLISH ARMY, COMBINED JOINT OPERATIONS CENTRE



LIEUTENANT COLONEL VINCENT SAINT-DENIS, FRENCH ARMY, SERVING AT GERMAN-NETHERLANDS CORPS, SCENARIO CONTROL

On September 15th a pre-exercise started, the aim of which was to train the procedures for all cells in the Exercise Control. After an individual training on our management system that enables to follow the development of the script, we had training within respective cells using the system. Then we rehearsed the first day of the exercise in real time with all procedures, meetings etc. As a result, on September 18th, we were not so much concerned with the current day, but we focused on preparing the next day. The main difference for us before and after the main part of the exercise started was that, in the beginning, we prepared ourselves without the Training Audience, which was easy – we just followed the scenario. Then, we had the Training Audience to train, so we had to adjust the play to their reactions, which was not always what we had expected.

MAJOR ARTURAS RADVILAS, LITHUANIAN ARMY, COMBINED JOINT OPERATIONS CENTRE

I am a RFI manager (Request For Information) so I am responsible for the information that comes in and goes out. For example, if the Training Audience requests something, the message first comes to me and I decide where to forward it to. Therefore, the most challenging thing was the startex of the exercise because of the huge information flow. Everybody wanted to receive the answer in a short time. But there are a lot of things I will remember from this exercise. I have not been in such a type of exercise before so everything going on here is very interesting to me, such as how things are coordinated and how the centre is managed. It was a very useful experience for my future military career.



MASTER SERGEANT IVO KASK, ESTONIAN ARMY, DISTAFF

It is the first such huge exercise for me. Because I have only had a two-month experience with the MNC NE, I am still looking to find my way. The briefings we got were useful for me because it is always good to know what is going on, what kind of software and systems we are using and what kind of experience we will eventually get. I think I have learnt much more than at the Headquarters in Szczecin, not being so much concentrated on my branch. Here, I get to know the people, I notice what is going on around me and learn how the system works. I even recalled some words from the German language as I cooperate a lot with German soldiers. And all this will help me in future exercises, of course.



EXERCISE IMPRESSIONS

I came on September 2nd to Wildflecken because I had to prepare the evaluation conference. The first days I was a little bit confused because I could not even find my building, as the area is very large. So the familiarization was my first task but then, of course, I had to study all the documents related to the exercise. It is the first exercise of this size in my military career. But all in all, I am really positively surprised by almost everything here – the accommodation is above my expectations, the food is fine, the equipment works perfectly so I have nothing to complain about.

MAJOR RENE HÁZ, SLOVAK ARMY, EVALUATION CENTRE



The in-processing was really well organised. Two buses arrived in Wildflecken at the same time. The people from one bus went for in-processing, whereas the soldiers from my bus went for dinner instead of waiting in a queue. It was a very good idea. Afterwards, we were in-processed. First, we checked-in showing our ID cards to the respective officer, then we received the exercise badges. We also learned about our accommodation. Eventually, we received meal tickets, but that actually depended on the nation. Some soldiers had to settle the bill right on the spot. And that was it; after a long journey I could simply go to my room.

MASTER SERGEANT JOHANNES SCHAFNITZEL, GERMAN ARMY, COMBINED JOINT OPERATIONS CENTRE

SERGEANT MAJOR MICHAEL FRÖSLEV, DANISH ARMY, ADMIN

When we came to Wildflecken on September 1st, we found almost empty buildings. One of the first places to build up was the building where the Media Information Centre and Visitors & Observers Bureau were located. There were two German teams and a Polish one, who took care of bringing up and arranging the furniture and then cabling the whole building. Afterwards, the cables had to be taped to the floor or wall for safety reasons and connected to the equipment. As a result, it was hard to rearrange the interior later on, as it meant extra work. For that reason, the Admins of the different branches shall be the first ones in the exercise area to make sure the appropriate environment for work is created. It took us approximately a week to prepare everything and then we started to work really hard to get the internal network and the Internet functioning.



MAJOR ADRIAN SILEANU, ROMANIAN ARMY, LOGISTICS

A time leap was a necessary step in the exercise to move from one phase to another and to thus cover all challenges for the Training Audience. The Info Briefing helped everybody to understand what the difference between the previous status and the new status was. The main impact for my branch was that actually two new Forward Operating Bases, the strongholds from which the troops are operating out to conduct their operations, were established. That was a new challenge in terms of re-supplying them or providing medical facilities. I have attended a lot of international exercises, CAX- aided exercises, but never at such a high level. I learned a lot of things, basically absorbing the lessons learned from our colleagues who went through the ISAF mission. I also had to adjust my previous ideas that Afghanistan was pretty much the same like Iraq, which is not so. Exploring this new theatre of operations was challenging for me.



SZAFRAN IS A CORPS COMMAND AND CONTROL INFORMATION SYSTEM (C2IS); IT IS AN INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY BASED SYSTEM THAT PROVIDES COMMANDERS AND STAFF OFFICERS (END USERS) WITH CORE AND FUNCTIONAL SERVICES HELPING THEM TO ACCOMPLISH THEIR TASKS AT THE HEADQUARTERS OR COMMAND POSTS DURING AN OPERATION. C2IS ENABLES GATHERING, PROCESSING AND EXCHANGING OF DATA. THIS SYSTEM ALSO INCLUDES OPERATIONAL AND TECHNICAL PROCEDURES. THE RESULT IS THAT THE CORPS ATTAINS THE ABILITY TO COMMUNICATE WITH OTHER CORPS.

Experts:

Colonel Peter Baierl

Major Hans Peter Wamsler

SZAFRAN WAS USED DURING THE CRYSTAL EAGLE EXERCISE.

X False. Szafran was not part of Crystal Eagle as such. The expression that the system was used in the exercise "to the extent possible" simply meant that an extra exercise was conducted, in other words, an experimental exercise. The aim of it was to test Szafran in a tactical scenario for the first time. A number of personnel were technically and tactically trained to do staff work on Szafran.

THERE WAS NOT ENOUGH TIME TO TRAIN ALL EXERCISE PARTICIPANTS ON SZAFRAN BEFORE CRYSTAL EAGLE STARTED.

✓ True. The testing phase of Szafran and its adjustment to the exact Corps needs was finalized in the middle of July 2008. Due to the fact that the training of approximately 600 users in their basic functions would take at least half a year, it was decided to train only selected personnel that would test Szafran in the separate experimental exercise.

THE PERSONNEL OF THE EXPERIMENTAL EXERCISE WERE NOT PART OF THE CRYSTAL EAGLE EXERCISE CONTROL.

✓ True. A distinctive organisation was created to conduct a tactical play with the use of Szafran. There was the Theatre Task Force Szafran consisting of about 30 officers and NCOs. A group of about 10 people constituted the Szafran Control which portrayed elements, such as LOCON, HICON, Aurigan National Forces, International and Non-Governmental Organisations and others. Additionally, 3 soldiers represented the Technical Support Division.

THE EXPERIMENTAL EXERCISE USED THE SAME SCENARIO AS CRYSTAL EAGLE.

✓ True. The scenario was basically the same with similar problems and injections, like for the Brigade staffs. Comparable to Crystal Eagle, incidents were injected by LOCON or HICON, but the part simulating movements of units was missing. There was no simulation in the experimental exercise. Everything was taking place in real time; there was no time leap, like in Crystal Eagle.

EVERY OFFICER AND NCO TAKING PART IN CRYSTAL EAGLE WAS IN TOUCH WITH SZAFRAN.

X False. Only 43 people altogether were involved in testing Szafran during Crystal Eagle. 45 percent of them were MNC NE personnel, the rest were coming from other units – the Polish 100th Signal Battalion, German 610th Command Post Battalion, Command Support Brigade Headquarters and the German National Support Element from Szczecin.

SZAFRAN IS A TOOL TO REPLACE PAPERWORK.

✓ True. Szafran is an electronic replacement of all the paperwork the staff divisions produce. For example, you can draft up orders in the system and send them via emails to divisions or brigades, you can portray the tactical situation electronically or generate reports using the geographical situation displayed on a map in the system without using a pen. You can also receive reports with a lot of data displayed on a map. Everything is done automatically. Szafran can also be a useful database containing necessary information about a given unit, e.g. the number of personnel, vehicles, number and type of weapons.

SZAFRAN IS A RATHER COMPLEX TOOL TO USE.

✓ True. It is too complex to learn it overnight. But it is also a question of motivation. During the experimental exercise, the focus was placed only on certain tools. But even with a higher number of personnel involved, three weeks are not enough to test all features Szafran possesses. It is a real multi-tool.

THE EXPERIMENTAL EXERCISE WILL ENHANCE THE INTRODUCTION OF THE SYSTEM IN THE HEADQUARTERS.

✓ True. 13 MNC NE members who participated in the experimental exercise will promote Szafran within the Headquarters. They know how the system works, they have the know-how and some experience. They can also act as advisers or even trainers in case their colleagues needed support.

SZAFRAN WILL REPLACE ORDINARY TOOLS USED IN STAFF WORK, LIKE WORD, OUTLOOK OR EXCEL.

X False. The concept defining the future role of Szafran at the Headquarters has not been approved yet. Nevertheless, it has to be stated that Szafran is primarily a tactical tool and will not replace everything. There is no sense in decommissioning tools that work very well. Therefore, a text editor integrated in Szafran will not replace Word or the calculation tool – Excel.

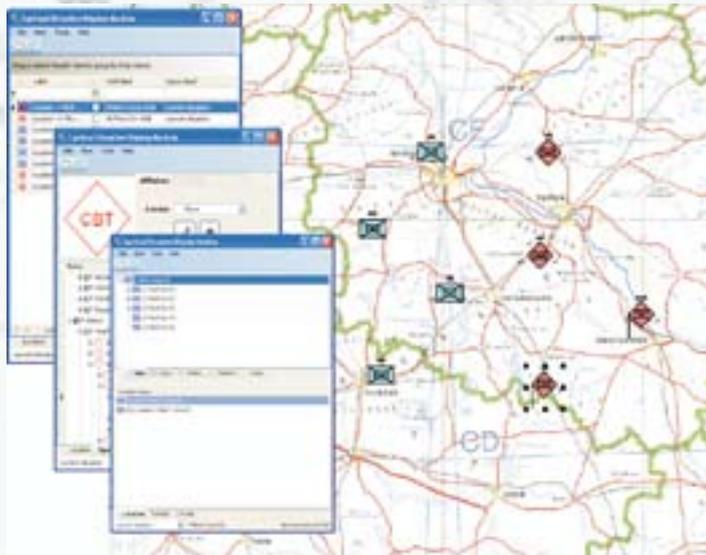
SZAFRAN WILL BE USED IN THE NEXT CORPS EXERCISE LITTLE EAGLE 2009.

✓ True. It is a clear expectation of the framework nations to use Szafran during the Little Eagle Exercise in May 2009. There is still a lot of work ahead for everybody to fully integrate the system within the Headquarters in order to live up to that expectation.

SZAFRAN

COMMAND AND CONTROL INFORMATION SYSTEM

The SZAFRAN is a Polish tactical level C2IS dedicated to Land Forces. It has been designed to support all phases of command and control cycle, to speed-up planning and decision making processes, to provide the battlefield situation monitoring capabilities, to implement automation, standardization as well as integration and interoperability with other systems in joint and combined operations.

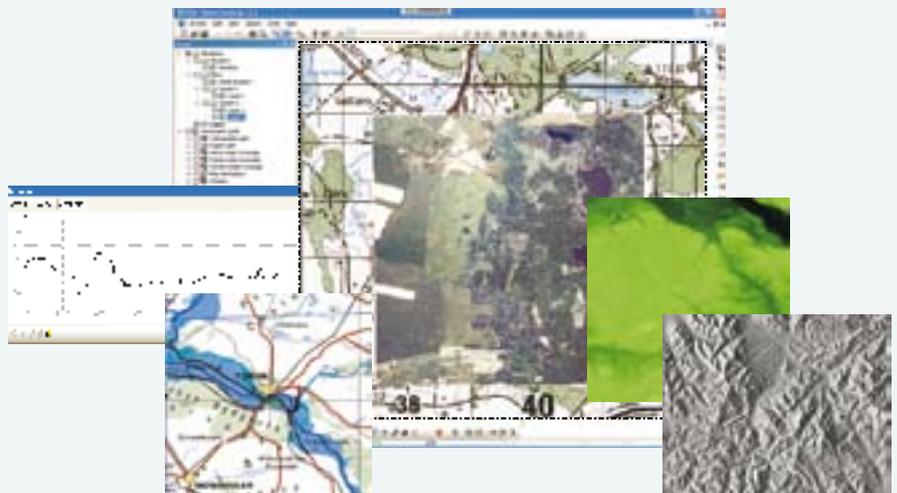


SZAFRAN functionality

- >> Hold, maintain and provide the up-to-date complete and consistent information concerning the friendly, enemy, neutral and unknown forces and other units having proximity relations as well as any any other relevant information (e.g. terrain conditions) which contributes to improvement of C2 process;
 - >> Information processing automation, including plans, orders and other command document creation;
 - >> Seamless and transparent delivery of orders, reports and other command documents to specified recipients;
 - >> Facilitate exchange of formal documents between CPs and external entities in accordance with NATO standards.
-
- >> Increase information security in warfare environment;
 - >> Present tactical situation accordingly to the level of command. The tactical situation shall be based on the information held in the system's database using tactical symbols compatible with APP6A and MIP;
 - >> Integrate systems of other arms and services;
 - >> Achieve C2IS-C2IS interoperability in multinational environment ADatP- BI12.2 messages and MIP Blok 2 solution.

GIS functionality

- >> Gazetteer
- >> 3D terrain model
- >> terrain relief determination
- >> national boundary/ administration area information
- >> distance, area, azimuth calculation
- >> flood zone estimation
- >> route calculation
- >> multi-layer visualisation



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September 24th, the seventh day of the exercise, was a bit different from the others. It was the time when the exercise was fully running, but it was too early for an overall assessment. It was also the time when a group of 61 high-ranking guests from 12 nations entered the Rhön Barracks to observe the soldiers' training. The array of prominent personages represented the world of the Army, Ministry and Diplomacy.

The timetable was busy for the Distinguished Visitors. They were welcomed by Lieutenant General Zdzislaw Goral, Commander of the Multinational Corps Northeast, and took part in a series of exercise-related briefings, which brought closer several exercise-related issues to them. However, the most interesting part was visiting different exercise locations and Brigades' command posts, and looking how the soldiers work. All VIPs were divided into three groups. Two of them followed the same schedule. Their stops were in the HICON, LOCON, Evaluation Centre, the location where Szafran was tested and a Command Post of the Brigade they were interested in. The third group visited those places where Szafran and the German Joint Fires were being experimented on.

As a matter of fact, there were two Distinguished Visitors' Days (DV Day). Two days before the main DV Day, on September 22nd, a group of high ranking German personnel visited the Rhön Barracks and conducted the same programme like the remaining groups, but naturally, a greater focus was placed on the German 37th Brigade and German issues. Two DV days meant a double effort for the organisers.

All Distinguished Visitors were more than satisfied with the achievements and results of the exercise. The investment in careful planning of the Crystal Eagle exercise had clearly paid off.



Lieutenant General Kurt Ebbe Rosgaard is the Special Representative of the Danish Chief of Defence. When the Corps was established, he was supporting the first Danish General Ekmann in getting all things prepared for the Danish personnel to work in Szczecin.

Sir, what do you think about this exercise?

It looks like they have had a lot of good inputs and lessons learned during this exercise. They have a good setup for evaluating, which is important. My impression is that it is a well-organised exercise and it seems the people are eager to do their best of their nations. And it is always a challenge when you have so many nations working together.

What is the importance of exercises like Crystal Eagle?

Obviously, the exercise gives the Brigades a unique chance to train in a complex Peace Support Operation scenario. Apart from that, from the Corps' perspective, the greatest value is that the Corps' personnel works together, goes through different processes so that they can get better when they go out on live operations.

Is the exercise scenario far away from the reality?

If you are good at scripting incidents, it can come as close as possible to a real operation. But you do not have what I would call "the friction of war"; you do not have unexpected things. An exercise can never substitute real life but if you are well prepared during exercises having tested different areas, it is much easier to adapt when you are out in real life and bullets are flying around you.

What kind of skills can be improved during an exercise like this?

First of all, knowledge of different systems you are using, the electronic systems, command and control systems, and evaluation systems. You can improve interrelationship skills among the soldiers and that is very important when you are talking about multinationalism. We are different, but bless it that we are, otherwise it would be boring.



Lieutenant General Günter Weiler, currently the Deputy Chief of the German Army, had been the Commander of the 14th Mechanized Division in Neubrandenburg, which was affiliated with the Multinational Corps Northeast.

Sir, what are your impressions?

I am very impressed by the professionalism of all soldiers I have seen here. The scenario is very realistic. The procedures they work on here are the same as during the ISAF engagement, the whole circumstances are ISAF orientated. That is very good and very professional.

What do you consider the greatest value of exercises like this one?

The value is to become acquainted with the comrades from other nations, to train the procedures and to prepare together for a mission where you are confronted by a lot of challenges and you have to face them.

To what extent do you think such exercises allow for the improvement of skills?

I talked to the German Brigade Commander and he said it was the end of his preparation phase for the ISAF engagement and now he feels well prepared. I think this is the best answer to this question.

Do you think it would be possible to achieve the same at a home base without going to an exercise like this?

That is not possible. The support of the Army Warfighting Simulation Centre is necessary to simulate all things for a realistic scenario and it is much better than any paper plan in the barracks.



Brigadier General Boguslaw Samol is a Chief of D-8, the General Staff. Even though he does not have direct relations to the Corps, he notices the importance of the Corps in the process of staff training.

Sir, what impressed you in this exercise?

First of all, command posts of the Corps, which is in a charge of the whole exercise, are organised in a very modern way. Moreover, officers holding various posts are very well prepared to perform their functions.

Have you noticed anything interesting or exceptional?

We observe significant changes as far as command systems are concerned, as for instance Szafran Command and Control Information System. We have also learned that our friends from Germany will test the systems of fire control and fire support.

What is, in your opinion, the significance of exercise like Crystal Eagle?

Thanks to such exercises less blood on the battlefield will be shed, which is the most important. Secondly, officers of various nationalities cooperate under the frame of the alliance and establish friendly relations which undoubtedly will have a good impact on future joint operations. Additionally, we have the opportunity to test together new equipment, especially systems of command and control as well as support systems which are based on information technology.

What can the servicemen learn during such exercise?

First of all, officers and non-commissioned officers who hold posts in the structure of the Corps learn the procedures related to operational planning, tasks giving and combat control. Secondly, they improve their knowledge of hardware, software and systems which support planning and commanding processes as well as improve their English language abilities.



- Invitations sent
- Invitations confirmed
- Hotel rooms booked
- Escort officers assigned
- Briefing area prepared
- Refreshments arranged
- Gifts for Distinguished Guests ready
- VIPs in the right place and time
- VIPs departure

Organising a Distinguished Visitors' Day (DV Day) requires a lot of effort. Nobody has probably imagined that the preparations for this day started already in May. It was the time when the first invitations were sent out. The Visitors and Observers' Bureau (VOB) was in charge of the whole preparations.

Master Sergeant Arnold Weber recalls the DV Day in these words: "The greatest challenge was to accommodate all the guests in accordance to their rank and position. Then to make sure they appear in one place at the same time". If you imagine that there were 61 VIPs, including 3 Lieutenant Generals, 11 Major Generals, 8 Brigadier Generals and then, additionally, 18 military Aide-de-Camp and 15 drivers, the coordination effort that needs to be taken appears enormous.

In planning a meeting at such a level, all things have to be taken into account. Appropriate accommodation and providing escort officers is one thing. But there is also seating arrangements

to be prepared in accordance to the Diplomatic Protocol. Other planning issues refer, among other things, to the arrangement of tables and chairs, providing refreshments, or even discussing the menu considering, for example, vegetarian preferences of some VIPs. "The hardest thing was to identify what we would need in advance and transport it to Wildflecken. The whole truck was loaded with VOB materials – flags, gifts, name tags, folders etc.", adds **Major Kim H. Nielsen**.

A few days before the DV Day, the tension was mounting. The preparations were finalized at the very last minute due to unexpected changes and impediments like the fact that a briefing area was also to be used to celebrate a mass and could not be prepared earlier. "I did not manage to finish my work before midnight and, even afterwards, it was difficult to simply forget it. We wanted to do all things right", says Master Sergeant Arnold Weber.

What was the result of this work? It must have been fully positive as our guests could simply concentrate on exercise issues only.

MNC NE Calendar 2008

Selected Events

14th August and 6th November – Celebrating Polish National Holidays

For the first time in history, the soldiers from the HQ MNC NE and 12th Mechanized Division organise the celebrations of the Polish Armed Forces' Day together to honour the battle known as the "Miracle on the Vistula River". In November, the Poland's turbulent history is recalled again during the commemoration of restoring independence to Poland in 1918.



1st September – New CSB Commander

Colonel Jarosław Mika officially takes over command of the Command Support Brigade (CSB) of MNC NE. The ceremony in Wałcz is, among others, attended by Lieutenant General Zdzisław Goral, MNC NE Commander, Major General Jerzy Michałowski, Chief of Staff – Deputy Commander of the Polish Land Forces as well as authorities of Wałcz and Stargard Szczeciński.

2nd – 3rd September – Guidance for the Corps

The 33rd Corps Committee Meeting brings the approval of the mission-oriented approach of the Corps – the Training & Exercise Policy together with the Commander's vision for future MNC NE training being thus accepted. Other topics relate, among others, to the preparations for the 10th Anniversary of MNC NE and the implementation of the Command and Control Information System Szafran.



18th – 26th September – Crystal Eagle Exercise

HQ MNC NE personnel, soldiers from the 1st Estonian, 37th German, 1st Latvian and 7th Polish Brigades as well as representatives of different national forces commands and other NATO Corps, altogether about 945 soldiers from 18 NATO countries, go to Wildflecken to train planning, preparing, executing, commanding and assessing Peace Support Operations.



2nd and 10th October – Celebrating German Unity Day and Oktoberfest

October is typically marked by German events. At first, the German community invites numerous guests to commemorate the anniversary of the reunification of the two German states. A few days later, a loud shout “O’zapft is!” announces the tapping of the first beer keg and official opening of the Oktoberfest, the celebration of which has already become a well-established tradition at the Baltic Barracks.



15th – 16th October – Military historic terrain walk

More than 60 MNC NE officers and senior non-commissioned officers go to Polish Kostrzyn and German Seelow to analyse the “Berlin” Operation of 1945, which led to the end of the World War II. They get acquainted with the operational planning of the Odra River crossing and the seizing of the Seelow Heights from the perspective of those who attacked, and those who defended.

21st October – Promoting Professional Development

The visit of Command Sergeant Major Mario Ouellet from the Joint Forces Command Brunssum initiates the professional development of non-commissioned officers at the HQ MNC NE. His Joint Mobile Training Team will conduct training for NCOs as part of preparations for future missions. The training starts in December 2008 and will be continued in 2009.



7th November – VIPs visit the Corps

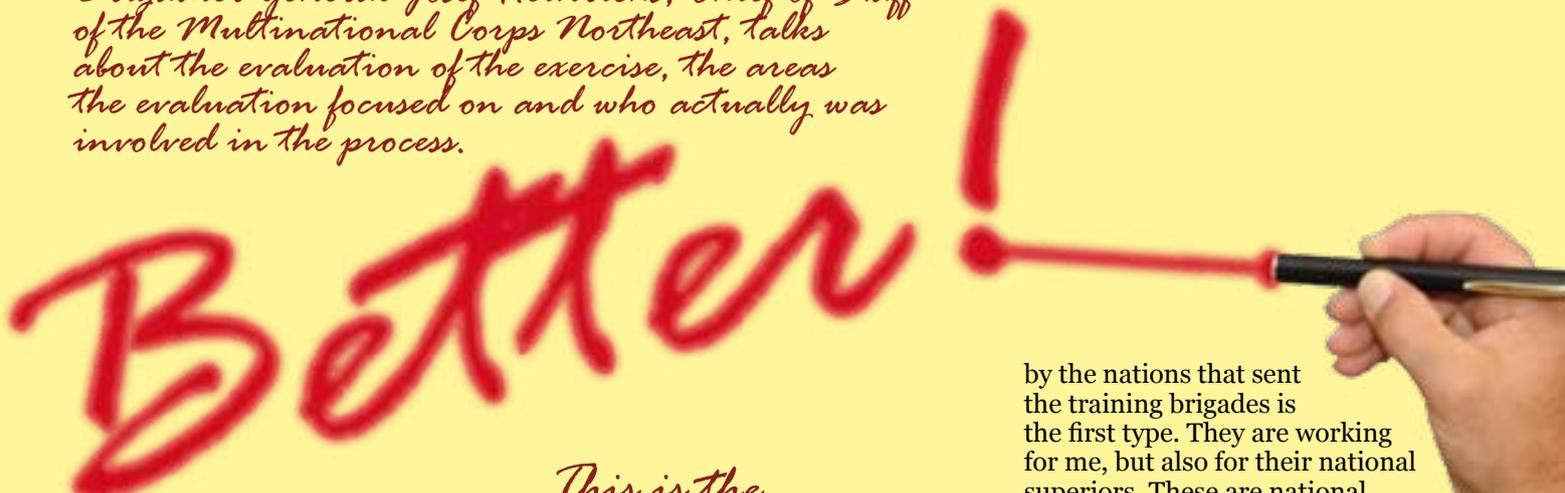
The authorities of Westpomerania and representatives of the uniformed services visit the HQ MNC NE to get acquainted with Corps-related issues and to exchange views on current developments in the region. This meeting fits into a spate of visits to the HQ, which presents the Corps as an open institution willing to maintain good relations with its environment.

13th November – Saint Martin’s Day at the Baltic Barracks

The lights from candles, torches and handmade lanterns illuminate the Baltic Barracks during the celebrations of the Saint Martin’s Day. The event organised by the Ladies’ Club is an example of strong social ties between MNC NE members, who, like a big family, meet on numerous occasions to chat, have fun and learn about other nations’ traditions.



Brigadier General Josef Heinrichs, Chief of Staff of the Multinational Corps Northeast, talks about the evaluation of the exercise, the areas the evaluation focused on and who actually was involved in the process.



*Anna Galyga:
Why do you need to evaluate the exercise?*

There are two reasons for making the evaluation. First of all, the evaluation is to support the Training Audience so that they become better. We want to educate the Training Audience, not just rate their performance good or bad. The second purpose of the evaluation is a standard one – to see if the objectives set by our Commander for the exercise have been met. In order to do that, we are closely linked to the Scenario Management Cell.

What does a process of evaluation look like?

The evaluation is a huge effort; there are more than 60 personnel in the Evaluation Centre. We filter storyboards for the upcoming days and choose the areas we want to concentrate our evaluation on. Then, we create daily observation orders and forward them to the observers. These are the guys who go out to the Training Audience and observe how they work. Afterwards, we get findings of the day from them. We analyse and reference them against the objectives and draw some conclusions.

In the exercise we are not just following a prescribed story, but we are doing daily refinements. The scenario managers pick up our recommendations for adjustments or repetitions and refine the scenario for the upcoming days. So we have a chance to, for example, repeat an incident or a task to see if there are any improvements.

“This dynamic scripting process keeps the Exercise Control busier than in case of following a prescribed storyboard.”

This is the continuous observation then. Have you got any other ways to evaluate the exercise?

Apart from the observation-based part of the evaluation, there are also two other tools. One tool is a Lesson Identified Form at the WISE page. Anyone who has access to it can fill in whatever the individual thinks is worth saying. Additionally, we do surveys as the third tool. We concentrate on several issues. One of them is Real Life Support issues, like food, accommodation, sports and whatever you need for well being while staying here. We did it after the first week and there were pretty good comments on what needs to be improved. We have solved some of these issues.

Can you give me some examples?

One of them was providing adequate meals for Muslims. The next one was related to ensuring the availability of sports equipment at the weekend. Another good example of a constructive comment was a suggestion to do a little bit of sightseeing to see more of Germany than the Rhön Barracks and German Autobahn. However, there were also issues we were unable to solve, for example we could not make duplicate keys for rooms due to security reasons.

Coming back to those observers visiting the Brigades, can you tell me more about them?

There are two types of teams. The Brigade Evaluation Teams provided

by the nations that sent the training brigades is the first type. They are working for me, but also for their national superiors. These are national teams working in their native language with a respective Brigade and looking more on internal issues. They are following their national procedures, which are not fully different from NATO procedures, but there are slight differences. They are also checking if the nationally set catalogue of exercise objectives is met.

The other type of evaluators are the special observers, Subject Matter Experts, provided mostly by our Headquarters, for example Intelligence, Nuclear Biological Chemical, Force Protection or Logistics. They check if the Brigades working in a multinational environment are able to interact with a higher headquarters and to follow the NATO cooperating standards, which means coordination of operations and all their work with their neighbours.

What areas do you actually evaluate?

One issue is how they are doing the operational planning process, but this takes days. Other areas are more incident-related. The incidents are derived from the experience we gained in ISAF last year to make it as realistic as possible.

“When you have a look into the storyboard and different incidents, except for a date and location, those are all incidents that had happened while we stayed in Afghanistan, so it is not just a generic scenario, it is what actually happened down there.”

Did you refer to any evaluation systems while doing the evaluation?

We are following the general NATO

evaluation procedures, but we also created additional tools, like Lessons Identified Form and surveys. The dynamic scripting is possible but not a mandatory part of the evaluation procedure prescribed by NATO.

What kind of advice do you give to the Brigades?

The Training Audience is receiving a feedback on a daily basis to improve their performance immediately. We do not wait until the exercise is over to give them an assessment for the first time. They have a chance to refine their processes and do a better job.

The most critical issue is casualty evacuation and medical evacuation, which needs to be solved in a proper and timely manner. It is of highest importance because

casualties, especially own casualties, are the most sensitive issue for all nations sending troops to any Peace Support Operation.

Another example was when one of the Brigades sent some staff officers, but not the commander, as negotiators for a key leader meeting with the local elders and a representative of the insurgents. They have immediately realized that they were not the top ranks and just did not accept them. Afterwards, we could tell the Brigades that it is much more important who is saying something than what is being said.

How will you proceed with the evaluation of the exercise?

The first step of the comprehensive overview will be the After Action Review, provided by the Commander. Then, there will be Post Exercise Discussion series going a little more in depth and this process is scheduled to be finished by February,

March 2009. It should also provide some comments for the Commander's yearly report.

Is the Evaluation Centre satisfied with the results of the exercise?

We are very happy because the main aim – to educate the Training Audience, not just to check their performance, was achieved. Due to the dynamic scripting process, we could always state that the Brigades have improved and as long as the Training Audience is improving, the objective is met.

Overall, from our perspective, it was a good exercise and a success. This is not only our observation, this is also the feedback we got from the audience. We have been in close contact with them on a daily basis. I have been talking every day to the Brigade Commanders to present them our findings, but also to get their

individual perception, which may differ. When you write the storyboard, the scenario managers may have a good idea, but is it also a good idea for our audience? And, therefore, you need to take both sides into account.

So what kind of advice will you give the team organising the exercise for the next time?

It must be clear that the main focus is to educate the audience, not just to check upon their performance. For that reason, dynamic scripting is an important tool.





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