



**Interview with Lieutenant Colonel Jarosław Przybyła, Chief OPSCEN in Baltic Barracks.**

**- What does the abbreviation OPSCEN mean and what is OPSCEN?**

LtCol Przybyła: The abbreviation OPSCEN stands for Operations Centre. It is a point of contact between the Permanent Headquarters in Szczecin and the deployed Field Headquarters in Kabul, Afghanistan. The Centre was created in the mid of December 2006, but only after the major group of the MNC NE staff had been deployed to Afghanistan in January 2007, the Operations Centre started to function in full.

**- What are the main functions of OPSCEN?**

The main function of OPSCEN is to keep the PHQ and the families informed about the situation in the ISAF Headquarters in Kabul and vice versa. That is why OPSCEN monitors and analyzes the situation in Afghanistan with a special focus on Kabul and the ISAF HQ in order to create a common situational picture. This update is presented to the Commander, the Chief of Staff and all PHQ members in order to maintain the situational awareness. The information also reaches the families of the soldiers if needed. On the other hand, OPSCEN collects information concerning the situation in the PHQ and the families.

OPSCEN, apart from monitoring the situation, is also responsible for coordinating matters as it deals with any information coming from Afghanistan, the PHQ and the families. The Centre sends relevant information to respective personnel or institutions like Family Care Centre, which should be involved in solving a problem. OPSCEN may also suggest some solutions.

### **- And what has been the greatest challenge for OPSCEN so far?**

Being the real point of contact between Afghanistan and the PHQ has been the greatest challenge for OPSCEN so far. Fortunately, there have been no serious events involving our staff in Kabul or in Szczecin. But the best example illustrating that OPSCEN is a flexible and efficient structure was the time of deployment, which was rescheduled several times. The Centre was responsible for managing information e.g. through National Support Elements and for making sure that each soldier was informed about the delay. This test was fulfilled successfully.

### **- Operations Centre does not belong to the Headquarters peacetime structure. Where is it situated then?**

OPSCEN is subordinate to G-3 Division, which together with G-2 and G-5 Divisions create so-called OPS Division. Remaining Branch Divisions constitute Support Division. Naturally, OPSCEN has direct links to the Commander PHQ, the Chief of Staff, National Support Elements, all other Branch Divisions and Family Care Centre.

### **- How long will OPSCEN operate then?**

OPSCEN will operate until the end of the mission in Afghanistan; we expect that it will be at least 25th September 2007. However, we are ready to prolong it if necessary.

### **- What is your role as Chief OPSCEN?**

My role is to coordinate all work done by OPSCEN and to introduce duty officers to new regulations. I gather information from duty officers and I solve some problems if necessary. I am also responsible for creating updates for the Commander and the Chief of Staff and for coordinating weekly updates for all PHQ personnel.

### **- And finally, what does a typical day and work at the OPSCEN look like?**

During ordinary working hours from 08:00 to 16:00 all permanent members of OPSCEN are present, namely the Chief OPSCEN, two officers and one non-commissioned officer. The situation is different after 16:00 because it is the time when duty officers have their shifts. They are PHQ officers and NCOs up to a rank of major. During weekdays a duty officer starts his shift immediately at 16:00 and finishes at 08:00 the next morning. At the weekend there are 24-hour shifts, starting and finishing at 08:00.

All routines are directly related to all tasks of OPSCEN and involve browsing NATO, ISAF and JFC Brunssum web pages, including the classified ones, and browsing public media as well.

## Centre of Operations

Written by AG

Tuesday, 20 March 2007 09:00

---

Then a report is prepared. Similar tasks are performed by duty officers. If necessary, Senior National Officers are informed about the situation despite they do not belong to OPSCEN as such, but on behalf of the COM PHQ they may provide some guidelines for duty officer how to solve a given problem. Finally, duty officers receive tasks from the Chief OPSCEN as well.