

The Corps' Eagle stretches its wings! (Video)

Written by AG

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Baltic Barracks, 12 days, more than 600 officers and non-commissioned officers from Headquarters Multinational Corps Northeast as well as Crisis Establishment personnel, 11 nations, 150 incidents and almost 300 “injections” steering operational and planning tasks for the soldiers; in other words: Little Eagle II exercise.

Lasting from 5 to 16 September 2011 Little Eagle II continues the training process initiated after the accomplishment of the Corps' mission in Afghanistan. With the general aims to plan, command and conduct a crisis response operation with the use of Polish Command and Control Information System (C2IS) Szafran, implement the Corps' valuable experiences from the Afghan mission and to develop the current structure of the Corps' Field Headquarters, Little Eagle II was an important step within the training cycle leading to the major exercise planned for next year: Crystal Eagle 2012. During that exercise, the Corps' personnel are not going to be the trainees; on the contrary, they are going to train the assigned by the Corps' nations units, serving as a higher command and sharing valuable experiences and knowledge.

Little Eagle II is this year's third exercise which adds value to the on-going structure review. Little Eagle I conducted in March was based on a traditional structure with clearly distinguished functional areas, basically referring to the current field headquarters structure. During Bold Eagle in May, the Corps introduced an experimental formula based on cross-functional teams, resembling the solution applicable to the ISAF Joint Command in Afghanistan. The main difference from a traditional concept lies in teams composed of experts from various functional

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areas. The organisation of Little Eagle II, however, was the combination of both modules, using the best practices but adapting them to the Corps' possibilities and needs.

It shall also be stressed that along with the organisational reform, already during Bold Eagle exercise, the Corps shifted its "centre of gravity" in terms of operational and planning efforts from purely security to rather balanced combination of security, governance and development topics. For that reason, also during Little Eagle II, MNC NE staff activities covered a wide range of tasks, starting with the threat of aggression, countering improvised explosive devices, through civilian and mass casualties, problems with supplies, kidnapping, demonstrations ending up with developing the country, partnering with the Host Nation or training troops of the Host Nation.

The Information Dominance centre, operating next to another cross-functional team – the Joint Planning Centre, was an excellent example of the ongoing transformation. The centre gathered intelligence information but mostly focusing on people of the Host Nation and neighbouring countries who may have any influence on the development of situation, identifying links and patterns and, in this way, supporting the operation.

"It was not only an interesting but also a real good exercise. We have learned a lot, we have made progress," said the MNC NE Commander in his final remarks to the exercises participants.

General Korff also thanked the Command Support Brigade of MNC NE which along with its subunits – German 610 Battalion and Polish 100, 102 and 104 Battalions – set up the exercise area, the tactical command post and provided all the necessary communication, information and logistic support to the exercise participants, making the conduct of Little Eagle II possible.

Additionally, a four-person group from the 2nd Mechanized Corps from Kraków observed the exercise. As Major Piotr Putkowski from the 2nd Mechanized Corps said, their main intention was to observe a multinational exercise conducted by a multinational corps. *"We wanted to see what kind of solutions the Corps is using,"*

he said. The guests asked about their impressions stressed the positive atmosphere and openness of the staff as well as interesting technological solutions introduced in here.

"We have noticed a very well developed multinational cooperation among officers and non-commissioned officers of the Corps' nations," said Major Piotr Putkowski.

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"We were never left without an answer for a question we had asked. We either received it straight away or at least learned who would be able to answer it,"

he added. "The website created for the need of this exercise was a very interesting thing. A soldier did not have to leave the office in order to get the information he needed," said Captain Rafał Dzierwa underlining a very good communication and information systems used by the Corps.

"We have been impressed with the use of Szafran system. It really makes work easier," admitted Major Piotr Putkowski.

The observers unanimously identified substantial profits resulting from the deepened cooperation between the personnel of both Corps and such recommendation would be present by them to the Commander of the 2nd Mechanized Corps.

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<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AL863aHPUwA>