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CROATIAN AIR FORCE CROATIAN AND CZECH AIR FORCE TEAMS' JOINT TRAINING

INTERVIEW MAJOR GENERAL MICHAEL REPASS COMMANDER OF U.S. SPECIAL OPERATIONS COMMAND EUROPE, COMMANDER OF MILITARY EXERCISE JACKAL STONE 2012

THE COMMANDO TRAINING A DRILL ONLY FOR THE TOUGHEST



AMUSTRY AMUSTRY AMUSTRY BX8 BURO ĐAKOVIĆ'S PRIMARY PILLAR OF DEVELOPMENT





THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE'S EXPERT MILITARY BI-MONTHLY MAGAZINE

It includes new information about activities within the Armed Forces and CMoD, expert military articles about foreign armed forces, armament, military techniques, history and themes that are important globally.

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INTERVIEW

Major General Michael Repass,

commander of U.S. Special Operations Command Europe, commander of military exercise Jackal Stone 2012

JACKAL STONE 2012 highlights the interoperability among the Lead Nation (U.S.), the Host Nation (Croatia) and the other special operations forces from NATO and Partnership for Peace member nations. JACKAL STONE directly prepares our participants to operate successfully in a joint, multinational, integrated environment. JACKAL STONE is also an important exercise that conveys to the region our mutual commitment to European security

A JOINT CONTRIB

The Jackal Stone international Special Forces exercise which for the second time has taken place in Croatia was the topic of our conversation with Major General Michael Repass. General Repass spoke of Croatia as the host nation of the exercise and of the CAF members that participated in it in a complementary way. He stressed that the forces' progress in structure and interoperability is more than obvious and pointed out that these types of exercises are a framework in which that progress can be demonstrated. The lessons that are learned during this type of exercise are priceless in order to successfully participate in operations. How satisfied are you with the JACKAL STONE 2012 exercise and what kind of message did you send to the Croatian people and to the citizens of countries whose members participated in the exercise?



Let me start by saying that I would like to thank the people of Croatia, our gracious hosts, for their generous support of this very important annual exercise. JACKAL STONE 2012 highlights the interoperability among the Lead Nation (U.S.), the Host Nation (Croatia) and the other special operations forces from NATO and Partnership for Peace member nations. JACKAL STONE directly prepares our participants to operate successfully in a joint, multi-

Goran Grošinić, photos by Davor Kirin, Josip Kopi



I spoke to a veteran US operator who told me how impressed he was with the level of proficiency that he has encountered across the coalition we have in JACKAL STONE. I have to say I have encountered much the same experience here in the operationallevel headquarters

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fence effort, so we owe them our solemn best effort every day to improve ourselves, our soldiers and our communities.

Most of us are guests here during this exercise, and we have to show our appreciation to those who have treated us so graciously. If we can spend some time with the local citizens then we will do so to learn about the culture. We are partners in the NATO alliance, so we should get to know each other on a personal level whenever possible. I think this is common social decency that transcends our borders and cultures. Projects like the renovation of the "Little Bear Kindergarten" in Udbina, which we completed with the assistance of the U.S. Embassy in Zagreb and the United States European Command's Humanitarian Assistance division, are excellent examples of how we can make a lasting difference to the everyday lives of our host nation's citizens.

The primary benefit is to the community, of course, but the benefits to the U.S. are twofold. First, our service members (in this case, U.S. Navy Seabees from Mobile Naval Construction Battalion 1) get experience in their areas of expertise like civil engineering, carpentry, electrical installation and plumbing. Second, they are able to interact with the Croatian townspeople. This ancillary benefit pays huge dividends for us because it shows the average citizen of our host nation that their well-being is important to the United States.

In the case of the Little Bear Kindergarten project, we spent approximately \$110,000 to give up to 25 children a safe, clean and structurally-sound building in which to learn. That seems like a very small price to pay to earn the trust of the citizens of Udbina.

UTION TO SAFETY

national, integrated environment. JACKAL STONE is also an important exercise that conveys our mutual commitment to European security to the region.

Members of the Special Operations Forces were engaged in some specific projects in Croatia to help the civilian community. How important is that for the development of trust between citizens and Special Forces members, who are not so present every day? The bond of trust between a nation's soldiers and its citizens is essential. Our nations send us their sons and daughters to be part of the national de-



INTERVIEW

NATO SOF HQ has made significant advances in structure in the last few years and progress is very obvious in the area of interoperability. What are, in your opinion, the biggest factors contributing to this, and what can we expect from NATO SOF in the coming years?

The special operations forces in NATO-member countries have made significant advances in both technology and tactics, and the reason is clear: we are working together - both in exercises and on the battlefield – more than ever. Our professional military relationships strengthen tactical proficiency in critical mission areas and support our familiarity and trust. I want to stress that habitual and sustained relationships cannot be formed in a crisis: our consistent training with each other is imperative to adequately and thoroughly prepare for a regional emergency. The primary driver that has unified NATO SOF is the realization that we are working together in important places around the world. The primary place we see each other and work together is in Afghanistan. Increasingly, we see each other and are cooperating in other areas such as counter-piracy off the horn of Africa and in places such as North Africa and the Levant. The single most important endeavour for NSHQ in my opinion has been its agreed-upon standardization of SOF capabilities. technology, and doctrine. These aspects have been transformational for many of the member nations in that the headquarters has provided a concrete set of standards for each nation to meet as part of the alliance structure. It gives every nation a recognized baseline for development and readiness - which is directly tied to funding and force development.

Multilateral exercises like JACKAL STONE 2012 broaden our areas of cooperation and enhance mutual air, ground and maritime capability, and we come together every year to test ourselves and sharpen our capabilities. The amount of preparation that all participating nations contributed to this year's exercise showcases our coordinated efforts and collective dedication in support of regional stability and security.





For NATO SOF's future plans, we know that advanced SOF education, and operational and strategic training continues to develop so they are not standing still. They are very aggressively seeking to improve the higher echelon proficiency of our operators and units. NSHQ has stated that SOF aviation is an important capability that needs improvement across the alliance, and I strongly agree.

The age of digital technology has enabled the modern multinational Special Operations Forces a 'golden opportunity' for even greater cooperation and development capabilities. How important is the continuous improvement, implementation and use of modern technology in order to create a 'modern defence' that is capable of preventing 'modern threats' such as WMD, terrorism and cyber terrorism?

> Technology is a very important and rapidly-evolving force multiplier. Our militaries progress in this area at different rates because our missions and national priorities differ slightly, but we find through regular exercises like JACKAL STONE where we come together for almost one month every year, our interoperability improves with every iteration. Technology makes our missions easier in many ways – in categories including intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance – but it is crucial to remember that technology is not a substitute for trust and mutual collaboration.

> We have sponsored new technology integration each year during JACKAL STONE. This year we have a commercial ISTAR capability that provides imagery that is releasable to all allies. We also have the new NATO SOF-approved communications integration device called "Mutual Link" that is remarkable-it



allows any communication device to talk to any other device. Systems such as these allow us to get past national technology problems and work seamlessly as a coalition or alliance task force.

Continuous improvement and testing is imperative. What SOF may be using now could be used by the conventional forces in a few years, so I think it is a good idea to test it operationally on a smaller scale before increasing the scope to include the larger national forces.

In the U.S., our processes and solutions to problems may be more technologically driven than some of our counterparts', and our Allies may have a different perspective that leads to a different outcome, but by blending the two results, we create a more adaptive and nuanced approach to the mission.

Combat operations experience and lessons learned are especially valuable for new members of Special Forces Units; but in some way it is also important for all members. From your perspective, as a soldier who had the opportunity to be involved in the most complicated of operations, how important was the experience of your senior colleagues?

I cannot stress enough that the bedrock and foundation of our success as a Combined Joint Special Operations Task Force remains our professional and in some cases, personal, military relationships. I have known some of the commanders serving here in JACKAL STONE 2012 since 1993. That is a long time to be colleagues – a long time to serve our respective nations and work together toward solving problems and protecting our rights and freedoms as

I am very impressed with the BSD and with their command team. They have multiple challenges and they seem to handle them with ease. Our units enjoy a very strong professional association and I appreciate their untiring efforts to continually improve their unit and their focus on modern training, doctrine, weapon systems and tactics

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citizens. We are handing down that familiarity and trust to those that are coming along behind us, just as it was handed down to us. Some of us are the product of a generation of shared service. As we say in the United States: "You can't put a price on that." I learn important things from my fellow SOF commanders every time we meet. SOF perspectives are always different and those insights are hugely helpful to me personally and professionally. The Europeans who know me will tell you that I ask them hard questions because I genuinely value their insights and opinions. They might also remember that I have said it is important for Americans to have allies because our allies will tell us things about ourselves that we don't know, but should know.

Croatia has the Special Operations Battalion. Croatian Armed forces give special attention to the transfer of experiences from older officers from the Homeland War to younger officers. You had the opportunity to see or to be informed of how BSD members work, would you be so kind as to rate their performance, especially their training and experience, and could you maybe share what impressed you most about them with us?



Multilateral exercises like JACKAL STONE 2012 broaden our areas of cooperation and enhance mutual air, ground and maritime capability, and we come together every year to test ourselves and sharpen our capabilities The soldiers of the Croatian Special Forces are very capable of executing their assigned mission, and I am very proud of our relationship with the BSD and the Croatian Armed Forces. The Croatian Armed Forces have repeatedly demonstrated their interoperability with NATO peers, and they have taken on a leading role in the deployment and preparation of forces to various stability operations in Europe, Africa, and Afghanistan.

There are differences and similarities between American and Croatian Special Forces. The Americans have a strong reliance on technology, while the Croatians are less reliant on technical means for analysis and operations. This means we can approach mutual problems from different perspectives and combine into one optimal solution. The current group of Americans has spent a lot of time in Irag and Africa and is much less familiar with Afghanistan and NATO procedures than the Croatian SF. As a result, the Americans have a lot to learn from their Croatian partners. Also, I spoke to a veteran US operator today who told me how impressed he was with the level of proficiency that he has encountered across the coalition we have in JACKAL STONE. I have to say I have encountered much the same experience here in the operational-level headquarters.

I am very impressed with the BSD and with their command team. They have multiple challenges and they seem to handle them with ease. Our units enjoy a very strong professional association and I appreciate their untiring efforts to continually improve their unit and their focus on modern training, doctrine, weapon systems and tactics. One of the many examples of the cooperation and joint work of special units, in this case the 11 countries that participated in **Jackal Stone 2012**, is this year's largest international special units' military exercise in Europe. It was held in Croatia and proved that international forces can cooperate exceptionally well even when special units are concerned, and it was all for the strengthening of stability and safety in the world, which along with increasing cooperation and interoperability between countries participating in the exercise, was one of the main goals of the exercise

INTERNATIONAL SPECIAL UNITS' MILITARY EXERCISE



Leida Parlov, photos by Davor Kirin, Josip Kopi

To successfully counter security threats in our present time, a proper collaboration between the special units of friendly and partner countries is necessary. Although small in number, special units are a key and elite segment of the armed forces of every country.

One of the many examples of the cooperation and joint work of special units, in this case the 11 countries that participated in **Jackal Stone 2012**, is this year's largest international special units' military exercise in Europe. It was held in Croatia and proved that international forces can cooperate exceptionally well even when special units are concerned.

The operation began exactly at 19:00 on the 18th of September, under the cover of darkness and continuously until the early hours of the 25th of September. It was implemented according to a scenario that the specialists on the field were not at all familiar with. They were left to use the abilities they have to the maximum and to piece together the puzzle in order for the heroes to thwart the foe's intentions, all while under the supervision of the managerial control group. Special reconnaissance, surveillance, direct action on land and sea, intercepting and capturing vessels, infiltration behind enemy lines by parachuting, high-risk arrests, raids on fast time-sensitive targets, working in the opponent's surroundings is only part of classic special operations that were implemented during the Jackal Stone exercise. Infiltration into the area of operation, performing the assignment and remaining undetected all the while was imperative during all the actions.

Along with Croatia and the USA, special unit members from the Czech Republic, Estonia, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Norway, Poland, Romania and Slovakia also participated in the exercise





INTERNATIONAL SPECIAL UNITS' MILITARY EXERCISE



BRIGADIER GENERAL IVAN JURIĆ, DEPUTY COMMANDER OF THE JACKAL STONE 12 EXERCISE



"It was an honour and a pleasure to be host to this exercise and to actively participate in it. CAF members actively participated in the planning and implementation processes, in the exercise's headquarters' activities and in the decision-making process," said General Jurić who also mentioned that in accordance with the concept, there were three sub-units and three subordinate commands in the exercise.

Did our exercise participants do a good job?

Yes, they did a very good job. We shared experiences, procedures, tactical ways of carrying out assignments. And those who were in teams when executing assignments jointly implemented activities with their colleagues from 11 countries and shared experiences. The fact that 95 percent of the operation was implemented during the night confirms the high training level of all of those who participated.

How would you rate the work in the exercise's Command and the cooperation with the partners?

In Command we were all exceptional. All the countries worked together and there weren't any differences between us. There were no problems. The exercise's Command and operative centre worked 24 hours a day. This was a continuous process and I am extremely satisfied with the cooperation, not only with the members from the USA but also with colleagues from other countries that participated in the exercise.

What is the exercise's greatest benefit for Croatia and its armed forces?

Joint work in the decision-making process and in activities, modifications in procedures, tactics. Having all the technical possibilities provided by the Special Forces Command for Europe during the exercise at one's disposal is also a major benefit. During the exercise Croatia also had the role of NHS (Host Nation Support) and everyone that worked on this did a superb job. I am very satisfied. The operation began exactly at 19:00 on the 18th of September, under the cover of darkness and continuously until the early hours of the 25th of September. It was implemented according to a scenario that the specialists on the field were not at all familiar with



The exercise was implemented on land, at sea and in the air. The exercise's headquarters were located at the Zemunik Air Base, where the managerial control group and the Command of the exercise's air component under American command was also located. The naval force's headquarters which was commanded by Norway was located in the Lora Naval Base in Split, and land components were located in Udbina and Delnice under the command of the USA and Romania. The exercise's organiser was SOCEUR (Special Operations Command for Europe), and with Croatia as the host country the Ministry of Defence, all CAF branches and other ministries and government bodies were engaged in







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its organisation. About 2000 participants were engaged in the exercise, almost one third more than had participated in Jackal Stone 2009 when Croatia was also the host.

Major General Michael Repass commanded the exercise, his deputy was Brigadier General Ivan Jurić, the exercise's director was Colonel Martin Starčević and the main Croatian planner was First Lieutenant Željko Vuk.

Defence minister Ante Kotromanović rated the exercise as excellent. "I expect there to be more and more of these exercises in Croatia," said minister Kotromanovic at the "Josip Jović" Barracks in Udbina where only a segment of the Special Forces' area of operations was demonstrated. "We are all learning from each other," said the CAF's Chief of General Staff Lieutenant General Drago Lovrić, adding that all units that participated in the exercise were extremely professional, high quality and capable of accomplishing all assignments.

Croatia has once again proven itself to be an excellent host country, boasted the exercise's commander, General Repass. He did not forget to highlight and praise us for the contribution we give to international missions and operations; all for the strengthening of stability and safety in the world, which along with increasing cooperation and interoperability between countries participating in the exercise, was one of the main goals of Jackal Stone 2012.



Infiltration into the area of operation, performing the assignment and remaining undetected all the while was imperative during all the actions.

One of the main dimensions of the Jackal Stone exercise is the civil-military cooperation within it which lead to water supply networks being completed, a command building being built at the "Josip Jović" Barracks and a kindergarten being renovated and expanded in Udbina. All three investments have a total worth of approximately 700 thousand American dollars. The living standard of local communities is raised through such cooperation.

Croatia has once again proven itself to be an excellent host country, boasted the exercise's commander, General Repass.



COLONEL MARTIN STARČEVIĆ, DIRECTOR OF THE JACKAL STONE 12 EXERCISE



The position of director of this type of international exercise is usually given to the host country. His assignment is to organise and coordinate, in other words, to make sure that everything that has been envisaged in the scenario goes according to plan in a timely fashion. "There were no major deviations from the plan. Everything was done as planned and on time," said Colonel Starčević. "What you have seen of the implementation

of the exercise is but one part of it. The planning process for Jackal Stone began a year ago with the acceptance of hosting duties. A lot was done by the time the exercise had started. The whole planning team that was headed by First Lieutenant Željko Vuk did a great job. It is a known fact that the activities and operations that are implemented by Special Forces are more complicated and demanding to organise than those for conventional forces. But thanks to the people who knowingly entered the planning process and implementation of the exercise, according to the assessments of all those who I contacted and cooperated with, the exercise was deemed to be highly successful".



Speaking of the exercises that they undergo in Patrias, members of the 1st Company of the Tigers Battalion demonstrate that not only do they approach their job professionally and militarily, but also with a great will and with enthusiasm. They are doing what they love, using new means, and each day is a new experience for them...

THE TIGER'S BATTALION

Several big and significant events in which members of the Republic of Croatia's Armed Forces engaged in with the Patria AMV 8x8 armoured modular vehicle, for example the EU Battlegroups exercises and the Immediate Response exercise, have encouraged us to talk with vehicle crews. We went to the "Colonel Predrag Matanović" barracks in Petrinja to visit the Tigers First Mechanized Battalion of the Motorized Guards Brigade.



THREE BIG EXERCISES

The Tigers first company has been intensely working with Patria, which, thanks to the program offset, is produced by the Croatian Đuro Đaković special purpose company from Slavonski Brod. In just two months they were involved in three major exercises with their vehicles. First they tried their hands at the German Army Combat Training Centre in Letzlingen. From the 28th of April to the 8th of May, 2012 soldiers from the Croatian Armed Forces participated in the EU 12/2 Battlegroups's exercise that was held there. Soon after, in early June, Immediate Response 2012 took place in Slunj, the CAF's largest military training area. Finally, on the 24th of July, at the military

PATRIA U WITH TIGER

training ground in Gašinci near Osijek, a battlefield shooting from the DUOS system (Remotely operated weapons station) was successfully held. The shooting was organized as part of training with the U.S. mobile training team (MTT 1/2 CR) from the United States Army Europe (USAREUR).

Commander of the 1st Company First Lieutenant Krešimir Kršinić was present at two of the exercises, the ones in Letzlingen and in Slunj. He is young, just like many of his units, which nonetheless include many veteran soldiers who gained experience in the Homeland War. "Germany was an interesting experience. Not only were our Patrias there, but the APC's Fuchs. Marder and Wiesel as well... the whole Battalion with its vehicles. We did all the exercises and tactical situations together in formations. We had never trained at such a level and in such surroundings... We received the best grades and were praised by the German Command," said First Lietenenant Kršinić, who has confidence in his people's quality. "We are all delighted with the vehicle, with how easy it is to manage and how adaptable it is to difficult terrain... With a well-trained crew, the Patria is unstoppable!" said First Lieutenant Kršinić. It was similar in Sluni, in the company of Slovenian Patrias and American Strykers, where our soldiers found themselves in complex tactical situations, which made the training grounds all the more demanding. Still, the tasks were carried out, with full interoperability.



By Domagoj Vlahović, photos by Tomislav Brandt





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NSTOPPABLE

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and one such example is the war veteran Sergeant Mario Jurilj. Although a routinist himself, he also learned something new about Patrias. "We are a unit that up until now was oriented towards easy, classical infantry. We had to get into a new rhythm and adapt ourselves in our march, which otherwise is our main quality. We proved during the exercises that, at the tactical level, we are not in the least bit behind other nations. I think we had something to show and that others were also able to learn from us," remarked Sergeant Jurilj. The Patria has much to offer and it is now up to us to fully take advantage of its tactical use possibilities. This is work that is done every day, and much has been done so far.

THE ULTIMATE IN TECHNIQUE

The APC crew also told us about their impressions. It is commanded by Corporal Ivan Pirš. He recalled the days right after his return from ISAF, when he was entrusted with a Patria. "I was excited to be getting such a powerful vehicle that is currently one of the most modern that exists in the Armed Forces, the ultimate in technique". The crew has been in the same composition from the beginning and the commander would like it to remain as so. "The longer we are together and constantly undergo training, the better we get," he emphasised.

The "fiery" role in the crew's three is held by the gunner Lance Corporal Josip Miličić. He sits with a Browning 12.7 machine-gun, and as a gunner took part in the ISAF operation. "It was a completely different experience in a Humvee with an open dome through which a lot of dust is swallowed. Here I am protected; I use a camera that has excellent performance, however, a lot of work needs to be done to adapt to looking through its lens. It was difficult at the beginning, but now there are no problems," said the Lance Corporal, who would also like to try out weapons with a stronger calibre on the Patria. Driver and Lance Corporal Damir Pinter has handled various trucks, Humvees, a IFV M-80 and other vehicles, but the Patria is definitely special. Until one sits behind its wheel, one cannot fathom its power and capability. In Germany, at "the perfect training grounds for armour", they tested side slopes, speed, and other performance aspects to the permitted limits, and the results have brought a great amount of satisfaction.

All that has been said is perhaps the best indicator of the importance of modernization, not only for the overall equipping and readiness of the Armed Forces, but also for the soldiers, the people that are out in the field. The Tigers not only approach their job professionally and militarily, but also with a great will and with enthusiasm. They are doing what they love, using new means, and each day is a new experience for them.

Corporal Ivan Pirš, Lance Corporal Josip Miličić and Lance Corporal Damir Pinter

S CREW



A NEW RHYTHM

In Germany, Second Lieutenant Mirko Muhek commanded with his 3rd Platoon from the 1st Company. "First, as a platoon, we were within the composition of the German Company, and we managed very well," he said, adding that vehicle movement techniques and formation techniques are the same for all allies. The Tigers learned how to move in wide positions and formations, and this was enabled by the German training grounds. Muhek is happy to command such a well-equipped platoon. "It took a few days for us to get used to the Patrias, but now everything is going as planned".

The Tigers have experienced people as members,



Second Lieutenant

Mirko Muhek



The basic special operations training, better known as the Commando training, is considered to be one of the most difficult trainings, and it can be completed by only the most mentally and physically enduring soldiers. In Croatia it is undergone by the Special Operations Battalion (SOB). Journalists from CroMil observed the events taking place during one of the training's days...

SPECIAL OPERATIONS BATTALION

THE COMMANDO FRANNING A DRILL ONLY FOR THE TOUGHEST

We had left Zagreb during the night, it hadn't stopped raining, and at dawn, as we were getting closer to the "Josip Jović" barracks in Udbina, from a distance we could discern the silhouettes of lines of soldiers that were treading towards the barracks. About ten minutes after us they had also entered the barracks area. We were there because of the Basic Training for Special Operations, better known as the Commando Training, which had just begun its tenth day, and forth day of the week from Hell. "Why do you call it the week from Hell?" we asked the commander of the training, Sergeant Major Vlatko Menalo, as we waited for the group's arrival. "Because it is a time for a complete mental and physical drill: exercise, hours and hours of training, assignments, tactical road marches, shooting, and night emergencies, and so it goes every day and every night. During this phase, participants

Besides this SOB, many other special trainings are conducted, such as MESiD, parachuting training, training for combat swimmers and divers, mountain warfare training, sniper training, urban warfare training etc.

THE FIVE TRAINING PHASES The Basic training for Special Operations includes 5 phases. The first, the intensive drill phase, and over its course the participants acquire basic theoretical and practical knowlidge on tactics, topography, shooting practice with all the weapons used by the Croatian Army, are counter-intelligence work, first aid and martial arts. Next is the amphibious phase which lasts ten days and over whose course the following is trained: and navigation. This is followed by a ten-day-long alpinist phase in which participants mastered and basics of alpinism and a training for mountain warfare. The penultimate phase is where urban warfare methods are trained, as are city combat and the resolution of hostage situations. The last phase is the crowning event of the whole training and over the course of its three days on the interview of its show of the depths of enemy territory and in enemy surroundings are simulated. Participants are in the woods, without food or water; they depend on their own resourcefulness and on one in the woods, without food or water; they depend on their own resourcefulness and on one in the woods, without food or water; they depend on their own resourcefulness and on one in the woods, without food or water; they depend on their own resourcefulness and on one in the woods, without food or water; they depend on their own resourcefulness and on one in the woods, without food or water; they depend on their own resourcefulness and on one in the woods, without food or water; they depend on their own resourcefulness and on one in the woods, without food or water; they depend on their own resourcefulness and on one in the woods, without food or water; they depend on their own resourcefulness and on one is to tasks. At the same time another group plays the role of the "enemy" and constantly pursues of tasks. At the end of this phase there is a three-day long prison camp in which participants are develowed with situations in which they may be found in if ever they are captured.

By Lada Puljizević, photos by Tomislav Brandt



The well-coordinated and well-trained SOB team of instructors is comprised of about fifteen instructors. They have all completed the Commando training, at least two additional specialised trainings and many courses; they have a rich experience in dealing with new participants in trainings, and many also have experience from the Homeland War and missions in which they have participated in

SPECIAL OPERATIONS BATTALION







Speaking of the instructors as the bearers of a wide spectre of the content of the SOB's training content, Sergeant Major Vlatko Menalo said: "These are people that not only know to conduct training and transfer their knowledge exceptionally well, they are also capable of reaching out to the participants and make them give their maximum. It is a great pleasure to work with such instructors and to be their commander

We also ran after them. Along the way one of the instructors explained to us: "Every time they enter or exit the camp, they have to run and sing. That's the rule".

Suddenly there was noise, whistles, running and shouting; on the training grounds of the range instructors divided the whole group into smaller groups, each starting a cycle of sharp exercises with his respective group. Strength was being trained, followed by the obstacle course. They slid across the red runny mud as they threw themselves on their bellies and tried to slip under the barbed wire as quickly as they could, while a little further away, others panted while they did one more, then another and yet another set of push-ups. "Faster! Harder!

You wanted to be in the SOB? Well show me how good you are!" roared an instructor hunched over one of those who, after a night spent marching and a third sleepless night, lay in the mud doing his fourth set of sit-ups. The veins in his neck throbbed, he gnashed his teeth, he groaned and panted. "What's wrong? You can't do it? Well quit then, quit!" the instructor yelled in his face. He is experienced; he knew exactly what he was doing. He knows that for a victory over this hellish drill, mental strength and motivation are more important in a participant than physical readiness. A strong will is the strength that leads to victory here. "Quit!" the instructor repeated to him while he stared at him furiously. "I won't!" he said in a hoarse voice and continued, angrily and





even more determinedly doing sit-ups.

The rules are known to everyone here, participants and instructors alike: and the participant who during the drill decides to quit loses the right to continue participating in the training. Whoever loses consciousness out of exertion or gets injured during the exercise and drill but does not express the desire to quit receives medical attention and then continues. Afterwards during the course of that fourth hellish day, after only two or three twenty-second breaks, there was a six-kilometre run followed by more than a half-hour of speed walking while carrying beams, martial arts and then the traditional Commando prayer and smearing of blood.

Participants in this training want to become mem-

Up until now the basic training for special operations was conducted over the course of two and a half months. The commander of the trainer, Sergeant Major Vlatko Menalo, said that as of next year, according to the amended work concept, the training will last six months. Thus, according to Menalo, the Croatian Army is following global trends in the implementation of these types of trainings and additionally raises the level of its quality

bers of the SOB. They signed up for the contest that the SOB had announced in the spring. They had all spent a minimum of two years in the Armed Forces or MOD before applying and had to satisfy the health criteria and demonstrate exceptionally good mental and physical capabilities at the initial testing in order to enter the circle of the selected.

The two-week long selection training that preceded this one started off with 85 candidates, by the beginning of the Commando Training there were 42, the morning of the tenth day there were 37 participants and by noon only 33 were left. It is like this every time, this is normal. The weaker quit along the road, only the strongest survive. This training and then entrance into the SOB is not meant for just anyone. Nor should it be. It is for the chosen. For the best.





The role of NCOs, in modern armies, almost changes from day to day. Their basic role is to be the main trainers of soldiers, especially for individual assignments, and so they support joint assignments and combat assignments. Also, NCOs are responsible for discipline, and it is their duty to make sure that soldiers adhere to all the prescribed standards, in behaviour as well as in training. Finally, NCOs are the main communicators, and they must be able to convey a clear message about the main purpose and tasks to every soldier...

INTERVIEW - SERGEANT MAJOR DAVID DAVENPORT, PRINCIPAL USAREUR NCO

After Hungary, the Netherlands, Poland and Germany, the Conference of European Armies for Non-commissioned Officers was held in June in Zagreb and it gathered more than 60 participants and delegations from 38 countries. Principal USAREUR NCO Command Sergeant Major David Davenport spoke to us about the role of NCOs in today's armies and about the cooperation between them, about the USAREUR as well as about the possibilities that internet social networks present in communication between military and civilian communities.

What does it mean for you to be the principal USAREUR NCO?

For me, first and foremost, it is a great honour to be the principal USAREUR NCO. And so, not only do I get the opportunity to lead American soldiers, but also soldiers from 51 friend nations, and I was particularly delighted to get the opportunity to give them advice about conducting training and caring for soldiers.

What is the importance of NCOs in modern armies and what are their assignments?

The role of NCOs, in modern armies, almost changes from day to day. Their basic role is to be the main trainers of soldiers, especially for individual assignments, and so they support joint assignments and combat assignments. Also, NCOs are responsible for discipline, and it is their duty to make sure that soldiers adhere to all the prescribed standards, in behaviour as well as in training. Finally, NCOs are the main communicators, and they must be able to convey a clear message about the main purpose and tasks to every soldier. Basically, this is very different from 1982 and the role of the NCO when I began.

How do you assess the cooperation of NCOs from various armies up to now?

The cooperation is excellent, and the fruits of this cooperation are visible in, say, Afghanistan where most

LISTEN TO YOUR NCOS!

Part of your official communication is conducted by blog (www.eur.army.mil/leaders/csm/) and FaceBook (www.facebook.com/USAREURCSM). How important do you consider this type of <u>communication to be?</u>

First of all, social networks and internet social networks are extremely important. That's the way that most of our young soldiers communicate among themselves. In person, I can only come to one event such as this conference at a time, but through FaceBook, Twitter or a blog, I can send my message and express my opinion to a much larger number of soldiers than can fit in any conference room. And so, by using social networks and thanks to them, I can travel throughout the whole world and be anywhere. Besides that, social networks also help families of American soldiers see how hard we work and how we take care of them, and that is important.

What are the advantages and disadvantages of military and civilian communities communicating through online social networks?

Not using social media would mean not taking advantage of a good opportunity to communicate with soldiers and their families. Social media in that sense is very useful, but, of course, we must be very careful not to jeopardize operative security with its use. of the coalition forces come from Europe. The success achieved on battlefields is the result of such a close and good cooperation, and one of the ways to encourage this is through conferences such as the one that is being held in Zagreb.

What are your impressions of the cooperation with NCOs from the CAF?

This is my second visit to Croatia, but I feel as accepted as if I would have come home to my own family. My impressions are excellent. In these past few weeks I have managed to exchange many good ideas, and not only about the conference but also about ways in which we can train our soldiers in the future.

What is your message to soldiers and NCOs?

My first message to soldiers is: Listen to your NCOs! They only want the best for you, whether in training or in discipline. And my message to NCOs is that just because they have their rank does not mean they have the right to stop learning. To remain a professional, you must continue to learn and improve yourself in your trade, and for NCOs that includes a wide array of skills, from being a leader to training.

Lada Puljizević, photos by Josip Kopi

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The NBC Defence Battalion is one of the NBC Defence. It's mission is to provide support to all of the CAF in NBC protection and executing NBC monitoring tasks, NBC reconnaissance (including analytical NBC laboratory work) and NBC decontamination. The battalion also trains specialists from its military branch and other CAF members

THE NBC DEFENCE BATTALION

MOBILE MPD-100 DECONTAMINATION SYSTEM

- system implements NBC agent and toxic industrial material decontamination
- can decontaminate people, equipment, weapons, combat and non-combat technology, terrain and buildings and sensitive equipment (computers for example)
- the system was tested in accordance with NATO's strictest standards
- produced by OWR AG/ SR Germany

TT DATA

Mobile system: IVECO motor vehicle + container Decontamination type: using liquid, mist, foam and emulsion Number of operators: six System preparation time: 20 minutes_____

Decontamination speed

People: 240/hour Trucks: up to 10/hour Tanks: 5/hour Terrain: 6000 m²/hour Sensitive equipment: 250 to 1000 m²/hour

AN ANSWER TO I

If there is something that could be called "modern threats", then that is most certainly threats that contain nuclear, biological or chemical elements. Consequently, armies throughout the world are giving a greater importance to defence from potential NBC catastrophes, whether they are intentional or accidental, man-made or a natural disaster. The same goes for the CAF. Its first decontamination platoon, composed of the former 50th NBC Battalion, was formed in 2000 and declared to be in accordance with the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons - OPCW. Deputy Commander of the NBC Defence Battalion Major Mario Fintić mentioned, representing his unit, that this was the first time that one of the CAF's units had been declared for an international body. The NBC Defence Battalion, with its headquarters in the "Milivoj Halar" barracks in Dugi Selo, is the successor of the aforementioned 50th Battalion. The current name and location in

The battalion has already begun activities based on NATO's Smart Defence initiative. Namely, the Decontamination Platoon will go through an affiliation in the composition of the 18th CBRN of Slovenia's Armed Forces in the future period. The battalion will be joined to NATO's Multination Corpus Northeast

the organization, directly under the command of the Croatian Army, have remained the same since 2007, and it is one of the NBC Defence units in the CAF. As such, it has a wide range of tasks and responsibilities. When it comes to the Armed Forces, the battalion's mission includes providing support to all of the CAF in NBC protection and executing NBC monitoring tasks, NBC reconnaissance (including analytical NBC laboratory work) and NBC decontamination. Furthermore, the battalion also trains specialists from its military branch and other CAF members.

FOLLOWING GLOBAL TRENDS

What gives the battalion an added importance is the potential support it lends to civilian structures if there is an NBC catastrophe. Croatia has its specialists as well as equipment at its disposal that is partially new in our country and in other places as





Domagoj Vlahović, photos by Tomislav Brandt



CROATIAN MILITARY MAGAZINE



best possible equipment," said First Lieutenant Ankica Zlatić, the battalion's implementation officer. Namely, this is a unit that is declared and affirmed to participate in NATO-led forces. A national platoon certification was conducted according to the CREVAL assessment system that showed that the high NATO standards on the equipping and training of people were met in 2010. This was an exercise on the assessment of the readiness of Croatian Army units that are declared for participation in NATO's peacekeeping operations and missions. After the exercise the decontamination platoon proceeded to receive NATO's affirmation.

THE PLATOON IN THE NRF'S COMPOSITION

The ultimate proof that the platoon has satisfied the highest criteria is its national certification for participation in NATO's Response Force (NRF), received during the Readiness 12 exercise that was held in early April of this year. After visiting the platoon in early May, British Lieutenant Colonel David Williams also bore witness to its skill. Lieutenant Colonel Williams will lead the NBC Defence component in NATO's rapid response force that will be, including the Croatian platoon, on standby in 2013.

It is interesting that the battalion has already begun activities based on NATO's Smart Defence initiative. Namely, the Decontamination Platoon will go through an affiliation in the composition of the

IODERN THREATS

well. Namely, it is clear that NBC threats constantly evolve and change along with new NBC technologies as well as with new forms of terrorist crimes. Therefore, the NBC Defence Battalion is, with the support of the Army Command, a unit that is constantly evolving. Its employees follow global trends and training, they attend international schools and courses, they cooperate with Croatian professionals and scientific institutions, etc. Very often new staff members from Croatian universities and schools join the unit, which very quickly introduces them to the "military side" of their field of work.

THE BEST EQUIPMENT

The battle against sophisticated threats requires the appropriate equipment, and that condition has been met, especially when it comes to the mentioned platoon within the composition of one of the units for NBC decontamination. "It is equipped with the The ultimate proof that the platoon has satisfied the highest criteria is its national certification for participation in NATO's Response Force (NRF)



18th CBRN of Slovenia's Armed Forces in the future period. The battalion will be joined to NATO's Multination Corpus Northeast. In the end, Major Fintić conformed that the NBC Defence Battalion has the possibility to participate in EU Battlegroups in the future, and it is a known fact that NATO's assessment criteria are also valid for EU military forces.

COLPRO SYSTEM

offers collective protection if an area is contaminated with NBC devices

makes the work, rest and stay of people (staff for example) without protective equipment possible in NBC contamination conditions

works on the principle of creating an overpressure inside the tent

its main parts are: a tent, an air antechamber, an NBC filtroventilation unit, air conditioner and an electric generator CROATIAN AIR FORCE

CROATIA

ADEDIAN

Domagoj Vlahović, photos: Tomislav Brandt

93RD AIR FORCE BASE – ZEMUNIK

6

This is a joint training of Croatian and Czech helicopter air crews and aircraft maintenance technicians that is a part of the pre-deployment training and preparation of members that are being deployed to Afghanistan on the ISAF mission as an Air Force mentoring team that trains the helicopter squadron of the Afghan Air Force (AAF) according to NATO standards and procedures at KAIA Kabul airport



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The Republic of Croatia took a very serious approach to the implementation of projects within NATO's Smart Defence initiative, in which countries consolidate their resources and capacities in order to reduce training costs. This was best demonstrated by two training events that were held halfway through this year, right in Croatia, in the Zemunik barracks in Zadar. First the 93rd Air Force base of the Croatian Air Force and Air Defence were the hosts of the first Air Advisory Team Pre-deployment Training Course (1st ATT PTC) from the 30th of April to the 17th of May. Then from the 10th to the 20th of July the training for the Czech helicopter crew for special operations was held. The 93rd Air Force Base in Zemunik develops these trainings' regular assignments and missions as well as other international training processes in the Multinational Centre for pre-deployment and other forms of helicopter pilot trainings.

COORDINATING STANDARDS AND PROCEDURES DURING FLIGHT MISSIONS

The full name of this first training event was the 1st Air Advisory Team Pre-Deployment Training Course. The focus of the course, in which 11 CAF members and 8 Czech Armed Forces members participated (helicopter air crews and aircraft maintenance technicians), was on flight missions in Mi-171 Sh helicopters. For the training in the 93rd Air Force Base and the surrounding area (Mount Velebit, the "Crvena zemlja" military training grounds near Knin) there are existing conditions that can mimic those in Afghanistan, where participants are part of the rotation of the joint

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Flight training was conducted on Croatian Mi-171 Sh helicopters, and this was preceded by a week-long flight crew training on a simulator in Ostrava in the Czech Republic. The training included a theoretical and general informative preparation of members for the area of operation, and a functional part for flight and ground groups. It all ended in practical flight training. The course was jointly designed by Croatian and Czech teams with the advisory support of institutions and units from the USA, and the commander was the Croatian pilot Colonel Michael Križanec. The training was followed by a forces mission readiness evaluation at the national level, and by the rotation of forces. The task of the advisory team in Afghanistan is training the helicopter squadron of the Afghan Air Force (AAF) according to NATO standards and procedures at KAIA Kabul airport. Colonel Michael Križanec has mentoring experience from Afghanistan. He believes that the most import result of the course is finding answers to the current difficulties that teams have come across in

current difficulties that teams have come across in Afghanistan, especially those in communication. Therefore, the main goal is coordinating activities, standards and procedures during flight assignments, which increases the security and efficiency of all of those who fly in Afghanistan as mentors. Besides in communication, there were also difficulties in configuring terrain in Afghanistan: the high altitudes and dusty terrains. There are also the procedures for many helicopters flying in a formation. "All the procedures that will be used there, were also implemented during the course," remarked the colonel.

CZECH SPECIAL OPERATIONS HELICOPTER CREWS TRAINING

Czech special operations helicopter crews training, referred to by some as the continuation of the good cooperation of Croatian and Czech forces, The most interesting part of the first course was the battlefield target practice at the "Crvena zemlja" training grounds near Knin. The goal of the target practice was for the helicopter crews to reach a higher level of coordination in situations where pilots, flight technicians and flanking shooters are in joint action. Target practice was undergone by members of the Czech Armed Forces using M-84 (PKM) machine guns from the helicopters and shooting at targets on the ground

. . .

is implemented in real terms in Czech Mi-171 Sh helicopters. Croatia offered support with a BELL 206 B helicopter from the Helicopter Squadron from the 93rd Air Force Base's composition in Zemunik. During training, on the day of its official presentation, the content of some of the training phases was presented. Also presented was one of the possible situations of the joint action of airborne and ground forces in the operation activities of the special operations units. It was attended by members of the Czech Republics' Armed Forces Special Operations Battalion. The goal of the training was to reconcile standard procedures and coordination in the preparation and immediate implementation of concrete assignments in the most realistic operation conditions possible. On that occasion, Deputy Chief of the General Staff of the Czech Republic Army Brigadier General Bohuslav Dvořak praised the high potentials of the Air Force Base in Zemunik for implementing the most demanding training in which Czech helicopter crews for special operations are currently involved in, as well as the training and high professionalism of members of the Croatian special units. "We have shown that by sharing capacities and achieving all training standards it is possible to achieve our goals, but also to offer other partner countries our shared experiences and transfer of knowledge. It is a principle that we promote and that will be accentuated even more in the future", General Dvorak said.



Ten years after the conference in Prague that identified the need to establish a military police force that, where needed, will be capable of responding to the challenges of global terrorism and five years after the first lining up of members of four nations under the same flag in Gliwice, Poland, MNMPBAT has, at the hands of NATO evaluators, certified and declared it a unit with full operational capability during the SHARP LYNX 12 exercise held at the military training ground in Wedrzyn this year. At the same time, with the formal signing of the document, the process of merging MNMPBAT with NATO's Multinational Corps Northeast...

Lada Puljizević, photos by Lada Puljizević, Krešimir Kaštelan

<text>

THE CROATIAN ARMY

FIRST LIEUTENANT SINIŠA MARIĆ, THE CROATIAN ARMY'S MILITARY POLICE REGIMENT



You are a member of CERVAL's combat readiness assessment team for NATO's MNMBPAT project. Let's start from the beginning: What is CERVAL and why is it important?

CERVAL is a tool that assesses the army's combat readiness, and it stands for Combat Readiness EVALuation. The CERVAL tool certifies and af-

firms units that are at least at the battalion level's readiness for performing all assignments in the area of operations that are in accordance with the scope of the unit's activities, and combat readiness is assessed in two phases. In the first "in barracks" CERVAL phase, personnel and logistical readiness is assessed, as well as training and fitness levels. In the second "in field" phase, the unit's combat readiness is assessed through a tactical display of the execution of tasks. This is, therefore, a combat readiness standardisation tool for armies that are NATO and PfP members.

However, in applying CERVAL for the assessment of the combat capabilities of the Military Police, some difficulties were identified. What were they?

This is correct. Due to the specificity of the assignments that the Military Police implements, in the past few years the need to adapt the CERVAL tool to the requirements of the Military Police's units arose. The awareness of the need to adapt CERVAL developed during the planning process and the annual Black Bear exercise that NATO MNMBPAT was implementing. At last, during this year's the SHARP LYNX 12 exercise in Poland, the Military Police was assessed for the first time in accordance with the modified and adapted CERVAL tool. It is expected that in the future this tool will be used during all subsequent Military Police unit's combat readiness assessments, in other words, that CERVAL will receive a special supplement that will be used for assessing the combat readiness of Military Police from nations that are NATO and PfP members.

What are your impressions as a CERVAL assessor now that the SHARP LYNX 12 international military exercise has been held?

The assessment of NATO MNMBPAT's combat readiness has been fully implemented in the first phase, while in the second phase the assessment of NATO MNMBPAT's headquarters and constituents of the Criminalistic Military Police has been conducted. I am exceptionally satisfied, in the area in which I was in charge and as a member of the CERVAL team, with everything that has been done, and I believe that NATO MNMBPAT is completely ready to answer to all the demands of the assignments that will be set before it in the future.





In the Republic of Poland, during the month of September, an international military exercise of NATO's Multinational Military Police Battalion (NATO MNMP-BAT) was held in which, along with military police from Poland, the Czech Republic and Slovakia, members from the Croatian Armed Forces' military police participated. Up to now, along with many other planned forms of continuous and close cooperation among partner countries, MNMPBAT has implemented four annual Black Bear exercises – held in



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Poland in 2008, in the Czech Republic in 2009, in Croatia in 2010 and in Slovakia in 2011 – and over whose course, year after year, overall progress was shown as well as better teamwork and MNMPBAT readiness at all levels.

Ten years after the conference in Prague that identified the need to establish a military police force that, where needed, will be capable of responding to the challenges of global terrorism and five years after the first lining up of members of four nations under the It is expected that parts of NATO's MNMPBAT, as units that are under MNC NE's command, participate in the ISAF mission in Afghanistan in 2014.

LIEUTENANT COLONEL TIHOMIR ZEBEC, HEAD OF THE MILITARY POLICE DEPARTMENT OF THE CAF GENERAL STAFF

You have been involved in NATO's MNMPBAT project from the very start. How do you rate the progress of that project up to now?

I would rate this project with a very high grade, because not only was high military progress shown but also a high cohesion between the nations, and in the end the goal that we set was achieved: four nations have jointly formed a unit which, in its development over the course of five years, has attained the full capacity to be used in missions. Also, a mutual, multinational spirit was developed among all members of the unit who work and live together as one body, regardless of what nation they belong to.

During that time, how was the cooperation between the members of the four nations which jointly make up MNMPBAT developed and shaped?

The cooperation between MNMPBAT members has one important characteristic – each member, at his own level, developed that cooperation, whether he was a soldier, NCO or officer. In that way a cohesion and collective spirit was achieved in MNMPBAT that enabled the successful implementation of all the assignments and the overcoming of possible difficulties that arose in the complexity of the assignments. This cooperation between MNMPBAT members is the project's greatest asset because the project was created in the spirit of friendship and fellowship.

What are your impressions of the SHARP LYNX 12 international military exercise that has just ended?

Personal impressions are expected of me because I am familiar with the project and the people who participate in it, and I knew that they were prepared to implement all the assignments that were placed before them. However, MNMPBAT members have always pleasantly surprised me with their willingness and desire to give it their all, as if it were their first exercise. Their enthusiasm and unity gets the SHARP LYNX 12 exercise's best grade – and I rate it with the highest possible grade.

What are the plans for MNMBPAT's activities after this exercise and the certification?

CERVAL's certification is not final; it is not a complete process. MNMPBAT's certification will last three years, after which it will be necessary to re-implement a combat readiness assessment. This is a circular, closed process which is comprised of planning, training and assessing. The exercises that will be implemented next year are already being planned, but they will be smaller in scope and focused on the implementation of the assignments that MNMBPAT will have in specific missions. These exercises will be related to the training processes that will be implemented within MNC NE Command, and thus will contribute to compatibility and interoperability with other units that are within MNC NE. THE CROATIAN ARMY



same flag in Gliwice, Poland, MNMPBAT has, at the hands of NATO evaluators, certified and declared it a unit with full operational capability (FOC) during the SHARP LYNX 12 exercise held at the military training ground in Wedrzyn this year. At the same time, with the formal signing of the document, the process of merging MNMPBAT with NATO's Multinational Corps Northeast (MNC NE) began.

As the leading nation, Poland provides a military police company to this battalion, while Croatia, the Czech Republic and Slovakia each provide a military police platoon and Criminalistic military police teams. What makes MNMPBAT so unique is that it is the only NATO unit that operates on the multinational basis of reciprocity and equality, which means that all MNMPBAT countries are equal and that not one can make a decision that isn't agreed upon unanimously with the remaining MNMPBAT members.

It is expected that parts of NATO's MNMPBAT, as units that are under MNC NE's command, participate in the ISAF mission in Afghanistan in 2014.

463 members of the four nations participated in the SHARP LYNX 12 exercise in Poland. Croatia participated with 44 CAF and MoD members, three specially-trained military police dogs and 11 vehicles.

For military police members from Croatian, Polish, Slovak and Czech armed forces – which together constitute MNMBPAT – the most important event of the entire exercise was MNMBPAT's certification by NATO CREVAL evaluators. The "Declaration of Achievement of Full Operational Capability Status" was jointly signed by the following military police commanders: Lieutenant Colonel Tihomir Zebec (Croatia), Major General Miroslaw Rozmus (Poland), Colonel Milan Schulc (Czech Republic) and Colonel Jaroslav Hamar (Slovakia). With this, after years of



As the leading nation, Poland provides a military police company to this battalion, while Croatia, the Czech Republic and Slovakia each provide a military police platoon and Criminalistic military police teams



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dedicated work and close cooperation on the part of many military police members from all four countries, MNMBPAT received a "full operational capability" status and made a big step towards its next goal – joining NATO's Multinational Corps Northeast (MNC NE)

Along with NATO MNC NE's commander Lieutenant General Rainer Korff, SHARP LYNXA 12's final day was attended by Rear Admiral Tihomir Erceg, Major General Pavel Macko, Major General Ildefonso Hernandez Gomez, Colonel Brian Bisacre, Major General Miroslaw Rozanski, Brigadier General Franciszek Kochanowski and many other NATO representatives and military officials from many countries.

In his speech during the ceremony, NATO MNC NE commander Lieutenant General Rainer Korff thanked all the participants in the SHARP LYNX 12 international military exercise for their efforts and for the enthusiasm that they have shown. Stressing the importance of the exercise as well as of the entire NATO MNMPBAT project, he said "We come from different places, we have different names and speak different languages, but we all have the same goal – we want to contribute to freedom and democracy". In his address Rear Admiral Tihomir Erceg welcomed the achieved progress as well as MNMPBAT's results; he also announced that Croatia will continue to support and participate in this project.

During the last day of the SHARP LYNX 12 international military exercise, a presentation of MNMP-BAT's level of training was held. At the "Wedrzyn" military training ground, members of Croatian, Polish, Slovak and Czech military police forces demonstrated that together and coordination they are capable of effectively accomplishing complicated military police tasks.



With all the proven and necessary capacities and abilities, Duro Daković has adopted the technology transfer in manufacturing superior and modern AMV 8x8 vehicles that meet all NATO standards. They offer a fully-armoured combat vehicle, as well as assistance in training and maintenance for the entire lifespan of a vehicle. In the collaboration with Kongsberg, Đuro Đaković had already successfully installed a battle station on Croatian Patrias, which are armed with 12.7 calibre machine guns. The AMV 8x8 project will remain ĐĐ Special Vehicles' primaru pillar of development

Domagoj Vlahovic, photos by Tomislav Brandt

THE CROATIAN MILITARY INDUSTRY

ĐURO ĐAKOVIĆ'S PRIMARY PILLAR OF DEVELOPMENT

PATRIA AMV 8X8 ARMOURED MODULAR VEHICLE

The Patria AMV 8x8 armoured modular vehicle is a multipurpose military vehicle, production of which is based on cooperation with the Finnish company PATRIA LAND SARMAMENT OY, realized through a transfer of technology. In the production of AMV 8x8 vehicles, the most up to date technologies have been applied. The vehicle features maximal capacity of payload, simultaneous integration of high level armour with high level of mine protection and incorporation of heavy weapon platform - without jeopardizing vehicle mobility. The basic feature of the AMV 8x8 vehicle is its modular design, which enables the installation of equipment for various missions on the same vehicle platform.

Typical basic configurations of the vehicle include:

- AIFV-12.7, with remote weapon station 12,7 mm
- AIFV-30, Armoured Infantry Fighting Vehicle, armed with
- 30 mm automatic gun AICV, Armoured Infantry Command Vehicle
- AAV, Armoured Ambulance Vehicle
- ARRV, Armoured Repair & Recovery Vehicle ATGMV, Anti-Tank Guided Missile Vehicle

The news that in mid-June of this year the Croatian company Đuro Đaković Inc and Patria from Finland signed a framework agreement on the joint appearance on third markets in the sale of Patria AMV 8x8 armoured modular vehicles was published in all relevant international media covering themes in the military industry. Signed in Paris at the Eurosatory World Reference Exhibition for Land and Airland Defence and Security, the agreement definitely confirmed Đuro Đaković Group to be a company that produces armoured vehicles (tanks, AMVs) completely in accordance with "Western" standards, NATO's standards.

M-84 & T-72 MODERNIZATION

ĐĐSV develops a T-72 & M-84 tank modernization program, according to new military technologies, which includes mobility upgrading, firepower enhancement and survivability improvement

But the roots of the successful transition to Western technology lie at the very beginning of the large company's military production, which is based in Slavonski Brod. The M-84 tank, the first product that was for the most part created at Đuro Đaković, was created for the needs of the former state's army in the early 80ies with a licence from the famous Soviet T-72. That, however, was its modernised version, said Bartol Jerković, executive director of "ĐĐ Special Vehicles", which is a member of Đuro Đaković Group that is specialised in military and rail production programs. "The M-84's platform had an Eastern design, but even then the tank had some Western elements, like the fire control system with a ballistic computer and passive night-vision devices. Already back then, just like Western tanks, they were capable of shooting a moving target while in motion," said Jerković. This type of combined orientation was justified by the agreement that was signed in 1989 with very selective buyers from Kuwait. According to the agreement, the 🔶

THE CROATIAN MILITARY INDUSTRY

Đuro Đaković and the Homeland War

The Homeland War interrupted Đuro Đaković Group's upswing in production, but the company remained active during the conflict though some of its strategically important installations were constantly exposed to enemy threats. "At the time we were on several fronts. In May of 1991 employees prevented the former JNA's takeover of about twenty tanks. During the summer of 1991 in Slavonski Brod, the Croatian Army founded its first armoured unit, which was comprised of people and technology form Đuro Đaković. In parallel, we were also capacitating armoured and anti-tank units from other brigades. During the entire war we organized mobile units that worked on the maintenance of armoured vehicles on-site throughout Croatia. Unfortunately, many of our employees were been killed, both as soldiers and as workers," recalled Jerković.





TANK DEGMAN

The MBT Degman brings out a successfully accomplished combination of the M-84 tank and modern trends and solutions. It is distinguishable by its with low silhouette, small mass, high density power train and powerful main armament. Implementing advanced gun fire controls with thermal imaging sights and MCS, improved turret drives, RRAK explosive reactive armour, protection systems, communication equipment and other, have created a tank with amazing characteristics.

Technical data			
Combat weight:	44.5 tons		
Combat weight:	3		
Drive:	diesel engine 735 kW		
Top speed:	70 km/h		
Armament:	smooth bore tank gun 125 mm		
Coupled machine gun PKT 7.62 mm			
Antiaircraft machine gun 12.7 mm			
Gun loading:	automatic		
Firing speed:	8 shells per minute		
Fire control System:	automatic, electrohydraulic		

Middle-Eastern country's army was equipped with many versions of the M-84, which are low silhouette tanks with high mobility levels that are lightweight and able to operate in the most varied weather and terrain conditions, day and night.

THE PRODUCTION OF ARMOURED COMBAT VEHICLES

Despite the scars left from the Homeland War, Đuro Đaković came out of it restructured with the intent of becoming fully modernised, and in this it succeeded. Logically, the "ĐĐ Special Vehicles" part of Đuro Đaković Group was designated as the strategic partner to the Croatian Ministry of Defence. The production and modernisation of M-84 tanks, as well as other vehicles for the needs of the Croatian Armed Forces, was successfully resumed. Here there is a long-term, continuous agreement. However, the new partnership level established the production of Patria armoured combat vehicles. When it was concluded that the new needs of the Croatian Armed Forces, members of NATO's Army, included the acquisition of ACVs, it was natural for the MoD and the government of Croatia to mark ĐĐ Special Vehicles as the bearer

MINE SWEEPER RM-KA-02

humanitarian mine clearance machine is developed and produced by ĐĐ Special vehicles ltd. With a total mass of 14 tons and relatively small dimensions, the RM-KA-02 mine sweeper is ranked in middle class of mine clearance machines

of production. The domestic producer, with all the proven and necessary capacities and abilities, was officially nominated even before the decision on which foreign company was to be included in the agreement was made. When in July 2007 it was decided that this company was to be Patria form Finland, the crown of the story was the development of Đuro Đaković's capacity to adopt the technology transfer to manufacturing superior and modern AMV 8x8 vehicles that meet all NATO standards.

"The way in which we have received technology, prepared ourselves and conducted training for all employees resulted in a product that is perfectly identical to the one made in Finland," said Darko Grbac, director of the Defence Division at Đuro Đaković and manager of the Patria production project. This was accompanied by the contract mentioned at the beginning of the story: with it, as well as with the certificate that confirms Đuro Đaković as a manufacturer of original equipment, Patria showed that it counts on Đuro Đaković as an equal partner. "Patria AMV 8x8 are not assembled in our company, they are produced here," stated Grbac. What is most interesting is that the company is ready to respond to wider demands

THE M-84 AB IN THE GULF WAR

Equipping the Kuwaiti Armed Forces with M-84 AB tanks was undergone under extremely complex conditions. It was the pre-war era in the former Yugoslavia, and deliveries to Kuwait began precisely at the moment when Iraq's invasion of the country had begun. Tanks were delivered to Saudi Arabia, where Duro Daković's technical team was present and provided technical support and training. The tanks later successfully participated in the campaign for Kuwait's liberation as the first combat vehicles to have entered the country. All the tanks that went into action successfully reached their goals, said Bartol Jerković proudly, adding that all these vehicles are still operational today.

CROATIAN MILITARY MAGAZINE







The M-84 tank is based on the Russian T-72 tank and is distinguished by its largest applicable gun calibre with efficient ammunition, automatic gun loading, small mass, low silhouette and good protection. Besides that, the M-84 tank is equipped with a new, modern fire control system, a modified and stronger engine, new radio equipment and a new NBC detector.

Technical data

- commean			
Combat wei	ght:	42 tons	
Crew:	3		
Drive:	diesel engi	ne 735 kW	
Top speed:			
Armament:			L25 mm
Coupled machine gun PKT 7.62 mm			
Antiaircraft machine gun 12.7 mm			
Gun loading: automatic			
Firing speed: 8 shells per minute			
Fire control	System:	automatic,	electrohydraulic



and standards than those that it has shown to have. The AMV 8x8 is a multi-role vehicle, and a number of variants of equipment and weapons are available for it. "The direction of our future development is for us to be profiled as a company that can not only install, but also participate in the integration, testing and verification of individual systems on the platform. We offer a fully-armoured combat vehicle, as well as assistance in training and maintenance for a prolonged period, the entire lifespan of a vehicle," Grbac said. He recalls that, in the collaboration with Kongsberg, Đuro Đaković had already successfully installed a battle station on Croatian Patrias, armed with 12.7 calibre machine guns. "Other weapons systems, other types and calibres are coming in the future," added Grbac, and Jerković also recalled the experience with integration that they have from the tank program.

This type of orientation was there even before, as Duro Daković's "open architecture" principle and their customisation for the customer began to be cultivated when producing M-84 and Degman tanks. "Customers are becoming more and more demanding and have specific needs, and we want to allow them to get what they wish for", confirms Jerković.

MINE SWEEPER RM03

The RM03 humanitarian mine clearance machine is developed and produced by ĐĐ Special vehicles ltd. With total mass of 21 tons and its dimensions, mine sweeper RM03 is ranked in class of heavy mine clearance machines



The AMV 8x8 project will remain ĐĐ Special Vehicles' primary pillar of development, and this includes an active civil program for railways (domestic and foreign). Military and civilian programs are technologically compatible and, together with other programs and Đuro Đaković Inc companies, guarantee the preservation of the company's entire production capacity. Therefore, they are ambitious in company: they continue to offer the adequate production and modernisation of tanks (also offering the possibility of modernising of T-72s), and novelties in the demining program. Some of their advantages are full serial production, a continuously active production line, which provides fast and efficient production and delivery to the client, and offers training on the company's training ground. In short, "deadlines are twice as short as the competition's"!

Another advantage is cooperation with and support from the Ministry of Defence and from the CAF. The most important thing when concluding foreign affairs are local references, emphasize the company's employees. Patria production is in full swing, and members of the CAF have already been very successfully using it in several domestic international exercises. The primary activity of the Galeb company is the production of wearing apparel: underwear, outwear and nightwear. A special group of Galeb's products is developed especially for special purposes and for highly demanding customers like military organizations

THE CROATIAN MILITARY INDUSTRY





Products for military customers are based on long-time experience and modern researches



Galeb is a company established on the 30th of October 1951 which has been connecting tradition with trends in order to satisfy the needs and preferences of its clients for over 50 years. During years of gaining experience and endeavoring to satisfy clients' needs in all age groups, Galeb has created within its production program the following product brands: Galeb, Adriatic and GLB. The primary activity of Galeb is the production of wearing apparel: underwear, outwear and nightwear. The production program includes an assortment of products for women, men and children. Products are primarily made of natural fibers (cotton), one part is made of natural regenerated fibers (micromodal) combined with elastan fibers. During the selection of raw and production materials, Galeb only cooper-

In 2010, Galeb started researching fibres with special performances for the development of functional underwear. The main goal of functional underwear is to be comfortable and to protect the skin

ates with reputable suppliers of European origin, which results in its product satisfying high quality and ecological norms. Since February 2007, products have borne the Croatian Quality label which is awarded by the Croatian Chamber of Commerce. As a confirmation of high ecological standards for the raw materials used in the production process, as also for knitted fabrics and finished products, Galeb has the certificate which is awarded by the best known quality certification institute from Germany (Textil-Service-Verglas-und Zertifizierungsstelle from Hohenstein) to which samples are sent for analysis with the purpose of extending the certificate's validity once a year.

Development of functional underwear

In 2010, Galeb started researching fibres with special performances for the development of functional underwear. The main goal of functional underwear is to be comfortable and to protect the skin.

Underwear, depending on its type and purpose, can cover even more than 95% of our skin. Due to such a big and intensive direct contact with skin, the choice of the right and healthy underwear is very important. To enable the skin to do its function correctly, in circumstances of usual, moderate rhythm of every-day life, without exposing the skin to extreme situations, it is most desirable to use underwear completely produced from organic natural materials based on raw materials such as wool, silk, cotton, and other



Modern characteristics like improved control over moisture produced by the human body, control over temperature produced by the human body and improved protection from fire make this products ideal for soldiers and similar professions



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PRODUCER OF HIGH QUALITY CLOTHES



cellulose fibres. In that way Galeb provides the best functionality of skin, makes the duration period of skin without certain diseases longer and prevents the appearance of diseases of other organs that can happen because of exaggerated and intensive use of underwear made of bad and inadequate fibres. To help the skin perform its function as best as possible even in extreme circumstances, that is to say, to protect it as much as possible in such situations, it is necessary to use underwear that has especially good functionalities, that is adjusted to particular conditions. Because of that it is important to know that there is underwear that has such functionalities.

Galeb produces a few types of functional underwear that can be put into three groups:

- underwear with improved control over moisture produced by the human body (sweat)
- underwear with improved control over temperature produced by the human body, that is to say better regulation of outer climate influences to the human organism
- underwear with improved protection from fire, heat attack and eliminated gathering of static electricity.

A special group of Galeb's products is developed especially for special purposes and for highly demanding customers like military organizations. Products for military customers are based on long time experience and modern researches. The result is a range of products adjusted to specific military needs and to satisfying demands from this group of customers. Modern characteristics like improved control over moisture produced by the human body, control over temperature produced by the human body and improved protection from fire make this products ideal for soldiers and similar professions. The quadruple sculls team: Valent Sinković, Martin Sinković, Damir Martin and David Šain



The taekwondoist Lucija Zaninović

CAF MEMBERS AT THE OLYMPIC GAMES IN LONDON

The agreement which was signed on the 3rd of September 2010 between the Croatian Ministry of Defence and the Croatian Olympic Committee initiated an employment model that was intended primarily for top athletes in the Armed Forces. Top athletes receive support in their athletic endeavours, and in that way the MoD contributes to and promotes the country through sports, systematically helps top sport and also achieves a higher level of sports culture, especially in the Armed Forces.

Not much time has passed since, in accordance with the agreement mentioned above, the first top athletes joined the CAF in early March of last year. During this short period, many of them have shown that the collaboration between the CAF and the Croatian Olympic Committee was a success, not only for Croatian sport but also for the Croatian Army, especially considering the fact that during that period they have won numerous titles in European and World competitions.

The recently ended Olympic Games in London have established the coupling of sports and of the army in the best possible way and announced that the cooperation will be long and fruitful. The quadruple



ROATIA

The Winter Olympics will be held in early 2014 in Sochi. It is almost certain that CAF member, skier Natko Zrnčić-Dim will participate in them



sculls team and the taekwondoist Lucija Zaninović came back to Croatia with medals around their necks. Some athletes were very close to winning a medal (shooter Snježana Pejčić and sailors Tonči Stipanović and Ivan Kljaković Gašpić). The others, having gone through gruelling Olympic qualifications, have proven that they are among the best in the world in their sports. Croatian Defence Minister Ante Kotromanović gave recognition to the military Olympians, handing them Croatian Armed Forces Olympic badges.

Of the 24 athletes that have signed a contract with the Croatian MoD (along with the Žugaj brothers who are active officers), 14 have competed in London. This is a figure that is very significant, and it is even more meaningful when stressing that all these men and women are far from being at the zenith of their sports careers. Much more success and many

THE WELL-DESERVED MEDALS OF MILITARY OLYMPIANS

The recently ended Olympic Games in London have established the coupling of sports in the best possible way The quadruple sculls team and the taekwondoist Lucija Zaninović came back to Croatia with silver and bronze medals around their necks

CAF MEMBERS IN LONDON

Quadruple sculls		
(Valent Sinković, Martin Sinković, Damir Martin	SILVER MEDAL	
Lucija Zaninović - taekwondo		BRONZE MEDAL
Tonči Stipanović - sailing, Laser class		4 th place
Snježana Pejčić - shooting-air rifle	(3 positions)	5 th place
	(10 metres standing)	18 th place
Ivan Kljaković Gašpić - sailing, Finn class		5 th place
<u>Šime Fantela-Igor Marenić - sailing, 470 class</u>		6 th place
Bojan Djurkovic - shooting, small caliber rifle	(50 metres prone)	7 th place
	(50 metres 3 positions)	35 th place
	(air rifle, 10 metres standing) 36 th place
Neven Žugaj (wrestling, 74 kg)		10 th place
<u>Nenad Žugaj (wrestling, 84 kg)</u>		14 th place
Tina Mihelić (sailing, Laser Radial class)		17 th place

more medals await them, perhaps even at the next Olympics in Rio de Janeiro in four years. There will be room for Tonimir Sokol (wrestling), Stipe Jarlonija and Filip Grgić (taekwondo), Filip Hrgović (boxing), Andreja Daković and Ivan Maranić (judo)... as well as for others who have yet to join the CAF but who would very much like to do so. New Olympic Games are already to take place in early 2004 in the winter, in Sochi. It is almost certain that a CAF member will participate in them, that being the skier Natko Zrnčić-Dim. In anticipation of Sochi, we will continue to follow the success of our soldiers, top athletes and great promoters of the CAF and of Croatia...

Domagoj Vlahović

The Afghan National Army's Military Police School is one of twelve schools operating in ANATEC (ANA Training and Education Command) as a part of the NATO Training Mission – Afghanistan. As of May 2011, the project was entrusted to the Republic of Croatia who became its leading nation, and in Afghanistan Croatia is recognised for the high quality of its Military Police's work. It is one of the few schools that have achieved the desired and planned size and it helped the complete structuring of the ANA's military police. So far it has developed 16 courses and trained over 700 ANA MP enrolees

INTERVIEW

Text and photos by Dražen Jonjić

Colonel Željko Akrap,

commander of the 4th MP TAT (Military Police Training Advisory Team) and senior military advisor of the ANA Military Police School

WE HAVE THE KNOWLEDGE AND THE CAPACITY TO UNDERTAKE EVEN THE MOST CHALLENGING PROJECTS

AKRAS

We had the privilege to speak to commander of the MP TAT (MP training team), Colonel Željko Akrap, about the ANA Military Police School. He is the School's senior military advisor (SMA), and today, he is better known to both his associates and his Afghan colleagues as the Military Police School commander.

In a meeting with Minister Kotromanović, NATO's Secretary General Anders Fogh Rasmussen emphasised the value and the importance of the Military Police School project. What in fact is this project?

The Afghan National Army's Military Police School is one of twelve schools operating in ANATEC (ANA

The School invited countries from the US-Adriatic Charter, better known as the A-5 Initiative, who sent their representatives to the School. First, Albania, Slovenia, Macedonia and Montenegro joined. Later, Bosnia and Herzegovina included itself in the school's activities

Training and Education Command) as a part of the NATO Training Mission – Afghanistan (NTM). It's at its beginning, having started in April 2010, and it began its activities quite late. As of May 2011, the project was entrusted to the Republic of Croatia who became its leading nation, and in Afghanistan Croatia is recognised for the high quality of its Military Police's work in ISAF, under the patronage of the USA. The School invited countries from the US-Adriatic Charter, better known as the A-5 Initiative, who sent their representatives to the School. First, Albania, Slovenia, Macedonia and Montenegro joined. Later, Bosnia and Herzegovina included itself in the school's activities. Last year in May, we began the first courses, the school's activities

After the completion of works and equipping, the School should move from its temporary location in Kabul to the North of Afghanistan, to Camp Shaheen

INTERVIEW

in other words. We established an excellent relationship with the relevant ANA bodies with the sincere support of the NTM. There are currently thirty-nine staff members in the School; twenty are members of the CAF and nineteen are members of armed forces from countries in the region.

What state did you find the Afghan Military Police in? What were the beginnings truly like?

They were not easy; it must be emphasised that the ANA did not have any experience with the military police as a branch. We had not met a single officer or NCO who had at least in the past been a military police officer. We began right from the basics. Of course a problem for us were ANA representatives who were supposed to be instructors, but who for the first time in their lives were faced with military police tasks. Another problem was mastering specialist skills. In a rapid transition period, we had to train them to work and implement actions independently, but with the help of our advice of course. Instructors are hard to create; in a five-course rotation for immediate protection, only three of thirty candidates remain.

Among ANA's schools, this one, which we like to think of as the Croatian one, has had exceptional results. How do you explain this?

So far, in all of our rotations, we have had exceptional military police specialists from six countries that were able to recognise needs, who knew how to translate them into the necessary courses, creating all the necessary support documentation for them. We are one of the few schools that have achieved the desired and planned size. In fact, it could be said that we very much helped the complete structuring of the ANA's military police. That's why we were able to devote ourselves to realising the second phase which is the development of specialised courses and the further increasing of their knowledge and skill in the field of military police work. We added extra courses in areas where we perceived they were lacking, such as in information technology, on radio procedures, topography and defence techniques. We have raised the ANA's capabilities in this area. So far we have developed 16 courses and trained over 700 ANA MP enrolees.

Last year in May, we began the first courses, the school's activities in other words. We established an excellent relationship with the relevant ANA bodies with the sincere support of the NTM. There are currently thirty-nine staff members in the School; twenty are members of the CAF and nineteen are members of armed forces from countries in the region



What are the plans for the further development of this project?

In accordance with the NTM's i.e. DCOM's plans, there has been an acceleration in the transfer of authority to the ANA. The Afghan instructors that we trained are capable of implementing fifty to seventy percent of the program independently, which, in comparison to others, is a high average. We are multiplying courses in order for more instructors to master these skills. The problem remains in the specialist courses, but I believe that even those will be mastered, especially if one takes into account that we have encouraged interdepartmental cooperation with specialists from the police, the school's "Legal", ANATEC or from other state institutions, which is something completely new here. We are extremely happy with this cooperation, I believe that we will completely train our ANA colleagues for independent work within the given timeframe.
The School at which Croatia is the leading nation, according to NATO's Secretary General Anders Fogh Rasmussen, is an example of succesful regional cooperation

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ters Lieutenant General Lovrić, we were mentioned by NATO Secretary General Rasmussen. Of course, praise is always welcome. It is very flattering that our concerted efforts are recognised. If it weren't for the particularity of the Afghan situation, if all of the ANA's key positions in the School had been filled on time, the results, dare I say, would be even better. However, I learned to work with the people I had and to adapt to situations, to acknowledge reality. I had an exceptional collaboration with the School's Chiefs of Staff, Lieutenant Colonels Ampov and Brajković, and with the heads of training department Lieutenant Colonels Palac and Ivančić.

The move to the School's permanent location, in Camp Shaheen near Mazar-e-Sharif will also most likely contribute to even higher quality work...

I believe that will be the case, although deadlines are very flexible here. A permanent location provides conditions that we don't even have in Croatia. This will contribute to the betterment of the military police branch's training and development. I hope that the School will move to its new location by autumn.

What did the Republic of Croatia gain from this project?

The Republic of Croatia has proven that is has the knowledge and skills to be a leading nation and to create demanding projects such as this one that are to the general satisfaction of everyone. Of all NATO bodies, the MP School is noted as an example of a successful project. In the wake of these results other, new projects will be possible.

Regional cooperation is also something that makes this school special. What are the experiences like?

All members of the initiative ensured the high guality of the representatives that they sent to work in the School. I can proudly speak very highly of the involvement of the representatives and of interrelations. Of course, it is more complex to work with representatives from six countries than to only deal with CAF members. The experience I gained in RACVIAC has helped me in this work. This is in fact what all relevant NATO bodies recognised. When motives for the actualisation of assignments are coupled with the positive atmosphere that surrounds the School, visible results ensue. The School was praised by Brigadier General Gabrys of the DCOM ISC, by Army Brigadier Stevenson form the DCOM and by our immediate superiors. We were also praised by ISAF commander General Allen, and in a letter sent to Head of the CAF HeadquarThe Republic of Croatia has proven that is has the knowledge and skills to be a leading nation and to create demanding projects such as this one that are to the general satisfaction of everyone. Of all NATO bodies, the MP School is noted as an example of a successful project. In the wake of these results other, new projects will be possible



February 2013 will celebrate the ten-year mark of the Military Police's first platoon, with a total of twenty members, being sent to the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan in the ISAF operation. This was the beginning of the Croatian Armed Forces' participation in this NATO operation

THE CROATIAN ARMY

The engagement and assignments that members of the Croatian contingent undertook in this country transformed, as the ISAF operation itself did. Contingents grew out of the first Croatian engagement and military police assignments that Croatian soldiers carried out in Regional Command Capital and increased It is in fact the beginning of participation in the ISAF mission that proved that the Croatian Armed Forces in a short time grew from an army that won a victory during the Homeland War to a modern armed forces that had the capability to participate in the most demanding international operations. It was also an indication that the Republic of Croatia went from beeing a recipient of the international community, of international forces, to a country that actively contributes to global safety and stability. Since February 2003, twenty Croatian contingents have been sent to ISAF, a mission in which over three and a half thousand CAF members have participated. Participating in international operations thousands of kilometres from Croatian borders is demanding in every aspect. It was necessary to train soldiers for participation in an international environment, to equip contingents with the adequate equipment and, none the easier, to dispatch people and technologies to Afghanistan.

THE ISAF MISSION TENSION TEN

Sretno!



Dražen Jonjić, photos by Tomislav Brandt, Archive Croatian Military Press

CROATIAN MILITARY MAGAZINE

The engagement and assignments that members of the Croatian contingent undertook in this country transformed, as the ISAF operation itself did. Contingents grew out of the first Croatian engagement and military police assignments that Croatian soldiers carried out in Regional Command Capital and increased. Positions in the RC-C command were taken over as well as in the ISAF command. The next step was to send Mobile Liason Operational Teams – MLOTs – that were active in the area of the Regional Command West (RC-W) to the Provincial Reconstruction team in the city of Chagcharan in the province of Ghor. Civil-Military Relations officers (CIMIC) and psychological operations officers also joined those teams. This increase in the number of members was not simply important in terms of quantity; acquiring new capabilities and applying them in ISAF was much more important. It was mentioned many times with pride that the Croatian flag that our soldiers wear on their shoulder has Since February 2003, twenty Croatian contingents have been sent to ISAF, a mission in which over three and a half thousand CAF members have participated

become a trademark – an indication that these are people that came to Afghanistan to help contribute to the development and strengthening of Afghan security forces, contributing to their limits to the better life of the ordinary people of that country. Croatian soldiers tried to donate school supplies or food whenever they were able to and their gestures showed that they understood the situation of the people of that country.

THE CROATIAN ARMY

We are particularly proud of the ANA's Military Police School which is currently in Kabul. Croatia is the leading nation in it, and its advisors are members of armed forces from the A-5 initiative working as mentors



→ With every following contingent the number of members grew, as did the assignments that components of Croatian contingents in the ISAF operation undertook. Over time, the majority of forces were deployed to northern Afghanistan in three camps: to Pol e Khomri PRT, to Camp Marmal and to Camp Mike Spann, near Mazar e Sharif. Our members best showed their expertise and capabilities when they took over the demanding assignment of mentoring the Afghan National Army (ANA) and the Afghan National Police (ANP). They were organised in operational mentoring teams - OMLTs. The results that the Croatian mentors achieved, as well as the manner in which they were accepted by their Afghan colleagues, not to mention an unguestionable expertise of the test of a potential friendly relationship with members of the ANA and ANP, the acceptance of dialogue and the search for pragmatic solutions that contribute to the development of Afghan security forces' capabilities, give us the right to talk about Croatian ways, about the Croatian mentoring model. Our OMLTs implement one of ISAF's ideas, and that is working side by side, or as Afghans would say, Shona ba Shona. Over twenty-five per cent of the Croatian contingent is engaged in mentoring assignments that are among the most respected tasks in the ISAF operation. That percentage grows from contingent to contingent, and we are very proud of this.



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We are particularly proud of the ANA's Military Police School which is currently in Kabul. Croatia is the leading nation in it, and its advisors are members of armed forces from the A-5 initiative working as mentors. More than once the highest NATO authorities pointed to this school and to the Croatian mentoring teams in it as being an example of the excellent work that has contributed to the ANA creating a military police that prior to their aid was non-existent. By participating in this operation, the Croatian Armed Forces have grown stronger, acquiring new skills and procedures. Over the course of ten years, twenty Croatian contingents have been contributing to stability and peace, and each of the three and a half thousand members of the CAF is the perfect picture of the Croatian soldier, of Croatia as a dependable ally that has invested its knowledge, expertise and motivation.

It is in fact the ease with which Afghanis recognise and welcome the Croatian flag that actually gives us the right to claim that we have accomplished our mission. We were and still remain interested in the future and security of Afghanistan, and are well aware that without a safe and stable world, Croatia will not have any stability either.



With its first participation in the International Military Pilgrimage, Croatia was accepted into the community of nations trying to offer their values to the European table, the table of collectiveness, where one is not pitted against the other, but rather contributes to the good fortune of others. From year to year the number of Croatian pilgrims increases, and in the last pilgrimage there were over a thousand participants

Leida Parlov, photos by Davor Kirin

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CROATIA

ANNIVERSARY

PILGRIMAGE TO LOURDES

20 YEARS OF CROATIAN PARTICIPATION IN THE INTERNATIONAL MILITARY

SOLDIERS OF DEALERATION

Soldiers from all around the world gather in Lourdes. There they are one big family, and a spirit of unity, of mutual respect, a sense of belonging to the international community and national pride is present at every step

ANNIVERSARY





For 20 consecutive years already, Croatian soldiers, police officers and fire-fighters have been going on the pilgrimage to Lourdes – one of the largest Marian shrines in the world. The tradition of the International Military Pilgrimage takes place at the French shrine which is situated at the foot of the Pyrenees where, according to fifty-three-year-old tradition, the union of Heaven and Earth took place.

At the beginning, while the war still raged in Croatia, a few soldiers headed for Lourdes which was chosen by chaplains from Germany and France as the place for armies to meet in peace and where, as was stated by Military Ordinary Bishop Juraj Jezerinac at one of the pilgrimages, the reconciliation of not only Europe, but of the whole world started. With rosaries around their necks, they prayed for peace. With its first participation in the International Military Pilgrimage, Croatia was accepted into the community of nations trying to offer their values to the European table, the table of collectiveness, where one is not pitted against the other, but rather contributes to the good fortune of others. No one was forced to come. From year to year the number of Croatian pilgrims increases, and in the last pilgrimage there were over

The Croatian Army is very recognisable in Lourdes. Its experience from the Homeland War as well as the fact that it participates in international operations proves that it is a true peacemaker





a thousand participants.

Every year, people are united under a different slogan, this year's being "Hail Mary, Queen of Peace", but always with the same goal. Soldiers from all around the world gather in Lourdes. There they are one big family, and a spirit of unity, of mutual respect, a sense of belonging to the international community and national pride is present at every step.

Victims of the Homeland War also go on the pilgrimage, among them are even the most severely disabled that are in wheelchairs who thus confirm their service for peace, as a military pilgrimage is a particular way of service for peace. Every year in Lourdes, in its own particular way, the message that peace is not a given but rather something that needs to continuously be worked on is sent. Soldiers and police officers serve for peace and security, and Lourdes further inspires them to continue.

The Croatian Army is very recognisable in Lourdes. Its experience from the Homeland War as well as the fact that it participates in international operations proves that it is a true peacemaker. It had brought peace to Croatia, and today serves for peace throughout the world. The organiser of the military pilgrim-



Every year in Lourdes, in its own particular way, the message that peace is not a given but rather something that needs to continuously be worked on is sent. Soldiers and police officers serve for peace and security, and Lourdes further inspires them to continue

CROATIAN CADETS AT THE PILGRIMAGE

The recognisability of Croatian pilgrims at Lourdes is nothing new for those who are pilgrimage veterans, but it is for the CAF's new generations and especially for the cadets who will be marked by the experience of the pilgrimage for the rest of their careers. Here's how cadets Andrea Eldić, Ivan Hrvoje Jurkin and Mihael Lach experienced their first pilgrimage. "Here, a special power reigns: love

togetherness. Everyone should come and feel it and be a part of this atmosphere," said Andrea. "This is an army that serves for peace," said Mihael Lach, who added that it is a wonderful feeling when you see in Lourdes that the world recognises a country as small as Croatia and that soldiers from other countries stand and salute them as they go down the streets. For Ivan Hrvoje Jurkin this was a unique opportunity to be at one place with soldiers from so many different countries. However, he does not forget to remember our veterans and those disabled during the war who come to Lourdes and "who like the rest of us pray for a better tomorrow. We sympathize with them, we know what they have gone through and that if it were not for them, we would not be here".

age is the Military Ordinariate in Croatia, which actively participates and conducts masses and processions. The mass at the foot of the cave where the apparition took place, the Procession of the Blessed Sacrament, the magnificent procession with candles where thousands of people pour down the streets of Lourdes holding candles and the Way of the Cross are but some of the prayer celebrations where, despite the different languages that people speak, everyone understands. Along with all of this, Lourdes is also a place where Croatia as well as its traditions and cultural heritage can be promoted, and the CAF's Orchestra, the "Sveti Juraj" Croatian Navy a capella band and the Zrinski Guard contribute greatly to this. Every year, Croatian soldiers are joined by senior government officials, presidents, ministers and senior military officials in Lourdes. Defence Minister Ante Kotromanović was also at the 20th jubilee pilgrimage. "It is impressive to see soldiers from other countries salute our flag," he said after meeting with those most severely disabled during the Homeland War and with veterans. He also stressed the need to continue the tradition of the pilgrimage to Lourdes, where the cult of unity prevails.



Victims of the Homeland War also go on the pilgrimage, among them are even the most severely disabled that are in wheelchairs who thus confirm their service for peace





The CAF pays a great deal of attention to its military training grounds and continuously invests in their infrastructure. The three military training grounds that we are taking the opportunity to present have an added dimension: they are sites where the CAF prepares for international missions, but also for international military exercises in which members from allied and partner countries participate in

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THE CAF'S TRAINING INFRASTRUCTURE FOR ALL TYPES OF TRAINING

Many field training and exercise activities of the Croatian Army go beyond the possibilities of the barracks in which units are located. Therefore, the CAF pays a great deal of attention to its military training grounds and continuously invests in their infrastructure. The three military training grounds that we are taking the opportunity to present have an added dimension: they are sites where the CAF prepares for international missions, but also for international military exercises in which members from allied and partner countries participate in.

"Eugen Kvaternik" - large and versatile

The "Eugen Kvaternik" training grounds in Slunj are the largest military training grounds in Croatia. They are about one hundred kilometres south of Zagreb and have a surface area of 23 973 ha. The length of the training grounds north to south is 28 km, and The "Eugen Kvaternik" training grounds in Slunj are the largest military training grounds in Croatia. Because of their size and geographical diversity, the training grounds enable not only small exercises, but also those that are complex and inter-branch

east to west they measure between 5 and 13 km. Today, the training grounds are under the command of the Croatian Army, and the base is comprised of a few units, including the Combat Training Centre, Training and Doctrine Command, Training Grounds Maintenance and the Artillery Rocket Battalion of the Guards Motorised Brigade. Because of their size and geographical diversity, the training grounds enable not only small exercises, but also those that are complex and inter-branch. It ensures the implementation of practical and specific forms of training, military and test shooting from both existing and new armament systems of the Croatian Army, the implementation of trainings on the grounds using the "MILES 2000" system up to the level of Company teams, the destruction of ammunition and deadly weapons and the implementation of other activities. Among the CAF's exercises and international exercises held at





Domagoj Vlahović, photos by Davor Kirin, Tomislav Brandt

CROATIAN MILITARY MAGAZINE



The "Gašinci" military training grounds have earned a good reputation thanks to the implementation of many of the CAF's important exercises and international exercises (Guardex, **Croatian Pride, Black** Bear, Adriatic Aurora), as well as a series of smaller exercise and training events. Interestingly, in 2011 the shooting ranges were in use 297 days, 14 899 members from 219 different units used them, and they used over 470 000 rounds of ammunition



and concealments as well as the maintenance and construction of roads. At the "Poljane" air defence training grounds, airborne target practice is undergone. The training ground for the training of the Croatian Air Force and Air Defence is intended for the training of aviation units in assault operations (cannon and machine gun firing, rocket attacks and bombings). Besides that, it can also be used for the tactical training of all levels of aviation and other units. The training grounds also have seven shooting ranges. This includes a tank shooting range, a shooting range for tank crew and battle shooting, the "Koturevo" infantry shooting range for anti-tank battle, the "Močila" shooting range for small arms, a shooting range for pistols and submachine guns, a shooting range for artillery support and a shooting range for the Croatian Air Force.

"Gašinci" - Active from the beginning of the Homeland War

The "Gašinci" military training grounds in Eastern Slavonia are situated in a village 14 kilometres from the city of Đakovo. They are under the authority of the Infantry Regiment of the Croatian Army's Training and Doctrine Command, and are home to a few units of the Guard Armoured Motorised Brigade. They have earned a good reputation thanks to the implementa-

NING GROUNDS

training grounds, "Immediate Response 11", "Jackal Stone", "Impact", "Noble Midas" and "Croatian Pride" are particularly noteworthy.

As for special training grounds, the largest infantry training ground can be found at "Eugen Kvaternik". It is intended for the implementation of exercises using the "MILES 2000" system, as well as for the training of ground units and for special purpose units' exercises. It is also an important training ground for armoured mechanised units, and a training ground for artillery support, at which tactical training and shooting from the support squad to the support regiment level can be undergone, for a variety of weapons and calibres. The engineering training ground is intended for practical training in handling practice or live mines and explosive devices, using the natural advantages of the land for the prevention, identification and disabling of artificial and natural barriers



tion of many of the CAF's important exercises and international exercises (Guardex, Croatian Pride, Black Bear, Adriatic Aurora), as well as a series of smaller exercise and training events. Of the three military training grounds mentioned in this text, only Gašinci were used for a greater part of the Homeland War, more precisely, since the 19th of September 1991. "Gašinci" are best for training individuals and smaller groups, but an impressive list of larger exercises is proof that they can be undergone without a problem as well. "Gašinci" are divided into two parts. The eastern part is where Headquarters, training grounds, camp areas and sports fields are situated and the western part is where the training facilities are located. The military training grounds take up an area of 26 360 hectares, approximately 2100 of which are designated for training and shooting. The dimension of the grounds is 7,5 x 5 kilometres.

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The training grounds' uses include the implementation of trainings on a track inclusively with companies, tactical exercises inclusively with battalions, target practice at the squad, platoon and company levels, the implementation of preparatory and combat shooting from infantry and anti-tank weapons, firing a hand grenade, artillery and tank weapons, as well as individual and collective trainings of units and the training of units for international military operations. On the military training grounds there are ten different shooting ranges (one automatic infantry and tank. one for target practice with a hand grenade, one for instinctive and situational shooting ...) and ten training grounds (for infantries, anti-tank activities, air defence, artillery...). Interestingly, in 2011 the shooting ranges were in use 297 days, 14 899 members from 219 different units used them, and they used over 470 000 rounds of ammunition.

"Crvena zemlja" - Just like Afghanistan

The "Crvena zemlja" military training grounds are situated in the western slopes of the Dinara Mountains. They are situated six kilometres northeast of Knin, in Dalmatia's hinterland, and with a total surface area of approximately 50 square kilometres, stretch north to south. The grounds are comprised of five sections. The first is the "Bralovac" multipurpose facility for accommodation, training and shooting. The second section is a campsite, the third is an area for target shooting, in the fourth section there is a space for the implementation of trainings and tactical exercises while the fifth section is intended for the destruction of lethal weapons. The configuration of the terrain, the woodland scrub and the scarce vegetation enable commanders to The "Crvena zemlja" military training grounds are situated in the western slopes of the Dinara Mountains. Due to the configuration of the terrain and the microclimatic conditions, "Bralovac" proved to be an exceptional area that simulates the conditions in that CAF members that go on the military mission in Afghanistan will be faced with





train completely different ways of introducing units, manoeuvring and soldier training from what is done in areas with rich vegetation. The Dinara crag is one of the harshest areas on Croatian territory and this very type of area is ideal for training units such as the Guard Motorised Brigade, which manages the training grounds. It was under the control of enemy forces until August of 1995 and Operation "Storm", after which, neglected and devastated, the CAF took over it. At the time, the necessary infrastructures on the training grounds were lacking, with the exception of those needed for the "Bralovac" shooting range. In 2006, intense interventions began, as well as the creation of a separate training ground, "Bralovac", within the "Crvena zemlja" military training grounds. Due to the configuration of the terrain and the microclimatic conditions, "Bralovac" proved to be an exceptional area that simulates the conditions in that CAF members that go on the military mission in Afghanistan will be faced with. From 2006 to 2011, a series of new military exercise facilities were built: a shooting range for instinctive shooting, pedestrian barriers, a heliport, a road convoy, a safe-house for target practice, an automated infantry shooting range with nine lines and a control tower. At the same time, also built were facilities to accommodate people, sanitary facilities, summer classrooms, facilities for management headquarters, a meeting room, a kitchen and the necessary infrastructures. The Guard Motorised Brigade will continue to implement tactical training at "Crvena zemlja" as well as trainings for international operations and target practice. In addition to regular activities, in 2012 two other important military exercises are set to take place here: Guardex and Croatian Pride 2.



PROJECTS that **WE ARE PROUD** of...



KRILA OLUJE AEROBATIC DISPLAY TEAM DVD

The Croatian "Krila Oluje" (Wings of Storm) is among the thirty or so aerobatic display teams that have been flying over the past eight years. They have numerous top performances at international meetings behind them and are attracting more and more attention everywhere they go with their uniqueness. Wanting to capture their acrobatics and flying skills, the Multimedia Division has released a DVD about the "Krila Oluje" aerobatic display team which contains a five-minute video and the story about our top pilots.



HANDBOOK FOR CAF MEMBERS ON THE ISAF OPERATION

The Croatian Military Press and Publications Division has published the second modified and revised edition of the Handbook for CAF Members on the ISAF Operation which every member of the Croatian contingent that goes on the mission will carry with himself as an integral part of his equipment.

This is a two-hundred-page pocketbook that summarises all relevant information about Afghan culture, history, tribal customs, religion, economy and political system as well as the organisation and operation of Afghan military and police security forces. In addition to this, in the handbook there is also a summary of ISAF's establishment with the role and assignments of regional commands as well as the deployment of units from international forces that operate in the mission, and a special chapter is dedicated to an overview of CAF member's participation in the mission. There is also a Croatian-Dari-Pashtu dictionary in the handbook with commonly used words, phrases and questions.

With every new contingent the handbook is revised in accordance with current changes.

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