CROATIAN MILITARY MAGAZINE

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COLONEL JASENKO KROVINOVIĆ
HEAD OF THE GENERAL STAFF'S
DIRECTORATE FOR COMMUNICATIONS
AND INFORMATION SYSTEMS

CYBER THREATS HAVE NO BOUNDARIES

ARMY TRANSING RANGE THE EXERCISE "SPREMNOST13"

CROATIAFULL MEMBER OF THE
EUROPEAN UNION

"WINGS OF STORM

PERFORMING AT THE INTERNATIONAL AIR SHOW

SPECIAL MILITARY POLICE COMPANY

TEAM WORK
THE KEY TO SUCCESS



MODULAR HELMET PRODUCT OF CROATIA



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INTERVIEW

Colonel Jasenko Krovinović.

Head of the General Staff's Directorate for Communications and Information Systems



CYBER THREATS HAVE NO BO



The capability of collecting, processing and transmitting large amounts of data necessitate strong development of target military capabilities. Meanwhile, all NATO countries need to recognise the fact that their dependence on cyber-space (the IT space extending to the Internet as well) leaves them vulnerable and without systematic investments into the domain might undermine the overall operational capabilities or recovery from potential threats

Cyber-defence is a current topic on NATO's agenda, as evidenced by the recent defence ministerial, featuring a separate panel dedicated for the first time to this particular matter.

We discussed the importance attached to cyber-defence by the Armed Forces of the Republic of Croatia with the right authority - Col. Jasenko Krovinović, Head of the Communications and Information Systems (CIS) of the General Staff of the Armed Forces of the Republic of Croatia. The interview was held during the Cyber Endeavor 3 multi-national seminar organised in Zagreb, Croatia, by the CIS Directorate and the United States' European Command (EUCOM).

Cyber-threats know no boundaries so the cyber-defence needs to boost open co-operation of the different agencies and Allied countries and partners alike...

Is Croatia's hosting of the regional seminar on cyber defence (Cyber Endeavor 3) to suggest that the Croatian Armed Forces have taken an increasing role in the crossborder cyber-defence?

The Republic of Croatia has recently adopted one of the current NATO's transformation targets: development of the capability of protection of the information systems and the cyber-defence capability respectively. It is implied that as an Ally and partner Croatia needs to participate in building and protection of at once its own and Allied cyber space defence capabilities. Training the operating personnel through seminars constitutes the means to fulfill the



Author: Domagoj VLAHOVIĆ, Photos by: Tomislav BRANDT

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goals of development of cyber capabilities. We offered to host the seminar in September 2012 during the visit to US EUCOM, and our proposal was readily accepted, which can also be seen as recognition for the bilateral co-operation realised so far.

Does cyber defence, which has been one of the main items on the agenda of the NATO Defence Ministerial, have to do with prevention or with the expansion of actual threats?

NATO Ministerial agenda featuring the cyber-defence suggests at once the increased threats and the awareness about potential threats present at the top levels as well as the need to upgrade the prevention efforts.

JUNDARIES

Digital networks underpin the development of the society at the one hand and at the other hand enable operational dominance. The collecting, processing and transmission of large quantities of data demand strong development of target military capabilities. Meanwhile, all NATO countries need to face the fact that their dependence on the cyber -space, the IT space extending to Internet as well is at the same time their vulnerability, and without systematical investment in the domain will lead to disruption of the overall operational capability and of recovery from potential threats.

What is the main challenge for NATO in future upgrade of joint cyber-defence systems?

NATO and its member countries alike face a series of issues in the domain. One of them is related to the definition itself – whether we are talking about cyber-defence or cybernetic defence, and whether cyber-defence is a part of protection of IT systems or is it vice-versa. There have been requests for unification and definition of terms. More to the point, the issues whether a cyber-attack may be the case either for recourse to the Article 5 or launching the collective defence, or to the Article 4 of the Charter, which is more plausible. On the other hand, there

Our role in the defence of the national cyber-space is limited to the MoD and the Armed Forces system and we hold no responsibility beyond it, but of course we co-operate with other relevant bodies. I need to stress here that the Republic of Croatia, having closed the months-long interdepartmental co-ordination, is now also prepared to sign the Memorandum of Understanding with the NATO Alliance on the cyber defence co-operation.

have been operational concepts set at the organizational, doctrinary and technological level, with the respective budgets assigned for development of joint initial and full defence capabilities.

From the point of view of the function, NATO is responsible only for its networks, while the member countries hold responsibility for their national networks, which generated the political quidelines they have received to develop their cyber-defence capabilities in their own right or in co-operating between themselves. In any case, the domains of the collective defence that pose the challenge for NATO and need to be responded to encompass a number of issues – there is the issue of definition of critical infrastructure, application of military or civilian crisis management resources; exchanging the forensic experts for investigations purposes; issuing of the orders or recommendations to the Internet Service Providers (ISP) in the case of need of communication block: the active defence aimed at disrupting the command and management infrastructure behind the attacks and the like, extending to the use of offensive cyber-forces of the Allied countries to counter-attack on behalf of the Alliance.

Which are the most frequent motives for cyber-attacks on the security systems of the government? Is it intelligence, terrorist or common ones, "hacking"?

Initially the term hacker had a positive connotation, denoting a clever and skilled technology user, particularly who altered hardware of software components to expand the existing limitations. In time, the malicious practice led to corruption of the original meaning of the term. The virtual nature of the cyber-space opened the gate to quite a spectrum of human attack initiating motives. Although performed in the virtual space, the attacks have



INTERVIEW



more or less a direct effect upon the real world and space. Of course, attacks on the cyber-space of the defence and security system are heavier than attacks in the realm of crime or malice. Cyber attacks in the military context and system imply the attempted disruption of the operational cycle of information flow, deliberation, decision-making, even the the operational dynamics and strength. In peace-time the strategically vital intelligence is obtained through cyber-espionage.

Could you cite some notorious examples of cyber-attacks on governmental and security CIS systems?

In the chronological order – there was an attack of the NSA agency "Eligible Recovery 97" on the Pacific Command for exercise purposes, and it was a total success. In 1998 a series of networks of Pentagon and NASA, titled "Moonlight Maze" were hacked by an unknown offender. NATO's and NATO's members' computer networks underwent attempted attacks during the campaign in Kosovo in 1999, fortunately unsuccessful. Prior to the air raids by the Israeli forces on a nuclear reactor in 2007 the attack on the Syrian military computer system was launched. In 2007 too the Estonian Government's web-page came under a cyber-attack that damaged it. To prevent such events NATO established a Cooperative Cyber-Defence Centre of Excellence in Talinn, Estonia. During the armed conflict between Georgia and Russia in 2008 the Georgian computer portals were a target of a series of effective attacks.

In 2009 the GhostNet espionage network including over 1000 compromised computers in 103 countries was uncovered. The network was used for digging for diplomatic, political, military and economical information. Since 2010, the academic society has analysed the so-called Stuxnet worm, an advanced malware used as a tool for attacking the Siemens' industrial automation computers in the nuclear facilities in Iran. There were a series of malwares directed against national security systems such as Duqu, Flame, Red October.

Only the malware focused on real-time incapacitating and disrupting of the services was identified in the real-time, whereas the malware employed for espionage purposes went secretly operating for years and yielded results. The presently active malware are to be detected yet.

What is the situation of cyber security in the MOD and Armed Forces' systems?

The cyber-defence capability is in an initial phase, with a plan designed for upgrade and consolidation of the system to be implemented internally and through bilateral and multilateral initiatives. We shall be elaborating the NATO capability implementation to provide an acceptable framework



In the military context and system cyber warfare implies attempts to disrupt the operational cycle of the information flow, deliberation, decision-making and even the operation tempo and strength, whereas in peace-time the strategically vital intelligence is obtained through cyber-espionage.



for attaining cyber-defence capability in the coming period of time. Our role in the defence of the national cyber-space is limited to the MoD and AF system and we hold no responsibility beyond it, but of course we co-operate with other relevant bodies. I need to stress here that the Republic of Croatia, having closed the months-long process of co-ordination, is now prepared to sign the Memorandum of Understanding with the NATO Alliance on cyber defence co-operation.

Does the success of the cyber-defence depend primarily on software and hardware, or in other words, technology and funds?

Software, hardware and the funds are a welcome pre-requisite, but if you lack human potential, correct organization and cyber-space protection policy they will be useless. We do procure and test the NATO-certified equipment or the equipment from individual NATO members, and we have allotted a certain amount of funds for the purpose, but the focus has presently been placed on transformation of CIS organisation within the MoD and AF and coordination with other government administration bodies and with the relevant NATO CIS and cyber authorities respectively. A priority is also to select, train and educate officers and NCOs and raise the awareness by all staff levels on the need of enhanced defence of computer networks and capabilities. The topic of this interview on the occasion of the Regional Cyber Conference also serves the purpose.

Speaking of different CIS systems, will a stricter control be put in place within the MoD and the Armed Forces on the use of different CIS systems?

Certainly, superior order, organisation, clarity and consistency are expected, with the aim of ensuring information confidentiality, integrity, accountability and availability.

As the 28th member of the European Union Croatia will not only be contributing to peace and stability, share the common values and build mutual trust, but will also enrich the Union with its diversity and singularity. The EU membership constitutes a major achievement for Croatia and for the EU alike, towards the greater and safer future of the region and Europe

Dobro došla Hrvatska!

pro dos ratskai

Herzlich willkommen, Kroatien! Benvenuta Croazia! Sveika, Kroatija! Sveicināta, Horvātija! Merhba lill-Kroazia! Welkom Kroatië! Witai, Chorwacio! Boas-vindas à Croácia! **Bun venit Croatiei!** Vitaj, Chorvátsko! Välkommen Kroatien!





Having acceded to the European Union as full member, the Republic of Croatia has fulfilled its second major foreign policy objective set immediately upon gaining the independence, which was another crucial event in its recent history. Croatian citizens have become in the formal and legal sense a part of the European family, thus taking the place their country was entitled to in the geographical, historical and cultural aspect. The path to the membership was everything but easy, burdened with difficulties, decade-long negotiations, more demanding requests placed before the government than had been experienced by the countries admitted previously. Croatia was the only EU member that went through the war with all the hardships and was faced with the demands of restoration of peacetime environment, democratization of the society, transformation and adjustment of all its segments.

FROM THE REQUEST FOR ACCESSION TO EU MEMBER STATUS

- 21 February 2003 20 April 2004
- During the Greek presidency term over the EU, the Republic of Croatia submits the official request for the EU membership.
- the European Commission brings a positive avis regarding Croatia's request for EU membership and proposes the opening of accession
- 18 June 2004
- at its summit held in Brussels, the European Council grants the status of candidate country to Croatia. In its conclusions from the summit the Council stated that the December meeting of the Council would set the date of the opening of the accession negotiations.
- December 2004
- the European Council at its Brussels summit chose 17 March 2005 as the date for opening of the negotiations on the accession of the Republic of Croatia to the EU, conditional upon full co-operation with the Hague Tribunal. The Council's conclusions contained the guidelines for the Negotiating Framework that was to incorporate the experiences from the fifth circle of EU enlargement.
- 1 February 2005
- the ratification by the parliaments of the EU member countries was followed by the Stabilisation and Accession Agreement between the Republic of Croatia and the European Union.
- GAERC (General Affairs and External Relations Council) postponed the opening of accession negotiations. The European Council did not set a new date, and its Conclusions only stated that there would be a bilateral Inter-governmental Conference summoned upon the EU Council establishing full co-operation by the Republic of Croatia with the Hague Tribunal. The same day the Council adopted the Negotiating Framework for Croatia that had been proposed by the EU Commission in late January, setting out the rules for negotiations with Croatia. The novelty consisted in the so-called "benchmarks" for opening and closing of accession chapters, with the 31 chapters of the European Union's acquis communautaire divided into 35 negotiation chapters.

16 March 2005

CONGRATULATIONS FROM NATO

NATO Secretary General Anders Fogh Rasmussen congratulated Croatia on the achieved accession into the European Union. In his statement, published two days prior to the full membership coming into effect, the Secretary congratulated the Government and the citizens of the Republic of Croatia on reaching an important step in completing Europe that is whole, free and at peace saying: "Republic of Croatia is a valued NATO Ally and a role model of the successful Euro-Atlantic integration for the whole region".

FULL MEMBER OF THE EUROPEAN UNION

The foundations that were followed on the path towards the EU were laid by the Croatian defenders in the Homeland War. The free, independent and self-governing country that they sacrificed themselves for was a condition sine qua non of the European membership. It was Croatian soldiers who defended and secured the values that had been built into the EU itself – freedom, rule of law, equality, democracy and justice and who made possible for us to join the European community of nations.

As the 28th member of the European Union Croatia will not only be contributing to peace and stability, share the common values and build mutual trust, but will also enrich the Union with its diversity and singularity. The EU membership constitutes a major achievement for Croatia and for the EU alike, towards the greater and safer future of the region and Europe as a whole.



- 3 October 2005
- Croatia's Accession talks were officially opened at the bilateral Inter-governmental Conference between the Republic of Croatia and the European Union in Luxembourg, in the early morning hours, between 3rd and 4th October 2005.
- 3 October 2010
- the 5th anniversary of the opening of the accession talks was characterised with seven more chapters to be worked on. In the late 2010 the EU Commission announced March 2011 as the date of publishing of the report on the benchmarks closed in the Chapter 23 (Justice and Fundamental Rights) as the crucial one for the outcome of the entire negotiating process.
- **30 June 2011**
- Croatia closes the remaining four accession chapters Competition Policy, Justice and Fundamental Rights, Financial and Budgetary Provisions and Other issues.
- 1 December 2011
- European Parliament approves the Treaty concerning the Accession of the Republic of Croatia to the European Union by absolute majority of votes, as a pre-requisite for its adoption. 564 Euro-Parliamentarians out of the voting 634 were in favour of the accession, and 38 against, while 32 abstained from voting.
- 9 December 2011
- President of the Republic of Croatia Ivo Josipović and Prime Minister Jadranka Kosor co-signed the Treaty concerning the Accession of the Republic of Croatia to the European Union, preceding the opening of the meeting of the European Council, where Croatia participated for the first time, in the quality of observer.
- The next step was ratification of the Agreement in the parliaments of the EU member countries.
- **1 July 2013** Republic of Croa
- Republic of Croatia becomes a full European Union member





THE CROATIAN ARMY



British troops preparing for a large-scale exercise "The Cambrian Patrol"

British servicemen took the advantage of their stay at Slunj to prepare for the competition and the exercise due upon the return to Great Britain - "the Cambrian Patrol", entailing team marching for 60 kms in under 48 hours and performing a series of exercises in the marshy zones of Wales and the Cambrian mountains.

Author: Petra KOSTANJŠAK, Photos by: Josip KOPI

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Captain Herne: "This is our first time here, but we should by all means like to continue the co-operation in the future, as the camp provides excellent conditions for urban operations, complemented with the experience of co-working with a foreign Army"

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As for the title of the Exercise, Major explained that all extra-territorial exercises of the UK troops contain the name "Star" and expressed the hope that the exercises of that category would be held in future too.

In the evaluation phase of the exercise, the concluding one, the British soldiers were joined by 34 members of the Croatian Motorised Guard Brigade, from the Battalion named "Vukovi" ("Wolves"). In the words of Lt. Col. Marin Kostelac, Deputy Com-



the 3rd Battalion. Lt. Col. Thomas P.D. Morris commended the Range near Slunj as an "excellent exercise package", with the terrain radically different from Britain's. "This Range is the challenge we were looking for, with a far denser vegetation and warmer weather, which only adds to the complexity we needed because we seek to train our men in various conditions"



mander of the Combat Training Centre and Deputy Commander of the Training Range respectively: "A part of our troops will be designated as the enemy force to assist the British troops fulfill the training objectives, and partly will be imbedded with the British servicemen to conduct the exercise jointly". Lt . Col. Kostelac also stated that the Combat Training Centre was providing comprehensive logistic and general support for the conduct of the Exercise. Preparing the Exercise, the British officers "scouted" the training ranges in Croatia and chose Slunj, in view of its convenient infrastructure containing all the necessary resources for the exercise of the kind. Captain Tim Hearne, Aide-de-Camp and a PA officer explained that the British soldiers employed a very effective Dismounted Tactical Engagement Simulator (DTES), which is very similar to the one used by the Croatian troops for training purposes. Furthermore, the British servicemen are equipped with the SA80 A2 guns. "This is our first time here, but we should by all means like to continue the cooperation in future, as the camp provides excellent conditions for urban operations, complemented with the experience of co-working with a foreign Army", concluded Capt. Hearne.

THE CROATIAN ARMY





INTERNATIONAL SIMULATION COMPUTER-ASSISTED EXERCISE

The international computer-assisted exercise held in the "Petar Zrinski" Barracks was conducted to train for operating in an international framework, test the inter-operability and compatibility in joint operations and to foster co-operation, partnership and trust at the regional level. The Exercise participants included some 350 officers and NCOs from the Armed Forces of Croatia, the United States, Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, Macedonia, Slovenia, Serbia and the United Kingdom...

The "Petar Zrinski" Barracks in Zagreb hosted on 27 August 2013 of the presentation of the multinational simulation computer-assisted exercise; "Immediate Response 13". Each of the three Exercise conducted had different features/scenario - the Exercise held in 2011 was a combination of a staff computer supported and field exercise (conducted by the Simulation Centre of the Training and Doctrine Command, whereas the 2012 edition was solely a field exercise and held at the "Eugen Kvaternik" Training Range). The 2013 exercise event has been an entirely staff computer-supported exercise. Over the period it has grown in quality, the number of participants and the level of the training groups. "At the close of the cycle it is evident that all the goals have been fulfilled", stated the Croatian Army Commander, Maj. Gen. Dragutin Repinc while delivering the public

Completion of the Immediate Response 13 also marked the completion of the three-year cycle of the Exercise in the Republic of Croatia. In 2014 the Exercise will be hosted by the Republic of Slovenia, with the organisational support by the Republic of Croatia, as a compliment to its hosting capability and co-operation with the Command of the USAREUR.

presentation of the Exercise attended by a number of senior officials, including the Chief of the General Staff of the Armed Forces of the Republic of Croatia, Lt. Gen. Drago Lovrić, the USAREUR Commander, Lt. Gen. Donald M. Campbell Jr., and representatives of the participating Armed Forces, of the Ministry of Defence of the Republic of Croatia and of the diplomatic and military diplomatic corps respectively. The goals, primarily those associated with the Immediate Response 13, were explained to a larger detail by the Exercise Co-Directors or Vice-Commanders, Col. Blaž Beretin, the Croatian Training and Doctrine Command and Col. Andrew Heppelman of the USAREUR. The Exercise goals included upgrading the level of NATO interoperability, strengthening the relations among the participating militaries and preparation for contribution to

CROMII.





Author: Domagoj VLAHOVIĆ, Photos by: Davor KIRIN

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operations following ISAF and to NATO operations in general. The Exercise was also to increase the Croatian capacities for hosting computer-assisted exercises in international settings and to promote the level of co-ooperation, trust and security among NATO nations and partner countries in the region. The participants in the Immediate Response 13 were some 350 and included officers and NCOs of the Armed Forces of Croatia, the United States, Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, Macedonia, Slovenia, Serbia and for the first time the United Kingdom. Unlike the previous years, when some of them attended as observers, all the countries now took an active part in the Exercise. The Exercise was highly demanding, with the brigade staff as the primary training group. The staff engaged officers from the Croatian Armed Forces and from six more countries. The second training group were staffs of four battalions (Croatian, Slovenian, British and the U.S.), each of them supported by foreign countries' officers. As an introduction to the Exercise, the participants underwent a training with simulation tools and decision-making process, which served as preparation for simulations testing their readiness

The primary objective of the Exercise was to upgrade NATO interoperability and foster the co-operation between the NATO member countries' militaries. The second was to prepare for contribution to post-ISAF and NATO-led operations and the third one entailed maximisation of Croatian Armed Forces' capacities for computer-assisted exercises in international frameworks. The fourth objective was to promote co-operation, trust and security among the NATO members and partners in the Southeast Europe.

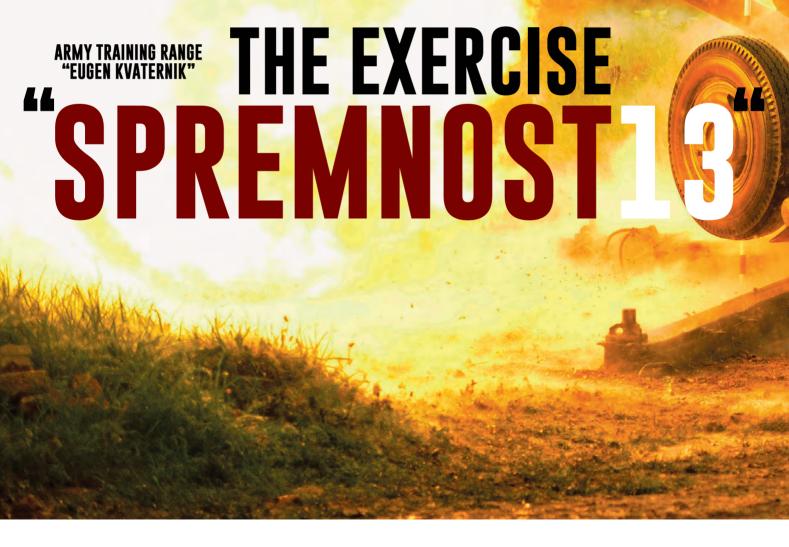


and trainedness for conducting a whole spectrum of military operations.

The Croatian Army's Simulation Centre performed excellent support function, facilitated to a large degree by the USAREUR's Joint Multinational Simulation Centre, which included the Command Post of the Future (CPOF) and the Virtual Battlefield System (VBS). The co-operation with the technicians from the U.S. provided new guidelines to be built into the development of the Centre.

The Exercise "Spremnost 13" ("Readiness-13"), one of the major training events for the Armed Forces of the Republic of Croatia in 2013 was conducted at the Military Training Range "Eugen Kvaternik" near Slunj. The Exercise comprised two major segments: the first one comprising a live-fire tactical exercise conducted by the manoeuvre units assisted by artillery support, aimed at demonstrating the trainedness and preparedness of the units for combat operations; and the other entailed national certification of the units declared for the NATO Response Force

The "Readiness13" Exercise has been one of the biggest training events for the Armed Forces of the Republic of Croatia in the current year. It was held at the "Eugen Kvaternik" Training Range and included the "Mechanised battalion in defence launching counter-attack" exercise that was concluded on 7 May. The essential exercise scenario was in the duration of 40 minutes only, yet it was more comprehensive compared to the exercises of the type conducted so far. It comprised both defensive and counter-attack operations and included a series of branches, units and different weapon systems, with over 700 participants. One of the features of the Exercise was inter-service operation – the ground units were provided support from the M1-171Sh helicopters and the MiG aircraft of the Croatian Air Force and Air Defence alongside with the F-16s of the United States Air Force from the Aviano Base, who were directed by a team of Croatian Forward Air Controllers, who demonstrated a high degree of interoperability.



PREPARATION AND EXECUTION OF DEFENSIVE AND OFFENSIVE COMBAT OPERATIONS

The exercise, with the Motorised Guard Brigade of the Croatian Army as the main force, was conducted to display trainedness and preparedness of the Brigade to quickly and effectively prepare and execute defencsive and offensive combat operations. The nucleus of the exercise scenario was the Battalion titled "Gromovi", operating four armoured personnel vehicles (the "Patrias"). The events were divided into four main phases, which ran quickly and intensively. The first phase, entailing defence preparation, was completed with all elements of the combat order taken on time which allowed the launching of the operation (the second phase), opened with the simulated artillery attacks by the enemy side on the recce HMMWVE;

The goal of the tactical exercise with live-fire shooting was to test the skills and trainedness of the Command of the **Motorised Guard** Brigade and the designated units in the decision-making process, establishing and organisation of task forces and execution of a joint operations through synchronised interbranch and interservice operation.

the Battalion retrograded briefly and responded vehemently, provided with close aerial support by the MiG and the U.S. F-16 aircraft, followed by the artillery Howitzers and self-propelled multiple rocket launchers. Then were deployed the UAVs and the anti-armour and air defence systems, to resolve the situation in the ground. The main role in the third phase (transition to the offense) was assigned to the manoeuvre units (the M-84 tank platoon), aided by the 1st mechanised company operating the "Patrias" as the striking force and the M1-171 Sh. Supported by the artillery force again, the sychronised forces delivered penetration and counterattack on the forward edge of the enemy troops destroying them. The casualties were evacuated by the medical armoured vehicle ("Patria") and the Mi-171Sh. The pursuit was the final phase, followed by the withdrawal of forces from the tactical field.





THE CROATIAN ARMY





Exhausted yet satisfied, the participants made a line-up to receive commendations for the demonstrated ability under highly demanding circumstances which required synchronised use of all military skills. The "Gromovi" Battalion merited special commendation for optimal employment of the Patria vehicles. The Battalion is to undergo the evaluation for the international units, same as their fellow servicemen of the "Tigrovi" Battalion of the Brigade, who have been in the process for months already.

NATIONAL CERTIFICATION OF THE UNITS DECLARED FOR THE NATO RESPONSE FORCE

The second part of the Exercise entailed national certification of the unit declared for NATO Response Force. The scenario aimed at testing the tactical and the technical properties and the procedures implemented by the Company, which had to demonstrate its capabilities in the attained degree of trainedness to be eligible for the NRF pool. In the latter part the dominant role was taken by the 2nd mechanised company of the "Tigrovi" Battalion of the Mechanised Guard Brigade. The Company underwent the CREVAL for entry into the NRF in May 2013.

The first day was reserved for the in-barracks evaluation of the Company and was followed by a two-day field evaluation (which coincided with the arrival of the CROMIL magazine team), and the initial analysis the day after. NRF Force Generation entails additional evaluation requests and as such is more demanding than the previous occasions (e.g. the units declared for the EU Battle Group), for the evaluators too. The members of the "Tigrovi" were

During the first unit part of the Exercise, a 40-min scenario demonstrated integrated fire in simulated battlefield conditions. fire and manoeuvre control as well as the manoeuvre and firing capability of the unit and the weaponry respectively. The exercise was conducted in compliance with the scenario of augmented mechanised battalion in four phases: defence preparation, defence execution. counter-attack and pursuit.











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The first part of the exercise pooled over 700 members of the Armed Forces and the U.S. AF including members of the Motorised Guard Brigade Command, the "Gromovi" Battalion (the Battalion Command, 1st mechanised company equipped with Armoured Personnel Carriers (the "Patrias") and the Metis anti-armour system, the Fire Support Coy, equipped with 120-mm mortars and a recce platoon), tank platoon (T-84 tanks) of the Mechanised Guard Brigade, the "Vukovi" Battalion of the Mechanised Guard Brigade (equipped with the anti-armour "Fagot" system and the 82-mm mortars), the Air Defence Battalion (the 20/3 air defence guns) and Artillery and Rocket Battalion (operating the 122-mm Howitzers D-30 and SVLR) and the FAC team of the Motorised Guard Brigade respectively; supported with the UAV Military Intelligence Battalion team; two MiG-21 fighter aircraft and the multi-purpose Mi-171Sh of the Croatian Air Force and Air Defence, and two multi-purpose F-16 U.S. Air Force fighter aircraft.



SPREMNOST13



in the assembly area, with their "Patrias" camouflaged in the shrubland aside from the road and awaiting the first phase of the offensive operation launched on the "Bull" target in the "Centre" tactical field. Their painted faces reflected anticipation – the enemy side – the Reds were waiting for them. The "Tigrovi" commenced their preparations in the early 2012, from individual tasks, followed by tasks conducted by squads and platoon, APV integration into the unit, combat-oriented training, training for international PSO and the like. The "lessons learned" from peers of the 1st Coy of the Battalion, which underwent similar exercises previously, were very useful in that regard.

The "Tigrovi" launched the action shortly after that and the Exercise resumed its dynamics. Shooting, echoes of the engines and Pilatus flying over the battlefield in simulated fire support to the soldiers in the ground. Alongside the evaluators, the Exercise was surveyed by the "target controllers", the soldiers functioning as liaison between the evaluators and the units, co-ordinating and directing the scenario and the simulated events. The campaign extended for over an hour and included the inevitable MEDEVAC (land). The last part of the evaluation comprised the stability operations. The analysis of 11 May concluded the "Spremnost" Exercise as one of the largest, organisationally complex and successfully conducted training events of the Croatian Army in the year 2013.



The badge, authority and law guide their operation - strong individualistic personalities impeccably exercising their duty within a team and respecting others to ensure the optimal conduct of the task. Their peace-time duty is to protect persons and facilities of special interest for the Armed Forces of the Republic of Croatia, and to act and resolve the most complex situations should these come under a threat, such as hostage crisis. They are the Special Military Police Company of the Croatian Army's Military Police Regiment and they are among the élite units, assigned the most complex and demanding duties. In early June of 2013 the Company's members completed another tough field training cycle, exercising urban area operations, amphibious, helicopter and night-time operations. A series of procedures were to be mastered - communication, authentification, guidance and landing zone security; helicopter embark and disembark; fast rope descent into a rough and limited mobility area; helicopter descent onto a ship and building; dynamic night-time insertion into the facilities and search; high-risk apprehensions and procedures in a number of similar grave situations; insertion through dispersion from the helicopter into the sea and the "stick" extraction technique.

"Most of the activities were conducted to train speedy deployment and landing at the target area, in compliance with the doctrine of the highly mobile and deployable units family that the Special Military Police Company certainly belongs to", said 1st Lt. Andrej Smolek, Acting Commander of the Company. The realistic and challenging training of the kind should however not bee seen as the "full-stop" on the training cycle but as an event preparing the members for the duties inherent to the Military Police mission.

MORIZ SUCCESS

The training included a combat group (four teams of four servicemen). Proper conduct demanded that each of the teams functioned well. "Team work is everything here; in our job it is details that determine the mission."

SPECIAL MILITARY POLICE COMPANY







MASTERING THE SPECIALTIES

Lt. Smolek stressed safety another essential element gained through the training. "Any training will result in unit's readiness, and it reflects through safety of the troops: they all know the content of their duties but throrough trainedness is a guarantee of safe conduct of the task, with minimal casualties".

The training included a combat group (four teams of four servicemen). Proper conduct demanded that each of the teams functioned well. "Team work is everything here; in our job it is details that determine the mission. You have to have a clear goal, clear rules of conduct and tangible results", stated Lt. Smolek and added that the members of the Company were professionals living with their duties around the clock".

Along with the activities practiced in the Lora Naval Base, the members of the Special Military Police Company is also expected to capable of performing diving, alpinist, parachuting, precision shooting and combat lifesaver duties, as it is the broad range of the tactical capabilities ensure conduct in compliance with their authority.

The Special MP
Company's peacetime duty is to
protect persons
and facilities of
special interest and
importance for the
Armed Forces of the
Republic of Croatia,
and to act and
resolve the most
complex situations
should these come
under a threat, such
as hostage crisis.





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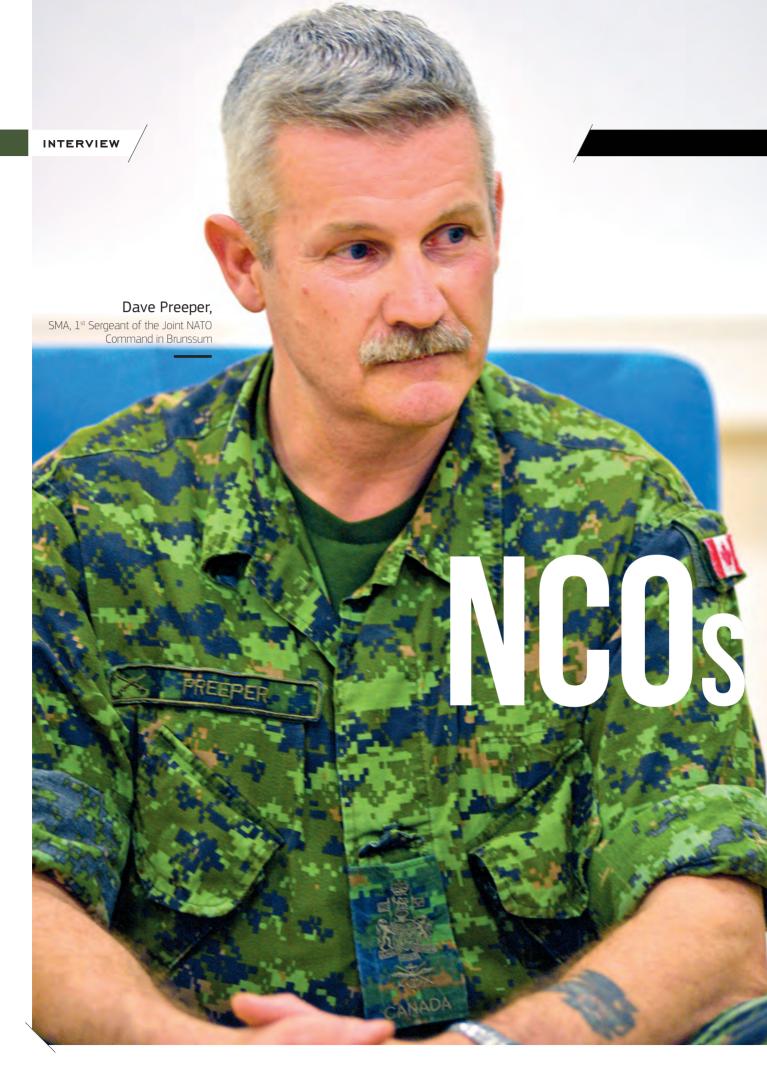


Furthermore, the training that was evaluated by Lt. Smolek as successful, was conducted jointly with the Croatian Air Force and Air Defence and the Croatian Navy units respectively. It also constituted useful preparation for a number of upcoming international activities, such as the prospective exercise to be held in the Slovak Republic and to demonstrate the role of Military Police in the support to logistic units in the area of operations.

ROT AND TELI'S FIRST HELICOPTER FLIGHT

The tactical team was supported by two search-and-rescue military working dogs - Dot, a Dutch shepherd (2y) and Teli, a Belgian Malinois (3y). They are new in the Special MP Company and were therefore brought to the training site to get familiarised with the new setting and the teams' operation tactics and to bond with its members as the ones to trust to and not attack when ordered by the dogs guide. Rot and Teli took their first ever flight aboard the helicopter. Cpl Božidar Knežević, member of the Company and working dogs guide highlighted that it was a stressful experience for them- "The dogs were nervous during their first flight, but it later decreased, and then they relaxed and watched through the windows of the cabin; disembark brought some stress too, but it was dealt with by offering them the trainer's arm with the sleeve as a reward". "What for?", was our question. "We did so because they are SAR dogs, and the trick reacts with their genetic code, calms them down and relieves the stress inherent in the situations which are new for them". When disembarking from the helicopter next time they will not watch left and right and will not react to outside noises or smells, but will remember that they are disembarking, which will tell them they need to bite. That is what they are being trained for. The bite was strong, but it is a part of this job".

A unit of the category "special" needs the best trained members. They acquire their knowledge and skills through a lengthy and depleting training for adversity situations. They have to meet high entry criteria to start with, that admit only the best motivated they have to meet high entry criteria to start with, that admit only the best motivated "they have to meet high entry criteria to start with, that admit only the best motivated they have to meet high entry criteria to start with, that admit only the best motivated they have to mean the fittest individuals. "Once recruited to the Company", remarks 1st Lt. Smolek, and the fittest individuals. "Once recruited to the Sopecial unit soldiers capable "they will still need three sing flexible and communicative". All of this is full awareness of the situation and being flexible and communicative". All of this is required because their duties in the Special Military Police imply legal implementation of authority and the commitment they were invested with base on hard and demanding training. The use of weapons is the last line to recourse to in order to defend their ing training. The use of weapons is the last line to recourse to in order to defend their own lives or the lives of protected persons and is a sign of partial success in performing a task. Lt. Smolek also highlights that the Company boasts a superb and experienced staff, composed of pronounced personalities joined into a unique unit.



"Non-commissioned officers constitute the backbone of any military, and their importance for the military and its effectiveness is nowadays even bigger compared to the period of twenty years ago. NCOs have to stay in the know of the progress and all of the state-of-the-art technology, which gives them a big and important role. They have to be sensibilised and prepared for any contingency", says SMA **Dave Preeper**, 1st NCO of the Joint Force Command in Brunssum

Author: Lada PULJIZEVIĆ, Photos by: Davor KIRIN

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Sergeant Major of the Army Dave Preeper, $1^{\rm st}$ NCO of the Joint Force Command in Brunssum was a visiting lecturer at the International NCO Camp held in the "Sv. Nikola" Naval Base in Split from 11 to 20 June 2013. We took the opportunity to discuss with him the role of NCOs in today's militaries.

What role do NCOs have in the militaries of today?

The question You have just made is of crucial importance for what we are doing today in the modern militaries and modern warfare. It is particularly important in this moment, when all of us are faced with financial constraints, that all members be included and do the scope of work they are responsible for. Speaking of NCOs in the militaries of today, we should emphasize that NCOs constitute the very backbone of the military and their importance for the military and its effectiveness is nowadays bigger compared to the period of 20 years ago. NCOs have to stay in the know of the progress of technology and be familiar with and prepared for everything.



The Croatian
Armed Forces have
definitely recognize/attach due
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have done a lot for
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further education
and professional
development of the
NCO potential..

tional counterparts, joint training or education events, such as this NCO Camp, as a worthwhile occasion for exchange of experiences related to E&T. The Croatian Armed Forces have definitely been attaching due importance to the NCO in their ranks and have done a lot for training, education, further training and professional development of the NCO potential.

Sergeant, You have delivered lectures at the International NCO Camp taking place in the "St. Nikola" Naval Base in Split. What do the event and joint work mean for the NCO Corps of NATO and Partnership for Peace countries?

The International NCO Camp and its concept highlight the very the skills and capabilities possessed by the Croatian Armed Forces – mutual respect, strong interpersonal relations, high degree of mutual understanding and co-operation, which count the most in an international setting of which the Camp is an example. The events of the kind will

ESSENTIAL ROLE IN THE ARMED FORCES

We hold some practical responsibilities and NCO roles, and we, the NCOs of the NATO militaries, have tried to articulate within the Alliance in a document signed by the two Strategic Commands in 2010, which has the value of a strategy for NCOs in NATO. The Commands have recognised the important role of the NCOs, as well as the differences observed throughout the system of the member Armed Forces. That is a recommendation which should contribute to joint efforts by the NATO members towards promotion and standardisation of the NCO organisation system.

What place do Croatian Armed Forces occupy among the NATO and PfP countries with respect to the NCO role?

The 1st Sgt of the Croatian Armed Forces nurtures excellent relations with his counterparts from other NATO Countries, extending their elevated co-operation to international peace operations, where Croatian NCOs o-work with their interna-

My appreciation goes to the Croatian Armed Forces for sending taking the sacrifice of sending their men and women to international military operations, and I primarily mean in Afghanistan.

certainly influence the outcome of combat missions in which the servicemen from our militaries may be deployed to jointly.

NCOs exercise a large deal of responsible tasks entailed in the missions assigned to the Allied forces in the ISAF mission in Afghanistan. In what way will the conversion of the mission from combat to non-combat affect the role of NCOs in Afghanistan?

With the transition of combat mission into noncombat, the role of NCOs in the mission will change too and will be defined by the new tasks assigned. NCO's role will primarily consist in training, advisory role and assistance to the Afghan Security Force. I shall avail myself of this opportunity to express appreciation to the Croatian Armed Forces for making the sacrifice of sending their men and women to international military operations, and here I primarily mean Afghanistan.



Author: Domagoj VLAHOVIĆ, Photos by: Josip KOPI



The competition titled "First for Croatia", held in and around the "Drgomalj" Barracks in Delnice was resumed last year after a decade-long pause. There can only be one fittest soldier, and this year it has been won by Private Josip Miculinić (27y), member of the Special Operations Battalion, an élite unit subordinated directly to the Croatian Armed Forces General Staff. Miculinić was awarded the winner's badge and was a strikingly convincing winner. He was running with a half an hour's lead from the first runner-up. He soon took the lead of the 30-km long exhausting course, readily overcoming eight exercise stations and seven control stations respectively and kept it to the finish. "This competition highlights the abilities a soldier must possess, it is demanding in both physical and psychological regard; it combines the complex weather conditions, military operation and the use of weapon systems", stated the Chief of the General Staff of the Croatian Armed Forces, Lt. Gen. Drago Lovrić welcoming the winner of this year's competition for the Fittest Soldier of the Armed Forces.

Pvt Miculinić's unit, the Special Operations Battalion, was the overall winner of the competition. The Battalion has evinced great organisational skills preparing the "Drgomalj" Barracks, the surroundings of Delnice and Lokve for the demanding competition which attracted over 100 servicemen from all units of the Croatian Armed Forces and visiting members of the Ministry of the Interior of the Republic of Croatia. The competition and the qualifications conducted at the



PRIVATE

JOSIP MICULINIĆ,

COMPETITION WINNER

Joining the Special Operations Battalion and taking the commando training were great training opportunities for me. I was preparing for the competition but I could not tell I would be the winner. The rain? It actually helped me; my motto is that "bad weather is my chance". I found the last part of the competition the hardest, I got tired without being aware of the advantage over other contenders.



CORPORAL MARIO ILIJEVIĆ, 1ST RUNNER-UP

The competition was hard, but we prepare and train for such tasks. It is a normal thing. All parts of the course were highly demanding, and I would say orientation was the most challenging one, in view of the dense vegetation we had to cross through. Nevertheless, I managed to overcome all the stations



STAFF SERGEANT DRAŽEN HENC, 2ND RUNNER-UP

"If you see a soldier overtaking you, it only "triggers" you on. The fault for my 2"d runner-up position was in the pistol firing exercise, where a correction was needed, but it went all right after that, I hit all the targets.



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shooting range at Grobnik and at the "Kantrida" swimming pool in the town of Rijeka ran smoothly. The Battalion boasted five of its members among the 10 ten best performing servicemen. Although they were competing at their "home ground", it only highlighted their superb mastery of military skills and abilities. Much to the pride of the entire Croatian Armed Forces, a number of their servicemen displayed superb level of preparedness during the qualifications held from 14 to 17 May 2013.

My motto is that "bad weather is my chance"

While the last year's competition held at the "Gašinci" Training Range near Osijek was dominated by experienced servicemen, the 2013 event was in favour of under-20 soldiers. What can be expected from the next competition remains to be seen, but in any way it will be held at the largest Croatian training range – the "Eugen Kvaternik" Range near the town of Slunj.





THE START

The contenders were off from Lokve (near Delnice) at 7 am. The organisers did the last check of the equipment - the VHS rifle, a combat vest, a helmet, a rucksack, a protective (gas) mask, supplementary uniform, a water container, a compass, a map, a bandage, four containers, supplementary underwear, ballistic plate, which combined weighed at least 15 kilos.

> Depending on the positions won during the qualifications, the contenders started the course at 30-sec intervals from each other. The advantage was symbolic and not decisive, as the course, the strict rules and soldier improvisation made the competition highly unpredictable.



The contenders were asked to assemble the weapons, a set prepared for each of them, deposed on the ground, without a determined order.



Shooting a 5x5 targets from 15 m with three 575 g grenades in the prone position.

TARGET SHOOTING WITH HAND GRENADE



ASSEMBLY OF INFANTRY Personal Weapons (VHS RIFL, AK 74 and HS 2000 pistol)

FITTEST SOLDIER FOR CROATIA 22 TRANSPORTATION OF WOUNDED SOLDIERS, ESTABLISHING THE RADIO-COMMUNICATION AND MEDEVAC REQUESTING

ORIENTATION



The contenders were handed in the maps and they were expected to reach a series of difficult orientation points according to the strictly defined order. They were instructed to reach the same posts (at harsh locations) but following different routes, which required a great deal of thinking, resourcefulness, speed and dexterity.



The station entailed transportation of a "wounded" soldier of 80 kilos in weight, at a distance of tens of meters using the "firemen's carry. In case the wounded soldier is dropped, the contender will be disqualified. Similarly, incorrect request for MEDEVAC was penalised with 15 minutes added to the overall score







The ropes (30 m long and 50mm in diametre) were not hang high off the ground but the rain left them slippery.

The net was 4 metres long and 10 metres wide. Climbing was aggravated by the mandatory use of the protective mask.

OVERCOMING THE BARRIER WITH THE USE OF THREE ROPES



CLIMBING THE NET IN NBC CONTAMINATION CONDITIONS FITTEST SOLDIER

TARGET SHOOTING WITH THE AT-4 MILES 2000 ANTI-TANK SYSTEM

Upon arrival at this station, which was assembled in the "Drgomalj" Barracks, the timer was stopped for all contenders and only missed targets were added to the score, with the AT-4 and the HS-2000 (the following station). The

target dimensions were 1x1 m, and the contenders shoot them in the kneel position from the 250-m distance.



The silhouette target was 15 m away and was shot with 10 bullets. Each time a contender missed the target he received a penalty minute.



FINISH

Pvt Josip Miculinić arrivedneared the bell, rang it and saluted the national flag the first, followed by another Special Operations Battalion member, PFC Mario Ilijević and Staff Sergeant Dražen Henc of the NCO School of the Croatian Defence Academy. The third runners-up were PFC Josip Klauz and Pvt Stjepan Strukar.

TARGET SHOOTING WITH THE HS 2000 PISTOL

All contenders that managed to arrive at the finish were to be considered winners and were welcomed by applause from the audience.





ADRIATIC SEA DEFENSE AND AEROSPACE EXHIBITION IN SPLIT

THE POINT OF ENCOUNTER WITH NEW IDEAS, PRODUCTS AND BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES

The number of the businesses displaying at the Adriatic Sea Defense and Aerospace Exhibition suggested that it has been recognised as an excellent presentation and business opportunitu...

Although only taking place for the second time, the ASDA (Adriatic Sea Defense & Aerospace Exhibition and Conference) has found its place in the world exhibition map, with Croatia as a respectable host for contact making and business co-operation in to the military equipment and weapons.

The ASDA 2013, organised by the U.S.-based TNT Production Corporation and under the auspices of the Government of the Republic of Croatia and in co-operation with the Ministry of Defence of the Republic of Croatia, was held in the Spaladium Arena in the town of Split in late April 2013. Over 100 domestic and international subjects from 20 countries from Southeast and West Europe, Asia, Northern Africa and the Middle East displayed equipment and weapons utilised for land, sea and aerial defence and national security protection. Croatia was represented by the HS Produkt, Šestan Busch, Adriamar, Insig2. Hemco, Dok Ing,









Tehnomont - to name some. The Exhibition was also attended by internationally renowned companies such as the French shipyard concern DCN, Swedish SAAB, Elbit from Israel, RUAG from Switzerland, as well as Fabrica de arma Cugir Paxella from Romania with its computer training system, the KU with a number of protective equipment items (helmets, bulletproof vests, bullet-proof tables), BISA – ammunition containers manufacturer from Turkey, the engineering items by the Pearsons Engineering Ltd. among others.

Although outnumbered by the visitors of the ASDA 2011, the 2013 event was particular for attracting a number of senior delegations from all over the world. Every military equipment exhibition is an ideal setting for making initial contacts and emerging in the highly competitive world markets in the domain of defence technologies. A great deal of the domestic displayers of equipment and









weapons appearing at the ASDA qualified it as an excellent opportunity to present their products and explore new business options.

Croatian Defence Minister Ante Kotromanović commended ASDA as the first-class business event and a great opportunity to compare the respective achievements and new advances in the military industry. ASDA 2013, stated the Minister, is also a platform for contacts between the exhibitors and customers and for business successes and new ideas.

In the words of Justin Webb, Director of TNT Production, ASDA was conceived as a forum for governments and representatives of military and defence industries to discuss common defence strategies and technologies, but it has expanded to embrace a series of bilateral meetings entailing the opportunities to continue and extend defence co-operation. Croatian Armed Forces were given the opportunity to present some of their capabilities in the framework of a military exercise held in the port of Lora. The funds raised from the entrance tickets were donated for charity purposes.

Co-signing the Letter of Intent on co-operation in maintenance and modernisation of the T-84 tanks with the President of the Board of Management of the "Đuro Đaković" Holding, Vladimir Kovačević, Defence Minister Ante Kotromanović stressed that it testified of continued support by the Ministry of Defence of the Republic of Croatia to the development of the domestic defence industry, which demonstrated at the ASDA 13 to have the excellence necessary to survive in the international market. The Minister also stated that the co-operation would earn "Đuro Đaković" prime references and capabilities for future presence in the business.

"As a long-time partner of the Ministry of Defence, we are most glad that our co-operation is continued on new projects. The co-operation was at once logical and expected, as the "Đuro Đaković" Holding is the sole manufacturer of the M-84 tank in the Republic of Croatia, which has a long-time experience in the maintenance of tanks and the entire weaponry", stated the President of the Board of Management of the Holding, Vladimir Kovačević.







NOTICEABLE MOMENTUM OF THE CROATIAN DI

The ASDA 2013 was conceived and conducted as an Exhibition of the state-of-the-art items and technologies for the three services of the Armed Forces. Quality-wise it was a step forward from the past event in 2011, as evidenced by bigger number of foreign delegations interested in doing business with the Croatian defence industry.

The innovative VHS 02

The ASDA 2013 was the opportunity to present the latest version of the multi-purpose VHS rifle manufactured by a Croatian company (the HS Produkt from the town of Karlovac). Building on the feedback from the users of the Croatian Armed Forces and on the improvements introduced by its Development and Research Department, the HS configured and manufactured at once a lighter, shorter and more accurate assault rifle. The decreased mass of the new rifle is a result of its "bull-pup" configuration with the moving components housed into the butt, behind the hand guard and the trigger pull. Regarding the barrel length, the manufacturer presented two advanced types of the rifle - the VHS-D2 with a long barrel and the VHS-K2 with a short barrel. The new model has the original telescopic butt, which is pulled from its configuration case, unlike the fixed one. The casing eject mechanism is another important feature of the new model - the VHS-02 has a configuration ejecting the casings under sharp angle to the front to avoid hitting the shooter into the face or the head. This feature, combined with the operating mechanisms placed on both sides, makes it the only rifle in the world usable by both left-handed and righthanded shooters without any adjustments.



The new versions of the Armoured Personnel Carrier The renowned holding from the town of Slavonski Brod and their "Defence" Division inaugurated a prototype of the amphibious version of the armoured personnel carrier, the "Patria AMW 8x8" – the amphibious combat vehicle of the series tailored for the MoD needs. It is a lighter version of the basic armoured personnel vehicle, converted for the amphibious use with the aid of special amphibious equipment, which includes rear-mounted thrust propellers. The reduced mass does not compromise the armoured protection. It is equipped with the remotely controlled 12.7 mm weapon station.

"Đuro Đaković" also displayed the medical version of the carrier, with a forward demonstration command post which displayed the Battle Management System (BMS) - the co-ordination by the commanders in the chain of command in tactical conditions.

Special Elbit vehicle

The entry into the European Union implies the new obligation for the Republic of Croatia, referring to control of the state borders, particularly those coinciding with the very EU borders. The entry into the "Schengen Zone" will necessitate modernisation of the border system







FENCE INDUSTRY

infrastructure to meet the expected standards and safety guarantees.

With this in mind the Israeli Elbit Security Systems, the local branch of the globally renowned Elbit Company specialised in defence technology and the Croatian Luvety presented their products at the ASDA 13 - a special vehicle for control of illegal border crossing, which is already in the operational use in the Republic of Macedonia. Any commercial and available 4-wheel vehicle can be used for the purpose, with the special additional equipment mounted onto it (the telescopic pole with a long-range camera, the operating and control console equipped with the modern LCD displays, computer blocks and the stabilisation systems). This multi-purpose vehicle can be used for crisis management operation, patrolling and control of urban areas, intelligence operations, control of the land borders, coastal control and patrolling of the high safety areas (maritime ports and airports, infrastructure of vital importance and the like.

Renowned Naval Architecture Institute

In the light of the recent decision to build the patrol boats for the use by the Croatian Navy and the related tender, the ASDA also featured visits by renowned domestic and foreign firms specialised in naval architecture, among whom the Croatian Naval Architecture Institute as the author of the Patrol Boat Project. The Institute has for decades held a prominent place for its projects of both static and dynamic maritime constructions, and has recently taken an active and fruitful





part in the projects of new technologies related to wise management and effectiveness of energy. The rest of the subjects included - the Split-based "Brodosplit-Brodogradilište ("Brodosplit Shipyard") company is known for its specialised staff and technology implemented for civilian and military purposes alike;

- the privately-owned Adria Mar, Croatia, best known for its experience in building and overhaul of the military patrol boats for the use by the Coast Guard,

- the Pula-based shipbuilding company "Tehnomont Brodogradilište Pula", which presented its projects of patrol boats for the police use (titled "P(atrol) B(oat) 25-1", PB – 14, Onix 26 SD and Onix 23.

Croatian Air Force and Air Defence Experience

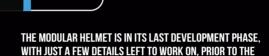
The Republic of Croatia struggle with a big problem of fires in summer seasons, which favours new solutions in fire fighting equipment. The Croatian company "Letina" displayed the fire fighting bucket "Flory 26" for helicopter fire fighting. The product is a 2311-liter stainless container for suspension from the hook of the helicopters of the Mi-8/17 family. The Croatian Air Force and Air Defence has acquired considerable experience with aerial fire fighting, and the Flory 26 is a result of continuous surveying and upgrading of the former bucket configurations for the same purpose. The bucket fire fighting tactics is based on finely dispersed still or sea water over the fire site, and the "Flory 26" displays adjusted operational and technical functions aimed at improved fire fighting tactics and effect.

CROATIAN MILITARY INDUSTRY



DEFEREN

01



OFFICIAL PRESENTATION DUE LATER THIS YEAR.

PRODUCT OF CROATIA

IN A FEW MOVES AND MINUTES THE MODULAR COMBAT HELMET FOR OPERATIONS (BK-OPS) IS CONVERTED FROM THE BASIC MODEL INTO A MODERN ANTI-BALLISTIC HEAD PROTECTION SYSTEM, ADAPTABLE TO USE IN DIFFERENT OPERATIONS EXERCISED BY SPECIAL UNITS

The special purposes and units helmet (BK-OPS), a product of the internationally renowned Croatian firm "Sestan-Busch" has found its place in the market and a customer from an Arabian country. Early in July in their facility in Prelog, some 100 km from Zagreb, the owner of the firm, Alojzije Šestan and the technical manager Božo Bujanić presented for our magazine the newest prototype of the helmet, with a modulary design. The two experts stressed that the helmet was in its last development phase, with only a few details to work on, prior to the official presentation to be held later this year. In a few touches and minutes the combat helmet for operations (BK-OPS) is converted from the basic model into a modern anti-ballistic head protection, adaptable for use in different operations by members of special purposes units. In view of its high modularity and the number of possible versions and the brand-characteristic level of protection maintained, it is a potential new huge success of "Šestan-Busch". The interest has already been shown by a number of subjects, and the firm management expects orders from an increasing numbers of countries, as the modern military strategies have given the prominent role to the development and abilities of special units.

The "parachute" version with the mobile cover protecting from air circulation is made of fire-resistant, meta-aramid NOMEX material, used also for pilot or Formula1 driver gear. The inside material is COOL-MAX, with air pockets, which is also used in manufacturing of parts of bullet-proof vests that are in the direct contact with the skin.

The target weight of the helmet including the neck, ear and chin covers, electronic devices excluded, is 2300 g. Even with the external systems mounted onto the Picatinny rails and the night vision goggles the BK-0PS version leaves enough inner space, enabling ventilation and fitting of the necessary CIS systems.

The chin and face covers and the visor give the helmet a futuristic look. The cover incorporates the identical level of protection as the helmet, and the visor's level is identical to that of the Šestan-Busch de-miner helmet . The cover is fitted onto the Picatinny rails, leaving out free space. When not in use, the visor is lowered and is in parallel with the chin cover.

05

Ear covers are fitted onto the Picatinny rails of the basic model, although they contain rails too and allow fixing of devices as necessary. The level of protection is identical to the basic model, and reinforced at the junction with the body of the helmet.

Lateralia



The rear part of the helmet has a mobile COOLMAX pads for neck protection, with an incorporated bullet-proof plate, used for better adjustment of the helmet on the head.

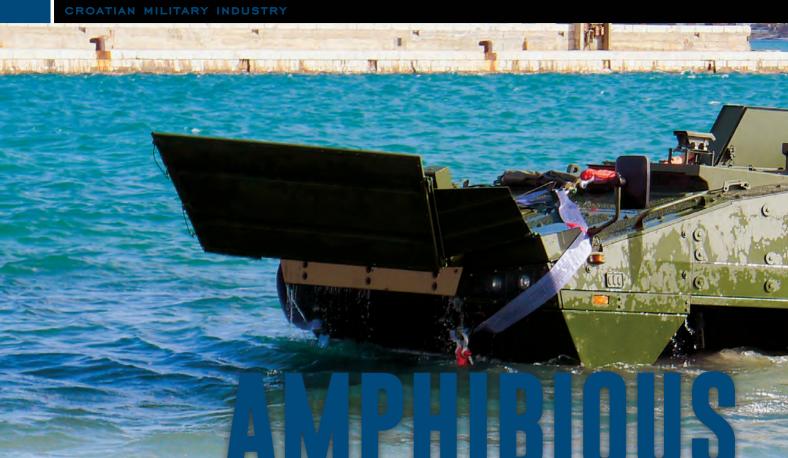






The vehicle is water-deployable within five minutes, and swims through waves up to half a metre high. Buoyancy is ensured through embedded protection canals and the extra air intake and exhaust pipes built in.





The Amphibious Patria – the amphibious combat vehicle, completed the testing process in the late 2012 and was publicly presented at the Adriatic Sea Defense and Aerospace Exhibition (ASDA) held in Split in late April. The Armed Forces have at their disposal 12 vehicles, of which the first two were manufactured in the Patria's facilities in Finland and the remainder by the "Đuro Đaković" defence manufacturer in Slavonski Brod

Speaking of the new "Patria" armoured combat vehicles manufactured by the renowned Croatian company "Đuro Đaković", the term "new " is ambiguous, as the "Patrias" are modular vehicles, allowing modifications and upgrades, but the baseline hull is standardised. The same applies to the version that is the subject of this article. The amphibious Patria was manufactured and configured in compliance with the contract concluded between the Croatian MoD and "Đuro Đaković". The features of the vehicle were presented to us by Mr. Darko Grbac, Executive Vice-President of the "Defence" Division of the company and Executive Director of "Specijalna vozila" ("Special Vehicles") and the members of his project engineer team.

PRODUCT OF CROATIA

The Amphibious Patria – the amphibious combat vehicle, completed the testing process in the late 2012 and was publicly presented at the Adriatic The amphibious "Patria" vehicle is 2.2 t lighter than the baseline version, as a result of greater use of lighter protective materials, including ceramics, at the expense of steel. But the level of protection is maintained, and the armour incorporates higher level of corrosion protection.

Sea Defense and Aerospace Exhibition (ASDA) held in Split in April. The Armed Forces have at their disposal 12 vehicles, of which the first two were manufactured in the Patria's facilities in Finland and the rest by the "Đuro Đaković" defence facility in Slavonski Brod.

For the purpose of reminding our readers - pursuant to the Agreement signed between "Patria" and the Republic of Croatia for the purpose of equipping the Armed Forces of the Republic of Croatia with the excellent vehicle type, "Đuro Đaković" took over Patria's manufacturing technology through the offset principle. The company has evinced great capability in implementing the project and as a result the two of them are jointly appearing in the third markets. The order placed by the Republic of Croatia for the amphibious vehicle itself was concluded within the first quarter of 2013, the vehicles were tested, and the first group of instructors from "Đuro Đaković"







Author: Domagoj VLAHOVIĆ, Photo credits: Đ. ĐAKOVIĆ

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and from the Armed Forces underwent the allconditions training (i.e. in a still water, pool water, sea and lake water, followed by the training on the running water and rivers).

LIGHTER MATERIALS

On the solid ground the amphibious vehicle is just like the standard one, manufactured for the Armed Forces, with the 12.7mm weapon station, and so is the company's original merchandise manufacturer certificate, the manufacturing technology, the technical performances, as well as the weapon and communications and information system. There are three groups of features that distinguish it though - the armour, the amphibious system and the security equipment. The amphibious vehicle weighs 2.2 tons less than the standard one, the result of increased portion of lighter materials built into it (ceramics versus steel), with the identical armour and higher anti-corrosion protection. The amphibious equipment consists of two propellers run by a hydraulic pump mounted on the standard Patria engine. There is no special rudder for manoeuvering in the water - it is controlled by stronger vs weaker rotation and switching of direction by one of the propellers - while minor manoeuvres are obtained by simply moving the wheels. The maximal speed of manoeuvring is 10 km/h.

Unlike the classical vehicle, the amphibious vehicle's standard equipment includes safety belts, ropes and float. The additional equipment box gives it extra 25 cm of length.



The ship prow-like skirt is fixed on the nose of the vehicle to stabilise it and achieve propulsion; in addition, two amphibious bow lates to prevent the vehicle from plunging. The seawall is hydraulic and the plates are mounted manually. The vehicle is waterdeployable within five minutes and swims on waves up to half a metre high. The maximum speed of the water flow the vehicle is resistant to is 1 m/sec along the river bank and 2.7 m/sec in the "open" water. The maximum ground elevation manageable by the amphibious vehicle (to descend into the water or mount on the bank or shore) is 22 degrees. The vehicle is equipped with protective canals and supplementary air intake and exhaust pipes, as well as two additional drainage pumps, placed in the driver's and engine compartment.

The vehicle's safety equipment is comparable to that of a ship. Unlike the classical vehicle, the amphibious vehicle's standard equipment includes safety belts, ropes and float. The additional equipment box gives it extra 25 cm of length. The expert team of the "Đuro Đaković" – Defence Division claim that they can produce more than one amphibious versions of the "Patria" manufactured for the Armed Forces of the Republic of Croatia, and that they have inaugurated a modular approach to accomodate a whole spectrum of needs of potential customers.

"Understandably, the intensity of rehearsing had the effects on the members", said Staff Sergeant Krunoslav Posavec 1st Sergeant of the Honorary Coy of the Honorary Battalion, who was wearing the historical Croatian military uniform.

"On Sunday however, when we lined up at the Champs Elysees, the tiredness and pains were gone. The applause we won from the Parisians on our march towards Concorde filled us with pride and dignity".

PARIS

The echelon representing the Armed Forces of the Republic of Croatia, composed of 71 members of the Honorary Battalion, two members of the Croatian Army and one member of the Croatian Navy and the Air Force and Air Defence respectively took part in the military parade traditionally organized on the French National Day. The historic Croatian military costume worn by six members of the echelon drew immense attention of the public, and the requests for keepsake photos were not a rarity.



CROATIAN SOLDI THE FRENCH NATIO

In the traditional military parade on the streets of the French capital on the occasion of 14 July, members of the Croatian Armed Forces took part too. The Croatian echelon was made up of 71 members, two members of the Croatian Army and one of the Navy and the Air Force and Air Defence respectively. They had the honour to march down the famous Champs Elysees, between the Arc de Triomphe and the Place de la Concorde, along with host forces, the echelons from the African countries participants of the UN Mission in Mali, as well as the combined echelons of the Franco-German EU Brigade. The traditional Croatian costume, worn by six members of the echelon was a major attraction and won them many requests for phototaking, while their height respect to the rest of the participants won them witty comparison to the Avatars of the famous James Cameron motion picture.



1st Lt. Zoran Benković, Commander of the Honorary Coy of the Honorary and Protection Battalion, and flag carrier at the Parade, added that the members were aware of their responsibility and did their best presenting the Croatian Armed Forces. "During the preparations conducted in Paris and at the nearby Nexter's Range, our echelon was the best synchronised one, and what makes us very proud is the fact that a lot of other participating echelons' commanders commended our column as exemplary".

Author: Branimir Gaćina-Bilin, Photo credits: MoD







ERS MARCH AT DAY PARADE



During their stay in Paris Croatian soldiers made a lot of contacts with their colleagues from foreign militaries, particularly with the French Légion d'Etrangèrs. It was a communication characterised by high mutual respect, even more in view of the fact that the Légionnaires deem Croatian force victorious and equal to them as regards preparedness.

PREPARATIONS FROM 3.00 AM

The appearance of the Croatian echelon at the military parade in Paris was preceded by major preparations, beginning on 10 June in Zagreb and lasting for 25 days. The members practiced and rehearsed twice daily to brush up to the tiniest detail. On 5 July they boarded the busses towards Paris to continue the preparations on the spot, in the night hours before morning's rush hour on the Avenue, followed by afternoon's "drills" at the Nexter's vehicle testing range in the vicinity of Versailles. During that pre-parade period Croatian soldiers crossed over 250 kilometres.

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THE CROATIAN ARMED FORCES

The major part of the tasks assigned to the Honorary Battalion is performed in a systematic, 24-hour manner, far from the limelights, in discretion to the point of invisibility, except for the Honorary Company, which draws attention and remains in memory of the audience on every occasion it performs...





MORAN

The Honorary Battalion is a unit subordinated directly to the Croatian Armed Forces General Staff. A successor of the former 1st Croatian Guard Corps ("Hrvatski gardijski zbor"), it has existed in the present form since September 2000. Its members are responsible for a number of tasks, including exterior and interior security of the Office of the President of the Republic as Supreme Commander of the Croatian Armed forces and himself, as well as of other important persons and localities, antidiversionist entry checks, medical and toxicological safety, postal and luggage safety, VIP secure transportation and protection during their stay in the state residences in the islands of Brijuni. A major portion of the tasks is performed systematially in the 24-hour cycle, far from the limelights, in discretion up to the point of invisibility, with the exception of the Honorary Company, whose mission draws a great deal of attention and remains

The members of the **Honorary Battalion** need to meet strict general and specific conditions - height between 183 and 187 cm, soldier-like posture and image. superb motor skills and movement co-ordination and sense of rhythm.



in memory of the audience.

The mission of the Battalion encompasses protocol and ceremonial tasks of welcoming and sendingoff the President of the Republic of Croatia and other dignitaries or foreign heads of state, perform honorary salutes or wreath-laying ceremonies. The greatest visibility was noted at the occasion of the traditional French National Parade of 14 July in Paris, where they drew the biggest attention and applauses by the audience.

The members of the Battalion displayed their honorary and ceremonial programme first in the Jelačić Square in Zagreb in 2011, as part of the ceremony marking the 20th Anniversary of establishment of the Armed Forces of the Republic of Croatia. The programme, consisiting of the elements of ceremonial and exercise drills, was performed by 20 members of the Battalion.

1st Lieutenant Zoran Benković, Commander of the



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The honorary ceremony, composed of exercise drills and actions performed by soldiers in a dynamic and eye-catching manner, demonstrating psychological and physical readiness of the performers, consistent and synchronised operation by the Battalion's members.

Honorary Company of the Honorary Battalion, said that some two years ago the members had been assigned with designing a programme to display their usual drills and a combination of the programmes seen by the foreign militaries on ceremonial occasions. "We have prepared two choreographies, 10-12 minutes each, performed by some 20 members. At the moment, a third and somewhat different choreography is being designed but it draws on to the existing two. The programme has been performed on a number of occasions throughout Croatia, from Dubrovnik to Vukovar", says 1st Lt. Benković, "on different occasions of the kind". The honorary ceremony, composed of exercise drills and actions performed by soldiers in a dynamic and eye-catching manner, demonstrating psychological and physical readiness of the performers, consistent and synchronised operation by the Battalion's members.



THE CROATIAN AIR FORCES







AEROBATIC SHOW IN HUNGARY AND POLAND

WINGS O

PERFORMING AT THE INT

The performances at the aerobatic shows held in Hungary Kecskemet 2013 and in Radom 2013 in Poland the "Wings of Storm", aerobatic group of the Croatian Air Force and Air Defence closed their participation at the international aerobatic flying events for the year. A highly demanding flying programme, superior from the technical side as well, won enthousiastic reactions from the visiting fans

KECSKEMET 2013

Over 100 000 visitors enjoyed the aerobatic flying performances during the two-day International Air Show and Military Display, held in the Hungarian Air Force Base in Kecskemet. The Show, organised by the Ministry of Defence of Hungary, offers one of the most comprehensive and most attractive military group and solo aerobatic flying programmes and an impressive number of participating countries (over 20) and aircraft (over 140). Croatian Air Force and Air Defence was represented by the "Wings of Storm", which has over the past years become quite an attraction at the international air shows, performing a highly demanding and technically

"Wings of Storm" flying at the Kecskemet 2013 proved anew that the key to a top performance are not sturdy aircraft but pilot skills and wellharmonised team made of uniformly trained individuals.

superior programme on the PC-9 aircraft, to the delight of the aerobatic fans. The professional pilot staff of the "Wings of Storm" boast precision, perfectionism, superior trainedness and valour and have found their way among the top aerobatic groups of the world with unique and demanding manoeuvres.

The opening programme featured the overflights by the host-country's Gripens and an interesting parachuting programme, followed by solo and group performances, among whom the "Patrulla Aquilla" of the Spanish Air Force. The group performed flights in the seven C 101 aircraft formation (the aircraft is used for training purposes in the Spanish





Author: Leida PARLOV, Photos by: Tomislav BRANDT

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F STORM"

TERNATIONAL AIR SHOW



Air Force). The "Turkish Stars" were the "stars" of the show indeed, and so were the famous Frecce Tricolori, "painting" the skyline over Kecskemet in the colours of the Italian flag and performing to the sounds of the Italian national anthem. The first day of the show was closed by the performance of the Ruskie Vityazi (Russian Knights), on the Su-27 aircraft, one of the largest combat aircraft used in the aerobatic flying, which was one of the reasons that placed the Russian group among the biggest attractions. In addition, this was the first performance of the group outside Moscow in many a year. Also interesting were solo performances on combat and transport helicopters -the Dutch competitors

The Wings of Storm had performed at Radom since 2011 and impressed the **Polish viewers** and the visiting enthousiasts who enjoyed their 20-minute dynamic programme featuring a series of increasingly complex and demanding elements performed with meticulous precision.





flying on a F-16 with the Netherlands royal colours; the skilled Romanians on te MiG-21L, the rare sight on the air shows - MiG 15, flewn by Polish pilots, and the Italians demonstrated the mobility of the C-27 transportation aircraft, manoeuvering it and demonstrating the landing and take-off from a short runway. The Belgians presented an excellent programme on the helicopters, same as the Czech team.

The "Wings of Storm" performed at Kecskemet for the fourth time, presenting the new composition, with Maj. Matija Vrđuka as team leader, Cpt Josip Čolak, formerly a demo-pilot and presently the right wing), Cpt. Ivan Andić as the new demo-pilot and the rest of the Group on new positions.



THE CROATIAN AIR FORCES

MAJ. MATIJA VRĐUKA, "WINGS OF STORM" TEAM LEADER



The performance at the Radom Show being the last international appearance for the "Wings of Storm" in the current year, we took of the opportunity to talk to Maj. Matija Vrđuka, in his first year as the team leader, who has been in the team since its establishment.

Were you expecting to see the "Wings of Storm" find its way among the top aerobatic groups in such a short time?

None of us expected to see the group progress so rapidly at the international scene. However, the quality of our work earned us invitations to every international air show, and I can say that all air show organisers do their best to have the "Wings of Storm" appear at their event.

How many air shows have you attended so far and what experiences do you carry?

The Air show at Radom 2013 is our 19th international appearance and we have conducted 37 performances. Although it may not appear so, it is the flying to the air show location and return that make the most difficult part. The group has to fly long distances, running the risk of flying under adverse weather conditions, or facing cancellations and unpredictable situations. Thus, any time we return from the site we gladly perform a "Salute to the town of Zadar" flying over the Sea Organ.

Although the Group does not fly heavy aircraft, and you don't have the smoke effects, your performances always win enthousiasm and commendations by the viewers.

Right, although we fly less attractive aircraft, without noise, speed or smoke effects, we have been recognised by foreign experts, our counterparts and the wider audience alike for the attractiveness and the quality of our flying programme. It is very gratifying to receive the commendations as the "stars" of the show, over the longer-lasting and more famous groups, because it proves that all the effort and hard work have been worth the while.

How important is team work for your success?

When flying at less than 2 metres from one another, at the speed of over 500 km/h and at extremely low altitudes, performing aerobatic manoeuvres, mutual trust by all members of the team is crucial. There is a high degree of cohesion among the members of the "Wings of Storm", which makes it possible to move forward and set ever higher standards of performance.

The Kecskemet air show contains one of the most comprehensive and interesting flying programmes of group and solo aerobatic flying both with regard to the number of the participating countries and aircraft. This year's show saw over 140 aircraft from over 20 countries, including the "Wings of Storm" aerobatic group of the Croatian Air Force and Air Defence.





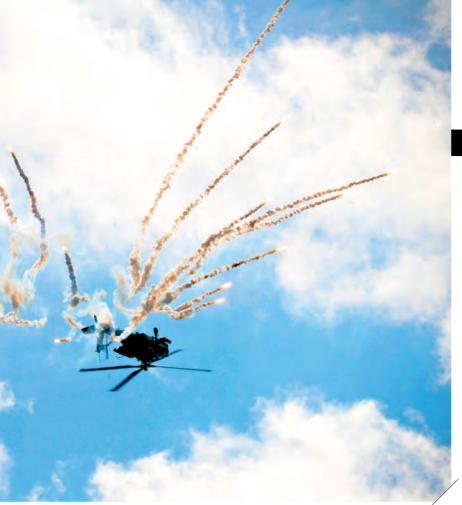


RADOM 2013

The programme displayed by the Wings of Storm at the Radom international air show in Radom, Poland was a delight for the most demanding aerobatic enthousiasts that attended massively the show on 24 and 25 August 2013. There were 200 000 of them enjoying the programme performed by over 220 aircraft in the flying and the static part of the show. It was an exquisite opportunity for pilots from over 20 countries to demonstrate their flying excellence, exchange experiences and show at once the interesting and the demanding side of aerobatic flying.

The "Wings of Storm" had performed at Radom since 2011 and impressed the Polish audience and the visiting enthousiasts who enjoyed their 20-minute dynamic programme featuring a series of increasingly complex and demanding elements performed with meticulous precision. Visibly content with the performance, the Group Leader, Maj. Matija Vrđuka revealed that







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performing at big shows was an interesting and pleasant experience. The show was very well organised, proving the Poland's great hosting capability. The first air show at Radom was held in the year 1991 and has over the years acquired international character. It is held biannually, the last weekend in August and attracts more and more viewers. The performances of the "Wings of Storm" at the international air shows have set the standard recognised as one as the most attractive for the experts in the domain and the general audience alike Nevertheless, Maj. Vrđuka has announced enriching the programme with some more attractive elements.



AIR TECHNICIANS

The "Wings of Storm" always visit air shows accompanied by air technicians. It is them who arrive the first and leave the last, on board of helicopters, cars or busses. Taking off and landing without them is impossible. They have to reach the site of the show at least an hour or two before to mount the equipment and prepare everything to accommodate the

competing aircraft. Immediately upon the landing of the performing aircraft the technicians undertake post-flight checks. Their duty also includes preflight and inter-flight checks and when the air show is scheduled on Monday, as is often the case, the day for routine weekly check, it will be on their agenda too.

The job of air technicians does not tollerate mistakes nor superficiality, as any oversight may have fatal con-

senquences, which is especially true in aerobatic flying. Hardly surprisingly, as they are responsible for the technical condition of the aircraft and for the safety of the pilots, the technicians carefully observe the entire performance of the group, paying their attention to the auditive aspect and remain on the alert throughout the performance until the moment the aircraft land.

When preparing the aircraft for the return, the air technicians remain on the runway for a while after the take-off, and it it is a country less distant from Croatia, they remain up to the moment the aircraft enters the Croatian air space and on the alert until they are advised that the group landed safely in the Zemunik Base. Their co-operation with the pilots is excellent, which is a pre-requisite of good work. Any success of the "Wings of Storm" is their success too.

Our pride editions



THE FILM "22 YEARS OF PRIDE, RESPONSIBILITY AND PROFESSIONALISM"

Celebrating the 22nd anniversary of the establishment of the Armed Forces of the Republic of Croatia, the Multi-Media Department has produced a 10-min film titled "22 Years of Pride, Responsibility and Professionalism", depicting the growth and transformation of the Croatian Armed Forces from the war-time hardships into a modern armed force prepared for the challenges of the new times.

MUSIC VIDEO FOR THE "KRALJICA MORA" AND A CD OF THE CROATIAN NAVY VOCAL ENSEMBLE "SVETI JURAJ"

The Multi-Media Department and the Croatian Military Publications
Department co-produced a music video for the song performed by the
Croatian Navy Vocal Ensemble "Sveti Juraj". It has been a novelty in our video
production, and has been very well reviewed and received by the wider public.
A new CD of the Ensemble has been released too, titled "Vive 1 company", to
mark the entry of the Republic of Croatia into the European Union.





BOOK "TARGET FIREARMS DEVELOPMENT"

The Croatian Military Publications Department came out with a new and highly valuable military edition titled "Target Firearms Development", characterised by eye-catching layout, with a number of photographs on about 200 pages illustrating the development of shooting weapons since their earliest date up to the modern times.

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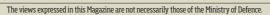
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