

CROMIL

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ADRIATIC SEA DEFENSE AND
AEROSPACE EXHIBITION AND
CONFERENCE 2015

**INVESTMENT IN DEFENCE
IS INVESTMENT IN SECURITY**

CROATIAN DEFENCE INDUSTRY

**MILITARY EQUIPMENT
EXPORTS ON STEADY
UPWARD TREND**

RESOLUTE SUPPORT

HRVCON IN A NEW MISSION - TO TRAIN
AND ADVISE THE AFGHAN FORCES

CROATIAN NAVY

AVPD RETURNS FROM THE MISSION

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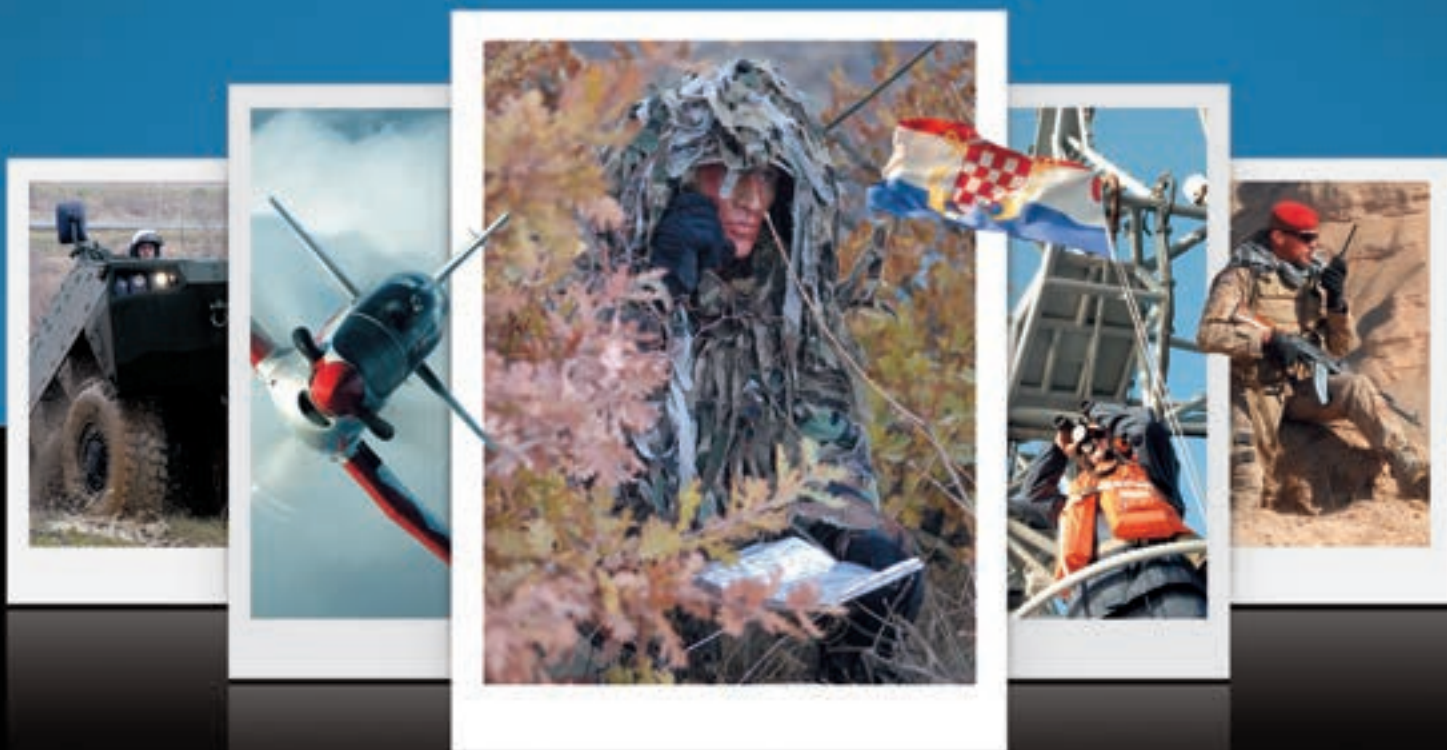
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CROATIAN AERIAL FIREFIGHTER FORCES

Firefighter Squadron in the Zemunik Barracks:

6 Air Tractors AT 802 (four amphibious and two wheeled)
6 Canadairs CL-415

Transport Helicopter Squadron in the "Knez Trpimir" Barracks at Divulje:

2 Mi-8 MTV-1 helicopters (more engaged as necessary)

By procuring the new Air Tractor AT-802 Fireboss two-seater aircraft, the Ministry of Defence enabled the Air Force and Air Defence to train foreign pilots on the aircraft. Only a few European countries have developed that capability.

COMMON KEY TO OPTIMISED

Rear Admiral Terry Loughran opened the Conference



The international Aerial Fire Fighting Europe 2015 Conference, organised by the UK-based Tangent Link, with the support from the Croatian Ministry of Defence and the National Search and Rescue Directorate took place in Zadar on 29 and 30 April 2015. It was officially opened by Rear Admiral Terry Loughran, CB FRAeS of the Royal Navy, UK, who stated: "I am glad that Croatia is hosting this year's Conference, and would particularly like to point out the internationality, because co-operation and interoperability are a key in this domain. The Conference was attended by 20 countries and exhibitors from all around the world. The stress was laid on the interoperability and working on a common framework for optimised firefighting efficiency.

Major Davor Turković, Commander of the Firefighter Squadron and Captain on Canadair CL 415 of the Croatian Air Force and Air Defence bided welcome to the attendees on behalf of the Croatian Defence Minister, Ante Kotromanović to Zadar "the central place of firefighting in Croatia". The Conference, said Major Turković, "provides an opportunity for pilots and operators to exchange the respective experi-



Author: Petra Kostanjšek, photos by: Tomislav Brandt

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FRAMEWORK FIREFIGHTING EFFICIENCY

The conference is a regular aerial firefighter event and features a wide spectrum of relevant issues. Along with Croatia as host country, the Conference was attended by 20 countries and world's leading firefighter equipment manufacturers. Opening the Conference, the Chairman, Rear Admiral Terry Loughran, CB Fraes, Royal Navy, UK stated: "I am glad that Croatia is hosting this year's Conference, and would particularly like to point out the internationality, because co-operation and interoperability are a key in this domain", stated Radm Loughran. The stress was laid on the interoperability and working on a common framework for optimised firefighting efficiency...

ences and discuss the latest technological solutions, training and other tasks related to aerial firefighting. "We are well aware of potentially devastating impact of fires, having witnessed a number of times to fires endangering property as well as human lives. This necessitates superior co-ordination and swift action on the site. Croatia as the latest EU member latest EU member was determined to employ the available tools to create a better and safer environment. The benefit of the Conference was in constructive solutions for joint operation, while the prospective standardisation and putting in place of a common legal framework are expected to optimise international response operations.





MAJOR DAVOR TURKOVIĆ,
COMMANDER OF THE FIREFIGHTER SQUADRON

"The Conference provides an opportunity for pilots and operators to exchange the respective experience and discuss the latest technological solutions, training and other tasks related to aerial firefighting. We are all well aware of the potentially devastating impact of fires, having witnessed a number of times to fires endangering property as well as human lives. This necessitates superior co-ordination and swift action on the site", said Major Davor Turković, Commander of the Firefighter Squadron.

Major Turković stressed that Croatia as the latest EU member was determined to employ the available tools to create a better and safer environment. The benefit of the Conference therefore is in producing solutions to achieve ever better and more systematic fire prevention and fighting and enable more efficient international operation.



EU CIVIL PROTECTION MECHANISM IN AERIAL FIREFIGHTING - A VOLUNTARY FIRE PROTECTION POOL

Dimitrios Pagidas of the European Commission's Humanitarian aid and Civil Protection Department (ECHO) presented the EU Civil Protection Mechanism in Aerial Firefighting, with the emphasis on its perspective and upgrade. The Mechanism comprises 33 countries and serves as framework applicable with diverse types of disasters, fires among the most common.

The system works by submitting requests for assistance to the Brussels headquarters, which forwards the request to any country capable of providing it. The Headquarters co-ordinates the assistance and the European Commission reimburses up to 55% of transportation expenses to the delivering country. The mechanism is based on ad hoc decision making and displays many shortcomings.

In Mr Pagidas's view the objective is to design a new concept of operation based on the current planning practice to optimise the use of the resources. He briefly introduced a new concept of response devised as a "volunteer pool", whereby member countries would previously submit requests and get certified for assistance in the event of request, and would in return be reimbursed up to 85% of transport expenses and 100% of expenses for the necessary adjustments.



STANDARDISATION, GUIDELINES AND RULES

Jadran Perinić, Director of the National Protection and Rescue Directorate, in his address urged co-operation at a global level, as the fire impact often exceeds individual countries capacities. "The Conference is an important opportunity to exchange the experience and expand knowledge in the domain", said Director Perinić, who also underlined the importance of standardised regulation. He further presented the development of the fire protection and fighting in Croatia and praised the co-ordination between the National Protection and Rescue Directorate and the Ministry of Defence. The Croatian aerial firefighter forces have conducted a series of international interventions, participating in fire extinguishing operations in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Macedonia, Greece, Israel and Portugal, and in a joint firefighting exercise in Greece.

The Director of Global Fire Monitoring Centre (GFMC), Johann Georg Goldammer covered the key topic of the Conference - a co-ordinated approach in international aerial firefighting missions. He also presented the conclusions from the interoperability workshop held on the eve of the Conference. Despite the fact that the co-operation and exchange of the capacities and resources is at a superior level, the

The Croatian aerial firefighter forces have conducted a series of international interventions, participating in fire extinguishing operations in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Macedonia, Greece, Israel and Portugal, and in a joint firefighting exercise in Greece

EU still lacks a common framework for operation, producing the necessary guidelines, data bases and other co-ordination enhancers. One of the solutions considered are the prospective International Fire Aviation Guidelines and the International Manual of Common Rules for Firefighting, developed currently by the working groups of the UN International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (UNISDR).

"As we heard at yesterday's workshop, the main shortfalls with respect to international missions are a delayed arrival to the fire site, hardened communication, inexistence of common standards nor guidelines for interoperability, including the co-ordination with the ground forces. That is why we have to address the issue and support the development of common guidelines and rules", stated Director Goldammer.

This year's conference in Zadar is attended by representatives from 20 countries and the leading international firefighting and prevention technology and equipment, among whom the DynCorp International, Inaer, Air Tractor, Saab and others

UNMANNED AERIAL AND GROUND VEHICLES

An additional obstacle to efficient firefighting are the mine-contaminated areas in the region, but also in Germany and France (where unexploded mines from the WWII are found). The problem is addressed by employing new and innovative technology solutions, such as remotely operating fire fighting tanks. The Conference participants addressed the example of the fire occurring in Chernobyl coinciding with the conference, whose extinguishing was aggravated by the contaminated vegetation. The focus in the future situations of the kind could be on remotely operated firefighting vehicles or unmanned helicopters; one such model is being tested. The aerial firefighting conference is the regular annual event for firefighter experts. It features a broad spectrum of issues related to aerial firefighting presented by domestic and visiting presenters. This year's conference in Zadar is attended by representatives from 20 countries and the leading international firefighting and prevention technology and equipment, among whom the DynCorp International, Inaer, Air Tractor, Saab and others. The visitors were also able to see the novelties in the aerial firefighting technology. The conference and the static display were set in the Višnjik Sport Centre, while the live demonstration was organised in the 93rd Base at Zemunik, where the visitors were shown the entire stock of firefighter aircraft of the Croatian Air Force and Air Defence.



Since the first event in 2011, ASDA has found grown into a traditional military exhibition and found its place among international exhibitions

ADRIATIC SEA DEFENSE AND AEROSPACE EXHIBITION AND CONFERENCE 2015



Croatian Defence Minister
Ante Kotromanović opens ASDA15



INVESTMENT IN DEFENCE IS INVESTMENT IN SECURITY

The "Spaladium arena" in Split hosted the Adriatic Sea Defense and Aerospace Exhibition from 22-24 April for the third time. The Exhibition was held under the auspices of the Government of the Republic of Croatia, and with the assistance by the Ministry of Defence of the Republic of Croatia. The Exhibition, organised by the U.S. TNT Production Inc., specialised in the events of the kind, offered the Croatian and international defence manufacturers the opportunity to display their products and technological achievements.

ASDA 15 was officially opened by the Croatian Defence Minister, Ante Kotromanović, and was attended by defence ministers of Slovakia, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Kosovo, ambassadors and defence attachés, a number of foreign delegations and senior officials in defence and armed forces equipping sector; by the Chief of the General Staff of the Croatian Armed Forces, General Drago Lovrić and other senior civilian and military officials.

ASDA is conceived as a three-service conference and exhibition of cutting-edge defence products and technologies for the use by the army, navy and the air force. It is organised as an opportunity for networking between the government and the business sector, and holds special importance for the host country and the domestic manufacturers

Opening the Adriatic Sea Defense and Aerospace Exhibition, the Croatian Defence Minister Ante Kotromanović expressed the belief that Croatia had been chosen as host in recognition to its national policy towards defence and the proactive approach and the potential of its growing defence industry. "The exhibitions such as ASDA underpin the exchange of information and ideas, the launching of new products and deals, and enable better understanding of the existing tendencies in the regional and global co-operation and stability". "The current instabilities and crises pose new challenges, prompting the investments into development of defence and Armed Forces capabilities, which should be regarded as factor of development and not merely a budget item and an expense "Investment in defence is investment in security, as the main precondition of development". He also said that the co-operation between the government and the defence industry should serve as



Author: Vesna Pintarić, Photos: Josip Kopi, Stjepan Brigljević

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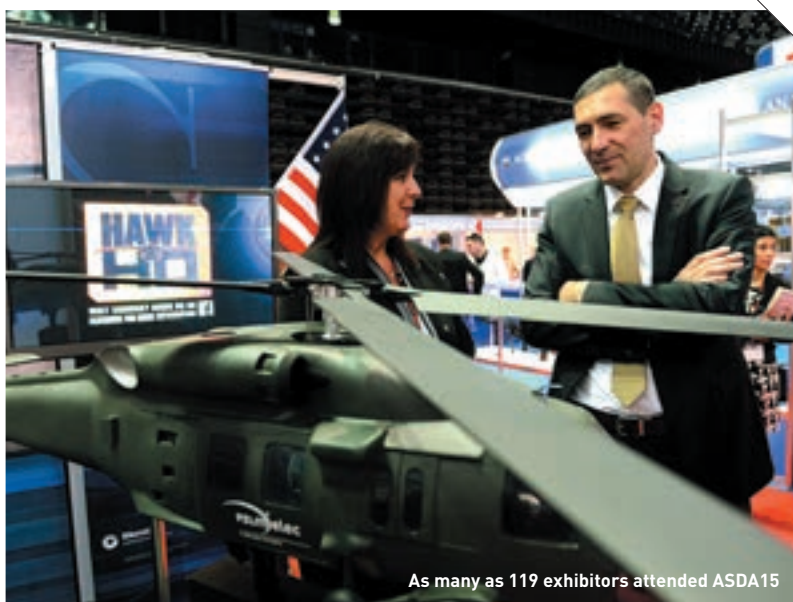


OPENING THE ADRIATIC SEA DEFENSE AND AEROSPACE EXHIBITION, THE CROATIAN DEFENCE MINISTER **ANTE KOTROMANOVIĆ** EXPRESSED THE BELIEF THAT CROATIA HAD BEEN CHOSEN AS HOST IN RECOGNITION TO ITS NATIONAL POLICY TOWARDS DEFENCE AND THE PROACTIVE APPROACH AND THE POTENTIAL OF ITS GROWING DEFENCE INDUSTRY. THE MINISTER UNDERLINED THAT THE CURRENT INSTABILITIES AND CRISES POSE NEW CHALLENGES, PROMPTING THE INVESTMENTS INTO DEVELOPMENT OF DEFENCE AND ARMED FORCES CAPABILITIES, WHICH SHOULD BE REGARDED AS FACTOR OF DEVELOPMENT AND NOT MERELY A BUDGET ITEM AND AN EXPENSE. **“INVESTMENT IN DEFENCE IS INVESTMENT IN SECURITY, AS THE MAIN PRECONDITION OF DEVELOPMENT”**.

an important economic incentive, particularly in times of economic crisis. Integrative, sustainable and competitive industry is essential for development and maintenance of the Croatian defence capabilities.

“The co-operation with the defence industry has made our Armed Forces stronger and fitter to do their mission than ever before”, said Minister Kotromanović too and emphasised that the organisation of the ASDA implied committed support to domestic manufacturers, some of whom have earned global recognition and strike deals in the most demanding markets”-

Addressing the visitors, the TNT Director Justin Webb extended appreciation to the Croatian Government and the Ministry of Defence for the assistance with the organisation of the Exhibition, which gathers 119 foreign and domestic manufacturers from 20 countries from Europe, Asia, North America and the Middle East.



As many as 119 exhibitors attended ASDA15

ASDA 2015 was attended by 119 international exhibitors from 20 European, Asian, North African and Middle East countries.

During the three days the visitors were able to see the cutting-edge products and technologies by some 120 exhibitors, among whom some 50 domestic businesses, who rank highly among the world's arms and military equipment manufacturers.



ADRIATIC SEA DEFENSE AND AEROSPACE EXHIBITION AND CONFERENCE 2015



The Exhibition featured the "ASDA 15" Interdiction at Sea Exercise, conducted by the Croatia Navy forces, the Croatian Air Force and Air Defence and the CAF Special Forces Command, demonstrating the capabilities and trainedness of the Croatian Armed Forces assigned with protection and control of maritime security in the Adriatic Sea.



CROATIAN PRESIDENT VISITS ASDA 15

The President of the Republic of Croatia and the Supreme Commander of its Armed Forces, Mrs Kolinda Grabar-Kitarović, accompanied by the Defence Minister Ante Kotromanović and the Chief of the General Staff, General Drago Lovrić on 23 April visited ASDA 2015.

Expressing satisfaction over the opportunity to familiarise herself with the latest technologies, Mrs Grabar-Kitarović stated: "The development of military technology cannot be viewed unrelated with the fact that it affects the innovation domain in the civilian sector as well, and that it creates the conditions for progress in medicine and other life-relevant science disciplines". The President visited the stands, paying special attention to the products of the Croatian military industry.





ASDA is conceived as a three-service conference and exhibition of cutting-edge defence products and technologies for the use by the army, navy and the air force. It is organised as an opportunity for networking between the government and the business sector, and holds special importance for the host country and the domestic manufacturers. During the three days the visitors were able to see the cutting-edge products and technologies by the exhibitors, among whom some 50 domestic businesses, who rank highly among the world's arms and military equipment manufacturers.

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Since the first event in 2011, ASDA has grown into a traditional military exhibition and found its place among international exhibitions. The following one (ASDA 2013) was attended by 106 exhibitors (51 domestic and 55 international) from 19 countries.

MILITARY EXPORTS UPWARD

CROATIA'S EXPORTS OF THE WEAPONS AND MILITARY EQUIPMENT IN THE YEAR 2014 TOTALLED 1,5 BILLION KUNA, EQUAL TO OVER 20% INCREASE WITH RESPECT TO 2013, AND A RECORD FIGURE WITH RESPECT TO PREVIOUS YEARS...



The data of the Government Agency "Alan" reported the total worth of the Croatian export of weaponry and military equipment in 2014 cca 1,5 billion kuna in agreed and realised deals, which is 20% increase compared to the year 2013 and a record figure over the past period, confirming the general upward trend in the industry. The exported weapons and equipment, manufactured by some twenty Croatian companies, are the latest technology.



The foremost Croatian military exporter in 2014 was the Karlovac-based HS Produkt, who sold 434,520 pistols, mostly in the United States market. Alongside the VHS assault rifle by the same manufacturer, the most important export products comprise the DOK-ING de-mining machines, the combat helmet by Šestan-Busch from Prelog, the RBG grenade launcher by the Pula-based M Adler D, the sniper rifles of different manufacturers, the ammunition by ATIR, the Kroko protective gear, and vessels built in Brodosplit, Tehnomont, "Geben", "Viktor Lenac" shipyards for the armed forces and police use, as well as the combat system instruction and maintenance services.

Some of the manufacturers export directly or through private firms, and some through the Government Agency Alan, a registered export broker with as much as 30% contracted annual exports, as stated by Ivan Nekić, Alan CEO, to the markets of Australia, Azerbaijan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Czech Republic, Denmark, the Philippines, France, Greece, Guatemala, Iraq, Italy, South African Republic, Kazakhstan, Columbia, Kosovo, Lithuania, Hungary, Macedonia, Germany, Pakistan, Poland, Russian Federation, the United States, Saudi Arabia, Slovenia, Spain, the Sultanate of Oman, Switzerland, Tunis, Turkey, the UAE and Ukraine.

Šestan-Busch exports the majority of its products to international markets. It has earned its place in the map of top European and global helmet manufacturers.



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Author: Vesna Pintarić, Photo archive of the Croatian Military Publications Department

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EQUIPMENT ON STEADY TREND

COMPETITIVE QUALITY AND PRICE

The Croatian exports are based on new technologies and products, and are sold to respectable buyers who value quality. For instance, the Croatia-made pistol (manufactured in millions of items) was sold to the United States and the VHS assault rifle to Iraq. Croatian defence industry has launched a series of products meeting the top technical standards while keeping a competitive price. While the market will offer rifles at lower price, they are of inferior quality. Croatia has offered a series of products meeting top technical standards at a competitive price.

"A good product is always a ticket to the tender, sometimes the winning one; a domestic product is always a priority and if it meets the highest technical standards, the price is of lesser importance", says Nekić. "It is a winning combination. The new pride of the HS Produkt – the VHS-2 assault rifle is among the world's best makes; another successful example are the DOK-ING de-mining machines, employed by the U.S. Army and Australian Army, and humanitarian de-mining organisations. Likewise, Šestan-Busch exports the majority of its products to international markets. It has earned its place in the map of top European and global helmet manufacturers. According to the latest figures by the Croatian Chamber of Commerce from the recent largest defence exhibition (the IDEX 15), the firm received the order from the United Arab Emirates, Turkey, Bangladesh and some African countries for over 100,000 helmets, to engage its production capacities for the entire year.

Another successful Croatian exporter is the Adria-Mar, a vessel manufacturer among whose customers is the Libyan Navy, has recently made contract

to overhaul four patrol vessels.

A major Croatian military equipment manufacturer is Đuro Đaković Holding from Slavonski Brod, which recently struck strategic partnership with the Finnish Patria and Norwegian Kongsberg for the Middle East market.

Furthermore, Kroko, an authority in military and protective gear, the Inkop, Jelen and Viko as boot manufacturers are building their reputation in the demanding international market, and achieving better business results.

AMONG 25 WORLD'S LARGEST MILITARY EQUIPMENT EXPORTERS

The aforelisted manufacturers have placed Croatia among the restricted number of countries offering quality products. Although economically and technologically inferior to more powerful countries such as the United States, Germany, France, the United Kingdom or Russia, Croatia remains among 30 countries whose original products easily find customers. Croatian brands are found in some 40 countries, which classifies it among the 25 world's

"A good product is always a ticket to the tender, sometimes the winning one; a domestic product is always a priority and if it meets the highest technical standards, the price is of lesser importance", says Nekić



Superfast transport craft produced by the Brodarski institut and Olimp nautika

The new pride of the HS Product – the VHS-2 assault rifle is among the world's best makes



CROATIAN DEFENCE INDUSTRY

Another successful example are the DOK-ING de-mining machines, employed by the U.S. Army and Australian Army, and humanitarian de-mining organisations



largest military equipment exporters.

In order to maintain or increase the existing positive trend, manufacturing should be expanded and new products and technologies developed, where the support from the government is necessary, in terms of ensuring business friendlier legislative and administrative solutions, and a more supportive environment. "Without the support from the leadership of the Ministry of Defence and of the Ministry of the Interior it wouldn't have been possible to get where we are now". Defence and military industry are not subsidised, and in the market they rely on their own capacities and resources.

In defence industry, the deals realised through government-supported agencies are essential, because being listed as domestic Armed Forces and police's provider can sometimes be the decisive trade factor. This is proved by the contract signed recently by the Ministry of Defence of the Republic of Croatia and 22 domestic manufacturers of military footwear, gear and equipment for the use by the Croatian Armed Forces, worth cca 50 mil kuna (6.5 mil EUR). The project of equipping and arming the Croatian soldiers entirely with the Croatia-made products is the definite proof of the Ministry of Defence's policy to support and strengthen the Croatian industry and value their expert knowledge and quality. It is also an additional certificate for their future exports.



Ivan Nekić, CEO the Government Agency Alan

DEFENCE EXHIBITIONS

The appearance in the international market is correlated with the presence in the specialised exhibitions. They are a convenient opportunity to display products, make contacts and get acquainted with the latest trends in military industry.

The top international exhibitions, such as Abu Dhabi, Paris or London, gather all relevant exhibitors - designers, manufacturers or customers - and are the right venue to showcase the industry's latest developments and innovations and manage business contacts. Croatian manufacturers participate as exhibitors too, supported by the Agency Alan, who takes responsibility to present all relevant Croatian manufacturers and provide them with the resources and know-how necessary to participate at the exhibitions.

"The Agency Alan's Catalogue contains all products and technologies available in Croatia, allowing the visitors of the Agency's stand to obtain all necessary information.

The exhibitions are seldom an agreement-signing occasion, though, except to conclude the previously agreed deals. The agreements and contracts are a result of lengthy work, testing, selection and other procedures, says Nekić. Procurement of arms is a years-long planning process, implying the respective procurement and funding plans.



IDEX 2015

The Government Agency Alan made third consecutive appearance at the IDEX Exercise and Conference that took place in Abu Dhabi from 22 to 26 February 2015 presenting the HS Produkt and Inkop. Croatia was also represented by Šestan Busch and DOK-ING.

IDEX is the sole defence exhibition taking place in the MENA (the Middle East and North Africa) biennially, presenting the state-of-the-art military and defence industry intended for army, navy and air force alike. Sponsored by His Highness Sheikh Khalif Bin Zayed Al Nahyan, President of the UAE and Supreme Commander of the UAE Armed Forces, IDEX is a unique platform to establish and nurture the co-operation with the government, companies and armed forces' representatives from all over the world. It features a series of extra events, such as the NAVDEX, live demonstrations, helicopter and the UAV fora, and the Gulf Defence Conference.

With over 2,800 exhibitors from 59 countries, who showcased at a surface of cca 133,000 m² and over 80,000 visitors, the IDEX holds its place on the map of the most important events of the kind, with a significant contribution of the Croatian firms, with growing prominence and demand as defence manufacturer.

This year's IDEX has been very successful for the Croatian industry, as the Agency's representatives agreed new and finishing deals worth cca 100 mil kuna.

GOVERNMENT AGENCY – A GUARANTOR

Although arms and equipment manufacturers do business autonomously or through private export brokers, a significant deal of customers prefer working through government agencies as the best guarantor. "Customers are interested in doing the business safely, and very often, when large projects are involved, they will ask for the best guarantee, which the government is", says Nekić.

Large manufacturers, mostly renowned multinational companies who trade thousands of millions annually may be a sufficient self-guarantor; without the well-rooted position or government guarantee it is almost impossible to strike deals for sophisticated and costly equipment".

A highly important criterion in arms trade is the international status of the customer and end user, the responsibility in this business does not end with the delivery, but involves an entire chain of subjects and entails extensive co-ordination and consultation with strategic partners.



In conclusion, the year 2015 offers extensive opportunities for all subjects determined to invest into the quality of products or modernised capacities. They merit incentives and support to justify and maintain the position in the domestic and international markets.



The Croatia-made pistol (manufactured in millions of items) was sold to the United States and the VHS assault rifle to Iraq

NATO HAS SET A CLEAR COURSE FOR THE FUTURE

NATO Deputy Secretary General, Amb. Alexander Vershbow (in the office since February 2012), in November 2014 visited Split as one of the senior speakers at the NATO-Industry Forum. The Forum organised annually, hosted by different NATO nation and serves as an optimal opportunity to discuss the burning strategic issues. We took the opportunity offered this year to interview the NATO Deputy Secretary General on the principal challenges faced by the Alliance, the future warfare and development. Among other things, NATO Deputy Secretary General addressed the current security threats and the need for a closer co-operation between the Alliance and its partners. He also emphasised NATO's efforts to create more agile forces ready in shorter term. Asked about NATO enlargement, Amb. Vershbow stressed the open door policy pertaining to countries that implement real and sustained commitment to reform regional co-operation.

We are making our forces more agile and more able to deploy quickly, whenever and wherever threats emerge. We are maintaining a continuous NATO presence in the eastern part of our Alliance, on a rotational basis, to reassure our Allies and to provide an effective deterrent. We are also setting up a rapid reaction Spearhead Force.

What is the importance of the NATO-Industry Forum and the co-operation with defence industry?

The NATO-Industry Forum is an important opportunity to discuss strategic issues related to the development of NATO capabilities. It is a unique venue to engage in debate about the security challenges that our nations face. We in NATO view industry as a key partner. The North Atlantic Council launched the Framework for NATO-Industry Engagement as an instrument to pursue this partnership. We believe that a closer NATO-industry partnership will be good for our nations, for NATO and for industry.

What are NATO's main challenges today?

Our strategic environment today is more volatile than it has been for decades. Russia's ongoing aggression against Ukraine and the spread of violence and extremism in North Africa and the Middle East, represent major challenges to our security. In addition, we also face challenges such as missile proliferation, cyber attacks, and threats to energy supplies.

In the face of these complex challenges, NATO has set a clear course for the future. We will keep the Alliance strong, ready and capable to meet any threat to any Ally. We will work more closely with our partners to keep our eastern and southern neighborhoods stable. To that end, Allies have launched the Defence Capacity Building Initiative to assist those nations that require the Alliance's help. We will also make sure that the vital bond between Europe and North America remains rock solid.

NATO-Industry

Forum 2014

Split, Croatia

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What plans have been put in place to keep NATO ready for any possible crisis and what is NATO focused on?

At our Summit in Wales in September we agreed on a 'Readiness Action Plan', the most significant reinforcement of our collective defence since the end of the Cold War. We are making our forces more agile and more able to deploy quickly, whenever and wherever threats emerge. We are maintaining a continuous NATO presence in the eastern part of our Alliance, on a rotational basis, to reassure our Allies and to provide an effective deterrent. We are also setting up a rapid reaction Spearhead Force. We are planning to pre-position equipment and supplies, so that, if needed, we can deploy reinforcements more quickly. We are also putting in place command and control elements on the territory of our eastern Allies.

As part of the Readiness Action Plan, we will ensure that NATO is able to deal with the challenges posed by the so-called 'hybrid warfare'. We have seen this type of warfare in Ukraine with the "little green men" without national insignia; regular troops allegedly "on vacation"; overt and covert support for the separatists trained and equipped across the border; and all of this wrapped in a sophisticated propaganda campaign.

"We need sustainable, innovative, and competitive defence industries. In particular, we recognize the importance of national industrial defence capabilities; in Europe and North America, and including our newer Allies

What are Your predictions of the future warfare and the role it will imply for the industry?

Nearly all of the challenges that we face have an important industrial dimension. Cyber defence is a good example. Industry is our first line of defence. The private sector owns the majority of the world's information systems and provides technical solutions for cyber defence. We need industry to play its full part in the development of our capabilities. This is why we need to move towards a closer and more open relationship between NATO and industry. We also have to ensure that the capabilities that our militaries depend on are affordable. Again, this is why we need closer cooperation with industry. We need sustainable, innovative, and competitive defence industries. In particular, we recognize the importance of national industrial defence capabilities; in Europe and North America, and including our newer Allies.



Russia's ongoing aggression against Ukraine and the spread of violence and extremism in North Africa and the Middle East, represent major challenges to our security. In addition, we also face challenges such as missile proliferation, cyber attacks, and threats to energy supplies.

We would like to hear Your view on defence expenditure. The past years have seen cuts in defence budgets. Do You see this trend changing in the near future?

Defence spending has steadily decreased since the end of the Cold War and the economic crisis has accelerated this trend. But at our Summit in Wales, NATO leaders pledged to halt the decline in defence budgets. They agreed to aim to increase defence spending in real terms over the coming decade, and to move towards the NATO benchmark of two percent of GDP. We did this because we have to be ready to meet the current and future challenges; and because there is a need for more investment in the armed forces. Governments are now going to have to implement this commitment that they made at the Wales Summit. This will remain a challenge for many Allies. That is why leaders have also emphasised the need for greater multinational cooperation, to get the most out of the resources we have available.

Multinational co-operation should be the preferred option for Allies to develop jointly the capabilities that they cannot afford individually. This will help us achieve tangible benefits, both in terms of operational effectiveness and cost efficiency. And this particularly applies to capabilities that will increase NATO's readiness and adaptability.



What are the prospects of new NATO enlargement and admission of new members as a way to expand co-operation and peace?

NATO's open door policy has already brought great benefits in terms of cooperation, democratic reforms and stability in the Euro-Atlantic area. We are committed to keeping our door open to those countries that show real and sustained commitment to reform. However, the door to NATO membership does not open automatically and there are no shortcuts leading to it. This is a merit-based process. Some of our partners aspire to join our Alliance. That aspiration has inspired important reforms, and important steps towards regional cooperation and reconciliation. It has moved us closer to our goal of a Europe whole, free and at peace. But there is still a way to go if we are to ensure a continent whole, free and at peace. This is Europe's unfinished business.

NATO Industrial Forum that was organised by the NATO Allied Command of Transformation and under the auspices of the NATO Secretary General, was an excellent platform for co-operation between the Alliance and defence industry. Attending the Forum, Deputy Secretary General, Amb. Alexander Vershbow, declared it "a unique opportunity to engage in debate about the security challenges NATO nations face, where industry is a key partner"...



A VENUE OF SYNERGY BETWEEN THE ALLIANCE AND DEFENCE INDUSTRY



The Supreme Allied Commander for Transformation, General Jean-Paul Palomeros in his address said that the new challenges faced by NATO call for novel solutions

NATO Deputy Secretary General, Amb. Alexander Vershbow, the Croatian Defence Minister, Ante Kotromanović and Deputy Minister of Foreign and European Affairs, Joško Klisović were the opening speakers at the NATO Industrial Forum held in the Le Meridien Hotel in Split on 13 November 2014. The Forum was organised by the Allied Command of Transformation and under the auspices of the Secretary General. It served as a platform for close co-operation between the Alliance and defence industry. Deputy Secretary commended the Forum "as a unique opportunity to engage in debate about the security challenges NATO nations face, where industry is a key partner". He reviewed the current volatile environment prompting NATO's capability and readiness, maintaining close Transatlantic link and close co-operation with defence industry. The Supreme Allied Commander for Transformation, General Jean-Paul Palomeros in his address said that the new challenges faced by NATO call for novel solutions. "The new challenges faced by the Alliance call for new solutions and innovative thinking. Our job here is to get to the solutions", stressed General Palomeros.

NATO - INDUSTRIAL FORUM - SPLIT

Croatian Defence Minister, Ante Kotromanović commended the NATO-Industry Forum as a valuable framework for exchange of experience with the leading defence industry companies and addressed the latest developments in the European environment. "It is our duty to assess the existing capabilities and consider the extent of investment into the security of countries and their citizens. A synergy of the Alliance and the defence industry towards strategic autonomy and wider co-operation is a necessity", said Minister Kotromanović

Deputy Minister of Foreign and European Affairs, Joško Klisović, said that defence industry was of strategic importance for NATO.

Senior attendees of the Forum included Assistant NATO Secretary General for Defence Investment, Patrick Auroy, Deputy Chief of the General Staff, Lieutenant General Dragutin Repinc, Assistant Defence Minister for Material Resources, Viktor Koprivnjak, and other Ministry of Defence and Armed Forces officials.



Croatian Defence Minister Ante Kotromanović commended the NATO-Industry Forum as a valuable framework for exchange of experience with the leading defence industry companies

The NATO - Industry Forum is the first post-Wales opportunity for the NATO and defence industry representatives to discuss the security exigencies and priorities.

The summit highlighted the importance of the strong defence industry and related co-operation, and in return the Forum gave the defence industry representatives the insight into NATO's priorities and enabled them to plan the strategic investments accordingly.

NATO SECRETARY GENERAL'S ADDRESS ON THE IMPORTANCE OF THE NATO INDUSTRIAL FORUM

NATO SECRETARY GENERAL, **JENS STOLTENBERG**, DELIVERED A VIDEOSTREAMED MESSAGE TO THE PARTICIPANTS OF THE NATO INDUSTRIAL FORUM, IN WHICH HE EMPHASISED THE ROLE OF NATO AS STABILISER IN A VOLATILE WORLD, WHENCE THE IMPORTANCE OF DEVELOPMENT AND MAINTENANCE OF EACH CAPABILITY. INDUSTRY HAS AN ESSENTIAL ROLE, RANGING FROM **AIRCRAFT MANUFACTURING TO CYBER DEFENCE**. IT PROVIDES PRACTICAL SOLUTIONS, AND OUR TASK IS TO INVEST MORE AND WISER TOWARDS A STRONGER NATO



NATO Industry Forum was the first post-Wales opportunity for the NATO and defence industry representatives to discuss the security exigencies and priorities. The summit highlighted the importance of the strong defence industry and related co-operation, and in return the Forum gave the defence industry representatives the insight into NATO's priorities and enabled them to plan the strategic investments and innovations accordingly.

"Co-operation with NATO as a unique multinational client is at once a great honour and challenge", said Philippe Duhamel, "Co-operation with NATO as a unique multinational client is at once a great honour and a big challenge", said the Chief Executive Officer of Thales Raytheon Systems, Philippe Duhamel. The home and foreign industries attending the Forum were Airbus Defence&Space, Sikorsky Aircraft, Đuro Đaković Holding, HS Produkt and others.



Author: Lada Puljizević, photos by: Tomislav Brandt

INTERNATIONAL EXERCISE

The "ŠTIT 15" international exercise engaged some 600 members of the Croatian Armed Forces and 70 members of the Armed Forces of the Republic of Slovenia. The main objective of the Exercise was to demonstrate the Air Defence units' firing competence and trainedness, and harmonised inter-branch and inter-service operation.

The exercise demonstration in the "Rt Kamenjak" Training Range on 24 April 2015, organised as the Distinguished Visitor Day, demonstrated the air target shooting by Croatian and Slovenian Air Defence and Army forces

“ŠTIT 15” THE AIR TARGET SHOOTING EXERCISE

The exercise demonstration in the "Rt Kamenjak" Training Range on 24 April 2015, organised as the Distinguished Visitor Day, demonstrated the air target shooting ability. It was attended by the Deputy Chief of the General Staff of the Croatian Armed Forces, Lieutenant General Dragutin Repinc, the Commander of the Croatian Army, Major General Mate Ostović and senior military and civilian visitors. The Exercise itself commenced on 15 April, for the 21st consecutive time – it is a longest exercise conducted by the Croatian Armed Forces (since 1994), and for the second time an international event, joining the Croatian and Slovenian air defence forces. The "ŠTIT 15" exercise engaged 600 members of the Croatian Armed Forces and 70 members of the Armed Forces of the Republic of Slovenia. The main

objective of the Exercise was to demonstrate the various Air Defence units' firing competence and trainedness, and their harmonised inter-branch and inter-service operation. The designated EXO was the Commander of the Training and Doctrine Command of the Croatian Army, Brigadier General Blaž Beretin, and the Exercise Director Lieutenant Colonel Damir Jugović.

The exercise demonstration featured air target shooting from air defence artillery and missile systems, presenting air defence capabilities of the Slovenian and Croatian Army components.

The exercise featured air defence drill, with Air Defence armoured vehicles tracking and shooting the targets towed by a MIG-21 aircraft at the speed of 500 km/h, and air defence missile units performed live target imitator firing.

The participants fired 10 projectiles from the "S-2Ms" and three missiles from "IGLA" portable air defence missile systems respectively. The Slovenian soldiers fired two projectiles from the "IGLA-S" system. Throughout the Exercise a total of 100 projectiles were fired from the "S-2M" and eight from LPRS "IGLA", and the Slovenian forces fired five projectiles from the "IGLA-S" respectively.

The exercises of the kind are relevant for the implementation of the Capability Targets, and constitute a realistic readiness test for participation in joint operations with NATO nations.

Deputy Chief of the General Staff of the Croatian Armed Forces, Lieutenant General Dragutin Repinc extended appreciation to all members for the com-



The exercises of the kind are relevant for the implementation of the Capability Goals, and constitute a realistic readiness test for participation in joint operations with NATO nations

INTERNATIONAL EXERCISE



LIEUTENANT GENERAL DRAGUTIN REPINC,
DEPUTY CHIEF OF THE GENERAL STAFF OF THE
CROATIAN ARMED FORCES

"We are most glad to have conducted the Exercise jointly with the members of the Slovenian Armed Forces. I hope the co-operation will grow into a tradition much like the Exercise itself. It is of great importance to build friendly relations, compatibility and interoperability between the Croatian and Slovenian forces and among the Allies in general. The experience acquired and exchanged here will be relevant for the development of the air defence system both in Croatia and Slovenia.

The Exercise commenced on 15 April, for the 21st consecutive time - it is a longest exercise conducted by the Croatian Armed Forces (since 1994), and for the second time an international event, joining Croatian and Slovenian air defence forces



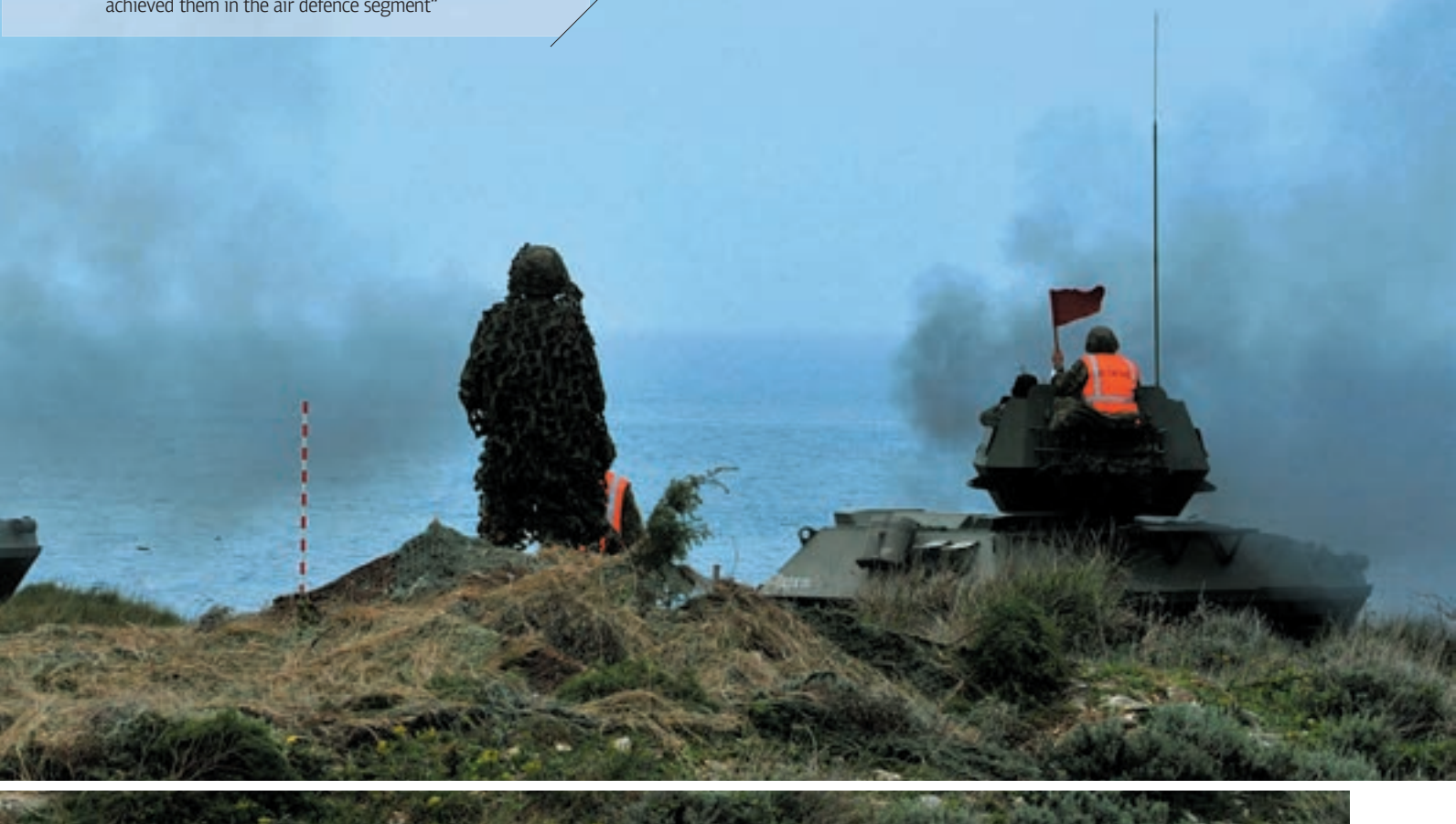
mitment and performance. Lt. Gen. Repinc also expressed satisfaction over the co-operation with the Slovenian Armed Forces and the hope of continued joint exercises: "We are most glad to have conducted the Exercise jointly with the members of the Slovenian Armed Forces. I hope the co-operation will grow into a tradition much like the Exercise itself. It is of great importance to build friendly relations, compatibility and interoperability between the Croatian and Slovenian forces and among the Allies in general".

Lt. General Repinc also emphasised that the ŠTIT 15 Exercise crowned a long effort aimed at joint development and practice of standard operational procedures, tactics and procedures. The experience acquired and exchanged in the Exercise will be relevant for the development of the air defence systems in Croatia and Slovenia.

The exercise featured air defence drill, with Air Defence armoured vehicles tracking and shooting the targets towed by a MIG-21 aircraft at the speed of 500 km/h, and air defence missile units performed live target imitator firing

COLONEL MILAN ŽURMAN, THE COMMANDER OF THE SLOVENIAN LOGISTIC BRIGADE

“The ŠTIT 15 Exercise is of great importance for the Slovenian Armed Forces, committed to nurturing friendly co-operation with the Croatian military and Croatia as a NATO and the EU nations. Interoperability and compatibility are our targets, and today we have demonstrated that we have achieved them in the air defence segment”



As an Exercise-related activity, the Armed Forces members assisted the host municipality of Medulin by conducting engineer works and clean-up in the Rt Kamenjak.

The Commander of the Slovenian Logistic Brigade, Colonel Milan Žurman shared satisfaction over the bilateral Exercise and the jointly achieved results. “The ŠTIT 15 Exercise is of great importance for the Slovenian Armed Forces, committed to nurturing friendly co-operation with the Croatian military and Croatia as a NATO and the EU nation. Interoperability and compatibility are our objective, and today we have demonstrated that we have achieved them in the air defence segment”.

Colonel Žurman also underlined that the ŠTIT 15 Exercise was an example of optimal and cost-saving co-operation, quite in line with the tenets of Smart Defence.



The members of the 1st Company of the 2nd Mechanised Battalion in February based out from the barracks in Petrinja to take the combat training in the Gašinci Training Range, as unit declared for **NATO Response Force** in the year 2016

THE CROATIAN ARMED FORCES

NRF 2016 CYCLE

“THE EVALUATION OF THE READINESS OF THE **GROMOVI**” BATTALION

Four “Patria” vehicles advance across the Gašinci Training Range near Đakovo. The distant rattle of machine guns is heard. All of a sudden the vehicles stop, to let the armed passengers disembark and take positions in the field, in cold air and winter sun a real film-like setting offered by the live fire training of the Battalion known as “Gromovi”. The members of the 1st Coy of the 2nd Mechanised Battalion based out into the Gašinci Training Range near Đakovo to prepare to join the NATO Response Force in 2016. One platoon alternately conducts live firing simultaneously with the other two engage in tactical training, one platoon training with Patrias and the other conduct infantry training, to maximise and balance the effort.

“The first training item today was precise shooting, familiarising the gunners with the shooting tactics, followed by more complex shooting sets, where shooters themselves were unaware of the target situation but vehicle commanders were expected to prioritise targets in the battlefield and act accordingly”, says 1st Lieutenant Saša Đerić, the NRF 2016 Company Commander, who coordinates the operation from the control post.

“The firing performance has been very good at this level, and we reasonably expect that towards the end of the exercise they will be even better. I am also satisfied with the motivation and the moral the

Company members have demonstrated”.

The Commander, Major Roman Kelnerić is overseeing the shooting on the site, aboard a targeting “Patria”; monitors the performance by the crew members, the required procedures implementation. “The crew is now to engage moving and unmovable targets from the position, and afterwards engage static targets on the move”, explains Major Kelnerić, while the crew is preparing to fire. “We are about to see a situation firing of static targets, which will be prioritised by the commander.

The Patria’s crew is composed of the vehicle commander, driver and gunner, each firmly concentrated on his task in a hasty environment. All the preparatory procedures completed, the vehicle commander declares shooting readiness. Targets are lifted, the Patrias’ engines started. “The target moving to the right, direction two o’clock. Driver-stop, tracker - to the right.”range 656 metres, fired”, and the gun atop the vehicle hits the target. This is the in-vehicle perspective of the firing. The targets are lifted for 40 secs, and if missed, they are pulled down.

The firing is conducted at intervals, with vehicles switching to and fro the position onwards and backwards to avoid enemy’s hits. The activities were conducted throughout the day and into the night, for higher preparedness in any conditions, and the most complex ones – the firing of squads is scheduled on





Author: Petra Kostanjšak, photos by: Tomislav BRANDT

CROATIAN MILITARY MAGAZINE

Later in 2015 the
“Gromovi” are to commence
preparations for the 2017
rotation of NRF

the last day. The squad firing entails infantrymen engaging the targets alongside the vehicles; the synergy is translated into an efficient outcome, which is an impressive sequence to the observers too. In order to be ready for the NRF 2016, the Company underwent a previous readiness testing at the Battalion level, which included individual training, squad and platoon training. No respite before the next round of training - following the Gašinci phase the “Gromovi” took to the Training Range near Slunj, to practise hand grenade use and RPG firing, followed by further training, problem solving and pre-evaluation in the Combat Training Centre by using the MILES System. In early May the entire NRF stand-by force for the year 2016 is planned to undergo final certification in the military exercise “Spremnost”. Later in 2015 the unit is to commence preparations of forces for the 2017 rotation of NRF, as announced by the Commander.





PREPARING FOR THE EUBG

As member of the European Union the Republic of Croatia contributes to the **European Union Battle Group (EUBG)**. The Guards Motorised Brigade has been assigned with generating and training an augmented company-sized unit.

The contingent comprises the motorised company, the general engineer support platoon (of the Engineer Regiment), the National Support Element (NSE) of the Support Command and staff personnel. The Brigade is responsible for training and preparation of the Motorised Coy and the Croatian staff members of the EU BG 2016/II. An encounter with the Vukovi during their field preparation proves their assiduity. The magazine's team visited the members of the 1st Motorised Battalion ("Vukovi" - the wolves) of the Guards Motorised Brigade during one of the two-week training cycles taken at the



The EUBG 2016/II will comprise the Motorised Company, the General Engineer Support Platoon, (of the Engineer Regiment) the National Support Element (of the Support Command) and staff officers.

Author and photos by: Lada Puljizević

CROATIAN MILITARY MAGAZINE

The Commander of the 1st Motorised Battalion ("Vukovi") of the Brigade, **Major Igor Gojmerac**



"Crvena zemlja" Training Range near Knin in alteration with a week off and week in preparation for the next stage of training. The cycle has been going on for months. The Commander of the 1st Motorised Battalion ("Vukovi") of the Brigade, Major Igor Gojmerac summarised the preparations: "My unit has been tasked with preparing a segment of the contingent for the 2016 rotation. The Battalion commenced the preparations in June 2014, and in the course of the following months developed plans, documents, key personnel selection and the preparations timeline.

The training phase commenced in October, which at the moment has progressed to the squad level, and we are about to take the squad performance evaluation and pairs and teams live firing respectively.

As planned for the latter half of 2016, the Guards Motorised Brigade is tasked with generating and training an augmented motorised company-sized force for the EUBG. The Brigade has been assigned with preparation and training of the motorised company and staff officers for the EUBG 2016/II...

Wintertime is very harsh in the Dinara mountain, with gusts of bora, sleet and low temperatures aggravating the conduct of tasks. However, "Vukovi" adapt like their eponyms and stoically exercise the assigned tasks. This is not uncommon situation for soldiers. Day after day their satisfaction and confidence grow as they notice the progress and fulfilled goals.

The training will continue in accordance with the plans for eight coming months and the defined tasks timeline, levels and responsible units. The plan for 2015 features the platoon-level training and evaluation, and the testing of procedures and SOPs by means of a new VBS2 at the Simulation Centre in the Croatian Defence Academy. The following step is self-evaluation of the Company in the Exercise conducted in the Crvena zemlja Training Range which offers diverse realistic conditions of operation.

The training will be concluded by the UDAR 15 EXE in October 2015 and the final CREVAL.

The commander of the Company component of the EUBG, 1st Lieutenant Mario Štimac, describes the course of the training taken by the Company members: "The Company is presently in training at the squad level. We have completed the training and evaluation of individual tasks, prior to the training at the platoon and company levels. The goal is to successfully complete the exercise UDAR 15 in October. Then we shall take the training to follow the Company evaluation in multinational exercises jointly with the members of other EUBG contributing nations". As of October 2015, "Vukovi" will take joint training with other components of the EUBG, prior to the inception of the 6-month stand-by period for deployments up to 6000 km from Brussels (July 2016).



THE TRANSITION TO A NEW MISSION ENTAILS A SHIFT FROM THE COMBAT OPERATIONAL ROLE INTO A **"TRAIN, ADVISE AND ASSIST"** SUPPORT TO THE AFGHAN ARMY AND POLICE, REDUCING AND ALTERING THE DEPLOYED FORCES. THE CROATIAN CONTINGENT HAS SINCE 31 OCTOBER 2014 BEEN REDUCED TO 92 AND STATIONED IN TWO AREAS OF RESPONSIBILITY - THE TAAC (TRAIN, ADVISE AND ASSIST COMMAND) NORTH IN MAZAR-E-SHARIF (THE MAIN COMPONENT), THE TAAC CAPITAL IN KABUL AND THE TAAC NORTH (THE MAJOR PART)...

RESOLUTE SUPPORT

HRVCON

IN A NEW MISSION

TO TRAIN AND ADVISE THE AFGHAN FORCES



Author: Petra Kostanjšak, Photo archive of the Croatian Military Publications Department

The framework for the new mission centres on cca 12,500 members of forces of 28 NATO and 14 partner countries assigned with the respective duties. The Mission is conducted from the headquarters in Kabul and from four bases, located in Mazar-e-Sharif, Herat, Kandahar and Laghman.

The early 2015, as planned, saw the launch of Resolute Support Mission – a follow-on mission to the ISAF. The 24th Croatian Contingent is the first Croatian contingent taking part in. The transition has implied the transfer of responsibility for safety in the country to the home forces (the Afghanistan National Security Force) and a shift from the combat operational role towards training, advising and assistance, which also altered the size and the type of the mission of the Croatian contingent in Afghanistan.

The new mission mandate reduced the NATO and partner countries troops in the theatre to 12,500, which is a significant downsize compared to the Operation's peak in 2011/2012 with 130,000 troops in the field. Some 1,200 to 1,400 servicemen will be tasked with the main missions (training, advising and assistance), and the rest of the forces will support them.

The Croatian force has also a reduced presence, from the previous 130 to 92. The Croatian forces have been stationed in two areas of responsibility – the TAAC North in Mazar-e-Sharif (the main component) and the TAAC Capital in Kabul.

A detailed operation plan of the mission was endorsed by the NATO foreign ministers in late June 2014, while the SOFA signed in Kabul in September 2014 constitutes the legal framework, defining the conditions and tasks to be implemented by NATO forces in the new mandate.

In the new situation, characterised by responsibility for security in the area of operations transferred entirely on the ANSF (comprising the Afghan National Army and the Afghan National Police), the Croatian Contingent is responsible for their training and advising. The Croatian troops operate divided into four main advisory teams, assigned to the Regional ANA Combat Training School, the Regular Police Command, the ANA Special Battalion and a NCO in the Army Institutional Advisory Team (AIAT) respectively.

The Croatian contingent has incorporated a new component - the SPTC SOAT (Special Force Training Centre - Special Operations Advisory Team), assigned with training and advising the members of the Afghan Special Police.





Another highly important task – that of securing and protecting all advisory teams in the TAAC-N in the Camp Shaheen - has been entrusted to the members of the Force Protection Train Advise Assist Company – FP TAA COY). The members of the Situational Awareness and Recovery Operations Centre (SAROC) operational awareness in the TAAC North and manage the activities of the Camp “Marmal” protection force and advisory teams.

Compliant with the changed structure and tasks of HRVCON in Resolute Support the infantry forces have taken the duty of securing the “Safe Haven” in the Shaheen Camp, and the close protection of advisors during their visits to the advised personnel. The Croatian Contingent also incorporates the members of the Army of Montenegro, and some of the posts in the SAROC will be assumed by the members of the armed forces of the A-5 countries. The Croatian Contingent has been augmented with a new component – the SPTC SOAT (Special Force Training Centre – Special Operations Advisory Team), assigned with training and advising the members of the Afghan Special Police.

A RETROSPECTIVE

A brief retrospective into the past 13 years reveals successful assistance to the building of the Afghan National Security Force, which enjoys support by the Afghan people and has demonstrated to be capable of leading the required combat operations. The mission Resolute Support, as visible from the



In the new situation, characterised by responsibility for security in the area of operations transferred entirely on the **ANSF** (comprising the Afghan National Army and the Afghan National Police), the Croatian Contingent is responsible for their training and advising.

The Croatian soldiers operate divided into four main advisory teams, assigned to the Regional ANA Combat Training School, the Regular Police Command, the ANA Special Battalion and the Army Advisory Team (one member) respectively.

new missions assigned to the Croatian contingent, continues the support to the Afghans implementing the conclusions from the NATO Summits in Lisbon, Chicago and Wales. Although primarily an advisory mission, Resolute Support is conducted in a country still faced by the same scale of threat, a constant close co-operation with the Afghan forces is required to maintain the security at the acceptable level. The agreements that constitute the legal framework of Resolute Support Mission stipulate the forces remaining on the site maintain readiness to defend the instructors, trainers and other mission participants.

The new mission in Afghanistan focuses on key areas (titled Essential Functions – EF) serving as a framework and guidelines for the Afghan security forces. These are: support to budgeting and programmes execution ; oversight, transparency and accountability; civilian governance of the ASI (ANSF as servants of the people); force generation (recruit, train, and equip the force); sustainment (supply and maintenance); strategy and policy planning, resourcing and execution (plan, resource campaigns); intelligence and strategic communication.

The mission's main objective is building and maintenance of the acquired capabilities of the Afghan forces. In addition to the advisory and training support, the Allies and partner countries are dedicated to long-term financial support of the international community to the home forces.

An important heritage of ISAF is a sustainable



partnership with the Afghan people, establishing and developing the Afghan security force that now comprises 350,000 troops and has assumed full responsibility for the security of the country. In 2014 the ANSF secured the elections from the Taliban attacks, allowing over 7 mil voters to exercise their right and opening the way to the establishment of a national unity government - the historic first democratic transition of government.

In "Resolute Support" the members of NATO and partner countries forces co-operate mostly with high-ranking members of the ANSF and of the Ministry of Defence, the Ministry of the Interior, the ANA and the police, which was not the case with ISAF. Resolute Support has been defined as a non-combat mission, with NATO forces not engaging in combat conducted by ANSF but assisting the Afghan officials to draft strategic and operational plans, the logistic and distribution planning, training and education.

Compliant with the changed structure and tasks of HRVCON in Resolute Support the infantry forces have taken the duty of securing the "Safe Haven" in the Shaheen Camp, and close protection of advisors during their visits to the advised personnel



CROATIAN ADVISORS:

The Croatian Contingent to Afghanistan is divided into four main advisor teams:

ANA Regional Combat Battle School AT (ANA RCBS AT) – six advisors

Afghanistan Regular Police Type A Police HQ AT (TAAC North) – three advisors

ANA SOK SOAT – four advisors

AIAT CSEL – one NCO in the Army Institutional Advisory Team

Camp Shaheen



Defying the snow, wind and rain in the “Gašinci” Training Range near Đakovo in the international exercise “Mir 15/1” conducted in the Range, from 9-11 February 2015, the soldiers strained to demonstrate readiness for the forthcoming participation in Resolute Support Mission in Afghanistan. The Exercise crowned the months-long training of the various components – including the members of the armed forces of the A-5 countries (Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Macedonia and Montenegro). The “Gašinci” Training Range was re-shaped to depict realistically the Afghan setting for the Exercise, and the scenario placed the soldiers amidst a series of expectable events and situations. Their performance and readiness were monitored by the evaluation team of the General Staff, strictly following the NATO CREVAL system. “We are today conducting the second part, the” in-field” part of the Exercise, jointly with the members of the armed forces of the A-5 Initiative; we are co-working to fulfill the training objectives and attain readiness for deployment in the area of operations, and developing our mutual relations and interoperability at the same time”, emphasised Brigadier General Siniša Jurković, the Commander of the Guards Mechanised Brigade and the EXE Executive Officer.



THE “MIR 15/1” EXE

2ND HRVCON READY FOR RESOLUTE SUPPORT MISSION

THE “GAŠINCI” TRAINING RANGE NEAR ĐAKOVO STAGED/FEATURED AN INTERNATIONAL MILITARY EXERCISE “MIR 15/1”, AS FINAL READINESS EVALUATION EVENT OF THE 2ND HRVCON TO RESOLUTE SUPPORT MISSION IN AFGHANISTAN. THE EXERCISE CROWNED THE MONTHS-LONG TRAINING OF THE VARIOUS COMPONENTS - INCLUDING THE MEMBERS OF THE ARMED FORCES OF THE A-5 COUNTRIES...





Author: Petra Kostanjšak, photos: Petra Kostanjšak

adequate preparations and featured in the Exercise scenario. The Team was entrusted with protection and escort of Staff personnel from the mock-up Camp "Marmal" to another base in the Range, along a defined route. The patrol was hindered by a suspected explosive left on the road, and had to perform the respective procedure - to retreat to a safe spot, check the terrain and re-establish safety. While executing the third procedure they were opened fire at, with several members wounded who had to be taken care of while still responding to the attack. The multinational team evinced excellent joint operation in the field and in the operations centre, resulting in successful elimination of the enemy, with the support from the aerial forces. "The preparations commenced in late October, when the General Staff's Evaluation Team found all necessary conditions had been fulfilled for us to take the pre-deployment training. It was complemented with a



The Chief Evaluator of the General Staff Team, Colonel Mijo Kožić, stated that the monitoring lasted throughout the Exercise's 72-hour time span, and revealed an excellent outcome. "We have seen a high-level of preparedness demonstrated by the forces in the field; we have been evaluating the force protection capability and other required procedures and techniques. All Contingent's components declared for rotation possess the required level of readiness to effectively fulfill their tasks in Resolute Support Mission" asserted Col. Kožić.

The Commander of the 2nd HRVCON to RSM, Colonel Stanko Paradžiković was satisfied with the evaluation for the Contingent members. "The Exercise went as planned, with no setbacks. The training took three months and a half, and the components have demonstrated to be ready and prepared for any possible scenario and incidents possibly occurring in the area of operations", said Colonel Paradžiković. The Component Force Protection Coy TAA in Afghanistan has been assigned with force protection and escort, which are the essential and the hardest tasks. The demanding nature of the tasks required



follow-up in January and leading to the integration of the Contingent in February, five days prior to the Exercise "Mir 15/1", said 1st Lieutenant Berislav Petrinović, training administrator, whose training unit was manned by the best NCOs of the Guards Mechanised Brigade. "Our NCOs have implemented their expertise and previous experience from ISAF through the Unit to train the members of the Contingent for the mission".

COLONEL SVETOZAR BRAJKOVIC,
HEAD OF THE COMBAT READINESS DEPARTMENT OF THE GENERAL STAFF OF
THE ARMY OF MONTENEGRO



"I have been assigned as evaluator of the 2nd Montenegro Contingent to Resolute Support mission. The Croatian and the Montenegrin evaluators jointly compose the final evaluation of the Contingent's readiness, which in my view is at high level, with well-synchronised operation, and I am confident that the members will handle any given task efficiently. The joint activities and excellent co-operation have become a tradition.

93RD CROATIAN AIR FORCE AND AIR DEFENCE BASE - ZEMUNIK

THE 93RD BASE HAS BUILT EXPERIENCE IN TRAINING FOREIGN PILOTS (FROM BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA AND MACEDONIA); HOWEVER, THE AGREEMENT WITH THE **ROYAL AIR FORCE** OF THE SULTANATE OF OMAN TO TRAIN THE PILOTS WAS A NEW AND MAJOR CHALLENGE. THE FIRST GROUP WAS LARGE (16 PILOTS) AND UNDERWENT THE ENDORSEMENT TRAINING IN THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE. THE NEW GROUP OF OMANI PILOTS HAS ARRIVED TO ZEMUNIK...



Chief of General Staff of CAF,
General Drago Lovrić attends
the graduation ceremony

GRADUATION CEREMONY OMANI

The successful training of the first group of the pilots of the Royal Air Force of Oman is a new credit to the Croatian Air Force and Air Defence's instructor and technician staff. Although foreign trainee pilots are not a novelty for them (previously trained pilots from Bosnia and Herzegovina and Macedonia), the agreement with the Royal Air Force of the Sultanate of Oman to train their pilots was a new and major challenge. The first group of trainees was large (16 pilots) and underwent the endorsement training in the English language. Having previously completed basic training on the PAC SUPER MUSHSHAK aircraft (comparable to the training of the Croatian pilots on the training aircraft ZLIN-242L), the Omani pilots were preparing in the 93rd Base to fly more advanced types of aircraft.

The training was conducted by the instructors of the Fixed-wing Squadron of the 93rd Base, and comprised basic aerobatic, VFR and IFR, night time and group flying, with 150 flying hours per pilot. Two Omani instructors followed the hands-on training in each segment. The Omani Air Force appreciated the timeline and the adaptability of the training programme to their needs. It was already valorised during the initial talks with the Squadron staff, who provided substantive entries on which to tailor the





OF THE FIRST GROUP OF PILOTS

The training of the first group of the pilots of the Sultanate of Oman ran in compliance with the agreed plan and timeline; as a proof, the Base is hosting the second group of RAFO pilots



The Omani pilots were accommodated in the Zemunik Barracks near Zadar, which adapted their space to the cultural and religious specifics of the Sultanate of Oman, related to lodging, nutrition and training cycle respecting the religious holidays and customs.

training process. The Agreement on Basic Flying Training of the Members of the Royal Air Force of the Sultanate of Oman, signed between the Ministry of Defence of the Republic of Croatia and the Ministry of Defence of the Sultanate of Oman, was finalised within a short time span as the first commercial co-operation in foreign pilot training. As stipulated by the Agreement, the expenses (including the costs of training, flying hours, accommodation and board) were a responsibility of the Omani Ministry.



OMANI PILOTS

CROATIAN AIR FORCE AND AIR DEFENCE



The training lasted from March through December 2014, and was carried out entirely along the planned timeline. The Croatian instructors tutored the Omani pilots individually and supervised their progress. One of the training principles was to conduct post-flight analyses together with the Omani instructors, to review the performance of the pilots – whether they perform in the standard or not – and consider possible improvements. We employed a continuous supervision process”, explained Captain Edvard Krišto, one of the trainers.

Despite the defined structure, the programme needed slight adjustments to the demands by the Omani side in certain flight segments (in terms of the familiarity with the terrain), without compromising and deviating from the standard quality level. They were also expected to adapt to flying in the

The town of Zadar is the place where the Omani graduates entered the high-class club of military pilots, on a special day for them and for the Croatian Armed Forces alike

civilian-controlled airspace and the complex situation, characterised by flying in the airport zone with busy civilian air traffic and two-way communication. It was particularly evident with the IFR; which for the Omani pilots was a challenging experience and a new and highly useful skill. “This is our first co-operation with the Croatian Air Force, and I believe that both sides are doing a very good job” said the Omani instructor, Captain Talal Abdullah Amer Al-aamri, who also praised the opportunity offered to his colleagues to adapt to a new setting, conditions and rules. The training experience has been a major challenge for the Fixed-wing Squadron in terms of organisation and execution, and an opportunity to evince professionalism of the Squadron staff, which has received international recognition.

Twelve Omani pilots successfully completed the

COLONEL KAROL LUČAN, COMMANDER OF THE 93RD AIR BASE



The basic flying training programme administered with the Omani pilots has created a new dimension and a new stage of its development and investment into the barracks infrastructure.

The co-operation has confirmed the high instructing potential of the Squadron, which has received international recognition, most evident with the Krila Oluje Aerobatic Team as the most visible brand of the Zemunik Base. The international reputation is based on the number of national and foreign pilots trained, and the Base staff is opening new developmental prospects.





THE SECOND GROUP OF OMANI PILOTS COMMENCES TRAINING

The Fixed-wing Squadron of the 93rd Croatian Air Force and Air Defence Base in the Zemunik Barracks on 26 February commenced training the second group of pilots of the Royal Air Force of the Sultanate of Oman, composed of 12 pilots accompanied by a flight instructor assigned as liaison officer and a training co-ordinator.

The training programme for the second group entails the basic flying training on the PC-9M in five modules: basic and aerobatic, VFR, IFR, night-time and flying in groups, and an experimental combining module administered with the current group of Omani pilots. On 15 April 2015 the Omani trainees performed three performance flights over the runway in Zemunik, to demonstrate the competence and autonomy acquired in the first module and the aptitude for the subsequent ones. They received heart-felt congratulations from their flight instructors and the Fixed-wing Squadron, Lieutenant Colonel Željko Harapin.



training, and were presented with the diplomas and pilot badges of the Royal Air Force of the Sultanate of Oman at the ceremony held in the Croatian National Theatre in Zadar. The three best performing pilots received the prizes of the Croatian Ministry of Defence and the Armed Forces.

The town of Zadar is the place where the Omani graduates entered the élite club of military pilots, on a special day for them and for the Croatian Armed Forces alike. The Croatian pilots did an excellent job transferring their expertise and experience on them. The job of their choice requires life-long education and continuous skill acquisition, which will determine their careers and lives. Never fear to take the initiative and show respect for the experience of the senior colleagues. I wish you a long and successful career" was the message by the Chief of the General Staff of the Croatian Armed Forces, General Drago Lovrić to the Omani pilots, and he also expressed the hope that the Sultan Qaboos Bin Said Al Said would share his pride. The Commander of the Croatian Air Force and Air Defence, Major General Dražen Ščuri for his part said "This has been a joint training project, where both sides - the Croatian and the Omani alike - invested serious effort and professionalism. It was their partnership that led to such successful training outcome".



The Omani graduates expressed recognition for the professionalism of the Croatian Air Force and Air Defence staff, and appreciation to the local community for their hospitality.

The training of the first group of the pilots of the Sultanate of Oman ran in compliance with the agreed plan and timeline; as a proof, the Base is hosting the second group of RAFO pilots.



On 7 April the twelve members of the first Croatian Autonomous Vessel Protection Detachment completed their turn in the **EU NAVFOR ATALANTA** and returned home. Their superb mission performance earned them a number of commendations, crowned by the **EU Common Security and Defence Policy Medal** presented by the **EU Naval Force Commander** in March.

The **AVPD** was assigned with protecting the MSM Douro merchant ship, aboard which they sailed over 7000 miles and transported over 22,000 tons of food and other humanitarian supplies. The mission lasted 111 days, only a few hours spent offboard. Along with hard operating conditions, they faced a number of challenges.

AVPD RETURNS FROM MISSION

The twelve members of the first Croatian Autonomous Vessel Protection Detachment (AVPD) last December embarked on the MSM Douro merchant ship moored in Djibouti, taking part in EU NAVFOR SOMALIA – OPERATION ATALANTA, as first-time Croatian participants. They were assigned with protecting the vessel transporting and providing the supplies and humanitarian assistance to the local population within the UN's World Food Programme – WFP).

"We only stepped on solid ground three times since we took on the duty – in Dar-es-Salaam, Tanzania, in Mombasa, Kenya and in Djibouti, it was less than 12 hours.", says Lieutenant (N) Nenad Kontri, the first Croatian AVPD Team Commander, Sergeant first Class Tihomir Roso, member of the 2nd Security Team and Sergeant Major of the Army Nikola Belas, Commander of the 2nd Security Team. Having previously reported on the Team's preparations for the mission, we now welcomed them as well to hear of their impressions and experiences as the first Croatian participants in the Operation ATALANTA.

The Team was composed of superbly prepared, trained professional soldiers, proven in toughest







trainings and special forces assignments boasting the experience from the Homeland War and from international missions as well. However, they saw the participation in ATALANTA no less demanding. "It takes psychological stamina", says Commander Kontri and goes on to describe everyday operating conditions throughout the 111 days spent aboard the ship – the temperatures ranging from 35-45°C, average humidity 90%; in the monsoon season the sea is 4-5, and wind 25-35 knots; the working and living regime consisted in 3,30-h shift work, without days off and free time. They were living and storing their equipment in restrained spaces in containers, with 3 members sharing a 6 m² room. Moreover, the movement radius on the ship at all three levels was 15 m; moving from the container to the "dormitory" at all three levels – from the container to the bed; from the relay position to the dining space – no further", says SMA Belas. In addition to the ship-like living conditions, they were found in a bizarre situation shortly upon embarking, when the ship captain expelled the ship cook for disobedience, and as the shipping company was not able to recruit a new one in the short time, it was the Croatian team that took on the cooking part. "We just added meal preparation to our normal tasks and shifts", said SFC Roso.

The MSM Douro's duty was to enter the ports to load or unload the cargo. The work was carried out around the clock, without using the machines; the 100m² deck was occupied by 100 operators swarming and carrying the items, potentially the



The AVPD was sailing aboard the MSM Douro from Djibouti to the Somali ports of Berbera, Bosaso, Mogadishu and Kismayo, to Dar-es-Salaam in Tanzania and the Kenyan port of Mombasa. They were aboard the ship from 28 December 2014 to April 2015, crossing 7000 miles and transporting over 22,000 tons of food and other humanitarian supplies.

people with covert goals and intentions that had to be surveilled. In Somali ports, in compliance with the rules of engagement, for reasons of security and inconspicuousness the AVPD team members wore civilian attire and carried only small arms, well-hidden.

"It takes a lot of concentration to keep it all under control, furthermore, you are only armed with a pistol for self-defence. The rest of the armament is kept hidden aside. Of course, the situations of the kind bear a higher alert level too, and we have procedures in place to apply as the situation requires and are 100% ready".

The AVPD members are stationed aboard the merchant ships. Military ships do not enter Somali ports, and the AVPD teams are tasked with collecting the required data and photos and with sending Port Reports to the respective command following the port visits. The Croatian officers emphasised noticing illegal crossings and human trafficking instances. Lieutenant Kontri sums it up: "We have done a great job, and completed some newly assigned tasks. In recognition to their commitment they received several commendations the operation ATALANTA Medal and on top of it, were presented with the EU Common Security and Defence Policy Medal by the EU NAVFOR Commander, in March.

The main duty of the AVPD Team was to deter and protect the ship from assaults and hijacks. Equally important for the success of the mission was the teams' ability of communication, peaceful settle-

The first Croatian Autonomous Vessel Protection Detachment received several commendations from the Command, and on 4 March they were presented with the EU Common Security and Defence Policy Medal by the EU NAVFOR Commander, Rear Admiral Jonas Haggren. It was published in the official EU NAVAL FORCE SOMALIA (<http://eunavfor.eu/>) web page:

"On Wednesday 4 March 2015 the EU Naval Force Croatian maritime team, embarked on World Food Programme (WFP) vessel, MSM Douro, to protect it from pirate attack as it sailed along the Somali coast, has been awarded the Operation Atalanta medal for their outstanding efforts. The Croatian maritime team, which is known as an Autonomous Vessel Protection Detachment, or AVPD, has served with Operation Atalanta since December 2014. As a result they were eligible for the EU Common Security and Defence Policy Medal, which was presented by the Force Commander of EU Naval Force, Rear Admiral Haggren."



ment of problems, as well as their intuition and resourcefulness.

Last but not least, they had to build harmonious relations with the ship crew, characterised by mutual trust and assistance as a precondition for the normal life aboard the ship. They did not wait to be asked to help with the cargo loading or with repairs aboard. There was an imperative of striking good communication with the locals too. Lieutenant Kontri gives a deeper insight: "You have to be attentive to the communication with the with the people you meet there, without imposing yourself or standing out, earn their trust without jeopardising the Team's security. That's why we grew our beards, wore civilian clothes, approached them in a friendly manner and avoided any unnecessary tension. We were there to help them. Our medical team administered aid to the locals on two occasions. We shared our food with them – chocolates, fruit, water. A bottle of cooled water to a man who carries sacks at 45°C outside – that's a gesture he won't forget, and he spreads the good word around on kind Croats reaching out to them and helping them".

"I would like to extend appreciation to all lecturers and instructors who gave their contribution in the pre-deployment training, as well as to the Croatian Navy for the trust invested in us for this important mission for the Croatian Armed Forces", said Lieutenant Kontri. "The experience and the knowledge gained in ATALANTA will be applied to prepare the next Croatian AVPD Team".



The merchant ship MSM Douro is 109 m long, and has a 15-m beam; its largest sailing speed is 12 knots. It has an 11-member crew, and 5300-ton bearing capacity.



The milestone of 50,000 flying hours were logged on the 20 Pilatus aircraft stationed in the 93rd Croatian Air Force and Air Defence Base (at Zemunik) in early November - a major part of it was logged in regular training activities for pilot cadets and foreign pilots, and by the "Wings of Storm" Aerobatic Group. In addition, the aircraft have been used for duty periods, for Coast Guard operations and search-and-rescue interventions. The flights went smoothly, without any serious accident...



THE PILATUS PILOTS LOGGED 50,000 THE FLYING HOURS

The first three Pilatus aircraft were acquired for the Croatian Armed Forces in 1996, followed by 17 more in the course of 1997. They are now stationed in the 93rd Croatian Air Force and Air Defence Base in Zemunik, and in November 2014 logged 50,000 flying hours. It was an achievement honoured by the visit of the representatives of the Switzerland-based manufacturer – Martin Evans, Hugh McCann and Giorgio Spada.



The Pilatus aircraft has been used for regular training activities for pilot cadets and foreign pilots, and by the "Wings of Storm" Aerobatic Group. In addition, the aircraft have been used for duty periods, for the Coast Guard's activities related to the protection and monitoring of the territorial waters and the protected fishing zone and search-and-rescue interventions. The achievement is all the more significant as it has been accident-free.



Author: Lada Puljizević, photos by: Tomislav Brandt



CROATIAN MILITARY MAGAZINE

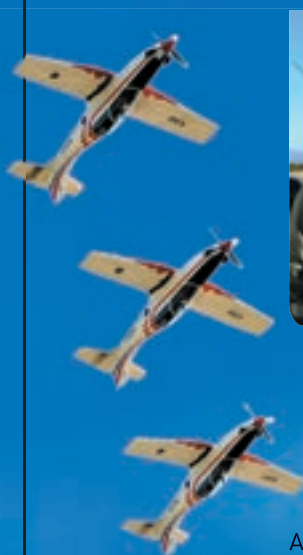
MAJOR MARIN ŽUNIĆ, CHIEF MAINTENANCE ENGINEER OF THE 93RD AIR BASE



Pilatus aircraft undergo scheduled maintenance on a daily basis, in the first level of maintenance (attending, pre-flight and post-flight inspections and minor defects rectification). Periodic inspections (150 hours or annual inspections), larger repairs, replacements of power units and maintenance of ejection seats pertain to the second level of maintenance, which is the responsibility of the Air Maintenance Battalion.

In the event of major defects unrepairable in our capacities, we turn to either the Aeronautical Technical Centre in Velika Gorica or the manufacturer itself for customer support. By doing so we have managed to maintain our aircraft's airworthiness. The Pilatus maintenance team is composed of technicians specialised for the fuselage and engines, for the electronic devices and for the inspection of ejection seats, and of the controllers for the cited specialties overseeing the maintenance.

The representative of the firm, Martin Evans, presented the Commander of the Croatian Air Force and Air Defence, Major General Dražen Ščuri with the Pilatus "50,000 Flying Hours Certificate" and a complimentary present – a bell adorned with the Swiss national symbols. He also awarded four pilots of the Fixed-Wing Squadron with the 1000 Flying Hours Certificates. It is a recognition to the Fixed-wing Squadron and to the service (the Croatian Air Force and Air Defence) itself, as the flying safety has not been compromised, and there have been no accidents, which demonstrates the high capability of the Croatian pilots and maintenance technicians alike. Commending the remarkable capability and expertise of the flight and technical staff of the service under his command, Major General Ščuri stressed that the major part of the hours was effectuated in cadet training, and that the figure involved 100,000 takings off and landings, and a long series of exercises and elements practised. The credit goes to all generations of pilots, flight instructors, commanders, and maintenance staff responsible for two levels of the aircraft maintenance, including the staff of the Aeronautical Technical Centre. The Pilatus experts repeatedly praised the maintenance works by the Croatian Air Force on their aircraft. Martin Evans of the Pilatus extended the company's congratulations to the Croatian Air Force and Air Defence and pledged continued support and excellent co-operation. The Commander of the 93rd Croatian Air Force and



MAJOR ŽELJKO HARAPIN, COMMANDER OF THE FIXED-WING SQUADRON OF THE 93RD AIR FORCE AND AIR DEFENCE BASE



The marking of the achievement of the kind belongs to the aviation culture and tradition, it is at once a symbolic and motivating recognition to the unit and its members for the efforts invested and a fact promoting the Squadron and the organisation as a whole.

The achievement is all the more important for us in this moment where the Squadron is seeking a more prominent role at the international level through pilot training programmes.

At this moment of full engagement on the task the Squadron demonstrates the capability to accomplish any assigned task and provide high-quality maintenance of the aircraft in the first and second levels, which enabled the achievement in the first place.

Air Defence Base, Lieutenant Colonel Karol Lučan expressed satisfaction over the achievement for his part too, stressing that a period equivalent to 2000 hours flying without accidents served as the best recommendation of the professional standards of the Fixed-wing Squadron's staff, who have recently been engaged in training of foreign pilots, thus proving the respect enjoyed at the international level.



CROATIAN MILITARY

THE CROATIAN DEFENCE ACADEMY IN THE ACADEMIC YEAR 2014/2015 INCEPTED TWO NEW STUDY PROGRAMMES, NAMELY MILITARY MANAGEMENT AND MILITARY ENGINEERING, TRANSFORMING THE MILITARY EDUCATION SYSTEM. THE PROGRAMMES HAVE RECEIVED A NUMBER OF ACCOLADES...



The Croatian Defence Academy "Petar Zrinski" and the University of Zagreb in the academic year 2014/2015 incepted new study programmes, titled Military Management and Military Engineering respectively. The programmes have profoundly transformed the military education system. In summer 2014 the first generation of students was enrolled, and in March 2015 the new contest has been announced. "Our objective is to educate new generations of officers with the academic merit, capabilities and skills to meet the standards of interoperability with the officers of NATO and the EU nations, which is modern military education", says the Commander of the Academy, Lieutenant General Slavko Barić. The programmes necessitated modernised teaching facilities and adequate teaching staff; the Centre for Strategic and Defence Studies was established and linked to NATO and similar national and neighbouring countries institutions to direct future development of the military education system in Croatia. Lt. Gen. Barić also announced inception of a graduate studies programme, as well as of study programmes designed for other services of the Croatian Armed Forces.



Croatian Defence Minister, Ante Kotromanović, announced the planned conversion of the Croatian Defence Academy into a Centre of Excellence, offering the region's best living and studying conditions for cadets, NCOs and officers.

The Croatian military studies programme has received a number of accolades. The Chief of the General Staff of the Croatian Armed Forces, General Drago Lovrić emphasised that the objective of the transformation of the Croatian Defence Academy was to invest into the human resources as the primary potential of the Croatian Armed Forces, and announced reception of over 400 cadets in the Academy by 2017.

The Croatian Defence Academy "Petar Zrinski" and the University of Zagreb in the academic year 2014/2015 incepted new study programmes, titled Military Management and Military Engineering respectively. The studies comprise eight semesters of both academic and military training required for commissioning. The programmes are worth 240 ECTS points.



EDUCATION MODEL

The Academy undertook wide-scale renovation works of the facilities of the Academy, refurbishing the classrooms, specialised classrooms, dormitories, which will be complemented, as announced, with a garage, a swimming pool and additional archiving space. The prospective Campus will comprise the School of Foreign Languages and the Centre for Strategic Studies, and will also offer over 5700m² sporting grounds, martial arts halls, over 30 classrooms, seven lecture halls and a number of modern specialised classrooms.



WINTER CAMP

Along with classroom time, the cadets are expected to participate in winter camps. One camp was organised for the first generation of cadets of the new military study programmes in the nearby Sljeme ski resort, where they practiced skiing techniques instructed by four kinesiologists of the Croatian Defence Academy. The cadets had to demonstrate mastering the basic skiing skills prior to the next winter camps.

REA TOMINA SKENDER, CADET

"It is an enjoyable experience for me, and I believe for other cadets too. I think we've found the right challenge here. We are carrying out our tasks in full military gear but do not complain. We wouldn't be here otherwise. There is still a lot of work and study in front of us, this is just the beginning, but I see myself as an officer of the

Croatian Armed Forces in four years' time. It is my goal and I am going to pursue".

PEKO NIKOLIĆ, A MONTENEGRIN CADET

"I come from Podgorica, Montenegro, and am the first Montenegrin cadet attending the Croatian Defence Academy – the Military Engineering Programme. In my view the programme is equal to the programmes administered by the world's most renowned military academies. I find nothing too difficult or superfluous.

The idea is to push ourselves to the limits of endurance and set them further. If you invest a lot of will and hard work, you can meet the standards and make it. The training is at the proper level, seeking more from every attendee. That is why I came here in the first place, to respond to the challenge".

CADETS TAKING THE BOOT CAMP

In addition to the academic curriculum, the cadets of the new military study programmes are obliged to take military training and learn a series of necessary routines. They attended such an activity during the boot camp in the "Gakovo" Training Range in late December. Divided into four teams the cadets were rotated at four workposts where they were taught tactics, topography, infantry weapons and first aid. Furthermore, they had to master marching with fire support, perform efficiently with the protective mask on, orienteer on a 3200-m path with 21 workposts using the compass, master safe use of rifle, make improvised stretchers and administer first aid. No fails, no drop-outs. Thumbs up from the instructors from the Cadet Battalion. The general attitude was best expressed by First Sergeant Dalibor Cug, who told the cadets "You've demonstrated being capable to do faster, stronger, more. Your will is motivating for us to do our best in our turn". Second Lieutenant Ivana Šćuri, Military Psychology Officer of the Officer School and psychologist overseeing the activities in the Range said that the Camp in Gakovo was a real opportunity to exercise co-operation, cohesion and teamwork as an essential part of the military training and growth of future officers.



During the study period at the Academy the Ministry of Defence bears the costs of the scholarships, transportation costs, board and lodging, the manuals, and provides the lodging, the use of sport facilities in the "Petar Zrinski" Barracks and provides employment following the graduation. The cadets' contractual obligations include due academic performance and attending modules such as military psychology, sociology, management and leadership, combat systems as well as military training (weapon handling, orienteering, swimming, skiing, rowing, paratrooper and flight training, communications and driving).



Our pride projects



◀ CROATIAN AIR FORCES ENGAGEMENT IN FIREFIGHTING

The 15-min film titled Croatian Air Forces Engagement in Firefighting is the newest video product by the Multimedia Department of the Public Affairs and Publishing Service of the Croatian Ministry of Defence, addressing the potentially devastating effects of fires on natural and human-made resources and the role of the Croatian air forces of the Firefighting Squadron. The video also presents the aerial firefighting system adjusted to Croatian specificities, and features the statements by the pilots with rich experience from firefighting missions, both in-country and abroad.



MULTIMEDIA DEPARTMENT



◀ THE CROATIAN DEFENCE INDUSTRY CATALOGUE

The new Croatian Defence Industry Catalogue 2015 has been published to provide a broader overview of the defence industry in Croatia. The Catalogue contains information and brief presentations of the products and the potential of as many as 56 Croatian businesses manufacturing diverse equipment for the use by the Armed Forces, ranging from the protective garments and footwear to vessels and sophisticated combat systems.

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