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20TH ANNIVERSARY
OF THE MILITARY AND
POLICE OPERATION "STORM"

**MAGNIFICENT MILITARY PARADE
DISPLAYS THE STRENGTH OF THE
CROATIAN ARMED FORCES**

PZH 2000 HOWITZERS

THE STATE-OF-THE-ART
ARTILLERY OF THE CAF

INTERNATIONAL MILITARY
OPERATIONS TRAINING
CENTRE

**BOOSTING THE KNOWLEDGE,
SELF-CONFIDENCE AND LIFE-SAVING
TECHNIQUES**

SPECIAL MILITARY POLICE COMPANY

**TRAINING INTENSIVELY
FOR THE ANAKONDA EX**

THE CROATIAN ARMED FORCES'
LARGEST PEACETIME INTER-SERVICE
EXERCISE

JOINT FORCE

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ANNIVERSARY

IT WAS A MAGNIFICENT CEREMONY, PRECEDING THE COMMEMORATION OF THE GREATEST MILITARY VICTORY OF THE HOMELAND WAR, WHICH PAID TRIBUTE TO THE VICTORY AND TO THE CROATIAN DEFENDERS, ALONG WITH THE GRATITUDE TO HAVE THIS OPPORTUNITY TO COMMEMORATE...

20TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE MILITARY AND POLICE OPERATION "STORM"

MAGNIFICENT MILITARY DISPLAYS THE STRENGTH OF THE



On the occasion of the twentieth anniversary of the Military and Police Operation "Storm", the Victory and Memorial Gratitude Day and the Croatian Defenders Day, the Croatian capital on 4 August 2015 hosted a military parade with some 3000 participants - the third military parade since the establishment of the Croatian military, the first one held in 1995 and the second in 1997.

A 5-km column composed of the various components of the Croatian Armed Forces (the motorised, mechanised, special and logistic units, the Croatian Air Force and Air Defence, Croatian Navy and others) marched through the capital of Croatia, displaying their equipment, combat and non-combat vehicles, hailed by tens of thousands of citizens who came to show their respect for the soldiers as the guarantee of their security and keepers of the peace in the world as participants of the UN-, NATO- and the EU-led operations.

The formal columns gathered the youngest members and the experienced veterans of the Homeland War - all composing the today's modern NATO military.



PARADE

THE CROATIAN ARMED FORCES

The central ceremony staged in the Ulica grada Vukovara in Zagreb was attended by the President of the Republic and the Supreme Commander of the Croatian Armed Forces, **Kolinda Grabar-Kitarović**, the Chairman of the Croatian Parliament, **Josip Leko**, the Croatian Prime Minister, **Zoran Milanović**, the members of the Croatian Government and of the Parliament, the senior civilian and military officials and the delegations from the partner countries. Prior to the ceremony itself the President had done the review of the columns, accompanied by the Defence Minister, **Ante Kotromanović** and the Chief of the General Staff of the Croatian Armed Forces, General **Drago Lovrić**.

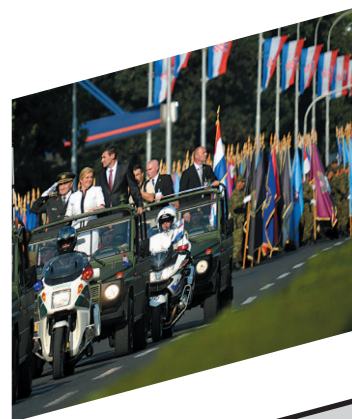


A 12-year old girl Mia Negovetić performed the Croatian national anthem, accompanied by the Croatian Navy's Vocal Ensemble "**Sveti Juraj**", the hoisting of the same national flag that was raised in the Knin Fortress twenty years ago. The flag had been brought by the cadets of the Croatian Armed Forces. The President then issued the order for the commencement of the parade and three MiGs-21 performed the flypast over the capital.

THE MARCHING COLUMNS WALKING PROUDLY THE STREETS OF THE CAPITAL

The Parade Command Column, with Rear admiral Robert Hranj and his deputies - Major General Mladen Fuzul and Major General Ivan Jurić, who did a great job organising the parade within a short time, led the parade along the route Vukovarska - Držićeva -Savska in Zagreb.

The Command Column was followed by the columns carrying flags of the Republic of Croatia, the European Union, NATO, the Ministry of Defence, the Ministry of the Interior, the General Staff of the Croatian Armed Forces, and the Column of the Banners of the War-time Units.



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During the marchpast by the Column of the Croatian Defenders of the Homeland War, six field M1-4/50 76 mm fired a 20-volley salute symbolising the 20th anniversary of the Military and Police Operation "Storm". Croatia's eventful military history was represented by the Historical Units Column. Alongside the Armed Forces, the parade featured the columns of the Ministry of the Interior, the National Protection and Rescue Directorate.

The marching columns represented the cadets, the flags of the partner countries, followed by the columns composed of the members of the legendary Croatian Army battalions - "Tigrovi", "Gromovi", "Kune", "Pauči", "Sokolovi", "Pume", "Vukovi", the Special Forces Battalion, the Croatian Navy, the Croatian Air Force and Air Defence and the Marching Column of the Military Police.

The marching columns display was followed by a flypast by the Croatian air forces and a tactical exercise.



THE FLYPAST BY THE AIR FORCES AND THE TACTICAL EXERCISE

The flying programme featured the air forces of the Croatian Air Force and Air Defence and of the Ministry of the Interior – the Bell 206B Jet Ranger III helicopters (in the low hover), the Zlin 242 L training aircraft, the Mi-171Sh helicopters, the Air Tractors AT-802 and the Canadairs CL-415. The air forces of the Ministry of the Interior displayed three helicopters of the Helicopter Unit of the Special Police Command.

The star of the programme was the "Wings of Storm" aerobatic group, which marked its tenth an-



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ENTHUSIASM ERUPTS AS THE MOTORISED AND MECHANISED COLUMNS DRIVE PAST

niversary. Flying the Pilatus PC9M aircraft, the group performed some of their breath-taking manoeuvres. Another highlight of the parade was the joint tactical exercise of the Special Forces Command and Croatian Air Force and Air Defence's Mi-8 MTV-1. In the exercise the Special Forces members performed the rappelling technique to descend from the National and University Library - the technique applied to descend buildings, helicopters and rocks. It was followed by the of the exfiltration technique known as the stick/chalk technique by the members of the Special Forces Command and of the Croatian Air Force and Air Defence. The technique is applied in search-and-rescue operations.

The display of the motorised, mechanised and armoured column of the Croatian Armed Forces was a culmination of the parade. The characteristic noise produced by the armoured vehicles and their caterpillars on the pavement accentuated the power of the Croatian military.

The multi-purpose armoured Patrias, the HMMWVs, the POLO M-83 and the M-ATV combat vehicles, the mobile coastal launchers, the cargo vehicles Iveco Eurocargo ML 140E2 4W, the field vehicle with the demining robot tEODor, the MRAP vehicles, the M84 tanks made a part of the assets of the motorised, mechanised and armoured columns. The culminating moment was reached with two self-propelled PzH 2000 155-mm Howitzers, the newest asset of the Croatian Armed Forces.



ANNIVERSARY



The motorised-mechanised-armoured columns comprised the columns of the Special Forces Command, the Guards Motorised Brigade, the Military Police Column, the Military Intelligence Column, the Air Defence Column and the NBC Defence Column. The Engineer Column, the Logistic Column, the

Signal Column, the Artillery Column and the Armoured and Mechanised Column of the Guards Armoured Mechanised Brigade also displayed their equipment.

During the marchpast by the Croatian Navy the spectators could observe the naval salute by the Naval Column of the Croatian Navy from the Brač Channel. The Ministry of the Interior and the National Protection and Rescue Directorate also displayed their motorised assets.

The crowds of spectators along the route enjoyed the unique opportunity to take photos of the Croatian Armed Forces' combat and non-combat assets. The military part of the parade was concluded by a flypast by six MiGs-21, culminating the elative atmosphere.

The admiration, V finger-signs, smiles and the emotions were seen on the faces of the spectators all along the route. It was a magnificent ceremony, preceding the commemoration of the greatest military victory of the Homeland War, which paid tribute to the victory and to the Croatian defenders, along with the gratitude for the opportunity to commemorate.



THE CELEBRATION OF FREEDOM AND TOGETHERNESS IN KNIN

The Victory and the Homeland's Gratitude Day and the Croatian Defenders Day were celebrated dignifiedly and emotionally along with the 20th Anniversary of the Military and Police Operation "Storm" in Knin on 5 August 2015, the town in whose Fortress the Croatian flag was hoisted on the same date twenty years ago, to symbolise the great achievements - by the Croatian military forces in the largest thereto liberation operation. The jubiliary ceremony of one of the major dates in the modern history of Croatia, gathered the senior state and military officials, the members of the Croatian Armed Forces and the Croatian defenders and the veterans of the Operation "Storm".

A part of the ceremony was the opening of the "Oluja" ("Storm 95") Museum in the Knin Fortress by the President of the Republic, Kolinda Grabar-Kitarović. The moment of the arrival of the Croatian military forces to Knin during the Operation was reminded by the church bell chiming, the flypast by two MiGs-21 of the Croatian Air Force and Air Defence, the performance of the Croatian national anthem and the roll-call of the 229 fallen, missing ad later deceased Croatian soldiers. The Croatian flag was hoisted in the same spot again, by the same members of the 7th Guards Brigade, Jasmin Hadžić, Mario Bilać and Edvard Baltić. In the highest spot of the Fortress the President and the late President Tuđman's son Miroslav unveiled the monument to the first Croatian President, Franjo Tuđman. It was accompanied by 20 honorary volleys and the performance of a song by the Croatian Navy's Vocal Ensemble "Sveti Juraj" (Stina pradičova) and the flying programme by the eponymic aerobatic group of the Croatian Air Force and Air Defence "Krila Oluje", established on 5 August 2005.



Author: Vesna Pintarić
Photos by: Željko Stipanović, Stjepan Brigljević



"The Croatian people celebrates its victories, not the defeats, and cherishes the freedom won in war"
said the President, Kolinda Grabar Kitarović during the central ceremony marking the Military and Police Operation "Storm"

Addressing the visitors in the Ante Starčević Square in Knin the President extended gratitude to all participants of the Operation, particularly the fallen ones. The ceremony, underlined the President, is not only the marking of the Operation Storm, it is also the celebration of togetherness and pride. The Croatian people celebrates its victories, and not the defeats, and cherishes the liberty won in war", said the President and underlined the fact to be remembered, that it was Croatia that was invaded and should not allow the equating of the victim and the aggressor. "The Operation Storm was an ethical campaign and is one of founding blocks of the modern state of Croatia, which today is a member of both NATO and the European Union" .



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THE "OLUJA '95" MUSEUM

The "Oluja '95" Museum accommodated in the Knin Fortress was formally opened by the President of the Republic Kolinda Grabar-Kitarović, who said that the nation with a history cannot be erased/annihilated, despite the attempts. The President appreciated all contributors to the Museum project - a realistic, documented and scientifically argued survey of events preceding the Croatian struggle for liberty, the Homeland War and the Military and Police Operation "Storm" and the contemporary international context.

"Dear Croatian defenders and descendants of the Croatian soldiers through the ages, dear residents of Knin, Croatians, we are the creators of our own history, which we proudly promote and interpret in the only justified way - by preserving the memory of the magnificent event. It is evident here in the Museum in the Knin Fortress as well", said the President opening the Museum.



THE UNVEILING OF THE MONUMENT TO THE FIRST CROATIAN PRESIDENT, FRANJO TUĐMAN



The monument to the first and wartime President Franjo Tuđman placed in the highest spot of the Knin Fortress was formally unveiled by the President of the Republic, Kolinda Grabar-Kitarović and the President's son, Miroslav Tuđman. The 2.30 m bronze monument commemorates the impressive moment of the modern Croatian history - 6 August 1995, when the late President Tuđman surrounded by the victorious Croatian soldiers, kissed the Croatian flag and exclaimed "We have Croatia".

The monument was transported to the spot by the Transport Helicopter Squadron, and the unveiling was accompanied by 20 honorary volleys and the performance of a song by the Croatian Navy's Vocal Ensemble "Sveti Juraj" (Stina pradiđova).

Having thoroughly considered the niches for a national contribution to NATO capability building, Croatia as a recent member has recognised its opportunity in the battlefield communications and information battlefield capabilities.

Our motive in this regard was the possibility for NATO funding of the facility for permanent accommodation of the unit and of the state-of-the-art computer and communications systems equipment for the operational and strategic level command. The biggest benefit of the establishment of a DCM for the Croatian Armed Forces is and will be the investment into the acquisition of knowledge, skills and experience of the CIS officers and NCOs...



THE CROATIAN NATIONAL DEPLOYABLE COMMUNICATIONS TO BE INTEGRATED

In late March 2014 we attended one of the events marking the 5th anniversary of the entry to NATO in late March 2014 – the ceremony of handover of the NATO DCM flag to Lt. Col. Eduard Špoljarić (later promoted to the rank of Colonel), the Head of the Signal Regiment, in the presence of the SACT, General Jean Paul Palomeros and the Chief of the General Staff of the Croatian Armed Forces, General Drago Lovrić. The Croatian Deployable Communications Module will be integrated into the NATO Force Structure. We spoke to Colonel Jasenko Krovinović, the Communications and Information Systems Directorate of the General Staff of the Croatian Armed Forces who is responsible for the project, to find out more about the unique unit.

What can be said about the Deployable Communications Module and its role to a greater detail?

In order to present the concept and the role of DCM I would like to underline a few characteristics of the Module. The Deployable Communications Module is a modular unit established as an exemplary component of NCIS (NATO CIS Group) as a part of the NATO Command Structure. It is presently commanded by Major General Thomas Franz (DEU) and composed of three battalions, each comprising six DCM units.



Translated in figures, each DCM is composed of 56 active duty personnel, commanded by an officer and manned by personnel of at least NCO rank. Of these, 48 are signal posts, and the rest are logistic. The unit manning request with NCOs clearly stating the military occupational specialty indicates the high level of expertise and experience required for the unit. Each DCM, fully manned and equipped, trained and prepared is assigned with establishment, maintenance and management of communications and information systems of NATO's deployable commands (maximum 250 members) in the theatre of operations, missions or military exercises.. Some of the DCMs are destined for NATO operations solely, while others, and among them the Croatian DCM, can be dispatched to national operations, such as military exercises, planning activities or disasters relief operations. The possible engagement of the Croatian DCM in the national planning activities is regulated by the Memorandum of Understanding. In simpler terms, DCM is a company-sized task force, manned by a single nation, stationed, equipped



Author: Domagoj Vlahović
Photos by Tomislav Brandt

comodation facility built by NATO and equipped with to-date computer and communications systems in support to command at the operational and strategic levels - which was also an useful asset.

Although it has been confirmed that NATO would fund the construction of an accomodation and working facility for the HRV DCM worth over 3.5 mil EUR, through a Croatian construction contractor, the biggest value in establishing a DCM will consist in the opportunity for the Croatian Armed Forces's CIS NCOs and officers to acquire knowledge, skills and experience.

The Croatian Ministry of Defence will allocate <2 mil kuna (cca 265,832 EUR) annually for the purposes of training and practice of the DCM operators in NATO-led operations, while NATO's expenses in locating, equipping, training, practice and deployment will exceed 80 mil HRK (10.633,283 EUR within the next decade. The national 20- mil HRK investment will therefore bring us 10.633,283 EUR from

MODULE



INTO THE NATO FORCE STRUCTURE

and trained by NATO and assigned with providing CIS support to main field commands within NATO and NATO-led operations. In certain cases DCM are deployable for national purposes. The DCMs Command is a responsibility of NATO CIS Group Commander, in line with his OPCOM.

What was the Croatia's motive to apply for DCM? Do all NATO nations participate in DCM?

This question is probably the most important. Having thoroughly considered the the options of a national contribution to NATO capability building, the Republic of Croatia as a recent NATO member recognised its opportunity in this regard in the building of CIS battlefield capabilities. At the moment when Croatia prepared its application NATO CIS Group had one vacant DCM. Others had been established by the United Kingdom, Germany, Denmark, Italy, the United States, Romania, Bulgaria, Poland, the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Hungary, Lithuania and Turkey. The project entailed the possibility of having a ac-

The Plan envisages Initial Operational capability achieved by the end of 2015, as a pre-condition for Full Operational Capability by late 2017

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the Alliance to build operational CIS capabilities; and through 3-year rotations of the DCM personnel and the participation in NATO-led operations the Croatian Armed Forces will have over 100 highly trained and expert CIS NCOs and officers. The acquired knowledge and experience in a demanding international environment will then be passed on to the national users. You will agree that it is a highly valuable investment.

Could you elaborate the term "deployable" in the DCM; where and how would the unit be deployed to if need arises?

The term "deployable" denotes the unit's ability to be dispatched to any location worldwide within a short period of time, where it will provide CIS services and support. The cost of the deployment is a NATO responsibility. Based on that model and in accordance with the nationally accepted NATO capability targets we developed the concept of deployable Croatian Armed Forces signal unit capability for field command support.

What is the composition of the Control Group and the national DCM Set-up Project Team?

As you are familiar with, the Minister of Defence issued the respective Decision and upon the approval of the Croatian application by the North Atlantic Council, the Control Group and the Project Team were established. The Control Group was headed by the Assistant Minister for Defence Policy, Zoran Drča and its members were Rear admiral Robert Hranj, the Director of the General Staff of the Croatian Armed Forces, Major General Mladen Fuzul, Deputy Commander of the Army, Colonel Stanko Čavar, Mrs Đurđa Hunjet and me, while the Project Team comprised three working groups – a Group responsible for legal matters, primarily the contracts between the Republic of Croatia and its Ministry of Defence and NATO, which is headed by Mrs Marina Jurić Matejčić of the Legal and Administrative Sector of the Ministry of Defence. The other group, headed by Slaven Jašić was responsible for the infrastructure and the third, headed by Colonel Eduard Špoljarić, was tasked with training and manning of the unit. I definitely have to commend the contributions by Ms Rubčić, Colonel Tubić, Lieutenant Colonel Čular, Lieutenant Colonel Zorić and the Commander of the HRV DCM, Captain Mario Lukežić.

Are there any other formal and legal agreements to be concluded between the Republic of Croatia and NATO regarding the DCM?

So far, the Memorandum of Understanding has been agreed between SHAPE and the Croatian Ministry of Defence to enable normal functioning of the HRV DCM with the national resources. Furthermore, an Agreement on Garrison Support is to be signed soon, based on which the Croatian Armed Forces and NATO will provide administrative and logistic support to the national DCM in the respective barracks. Once approved and signed, the Agreement on Garrison Support will require the drafting of four operational documents, namely the Local Administrative Agreement, the Agreement on Protection and Security of Forces, the Joint Coordination Group for Garrison Support Job Description and the Security Board for Garrison Support Job Description: In addition to these agreements, we still need to co-ordinate the Annex to Paris Protocol on the legal status and commodities/services relieved from taxes (VAT) among the various departments as the Protocol falls within the responsibilities of several ministries. I have to underline that the Annex to the Protocol applies not only to the DCM but to all other NATO units and commands likely to sojourn in the territory of the Republic of Croatia for extended periods.



Along with the national investment totalling 20 mil kuna (cca 2.631,578 EUR), we shall receive 80 mil kuna (10.633,283 EUR) from the Alliance to build operational CIS capabilities; and through 3-year rotations of the DCM personnel and the participation in NATO-led operations the Croatian Armed Forces will have over 100 highly trained and expert CIS NCOs and officers.

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Full operational capability is expected by late 2017. What are the prospects at the moment?

So far everything is going as planned. The commanders of the services of the Croatian Armed Forces (the DCM is manned from all three services) and the employees of the General Staff's directorates in charge of personnel and training have contributed a lot to the set up of a DCM. Some project problems and shortfalls that occurred during that phase caused delays in construction, but were resolved, the credit for which goes to the members of the DCM Set up Project Team as well as other key personnel of the Ministry and the Croatian Armed Forces. The Plan envisages Initial Operational capability achieved by the end of 2015, as a pre-condition for full operational capability by late 2017. Based on the information we receive from the NATO CIS Group, the FOC achievement timeline will be coordinated with the unit equipment plan, which is a responsibility of NATO CIS Agency. Anyway, the successful fulfilment of the training objectives in the forthcoming NATO exercises will constitute the main criteria for the IOC and FOC of the HRV DCM. The Republic of Croatia will fulfill its national obligations.

What special technical assets and the infrastructure are required for the HRV DCM?

Speaking of the requirements for the functioning of the HRV DCM, it has to be underlined that the rules are strict but are also clear and well-defined. NATO DCM facility has to be detached from the rest of the barracks and implement technical and physical



The main officials of the NATO CIS Battalion and the NATO CIS Group expressed satisfaction over the selection of DCM personnel, as well as over the training and practice demonstrated so far.

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protection requirements in order to meet the set standards. I need to stress here that the cost of the construction of the facility will be entirely covered by NATO. As I mentioned earlier, the cost totals some 3.5 mil HRK (cca 464,834 EUR). The Croatian Armed Forces have assumed the responsibility to arrange interim accommodation for DCM, which will enter the Croatian Army inventory once the new or NATO facility is built.

What funding arrangement is in place between the Republic of Croatia and NATO?

The new facility for the HRV DCM will entirely be funded by NATO, which is exempt from the VAT. For the rest of the expenses, the Republic of Croatia as Host Nation is responsible for the salaries, per diems and accommodation expenses, in line with the national legislation. NATO is responsible for the equipping of the national DCM with signal equipment and other necessary resources. For daily operation purposes NATO will cover the fees for the necessary courses and training programmes that are not administered for national purposes. The distribution of the daily operation expenses with respect to utilities (running water, heating, electricity) is still to be defined by implementation agreements and other documents following the signature of the Agreement on Garrison Support.

What is the profile of the personnel in the Croatian company?

The organisation was defined by the NATO CIS Group, with minor oscillations allowed. The overall structure comprises 56 members, and the rank

composition of the HRV DCM is two officers and 54 NCOs. The original proposal from the NCISG however stated one officer and 55 NCOs. As the majority of the nations did, Croatia also decided to convert the deputy commander post from NCO into an officer post. All members have to have minimally STANAG 2222. Other preferred skills depend on the individual posts within the structure, it may be truck driving skills, and to put it humorously, we may end with having a soldier, an IT expert and a driver in a single person, but it does reflect the demanding nature of the project. Furthermore, the main officials of the NATO CIS Battalion and the NATO CIS Group expressed satisfaction over the selection of DCM personnel, as well as over the training and practice demonstrated so far. The members of the HRV DCM are highly motivated, responsible and expert individuals, who are expected to demonstrate their competence in NATO-led operations but also to pass their knowledge and their prospective experience on to their home units or other CIS elements of the Croatian Armed Forces upon their deployment.

In view of the required IOC, is DCM already operational and in what way?

The IOC in the case of the DCM implies a defined number of personnel trained for autonomous operating in the theatres of operation. The personnel has been trained mostly in the NATO CIS School in Latina, Italy, and underwent some training and courses in their own units. Bearing in mind that HRV DCM is of recent date, and we had a number of members to train, we arranged the instructors come over to Croatia to minimise the training expenses. Upon completion of the training the personnel have been sent to take part in NATO exercises (either individually or in teams) to test the acquired skills. Based on the demonstrated skills and knowledge the DCM Commander determines the readiness of individual members for the deployment in the theatre of operations. As we have over the past period completed individual training of the members of the HRV DCM F, many of whom have performed successfully in the exercises, it has been decided to send some of the members to Resolute Support Mission in Afghanistan within the next calendar year. The deployment of the HRV DCM F members in the operations can be considered as the IOC.

Any other thing that You would like to say in conclusion?

I would take the opportunity to extend appreciation to the Chief of the General Staff of the Croatian Armed Forces, General Drago Lovrić and the Defence Minister, Ante Kotromanović for the wholehearted support to the implementation of the HRV DCM F, their communication of the Croatian official application for DCM before the NATO officials as well as the support and understanding in the past two years of the DCM project implementation.



CROATIAN ARMED FORCES

JOINT



Author: Petra Kostanjšak, Photos by: Tomislav Brandt, Josip Kopi

CROATIAN MILITARY MAGAZINE

"The Operation Joint Force is the largest exercise of the Croatian Armed Forces conducted in peacetime. "We have today demonstrated the Croatian soldiers integrating all abilities and capable of defending the territory of the Republic of Croatia. We are developing a new integrated battle doctrine of the Croatian Armed Forces and a new military strategy, and the Exercise served to test the capabilities" stated the Chief of the General Staff, General Drago Lovrić following the Exercise, which involved over 1000 participants representing the entire Croatian Armed Forces...

FORCE

THE CROATIAN ARMED FORCES' LARGEST
PEACETIME INTER-SERVICE EXERCISE

CROATIAN ARMED FORCES



The "Eugen Kvaternik" Training Range near Slunj on 6 October 2015 hosted the "Joint Force" exercise – a live-fire demonstration exercise, and the largest one conducted by the Croatian Armed Forces since the Homeland War. The Exercise involved over 1000 members, representing all units of the Croatian Armed Forces (630 in the exercise itself, 398 in support and 28 in the Exercise Headquarters). Furthermore, it has been the first four-dimension exercise undertaken – on land, sea, air and in cyber space. The Exercise was designed and conducted by the General Staff and its directly subordinated units, alongside the Croatian Army, Air Force and Navy units, logistic units and special forces.

The objective was to demonstrate the Croatian Armed Forces' integrated capabilities and the new systems and equipment successfully introduced into operational use.

The Defence Minister Ante Kotromanović extended congratulations to the Exercise organisers and participants lined up upon its completion. Recalling the adverse conditions in which the Exercise was conducted, the Minister said: "We intended to



demonstrate at this point that the Croatian Armed Forces are fully prepared to perform their duties in accordance with the Constitution, as much as they are ready to take part in the missions conducted worldwide". The Chief of the General Staff of the Croatian Armed Forces, General Drago Lovrić emphasised the Exercise was the Joint Forces was the largest exercise of the Croatian Armed Forces conducted in the peacetime period. "We have today demonstrated the Croatian soldiers integrating all capabilities and prepared to defend the territory of the Republic of Croatia. The new integrated battle doctrine of the Croatian Armed Forces and a new military strategy are being drafted, and the Exercise served to test the possibilities", said the Chief of the General Staff, General Lovrić. General underlined the role of the Navy in the Exercise. The video of the practice in the Naval Range Dugi Otok was displayed on the monitors. "The presented was an integrated operation of the RBS-15 missiles and the artillery at sea, demonstrating the capability of the Croatian Navy, along with its Coast Guard functions – namely migrant rescue and counter-



THE OBJECTIVE OF THE EXERCISE "JOINT FORCE"

The objective was to demonstrate the capabilities of the Croatian Armed Forces and the effective introduction of new systems and equipment into operational use, to test the interoperability at the Armed Forces level and the capability of complex live-fire joint exercises. The Exercise was also designed to display the readiness and the ability to effectively implement the assigned tasks – the defence of the territorial integrity, sovereignty and independence of the Republic of Croatia and its allies and the contribution to the international security.

piracy operations, to conduct combat operations in the protection the Croatian territory and to destroy any sea and land targets at up to 80-km distance" concluded General Lovrić. The Exercise Director, Colonel Ivica Matanović expressed satisfaction over the performance and commended the effort and the competence of the General Staff and the Croatian Armed Forces members in charge of the exercise. The participants were: the battle group of the mechanised infantry, reinforced with a MRLS battery, a tank platoon, a M-ATV vehicle platoon, a 82-mm mortar platoon, two missile boats, two MiG-21 aircraft, the Mi-8 transport helicopters and the Mi-171Sh multi-purpose helicopters; a component of the Special Forces Command, a Military Police platoon, a cyber team composed of the members of the CIS Directorate and CIS Division, as well as a movement control team and the fuel handling squad of the Support Command. The Exercise was kicked off by the protection of the communications and information systems from a cyber attack by the adversary force, and continued by MIGs engaging the land communication centre. The Special forces



launched a direct attack on high-value targets, supported by two Mi-171Sh helicopter. The artillery elements (the 82-mm and the 120-mm mortars, the Howitzers and MLRS) were assigned with the artillery support to the attack throughout the Exercise. The M-ATV platoon and the forward security force demonstrated the forward security force and fictional attack by the adversary and the response by the forward security force, followed by the attack by the mechanised forces and the breakout of the forward end of the adversary's defence. The Mi-171Sh helicopter conducted aerial evacuation of the wounded, transported in a medical Patria vehicle to the helipad. The mechanised forces seized key targets and continued the attack supported by mortars and Howitzers and reserve forces (engaged along the flank), against the adversary forces in retreat. The Military Police platoon secured the movement through the passage points. The naval component featured firing from RBS-15B against a sea target and naval artillery (57-mm and 30-mm guns) from two missile boats.

Upon the completion of the Exercise, the visitors toured the Exercise Headquarters.

EXERCISE SCENARIO

The Exercise followed a fictional scenario unfolded in the territory of the Republic of Croatia. The Adversary Alliance Forces committed aggression on the Republic of Croatia in order to seize, occupy and annex the territory and maritime property along the line island Rab - Senj - Plaški - Slunj - Cetingrad.

The first phase involved a planned territory cutoff, the seizing of central Dalmatia as the main objective of the adversary, who fulfilled his initial objective by taking control of the territory and reaching the line Cetingrad - Slunj - Udbina - Sveti Rok - Starigrad Paklenica - Žegar - Gračac - Lička Kaldrma fulfilled its initial objective. Reaching subsequently the Adriatic Coast in the vicinity of Starigrad Paklenica it enabled further attack operations along the Route 1 Knin-Split and Route 2 - Starigrad Paklenica - Zadar and Korenica - Slunj. Following the first phase the adversary alliance consolidated and reorganised the forces, and conducted hasty defence in the northern part of the temporarily occupied area of the Republic of Croatia (in the Karlovac County).

To the south the naval forces were preparing for the attack along the line Central Adriatic aquatorium - the island of Dugi Otok - Zadar.

In the temporarily occupied area of the Karlovac County the adversary aims to fortify the defensive line Cetingrad - Slunj - Plitvička jezera to prepare the ground for further attack operations.

The 3rd Operations Group in the Joint Forces Operation 15 will launch an attack campaign on 6 October 2015 to seize the attack objects in the assigned area of operation and cutting the supply route in the central Adriatic.

The Operation comprised three phases:

- PHASE 1** - defence with the contacting forces, the remainder of forces to develop the conditions for the attack on land, sea and air.
- PHASE 2** - concentrate the combat power elements to defeat the adversary forces and reach the area of Rakovica - Korenica - Donji Lapac; clean the seized area and develop the conditions for the continuation
- PHASE 3** - put the assigned operation area under control; establish full control over key infrastructure and support the civilian authorities





TRAINING UNIT

CROATIAN ARMY

- Mechanised Infantry Battle Group
- Tigrovi Mechanised Battalion,
- the Vukovi Motorised Battalion's platoon(M-ATV vehicles)
- the 122-mm D-30 Howitzer battery of the Artillery and Missile Battalion/GMtBrigade
- the 1222-mm GRAD MLRS Battery
- Engineer Platoon of the Engineer Regiment / GMtBrigade
- RBC Reconnaissance Team, GMtBrigade
- the Forward Air Controllers Team, GmtBrigade
- the Long-range Recon Team, Intelligence Division,
- the Logistic Company, Support Command,
- the Tank Company, of the Tank Battalion, GMechBrigade

CROATIAN NAVY

- "Kralj Petar Krešimir IV" Missile Boat RTOP-11
- "Kralj Dmitar Zvonimir" Missile Boat -12

CROATIAN AIR FORCE AND AIR DEFENCE

- two MiG-21 fighter aircraft
- two Mi-171Sh multi-purpose helicopters
- two Mi-8 transport helicopters

SUPPORT COMMAND

- Movement Control Group
- Fuel Handling Squad

SPECIAL FORCES COMMAND

- Special Operations Training Unit - L

INTELLIGENCE DIVISION (SOD)

- Electronic Reconnaissance Platoon

MILITARY POLICE REGIMENT

- Military Police Platoon

CIS DIRECTORATE OF THE GENERAL STAFF (UZZKS) AND CIS DIVISION

- Cyber Defence Team





CROATIAN NAVY

The live-fire testing of the RBS 15 missile system - a major activity of the Croatian Navy in the 2015 calendar - was conducted in the central Adriatic aquatorium on 14 May. The missile was fired from the coastal missile battery RB 1, hitting and destroying the target. It was one of the Croatian Navy's major activities for the year 2015, and was conducted to test the system reliability and functionality, to base the decision on the overhaul in order to extend its lifetime...

The RBS 15 live-fire field evaluation, a major activity of the Croatian Navy in the 2015 calendar, took place in the central Adriatic aquatorium on 14 May. The firing was conducted to test the weapon's reliability and functionality to base the decision on the overhaul in order to extend its lifetime.

The missile was fired from the coastal missile battery RB1, hitting and destroying the target, which precluded the need to launch another missile. The RB1 Crew, commanded by 1st Lieutenant Dražen

Kalebić, of the Surface Operation Battery of the Navy Flotilla, conducted the mission impeccably, destroying the target and precluding the need to launch another missile.

Senior government and military officials, alongside the members of the expert commission and the members of the firms contracted to test the RBSB components observed the firing from the coastal surveillance radar station at Vela Straža which offered a good view of the target.

The Defence Minister, Ante Kotromanović stated on the occasion that the Croatian Ministry of Defence was determined to maintain the RBS-15 capability as a deterrent from maritime threats and planned to renew the system to enable the Croatian Navy retain the continuity and the traditional naval capabilities in this transition period, as the Long-term Development Plan of the Croatian Armed Forces envisaged a procurement of a new anti-ship missile system in the year 2020.



A SUCCESSFUL LIVE-FIRE RBS-15B TEST



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

CROATIAN MILITARY MAGAZINE



The RBS-15B is a long-range missile for engaging ships of the 200 – 15,000 t class. It enables attacks beyond the range of the opponent's offensive systems, and well beyond the target's radar horizon and flies at a 90° angle. The system has short operating interval from target discrimination to missile launch, and a high hit probability and a highly efficient warhead. The missile is propelled by a turbojet engine and ejected by two booster motors that separate from the chassis within seconds. The missile guidance and control unit consists of an inertial measurement unit, a GPS receiver, a radioaltimeter and a high Ku-band active radar target seeker with jittered PRF and frequency agility. The GPS receiver and the radioaltimeter lead the missile along a calculated trajectory, followed by the target area search by the radar seeker, as defined on the launch platform prior to the launch itself. Upon target detection and impact the radar seeker takes over the lead of the missile and the warhead is activated until the target is destroyed. In the event of heavy jamming the guidance unit switches to autonomous guidance and homes the missile on the jamming source.

The Chief of the General Staff, General Drago Lovrić emphasised the first firing of the missile from the battery, enhancing the capabilities of the Croatian Armed Forces to protect the Adriatic Sea in its entirety. "The missiles easily hit and destroy any target at 80 km distance. It makes us highly proud that the system maintenance, the overhaul and operation have been effectuated entirely by the Croatian soldiers".

The Croatian Navy Commander Commodore Predrag Stipanović stated the RBS-15 firing was a major event for the Croatian Navy, which demonstrated the capability has been retained after the 21-year period. Commodore Stipanović himself commanded the "Šibenik" missile boat at the time of the first firing event in 1994.

The Director of the General Staff, Rear admiral Robert Hranj said the firing crowned the years-long efforts invested to upgrade the capabilities. "Today's firing has demonstrated the Croatian Armed Forces' maintenance and overhaul capabilities as well. It also demonstrated that the Croatian Navy has retained the RBSB missile use capability as a powerful deterrence tool". R Adm Hranj announced the overhaul of the system, Navy crews training and missile launch practice".

The RBS -15 firing was last conducted 21 years ago, from the "Kralj Petar Krešimir IV" and "Šibenik" missile boats within the inter-service Exercise "Posejdon 94" of the Croatian Navy and the Air Force and Air Defence. The system has since been maintained at the intermediate level, parallelly with the talks with the Swedish manufacturer to upgrade the maintenance and the overhaul of the system.

The target was a navigating object at the 25-km distance from the Lopad point, from which the firing was executed. It was made of floating pontoons combined with empty containers, 10-m high and 35-m wide

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FOTO: Josip Kevrić

MAIN TACTICAL AND TECHNICAL CHARACTERISTICS

Maximum firing range	80 km
Minimal firing range	12 km
Flight altitude	300 m / 100 m / 20 m
Maximum speed	>0.8 Mach
Target acquisition under the angle	up to ±90°
Missile length	4,35 m
Fuselage diameter	0,5 m
Wingspan	1,40 m
Wingspan (folded)	0,8 m
Container mass	780 kg

MISSILE BATTERY:

Armament	four RBS - 15B anti-ship missiles
Range	min12/max 80 km
Crew	2 officers, 2 NCOs
Maximum speed	80 km/h
Height	4 m
Maximum weight with s b/k	16500 kg
Width	2.5 m
Length	10 m

After the expiration of the missile's specified overhaul period in 2002, the decision was made to temporarily ban its operational use.

The year 2014 saw the decision on the extended lifetime of the missiles, followed by laboratory testing of single components, subsystems and launchers. The tests and repairs of single parts were continued into 2015, when they were concluded with the decision of the Expert Group (dated 27 April) certifying the readiness of the four missiles.

The RBS missile lifetime extension, including the testing, constitutes a modernisation and equipping project for the Croatian Navy, in accordance with the current Long-term Development Plan of the Croatian Armed Forces (in the period 2015 – 2024), whereby the lifetime for twenty missiles would be extended in three years.

The RBS-15B system has been in the operational use of the Croatian Navy since 1992, in the custody of the Missile Maintenance Coy in the Žrnovnica Base. Along with regular maintenance and testing works, the missile launch platform crews mastered the missile operating and launching procedures.



"ANDRIJA MOHOROVIČIĆ" - THE CROATIAN CONTRIBUTION TO

The Training Ship "Andrija Mohorovičić" will assist the Italian authorities control maritime border and rescue the migrants in the Mediterranean Sea till late October. The ship's crew is composed of 49 members of the Croatian Coast Guard, of an additional medical team and five members of the Ministry of the Interior's Border Police. "The Croatian soldiers are prepared to operate worldwide and to contribute to peace and stability, taking part in operations such as Triton in the Mediterranean. This is a mission of exceptional importance" said the Chief of the General Staff of the Croatian Armed Forces, General Drago Lovrić at the send-off ceremony...



The Croatian Navy's "Andrija Mohorovičić" Training Ship on 30 July left the Lora Navy Port in Split to take part in the EU-led Operation Triton in the Mediterranean, assisting the Italian authorities in maritime border control and in rescuing the migrants till late October. The ship's crew is composed of 49 members of the Croatian Coast Guard, of a medical team and five members of the Ministry of the Interior's Border Police. Prior to the departure the crew conducted a successful integration exercise demonstrating the readiness for the Operation in accordance with the operation plan and the rules of engagement.

ANDRIJA MOHOROVIČIĆ TRAINING SHIP

The Moma-class "Andrija Mohorovičić" was built in the Stocznia Północna Shipyard in Gdańsk, Poland. It has been in the operational service since 1972, and in the Croatian Navy since 1991 respectively. The **length is 73.3 m**, the **beam 10.8 m** and the **draught 3.9 m**. The standard displacement is **1260 t** and full **1538 t** respectively, and the speed is **17 knots**. The ship is armed with two 20-mm anti-aircraft guns.

Authors: Petra Kostanjšak, Maja Sirišćević, Photos by: Tomislav Brandt, Stjepan Brigljević

CROATIAN MILITARY MAGAZINE

The send-off ceremony was attended by distinguished visitors, who were welcomed by the Croatian Contingent Commander, Lieutenant Commander Vlado Zoko and the Croatian Navy Commander, Commodore Predrag Stipanović. Cdre Stipanović said: "Through participation in international operations as staff officers, UN observers or members of the first Croatian AVPD team the Croatian Navy members have gained valuable experience to use in the specific and demanding duty in the Triton Operation. Although not a classical military operation, it requires specific knowledge, capabilities and skills to deal with the challenges of the maritime operation. In the situations you will come across act humanly, and provide refuge aboard "Andrija Mohorovičić" for those in need. Dedicate your knowledge and skills for the humane cause".

FRONTEx

Frontex is a European agency responsible for co-ordination of the technical assets (ships, helicopters and vessels) and specialised border teams to assist the EU nations faced with increased migration. In 2014 the Agency coordinated a series of maritime operations conducted in Spain, Italy and Greece, and was also engaged along the land borders of Bulgaria, Greece, Hungary, Romania, Poland and Slovakia and in the European international airports. It relies on the EU nations' assets and subsequently reimburses them the fuel and basic maintenance costs.

"TRITON"



OPERATION "TRITON"

LIEUTENANT STJEPAN GILJEVIĆ,
THE "ANDRIJA MOHOROVIČIĆ" SHIP COMMANDER



"The participation in the Triton Operation is the first and historic deployment of a Croatian Navy ship. I am highly satisfied with the crew's readiness, motivation and the commitment. The demonstration exercise was realistic and the incidents

processed supported the Operation. The crew has attained the required co-operability level and will complete the tasks efficiently, as demonstrated", said Lieutenant Giljević, who passed the exam for the Ship commander.



The “Andrija Mohorovičić” crew rescued over 800 migrants in August

On 2 August, the very next day from the mission commencement the ship's crew rescued 37 migrants, and in the ensuing joint rescuing operations the lives of 800 more migrants were saved in the area operations



otic situations efficiently and in a disciplined and responsible manner." The Defence Minister Ante Kotromanović expressed support to the crew: "This is your first mission but it will not be the last mission for the Croatian Navy. We have launched important projects for future capabilities of the Coast Guard and the Croatian Navy – the new patrol boats and missile capabilities and will invest due effort in the following years. The Schengen Agreement will impose new capabilities, capacities and experience, such as the Operation Triton, aimed at developing the capabilities for autonomous control of the borders and waters and the protection of the national interests. The participation in Triton is a great initial experience in that regard".

The Chief of the General Staff stated that it was an important day for the Croatian Navy and the Croatian Armed Forces. "The Navy ship engaged off the Croatian territorial waters, in a demanding humanitarian operation in the Mediterranean. The Croatian military and the Croatian soldiers have proven their humanity during the Operation Storm twenty years ago saving Bihać from the imminent genocide, and today they are competent participants of international humanitarian missions and operations such as "Triton". The Croatian Armed Forces expect you to carry out the mission to the pride of the Croatian Navy and the Republic of Croatia. I am convinced that the "Andrija Mohorovičić" crew is well-prepared and that it will respond to any cha-

PRE-OPERATION CREW PRACTICE

A total of 49 members of the Croatian Coast Guard, a medical team and five members of the Ministry of the Interior (the Border Police) took the final integration exercise prior to the deployment in Triton. The exercise was conducted in the Sv. Nikola Barracks in Split and in the Split and Hvar aquatoria on 13 and 14 July 2015 and entailed the final evaluation of the crew's readiness, including a hands-on tactical exercise for the ship commander (Lieutenant Stjepan Giljević). The Exercise scenario was tailored to test the required capabilities, and depicted the operation-specific tasks such as the EU maritime border control, tracking the movement of ships and aircraft, transshipment, the inspection of suspect vessels and processing of migrants.

Following the final evaluation and the exercise the Head of the General Staff Evaluator Team, Colonel Mijo Kožić stated that the evaluation demonstrated the participants' preparedness and trainedness to carry out reception, transshipment and rescue of the immigrants from vessels or from the sea and administering first aid on a 24/7 basis and under aggravated navigational conditions with sea up to 5. "The crew is familiarised with the operation plans, the search-and-rescue at sea and the medical evacuation procedures, as well as with the ship self-protection from unpredictable threats and combat resistance", asserted Col. Kožić.

TRITON TRITON TRITON TRITON TRITON TRITON TRITON



SAVING HUMAN LIVES – THE MAIN PRIORITY

Frontex launched the "Triton" Operation on 1 November 2014. Although the Operation is focussed on the maritime border control, saving human lives is the absolute priority. The latest statistics reveal 499 cases of illegal migrations with a total of 70,178 persons, mostly from Eritrea, Somalia and other sub-Saharan and west African countries. The Triton objective is to implement co-ordinated activities along the outer EU borders in mid-Mediterranean in order to control irregular migrations and cope with cross-border crime. The Operation participants – the 26 European Union members plus the Croatian crew – assist the Italian authorities control maritime borders and conduct search-and-rescue and humanitarian assistance operations. The 2014 Operation budget totals 38 mil EUR. It has been enhanced in view of its importance, and is planned to last by late 2015.

In mid summer the Operation engaged four aircraft, six off-shore patrol vessels, 12 patrol vessels and two helicopters, nine debriefing teams and six screening teams. The operations area comprises Italian territorial waters and parts of the Italian and Maltese search-and-rescue zones, but on a number of occasions the vessels and aircraft were directed to assist the migrants off the area. The enhanced operation area was expanded to 138 nm to the south of Sicily. The Operation command is vested into the Italian Ministry of the Interior, working closely with the Italian Coast Guard and the Financial Police (Guardia di Finanza).



The air fleet of the Fighter Aircraft Squadron has been complete since the last aircraft arrived from the overhaul in Ukraine in mid-July. After protecting the airspace with a reduced fleet and guaranteed its security and the security of the people, the task will now be much easier. The Squadron will be able to dedicate itself to various training programmes, will log more flying hours and train new fighter pilots. "The larger fleet means greater reliability and greater system redundancy", says Lieutenant Colonel Željko Ninić. The air guard pair on-duty can now count on an additional aircraft ready to take off at any moment.

Lt. Col. Ninić assumed the command of the Squadron in the last year of the MiGs lifecycle "the Squadron was faced with a situation characterised by the exhaustion of the previous overhaul and the contracting of the new repair works. We had to handle the situation wisely to preserve the existing capabilities, the unit's combat readiness and the pilot staff, who had to maintain the required level of practice. Even in such conditions the continuity of airspace protection was not jeopardised, and I am proud of the Squadron's pilots and technicians", said Lt.Col. Ninić.

THE FLEET OF THE FIGHTER AIRCRAFT SQUADRON NOW COMPLETE WILL ENABLE THE PILOTS TO LOG MORE FLYING HOURS AND DEDICATE THEMSELVES TO VARIOUS PILOT TRAINING PROGRAMMES IN ADDITION TO THE AIRSPACE PROTECTION. AS UNDERLINED BY THE SQUADRON COMMANDER "THE JOB OF THE FIGHTER AIRCRAFT PILOT IS A POSITIVE ADDICTION, PRESENT FOR 24 HOURS, 7 DAYS A WEEK" AND EVERY PILOT WANTS TO FLY A GREATER NUMBER OF HOURS. THE COMPLETE FLEET ON THE APRON – A SIGHT TO SEE!

**FIGHTER AIRCRAFT
SQUADRON OF THE
91ST CROATIAN AIR
FORCE AND AIR
DEFENCE BASE**

MIIG

ASSF



Author: Leida Parlov, Photos: Tomislav Brandt

CROATIAN MILITARY MAGAZINE

The Fighter Aircraft Squadron is composed of the pilots and the air technicians. The pilots are assigned into three flying platoons and the Air Maintenance Company. The Squadron is primarily assigned with the protection of the airspace of the Republic of Croatia, and provides support to the Croatian Army and the Croatian Navy in operations engaging sea and air targets.

AIR GUARD PAIR ON DUTY

Air Policing is a daily peacetime task for the Squadron, which in the event of war would be converted into Air Defence. The task is a responsibility of the air guard pair on duty, expected to take off in the shortest of terms to interdict suspect targets, identify them and the mission. The Republic of Croatia having joined NATO Integrated Air and Missile Defence System), the operational authority over the assigned forces is transferred from the national

level to NATO, whereby the overall combat capabilities are upgraded. NATO Combined Air Operations Centre South located in Spain is responsible for the Croatian air space as well. It should be noted that the air guard pair on duty is not authorised to take off without the order from the responsible JFSouth commanding officer.

THE TRAINING OF NEW COMBAT PILOTS

The Croatian pilots undoubtedly enjoy international reputation for their abilities and flying competence. The fighter pilot training takes ten years and encompasses the university, the flying practice in the 93rd Air Base at Zemunik (on the Zlin 242 and the PC-9M aircraft respectively), the instructor specialisation and five hundred flying hours as a minimum. Further on, only those who pass the rigorous medical examinations and the evaluation by the instructors



Photo archive 91st Air Base

FLEET

BRN



and the commanders from the selective flights make it to the training for fighter aircraft pilot on the MiGs-21, in the duration of two to three years.

The fighter aircraft pilot training extends to three degrees – the endorsement training for the MiGs 21, with the mandatory 50 flying hours. Following the first degree the pilots are expected to be able for individual and flying in pairs in daytime, under favourable and demanding weather conditions alike and to perform elementary manoeuvres on the Mig21 aircraft.

The second degree involves preparation to fly combat fighter aircraft individually and in pairs (as wingman), after which the pilots are expected to fly the aircraft of the air guard pair on duty.

The third degree of the training entails pilots preparation for the duty of pair leader and and 4-aircraft group leader, i.e. they practice the same procedures and manoeuvres as in the second degree but as flight leaders. Upon completion the pilots are expected to fly combat missions on a 24-h basis as leaders of up to the 4-aircraft groups. During the third degree the pilots can also take endorsement training for flight instructors, trial and aircraft manoeuvre demonstration pilots, as well as for the air targets towing tasks, air-to-air, surface-to-air and air-to-air shooting.

The Squadron's fleet now complete, two new pilots – the experienced PC-9M instructors – are following the endorsement training for MiGs 21.

"Fighter aircraft pilot is a 24-hour job and a positive addiction extending beyond the conventional office hours. Being healthy is a major prerequisite. Short medical check-ups are scheduled before all flights, and additional can be conducted if requested by the commanders or flight schedule authority. Likewise, any time a pilot does not feel fit to fly he can report it to the commander and the medical doctor without consequences. It is about the trust between the



Fighter aircraft pilot is a 24-hour a day job and a positive addiction extending beyond the conventional office hours. Being healthy is a major prerequisite.

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pilots and the chain of command, and is associated with the overall and individual safety. No pilot in sound mind will step in the cockpit if he feels unfit to fly a mission, because that would lift the risk to an unreasonable level", says Lt. Col. Ninić.

Physical as well as psychological readiness is a must for the pilots. The flights are most demanding, involving adrenaline and a number of body processes and challenges (including the gravity) which exhaust the pilots and requires physical stamina. The physical condition is the prerequisite for successful completion of tasks".

"There will be no two identical flights in your career", says Lt.Col. Ninić. "Even under comparable weather conditions it is either the type of the aircraft, the take-off/landing direction, the flight elements, the hour that make the flight unique".

Lieutenant Colonel Ninić goes on to say that during the MiG overhaul period the emphasis was placed on training of pilots and technicians, in-country and abroad, such as the flight safety and NATO techniques and procedures courses. The Squadron has also productive international co-operation with the United States, Italy, Hungary, Germany, France and other NATO nations.

With the MiG fleet complete, the Squadron will be able to focus on various flight training programmes. The first assignment is the endorsement training of two pilots, and other pilot training programmes now at a larger scale. "Take the aircraft from the pilot, and you'll make him unhappy", says Lt.Col. Ninić, an experienced fighter pilot and one of the first generation of pilots who underwent the endorsement training from the Pilatus PC-9M to the MiG21 – a unique case, of which the Croatian Armed Forces are proud. Other fighter aircraft pilots, who performed the airspace protection task excellently despite the much reduced fleet, share the view – it is far more gratifying to see the entire fleet on the apron.



Photo archive 91st Air Base

LIEUTENANT COLONEL ŽELJKO NINIĆ,
THE FIGHTER AIRCRAFT SQUADRON COMMANDER,
91ST AIR BASE

Lt. Col. Željko Ninić has commanded the Fighter Aircraft Squadron since April 2012. Belongs to the second generation of the Croatian Air Force and Air Defence pilots and the first generation of pilots who underwent endorsement training from the Pilatus PC-9M to the MiG21 (back in 2001).



tion and servicing, the storing and maintenance of the aircraft out of service, the maintenance of the aircraft en route and the unscheduled inspection. The pre-flight inspection is conducted by a team of six certified air maintenance technicians of various specialties and controllers prior to the first flight of the day to ensure airworthiness.

The turnaround inspection checks the between-flight airworthiness and comprises the external check, the rectification of defects detected during the flight and the inspection, the fuel, lubricants, hydraulic fluid and gas check and replenishment. The S2 inspection (a 4-hour or longer inspection conducted on a weekly basis) involves thorough inspection of the aircraft following an indicated period of use, to prevent, detect and fix the malfunction or damage.

All technicians are well-trained and professional, that is the admission criterion for the Squadron.



**THE TECHNICAL AND
MAINTENANCE COMPANY**

The Squadron comprises the Technical and Maintenance Company, assigned with the first level of aircraft maintenance - the basic maintenance to ensure the airworthiness and proper weapon condition to optimise the mission performance, says 1st Lieutenant Dejan Majski, the IRE Platoon Commander. The first level of maintenance comprises: pre-flight inspection and preparation, the turnaround inspec-

The Company is composed of three platoons: the Aircraft and Engine Platoon, Aircraft and Electronic Equipment (IRE) Platoon and the Aircraft Armament Platoon. 1st Lieutenant Majski says the Company is being manned by young technicians, who work well with the Squadron and absorb the knowledge from the more experienced colleagues. All technicians are well-trained and professional, that is the admission criterion for the Squadron. "Our job is to send pilots on mission, and everyone is aware of his responsibility for their and our safety", says 1st Lt. Majski.



PZH 2000

STATE-OF-THE-ART

The PzH 2000 Howitzers, displayed in the military parade conducted in Zagreb on 4 August, were earlier presented to the media representatives in the Croatian Armed Forces' Maintenance Depot in Jankomir, Zagreb. The late 2016 is the term for the delivery of 12 operational Howitzers to the Croatian Armed Forces. They were presented by Colonel Tomislav Pavičić, the Commander of the Artillery-Missile Regiment, to which the howitzers are allocated to.

"It is with great satisfaction that I can confirm that we have fully mastered the use of the Howitzers, trained the first crews and are ready to adopt the howitzers into the operational use in a short time frame, following the signature of the contract with the manufacturer on the adjustment of the system to the Croatian use and the installation of the fire control system and communication devices. With the PzH in our inventory the Croatian Armed Forces will have one among the best equipped artilleries in NATO and in the world".

The PzH 2000 Howitzers were publicly presented in the Maintenance Depot of the Croatian Armed Forces on 29 July 2015. A total of 12 Howitzers are to be delivered to the Croatian Armed Forces by late 2016, which will place the Croatian Armed Forces among NATO's and the world's best equipped artilleries", said Colonel Tomislav Pavičić, the Commander of the Artillery-Missile Regiment of the Croatian Army...





Author: Petra Kostanjšak, Photos by: Josip Kopi

CROATIAN MILITARY MAGAZINE

HOWITZERS

ARTILLERY OF THE CAF

The PzH2000 is the state-of-the-art artillery weapon presently used. Its range depends on the ammunition – with the standard HE-FRAG projectile it equals 30 kilometres and 40 km with rocket-assisted projectile. The newest extended range projectiles have been launched that enable targeting at 80 kilometres. The Chief of the General Staff of the Croatian Armed Forces, General Drago Lovrić expressed satisfaction over the entry of the PzH Howitzers into the operational use by the Croatian Armed Forces. "The use of the Howitzers will be incorporated into the doctrine of the Army and of the Armed Forces, as well as the doctrine of the use of the artillery, where we opt for the integrated combat doctrine that entails



the integration of the sensors into a unified fire control system, which is why we are modernising our forces. I hope that the Howitzers will fully enter the operational use by late 2016 or in early 2017", stated General Lovrić.

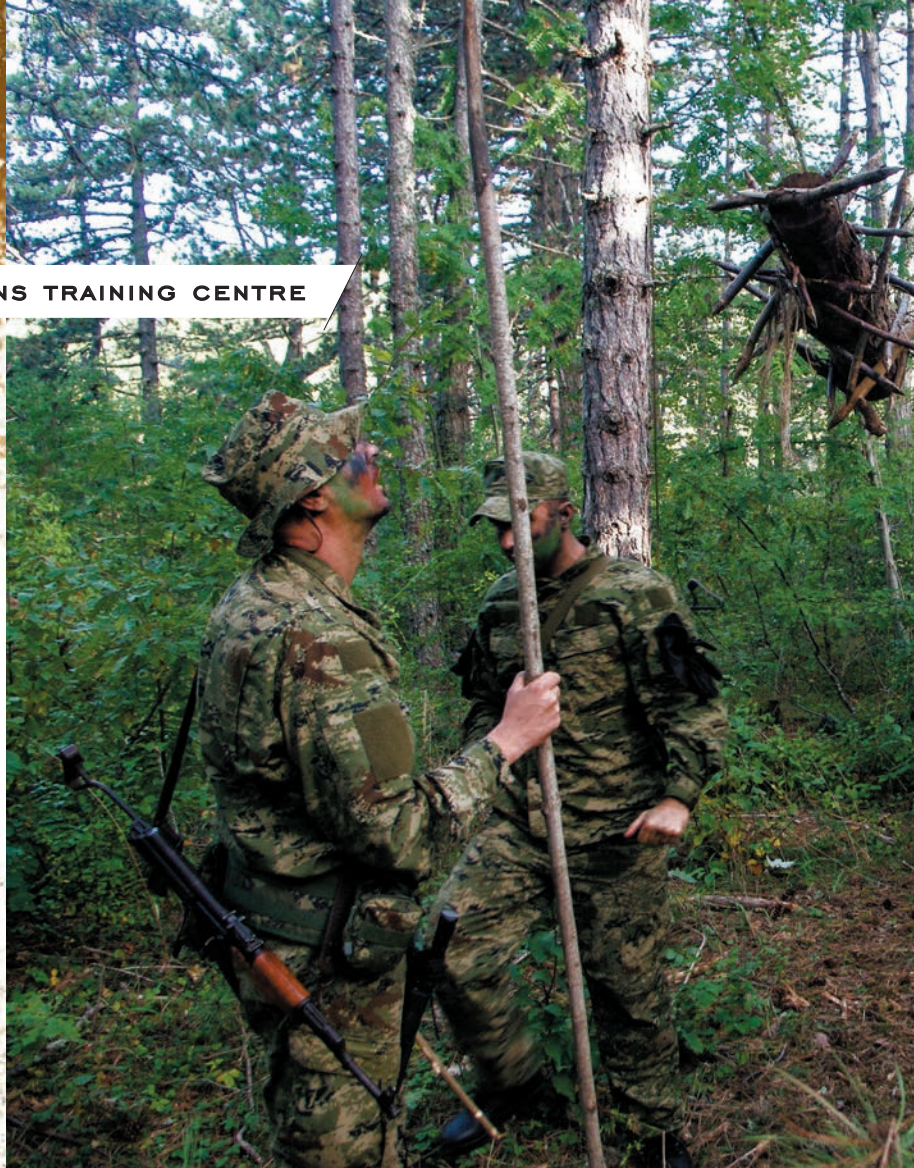
The PzH 2000 Howitzers are a state-of-the-art self-propelled high fire power artillery weapon. The howitzer's gun is 155-mm, with 52 caliber long barrel. They are characterised by high mobility and multiple round simultaneous impact (five shells below <2sec) and meet the standards for modern artillery systems and is presently in the operational use in four NATO nations: Germany, Italy, the Netherlands and Greece. Its reliability and efficiency were proven in the real conditions in ISAF.



TRAINED IN GERMANY TO OPERATE THE PZH HOWITZERS

Major Dražen Musić is currently the training officer of the Basic Training Centre in Požega, and the prospective deputy commander of the Battalion. The Battalion will consist of three batteries, each equipped with four howitzers. "The squad commanders and I spent 12 weeks training in Germany. It was a tailored training for squad commanders and future instructors of the crews and it was demanding, as it was at once the first contact for our members with the sophisticated weapon system and had to learn how to pass it on to the Croatian Armed Forces members. The PzH 2000 Howitzer is a tactically specific weapon, with a large burst mode and precision coupled with the quick changes of firing positions. It is an autonomous and automated system with a GPS hybrid navigation system that ensures high-distance precision. The crew has five permanent members, of whom two necessary for efficient operation". The operating training is carried out in two phases. Following the first phase of the training attended in Germany which provided them with the necessary skills, the trainees – the future commanders - regularly meet to incorporate the German documentation and reference into the Croatian Armed Forces training system, for the use by the future crew members", says Major Musić.

Length	11.7 m
Width	3.5 m
Height:	3.4m
Weight:	57 t
Main armament:	155 mm/L75
Rate of fire:	8-10 projectiles per minute
Range:	<56 km
Ammunition:	60 shells/288 charges
Crew:	3 (driver, gunner, commander) + 2 (loaders)
Engine:	736 kW



BOOSTING THE KNOWLEDGE, SELF-CONFIDENCE AND LIFE-SAVING TECHNIQUES

The International Military Operations Centre of the Croatian Army in September launched a pilot training programme in the Josip Jović Barracks at Udbina. The event is a novelty in Croatian Armed Forces and comprises survival, evasion, resistance and escape. The objective of the training is to attain the required level of preparedness of the members of the armed forces assigned for operations or for deployment in areas of operations containing high risk of capture or isolation.

The training entails three levels, depending on the associated risk assessment. The level B and the level C training were conducted at Udbina, comprising the practice of survival techniques, avoidance,



resistance and extraction in the event of isolation or capture.

The trainees included a member of the Infantry Regiment of the Training and Doctrine Command of the Croatian Army, a pilot of the Croatian Air Force and Air Defence, and two recon members of the Guards Motorised Brigade and the Guards Mechanised Brigade respectively.

"We recruited the members with previous experience and skills in the procedures applied in the S.E.R.E training in order to get more useful feedback on the training quality", said Captain Goran Boroš of the IMOTC, the training officer. The training was administered by the instructors of the IMOTC



THE **S.E.R.E.** (AN ACRONYM FOR **SURVIVAL, EVASION, RESISTANCE, EXTRACTION**) TRAINING WAS INTRODUCED IN THE CROATIAN ARMED FORCES THROUGH A PILOT TRAINING EVENT DESIGNED BY THE INTERNATIONAL MILITARY OPERATIONS TRAINING CENTRE OF THE CROATIAN ARMY AND TAKEN BY FOUR MEMBERS OF THE CROATIAN ARMED FORCES. THE OBJECTIVE WAS TO ENABLE THE TRAINEES BOOST THEIR KNOWLEDGE, SELF-CONFIDENCE AND LIFE-SAVING TECHNIQUES. THE OBJECTIVE WAS TO PROVIDE STUDENTS WITH THE LIFE-SAVING SKILLS, KNOWLEDGE AND SELF-CONFIDENCE...

alongside the experienced instructors of the Special Forces Command (who also conduct the commando training, and the instructors of the Croatian Air Force and Air Defence specialised in force extraction).

The first days were reserved for classes in movement in the unknown area, the evasion of "enemy force", shelter building, finding water and food in an unknown area and the like, concluded by a 24-hour field practice. Following a 1-day pause and the task assignment the trainees kicked off a 72-hour reconnaissance and intelligence gathering mission to find out the position of the members of "formerly conflicting sides", the route manageability and to

discover the possible friendly helicopter landing spots. The experienced instructor of the Special Forces Command has described us the course of the mission: "Shortly after their departure the trainees found themselves ambushed, and during the extraction were left with the personal weapons only. They were subsequently divided into two groups. The movement radius was cca 20 km, and the operational headquarters guided them towards the extraction spot".

The terrain was hostile for movement and reconnaissance, with many clearings and open spaces and only sporadic woods, making it difficult to move unobserved and evade ambushes. It sometimes

took three hours to cross 700 m. They were at risk of being observed by the local civilians, helicopters, UAVs and the "enemy force" pursuing them, not to forget the instructors, who were constantly monitoring them, and every now and then turned up to warn them of a fault or imprudence and then vanished again. These were all the setbacks in the conduct of the high-risk operation. Furthermore, the trainees took 1-hour sleeping turns and relied on what they found in the field for food, mostly fruit. They had been given scarce food portions, but were regularly provided with water. They communicated with the operational headquarters via radio.

They failed to escape, as very close to their end point they were intercepted and captured by the „enemy force“, then put in isolation and interrogated. The situation seemed hopeless, but eventually they were given the chance to escape and extract. The objective was to bring them into a difficult and stressful situation. The escape from confinement is an essential part of the training, says Captain Boroš, and the trainees are expected to master the identification with the rescuing forces. "It is a life-saver", says Captain Boroš.

The rescue operation can be executed by the forces of any allied country, and failing to identify oneself properly is not a guarantee of safety.

Staff Sergeant Zdenko Prugovečki, a senior instructor of the IMOTC and a survival instructor, assesses the training as pretty complex. "The trainees are doing fine. We have been with them all the time, monitoring them constantly. They sometimes see us and sometimes they don't. They were know what they are doing, and although

they had been prepared for most situations, they could not miss surprises too".

The military psychologist of the IMOTC, Captain Renata Koković Novosel, had a dual and an important psychologist - instructor role in the training. In the first part she taught the trainees about the capture or imprisonment, about the pressure and moods associated with isolation as well as on the psychological and physical factors affecting mental attitude, weakening the motivation to continue fighting and on the ways to alleviate them. "Psychologically, capture is the worst situation, when people already have been subject to increased discomfort - fatigue and sleep deprivation. Imprisonment, isolation and interrogation are the hardest experiences, calling for utmost self-control and self-regulation of one's psychological condition". Captain Koković Novosel taught the trainees on the behaviours and self-regulating techniques improving their well-being in captivity and the chances for surviving the imprisonment without compromising the task assigned and the lives of the fellow combatants in the field. "This is not about forcing the trainees break down - on the contrary, we train them to boost their confidence, knowledge, skills and life-saving techniques; the training aims to strengthen their will to survive, to overcome depression and apathy and to keep the faith despite the hardship they are going through". The training administrator agrees, stressing that the training is about learning and acquiring skills and not about selection, and that it was conducted in control conditions. As of 2016 the C-level S.E.R.E. training will be administered semi-annually.

S.E.R.E. TRAINING

S.E.R.E. training has been designed to provide the members of the armed forces with the the survival, evasion, resistance and extraction skills necessary in international deployments. It is administered at three levels (A, B and C levels), depending on the associated risk assessment, and in the Croatian Armed Forces the IMOTC is responsible for all the three levels.

The A level is the entry level training, entailing the theory of survival, evasion, resistance and extraction. While at present it is mandatory for deployments in international peace missions involving low risk of isolation from own forces, it may be included in the curricula for all members of the armed forces.

The B level entails theory and practical skills of survival, evasion, resistance and extraction. The B level training is intended for servicemen considered for assignments involving medium risk of isolation or imprisonment.

The C level - the most complex level, entails a demonstration of required techniques and skills; and is intended for the servicemen considered for assignments involving high-risk of isolation or imprisonment.

The S.E.R.E. training has not been designed as a sequential training.





THE TRAINEES

The instructors led us to a team composed of a member of the Guards Motorised Brigade and a pilot of the Croatian Air Force and Air Defence. "We have been walking for 11 km, we started at 5.50 this morning. We came across a few civilians and the enemy force, but we managed to avoid them. The terrain and the surrounding are rather inhospitable, but we've resolved that too. What about food? "Small supplies and some fruit for three days. "The trainee of the Guards Motorised Brigade was interested in the training; he recently completed the US Army Ranger Training, and has experience. "In terms of how it is organised the training is very useful, as the instructors come from various units. The programme is excellent, with clear assignments for us. The instructors too, are very knowledgeable, with a rich life experience and military expertise. They often presented experiences from

the Homeland War or the international operations in which they took part. I was convinced I had a clue about survival skills, but I now see it was next to nothing. Thumbs up for the instructors and for how this training has been organised". The trainees took 1-hour sleeping turns. Along with the physical strain they were exposed to, the sleep deprivation augmented their stress and made them test their coping with comparable situations in the future. One thing they were spared of during the training was cold. "We have constantly been on the move, zig-zag to avoid the open spaces. The 4-m distance in the map is really a 15 km walk".

"Why did you take the training in the first place?"

Nobody forced me really. I am glad to have taken the training and to have learned far more than I had expected".



The Sv. Nikola Barracks in Split from 30 August to 7 September 2015 hosted the 7th International Senior NCO Camp for NATO and Partnership for Peace nations. The Camp saw a record number of participants, said Sergeant Major Dominik Ban, the Camp Organiser. Of the 20 participating NCOs five were from the Croatian Armed Forces and 15 from other countries - from Bosnia and Herzegovina, Slovenia, Kosovo, Macedonia and Montenegro and from the United States, France, the United Kingdom, Germany, Hungary, Canada and Afghanistan...



CROATIAN CONTRIBUTION TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE NATO AND PFP NCO CORPS

The Sv. Nikola Barracks in Split from 30 August to 7 September 2015 hosted the 7th International Senior NCO Camp for NATO and Partnership for Peace nations. "The main objective of the Camp was to promote international co-operation of NCO corps and upgrading the level of specific knowledge, the exchange of experience and broader familiarisation", said Sergeant Major Boris Škokić, Croatian Navy CSM and Camp co-organiser. Upon the arrival to a theatre of operations there is no time left for major changes and we have to act jointly as allies. The Camp has been designed in that sense", says the Navy CSM. The Camp offered basic naval skills, the handling of the weapons used by the Croatian Armed Forces and other tasks and activities aimed at upgrading the NCO abilities and competences. The 7th Camp saw a record number of participants, said Sergeant Major Dominik Ban, the Camp Organiser. Five of the 20 participating NCOs were from the Croatian Armed Forces and 15 from other countries - from Bosnia and Herzegovina, Slovenia, Kosovo, Macedonia and Montenegro and from the United States, France, the United Kingdom, Germa-



ny, Hungary, Canada and Afghanistan respectively. The Camp hosted lecturers from Afghanistan, the United States, Slovenia, the EUCOM and Sergeant Major Davor Petek the present ACO Senior NCO and former Croatian Armed Forces Command Sergeant Major. The Croatian Armed Forces Services NCOs also took part in the Camp.

"In my view we have fulfilled the goals we set for the Camp. We also took the opportunity to familiarise the participants with the local historical and cultural heritage, and took them to see the Knin Fortress, around Split and the island of Brač, while some of them visited Zagreb as well", stressed the organisers. "The Camp participants were briefed on the services and units of the Croatian Armed Forces, took part in the training events and observed a series of demonstration exercises".

The 7th International NCO Camp was concluded with the presentation of the respective certificates to the participants and visiting lecturers by the Croatian Armed Forces CSM, Sergeant Major Dominik Ban. The organisers announced even bigger participation next year.



Author: Petra Kostanjšak, Photo archive CMPD

THE IMPRESSIONS FOLLOWING THE NCO CAMP

SERGEANT MAJOR LJUPČO STOJKOV, ARMY OF MACEDONIA

The participation in the Camp was a really enjoyable experience. I had the opportunity to meet a number of experienced NCOs, to share the experiences and knowledge and to build mutual trust. I have learned a lot about the Croatian Armed Forces NCO Corps, which is a very useful experience for the improvement of the Macedonian Army NCO Corps.

CORPORAL FARUK MIFTARAJ, KOSOVO SECURITY FORCE

I would like to express gratitude to the Croatian Armed Forces for inviting me to the Camp and for everything they offered us here. I am glad to have met the experts from the Croatian Armed Forces, which is a most useful for us from the armed forces of recent date.

STAFF SERGEANT ZLATKA ANDRAŠIĆ, CROATIAN ARMED FORCES

I am glad to have had the honour to meet the experienced colleagues who are also glad to pass on their experience and knowledge to others. I hope the camps will be continued, as they are a valuable opportunity to meet and socialise with foreign counterparts, and improve our abilities.

SERGEANT MAJOR MILAN TODOROVIĆ, THE ARMY OF MONTENEGRO

The NCOs of our countries have successfully co-operated for eight years in NCO education for eight years, and we take part jointly in the activities abroad, particularly in NATO-led missions. The Camp has fulfilled my expectations, especially for the great opportunity to communicate and make contacts to use in the future development of our respective NCO corps.

FIRST SERGEANT AMIR PENAVA, THE ARMED FORCES OF BOSNIA AND HERZGOVINA

I am glad to take part in the activity of the kind, and would like to commend the Croatian Armed Forces for the excellent organisation of the event and for offering us such conditions to make new acquaintances and acquire new experiences.

SERGEANT DESETNIK JURE MOČIVNIK, SLOVENIAN ARMED FORCES

The Camp has been a great opportunity for the NCOs of the region, NATO and wider to meet. The Croatian Armed Forces have demonstrated their working methodology, and we in presented our NCOs. We have acquired valuable new experience.

VISITING LECTURERS

SERGEANT MAJOR AMINULLAH SIDIQI, MARSHAL FAHIM NATIONAL DEFENCE UNIVERSITY COMMAND SERGEANT MAJOR, AFGHANISTAN



This has been my first Camp, during which we visited the Islamic Centre, which was a most impressive experience. The war brought many problems, and the high cultural awareness and the training of the Croatian Armed Forces in that regard is a most useful experience – when the members of the Croatia Armed Forces arrive to Afghanistan, they show familiarity and respect for our culture and religion. The Camp is beneficial for the future co-operation in the deployment of the participating forces to Afghanistan. I would like to see the initiatives of the kind continued, as the Afghanistan Armed Forces are a “young” military and can use any assistance. We

still have an enemy to fight with and are very appreciative to the Croatian Armed Forces, of whom we are also proud, because they leave their beautiful country to assist Afghanistan in its fight for the human rights and the future development.

COMMAND SERGEANT MAJOR PAUL E. BIGGS, CSTC-A SENIOR ENLISTED LEADER



I’ve CSTC-A Senior Enlisted Leader for five and a half months. I looked forward to participating in this Camp, which is very important, as all things at the global level have to be a common effort. The Camp offers the opportunity for the NCOs to work together, solve problems and make progress. The events of the kind are significant to maintain the contacts and enable continuity and synergy, for the benefit of Afghanistan and in Europe as well. I think the Camp has been a success; we held a series of presentations on our respective organisations, and had an open dialogue. Your country is beautiful and

the people are friendly. Our hosts, headed by the Croatian Armed Forces Sergeant Major, Dominik Ban, have been very hospitable.



TRAINING INTENSIVELY FOR THE ANAKONDA

The first decade of September was spent in the training facilities of the "Josip Jović" Barracks at Udbina, to prepare for the activities scheduled in the current and the next year, among which the return visit to the Polish counterpart – the Military Gendarmerie (*Oddział Specjalny Żandarmerii Wojskowej w Warszawie*) with whom the Regiment had a most productive co-operation in 2014, primarily through the Multinational Military Police Battalion (MNMPBAT). The overall bilateral co-operation with Poland has been rated excellent and more activities are planned. The Polish partners expressed the intention to expand the co-operation, with the particular interest in diving training. In Poland the Special Military Police will have the opportunity to practice in the superbly equipped

urban operations range "Wędrzyn" near Sulęcín. Another activity in the calendar is a large international military exercise Anakonda 16 scheduled in June 2016. The Exercise will engage over 10,000 participants. The Croatian Armed Forces will be represented by the national platoon of the Special MP Company affiliated to the MNMPBAT, the members of the MNMPBAT Staff and a representative of the Military Police in the Exercise Headquarters. During their stay at Udbina the members of the Special MP Company practiced the tactics and procedures relative to the unit's capability matrix (advanced daytime and night-time shooting practice, high-risk situation resolving, the response to convoy attack, the response by VIP security tactical teams, es-

Author: Leida Parlov,
Photos by: Tomislav Brandt

CROATIAN MILITARY MAGAZINE



EXE

The first decade of September was spent in the training facilities of the "Josip Jović" Barracks at Udbina, to prepare intensively for the upcoming activities: the return visit to the Polish counterpart unit - the Military Gendarmerie of the Polish Armed Forces - and the participation in the large international military exercise "Anakonda", to be hosted by Poland in June 2016...

establishment of a temporary control point, the use of the optical electronics in poor visibility and night conditions). The capability matrix enables us to acquire, develop and practice as many new procedures and actions which is our assumed commitment. Our performance in this regard is exemplary", says the Special MP Company Commander, 1st Lieutenant Andrej Smolek. The Company was indeed assessed "Combat Ready" by the ACO FS CREVAL in the Exercise Spremnost (Readiness) Exercise in May 2015.

At Udbina we meet the new members of the Company - undergoing intensive training to meet the standards and become operational. The pool of forces for the Company are the Croatian Armed Forces. 1st Lieutenant Smolek

says the training and the adaptation run faster and easier for the military policemen, thanks to the experience with this combat support branch..

The Company's member have proved their competence at the international level as well - in the Resolute Support mission in Afghanistan. Presently five members are in the Mission, securing the facilities and VIPs, for which they are regularly commended. "The results and commendations from unbiased officials foster the motivation and further development of capabilities and are also a definite confirmation of our competence", says 1st Lt. Smolek. Upon the return from Poland the Company will take to practicing the helicopter and amphibian operations, which will conclude the 2015 land, sea and air training cycle.

SPECIAL MILITARY POLICE COMPANY



COLONEL TIHOMIR ZEBEC, HEAD OF THE MILITARY POLICE SERVICE

The major part of the activities of the Special MP Company focussed on the MNMPBAT, we used the opportunity to talk to the Head of the MP Service, Colonel Tihomir Zebec, in charge of the co-ordination of the MNMBAT activities in view of the fact that the Republic of Croatia is the lead nation for 2015.

What does the MNMBAT Lead Nation status imply?

The four nations contributing to the MNMPBAT (Poland, Slovakia, the Czech Republic and Croatia) have equal status, and each year one of them takes the role of a lead nation. This year it is Croatia, which is in charge of all activities related to the MNMPBATs, including the training. It is a comprehensive job but has had yielded results. We have concluded the last round of negotiations with the U.S. MP about their joining the Battalion. More specifically, it is the 18th Brigade of the U.S. Military Police, stationed in Germany, who, although not formally the MNMPBAT members have taken part in training and exercises. There are other countries which have declared interest in joining too, such as Germany, Georgia, Ukraine and Montenegro, with whom we are negotiating on the participation of their respective Military Police forces, with the prospects of joining the Battalion too. The MNMPBAT has taken part in several international exercises, and concluded the process of joining the Multinational Corps Northeast (MNC NE) as an operational unit. Following the signature on the Note of Accession by the four nations, the Battalion will become the constituent part of the MNC NE, based in Szczecin, in Poland.

What benefit is there for the MNMPBAT?

The MNMPBAT is the first unit confirmed as a multinational one, to subsequently become an operational multinational unit within a multinational Corps. The four member nations of the MNMPBAT in 2012 requested joining the MNC NE as an integral multinational unit and gaining the status of the MNC NE's operational units. It is a major achievement for the MNMBAT, which will enable it to follow the developments within the MNC NE and take part in the training processes, education and exercises. The MNC NE Lead Nations are Germany, Denmark and Poland.

The preparations for the Anakonda 16 Exercise, which will be conducted in Poland next year, are under way.

The Exercise Anakonda 16 will indeed be conducted in Poland in June 2016, prior to the NATO Warsaw Summit. The Polish MP intention was to demonstrate the capabilities of the Polish Armed Forces supported by the forces of other NATO nations. The Exercise will be conducted throughout Poland – the participating forces will be engaged in as many as nine training ranges, depending on the practice area, while the Exercise Command will be based in Warsaw. The exercise timeline is two weeks, with over 10,000 participants, including the MNMPBAT.

What is the role of the MNMPBAT in the Exercise and who will represent the Croatian Armed Forces?

According to the current plans, there will be six multinational MNMPBAT platoons, assigned across six training ranges and the MNMPBAT Command, which will be based in Mińsk Mazowiecki near Warsaw. Each platoon will be commanded by one of the national commanders from the national MP



units of Poland, the Czech Republic, Croatia, Slovakia and the United States. The Croatian Armed Forces will be represented by the platoon of the Special Military Police Company nominated for the MNMPBAT, the representatives of the Crime Investigation Military Police and a MP representative to the Exercise Command. The MNMPBAT will be assigned with the Exercise support in realistic situations – namely, it will provide support to the Commander and the participating forces in the exercise of their respective tasks and training events, such as the security of vital facilities and persons, traffic security, critical post security, order and discipline and prevention of undesired effects. In accordance with the agreements with the host nation and the participating nations to define the authorities, the MNMPBAT will provide military policing - control and prevention during all events in the training ranges. It will be an opportunity to display the support by the multinational military police unit to the commander and the units in a realistic situation in the field, under a unified command. In case the Exercise scenario features the military policing tasks (convoy escort, securing the command post, special MP forces or others), the Battalion can assume the function of the acting forces.

The decision to take part in a major NATO exercise each year was adopted three years ago.

Right. It meant a significant major step forward for the MNMPBAT, as previously we only organised the exercises at the Battalion level. The participation in international NATO exercises is an opportunity to demonstrate the capabilities of the Multinational battalion, to gain visibility and display the Military Police capabilities. The Battalion has become recognisable and confirmed its compatibility with other units.

The Special MP Company has had excellent co-operation with the Polish Military Gendarmerie, inception at Your initiative.

I am most glad that the members of the Special Military Police demonstrate the intention for extended co-operation. A partner unit is a necessity, in order to see your own faults or underperformances as well as capabilities honed.

The joint training ensures quality and compatibility, as well as the confidence to co-operate with foreign counterparts in real situations without the anxiety over understanding, the procedure compatibility, and the performance odds. The co-operation was launched within the MNMPBAT project, but was continued at the bilateral level.

Within only 10 days of joint training last year in our country the Polish Gendarmerie and the Croatian Special MP Company impeccably performed the most complex military police tasks such as the hostage situations, infiltration into facilities, shooting procedures and the like. It is of immense importance as once the tasks of the kind are commenced it leaves hardly any time to think and reflect on what to do in any moment. The tasks are highly dynamic, they require action within a very short time and demand previous practice to ensure an expedient response. Moreover, the situations in the MP domain are characterised by high risk, and therefore the team members must trust each other and be confident of the uniform trainedness of the entire team.

The two countries, Poland and Croatia, co-work at the operational level and implement it through MNMPBAT – in exercises and in actions in the field. It is an expanded form of training - a combination of multinationality, the operability and the use of forces.

Filip Hrgović, the European boxing champion has been a member of the Croatian Armed Forces since 2011, pursuant to the Agreement between the Ministry of Defence of the Republic of Croatia and the Croatian Olympic Committee on the promotion and development of sport in the Republic of Croatia. Aged 19, Filip Hrgović has been recognised as a boxer promising to revive the tradition of Croatian medalists in the semi-heavy and heavy categories. The promise has come true in the recent European Boxing Championships in Bulgaria, where Filip won the European super heavyweight title

EUROPEAN CHAMPION



Not less important is the support from the Ministry of Defence and the Croatian Armed Forces. "The Ministry of Defence and the Croatian Armed Forces are the institutions that have provided the best support and fulfilled their obligations timely, so I gladly take part in the promotional activities, and will continue to do so

Author: Domagoj Vlahović, Photos by: Tomislav Brandt

CROATIAN MILITARY MAGAZINE

Filip Hrgović is the new European boxing champion. He has returned from a much-needed short holiday after the exhausting competition - the Championships held in Samokov, Bulgaria in mid-August and the public attention brought by his success. Filip has been a member of the Croatian Armed Forces since 2011, pursuant to the Agreement between the Ministry of Defence of the Republic of Croatia and the Croatian Olympic Committee on co-operation, promotion and development of sport in the Republic of Croatia. Aged 19 at the time, he was recognised as a boxer promising to revive the tradition of Croatian boxing champions - Mate Parlov, Željko Mavrović and Stipe Drviš. His results improved gradually and unstoppably. His biggest junior success was the Youth World Boxing Champion title in 2010, followed by individual and club (the Astana Arlans of Kazakhstan) successes in the world boxing league, alongside which he also won every national championships since 2011. "I have been at the world's top for some time, but it is this European title that means definitive recognition", says Hrgović.

We interviewed him in a sporting hall of the Croatian Defence Academy, during his preparation for the upcoming competitions. Aloof by nature, Filip Hrgović shows no false modesty when speaking of his qualities. "I possess fairly good co-ordination, speed and mobility for a 2-m tall and 100-kg athlete; I think I demonstrate balanced quality in all aspects - technical, tactical and condition, as well as the blow - everything it takes to be a top level boxer". Along with his physical qualities, the credit for the success goes to his coach from the early

His biggest junior success was the Youth World Boxing Championships in 2010, followed by individual and club's (the Astana Arlans of Kazakhstan) successes in the world boxing league, alongside which he also won every national championships since 2011.

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like discipline imposed by his coach. Filip thinks everybody should stick to discipline. "Discipline is the key to success - be it work or any other segment of life. It certainly is the basis of my life and training". The picture of himself as a professional soldier is therefore not strange to him. "I think it is a great choice; I remember the interesting training we took in Požega".

Not less important is the support from the Ministry of Defence and the Croatian Armed Forces, which he emphasised when we first called to agree the interview. "The Agreement and the regular monthly income give me the freedom to train and dedicate myself to boxing", says Filip. "The Ministry of Defence and the Croatian Armed Forces are the institutions that have provided the best support and fulfilled their obligations timely, so I gladly take part in the promotional activities and will continue to do so.

About the ambitions for the Olympics in Rio de Janeiro...

The Olympic gold is absolutely an ultimate goal and lifetime ambition, but I cannot bet on winning it; in boxing a punch, a wound or a lack of concentration may ruin all dreams and plans

Filip's words led us to picture him as a future coach of the boxers of the Croatian Armed Forces. "Why not? Although for the time being I am focussed on my career. I would love to coach once it is over, it would definitely be a very good start".

Maybe prematurely, but if was hard not to touch upon Filip's ambitions for the Olympics in Rio de

HEAVYWEIGHT IN THE CAF RANKS

days of his career - Leonardo Pjetraj. Filip Hrgović however still sees the room for improvement, in view of his youth. "Where I see the room for the progress is the strength and the punching power, which will come naturally over time and with training." "You have to attain greater strength to go professional. In the amateur league the stress is on speed, as the competitions run in three rounds".

Filip cherishes the support from his coach and from his family - all big boxing fans, who are to be credited for his upbringing and stability, coupled with the fanatic and rigorous regime and the military-

"I have been at the world's top for some time, but it is this European title that means definitive recognition", says Hrgović

Janeiro next year. "The Olympic gold is absolutely an ultimate goal and lifetime ambition, but I cannot bet on winning it; in boxing a punch, a wound or a lack of concentration may ruin all dreams and plans". At the moment Filip is thinking Rio de Janeiro instead of going professional, despite the offers from renowned world promoters. "Competing at the Olympics is an ultimate ambition for me, I wouldn't mind waiting for the 2020 event", says Filip, although aware that the interest in boxing, particularly in the amateur league, has waned in the recent years.



CADET BATTALION, CROATIAN DEFENCE ACADEMY

CROATIAN, THE U.S. AND POLISH CADETS HONING

THE ACADEMIC YEAR OVER, THE MILITARY CADETS TOOK ON THE SUMMER BOOT CAMP 2, WHICH CONSTITUTES A CONTRACT COMMITMENT FOR THE CROATIAN CADETS AND MEMBERS OF THE CADET BATTALION OF THE CROATIAN DEFENCE ACADEMY

The international cadet co.operation programme gathered the Croatian, the U.S. and the Polish cadets for joint training from 17-31 July, followed by a week-long camping for the Croatian cadets – the final and critical training component. The activity with the foreign cadets was implemented within the CULP (Cultural Understanding and Language Proficiency) Programme – a programme within the cadet education curriculum designed to promote the understanding of the culture and language, encouraging the skills oriented on discovering other cultures, languages and history. It is designed to promote the multiculturalism and co-operation in

THE CULTURAL UNDERSTANDING AND LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY PROGRAM (CULP)

The cultural understanding and language proficiency programme constitutes an important segment of the U.S. cadet training. The Program stems from the recognised need for deeper cultural awareness and language proficiency by the modern-day military officers. The multicultural co-operation competence fosters overcoming of the existing differences and recognition of common goals and interests. It enables efficiency of common operation and is today one of the basic skills of the modern-day leaders and officers in support of the modern global operations. The CULP programme has enabled hundreds of cadets travel to various countries and spend three weeks immersed in a host country culture and philosophy, beneficial also for their own learning about themselves. Including more than 40 countries, the CULP offers far more the usual academic curricula and classroom approach. In 2014 over 1300 cadets were involved in the programme, travelling around the globe and learning about the history, the culture, the socio-economic features and values of the host countries. The plan for the future envisages at least half cadets take part in CULP and experience the cultural familiarisation of the kind.

ation - was conducted in three locations from 17 July - 8 August 2015 - the Camp 2 in the Gašinci Training Range for the cadets of the Croatian Army; the Sveti Nikola Barracks in Split hosted the cadets of the Navy and the Zemunik Barracks for the cadets of the Croatian Air Force respectively.



THREE PRACTICE SITES

The joint military programme conducted in the Gašinci Training Range comprised the basics of the service tactics, the squad operation tactics, and the honing of commander skills. The tactical part comprised the familiarisation with the training and operation at the squad level, developing the abilities of the squad commander. The curriculum also comprised handling the VHS automated rifle, the HS2000 pistol and the 7.62-mm M-84 machine gun, and the tactical procedures such as movement in teams, attack planning and preparation, procedures taken in the expecting area and movement to contact, defence, ambushing and squad patrolling. The camping in the last week was the occasion to test the acquired skills.

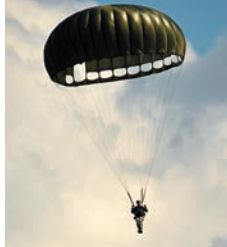
THE SKILLS IN THE SUMMER CAMP

multinational environments, which is one of the primary competences of the competent officers and leaders of the 21st century.

The U.S. cadets had prepared for the activity learning about the host country, the language, the culture, the cuisine and the like, which they further explored and saw first-hand upon their arrival to Croatia

The Camp 2 - organised as the first entirely service-level boot camp preparing the cadets for the specific duties they will be assigned to following the gradu-

The "Sveti Nikola" Barracks in Split hosted the cadet combat diver course, administered in co-operation with the Croatian Navy Training Centre and the Special Forces Command. The Course was taken by 14 cadets of the Cadet Battalion, eight U.S. and six Polish senior year cadets, who had previously completed the basic military and naval skill training. The Summer Kamp 2 in Split comprised the complex survival at sea training, swimming over the water obstacles and rowing.



CADET BATTALION, CROATIAN DEFENCE ACADEMY

Monitored by the instructors, the naval cadets practiced rubber boat rowing and manoeuvres, seaborne assault, infiltration into the enemy area, combat diving full geared and the like. The cadets preparing for the future duties in the Croatian Air Force and Air Defence took the Kamp 2 in the Zemunik Barracks near Zadar, which familiarised them with the air force tactics, the individual and small team operation tactics, the MCC (multi-crew co-ordination), infantry weapons handling and shooting, parachute training, the survival training and salvage operations following air accidents.

The Summer Camp is one of three annual training events the cadets are obliged to take during the academic year, the other two being the winter camp and the regular training. Such an organisation enables the prescribed 400 hours of training per year within the 4-year cycle. The satisfactory performance in the Camp are the prerequisite to continue the education. According to the new training concept, based on the university undergraduate studies of military management and military engineering, the basic officer training is integrated into the four-year studies curriculum, whereby the students - once they complete their cadet programme - will not be obliged to attend the Basic Officer training nor any additional officer education and will be assigned to units directly. Hence the importance attached to the annual time spent in training, the scores and the overall performance. The last year's generation will have all training domains integrated into their cadet programme, and will following the graduation be prepared for their first officer duties in their respective units.

THE GAŠINCI TRAINING RANGE

CPT RENEE HART,
CADET TEAM LEADER FOR AMERICAN CADETS



We are the U.S. cadets taking the CULP programme, and we came to Croatia to hone our military skills and acquire new ones, but also to exchange experiences and meet new people, their culture and language. The practices we took in the Gašinci Training Range were very well designed and administered and we enjoyed the activities despite the heat. The stay has

been an excellent opportunity to learn much about Croatia, its people and their customs; to travel around the country and see the landmarks. I think it makes an important part of the co-operation and I am glad to have come here, I hope to come again.

CDT CYNTHIA CANO,
SENIOR AMERICAN CADET



The co-operation of the Croatian and U.S. cadets has been a great experience. The working methodology in Gašinci was comparable to what we have seen before, but the weather conditions and high temperatures were a new experience. Sometimes we came across problems due to the language barrier, but we overcame them and we learned to understand each

other better, which is a plus. I am glad to have had the opportunity to visit Croatia and to have learned new things and enjoyed working with cadets and instructors from other countries. I hope to have a similar opportunity in the future.

ZADAR, THE ZEMUNIK BARRACKS

ANAMARIA ĆURKOVIĆ,
MILITARY PILOT CADET, FINISHED 2ND YEAR AERONAUTICS

I took part in the Military Camp 2 alongside the cadets from the U.S., with whom we practised the parachute skills and elements. The co-operation of the kind has been a wholly new and a very useful experience; we have made new acquaintances, which was very useful in practicing to communicate in English. We also exchanged the experiences from earlier training programmes, the life in the military and the skills in general. I think the events like this can only help us with our future career, in learning and attaining our career objectives. The multicultural and multilingual environments as we had in the Camp enable better mutual familiarisation, co-operation and joint reaching the set objectives. The Camp enabled us acquire new knowledge and skills and upgrade the experiences from earlier training events. For my part, I was particularly interested in the parachute training and my first jump, which was an extraordinary experience. I enjoyed it. I kept smiling throughout the preparation and the jump itself. I am looking forward to future events of the kind.



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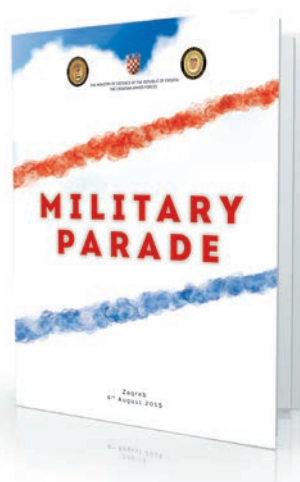
◀ THE CROATIAN NAVY VOCAL ENSEMBLE "SVETI JURAJ" MUSIC VIDEO

On the occasion of the 20th Anniversary of the Military and Police Operation "Storm", the Croatian Navy Vocal Ensemble "Sveti Juraj" released a new song "Zemljo moja" ("My Homeland") and music video promoting it. The video was filmed at several localities in central Dalmatia and the Dalmatian Zagora - near the monument to the fallen Croatian defenders at the top of Malačka, in the Škopljanci Ethno Village and in the Knin Fortress.

The additional value of the video is the authentic footage of the recent war history and the Croatian Army's successful liberating campaigns.



MULTIMEDIA DEPARTMENT



◀ THE MILITARY PARADE OF THE CROATIAN ARMED FORCES

The commemoration of the jubilee 20th Anniversary of the Military and Police Operation Storm was honoured with a magnificent military parade. The Croatian Military Publications Department marked the occasion with a Croatian-English brochure presenting all participants of the Parade.

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