

NORTHERN STAR

MAGAZINE FOR HQ JFC BRUNSSUM - OCTOBER 2020



NATO'S ENHANCED FORWARD PRESENCE BATTLEGROUPS

THE STRENGTH OF THE ALLIANCE ON THE NORTHEASTERN FLANK

THIS MONTH'S FOCUS: NATO EFP BATTLEGROUPS

- EXERCISE SABER JUNCTION 20
- NEW CHIEF OF STAFF AT JFC BRUNSSUM
- DANISH ARMED FORCES



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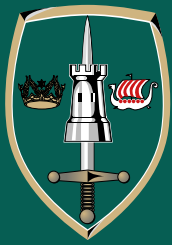


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NORTHERN STAR

MAGAZINE FOR HQ JFC BRUNSSUM

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ABOUT THE COVER

Canadians and Slovakian soldiers from the eFP Battlegroup Latvia participate in Exercise HAVOC SOARING. Camp Adazi, Latvia, August 2020.
Photo credit: eFP BG Latvia PAO

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COMMAND GROUP CORNER

LIEUTENANT GENERAL KRZYSZTOF KRÓL

“We are a strong and professional team!”

I feel privileged to be appointed the Chief of Staff at Joint Force Command Brunssum and thank the directorates and divisions for assisting my induction and setting the conditions for what promises to be a busy, but rewarding tour. It is obvious that we have a great staff team in the headquarters and I look forward to working with both military and civilian personnel alike in the months ahead.

As Chief of Staff, I am keen to make best use of my previous, and directly-related, experience in my appointment. By profession, I am a Combat Engineer but have served in many diverse posts, at company, brigade, divisional and corps levels. As a graduate from the Academy of National Defence, in Warsaw, I am equally well versed in dealing with issues at the military/strategic level.

My previous experience with NATO

In 2000, I was proud to be in the first group of Polish officers to take up a NATO post which, for me, was Joint Headquarters Centre, Heidelberg, before being redirected to Regional Headquarters South, in Naples. In subsequent years, I served as a Brigade Commander and Deputy Commander of Multinational Corps Northeast, in Stargard and Szczecin, Poland, respectively. I participated in the implementation of the outcomes from the Wales Summit, in 2014, and the Warsaw Summit, in 2016, and was NATO's Representative in the setting up and inauguration of some of our NATO Force Integration Units. As such, I have felt connected to NATO and Brunssum – almost as a ‘family member’ – for many years and have a close affinity with our northern region having served and visited widely within its boundaries that have extended from the Norwegian Fjords, the Arctic Circle in Sweden, through to Estonia and the Danube in Hungary. My most recent position as the Deputy Chief of the Polish General Staff will also permit me to offer a first-hand perspective to the Command Group on regional issues, where appropriate.

We can all benefit by learning from each other

My previous appointments have also taken in operational tours with the United Nations in Lebanon and, again in NATO, in Multinational Division Central South, in Iraq. Whether deployed on operations or in other positions, I have come to value multinationalism throughout my career, in the belief that there is a spirit in the cooperation of many nations. I believe that we can all benefit by learning from each other's differing experiences and that every individual has something to offer – something I want to reinvigorate and encourage between staff members.

We are in an exceptionally busy period

In my first few weeks, it has become apparent that this remains an exceptionally busy period as the headquarters. At the political level, there would appear to be encouraging signs of progress in our RESOLUTE SUPPORT Mission in Afghanistan. We remain on standby for the NATO Response Force and have and we are making good headway in the implementation of the ongoing NATO Command Structure – Adaptation programme while also dealing with the impact of the Covid 19 pandemic, the seasonal turn-over of staff and a demanding training and exercise programme.

Optimism and confidence will guide us

My overall approach is one of optimism and confidence as we navigate our way through complex staff issues. I have to declare that I am, by nature, a self-confessed ‘workaholic’ and have a PhD based on the ‘Process of achieving operational capabilities in the Polish Armed Forces’. I am therefore poised to bring this experience to support the Commander's direction to: embrace and align with the new NATO Military Strategy and their two supporting strategic concepts; extend our linkages NATO's Defence Planning Process; and add value to operations in a multi-domain environment. More generally, I am also seeking to devolve some flag and other responsibilities, where necessary; bring greater coherence to ‘top-down’ direction and guidance; operational-



ise our peacetime procedures in our battle rhythm; and continue the ongoing reform to our supporting staff processes.

I cannot promise any slow-down in the current tempo of operational, planning, training or support. However, my first impressions are that Joint Force Command Brunssum is a strong professional team with a commendable reputation, in and outside NATO. I am here to play my full part and work together with you all to build our operational readiness and outputs on all fronts. Thank you again for your much appreciated support to date. Stay healthy and stay safe.

Krzysztof Król, PhD
Lieutenant General



JFC BRUNSSUM WELCOMES NEW CHIEF OF STAFF



STORY BY JFCBS PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICE

On the 27th of August 2020, Joint Force Command Brunssum (JFCBS), mindful of COVID-19 restrictions, conducted an official ceremony to say farewell to the Chief of Staff (COS), Lieutenant General Hubert de Reviere de Mauny, French Army, upon his retirement, and extend a warm welcome to the new COS, Lieutenant General Krzysztof Król, Polish Army.

Lieutenant General Król comes to JFCBS from Poland where his last appointment was Deputy Chief of the General Staff of the Polish Armed Forces.

Before departing, Lieutenant General de Reviere de Mauny reflected fondly on his time at JFCBS as this marks, not only the end of his time in Brunssum, but the completion of his military career, a career that has spanned 39 years of Service.

Commander JFCBS, General Jörg Vollmer, thanked Lieutenant General de Reviere de Mauny for his dedication and achievements during his tour at JFCBS. He commended the work he has completed throughout his time as COS and his positive encouragement to all staff to continue learning and work as a team.

All JFCBS personnel wish Lieutenant General de Reviere de Mauny a well-deserved, long and happy retirement.



CHIEF OF STAFF Lieutenant General Krzysztof Król

Lieutenant General Krzysztof Król was born on 1st of December 1968 in Ciechanów, Poland. He began his military career as an officer cadet in 1987 at the Military College of Engineering, Wrocław, and was commissioned in 1991 as a Combat Engineer.

From 1991 to 1997 he served in a variety of command positions in the Command Support Battalion in the Ministry of Interior and the 1st Engineering Battalion of the 1st Infantry Division. It was during this period that he deployed to Lebanon where he served as both the Deputy and the Commander of the Engineering Company seconded to United Nation Interim Forces.

By 1999, he had graduated from the Academy of National Defence, Warsaw, and successfully completed postgraduate study at the Security and European Integrity in Humanistic Academy, Pułtusk. This was followed by a short tour as the Military Assistant in the office of the Commander of the Polish Land Forces.

In 2000, he was assigned within the first group of Polish officers to take up posts across NATO. He was appointed as the Senior Staff Officer at the Training and Exercise Division G7 in the Joint Headquarters Centre, Heidelberg, Germany. In 2001, he was re-directed to Regional Headquarters South, in Naples, Italy, where he filled the post of Senior Staff Officer-Kosovo in the Political Adviser's Office and spent part of his tour deployed in the KFOR mission.

From 2003 to 2005 he was assigned to the Training and Exercise Branch within the G3 Division of the Polish Land Forces Command in which he was the specialist, and then senior specialist, for operational work-up training at corps, divisional and brigade level. In 2005, he deployed to Iraq as Chief of G3 Operations in Multinational Division Central South, in Ad Diwaniyah. This was followed by a 4-year tour as Executive Officer of the Commander of the Polish Land Forces, until 2009.

In 2010, he completed the National Security Programme at the Canadian Forces College, Toronto. From this, he was appointed as Chief G5 in the 2nd Polish

Corps Headquarters, in Kraków. In 2012, he was appointed as the Commander of the Command Support Brigade Multinational Corps Northeast, Stargard, Poland. In 2016, he was then appointed as Deputy Commander of Multinational Corps Northeast, in Szczecin, Poland, where he was able to defend his PhD thesis on the Process of achieving operational capabilities in the Polish Armed Forces, earned at the University of National Defence.

In August 2018, the Minister of National Defence of the Republic of Poland appointed him to the position of Deputy Chief of the General Staff of the Polish Armed Forces. On June 29, 2020, Major General Krzysztof Król was promoted to the rank of Lieutenant General and, on 1st September 2020, took up his current appointment as the Chief of Staff of Allied Joint Force Command Brunssum.

His decorations include the Cross of Merit in Gold (Polish), the Army Commendation Medal (US), the Joint Service Commendation Medal (US) and Medal of Respect (Ukraine).

He is married to Donata and blessed with two adult sons, Mateusz and Filip, along with the fifth member of the family – their Maltese dog, Luna.

AWARDS AND DECORATIONS:

- Golden Cross of Merit
- Medal of the Armed Forces in the Service for the Fatherland – Silver Class
- Medal of Merit for Country Defence – Golden Class
- Medal for Long Meritorious Service – Silver Class
- Joint Service Commendation Medal (US) Iraq Star
- Medal of Multinational Division CS Iraq
- The Army Commendation Medal (US) Iraq Star
- Medal for the Mission in Kosovo (KFOR)
- UN Peacekeeping Medal for Lebanon 2 (UNIFIL)
- Medal of Recognition of the UA Ministry of Defence
- United Nations Official 25th Anniversary Commemorative Medal



A HISTORY OF NATO'S ENHANCED FORWARD PRESENCE (EFP): From the Wales Summit to combat-ready Battlegroups



STORY BY LIEUTENANT COMMANDER SALVATORE DI PIETRO, JFCBS J35

This special edition of the Northern Star focuses on the four eFP Battlegroups. This article underlines the history of the establishment of the concept for the Battlegroups and paves the way for the articles of Multinational Corps Northeast and the individual Battlegroups on the following pages.

The 2014 Wales Summit: Reinforcing collective deterrence and defence

At the 2014 Wales Summit, following the Russian annexation of the Crimea, Ukraine, the political decision was taken for an adjustment in NATO's posture with the purpose of reinforcing collective deterrence and defence across Europe; the intention being to deter adversarial aggression and reassure threatened nations along NATO's eastern flank – the end state, maintaining peace. The means of achieving this was through the establishment of Air Policing Missions and NATO Force Integration Units, with refinement to existing plans to increase NATO's ability to exercise command and control of forces across the Euro-Atlantic region. These new tactical commands and enabling headquarters created greater agility while strengthening operational capacity across all of the warfighting domains. With operations in the Middle East drawing down, nations were able to rapidly refocus efforts and resources to address emerging threats much closer to home, showing unwavering commitment to the Alliance and support to one another.

The 2016 Warsaw Summit: The establishment of the concept of eFP

During the 2016 Warsaw summit the concept of enhanced Forward Presence, known simply as eFP, was established. It was agreed that four multinational Battlegroups would be stationed in Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania and Poland as a demonstration of alliance resolve and capability to defend if required to do so. The United Kingdom, Canada, Germany and the United States each agreed to lead a Battlegroup and have received significant support from a multitude of NATO nations on a rotational basis. Commencing deployments in 2016 and being fully established in 2017, their presence in the region continues to make a clear statement to any potential adversary that an attack on any Ally will be considered an attack against all 30 Alliance members; while careful non-escalatory posture management of the force ensures NATO does not increase tensions but robustly display its readiness and willingness to defend.

Training opportunities for multinational integration

Throughout their time in the Baltic States and Poland, units have found themselves conducting Battlegroup and brigade level training events in the context of a joint multinational defensive operation; Land, Air and Maritime forces operating in harmony to protect Alliance territory. The en-

vironment offers unique training opportunities to the servicemen and women of the Battlegroups; from fighting in woods and forests to urban operations; individual cold weather training to Battlegroup live field firing supported by air, aviation and artillery; manoeuvre to defence in depth operations; fighting as part of a national grouping to operating as part of a multinational unit. The challenges of integration have been overcome, the procedures refined, well-rehearsed and are now second nature, the force is ready to standby the nations in delivering NATO's first line of defence.

As the concept has matured over the last 4 years and around 20,000 NATO personnel have rotated through the region, the intention has remained the same; deter adversarial aggression through demonstration of alliance resolve and capability to defend. But the plans have evolved. eFP battle groups have strengthened relations with their Host Nation fighting brigade headquarters, developed a greater understanding of national home defence plans and learnt how to operate alongside national forces as part of a wider NATO response force. At the higher tactical levels, synchronisation and liaison between the components becomes ever more robust and training opportunities continue to increase.

While NATO's enhanced Forward Presence continues to evolve and may look different again in another 4 years, the constants will remain the same; a mission defensive in nature, proportionate to the challenge and fully in line with NATO's international commitments – the Alliance remains unbreakable.



4 Multinational Battlegroups

- ESTONIA:**
 - United Kingdom
 - Denmark
 - Iceland
- LITHUANIA:**
 - Germany
 - Belgium
 - Czech Republic
 - France
 - Iceland
 - Luxembourg
 - The Netherlands
 - Norway
- LATVIA:**
 - Canada
 - Albania
 - Czech Republic
 - Italy
 - Montenegro
 - Poland
 - Slovakia
 - Slovenia
 - Spain
- POLAND:**
 - United States
 - Croatia
 - Romania
 - United Kingdom

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NATO Enhanced Forward Presence

Battlegroup led by the United Kingdom, operating with Estonian forces in Tapa, Estonia

Contributor	Troops	Forces
United Kingdom	800	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 x Armoured battalion with main battle tanks and armoured fighting vehicles • Supported by self-propelled artillery and air defence assets, engineers, an intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance group and logistic support elements
France	330	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 Mechanized infantry company (3 mechanized platoon (VBCI), 1 heavy armoured platoon (LECLERC), 1 engineer platoon, 1 artillery element) • National support element • Logistics elements (movement, maintenance, medical) ; • Signal element ; • Staff officers integrated in battlegroup in Tapa and eFP HQ in Tallinn.
Denmark	3	Support to brigade headquarters
Iceland	1	1 x Strategic communications civilian
Approximate total troop number: 1134		



Battlegroup led by Canada, operating with Latvian forces in Adazi, Latvia

Contributor	Troops	Forces
Canada	525	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 x Mechanised infantry battalion with armoured fighting vehicles • Combat support company • Support elements • Contribution to battlegroup headquarters
Albania	21	Mobility explosive ordnance disposal engineers
Czech Republic	55	1 x Mortar platoon and support element
Italy	166	1 x Mechanised infantry company/ Mountain troop company with armoured fighting vehicles, Joint Terminal Air Controllers and sniper teams, mortar and anti-tank unit
Montenegro	10	1 x Combat engineer squadron, contribution to battlegroup headquarters
Poland	Up to 200	1 x Tank Company, national contribution to battlegroup HQ, support elements
Slovakia	Up to 152	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mechanised infantry company • Contribution to battlegroup headquarters • Support elements
Slovenia	33	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 x Engineer platoon • 1 x Tactical Air Control Party team • Contribution to battlegroup headquarters
Spain	350	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 x Mechanised infantry company with tanks and armoured fighting vehicles • Mobility engineers and support elements • Logistic elements • Contribution to battlegroup headquarters
Approximate total troop number: 1512		



Battlegroup led by Germany, operating with Lithuanian forces in Rukla, Lithuania

Contributor	Troops	Forces
Germany	560	1 x Armoured infantry company, combat service, combat service support
Belgium	262	1 x Armoured infantry company with national support element and staff officers for battlegroup headquarters
Czech Republic	35	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 x Electronic warfare element • Support elements
Iceland	1	Public Affairs Civilian
Netherlands	270	1 x Mechanised infantry company with armoured fighting vehicles
Norway	120	1 x Armoured infantry company with armoured fighting vehicles
Approximate total troop number: 1248		



Battlegroup led by the United States, operating with Polish forces in Orzysz (Bemowo Piskie), Poland

Contributor	Troops	Forces
United States	857	1 x Armoured cavalry squadron with combat service and support enablers
Croatia	80	Self-propelled rocket launcher battery (4 x SPRL 122mm "VULKAN")
Romania	120	1 x Ground-based air defence battery and support elements
United Kingdom	140	Light Reconnaissance squadron equipped with Jackal
Approximate total troop number: 1197		



Multinational Corps Northeast in Szczecin (Poland) – from political symbol to regional responsibility



STORY BY: LIEUTENANT COLONEL (GS) ULRICH PFÜTZENREUTER, MNC NE J5 BRANCH HEAD POLICY

In September 2019, Headquarters Multinational Corps Northeast celebrated its twentieth birthday – the age of twenty usually being considered as reaching the peak of one's capability. Nevertheless, anyone who believes that being just over twenty signifies being fully grown is mistaken. The development goes on; especially when it comes to thinking, new approaches are formed and the tried and true is rediscovered. Moving with the times also means appreciating and caring for the strengths of any period as the temporary gift

they are, not taking them for granted as a permanent state. Multinational Corps Northeast faces up to any current and future challenges, true to its own motto: "Ready Today – Prepared for Tomorrow – Adapting for the Future".

Continuous change as the constant

NATO's relevance as the backbone of European security remains unbroken. This is particularly true for the Baltic Sea Region, where NATO territory immediately borders

Russia. A broad military invasion of Western Europe may no longer be something that has to be feared. However, it is also not possible to generally rule out a regional military intervention in the Baltic Sea Region. Russia continues to use every opportunity to create division within NATO. In times of limited resources, the different priorities set by NATO can be ensured best by a threat-appropriate re-regionalization of military headquarters. This way, groups of states dedicate themselves to those threats that are a priority for them. A great advantage in doing so lies in a close and direct cooperation between individual NATO





Foundation of MNC NE in 1999

member states with similar interests. A more regional posture of NATO is to be understood as an essential contribution to an appropriate response capability of the Alliance. For the Baltic states and the Baltic Sea Region, this regional responsibility lies with Multinational Corps Northeast based in Szczecin, Poland.

Political symbol – in the spirit of integration

Headquarters Multinational Corps Northeast (HQ MNC NE) was established in the city of Szczecin in north-western Poland on 18 September 1999 upon joint political decision of Denmark, Germany and Poland. Evolving from German-Danish Corps LANDJUT, it was the first time that, with the Republic of Poland, a new NATO member was integrated into a multinational formation. Beyond its immediate military tasks, MNC NE thus became a political symbol of the accelerated transatlantic as well as European integration process. This Corps is marked by a number of particularities concerning its creation, composition, tasks as well as its current and future role. Both within the framework of the second round of NATO enlargement conducted in 2004 and in the course of growing military integration across Europe, these particularities were of increasing importance and continue to be so today.

Being the first newly established NATO military body east of the former Iron Curtain, the Corps was met with interest from the new NATO member states from the very beginning. Only ten years after the Corps' inception, the number of participating nations had increased by eight more. These were Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania (2004); Slovakia and Czechia (2005); the United States of America (2006) as well as Romania (2008) and Slovenia (2009). Croatia (2012), Hungary (2013), and Sweden as the first non-NATO partner continued to further this build-up until 2014. "In the spirit of integration" was the then motto of the Corps.

Transformation

The decisions of the NATO Summits in Newport (Wales) in 2014 and Warsaw (Poland) in 2016 marked the first turning point in the orientation of the Corps: In the course of the events on the Crimean Peninsula and in Eastern Ukraine in spring 2014, the transatlantic Alliance decided to shift its main focus back to collective defence. In the process of implementing the measures of the Readiness Action Plan, the Szczecin-based Headquarters received a decisive role in reinforcing the NATO presence at the eastern flank of the Alliance. The aim: credible deterrence.

From headquarters to command

Within three years, the Corps grew by another ten nations to a total of now 25. The personnel strength was almost doubled, a new structure adopted and certification as a headquarters for high-readiness forces – and as Land Component Command –

accomplished in 2017 with a preparation time of only 24 months. Also the structure of the Corps changed from a headquarters to a command with subordinate units. The Corps is responsible for command and control of two newly established multinational divisions (Multinational Division Northeast (MND-NE) and Multinational Division North (MND-N)); four National Home Defence Brigade Headquarters in Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania and Poland; four multinational enhanced Forward Presence (eFP) Battle Groups and six NATO Force Integration Units. In this, it is supported by the Command Support Brigade – which in turn consists of three Polish battalions and one German battalion. Thanks to their capabilities, HQ MNC NE can be independently deployed to and employed at any location within its area of responsibility.





Credible deterrence – MNC NE commands major formations in the Baltic Sea Region

In this regard, it is particularly important to have recourse to structures that already exist in the regions, to soldiers who know the situation in the field due to their permanent presence, i.e. who have situational awareness.

To this end, MNC NE can draw on the NATO Force Integration Units (NFIUs) in Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Slovakia and Hungary. They serve as “eyes, ears and mouthpiece” for the NATO Regional Land Component Command in Szczecin.

They are perfectly integrated with the local structures and represent the Alliance. Through excellent relations to their respective host countries, the NFIUs are the ones who enable a rapid deployability of further forces of Allied nations in the first place, thus substantially contributing to credible deterrence and security in the region.

The enhanced Forward Presence Battle Groups are the four multinational formations under leadership of lead nations United Kingdom, Canada, USA and Germany that are providing the visible contribution of the Allied land forces to deterrence at the north-eastern flank of NATO on a rotational basis since 2017. These Battle Groups are firmly integrated into the respective national brigades of their host countries Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania and Poland. They are a significant and highly valued reinforcement of these brigades.

Regional responsibility

The three turbulent and challenging years with the decisions of the NATO Summits in Newport in 2014 and in Warsaw in 2016 consequently lead to new requirements for the development of the Corps in Szczecin: MNC NE is in the middle of implementing

the next “evolutionary stage” – establishing itself as the Regional Land Component Command for the Baltic Sea Region. Regionalization, regional focus and regional responsibility may initially sound unfamiliar for an alliance with a 360-degree defence approach. However, the multitude of unique and exclusive tasks being carried out in the Szczecin-based Headquarters leads to the single logical conclusion of aiming for exactly this status within the framework of credible deterrence.

While the permanent tasks associated with crisis response are assigned to the eight other NATO Corps Headquarters on a rotating basis, MNC NE permanently is the only NATO headquarters with regional responsibility for the Baltic Sea Region. It does not have to be deployed – it already is situated in its area of operations. Today, Szczecin is more than “just” a corps headquarters. MNC NE is a command with



Baltic Sea Region as permanently assigned area of responsibility and area of operations of MNC NE



Lieutenant General Sławomir Wojciechowski, the Commander of MNC NE, with his team during the Griffin exercise series



a clear mission, area responsibility and subordinate units. In addition, the Corps is the only one that is assigned and subordinated to a Joint Force Command – JFC Brunssum – already in peacetime. MNC NE thus is already “on mission” and permanently capable to respond. Maintaining a common operational picture, planning and exercises as well as conjoint collaboration with military and civilian actors therefore are aligned with the requirements and contingencies of the real development of the situation.

Ready for action at any time

In numerous multinational exercises, the men and women of MNC NE have demonstrated that, in their function as a corps headquarters, they can command and control major formations, counter emerging crises and defeat threats to security in the assigned area of operations – thus being able to act inwards and downwards. The challenge now is to develop, implement and live the upward and outward thinking as Regional Land Component Command both in the Headquarters as well as on the national and local decision-making levels within the area of responsibility: The objective is to further establish HQ MNC NE as the regional responsible entity and point of contact as well as to not only maintain its performance and response capabilities but to consistently further develop them. The crucial aspect is to further reinforce the confidence in cooperation across national borders, which forms the basis for continued joint effort and necessary investment. It is all about credible deterrence against any threat and aggression towards peace and security in the Baltic Sea Region.

New cooperation partners

The Baltic Sea is not only the left neighbour for the Regional Land Component Command – the sea also is the second strategic access route to the area of operations apart from the Suwalki Gap between Russian Kaliningrad and Belarus. Through first visits as well as mutual exchange of plans and in-

formation between Corps, regional German Navy Headquarters in Rostock (Germany) and Allied Maritime Command (MARCOM) in Northwood (United Kingdom), a closer cooperation with the naval forces will be established in the future.

Derived from the HQ's coat of arms, the Pomeranian Griffin, an organic series of exercises called “GRIFFIN” will pool and coordinate efforts of nations in the area of responsibility and NATO partners as well as relieve them by creating synergy effects.

Setting up a uniform data and information network provides a decisive contribution to interoperability of the individual land forces as well as to permanently monitoring and updating the cross-border operational picture.

Cross-border cooperation

The desired end state as a recognized Regional Land Component Command will be implemented in an inward- and outward-looking adaptation process. The headquarters and personnel structure of HQ MNC NE – only introduced in 2015 – is currently undergoing a rapid adaptation in order to quickly implement the new tasks and missions in a more efficient and effective manner with the right man or woman in the right place. Command and control exercises, cross-border deployments of units and formations right up to regular live-fire exercises serve to constantly further develop interoperability. In doing so, tactical English as the common language, command and control as well as decision-making processes, technical standards and IT networks are harmonized and improved. Far more important, however, are trusting cooperation and information exchange with national decision-makers and government agencies in Poland, Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia. It is imperative to create the preconditions with regard to planning, logistics and infrastructure in order to more quickly move NATO reinforcement forces to any potential deployment location at the

north-eastern flank of NATO. While it was smaller, brigade-size units (about 3000 soldiers) operating in the Balkans and in Afghanistan, here it is about the rapid deployment, integration and command and control of complex major formations in division or corps strength. Up to 40,000 soldiers must be able to arrive and cooperate in the theatre of operations.

The consultations and detailed planning for this are being stimulated and coordinated during routine duty from Szczecin already today. This daily initiative builds the mutual trust between partners and other actors that has its foundation in the pledge of mutual defence in Article 5 of the NATO Treaty: One for all and all for one.

Hub for regional cooperation

The annually completed deployment exercises of NATO's rapid response force (Very High Readiness Joint Task Force – VJTF) across borders under peacetime conditions confirm the effort of the Headquarters' members to fulfil and demonstrate the role of Regional Land Component Command every day anew. However, it is indispensable for this success already today that the national and local decision-making levels of all NATO and security partners have the prevailing confidence and conviction to include the Szczecin-based Regional Land Component Command in every consultation, every undertaking and every activity in the Baltic Sea Region, because only then can MNC NE successfully ensure the fulfilment of its permanent mission as land force integrator and coordination hub for the Baltic Sea Region – true to the motto: “Ready Today – Prepared for Tomorrow – Adapting for the Future”.



Everybody is in their right place at MNC NE



NATO eFP Battle Group Lithuania: MULTINATIONAL DEFENCE AND ASSURANCE



STORY BY SVEINN HELGASON (ISL), PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICER, EFP BATTLEGROUP LITHUANIA

“The NATO enhanced Forward Presence (eFP) Battle Groups in the Baltic countries and Poland demonstrate Alliance solidarity, determination and ability to defend the population and territory against any possible aggression,” says Lieutenant Colonel Peer Papenbroock, Commander of eFP Battlegroup in Lithuania. Around 1200 soldiers make up this multinational military force, based in Rukla, near the city of Kaunas. The Battlegroup represents cooperation and strength of eight Allies. Germany is the framework nation with contributions from Belgium, The Czech Republic, France, Iceland, The Netherlands, Norway and Luxembourg.

NATO leaders decided in Warsaw in 2016 to deploy four multinational Battlegroups to Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania and Poland. Their presence makes clear that an attack on one Ally will be considered an attack on the whole Alliance. NATO’s Battlegroups form part of the biggest reinforcement of

NATO’s collective defence in a generation. The Battlegroup in Lithuania is therefore an important part of the overall defence posture of NATO.

“Our aim is to preserve peace and prevent conflict. My mission as the Commander of the eFP Battle Group in Lithuania is to deliver credible deterrence based on our military capabilities, training and readiness,” says Lieutenant Colonel Peer Papenbroock who took over as Commander when the 8th rotation of the Battlegroup replaced the 7th rotation on 4th of August this year. Every six months the troops in the Battlegroup rotate, starting with the 1st rotation in 2017.

Defensive but ready for combat

The multinational nature of the Battlegroup is reflected in the battle cry “TOGETHER! STRONG!”. Germany contributes almost half of the current rotation, or 530 soldiers. 300 are from France, around 240 come from the Netherlands, 120 from Norway

and 60 from the Czech Republic. Belgium, Iceland and Luxembourg have small contingents but all nations play an important role. Croatia has also been a vital contributing nation to the Battlegroup.

Lieutenant Colonel Papenbroock is the commanding officer of the Armoured Battalion 104 in Pfreimd, Germany, since 2018. The 104 Armoured Battalion is also providing the core of the Battlegroup. Lieutenant Colonel Papenbroock was also the Commander of the 5th rotation of the Battlegroup in 2019, so this is his second time in Lithuania. Deputy Commander is Lieutenant Colonel Rob Opmeer, from the Dutch 43 Mechanized Brigade.

The Battlegroup has four battle companies from France, Germany, The Netherlands and Norway – consisting of soldiers on the ground, heavy military hardware and supporting elements. The companies use Leopard-2 and Leclerc main battle tanks in addition to armoured fighting vehicles – tracked and wheeled. The combat troops,





infantry and armoured, are supported by multinational elements such as engineers, logistical experts and soldiers specialised in close air support and aviation. The medical personnel has armoured trucks, the Boxers, to recover and carry wounded or injured soldiers. The multinational Military Police also has an important role, both on and off the base, for example during movement and transport of troops and vehicles.

The Staff in the headquarters of the Battlegroup directs the overall operations - command and control, planning, security and intelligence in addition to Public Affairs and other functions. A military mission has many moving parts, geared towards being ready for combat - to defend and deter. All forces are deployed in coordination with NATO partners and in close cooperation with Lithuania, the host nation. The Rukla military base is like a small international village where different nationalities live together under the NATO banner. This is military life where the soldiers are always on duty and stay alert.

Strong bond with the Lithuanian hosts

The Battlegroup falls under the command of the Mechanized Infantry Brigade Iron Wolf, part of the Lithuanian Armed Forces.

Commander of the Iron Wolf is Colonel Mindaugas Petkevičius. The bond with the host nation is strong and is reflected in close cooperation, mutual respect and joint exercises.

“The enhanced Forward Presence is very important and valuable in terms of deterrence and defence of the region,” says Raimundas Karoblis, Minister of National Defence in Lithuania. “We are happy to have German leadership in the eFP Battle Group and it is a very stable mission,” says the minister. “We are doing our best so the eFP nation troops which are deployed here, have the best possible living and training conditions.

It is our priority and we will continue on that path,” says Minister Karoblis, pleased with the overall commitment of the eFP nations contributing to the Battlegroup.

A recent example of good cooperation between NATO allies is a new shooting range in the Pabrade training area. This is a joint Lithuanian-German project and a Leopard tank with Commander Papenbroock in charge, tested the range in September. A new target construction system enables both the Lithuanian Land Forces and the Battlegroup to train even more effectively with main battle tanks and mechanized infantry vehicles.

Exercises to test and train the troops

The soldiers of eFP Battlegroup in Lithuania have maintained readiness at all times through the COVID 19 pandemic. Exercise EAGER LEOPARD at the end of September and beginning of October tested the multinational capabilities in defensive operations of the battle company level. In November Exercise IRON WOLF, the biggest exercise of the current rotation, is aimed at demonstrating the coordination of the Battlegroup within the Mechanized Infantry Brigade Iron Wolf and certifying operational readiness of the troops.

The Battlegroup seeks every opportunity to strengthen multinational and regional cooperation. Exercise Furious Wolf in Estonia and Lithuania from last summer brought together 9 NATO Allies, including troops from the Battlegroup. Specialized soldiers on the ground, Joint Terminal Attack Controllers (JTACs), trained with Allied fighter jet crews. The troops focused on Close Air Support tactics and skills to regain tactical advantage and win the ground battle. This is also a clear example of good cooperation with the Baltic Air Policing, based in Šiauliai in Lithuania.





The Battle Group participates also in the tank competition IRON SPEAR conducted by the eFP Battle Group in Latvia. IRON SPEAR 2020 test specific tank crew skills from eFP Battle Groups by demonstrating the readiness and the strength of the Alliance. Last but not least the Battlegroup cooperates closely with the NATO Forces Integration Unit Lithuania on a daily basis.

In fact the soldiers and other elements of the Battle Group are constantly training, testing combat capabilities and other skills to meet any challenge at the highest professional level. The Battlegroup also adapts to the ever changing political and security environment. Recent developments in Belarus, next door to Lithuania, require the Battlegroup to focus on defensive operations and training, sending a clear message of NATO unity.

Heads of States visiting

This fall two heads of state from eFP contributing nations have visited the Battle-

group in Lithuania to highlight Allied solidarity and meet the soldiers.

Erna Solberg, Prime Minister of Norway, visited a unit of the Norwegian Telemark Battalion, a part of the Battle Group, in Pabrade on 8th September. Prime Minister Solberg expressed Norway's continued commitment to the eFP mission and highlighted the overall security assurance of NATO membership. She and other guests also watched a capabilities exercise by the Norwegian 4th Battle Company and a multinational static display.

On 29th of September the President of the French Republic, Emmanuel Macron, showed also his commitment visiting the French contingent of the eFP Battle Group in Rukla barracks together with host nations President Gitanas Nausėda. France replaced Croatia in the mission last July and will contribute to the eFP Battle Group until the end of December this year. Early next year French troops will deploy to the eFP Battle Group in Estonia. Belgium will

replace France as a contributing nation in January 2021 and deploy a company to Lithuania.

Peace in challenging times

NATO membership and the presence of NATO forces enjoy strong support and recognition among Lithuanians. The nation knows that the eFP Battlegroup is ready to join the Lithuanian Armed Forces and fight any potential aggressor. This solidarity also exemplifies the nature of our Alliance for over 70 years, based on shared values to defend freedom and democracy. Article 5 on collective defence in the North Atlantic Treaty from 1949 is still relevant.

History teaches us we should never take peace for granted and vital security and political interests have to be protected. The eFP Battle Group in Lithuania is ready for the next challenge, preserving peace in challenging times.



THE ENHANCED FORWARD PRESENCE BATTLEGROUP LATVIA: ALL FOR ONE AND ONE FOR ALL



STORY BY CAPTAIN NATHANIEL METHEREL, CANADIAN ARMED FORCES, ENHANCED FORWARD PRESENCE BATTLE GROUP LATVIA

The Canadian-led enhanced Forward Presence battlegroup in Latvia (eFP BG Latvia) is a clear demonstration of the NATO Alliance's solidarity, determination and ability to defend Latvia against aggression. The battlegroup represents Canada's largest mission in Europe since the collapse of the Eastern Bloc. It was first established in June 2017 near the Latvian Capital of Riga at Camp Adazi as a direct response to the situation in Ukraine that began in 2014. It aims to preserve peace and prevent conflict and forms part of a broader effort to reinforce NATO's deterrence and defence posture.

The Battlegroup consists of nine nations. Alongside Canadians are NATO members from Albania, Czech Republic, Italy, Montenegro, Poland, Slovakia, Slovenia, and Spain working with the Latvian Armed Forces. All members represent a wide array of trades; there are cooks, medical staff, logistics support, mechanics, weapons techs, signalers, intelligence cells, electronic warfare specialists, engineers, and combat arms trades such as infantry, armour and artillery. All trades work together to ensure that the Battlegroup is completely self-sustainable and fit to fight should the need arise.

Multinational training - challenges become strengths

In order to maintain readiness, the Battlegroup trains and works together on a con-

stant basis. As can be imagined, training in a coalition Battlegroup has its challenges. To start, all of the nine nations speak a different language. The ways in which they each conduct training in their home country varies from nation to nation. Each country has their own unique equipment and weapon systems, with different doctrines and standard operating procedures. The rank systems are unique to each country and they each have their own military customs and traditions. These many challenges soon become strengths.

Making the Battlegroup stronger

When the Battlegroup works together to train, one of the first aims is to establish a common way to work together and establish NATO standard operating procedures. These are created by exchanging knowledge and expertise between nations, to come up with the most efficient and effective methods to get the job done. Incoming units arrive and learn to recognize the equipment, uniforms and ranks of the other NATO nations. Good coordination and communication is critical when working in a multinational Battlegroup and for this reason the universal language in use is English. Exercises are conducted to ensure interoperability, lessons are learned and revisions are made to the standard operating procedures in order to make the Battlegroup stronger. In this way, training together provides an opportunity to learn, share ideas and experiences in a very real and meaningful way. The multinational character of the eFP BG

Latvia is an extraordinary tribute to what NATO stands for.

Training at Camp Adazi is ongoing and demanding. The training builds from the platoon and company level to large battlegroup and Brigade exercises which involve the Latvian host nation for integration. In these large exercises, each of the eFP BGs cooperate with the other Battlegroups deployed across the Baltic region to ensure interoperability and the capability for mutual support. Each exercise has a focus and a primary training audience with an end goal in mind. Training often follows the crawl, walk, run approach where soldiers master the basics and build on those skills in a series of exercises adding additional challenges and layers of complexity all the while retaining the lessons learned from previous exercises.

Diverse and eventful exercises

Exercises are diverse, eventful and build off of one another. For example, Exercise FIRST CONTACT provided an opportunity for NATO members to familiarize themselves with foreign weapons, share a living area together and get to know the people in the Battlegroup they will be training and working with for the duration of their deployment. The Baltic Sniper Concentration included participants from Latvia, Estonia, Lithuania, Canada, Great Britain, Spain, and Slovakia. There were snipers represented from all the eFP Battlegroups across the Baltics. In this exercise, integration was a key component. Snipers from different





An Italian tanker from enhanced Forward Presence Battlegroup Latvia is conducting counter-attack operations during Exercise BEAST STRIKE where the Battlegroup set the conditions for Exercise SILVER ARROW, September 2020, Camp Adazi, Latvia.

countries were able to share their work experience, learn, adapt, and build partnership cohesion. Exercise SILVER ARROW was a combined arms combat readiness evaluation with an aim to increase the Battlegroup's standard of integration and readiness.

The IRON SPEAR competition will occur in October and it is the largest international tank and infantry fighting vehicle competition in the world.

It will be held in Camp Adazi training area alongside the other eFP Battlegroups throughout the Baltics, Poland and the Latvian Armed Forces. The eFP battlegroups such as the one in Latvia symbolise the spirit of our Alliance, which is best summed with a powerful set of seven words: All for one and one for all.

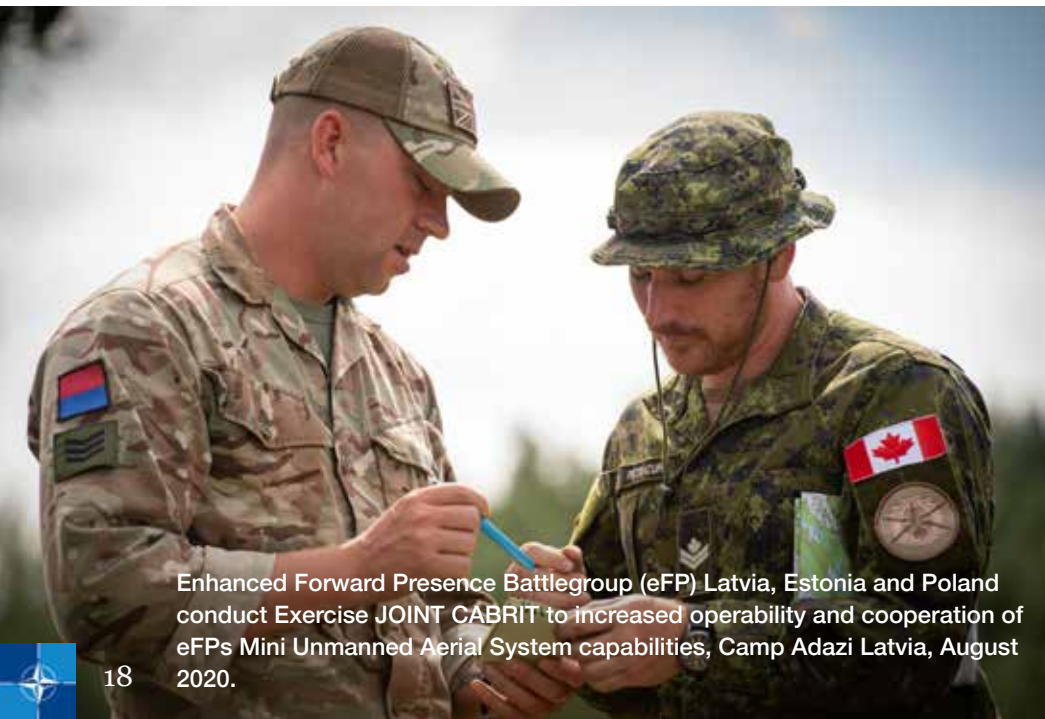
Training highlights

There have been many memorable moments for the battlegroup. Most members would agree that the ability for nations to cross train and use each other's equipment is one of them. For example on Exercise FIRES PRIME, which was a multinational artillery exercise with Spanish, Slovakian, Slovenian, Czech, Montenegrin and Canadian artillery working together. Slovenian gunners were integrated on the Canadian gun line and had the opportunity to use their equipment and pull lanyards on Canadian M777 Howitzers. Likewise Canadian gunners were able to drop mortar bombs and participate in Slovenian fire missions. Other highlights include trading rations with other nations, sharing meals together and trading unit patches. There are also

many activities within Camp Adazi that the members enjoy such as learning Spanish, participating in the various events such as the Baltic Warrior, the Canadian Army Run and the Slovakian lead Štefánik Race. This cross pollination of equipment and events was a huge success of integration. It was made clear through these experiences that the lasting bonds of friendship between members of NATO nations have been built and bonded. Through the development of these many relationships at all levels, eFP BG Latvia is a tangible reminder that an attack on one is an attack on all.

Stronger together

We all felt the warm welcome by our Latvian host nation. They have been very supportive and eager to work with the eFP



Enhanced Forward Presence Battlegroup (eFP) Latvia, Estonia and Poland conduct Exercise JOINT CABRIT to increased operability and cooperation of eFPs Mini Unmanned Aerial System capabilities, Camp Adazi Latvia, August 2020.



Snipers from Latvia, Estonia, Lithuania, Canada, Great Britain, Spain and Slovakia participate in the Baltic Sniper Concentration held in Latvia, August 2020.





Canadian and Slovakian soldiers from enhanced Forward Presence Battlegroup Latvia participate in Exercise HAVOC SOARING in which they conducted an air assault with the 5th Battalion, 101st Aviation Regiment from the United States of America, Camp Adazi, Latvia, August 2020.

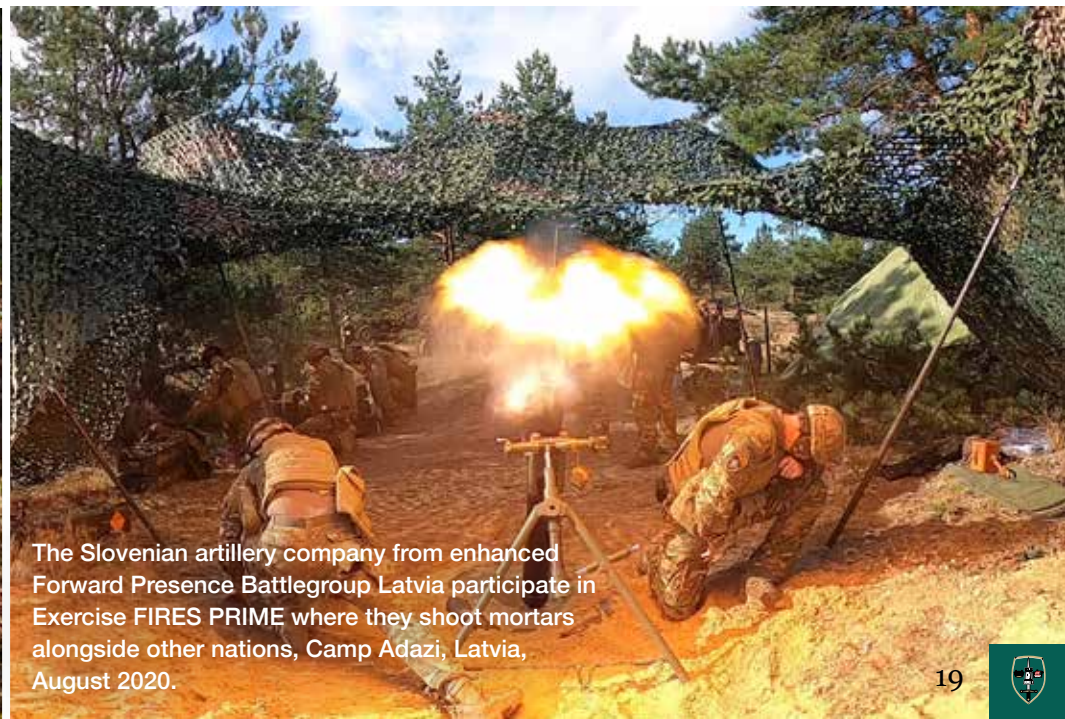
Battlegroup. Although the NATO nations presently in Latvia come from all walks of life they are unified in both purpose and resolve to defend and protect the interests of Latvia. They know the history and the hardships endured by the Latvian people in the past. Each Battlegroup member understands and empathises with the desire of the Latvian people to remain a free and independent democratic nation. Their presence in Adazi represents NATO's firm commitment to peace and stability for Latvia and the Baltics.

In Latvia it is clear that the members of the battle group have put service before self. There are countless members who have left the comfort of family and loved ones, missed the birth of a child, or have been absent from a funeral in order to be here. In Camp Adazi with eFP Battlegroup they have

gained a new family in their NATO allies. By living and working alongside each other, an enduring friendship has been made between soldiers and between nations. Together with the Transatlantic Alliance's eFP Battlegroups in Estonia, Lithuania, and Poland, we know that we are stronger together.



Polish members of the enhanced Forward Presence Battlegroup Latvia participate in the Slovakian lead Štefánik Race in Camp Adazi, Latvia, August 2020.



The Slovenian artillery company from enhanced Forward Presence Battlegroup Latvia participate in Exercise FIRES PRIME where they shoot mortars alongside other nations, Camp Adazi, Latvia, August 2020.



NATO enhanced Forward Presence (eFP) Battlegroup Estonia



STORY BY MR OLIVER OMAR, UK PERMANENT JOINT HEADQUARTERS MEDIA OFFICE

NATO's enhanced Forward Presence consists of four multinational Battlegroups deploying on a persistent rotational basis to Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania and Poland to demonstrate the Alliance's determination and ability to act as one in response to any aggression against its members.

UK Armed Forces have a leading role in NATO's enhanced Forward Presence (eFP) in the Baltic States in order to enhance Euro-Atlantic security, reassure our Allies and deter our adversaries.

The eFP BG in Estonia is led by the British Army's 5 RIFLES. Over 800 UK personnel of the Battlegroup are currently attached to the 1st Estonian Infantry Bde, as part of NATO's enhanced Forward Presence.

The Danish VIDAR Company is also fully integrated into the eFP Battlegroup, as a partner Troop Contributing Nation.

British Army 5 RIFLES is the lead unit

In September 2020, a historic occasion was marked by the Transfer of Authority parade, where 5 RIFLES replaced the FIRST FUSILIERS as the lead unit within the NATO enhanced Forward Presence Battlegroup in Estonia.

5 RIFLES is the first unit to deploy on Operation CABRIT twice, after leading the first ever eFP Battlegroup in Estonia in 2017.

"There is a long historical partnership between British and Estonian soldiers and we are proud of our leading role in the NATO eFP Battlegroup to fulfil our mission as a credible deterrence force," said Lieutenant Colonel Jim Hadfield, Commanding Officer 5 RIFLES. Uniquely, one-fifth of this Battlegroup have returned after serving on the first ever eFP Battlegroup in Estonia.

A challenging, but rewarding time

800 FIRST FUSILIERS soldiers from the Battlegroup returned home after completing their 6-month deployment. Lieutenant Colonel Chris Head, Commanding Officer FIRST FUSILIERS, who is about to leave Estonia, said that the six months spent in Estonia have been challenging but rewarding. "We have maintained readiness during unprecedented circumstances.

Together with our partners from the Royal Danish Army, we have truly integrated into a stronger Battlegroup," said Lieutenant Colonel Head. "I'm proud of the new and innovative training and engagement opportunities we have developed that not only benefits the eFP Battlegroup, but also the Estonian Defence Forces and Estonian Defence League."

"We are grateful for the collaboration and support from our partner organisations, who have enabled the smooth transition of the Battlegroups," said Colonel Paul Clayton, Commander of the NATO enhanced

Forward Presence in Estonia, adding that careful planning had taken place in liaison with Estonian authorities to ensure compliance with COVID-19 measures.

During this summer, the FIRST FUSILIERS achieved a lot from their deployment. In August, they delivered their first bespoke Potential Non-Commissioned Officers (PNCO) course in 10 years.

Selecting future leaders: The PNCO course

The British-led Allied Battlegroup had embraced the new Army Leadership Development Program by planning and delivering this invaluable opportunity to train in a unique environment with the innovative use of resources.

The five-week course saw 40 soldiers of mixed cap-badges from across the NATO eFP Battlegroup, including Estonian and Danish soldiers, taking part in this physically and mentally demanding challenge. This was a pivotal moment in the soldiers' professional working lives. As the first career course they have undertaken, it is arguably the hardest they will ever experience.

The programme saw students focus on four key areas: Leadership, Mentoring, Coaching and primarily tactics. Tactical skills were aimed at developing the students' ability to command and administrate a Section of soldiers, especially in pressured situations. They routinely rotated through



command appointments to test and develop their knowledge, skills and experience, with the end goal being to promote the next generation of junior leaders.

Unique training facilities and environments

Exploiting the opportunity of being deployed on operations, soldiers benefited from unique training facilities and environments. In the climatic phases of the 15-day final exercises, students conducted force-on-force training at the location of a former maximum-security prison, before the course deployed to Estonia's north-eastern coastline. In close collaboration with the Estonian Defence League, similar to the British Army Reserve, the course conducted an amphibious insertion to Pedassaar Island for a tactical raid to complete the exercise.

Historic cycling event over more than 1000 kilometres

Another pioneering project for eFP Estonia, also in August, was the historic cycling event to demonstrate the friendship between NATO Allies and local communities across Estonia.

Launched in Tartu on Saturday 15th August, a team of 30 Estonian, British and Danish soldiers and officers has completed a cycle ride of more than 1000km from South to West to North, covering the whole of Estonia.

Called "NATO Velo", the team cycled from Tartu in the south to the west coast of Estonia, across the islands of Saaremaa and Hiiumaa, before riding northward to the capital, Tallinn, and finishing in the Rus-

sian-border town, Narva on Friday 21st August.

"This will be a remarkable show of the unity and spirit of cooperation that is long established between the Estonian Defence Forces and the British and Danish forces that make up the NATO Battlegroup," says Colonel Paul Clayton, Commander of the NATO enhanced Forward Presence in Estonia. "The added bonus is the opportunity to enjoy the beautiful Estonian countryside while physically challenging ourselves."

NATO Velo began in Tartu, where the team embarked on the longest leg of the tour – 170 kilometers to Pärnu. From Pärnu, the President of Estonia, Kersti Kaljulaid, joined the team for a full leg on Sunday 16th August, leading the team onto her native island of Saaremaa.

The President believes that NATO Velo is a good opportunity to show the "great natural beauty" of Estonia to soldiers who would usually only see military camps and training areas. "It is one way to showcase our beautiful country," the President said.

"Meet the soldiers" events all over Estonia

Throughout the tour, the NATO Battlegroup hosted "meet the soldiers" engagement events, coinciding with the cycling team's arrival in Tartu, Pärnu, Haapsalu, Tallinn and Narva. At these events, the Estonian public enjoyed the opportunity to meet and greet NATO soldiers, see some of their equipment (from small arms to armoured vehicles) and learn about NATO and the enhanced Forward Presence.

"The equipment and heavy armour which we bring to Estonia is an important part of

our defensive role here", says Colonel Clayton. "But it is just as important that we go out and meet the Estonian public and do our best to earn their welcome and support."

Working and training together with other Battlegroups

Earlier, in June, the Battlegroup travelled to Latvia to conduct complex live firing across a range of weapons systems on Adazi ranges. This was a Battlegroup routine validation of capability, to test the contingent's readiness to perform a full range of operations.

Using Challenger 2 Main Battle Tanks, Warrior Infantry Fighting Vehicles, CV90 Infantry Firing Vehicles, and Supported by AS90 155mm Artillery, the Battlegroup practised defensive operations and live firing tactics in the challenging demanding terrain of Adazi ranges.

Careful planning took place in liaison with Estonia and Latvian authorities and the Latvian Defense Forces kindly agreed to support the exercise as the host nation. The Battlegroup had to work closely with our Allies to ensure the safe delivery of comprehensively planned operational training in Latvia, as well as to ensure compliance with COVID-19 measures.

Looking ahead, the new 5 RIFLES Battlegroup will be deploying on a series of exercises immediately after arriving in Estonia, as a validation of their mission-readiness.

They will be travelling across the Baltic States to operate alongside wider NATO Allies across the Baltic States, demonstrating the eFP's defensive and logistical capability, whilst underlining the strong cross-border cooperation between the Alliance.



The enhanced Forward Presence Battle Group Poland



US M777 at exercise Wojtek Fire

STORY BY MAJOR MIRJANA KIŠ, BG POLAND PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICE

Introduction – History and Purpose
 NATO's enhanced Forward Presence Battlegroup Poland established in 2017 is a multinational Battlegroup comprised of units from four nations: Croatia, Romania, the United Kingdom and the United States. Their mission is to contribute to and strengthen the NATO Alliance's deterrence and defensive posture in Poland. They operate in concert with the host nation's 15th Mechanized Brigade headquartered in Gizycko, Warmian-Masurian Voivodeship. As part of their mission, Battlegroup Poland is continuously executing training exercises to enhance their readiness and ability to operate as a multinational, combat-ready force. This training is accomplished through the joint efforts of the multinational staff at Battlegroup Headquarters in conjunction with the 15th Mechanized Brigade. The partnerships forged within and outside the Battlegroup continue to promote the cooperation and strong alliances that are fundamental to NATO's enhanced Forward Presence mission.

Multinational Composition

Located at the Bemowo Piskie Training Area, in the Warmian-Masurian Voivodeship, Battlegroup Poland is comprised of units from Croatia, Romania, the United Kingdom, and the United States. The partner countries assign rotational units to the Battlegroup. Currently, the United States Army's 2nd Squadron, 2nd Cavalry Regiment, "Cougars", make up the majority of the personnel in the Battlegroup as the framework unit. Cougar Squadron is equipped with the Stryker Infantry Carrier Vehicle, an advanced and fast-moving wheeled vehicle, which gives the Battlegroup the ability to rapidly move soldiers across the theater of operations as well as maneuver them around the battlefield. Legion Troop, from the United Kingdom's Light Dragoons, serves as the Battlegroup's primary scouts and reconnaissance unit. As a reconnaissance unit, they specialize in the ability to move quickly and stealthily in front of the Battlegroup in order to gather information and communicate it back to the commander. They are equipped with Jackals vehicles which were specifically designed for deep reconnaissance, rapid assault and

fire support missions. The Battlegroup also contains extensive indirect fire capabilities which includes the Croatian Army's MLRS Battery. The "Seamounts" utilize self-propelled multiple launch rocket systems which can rapidly fire 122mm rockets up to twenty kilometers. For more precise targets, the Battlegroup also has a battery of M777 howitzers from Bulldog Battery, 2nd Cavalry Regiment which can engage targets with near pin-point accuracy. Finally, the Romanian Army's "Blue Scorpions" provide air-defense capabilities to the Battlegroup.

Training and Battle Rhythm

As NATO's enhanced Forward Presence in the region, Battlegroup Poland remains ready to respond at a moment's notice to defend against threats to the Alliance. In order to fulfill this mission, the Battlegroup operates on a nearly ceaseless training schedule to ensure that it can maintain the high level of readiness to "fight tonight", and if necessary to defend against aggression. To accomplish this, the partner units in the Battlegroup must work constantly to maintain their individual unit readiness through physical fitness training and conducting maintenance on vehicles and



other equipment. Each unit in the Battlegroup also conducts their own role-specific training which focuses on improving proficiency in their fundamental skills and jobs before proceeding to more complex training events. As an example of this, the Stryker infantry units in the Battlegroup started their training cycle by validating their marksmanship with individual and crew-served weapon systems. After confirming their proficiency with individual weapons, the units then advanced to their collective training events that test the ability of squads (9 Soldiers), platoons (40 Soldiers), and finally troops (150 Soldiers) to maneuver together and conduct operations in increasingly complex training exercises. Along with each unit's training to sharpen their own skills, the partner nations in the Battlegroup collaborate through multinational training events. These exercises allow the partner nations to learn from one another and establish best practices that will help them to improve their performance in subsequent multinational exercises. These exercises serve a particularly important

role for the Battlegroup's operational capabilities because they provide opportunities for Allied countries to integrate their assets and methodology and establish standard operating procedures that strengthen the collaborative ability and effectiveness of NATO's forces.

Operation Wojtek Fires: Taking the training to an advanced level

From September 15th to 17th, Battlegroup Poland conducted Operation WOJTEK FIRES in the Bemowo Piskie Training Area which tested the Battlegroup's ability to coordinate and execute its extensive fire support capabilities. In comparison to the preceding Cougar Crawl Live Fire Exercise in August, which tested fire integration within the Battlegroup, WOJTEK FIRES took the training to a more advanced level. It introduced a new challenge to the Battlegroup by tasking it to simultaneously integrate its organic artillery assets with five U.S. Army

AH-64 Apache helicopters from the 101st Combat Aviation Brigade, 101st Airborne Division which took part in the exercise as part of their Atlantic Resolve rotational assignment. The Apaches had the opportunity to call for fire and observe fires from both the Battlegroup's Croatian MLRS and U.S. M777s Howitzer. Furthermore, the training provided the Croatian, UK and US forward observers the opportunity to work with the Apaches under day and night live fire conditions.

One of the principal goals of this exercise was to develop shared procedures that can be utilized by all of the units in the Battlegroup so that they can operate together more effectively and efficiently. Commenting on the success of the exercise Captain Antonio Burazer, Seamount Battery Commander noted: "All elements of the exercise were integrated into the unified system through procedures of the call for fire, fire execution and fire support. Conducting the exercise during night, accompanied with the fog, was particularly challenging. However, our continuous training and cooperation gave us confidence and produced results". Captain Coleman Gracey, the Battlegroup's Fire Support Officer, emphasized the long-term benefit that this event will provide to the Battlegroup, "through planning a multinational fires exercise based off of a complex scenario, Battlegroup Poland was able to create shared Tactics, Techniques, and Procedures and execute in a realistic tactical environment. The lessons learned during Wojtek Fire will be codified in the Battle Group Standard Operating Procedure and utilized by future rotations." The Battlegroup's Fires Standard Operating Procedure will ease the transition of future rotational units into the Battle Group and will establish increased multinational cooperation and understanding.



Exercise Bull Run 12 -water crossing





Romanian Air Defence Oerlicons

The exercise demonstrated not only the importance of technical interoperability, but also the advantages provided by the positive professional and personal relationships that make the Battlegroup into a more cohesive team. During WOJTEK FIRES, forward observers from Legion Troop took the opportunity to cross-train on the U.S. M777 howitzers and gained a better understanding of the crew drills required to process fire missions. Captain Bryce Higginbotham, Bulldog Battery Commander, highlighted the importance of such relationship for the success of the exercise, “the bond between Bulldog Battery and Legion Troop undoubtedly has made this process more efficient...WOJTEK FIRES is yet another great example of how we are building technical and procedural TTPs all the while strengthening the human element of interoperability.” The human connections that are strengthened through training together in the Battlegroup not only makes it a more effective fighting force but also strengthens the bond between the respective nations and NATO as a whole.

Excellent relationship with the Host Nation

The Battle Group has also taken advantage of the opportunity to build strong connections by training alongside its host-nation partners in Poland. The Battlegroup staff works closely with the Polish Army’s 15th Mechanized Brigade within which it is integrated in the mission to provide assurance and deter aggression in northeast Poland. Battlegroup Poland has always maintained a cooperative relationship with the 15th

Mechanized Brigade, as a subordinate unit, knowing that each partner can benefit from their shared relationship. Both units consistently find ways to train alongside one another which enhances the value of the training for all of the nations involved. This collaboration demonstrates their unity of effort and builds trust which is essential for the stability and security of the region.

During this rotation, Battlegroup Poland and the 15th Mechanized Brigade have joined forces to conduct multiple multinational exercises. In September, a team from the Battle Group’s staff integrated within the 15th Mechanized Brigade for their DZIK-

20 exercise to train on defensive operations, battle tracking, and Command Post operations. At the same time their respective staffs are also developing plans for upcoming exercises such as BULL RUN 13 and TUMAK 20, which will further strengthen their maneuver, fires, and reconnaissance interoperability. Notably, this BULL RUN Exercise will be the 13th iteration of the exercise in the history of the Battlegroup. This exercise is especially important because it tests the Battlegroup’s ability to alert, martial, and deploy and demonstrates its ability to respond rapidly in defense of the alliance.



Croatian MLRS during exercise Cougar Crawl





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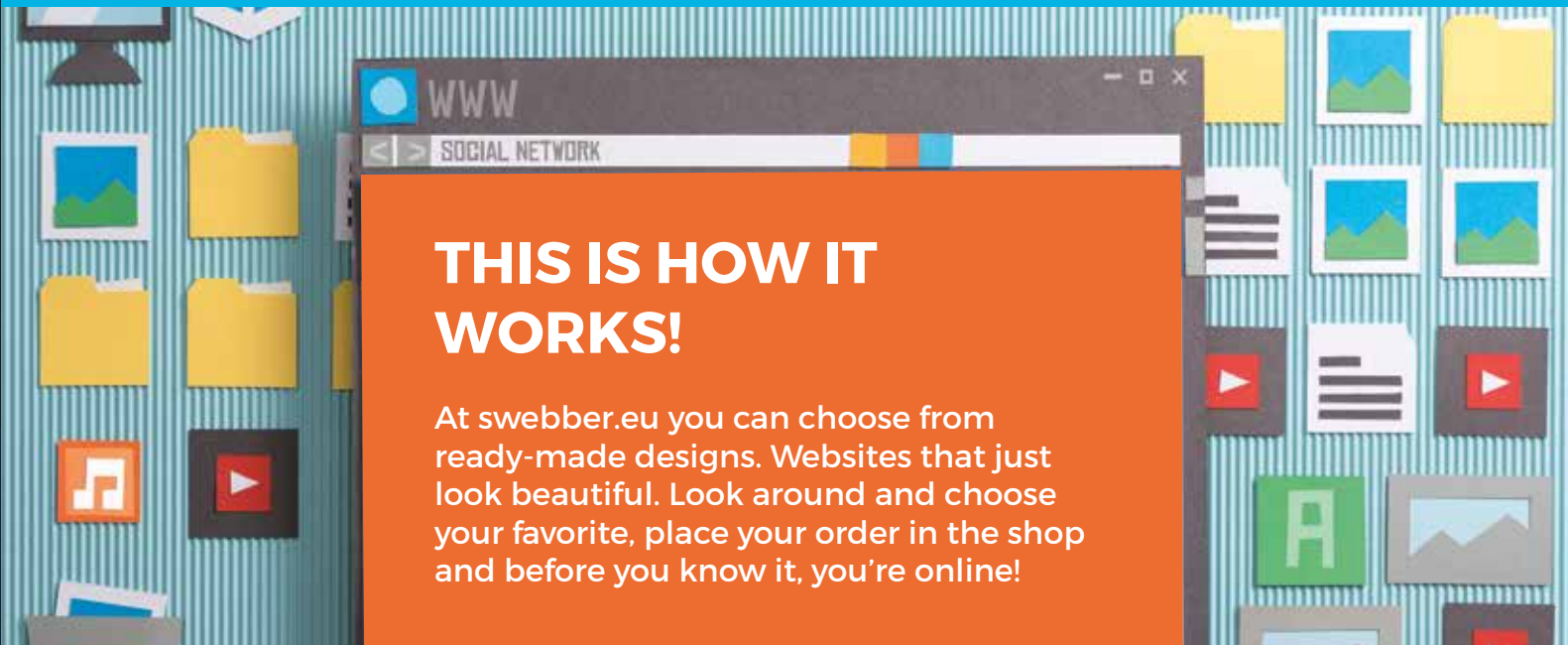
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STRONGER TOGETHER: U.S. ARMY AND NATO ALLIES AND PARTNERS TRAIN TOGETHER DURING SABER JUNCTION 20



STORY BY SERGEANT AMANDA FRY, US ARMY

HOHENFELS, Germany - Saber Junction 20 completed Aug. 27, 2020, marking the end of more than three weeks of intense field training for U.S. Army soldiers, National Guard units, and personnel from seven NATO Allies and Partner nations. The exercise tested the abilities of the military leaders and their soldiers, and fostered interoperability and multinational relations for the countries and units involved. The exercise faced unique challenges, from the implementation of a brand-new training process, to ensuring the soldiers' safety as precautions were taken against the spread of COVID-19. Held Aug. 3-27, Saber Junction 20 was a 7th Army Training Command conducted, U.S. Army Europe directed combat training rotation designed for the U.S. Army's 173rd Airborne Brigade at the Joint Multinational Readiness Center's (JMRC) Grafenwoehr and Hohenfels Training Areas.

4200 participants from the US Army and seven NATO Allies and Partners

As part of U.S. Army Europe, the 7th Army Training Command provides dynamic training and prepares forces to execute Uni-

fied Land Operations and contingencies. Supporting the Combatant Commands, NATO, and other national requirements, the 7th Army Training Command is centrally located among the highest concentration of U.S. Allies and Partners in the world. The institution is dedicated to efficiently and effectively providing innovative multinational training solutions. One of many training exercises organized by JMRC throughout the year, Saber Junction 20 hosted approximately 4,200 participants from the US Army and seven other NATO Allies and Partner nations.

Participating countries included Albania, Georgia, Latvia, Lithuania, Moldova, North Macedonia, Romania, Ukraine, and the United States. Each country involved played an active role, not only in the day-to-day scenarios within the training, but in the overall planning of the event itself.

Realistic training situations in an immersive scenario

As with all training exercises planned by JMRC, Saber Junction 20 provided realistic situations that helped immerse soldiers and leaders in the training environment. The training area includes several mock-villages, which hold role players who act as civilian residents in the simulated scenario. The civilians test soldiers' ability to inter-

act with residents, and conduct themselves around civilians in both friendly and hostile situations. Working against the training units is OPFOR (Opposing Force), which acts as the enemy force. Throughout the scenario, OPFOR fights against the training units by occupying territory and villages, as well as engaging with the training units in a series of battles. All interactions take place in real time, and the progression of the training depends on how soldiers and leaders interact with the role players and enemy forces in the training area.

OPFOR are central to trainings hosted by JMRC. OPFOR for Saber Junction 20 also consisted of soldiers from the 1st Battalion, 4th Infantry Regiment, as well as multinational units from Albania, Latvia, and Romania. OPFOR's actions and movement hinge on how the allied forces, comprised of the remaining units involved, respond to situations that arise in the training area.

Repetitive training in defensive and attack

Lieutenant Colonel Kevin Ryan, the 4th Inf. Regt. commander, and said that in preparation for Saber Junction 20, a new approach was taken as JMRC and multinational leaders planned the training exercise. "Saber Junction was different than any other rotation we have done," Ryan said,

noting that the training was designed with five battle periods for the battalions. Shifting to this format allowed for the individual battalions to get repetitive training, both in defense and attack, which helped maximize the overall training exercise.

“This model ensured that the battalions were all involved in the fight, and they all had multiple repetitions in both attacking and defense, as well as move of contact,” Ryan said. “All of this makes the battalion commanders and the soldiers better at their trade.”

While the planning and training approach is a recent development, Ryan said that the ultimate training objectives remained the same as they have always been for JMRC.

“We are still focused on the fundamentals,” Ryan said. “The fundamentals of fire and maneuver, planning and preparing for combat, executing that combat, and assessing the best way go into the next battle period.”

Learning from the mistakes made in a battle situation also serve to provide valuable knowledge for the forces involved in the training.

“Hopefully, we are learning from the lessons that we realized during the last battle period,” Ryan said. “We are modifying our behavior, and then fine tuning those modifications in the next battle period to get even better.”

Necessary measures to prevent the spread of COVID-19 were in place

Utilizing a new training plan was not the only aspect of Saber Junction 20 that provided new challenges for leadership. Built into the training that took place this year were precautions for military personnel’s health and well-being, as the U.S. Army continues to take all necessary measures to prevent the spread of COVID-19 among training personnel.

Soldiers and participants traveling to the Grafenwoehr and Hohenfels Training Areas for Saber Junction 20 were required to go through a 14-day restriction of movement period, as well as regular COVID-19 testing to protect all personnel against the spread of the virus. Additionally, soldiers were continuously monitored during the exercise. These precautions not only



ensured the health of soldiers, it allowed JMRC to continue to provide training to multinational troops during the pandemic and JMRC to continue to transport military personnel, including U.S. National Guard soldiers, into the training area, and helped maximize the potential of the training event.

Once cleared for training with a clean bill of health, soldiers were able to head out to the field and begin the three-week exercise, and focus on the purpose of building a multinational coalition that is trained to win in combat situations.

The multinational approach in planning and training

The multinational partnering that takes place at the JMRC training areas allows NATO allies and partnering nations to learn how to interact and train with each other. Planning for these training events is typically done on a multinational level as well. Captain Chase Olson, the multinational interoperability officer for JMRC, said that although the planning procedures were modified this year due to COVID-19 precautions and regulations, the nations involved in the exercise still played an active role in the planning and execution of Saber Junction 20.

“All countries played an integral part in the planning efforts of the exercise,” Olson said. “There was an inherent expectation for involvement, from the plans inception to execution of the execution of the rota-

tion. Each country’s representative has a voice, and provides invaluable input into mission and training objectives, exercise deliverables, and the force structure.”

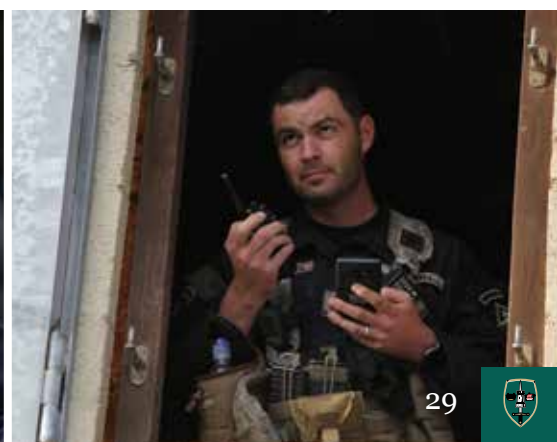
Helping each other to get better

In order to ensure the optimal training setting, Olson said that extensive planning is utilized for JMRC exercises, with an innovative event design that incorporates a “lessons-learned” strategy through various planning conferences, both before and during the exercise.

Ultimately, Saber Junction 20 succeeded in providing multinational forces the opportunity to meet and train in a real-world environment, testing their ability to work together and find solutions and strategies to win.

For Ryan, working with multinational forces further enhances the training experience for U.S. Army forces who are involved with the exercise. Working with NATO Allies and Partners, as well as the National Guard Soldiers who travel in for training, all serve to create a cohesive force.

“They fought alongside us, and made us even stronger,” Ryan said. “We learn about each other, we learned about our different cultures, and we learned what our strengths and weaknesses are in order to help each other get better.”



JFC BRUNSSUM PARTICIPATING IN THE 2020 WORLD CLEANUP DAY



STORY BY MR OLIVER SMITH, JFCBS PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICE

Every year, on the 3rd Saturday of September, there is a worldwide effort to get as many people as possible out and clear as much rubbish off the streets as they can. This is known as 'World Cleanup Day'. This year (19th September) the global effort was joined by a joint team of motivated local residents, and JFC Brunssum (JFCBS) personnel, who spent their own free time out working at bettering our local environment. The team was joined on the ground by the Commander of JFCBS, General Jörg Vollmer, who personally assisted in the litter-picking campaign across Brunssum, and the Mayor of Brunssum, Wilma Van der Rijt.

This is one of the many ways in which JFCBS tries to support their hosts, building community spirit and continuing the positive working relationship that is shared with the town of Brunssum. Whilst out and about cleaning in Brunssum, the volunteers were met with friendly smiles and nought but positive feedback from all those who they encountered; some of whom were pleasantly surprised to see such dedication to grass-roots environmental activism in their community. We can all be taking opportunities like these to set an example of environmental consciousness to all.

NATO, as an organisation of a huge and multifaceted scope, has a clear vested interest in maintaining an environmentally conscious *modus operandi*. The Alliance has undertaken measures to that effect since 1969 with the establishment of the Committee on the Challenges of Modern Society, whose responsibilities are now encompassed within the remit of the NATO Science for Peace and

Security programme (SPS). It is to the benefit of the Alliance to constantly act in mind of environmental protection and security.

'World Cleanup Day' is led by an Estonian based organisation 'Let's Do It World', and aims to mobilize as many people as possible to engage in local environmentally-positive events. 'World Cleanup Day' has an aspirational target of reaching 5% of the world's population. Despite not reaching this ambitious goal, event organisers can hardly be disappointed with the end result of directly mobilizing over 18 million people in 180 countries.

The day went ahead always mindful of the presence of COVID-19, social distancing, in keeping with the Netherlands governments' recommendations at the time, was practiced to the letter throughout the day.

The events of the day were a demonstration of the combined resolve of JFCBS and Brunssum town to a future less dominated by the environmental catastrophes which will affect us all, and will continue to affect subsequent generations for thousands of years to come.

A personal account

A personal account of the day's events from Corporal Monica Dunkley, one of the two organisers and advocates for the initiative, follows:

"Everywhere I look, I am constantly reminded of the human impact on our natural environment, whether it's a news report on climate change or plastic bottles and sweet wrappers which have been carelessly discarded on the ground, the effects are clearly visible, and so I ask myself "what can I do?" Last year, my colleague Kirsten and I

learned about World Cleanup Day; established in 2018, this fast-growing global movement, sees volunteers come together across the world, to collect litter through organised clean-ups, and conduct waste mapping initiatives, in a bid to make the environment a cleaner and safer place.

This year for World Cleanup Day 2020, we wanted to go bigger and better, the aim was to host an official NATO JFC Brunssum clean-up. The interest was there from the start and grew rapidly. Volunteers from the international headquarters were quick to sign up, military, civilian and parents with children; each person with the same goal: to make a difference.

The event gained the attention of the Mayor of Brunssum, W. J. F. Van Der Rijt and JFCBS Commander General Jörg Vollmer, both of whom participated in the clean-up. Deputy Commander JFCBS, Lieutenant General Stuart Skeates praised the team-building aspect of the initiative, commenting that he was "immensely proud that such a junior member of this multi-national headquarters took the initiative to bring together JFCBS's effort for this great cause".

As a Corporal in the Royal Air Force working in a 4* NATO headquarters, I am very proud to have organised this highly successful event and hope that more organisations will follow. For me, I will continue to do my part for the environment, inspired by the knowledge that there are many like-minded individuals who also want to make positive contributions to our planet, now and for future generations.

- Corporal Monica Dunkley
RAF, JFCBS J8



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VISITS AND ACTIVITIES

AUGUST - OCTOBER 2020



26 AUG 2020

GENERAL VOLLMER VISITS THE GOVERNOR OF THE PROVINCE OF LIMBURG

Wednesday 26 August General Jörg Vollmer conducted his first official call on Mr Theo Bovens, King's Commissioner for the Province of Limburg (Governor) at the latter's offices, in Maastricht. Discussion ranged across a number of topics that, amongst others, included: the seamless integration of NATO personnel and their families into the Province; the economic impact of JFC Brunssum on the local economy; opportunities that might be exploited/further exploited such that the Province and JFC Brunssum can derive mutual benefit; and the impact of COVID-19.

A thoroughly beneficial meeting concluded, on both sides, with a renewed determination to broaden and deepen relations.



28 AUG 2020

SITTARD-GELEEN MAYOR VISITS JFC BRUNSSUM

Friday 28 August the Mayor of Sittard-Geleen, Mr Hans Verheijen, visited JFC Brunssum for discussions with the Commander, General Jörg Vollmer. This was the first meeting of the two leaders.

Over lunch a range of issues were discussed including: JFC Brunssum's role and responsibilities as an Operational-level military headquarters in the NATO command structure; the economic impact of JFC Brunssum; and ways in which the headquarters and people of Sittard-Geleen might better support each other to mutual benefit.



27 AUG 2020

COMMANDER LANDCOM VISITS JFC BRUNSSUM

On Thursday 27 August Commander Joint Force Command Brunssum (JFCBS), General Jörg Vollmer, welcomed Commander Allied Land Command (COM LANDCOM), Lieutenant General Roger L. Cloutier Jr.

This was the first visit of Lieutenant General Cloutier to JFC Brunssum since assuming command of LANDCOM at the beginning of August. The purpose of the visit was to provide Lieutenant General Cloutier the opportunity to further his understanding of the ways in which JFCBS supports NATO's three core tasks of Crisis Management, Cooperative Security and Collective Defence. This broader and deeper comprehension of JFCBS' tasks and responsibilities will enable COM LANDCOM to prioritise and synchronise the work of his HQs in support of ongoing Alliance missions, operations, exercises and other activities.



03 SEP 2020

DESIGNATED CHIEF OF STAFF SHAPE VISITS JFC BRUNSSUM

Admiral Joachim Rühle of the German Navy, the designated new Chief of Staff (COS) of Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe (SHAPE), visited JFC Brunssum and its Commander, General Jörg Vollmer.

Prior to Admiral Rühle assuming his new post, the visit served as an introduction for the new COS SHAPE into the work of JFC Brunssum. It provided an opportunity to demonstrate the capabilities of the Command and helped to deepen understanding of the roles, responsibilities, and authorities of this Headquarters.



16 SEP 20

JFCBS COMMANDER VISITS LATVIA

JFC Brunssum Commander, General Jörg Vollmer, visited Latvia 16th and 17th of September.

This trip was part of an ongoing series of visits to enhanced Forward Presence Battle Groups (eFP BGs) and NATO Force Integration Unit (NFIU) Host Nations to underline the importance of operational readiness and the Alliance's unwavering commitment to Collective Defence.

"NATO stands together as one. We Are NATO!"

In a prepared statement, NATO's position of united strength was reiterated, as was Latvia's integral role in the future of the Alliance.



22 SEP 2020

LANDCOM CORPS COMMANDERS CONFERENCE

JFC Brunssum Commander, General Jörg Vollmer, spoke at the 16th annual LANDCOM-led Corps Commanders Conference (LC3) at the Multinational Corps North East HQ (MNC NE) in Szczecin, Tuesday 22 September. Commanders from across NATO member states dialled in to the LC3 to hear speakers discuss a range of topics related to the ongoing and future challenges facing the Alliance.



01 OCT 2020

GENERAL VOLLMER ATTENDS ANNUAL BALTIC CONFERENCE ON DEFENCE

JFC Brunssum Commander, General Jörg Vollmer, was invited to speak as part of a panel of experts at the 14th Annual Baltic Conference on Defence (ABCD), on the topic of 'Deterrence and Defence in the Baltic Sea Region.

The General spoke in the second of three sessions of panel discussions, all of which were unified in tackling ongoing security and defence concerns facing the Baltic States, NATO, and the EU. Following his address General Vollmer engaged in discussion focused on the direction of future security mechanisms/structures/processes in the Baltics.



05 OCT 2020

SERVICE OF REMEMBRANCE HELD FOR CREW OF LANCASTER R5701

A service of remembrance was held at Brunssum's Lancaster Bomber Memorial to pay tribute to the sacrifice of the crew of Lancaster R5701; 7 young men who lost their lives in the course of their duty flying a sortie over occupied Netherlands, in WWII. This marks the 78th anniversary of this tragic event. Members of the British Armed Forces and wider defence community stood alongside Brunssum community leaders and the general public, in respectful contemplation of the harsh consequences of War.



DANISH ARMED FORCES



STORY BY MAJOR JACOB T.B. BROND, JFCBS CO DCOS MGT

Introduction

The Danish Armed Forces consists of five operational commands, the army, navy, air force, special operations command and the arctic command.

The Danish Armed Forces are responsible for the enforcement of the sovereignty of the Kingdom of Denmark, which includes the Faeroe Islands and Greenland. Furthermore, the Danish Armed Forces are a part of the national emergency services.

Danish Army

The Army is the assurance that Denmark at any given time, can deliver a robust brigade sized unit, to be deployed abroad, or for national duties. The army's core tasks are international conflict prevention, crisis management, collective defence, defence of the Kingdom of Denmark, and its adjacent areas. The army consists of two brigades, with 1. Brigade being the army's quick reaction brigade, which is able to deploy worldwide, if needed. 1 Brigade consists of a number of manoeuvre units,

as well as logistic, engineer, signals and other support units. 2. Brigade is a more mixed brigade, composed of both regular troops, as well as conscripts. Furthermore, 2 Brigade is responsible for the final training and preparation for troops being deployed abroad.

Danish Navy

Denmark's role as one of the world's leading maritime nation, means that the Danish Navy has an important task with regards to the contribution to global maritime security, which is needed for a





peaceful development of the world. The Danish homeland security, welfare and growth, is to some extent based on the ability to use the sea as a safe mean of transportation.

Within the Kingdom of Denmark, which includes Greenland and the Faeroe Island, the Danish Navy is responsible for the training and deployment of naval forces, in order to enforce Danish sovereignty, as well as to conduct search and rescue missions, surveillance at sea, inspection of fishermen and many more tasks.

The Danish Navy is organized into three squadrons, each with their own scope. 1 Squadron comprises of multi-role frigates and Arctic patrol ships, and focuses on domestic operations, primarily around Greenland and the Faeroe Islands.

2 Squadron is built around the core task of international operations and combat operations; it consists of frigates, command and support ships, patrol vessels and mine clearing assets.

3 Squadron is primarily dedicated to national operations, maritime surveillance and enforcement of sovereignty and support to civil society – specifically with environmental protection assets.

Danish Air Force

As well as the navy, the Danish Air Force has a lot of domestic tasks. The overarching task is to control the Danish airspace with regards to military flights and to keep a high readiness at all times in order to be ready to intercept unknown aircrafts entering Danish airspace. Furthermore, the Danish Air Force is responsible for search and rescue within Denmark. 24 hours every day during the whole year, there are three rescue helicopters at short notice to move. These rescue helicopters are also used for transport of serious ill patients between the regions in Denmark, when needed.

The Danish Air Force is organized into five wings. Three of them operate aircrafts, while the two others are support wings. The Fighter Wing is on a short notice to move, 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. The Fighter Wing operates F-16 – which will be replaced by F-35 in the upcoming years. The Helicopter Wing operates EH101 Merlin, Seahawks and Fennec AS 550, and the Air Transport Wing operates C-130 Hercules and CL-604 Challengers.

The two wings in support are the Air Control Wing and the Operations Support Wing.

Worldwide

Currently, the Danish Armed Forces have a number of locations around the globe, where it's contributing. The deployments vary in numbers and sizes, with one of the smallest ones being single personnel deployed into UN observation posts, ranging up to Multinational Corps Northeast located in Szczecin, Poland, where Denmark is one of the framework nations. Denmark is also the lead-nation of Multinational Division North, in Adazi, Latvia.

Denmark has put a lot of effort and manpower into Multinational Corps Northeast and Multinational Division North, as these two locations are just in the backyard of Denmark.

Going beyond the borders, Denmark has other forces deployed around the globe, with larger contributions being in Kosovo, Iraq and Afghanistan. In Kosovo, the army is responsible for the security at the French camp Novo Selo. Up until recently, Denmark was present at Al Asad Air Base, in order to conduct training of Iraqi Security Forces. From the end of this year, Denmark will be leading the NATO mission in Iraq. In Afghanistan, the Armed Forces are supporting the Afghan National Security Forces in a train, advice and assist role.



#WEAREJFCBS

ITALY

#WEARENATO



When did you arrive and what is your job?

I arrived last summer, in July 2019. I am a member of the administrative team of the Commander and I also assist in the Commander's inner office to fill PA duties when necessary.

Tell us some more about your position here at JFCBS?

I really am lucky to collaborate with the COM's Staff. Every member of the team has an important job and I am very happy to be an integral part of the team. In the COM's front office, we begin early in the morning and you can be sure that you will be hard at work until the late afternoon. I could not have imagined the amount I have learned each day and I have the opportunity to contribute to so many different situations that I could never have imagined.

Tell us about yourself, before coming to Brunssum?

Originally, I am from Aprilia, a small town in the southern part of Rome, but I was born in Germany to immigrant parents: my father, from Sicily, who worked for years as a miner (a harder worker than me), my mother, who is an extraordinary seamstress, and my brother, who is currently a fireman, working the hardest in the family.

I began my military career in June 1991 in the Italian Army as a paratrooper where I completed primary training and jump school.

NAME : Massimo Volanti
RANK : OR-9
SERVICE : Aeronautica Militare
(Italian Air Force)
NATION : Italy



Thanks to my language skills, I obtained the opportunity to choose between joining the Italian Finance Police or to begin my career as a Warrant Officer in the Italian Airforce. I chose the Airforce as this was my goal, and I was lucky to have the chance to pursue this path.

I worked for 17 years near Rome at the glorious and historical Flight Test Centre of the Italian Airforce (Reparto Sperimentale Volo) in Pratica di Mare. My job and my day involved supporting the best Pilots and Astronauts in Italy.

I spent 10 years at the Head Quarters of the Italian Airforce at the 4th Department of Logistic. I was fortunate to be afforded the opportunity to continue to improve my language skills in German and English. I believe it prepared me well for the challenges and experience of a Multi-National Command at JFC Brunssum.

I accompanied a lot of pilots during their flights in this period; I had the pleasure of participating in various operational activities and flight demonstrations in Air shows.

The most memorable and amazing experience for me was a two month deployment to South Africa to assist in the flight test in 2006. It is something I will never forget.

Do you have family here?

Yes, my wife Filomena and my two sons, Ottavio (15) and Adriano (13), have joined me here at JFC Brunssum. My Kids love it here; they feel free to go around on bicycles and to meet people from the area, and from around the world. My children attend AFNORTH and, although it is quite different to the Italian curriculum, they have grown quite comfortable and have enjoyed the learning experience.

What are your Hobbies?

I love cinema, my own at home and the big screen. I love a great ending. I also like walking and biking in the countryside. I like listening to all kinds of music, depending on my mood, but I enjoy lounge music the most. Also, when I have time, I enjoy using my professional camera to photograph my family members.

I hope to begin sightseeing this beautiful area in all four directions. I would like to take advantage of the time we have, as a family abroad, and learn new habits and languages. Most importantly we try to live with the Dutch approach of "enjoy your life".

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