

HEADQUARTERS EUROCORPS INVOLVEMENT IN NATO RESPONSE FORCES

Part 1

NATO RESPONSE FORCE 7 (1st July 2006 – 31st December 2006)



After the re-deployment from Kabul after ISAF VI, the top priority for EC HQ has been the NATO Response Force 7 (NRF-7) in 2006. So, the first half of the year has been dedicated to an intense preparation program, followed by a stand by phase from 1 July 2006 until 10 January 2007.

NRF MISSIONS

This spectrum of NRF potential missions covers the full range of operations from consequence management to direct actions against terrorist threats. The NRF must hence be able to undertake following missions:

- Deployed as a stand alone force for crisis response: Non-Combatant Evacuation Operations (NEO), Consequence Management Support [in case of CBRN (Chemical, Biological, Radiological, Nuclear) events or humanitarian crisis situation], Crisis Response Operations (CRO), Counter Terrorism Operations Support, Embargo Operations.
- Deployed as an initial entry force to facilitate the arrival of follow-on forces in a Joint Operations Area (JOA) with an environment from benign to hostile, with or without host nation support.
- Deployed as a demonstrative force package in order to show the resolve of member nations. This could be a quick response operation to support diplomacy if required.

EUROCORPS PREPARING FOR NRF 7

The Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe's (SHAPE) Multinational Training and Exercise Program (the so-called MTEP) envisioned a very ambitious training programme including several Live exercises (LIVEX) forcing the EC HQ to maintain a very high tempo of preparation for NRF 7. EC also had to face the challenge to create one NRF LCC FWD CP (Land Component Forward Command Post) as land element of NRF, a Rear Support Command (RSC) as well as a Home Base concept instead of operating out of the HRF command post concept.

Furthermore, a training, validation and certification of the force package had to be developed in the understanding that COMEC was also tasked to certify the French German Brigade CP as a NRF Brigade CP.

The first major preparation exercise was COMMON TENACITY 05 which took place at the German Army Warfighting Centre in Wildflecken as a Command Posts exercise/Computer assisted exercise (CPX/CAX).

The following exercise was BRILLIANT LEDGER. It was the certification exercise for the NRF Land force package as a whole and it started with a LIVEX field exercise phase with all units, followed by a CPX. It was conducted in the French Training area Bitche where all necessary real life support was deployed to test the ability to operate in full autonomy in an austere environment as required for NRF.

This exercise was followed by the Steadfast series of exercises led by the Joint Forces Command (Brunssum). The CPX STEADFAST JACKPOT was the certification exercise for the NRF as a whole inclusive of the other components in a joint setting. During this exercise, EC deployed the LCC FWD in Entzheim near Strasbourg whilst the Home Base was fully activated at the Aubert de Vincelles barrack. Though deployment started already in May, Exercise STEADFAST JAGUAR in June 06 successfully demonstrated NATO's ability to deploy the NRF at strategic distance, in this case to Cape Verde.

Next to a fruitful exercise for all, EC and Land units' contribution was decisive in securing the support of the local population resulting in a smooth exercise leaving only good memories behind.

The main exercise during the standby phase for NRF 7 was Common Tenacity 06. This CPX was conducted in October 2006 on the newly erected training platform in Quartier Aubert de Vincelles.



A BALANCE OF NRF 7 FOR EUROCORPS

Preparing for NRF was a real challenge resulting in intensive training. Compared to the ISAF experience, preparing for NRF added deployment and initial entry to the challenge of preparing for a rotation in an ongoing operation. In other words preparing for NRF 7 was a unique opportunity to train and prepare for all aspects of an expeditionary operation.

Hard lessons were learned and the NRF preparation raised the individual proficiency, the equipment adequacy and the collaborative capacity of EC to a level never reached before at least as far as EC HQ is concerned.

Also under pressure of the NRF preparation, good progress was achieved in the area of C2 systems and the newly delivered field equipment is now routinely and swiftly set up. And moving from a 30 days notice to move for HRF to 5 days for NRF was also a challenge that had to be mastered. And finally, preparing for NRF developed a solid expertise in exercise design and organization as well as a good understanding of what training effort is required to sustain a high readiness capability.

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Part 2

NATO RESPONSE FORCE 15 (1st July 2011 – 31st December 2011)



In the framework of the transformation process a conceptual adaptation was adopted at the Krakow NATO summit of 2009, since the Alliance was confronted with a situation of declining unit nominations by the different nations over the years. Fears were emerging that the NRF operational readiness and effectiveness could be reduced. The new NRF concept was an effort to counteract this negative trend. The main NRF mission remained the fast demonstration of a military NATO presence and the provision of capabilities to support an Article 5 or a crisis reaction

operation.

The main features of the new concept were:

- A new command-and-control structure at the operational level with a Deployable Joint Staff Element (DJSE) designed to ensure the fast presence of an operational-level command element in theatre that acts as an extended arm of the stationary headquarters in Europe.
- A reduced overall force size of 13,000 troops resulting from a restructured force and more differentiated unit readiness requirements.

In the long-term NRF rotation plan Eurocorps was identified as NRF Land Component Command (LCC) for the period from 1st July until 31st December 2010. Thus, Eurocorps was the first corps-level headquarters that has prepared in accordance with the new NRF concept and that embarked on a potential NRF operation with the new structure.

Eurocorps preparation for NRF 15

The end of the standby phase NRF 7 in late 2006 already marked the start of the preparations for NRF 15. According to the adapted command post concept the new NRF Land Component command post (LCC CP) now comprises all cells and centres needed for the command and control process. The short-term, medium-term and long-term planning can thus be carried out in theatre. Moreover, the Commander LCC (COM LCC) thus has the expertise he needs available on site. In view of the fact that the value placed on the so-called Effects Based Approach to Operations (EBAO) has significantly increased, particularly in ongoing operations, Eurocorps has adapted its structures for NRF 15 with the creation of a Joint Effects Centre (JEC).

Besides the LCC CP, a Fact-Finding Team (FFT) acting as an advance party is part of the LCC command post concept. The fully equipped FFT can be deployed worldwide at 24 hours notice. The third and last pillar is the so-called Home Base (HB). The small Staff elements remaining at the Home Base ensure personnel augmentation, public information and family support. Furthermore, they run a Situation Centre where the in-theatre operations are monitored.

The NRF units– composition and command relationships

The above-mentioned reduced force size and differentiated unit readiness requirements for NRF 15 compose the units that are assigned either to an Immediate Response Force (IRF) or to a Response Force Pool (RFP).

The rapidly available and highly mission-ready IRF units vary in notice-to-move status between two and 30 days, whereas the RFP, as a body of forces offering staggered employment capabilities, is subject to partly much longer notice-to-move periods of up to 60 days.

The units belonging to the RFP offer a broad spectrum of capabilities without determinations regarding strength and specific capabilities of single units. The NATO nations nominate their contributions with time flexibility and under conditions they can determine themselves.

The way leading up to the stand-by phase

Exercise COMMON TENACITY (CT 09), which took place in November 2009 in Wildflecken (Germany), then marked the start of the internal preparation for the certification. It laid the foundation stone for the ensuing certification during exercise BRILLIANT LEDGER 10 (BRLR 10) in March 2010 at Valdahon training area (France). During this exercise in which roughly 1,300 soldiers from up to 18 nations took part - among them the French-German Brigade. HQ Eurocorps underwent a so-called Combat Readiness Evaluation (CREVAL) during that exercise, which was carried out by NATO Force Command Heidelberg and resulted in the rating "excellent". And so the Commander Eurocorps, Lieutenant-General Hans-Lothar Domröse, was able to report on 25 March 2010, the final day of the evaluation: „I herewith report that the Eurocorps and the Land Package for NRF 15 are combat ready“. The evaluation and certification process continued at a higher level in the chain of command. Exercise STEADFAST JUNCTURE



(SFJE 10) in May 2010 provided the framework for the JFC certification. The entire NRF contingent took part in that joint and combined exercise that took place at different locations and was led by Joint Force Command Brunssum.