



"Time and time again, NATO and its Member Nations have turned to Air Power as the first, and in some cases the only, Military Response Option"
General Frank Gorenc, COM AIRCOM

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THE MAIN LESSONS LEARNED OF TRANSFORMATION OF NATO COMMAND STRUCTURE AND NATO AIR COMMAND AND CONTROL STRUCTURE²³

In recent years since the Cold War, the United States and European NATO members have implemented serious reductions (both in personnel and technical investment) in their military forces, constantly reducing the proportion of gross domestic product spent on the military spending. It seemed possible that crises and conflicts could be managed with political and diplomatic means. However, there are many parts of the world which present security risks and experience armed conflict which potentially compromise the security not only of Europe but also the security of our country. In light of the crisis in Ukraine, it is worthwhile to review the effect of NATO transformation, began in 2010, and even though we cannot see the end of the events in Ukraine, some conclusions can already be drawn.

A NATO PARANCSNOKI VALAMINT LÉGI VEZETÉSI ÉS IRÁNYÍTÁSI RENDSZERE STRUKTÚRÁJA ÁTALAKÍTÁSÁNAK FŐ TANULSÁGAI

A hidegháború lecsendesedése után az elmúlt években az Egyesült Államok és az európai NATO tagállamok is komoly – személyi és haditechnikai – csökkentéseket hajtottak végre a haderejükben, folyamatosan faragva a nemzeti össztermékből a hadseregére fordítható kiadásokat. Úgy látszott, hogy az esetlegesen bekövetkező válságokat, konfliktusokat politikai és diplomáciai eszközökkel kezelni lehet. A Világ számos pontján vannak azonban olyan biztonsági kockázatot jelentő események, fegyveres konfliktusok, melyek Európa – és hazánk biztonságát is – veszélyeztethetik. Az ukrajnai válság tükrében még inkább érdemes áttekinteni a NATO 2010-ben kezdődött átalakításának a helyzetét, és bár még nem látjuk az ukrajnai események végét, bizonyos következtetéseket már most le lehet vonni.

INTRODUCTION

From the beginning of the nineties, after the analysis of the experience of the Gulf War, it became clear that NATO's transformation was inevitable. The task planner and executive headquarters, units and systems should be "tailored" to the challenges and requirements. A risk of broad attack against NATO has significantly reduced. After 1995 the need to deploy beyond NATO's traditional boundaries arose demonstrated by involvement in locations such as the Balkans, Afghanistan and the Persian Gulf region. At the end of the decade, with the entry of

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Poland, Czech Republic and Hungary into NATO, a conversion process began in "waves" with Croatia and Albania's integration for the time being set to the side.

In November of 2010, at the Lisbon NATO summit, the leaders of the Member States accepted NATO's new strategic concept of the Alliance. The main priorities were defined as the Alliance undergoing a continuous renewal process, a need to rationalize / reduce the existing headquarters command and control levels and units, as well as to improve and modernize the working methods as a means to increase efficiency. They promised that the new command system would be "efficient, slim and affordable." The Peacetime Establishment was reduced from 13.000 positions to 8.800 positions and regional isolation of single service commands ceased. This system has to serve a new series of requirements, as defined in NATO Level of Ambition (2 MJO - "Major Joint Operations", 6 SJO - "Smaller Joint Operations") based on the principles of rapid response and deployability.

The renewal process – before the Lisbon summit – began with NATO headquarters internal organizational transformation in June 2010 in Brussels. Further systematic reviews were made concerning NATO committees, whereby integrated organizational and personnel cuts were made. As a next step NATO started rationalizing the command structure and the system of NATO agencies. A decision was reached at the Lisbon Summit regarding conversion to the new model and its locations were approved by defense ministers in June 2011.

THE NEW COMMAND STRUCTURE AND THE EXECUTIVE BODIES

In accordance with the decision of the Ministers two strategic commands were created. The one in charge of NATO transformation was called ACT (Allied Command Transformation, Norfolk USA) whereas the command responsible for NATO military operations was named ACO (Allied Command Operations, Mons BEL). Between them, the commands covered, both geographically and professionally, Alliance military needs, being responsible for the planning, training and execution of military operations.

ACT operates and supervises such training, teaching, research and lessons-learned centres, whose activities have a significant impact on the transformation and development of NATO, training and task execution capability of forces⁴.

⁴ JWC – Joint Warfare Centre, JFTC – Joint Force Training Centre, JALLC – Joint Analysis and Lessons Learned Centre, NSO – NATO School Oberammergau, NMIOTC – NATO Maritime Interdiction Operational Training Centre

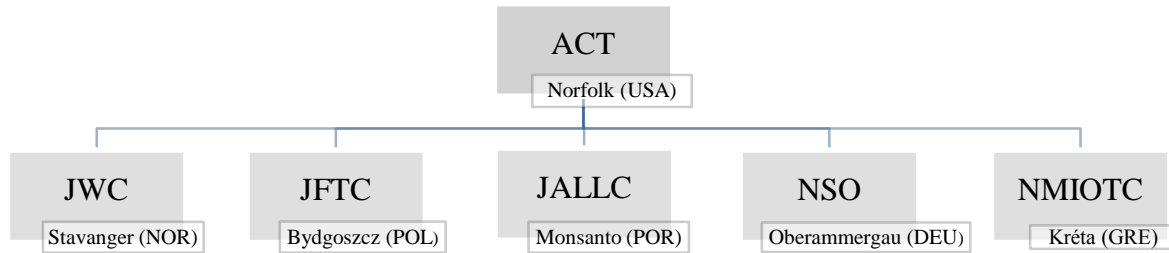


Figure 1. ACT and subordinate organizations (edited by the author)

ACO on the other hand is in charge of operations planning and execution of operations of the Alliance. It has two Joint Force Headquarters (JFCBS - Joint Force Command Brunssum, NLD, JFCNP - Joint Force Command Naples, ITA) to monitor ongoing NATO operations, as these scenes, these operations of joint activities take place.

There are then several single service commands: AIRCOM (Air Forces Command) – Ramstein DEU, MARCOM (Naval Command) – Northwood GBR, LANDCOM (Army Headquarters) – Izmir TUR based on the strategic level guidance of NATO responsible commander (SACEUR – Supreme Allied Commander of Europe) in peacetime, in crisis or in conflict plan and conduct the military tasks within their area of responsibility, sometimes beyond.

In the system of the military headquarters the Single Service Commands have been at the same – operational – level with joint HQs and in the command structure of the Alliance they are not in subordination of those.

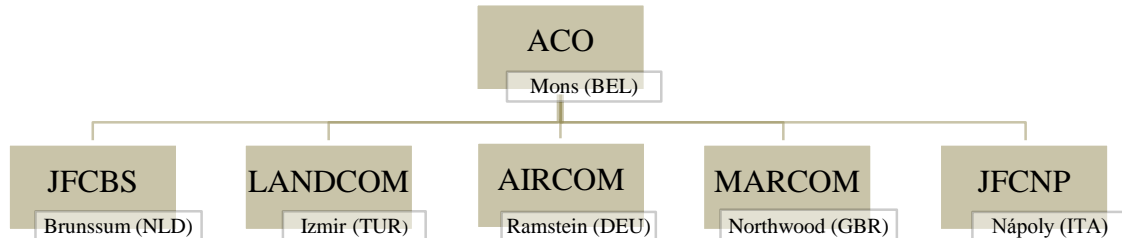


Figure 2. ACO and the subordinate commands (edited by the author)

There is a significant degree of professional knowledge in the Single Service Commands, because the member states have loaded this positions with experienced staff officers, highly qualified professionals, therefore they have appropriate competencies to determine NATO-level requirements and priorities, they authentically take part in mentoring, in inspections as well as in evaluations.

In order to ensure that the Alliance responds to the rapidly changing security challenges and can perform tasks with its full spectrum, a new system had to be settled – decided at the political level – by the 1999 NATO summit, and in 2001 a new force system – NATO Force Structure – NFS – had to be established in order to support missions of NCS.

The NFS consists of a system of Rapid Reaction Corps and maritime forces, founded by several nations and operated in accordance with Memorandum of Understanding. The main difference between the NCS and NFS is that the assigned command of NCS exercises command and control function at Operational Level in Joint Operations, however NFS provides additional



command and control and mission execution capabilities by designated units of responsible single service.

In line with the transformation of command structure and gradual build-up of NFS, NATO in 2003 decided to establish a rapid, joint response force (NRF – NATO Response Force), which based on organizations and staffs of NCS and NFS. The rapid reaction units execute their tasks in operational subordination and by operational command of a Joint Forces Command.

LESSONS FROM TRANSFORMATION OF NEW NATO COMMAND STRUCTURE

With transformation of NATO headquarters and air command and control elements has executed the largest military organizational rationalization of NATO so far. The new command system must have appropriate strategic and operational links to the deployed headquarters and troops. The thus created lithe structure more transparent, and able to carry out its tasks more efficiently and more flexibly. The system capabilities, the credibility of the appropriate deterrent power has to be visible through the command structure.

The number the bodies of the NATO command structure was reduced from 13 to 7. With strong separation of tasks of ACO-ACT become easier and more efficient to translate the political will to military duties. After the end of regional separation of component commands significant parallels have been eliminated and a more straightforward command and control system has evolved. The new structure of NATO Rapid Deployable Corps (NRDCs) raised the effectiveness and responsiveness of Army units to a higher level. Instead of the former lumbering, complicated structure, a slimmer more agile, fundable, but more efficient system has been introduced which has to be refined and developed in order to handle the present and future challenges.

In conclusion, we can say that due to the rationalization/reduction of the organization started in 2010, eliminating nearly four thousand peacetime establishments has significantly reduced the workload of the Member States, providing trained, professional staff.

THE NEW AIR COMMAND AND CONTROL SYSTEM

With transformation of the NCS, superior headquarters which provided C2 for the Air Force have undergone significant changes:

- Whereas previously in the Southern Region Air Command Izmir (TUR), in the Northern Region Air Command Ramstein (DEU) were responsible for the command and control of the Air Forces, since 2013 only Ramstein has been responsible for airspace control and air defence of the whole NATO area.
- The development of CIS and battle management systems has facilitated radical modification of the network of Combined Air Operations Centre (CAOC), operated under Memorandum of Understanding. In the former Northern and Southern Region of NATO 5-5 CAOCs were responsible for sovereignty of NATO airspace, and accomplished air command and control of subordinate units.

- After 2009 in the Northern Region – in accordance with the planned implementation of ACCS (Air Command and Control System) – the number of air operations centers was reduced to two, while in the southern region the Member States were not be able to agree to the reduction, preserved the previous five air operations centered system.
- Along with the reorganized air command and control units of NATO, after the Lisbon NATO summit in the summer of 2011, the locations of these new HQs was announced and these were significantly different from the previous concept;.

Surprisingly, one-one air operations center remained in Europe (Uedem in the Northern Region and Torrejon in the Southern Region) and instead of the intended location (Nieuw Milligen, NLD) – based on the former CAOC5 Poggio Renatico (ITA) – a new deployable air command and control center (DACCC – Deployable Air Command and Control Center) has been set up.

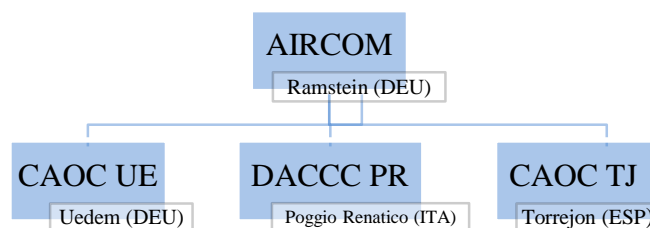


Figure 3 NATO Air Command and subordinate Air Command and Control units (edited by the author)

With the transformation the earlier „CAOC – CRC⁵ – execution units” chain and the procedures have radically changed, because the crisis-war planning, executing and monitoring functions have been cancelled from the tasks of the CAOCs. The steps of the air force planning and tasking cycle are already performed only in Ramstein, in the JFAC, which was formed the basis of the Air Component Command.

NATO JFAC establishment can be with the staff of the headquarters of the Air Force and with the professionals of Deployable Air Operations Center of Combined Air Operations Centers, complete with a dedicated national human resources, which with translocations can be achieved, depending on the type of Operation specifically is concerned. The type of military operations – in terms of the air force – is determined by the daily number of combat- and combat support missions (sortie/day - S/D).

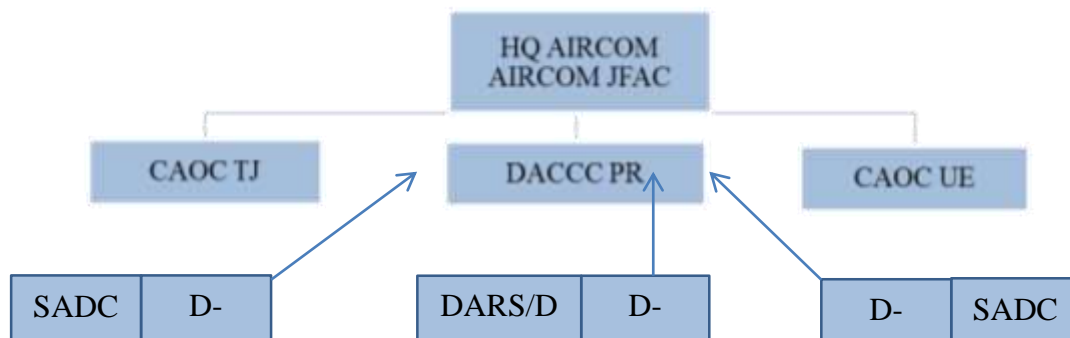


Figure 4. Setting up and moving the personnel of the Air Force Component Command achieved through the following organizational elements (edited by the author):

⁵ CRC – Control and Reporting Centre



With installation of JFAC the AIRCOM staff begins preparing and planning for joint air operations. With personnel from CAOCs and from DACCC the staffs of D-AOCs will deploy to AIRCOM, and with specialists of AIRCOM they will create divisions and branches of JFAC. The Static Air Defence Centres of CAOCs will continue their NATO integrated air and space defence missions inside their Area of Responsibility. Deployable ARS⁶ will support – with its DSS⁷ - airspace control and air mission control needs of NATO deployed forces.

THE LESSONS OF TRANSFORMATION

The various NATO Headquarters have made significant efforts over the past two years to achieve the operational abilities, which have been identified with the transformation of the NCS. In November of 2013, during Exercise STEADFAST JAZZ, JFCBS successfully demonstrated its ability to perform its duty and to command effectively NATO Response Forces, and to synchronize smoothly maritime, land and air components provided by member nations and partner states.

The target date of transformation of command structure is 2015, but since the beginning of the events in Ukraine – speeding up the conversion process – managed to show the Alliance's commitment to the defense of member countries by taking various measures.

With transformation significant results have been achieved though many challenges remain which should be resolved in the coming period:

- Development and installation of new air command and control system could not able to track requirements dictated by political decisions, therefore significant additions and modifications are necessary for the development of IT and signal systems;
- Due to different regulations and requirements France's entry to the NATO Integrated Air and Missile Defence System demands considerable efforts from the Alliance to integrate French forces and systems;
- The rotation of personnel makes extremely difficult the continuous replenishment and maintenance of training level of JFAC, along with its task execution capability;
- Urgent task to solve command and control of AWACS units, to maintain surveillance and warning capacity of AWACS fleet, personnel and technical improvements have to be completed in order to retain this vital ability for the Alliance;
- Reduction of Air Forces of Member States, the limited flight hours cause significant problems in maintaining the Quick Reaction Alert (Interceptor), in particular by a number of Member States do not have a QRA service and facilities.

In the past year showed with dramatic sincerity weaknesses of NATO's military capabilities and the areas waiting to be developed and improved. Further deterioration of the situation can shock the basic mission of NATO's credibility, therefore, significant efforts are required from Member States to maintain the credible military force.

⁶ Air Control Centre, Recognised Air Picture Production Centre, Sensor Fusion Post

⁷ DSS – Deployable Sensors Section



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