



# NORTHERN STAR

MAGAZINE FOR HQ JFC BRUNSSUM - NOVEMBER 2017



## NATO RESPONSE FORCE ROAD TO THE 2018 CHALLENGE

THIS MONTH'S FOCUS: NRF 2018 CERTIFICATION

- NEW NATO GUIDELINES FOR NON COMMISSIONED OFFICERS
- STRATEGIC DIRECTION SOUTH HUB UP AND RUNNING IN NAPLES
- HOW ROMANIAN ARMED FORCES CONTRIBUTE TO THE ALLIANCE







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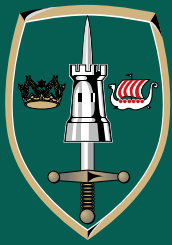
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# NORTHERN STAR

MAGAZINE FOR HQ JFC BRUNSSUM

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## ABOUT THE COVER

October 2017, Mediterranean Sea - A harrier of the Spanish Aircraft Carrier Juan Carlos I returns from a sortie during NATO exercise Brilliant Mariner 2017 (Photo by MARCOM)

## COLOPHON

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For more information, call ext. 2687 or +31 (0)45 526 26 87. The editor reserves the right to edit submissions.

## EDITORIAL STAFF

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*Editorial Director*

**Lt. Cdr. Davide Galli** (ITA Navy)  
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*Photographers and Photoeditors*

**Col. Roberto Lanni** (ITA Army)  
*Contributing Editor*

**CONTRIBUTORS:**  
*Sgt. 1st Class Mark Patton (JFC Naples), Capt (N) Carlos Bausà (ACT), EDA JDEAL Press Office, International Brunssum Club*

**PHOTO CREDITS:**  
*Allied Command Transformation, Joint Force Command Naples, Allied Air Command, Allied Maritime Command, Allied Land Command, NATO Rapid Deployable Corps Italy, Ministry of Defence of Romania, Ministry of Defence of Spain, EDA JDEAL, Lt. Col. Alexander Feja (DEU Air Force), Eugen Mihai, Nicusor Comanescu, Petrica Mihalache*

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NATO JFC Brunssum



't Swarte Schaap  
media & more

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Sint Franciscusweg 36-3  
6417BD Heerlen  
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info@tswarteschaap.nl  
[www.tswarteschaap.nl](http://www.tswarteschaap.nl)



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# EDITORIAL

## November issue highlights

### Dear Readers,

The picture on the cover of this month's Northern Star depicts an aircraft landing on the flight deck of a carrier. Air and naval assets are an integral part of the capabilities that the NATO Response Force can rely upon to respond to an emerging crisis and - with 2018 just beyond that horizon visible on the cover photo - JFC Brunssum and the designated multinational components are at an advanced stage of preparing for their upcoming NRF commitment.

Indeed, the current issue will guide you through the preparation for the 2018 NATO Response Force, describing how the main components - land, maritime, air and special operations - have been training in order to be certified before entering the stand-by period starting next January.

The ten pages covering this topic will provide you with a background on the Alliance's quick reaction force and then describe how the series of 'Brilliant' exercises tested and validated the individual component commands. Our Command Senior Enlisted Leader gives us valuable insight into the latest Bi-Strategic guidelines for NCOs (Non-Commissioned Officers) emphasizing the importance of training, experience and empowerment to enhance effectiveness in achieving the mission.

Other highlights from the November Northern Star include:

The Land Corps Commanders Conference addressing command and control issues in this domain with a focus on enhanced Forward Presence; NATO's Strategic Direction - Southern Hub up and running at JFC Na

ples; an overview of the Romanian Armed Forces and their contribution to the Alliance; the European Defence Agency initiative in the field of Counter-Improvised Explosive Devices, with a focus on the Joint Deployable Exploitation and Analysis Laboratory (JDEAL); Our HQ personnel testing their readiness to deploy for missions.

On the final page of the magazine - last but not least - you will find the first issue of the #WeAreJFCBS initiative, which is the evolution of what was previously called 'One of Us' and is now linked to the new NATO-wide campaign #WeAreNATO: the aim of our renovated initiative is to introduce personnel from the HQ talking about their jobs with a personal flavour coming from their experience. To kick-start this campaign we chose... ourselves - the Public Affairs Office - to let you know more about us and invite you to engage with us more; we would welcome your feedback and contributions.

And now, I invite you to go to the next page and read what our recently appointed Chief of Staff, Lieutenant General Rittmann, has to tell you about the challenges in his new assignment at JFC Brunssum at a very intense and 'thrilling' time.

Davide Galli, Lt. Commander (ITA Navy)

Chief Editor of the Northern Star

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# COMMAND GROUP CORNER

## *The Chief of Staff*

### BUSY, CHALLENGING AND THRILLING TIMES

It is my great pleasure to write my first article in the Northern Star. As you are all aware, I am like many of you a newcomer to the staff.

I first want to thank LTG Adamczak, my predecessor, for an outstanding hand over / take over that was conducted in a very short period of time. This was absolutely indispensable in getting me settled into the boots of the Chief of Staff as quickly as possible. From my previous assignments, I knew Joint Force Command Brunssum was a very dynamic and proactive Headquarters, but living it from the inside in recent weeks has confirmed that perception.

As I write, we are in a very busy period, in which we have to deal with real world events and missions, concurrent with preparations for our major exercise this year and substantial studies conducted under SHAPE's leadership to define how our NATO Command Structure needs to be adapted. So there is a lot of work on each and everyone's plate!

I trust that you will have benefited from our Battle Staff Training and TRIDENT JAVELIN 17, which was our certification exercise as the upcoming year's Joint Commander for the NATO Reaction Force. October's BST enabled us, including me, to fine tune our procedures and practices, and our battle rhythm. November was our test bed. We faced a very demanding and challenging exercise scenario committing the Joint Force we command against a near peer competitor in combat operations within SACEUR's area of responsibility, in the framework of collective defence. This type of scenario has not been played for many years, probably decades, and was a source of learning and improvement in the way NATO conducts operations in the future. I need not underscore how important this exercise was for JFC Brunssum, and I am delighted to report that we proved once again our great value as an operational war-fighting HQ.

But life goes on. As much as we would like to be preserved from the outside during these training events, taskers continue to arrive from higher headquarters. Notably, we have recently provided our inputs according to a very demanding timeline to contribute to the overarching study of NATO adaptation. This required a lot of investment from you, the staff, but the outcome will be of direct use to us as it will describe how our HQ is going to operate, what it will look like, how we will interact with others in the near future, and how we are best able to deal with the new security challenges we face in our implementation area. Who better than us can provide this kind of answer?

And of course, we still continue to command and control whatever elements are deployed forward in our area in the framework of deterrence. We have a working chain of command with real life headquarters under our command, themselves having deployed elements on the ground, and in that we are unique in the NATO Command Structure, a true test lab of how to implement, at the tactical level, direction and guidance from the political level.

Last but not least, we need to carry on with the support we provide to our comrades in Afghanistan. We might be on exercise and baseline activities, but they are on a real operation. Whatever support they require, we need to assist them in getting it.

So, all in all, these are busy and challenging, but also thrilling, times to be assigned to JFC Brunssum and I feel privileged to be in this position as the COS, and to support our Commander General Farina. I know I can count on everyone's total dedication to the tasks described above. In particular, I trust that those players in our recent training and exercise events will draw positive lessons from them and apply them to continue to improve the way we operate at the joint level.



*Lieutenant General Olivier Rittmann  
Allied JFC Brunssum Chief of Staff*



# NATO RESPONSE FORCE 2018:

## *The road to readiness*

Story and infographics by Lt. Cdr. Davide Galli,  
JFC Brunssum PAO

### The NATO Response Force

The NATO Response Force (NRF) is a technologically advanced, high readiness multinational force made up of land, air, maritime and special operations forces components that can be deployed quickly, wherever needed.

The NRF gives the Alliance the means to provide a rapid military response to various types of crises anywhere in the world. It was launched in 2002 as a high readiness force comprised of rapidly deployable units able to react in a very short time to the full range of security challenges, including:

- Immediate collective defence response capability, prior to the arrival of other forces;
- Crisis management & peace support operations;
- Disaster relief and the protection of critical infrastructure.

In addition to its operational role, the NRF is also a driving engine for NATO's military transformation and can be used for greater cooperation in education and training, and better use of technology.

The decision to deploy the NRF is taken by the North Atlantic Council, NATO's highest political decision-making body, and overall command of the NRF belongs to the Supreme Allied Commander Europe (SACEUR).

### The 'enhanced' NRF

In 2014 - within the measures of the Readiness Action Plan (RAP) - the NRF was enhanced, in order to be capable of responding to the changed security environment, increasing its size to 40,000 troops and providing it with an additional highly capable and flexible air, land, maritime and special forces package. This "spearhead force" is known as the Very High Readiness Joint Task Force (VJTF) and is deployable at extremely short notice.

### NRF composition

Elements of the NATO Response Force include:

- Command and Control Element: operational command of the NRF alternates between Allied Joint Force Commands in Brunssum and Naples;
- Very High Readiness Joint Task



Force (VJTF) includes a multinational land brigade of around 5,000 troops and air, maritime and special operations forces components with leading elements ready to move within two to three days;

- Initial Follow-On Forces Group (IFFG): high-readiness forces that can deploy quickly following the VJTF, in response to a crisis. They are made up of two multinational brigades;
- Maritime Component: based on the Standing NATO Maritime Groups (SNMGs) and the Standing NATO Mine Countermeasures Groups (SNMCMGs);
- Combat Air and Air-support Component;
- Special Operations Forces;
- Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear (CBRN) Defence Task Force.

### Participation in the NRF

Rotating forces through the NRF requires the contributing Allies and partner nations to meet strict standards and adopt procedures

required for both defensive and expeditionary operations. As a result, participation in the NRF is preceded by a six-month NATO exercise programme in order to integrate and standardize the various national contingents. Additional training serials within national preparation programmes are carried out by contributing nations during the 6-18 month period prior to assuming the role of an NRF high-readiness unit.

As units rotate through the NRF, the associated high standards, concepts and technologies are gradually spread throughout the Alliance, thereby fulfilling one of the key purposes of the NATO Response Force – the further transformation of Allied forces.

### NRF Rotation 2018

The NRF is based on a rotational system where Allied nations commit land, air, maritime or Special Operations Forces (SOF)



*The quick reaction force of the Alliance has to be prepared to respond to any threat: this requires training and certification. The NRF package for 2018 has seen its main components validated during the 'BRILLIANT' series exercises.*



## NATO RESPONSE FORCE 2018 COMPONENTS CERTIFICATION



Stand-by period: 1 January - 31 December 2018



### Command and Control:

Headquarters: Allied Joint Force Command Brunssum

Location: Brunssum, The Netherlands

Certification exercise: Trident Javelin 2017 (6-17 Nov 17)



### Air Component Command:

Headquarters: German Joint Force Air Command

Location: Kalkar, Germany

Certification exercise: Brilliant Arrow 2017 (11-22 Sep 17)



### Maritime Component Command:

Headquarters: French Aero-Naval Rapid Reaction Force

Location: Toulon, France

Certification exercise: Brilliant Mariner 2017 (29 Sep-13 Oct 17)



### Land Component Command:

Headquarters: NATO Rapid Deployable Corps Italy

Location: Solbiate Olona, Italy

Certification exercise: Brilliant Ledger 2017 (25 Sep-16 Oct 17)



### Special Operations Forces Component Command:

Headquarters: Spanish Special Operations Component Command

Location: Menorca, Spain

Certification exercise: Brilliant Sword 2017 (1-15 Oct 17)

units for a period of 12 months. The rotational period lasts 12 months starting 1<sup>st</sup> January and operational command of the force alternates annually between the two NATO Joint Force Commands (JFC).

In 2018 JFC Brunssum will take over stand-by responsibility from JFC Naples as the designated leading Headquarters for NRF rotation. If the North Atlantic Council activates the NRF, at any time during this period, JFC Brunssum will provide the Commander and necessary command and control elements as the deployable Joint Task Force Headquarters.

### NRF 2018 Certification

The 'BRILLIANT' series of exercises during the September-October 2017 period represented the designated certification venue for the component commands of the 2018 NATO

Response Force (NRF18)

- BRILLIANT ARROW certified the Air Component Command - German Joint Force Air Component (DEU JFAC) based in Kalkar (Germany);
- BRILLIANT MARINER certified the Maritime Component Command - French Aero-Naval Rapid Reaction Force (FR MARFOR), based in Toulon (France);
- BRILLIANT LEDGER certified the Land Maritime Component - NATO Rapid Deployable Corps Italy (NRDC - ITA), based in Solvate Olona (Italy);
- BRILLIANT SWORD certified the Special Operations Forces Component - Spanish Joint Special Operations Command (MCOE), based in Menorca (Spain).

The next pages will expand on this series of exercises.

The last step in the certification process is Exercise TRIDENT JAVELIN 2017, which will be covered in detail in the next issue of the Northern Star.



# BRILLIANT ARROW 2017:

## Air Component Command Certification

Story by Lt. Col. Paul Van Harten,  
JFC Brunssum PAO  
Photos by AIRCOM/DEU JFAC

**Kalkar, Germany** - The German Joint Force Air Component (JFAC) Headquarters based in Kalkar has trained with assigned units for NATO Response Force during exercise Brilliant Arrow 2017 from September 11 to 22.

Brilliant Arrow 2017 (BRAW17) is the NATO exercise which saw the participation of approximately 1,000 German and international participants in many serials, incorporating live flying activities over the north of Germany, the northeast of the Netherlands and the North Sea. Being one of the exercises the German air force has been focusing on this year, BRAW17 was the formal conclusion of the certification process for the Air component of the 2018 NATO Response Force rotation. For the second time after 2012, the German JFAC HQ is responsible for a NATO command and control assignment.

BRAW17 has seen participation of F-16 fighter jets from Greece, Poland and Turkey as well as German Eurofighter aircraft from tactical air wings 71 "Richthofen", 31 "Boelke" and 74. Flying activities took place in reserved training areas between mostly out of the air bases Nörvenich, Wittmund, Hohn and Laage.

The live-fly exercise offered the final opportunity to fine-tune interaction of the deployable JFAC HQ when it came to execute command and control of multinational air forces and the units assigned during the upcoming stand-by period in 2018. During this period the JFAC HQ together with assigned units will be capable of establishing operational readiness within a few days and of planning and executing NATO Response Force air operations worldwide.

Exercise activities were supported by AWACS aircraft flying out of the NATO Air Base in Geilenkirchen, Germany, an Airbus A-310 MRTT tanker aircraft taking off from Cologne and target simulation aircraft and forces from Hohn, Nordholz and Nordhorn.

Moreover, 26<sup>th</sup> Surface-to-Air Missile Group in Husum and 3<sup>rd</sup> Tactical



Air Command and Control Group in Holzdorf/Schönwalde with their deployable Control and reporting Centre provided key support to successful training during the exercise.

Commander JFC Brunssum, General Salvatore Farina, visited the German Air Operations Command on 19-20 September.

The visit was intended to provide a personal 'look and feel' of how preparations of the German JFAC for the 2018 NRF stand-by phase were progressing. The General was briefed by Lieutenant General Joachim Wundrak, Commander German Air Operations Command, and Brigadier General Burkhard Kollmann, Director German JFAC, and was also provided an







*The German Joint Force Air Component Headquarters trained with assigned units for NRF 2018 during the certification exercise Brilliant Arrow, which took place in the skies of Northern Germany and the Northeast of the Netherlands from September 11 to 22*



assessment of current challenges and the way ahead. General Farina took the opportunity to elaborate on the main efforts for the whole NRF package in the upcoming period in light of the current global security situation.

General Farina was content with his trip to Kalkar which allowed him witness the

recognizable progress of NRF 2018 components. The German JFAC demonstrated great professionalism and confidence in their capabilities, proving to be on the right track for next year's commitment.

Following the national Exercise KALKAR SKY 2016, which certified the German JFAC for their 2018 NRF commitment,

BRILLIANT ARROW is this year's most important training event for the NRF air components.





# BRILLIANT LEDGER 2017:

## Land Component Command Certification

Story by Lt. Cdr. Davide Galli,  
JFC Brunssum PAO  
Photos by NRDC Italy

**Bellinzago Novarese, Italy** - NATO Rapid Deployable Corps Italy successfully completed exercise Brilliant Ledger 2017 (BRLR17) and achieved its certification as Land Component Command (LCC) responsible for conducting and synchronizing land operations in case of NRF activation during 2018. Brilliant Ledger was a command-post exercise, based on a realistic and complex scenario that was able to test the international staff, and subordinate units, of the HQ in the most complex aspects of modern crises and conflicts.

The exercise was carried out in Bellinzago Novarese, where the NRDC-ITA Command was deployed, and Solbiate Olona, where the Italian Army Simulation and Validation Center directed the Exercise. About 1,000 servicemen and women from 85 different units from the Italian Army, Navy, Air Force and Carabinieri, as well as from 15 other NATO member countries, participated in the exercise. Over 40 military experts from the NATO Allied Land Command of Izmir (Turkey) over- watched the entire evaluation process.

The purpose of BRLR17 was to test NRDC-Italy's ability to plan and conduct high-intensity operations as the Land Component Command of the NRF. NRDC-ITA will also retain command and control over the land forces of the Very High Readiness Joint Task Force (VJTf), whose task is to ensure the initial and immediate NATO response to potential threats (on 5 to 15 days notice-to-move). The VJTf consists of highly trained multinational forces that enhance the traditional NRF structure. This element is also supported by air, maritime and special forces components.

The 1<sup>st</sup> Signal Regiment (Milan) ensured communications and information flow for the exercise, employing the latest technology, in compliance with security standards, while RESTAL (the NRDC-ITA Logistic Support Regiment) provided real life support and transportation.

8 General Farina met with NATO Ra-



pid Deployable Corps - Italy staff on a two-day visit, culminating on the Distinguished Visitors Day and Certification Ceremony on 11 October, attended by Lieutenant General Darryl A. Williams, Commander Allied Land Command, and Mr. Paolo Alli, Chairman of the NATO Parliamentary Assembly.

During his visit General Farina was briefed on the structure and capabilities of the Headquarters in its LCC role.

The meeting with Commander NRDC-ITA, Lieutenant General Roberto Perretti, also provided the opportunity for General Fa-







*Exercise Brilliant Ledger provided the certification venue for NRDC-ITA to act as Land Component Command in the potential event of deploying the NATO Response Force in 2018. This task includes command and control responsibility over the VJTF-Land, the 'spearhead' of the Alliance*



rina - as the responsible Commander for the preparation and readiness of the entire NRF18 force package - to provide further guidance for the upcoming stand-by period in 2018. Furthermore, General Farina elaborated on the current NATO work-strands at the operational and strategic level and

how these relate to the NRF, as well as the role of NRDC-ITA.

The visit to the Command Post, with a walk around through the different sections, provided valuable insights on how the HQ is going to manage its role as LCC.

General Farina was very pleased with the demonstrated capabilities of NRDC-ITA and expressed his thanks to LTG Perretti for his headquarters' dedication and their remarkable contribution to the NRF18 task, but also to NATO efforts in general.





# BRILLIANT MARINER 2017:

## Maritime Component Command Certification

Story by Lt. Cdr. Piotr Wojtas

JFC Brunssum PAO

Photos by MARCOM

**Toulon, France** - The world's oceans are busy maritime highways. Today, 85% of all international trade in raw materials and manufactured goods travels by sea, and tankers carry more than half of the world's oil. The risks to maritime security are high, and NATO is determined to help protect its Allies from any possible threats at sea.

NATO's maritime power provides some of the most mobile and flexible responses to crises – from humanitarian response to counter-piracy and from mine clearance to defence against ballistic missiles. Secure seas mean the safe transit of those 85% of world goods - few customers realize that basic commodities manufactured outside Europe have not arrived in this part of the world by plane but via the sea. Protecting trade, infrastructure and populations requires networked information and, most of all, international cooperation.

At any moment in time NATO has four Standing NATO Maritime Groups at its disposal - multinational, integrated maritime forces made up of vessels from various allied countries. These vessels, including their air assets, are permanently available to NATO to perform different tasks ranging from exercise participation to intervention in operational missions. These groups provide NATO with a permanently available maritime capability for operations and other activities in peacetime and in periods of crisis and conflict. They also help to establish Alliance presence, demonstrate solidarity, conduct routine diplomatic visits to different countries, support transformation and provide a variety of military maritime capabilities to ongoing missions.

Through deterrence, collective defense, crisis management and cooperative security, NATO maritime forces work with nations, partners and institutions to improve maritime security and provide an available capability that is ready to face any threat. Complex exercises conduc-



ted on, over, and under the water are part of NATO's approach to ensure the forces can operate across all domains and that command structures are ready to respond to a wide range of challenges.

Each year NATO organizes exercises that provide an opportunity to exercise command and control at the NRF Maritime Component Command level enhancing collaboration while improving cooperation

and mutual understanding. Participating units and crews evaluated their readiness and validate their capabilities, whilst simultaneously improving their knowledge and skills through operating in a demanding and challenging environment.

Conducted in the Mediterranean Sea off the coasts of France, Italy and Spain between September 29<sup>th</sup> and October 13<sup>th</sup> 2017, the Brilliant Mariner exercise was designed to







*Brilliant Mariner Exercise was conducted between September 29 and October 13 in order to support the certification of the naval component of NRF 2018: the French Aero-Naval Rapid Reaction Force will assume responsibility as the Maritime Component Command*



support the certification of the naval component of the NATO Response Force (NRF) for 2018.

The maritime commander for the NRF rotates annually and is subordinated to one of two Joint Force Commands – Brunssum or Naples. The French Aero-Naval Rapid Reaction Force (FRMARFOR) will assume responsibilities as the Maritime Component Commander (MCC) for the NRF 2018

and, together with other units dedicated to NATO, will remain on constant stand-by throughout the coming year. This year 27 naval units supported by maritime patrol and rotary wing aircraft from the navies of Canada, Denmark, France, Greece, Germany, Italy, Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, Spain, Turkey and the United Kingdom participated in the exercise.

Exercising with fellow sailors at sea is the

only true way to ensure readiness and responsiveness. Participation in major, joint and combined certification events such as Brilliant Mariner 2017 demonstrates, not only national readiness, but NATO's unified responsiveness, capabilities and the robustness of maritime power that is available to the Alliance and ready to respond to a crisis that could impact us all.



# BRILLIANT SWORD 2017:

## Special Ops Component Command Certification

Story by Col. Ralf Gras, JFC Brunssum SOFAD  
Photos by MCOE/ESP MoD

**Menorca, Spain** - NATO Special Operations Forces (SOF) are strategic assets to be employed to help achieve strategic and higher-level military objectives. Special operations are normally conducted in uncertain, hostile, or politically sensitive environments in order to create effects that support achievement of strategic-operational comprehensive objectives. These operations may be conducted using clandestine or covert capabilities/techniques and require mature, highly-trained operators.

Special operations can be conducted independently or in conjunction with operations by conventional forces and may include combined and interagency operations by, with, or through indigenous or surrogate forces.

Special operations differ from conventional operations in the degree of political risk, operational techniques, modes of employment, dependence on detailed operational intelligence, and use of indigenous assets. SOF personnel undergo a careful selection process and mission-specific training beyond basic military skills to achieve entry-level special operations skills. SOF organizational structures tend to be populated by mature and seasoned personnel, many of whom maintain high levels of competency in multiple military specialties.

The successful conduct of special operations relies on individual and small unit proficiency in a multitude of specialized, often unconventional, operational skills applied with adaptability, improvisation, innovation, and self-reliance. The small size, unique capabilities, and self-sufficiency (for limited periods of time) of SOF units provide the Alliance with additional options for a military response that may not entail the risk of escalation normally associated with the employment of inherently larger or more visible conventional forces.

SOF are commanded through a Special Operations Component Command (SOCC)



which exists alongside land, air, or maritime component commands.

The NRF 2018 SOCC is provided by the Spanish Joint Special Operations Command (MCOE, in accordance with its Spanish acronym) with Spain as the framework nation. The SOCC staff consists of personnel from 10 nations; its task organization includes 9 Special Operations Task Groups (SOTG) from 6 different nations.

BRILLIANT SWORD 2017 was a Command-Post Exercise sponsored by Joint Force Command Brunssum executing its responsibility for training and validation of the NATO Response Force (NRF) 2018 package.

General Farina visited his NRF 2018 SOCC on 7 and 8 October and met with Major General Jaime Iniguez - Commander of the

Spanish SOCC, Lieutenant General Fernando José López del Pozo - Commander Joint Operations Command, and Lieutenant General José M. Salom Piquere - Air Force Commander. At the SOCC HQ he was briefed on the structure and activities of the respective Commands and visited all the relevant staff cells. Commander JFC Brunssum took the opportunity of the visit to share his vision and inform the SOCC about directives for NRF-related activities. He also emphasized the necessity of all units participating in the exercise to be fully committed and act as a cohesive team, in order to be best prepared for the upcoming NRF 18 period and potential follow-on tasks.

The exercise served as the SOCC certification event for the NATO Response Force 2018 Special Operations Forces package. BRILLIANT SWORD 2017 focused on





Brilliant Sword 2017 was a Command Post Exercise sponsored by JFC Brunssum executing its responsibility for training and validating of the NRF 2018 designated Special Operations Component Command and its forces as part of the NRF package



achieving SOCC Combat Readiness certification throughout a Special Operations Forces Headquarters and Units Evaluation (SOFVAL). The exercise aimed at validating the NRF SOCC organization, interoperability and readiness, while simultaneously

evaluating component capabilities by exercising NRF missions and tasks. BRILLIANT SWORD 2017 marks the most important milestone along the path of training and validating the NRF 2018 SOCC and its designated Special Operations Forces.

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# LANDCOM CORPS COMMANDERS CONFERENCE

*11th edition of the semi-annual forum organised by Allied Land Command, this semester focusing on the theme 'Command and Control: how we fight'*



Story by Lt. Cdr. Davide Galli, JFC Brunssum PAO

Photos by LANDCOM

**Valencia, Spain** – Commander JFC Brunssum, General Salvatore Farina, participated in the 11<sup>th</sup> Allied Land Command Corps Commanders' Conference on 16-18 October 2017, hosted by Lieutenant General Darryl A. Williams, Commander Allied Land Command (LANDCOM).

General Farina was invited to give the participants – commanders and senior leaders from throughout the NATO Command Structure (NCS) – a comprehensive overview of the overall NATO adaptation with regard to the enhanced Forward Presence (eFP) way ahead and to share his vision as an operational Commander.

The aim of this semi-annual conference, organised by LANDCOM, was to bring together Corps Commanders and leaders from the NCS for collaboration, development and refinement of NATO's land strategy. In particular, the shared objective for the 11<sup>th</sup> edition of this forum was to develop the land adaptation strategy using

the theme 'Command and Control: How we fight'.

Commander JFC Brunssum presented his operational vision on the Alliance's enhanced Forward Presence, described as a 'catalyst for progress', and emphasized the theme of joint enablement of the battle-groups - as the land component of NATO's deterrence and defence posture at its Eastern flank - with the progressive integration of air and maritime assets in their support. He indicated the 5 lines of effort that JFC Brunssum would pursue to achieve this, including Capability and Requirement Development, Cross Domain Collaboration and Contribution, Training and Exercise Synchronization, Integrated Defence Planning, and Joint Situational Awareness.

The General then shifted to the ongoing work related to the NATO Command Structure Adaptation process, clarifying the JFCBS contribution to Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe (SHAPE).

During the presentation he emphasized the importance of Regional Focus, the increased role of the NATO Force Structure (NFS) in the proposed outline design, the need to link JFC HQs to contingency plans and NFS elements, and on the fundamental concept of addressing all NATO core tasks.

He welcomed US Army Europe Vice Commander's proactive work to enhance integration and interoperability, and the numerous Corps Commander's contributions to the land domain perspective.

Supreme Allied Commander Europe (SACEUR), General Curtis M. Scaparrotti, spoke on the 2<sup>nd</sup> day of the conference, giving his thoughts on NATO Command Structure Adaptation, the ongoing effort to ensure all NATO elements are "fit for purpose", and how that will affect the NATO Land Headquarters.





# NATO'S STRATEGIC DIRECTION SOUTH

*The JFC Naples-based "Hub" designed to enhance cooperation among organizations is up and running after its inauguration in September*

JOINT



Story by Sgt. 1st Class Mark Patton, JFC Naples  
Photos by JFC Naples PAO

**Naples, Italy** – The NATO Strategic Direction South Hub, a new center designed to enhance cooperation among organizations, is now established at Allied Joint Force Command Naples.

JFC Naples held a Sept. 5, 2017, ceremony to mark the NSD-S Hub's opening. Final capability is expected to be achieved by the end of the year.

The NSD-S Hub, under the roof and lead of JFC Naples, is designed to focus on a variety of current and potential issues to include destabilization, potential terrorism, radicalization, migration and environmental concerns. A role of the new center is also to coordinate and work alongside agencies outside of the NATO and national military structures as they concentrate on southern regions to include the Middle East, North Africa and Sahel, sub-Saharan Africa and adjacent areas, waters and airspace.

NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg announced the decision to create the Hub in mid-February of this year.

Hub officials say the center's opening provides the crucial beginning step for its staff, which is developing relationships with potential partners to ensure the eventual production of useful product and analysis.

Some of the partners the NSD-S Hub hopes to connect with include actors such as regional development and crisis handling experts, academics and non-governmental organizations.

Alejandro Alvargonzalez, NATO Assistant Secretary General for Political Affairs and Security Policy, highlighted the regular political dialogue and practical cooperation over the past years NATO has held with Mediterranean Dialogue countries and Arab Gulf states in the Istanbul Cooperation Initiative.

At the September ceremony, Alvargonzalez also highlighted NATO's ability to successfully build a new culture of cooperation in the security field with 12 regional partner countries.

"These partners are adopting NATO standards and promoting interoperability with the Alliance, while modernizing their defense and security sectors," said Alvargonzalez. "They all are asking NATO for more cooperation and more assistance in the defence and security fields."

It's the strengthened cooperation and two-way dialogue that personnel from the new center say will benefit the Hub's experts and stakeholders from NATO and non-NATO partners. Some of these groups will include international organizations that NATO is already working together with, such as the United Nations, European Union, the Arab

League and the Gulf Cooperation Council. U.S. Navy Lieutenant Commander Michael Nunziato, who started working with the Hub in February as part of the Implementation Assessment Team and will continue on with the new center providing analysis, said involving stakeholders outside of the military structure is critical to the Hub in

providing holistic analysis and recommendations.

"It's an organization, I think, that's going to do something different than what NATO is normally used to, and that's bridging the gap between the military way of thinking and the diplomatic way of thinking," said Nunziato

Nunziato's thoughts were echoed by Canadian Army Lieutenant-General Christian Juneau, the deputy commander of JFC Naples.

"These non-NATO entities have so much knowledge and understanding, and they look at an area, a problem set, from a whole different perspective," Juneau said. French Air Force Colonel Eric Asselin, deputy director and acting director of the Hub, said the center's opening was the first step following months of preparation to establish the center.

More information about NATO Strategic Direction South Hub is available at [www.thesouthernhub.org](http://www.thesouthernhub.org)



## ROMANIAN ARMED FORCES

Story by Col. Mihai Negrea, Romanian Senior National Representative at JFC Brunssum

**R**omania has fully understood the role it holds in the new regional security context, steadfastly supporting NATO's overall effort in consolidating the Euro-Atlantic space security, through a balanced approach of the threats coming up from the East and South of the Alliance and paying a special attention to the deterrence and defence posture of the Eastern Flank of the Alliance.

As the security situation in the Black Sea region has evolved and become more complex, the NATO allies' contributions to the implementation of the tailored forward presence (tFP) in the Southern segment of the Eastern flank, with ground, air and maritime forces represents an eloquent proof of solidarity among allies. The enhanced forward presence (eFP) in the Baltic States and Poland, in which the Romanian Armed Forces participate with a company-level unit, but also the NATO structures established on our national territory (MND-SE HQ, MN-BDE and NFIU), which conduct operations meant to strengthen the defence and deterrence posture in this region, stand for the proof that the Alliance remains united and powerful against all kinds of threats. NATO's credibility will eventually depend on the allocation by the member states of the resources required to provide for the essential military capabilities needed in nowadays' complex security environment. Romania is firmly committed to this objective; that is why, by the end of the year, our country will become one of the six NATO members which will have met its commitment, allocating 2% of the GDP for defence expenditures. This political pledge is to be continued on a ten-year period until 2026, the equipping program of our military being developed on such financial allocation.

Romania continues to be a significant contributor to Resolute Support, having currently deployed over 600 soldiers in Afghanistan (Romania is the fourth NATO



contributing state after the USA, Italy and Germany). The Romanian Army Institutional Advisory Team, the Train, Advise and Assist

Team – North, the Train, Advise and Assist Team – South, the Romanian Military Police Detachment and the staff personnel are involved in the training and assistance

and the activities of the Afghan National Defence and Security Forces (ANDSF) as well as in force protection, military intelligence and military police actions, informational/psychological and logistic support

operations, thus, contributing to the increase of ANDSF's credibility, capability and sustainability and supporting the Afghan government in countering terrorist actions.

Also, Romania currently participates in KFOR with staff personnel, HUMINT elements, a SIGINT group, a special ISR group and intelligence personnel, contributing with 58 soldiers and a number of servicemen deployable at order, as part of SACEUR's Strategic Reserve for KFOR. The Romanian Armed Forces' participation in EU ALTHEA Mission consists in staff and



## Romania, steadfastly supporting Allied security measures



intelligence personnel, liaison teams, advisory teams, air force structures and a national support element, counting 39 servicemen plus a number of deployable soldiers at order.

And to all these there should be added Romania's successful participation, alongside multinational structures built on its territory, in complex and wide-ranging multinational exercises. „Noble Jump 17” and „Saber Guardian 17”, the most important two international exercises which were conducted this year, marked the transition to an enhanced interoperability stage, at the same

time, leading to the increase of the level of reciprocal knowledge and trust among allies and partners. NOJP17 tested NATO's ability to deploy its Very High Readiness Joint Task Force (VJTF) and confirmed its ability to implement the NATO Readiness Action Plan (RAP) in Bulgaria and Romania. The second stage of the exercise, NOJP 2-DEPLOYEX, took place in Romania and Bulgaria in training sites offered through HNS. NOJP 2-DEPLOYEX consisted of theoretical preparation activities for the interaction of VJTF elements with the MND SE, NFIU and Romanian Armed Forces

structures, through April 3<sup>rd</sup>-7<sup>th</sup>, 2017. SG17 showed the reaction and deterrence capacity of the allied and partner nations according to the collective defence scenario, by exercising force projection. The Romanian Armed Forces were represented mainly by the Services, through their servicemen: 8,000 from the Land Forces with 1,000 pieces of equipment, over 1,000 from the Air Forces with over 40 aircraft and almost 800 from the Navy, with 10 destroyers and logistic support ships, 12 boats and 18 land vehicles.



# EXPERTISE, EXPERIENCE, EMPOWERMENT

Story by Sergeant Marc Hall,  
JFC Brunssum Military Assistant to the CSEL

## Brunssum, the Netherlands

Recently, SACEUR & SACT jointly signed the new Bi-strategic command strategy and NCO guidelines, at the NATO Military Committee Meeting in Tirana, Albania.

If you have not yet read it, I strongly suggest that you do. It outlines, for leaders at all levels, the expectations of the NCO Corps, methods and strategies to enhance effectiveness, as well as the way forward to achieve a ready and responsive cadre of NCOs with the expertise, experience and empowerment to tackle the operational and transformational needs of the Alliance in the current and future environment.

So what's changed? For one thing, the strategic landscape has dramatically altered over the past few years, and now more than ever, advancing human capital has never been more important. To stay ahead of the curve, we need to aggressively invest in the development of our NCOs by applying a greater emphasis on language training proficiency and military education, and by identifying and optimizing opportunities for critical, creative and forward thinking. Promoting and empowering the 'Command Team' concept at all levels within both NATO and National leadership structures is another key area of focus. While this dynamic may be new and strange to some, it is an integral component to the unity and determination of the Officer/NCO relationship, and a hallmark of many successful militaries. The development of this leadership paradigm seeks to include an NCO perspective in the decision making process and encourages critical thinking and unbiased communication up, down and across the command and control spectrum. In a Command Team relationship, your ability to knowledgeably speak truth to power and use your breadth of experience to advise and guide decision making is crucial. Ultimately, our job is always the same; to accomplish the mission using the authority vested in us, in accordance with the Commander's intent, and this model offers another tool for your Commanders to have at their disposal. For a recent example of this, look at the train & assist mis-



sion in Resolute Support where NATO has been building the ANDSF from the ground up. The feedback that we are getting from our personnel on the ground is clear. Units that have focused on training NCOs how to think are having a great deal more success versus those that focus on teaching NCOs what to think.

Ultimately, this guiding document is intended to provide a framework which nations within the Alliance as well as willing Partner nations can build on to increase the efficiency of interoperable forces at the NCO level in order to achieve SACEUR's intent of seamlessly aligned forces, capable of conducting full spectrum operations throughout the globe. In a truly multinational organization such as the eFP, this is especially important. Having units from several countries operating as a whole is only possible if the NCOs down to the tactical level are able to work together seamlessly. Those NCOs need to speak the same proverbial language, have similar experiences, educa-

tion and training, and be endowed with the same level of trust. NATO has a long history of adaptation and innovation, which is a major reason why it is the most successful alliance in history. The implementation of this document is merely the next step in the evolution of our fighting forces, and will drive us to meet the challenges that will arise in the future.

If you're an Officer, this should excite you. In the future you can expect an increasingly confident, competent NCO corps that seeks out and accepts greater responsibilities. You can expect NCOs that contribute added solutions, and are more willing and able than ever before to offer keen and unique insights into problem solving and task management. To cultivate this incredible resource, your NCOs are going to require time to attend courses and expand their military education. They will continue to need your guidance and support as they push boundaries and take on growing roles of responsibility. We, as a whole, are counting on you



*The new Bi-strategic command strategy and guidelines  
outline a Non-Commissioned Corps even more effective in  
conquering any mission*



to place the right NCOs in the right place at the right time with the right tools to do the job, and set them up for success at every level. Today's young NCO is more globally aware, educated, and tech savvy than ever before. These traits need to be leveraged to ensure that we maximize the potential of our collective forces to achieve victory in every circumstance.

If you're an NCO you can expect to be further challenged. You will be expected to put your years of practical experience on the table, to communicate honestly, and be held accountable to a degree that you may not be used to. As senior NCOs it is our responsibility to train and lead our subordinates and to provide them the example of "what right looks like." We must always be mindful that we are training our young NCOs to one day replace us. You must continue to set and maintain the standard in all things, develop your leadership style and command presence, and lead by example. There are a myriad of opportunities for

NCO training across the NCS and NFS. While I and the other CSELs across the Alliance will continue to push for those opportunities to be available, it is ultimately up to you to pursue them. The leadership courses offered by NATO School Oberammergau and the Swiss Armed Forces College can be a force multiplier in your leadership development, and offer you an opportunity to broaden your perspective and gain new skills. Experiences like the Slovenian Winter Camp and the Croatian Best Soldier Competition allow you to build relationships and test your knowledge with NCOs from many different nations. JMTTs offer you the chance to demonstrate and impart your knowledge, teach other NCOs, and expand NATO's message with our partners around the globe. Sound good? Then let's get to work. If you want to be better, I want to help. My door is always open. Make no mistake; great undertakings require great patience, cultural shifts do not happen overnight. There will always be people who are resistant to change and

progress will be difficult for some. There will be growing pains. Until the blueprint has been fine-tuned and ingrained in us so deeply that we take for granted that which seems so foreign to us right now, we must work at it constantly. You are the pathfinders, and it will be your unfailing efforts in the next year, five years, and ten years that will undoubtedly ensure the success of the Alliance, keep the longest peace in history and by extension ensure all of our children's collective security for years to come.

So seek out opportunities, accept challenges, and never settle for average. As a team, as an Alliance, let's continue to cultivate an NCO Corps with the expertise, experience and empowerment to conquer any mission, anytime, anywhere.

<http://shape.nato.int/command-senior>



# NATO COMMUNICATORS SET CONDITIONS TO COMPETE IN THE INFORMATION ENVIRONMENT



Story by Captain (N) Carlos Bausá, Stratcom Advisor, Allied Command Transformation  
Photos by Allied Command Transformation PAO

**Norfolk, USA** - The fourth annual NATO Information & Communicators' Conference was held September 18<sup>th</sup> to 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2017 in Valencia, Spain. The annual conference brings together communicators from Strategic Communications, NATO's Public Diplomacy Division, Public Affairs, Information Operations and Psychological Operations to discuss salient issues regarding NATO communications. Over the course of the week, over 340 communicators from thirty-three countries participated in working groups, break-out sessions, plenary discussions, a night owl chat and syndicate work in order to better position NATO to compete in the information environment.

A keynote speech from Ambassador Tacan Ildem, and remarks by NATO Assistant Secretary General Public Diplomacy Division, Admiral Manfred Nielson, Deputy Supreme Allied Commander Transformation, Carmen Romero, Deputy Assistant Secretary

General Public Diplomacy Division, Oana Lungescu, NATO Spokesperson and leaders from across the Alliance provided participants with strategic guidance. Journalists from CNN, BuzzFeed and The Economist contributed to discussions addressing the Conference's overall theme "Competing in the Information Environment" – a theme that reflects both the need to make NATO's voice heard and to challenge and counter disinformation campaigns affecting the Alliance. In his remarks, Admiral Nielson stated, the first challenge is, "to think, plan and act together" in the information environment. This challenge includes the way NATO conducts its business. The new military policy on Strategic Communications (MCo628) is aimed at improving NATO's Strategic Communications by better coordinating communications to achieve strategic effects and the implementation of the policy dominated discussions throughout



the Conference. All NATO communicators will now organize themselves in working groups, similar to those in place in the Psychological Operations and Information Operations fields. The establishment of these working groups necessitates new terms of reference and reporting structures.

In parallel with the reorganisation of NATO working structures, the conference participants analysed ways to counter misinformation, disinformation and propaganda by adopting a proactive approach both to innovate and to reinforce NATO's communications capabilities.

Representatives from NATO HQ presented the NATO Brand Guide and communication campaigns for 2017-18 on Defence and Security, Deterrence and Dialogue and Projecting Stability - encouraging Nations to adapt these campaigns. By the end of the



## 340 Communicators from 33 countries contribute to the 2017 NATO Information & Communicators' Conference held in Valencia, Spain.



year, the 2018 NATO communication strategy will integrate updated campaigns in conjunction with NATO transformational trends.

Participants also constructively analysed current NATO capability gaps and were looking for innovative solutions to better assess and use social media and big data analytics to compete in the digital age.

The newly formed NATO Digital Working Group recognises the need for a robust, cross-Alliance, deployable digital communication capability to plan, synchronize and execute digital communication strategies. Based on the innovative digital experimentation conducted during NOBLE JUMP 2017 exercise, this Working Group promises to foster the creation of a deployable civ-mil capability to support Alliance operations, missions and exercises.

TRIDENT JUNCTURE 2018 will be a NA-

TO-wide opportunity to test the Digital Production Unit concept on a large scale. The NATO Information Environment Tiger Team used this conference to provide feedback on Enhanced Forward Presence activities, to adapt and streamline reporting processes, and to draft an experimental roadmap that will lead Information Environment Analysis tools and processes as part of TRIDENT JUNCTURE 18.

Participants addressed the lack of Public Affairs-trained personnel to support future military operations. Ambassador Ildem and Admiral Nielson stated Military Public Affairs is a capability that needs to be included in the NATO Defence Planning Process. When Military Public Affairs is recognised as a shortfall capability in the NATO Defence Planning Process, NATO and Nations will be formally requested to provide more trained Public Affairs personnel for

upcoming operations.

In short, as NATO is assessing and addressing future risks, the NATO communications community is driving parallel work strands to adapt to a rapidly changing information environment and to develop persistent, resilient and flexible structures to better compete in the information environment.

The Strategic Communications Branch at Allied Command Transformation organized the 2017 Conference, supported by Allied Command Operations' Communications Division. The next NATO Information and Communicators' Conference will be organized by Allied Command Operations' Communications Team, supported by Allied Command Transformation. In between, 2018 will see a lot of innovation and opportunities to enhance NATO information warfare capacities.





# EDA JDEAL: READY FOR PARTNERSHIP



Story and photos by Joint Deployable  
Exploitation and Analysis Laboratory

**Soesterberg, the Netherlands** - The Joint Deployable Exploitation and Analysis Laboratory (JDEAL), is a Level 2 Technical Exploitation deployable facility financed through a European Defence Agency (EDA) program and is located in Soesterberg, the Netherlands.

C-IED (Counter-Improvised Explosive Device) Exploitation is the process by which the components of an IED-system are collected, recorded and analyzed, in order to support all the pillars of countering the Improvised Explosive Device threat. After the collection as first step (Level 1), Level 2 Exploitation (in theatre) focus on technical analysis from high qualified specialist and following refers to the Level 3 (national capabilities) only in case of high demanding tasks.

After 3 years of development since its opening in 2014, last October JDEAL entered the second phase of the project, ready for deployment in operations on request of any of the JDEAL second phase of the project, ready for deployment in operations on request of any of the JDEAL Contributing Members, most of them also part of the NATO organization. The JDEAL laboratory has been already tested and validated in 2016 in the NATO exercise "Bison Counter" in Sweden, where this new capability was deployed for the very first time and fully integrated in the scenario, with interaction with all other actors and proved to be a valuable support for the Intelligence collection of information in order to support the Attack the Network strategy.

The JDEAL project is now counting on two fully operational level 2 deployable capabilities, tailorable to the mission and capable

of a wide range of technical analysis related to IED, exploitation: latent finger print and DNA retrieval, electronic exploitation document and digital media recovery and analysis, mechanical exploitation, chemical analysis, detailed visual examination and high quality image capture as well as other materiel exploitation.

In the last 3 years of activity, JDEAL has proven to be a good example for how cooperation between nations can be arranged. As knowledge sharing platform, JDEAL keeps contacts with many other organizations involved in C-IED and exploitation, as the NATO accredited C-IED Center of Excellence in Madrid and other U.S. and Canada

facilities dedicated to this specific matter. The gained experience so far shows that it takes time to change, adapt current approaches, doctrines and even processes on



*The first European multinational laboratory for technical exploitation, based in the Netherlands, is ready to support the C-IED strategy in operational mission.*



(C-IED) technical exploitation. The JDEAL concept can be seen as an example of optimized use of resources and proficient sharing of knowledge and information and demonstrates that "pooling and sharing" principle is beneficial for all contributing countries.

After executing several courses to prepare national experts to work as a team in the la

boratory and to create a pool of specialists that fulfills continuation in future deployments, with the acquisition of the cutting-

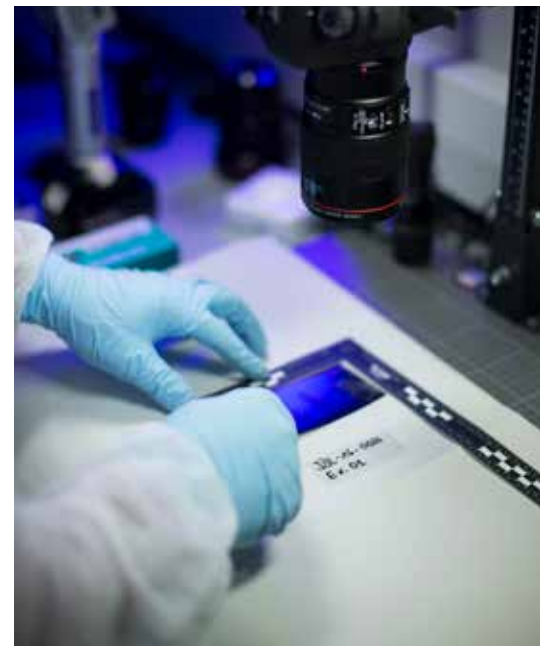
to-edge equipment for the deployable facilities, flexible and modular enough to adapt to the mission requirements, JDEAL definitely entered the "next stage" in the

project, ready to be deployed. Many Nations already showed their interest in this

capability that will also be soon included in the NATO VJTF (Very High Readiness Joint Task Force).

JDEAL staff can contribute to trainings, operations and discussions related to the specific C-IED technical exploitation work field. From this perspective JDEAL is in the position to influence the decision making process. Before the actual deployment JDEAL analyses with the lead-nation how to support the deployment. JDEAL is able to prepare and execute the necessary means and make sure that the assigned crew is educated in the JDEAL training facilities.

*For any information,  
contact JDEAL staff at: [JDEAL@mindef.nl](mailto:JDEAL@mindef.nl)*



# DEPLOYMENT READINESS TEST

*The Headquarters checks the deployability requirements of the personnel*

Story by Col. Edwin Altena, JFC Brunssum BSG Commander

Brunssum, the Netherlands - Although for the majority of the time JFC personnel fulfil their duties at the HQ, located in Brunssum, many of them need to be prepared to pack their gear and deploy on operations at relatively short notice. In order to ensure that the HQ can meet this requirement, the deployment readiness for deployable staff assigned to the Headquarters is tested on a regular basis. This took place most recently in September of this year. The test, conducted by the Base Support Group and J1 Personnel Branch, requires necessary preparatory work from the national delegations. Nations are required to present their personnel for inspection, equipped with those items that can be regarded as basic 'on-the-man' equipment, necessary to fulfil basic soldiering functions.

In total, 30 delegations and a large contingent of NATO International Civilians were checked against predefined requirements. The outcome of the test, from the perspective of individual deployability, is that JFC Brunssum is fully fit for purpose. With this result, a big compliment to the nations is justified!

This deployment readiness test can be regarded as a significant step towards NRF18, for which Exercise TRIDENT JAVELIN 17 represents the certification exercise for JFC Brunssum as the lead Headquarters.



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# BRUNSSUM INTERNATIONAL CLUB

*Making friends from across the globe in Brunssum*

**Brunssum, The Netherlands** - The Brunssum International Club have been raising money, while making friends from across the globe, since the Seventies.

The International Club is open to all NATO Card holder spouses. We meet regularly to share national culture and food! It is also possible to join various activity groups and go on day trips in the area.

The next upcoming event will be the Annual Christmas Charity Crafts Market on 28 November at International Conference Center in Brunssum. You are invited!

More information on the club and its activities: [jfcbic@yahoo.com](mailto:jfcbic@yahoo.com)

### Dates for your diary

#### 2017

Tuesday  
21st November  
10:00-12:00  
**Coffee & Culture**  
USA & Canada

Tuesday  
28th November  
10:00-14:00  
**Craft Market**  
Charity Event

Events take place at the ICC in Brunssum



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[jfcbic@yahoo.com](mailto:jfcbic@yahoo.com)

#### 2018

Tues 16th January  
10:00-12:00  
**Coffee & Culture**  
Turkey

Tues 6th February  
10:00-12:00  
**Coffee & Culture**  
France

Tues 6th March  
10:00-12:00  
**Coffee & Culture**  
Italy

Friday 13th April  
Evening  
**Charity Night**

Tues 17th April  
10:00-12:00  
**Coffee & Culture**  
Poland

Tues 29th May  
10:00-12:00  
**Coffee & Culture**  
UK and Germany

Tues 12th June  
10:00-12:00  
**Coffee & Culture**  
Baltics & Scandinavia



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# VISITS AND ACTIVITIES



20-21 September 2017

## Commander JFC Brunssum visits Slovakian Chief of Defence

**Bratislava, Slovakia** - 20/21 September General Salvatore Farina, Commander Joint Force Command Brunssum, met with General Milan Maxim, the Slovak Chief of General Staff.

Amongst a number of other issues the following topics were discussed: Slovakian Armed Forces current/future operations; the status of the Slovak Armed Forces' capability development program (which will incorporate an adjustment to embrace western military equipment and process); and Slovakia's role as a member of the Visegrad Four - a cultural and political alliance of four Central European states – the Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland and Slovakia – for the purposes of furthering their European integration, as well as for advancing military, economic and energy cooperation with one another.

General Farina also enjoyed office calls with the Minister of Defence, Mr Peter Gajdos, the deputy Chief of Defence, Lieutenant General Pavel Macko, and the Defence State Secretary, Mr Robert Ondrejcsak.



29 September 2017

## Visit of the Military Representative of Kazakhstan

**Brunssum, Netherlands** – On 29 September General Salvatore Farina, Commander Allied Joint Force Command Brunssum, welcomed Colonel Adil Bekov, Military Representative of Kazakhstan to NATO. Following discussions with the Commander Colonel Bekov met with representatives of the headquarters' Civil-Military Interaction/Military Partnership Division, led by Brigadier General Pavel Adam, for a mutually beneficial round table session of talks.

The objective of this visit was to discuss further developments on military cooperation as Kazakhstan has been an active member within the Alliance's Partnership for Peace (PfP) programme since 1994.



18 October 2017

## Visit of The Danish Permanent and Military Representatives

**Brunssum, the Netherlands** – October 18, the Danish Permanent Representative to NATO, Ambassador Michael Zilmer-Johns and the Danish Military Representative to NATO and the EU, Lieutenant General Michael A. Lalleagaard, visited the HQs.

Hosted by General Salvatore Farina, Commander JFC Brunssum, our distinguished visitors enjoyed an office call with the Commander followed by a round-table discussion with senior leaders, with the objective of discussing relevant topics of mutual interest for both Denmark and HQ JFC Brunssum. The official programme ended with a lunch hosted by the Commander. After visiting the HQs, the distinguished visitors used the opportunity to meet with all Danish military personnel serving at JFC Brunssum for an informal discussion at the Danish Support Element



# September – October 2017

20 October 2017

## JFC Brunssum hosts Commander of the Royal Netherlands Army conference

**Brunssum, the Netherlands** – On 18-19 October, Headquarters JFC Brunssum has been the venue for the Commanders Conference of the Royal Netherlands Army. In the morning of the first day, Commander JFC Brunssum, General Salvatore Farina, warmly welcomed Lieutenant General Leo Beulen, Commander of the Royal Netherlands Army. The office call was followed by the kick off of the conference. In the evening, Lieutenant General Leo Beulen and all other members of the Royal Netherlands Army Council, were briefed about JFC Brunssum, with topics ranging from contingency planning to enhanced Forward Presence and related topics.



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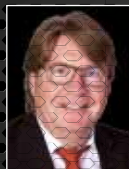
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**We are looking forward to your visit!**

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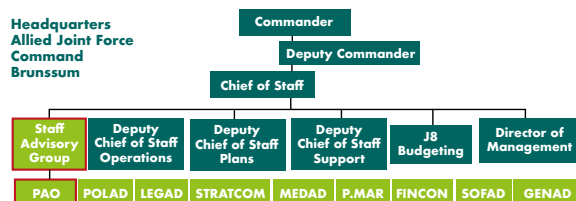
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NAME: **MARCO SCHMIDL**  
 NATION: **GERMANY**  
 RANK: **LIEUTENANT COLONEL (OF-4)**  
 SERVICE: **AIR FORCE**  
 OFFICE: **PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICE**



Headquarters  
Allied Joint Force  
Command  
Brunssum



**Public Affairs Office (PAO):** led by the Public Affairs Advisor, deals with the media and community issues in support of NATO mission, keeping internal and external publics informed about HQ activities through available channels. Fulfills its function by planning, executing and monitoring PA activities and by providing media advice and support for the leadership.

### Marco, when did you arrive in Brunssum and what is your job at the Headquarters?

I arrived in January 2014 to join the Public Affairs Office. I'm in the Media Operations Section but, as usual in Public Affairs, being a Desk Officer I am ready to perform in all other sections in case of need or shortfalls in planning, analysis, internal communication or content creation.

### Tell us about your military career.

Originally I am from the German Air Force Regiment and I'm a trained specialist in infantry and CBRN, but I was always interested in Public Affairs as I worked at the radio before I joined the forces. Therefore I was lucky to get an assignment in that domain as a Youth Information Officer in Geilenkirchen from 2003 to 2006 – combined with my promotion to captain.

After that I stayed somehow in the field of education and information, becoming a company commander at the German Air Force NCO Academy – and when I look back, this was one of my favourite assignments in my career.

The next step was my promotion to Major and a position in Cologne within the Air Force Office, in the division responsible for restructuring and STANAG. In that period I was posted to some different sections before I went to the Air Force Press Information Centre as the responsible Editor in Chief

for print and online products/channels. For additional duties I was the Spokesperson to

the Air Force Education and Training Command, a divisional command in the Air Force structure.

That was my last national assignment before I came here.

### Do you have any experience with other international missions?

Amongst them I'll mention the one in Sudan in 2009-2010 as UN Military Observer and Military Assistant to the Secretary of the Ceasefire Commission. This was so different to all my experience before, as you operate almost on your own, being also responsible for basics, like accommodation, food, water, electricity, communication, laundry – while fulfilling your primary task to monitor a fragile ceasefire as parliamentary elections in Sudan were taking place. This was quite challenging, physically because of the climate and all other conditions, psychologically because of the different cultures clashing there, and finally being a soldier - but carrying out your duty unarmed.

In 2013 I spent over half a year in Afghanistan, deployed to the former ISAF Regional Command North as the Public Affairs Advisor and Spokesperson to the Commander. I remember interesting times, redeploying forces in view of handing over the responsibility for safety and security to the Afghan National Security Forces before the mission transition from ISAF to Resolute Support – to which I then contributed from a different perspective as part of the Enabling Command here in Brunssum.

### Tell us about your job and its challenges.

Being appointed to the Public Affairs Office means to be able to facilitate all tasks in the shop – answering media queries, preparing the Commander or nominated flag officers for media en-

agements like interviews and talks shows, as well as writing articles for our web page, the Northern Star or posting on Facebook. I did that on TDYs and exercises like Trident Joust 14 and 15, Trident Juncture 15 and 16 and Brilliant Jump 16; I like the stress, the pressure and the heat to keep up with the speed of demanding journalists. Some colleagues here may know me from presenting the media landscape in the Situational Awareness Brief or covering community events - with a camera in my hands.

That's what I like, the various aspects of my job and the daily 'surprises' which always make me think of how to improve and how to be more effective in the ever-challenging world of communication.

### Is your family here with you?

Shortly after I was deployed here I moved with my family to Hoensbroek but, believe me, having 5 children it hasn't been that easy to find a house suitable to all needs. But it was the right decision, as all of them really enjoy the life abroad and take huge advantage of being part of our international community!

### What are your hobbies?

Somehow linked to my family, I like to be out with our dogs – one Labrador-German-Shepherd and one Labrador-Mix – and I am a passionate amateur photographer, if you ask my wife (sometimes) maybe with even too much passion.

I also keep my record collection of old vinyl alive and up to date, a bit of a mixture listening and enjoying the music (and linked travel back in time in my mind) and the collection itself.

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<sup>1</sup> the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. Turkey recognizes the Republic of Macedonia with its constitutional name.

#### Ecolog International Deutschland GmbH

In der Steele 14  
D-40599 Düsseldorf  
Germany

Phone : + 49 (0) 211 688 750 0  
Fax : + 49 (0) 211 688 750 199  
info@ecolog-international.com  
www.ecolog-international.com