



NATO  
OTAN

# Defence Transformation



# briefing

Forces



Capabilities



Assets

## Transforming Allied forces for current and future operations

Missions will continue  
to require agile  
and interoperable,  
well-trained and  
well-led military forces

**N**ATO's security is increasingly linked to stability beyond the Euro-Atlantic area. The Allies are finding ways to provide security across a range of new environments and are transforming their armed forces to meet new requirements.

NATO is engaged in operations and missions in Europe, the Mediterranean, Iraq and Central Asia. Its forces are involved in combat, peacekeeping, training and education, logistics support and humanitarian relief operations. They are working alongside the forces of non-member countries and with other international organizations.

The Alliance is enhancing its ability to conduct the full range of missions, from low to high intensity operations and from peacekeeping to collective defence. Under the direction of the North Atlantic Council – NATO's principal decision-making body – the Alliance stands ready to meet new challenges, wherever they may arise. ►



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To meet the full range of missions, Allied forces must be modern, deployable, sustainable and able to undertake demanding operations far from home bases. They must also be prepared, if necessary, for collective defence.

Coping with this increasing set of demands and new types of operations presents a significant challenge. That is why the Allies are committed to pursuing the transformation of their forces for current and future operations. Missions will continue to require agile and interoperable, well-trained and well-led military forces.

### **Guiding transformation**

The Comprehensive Political Guidance (CPG) provides a fundamental vision for NATO’s ongoing transformation. Endorsed by Allied leaders at the Riga Summit in November 2006, it sets out the framework and priorities for all Alliance capability issues, planning disciplines and intelligence for the next 10 to 15 years.

The CPG provides an analysis of the future security environment, while acknowledging the possibility of unpredictable events:

“Terrorism, increasingly global in scope and lethal in results, and the spread of weapons of mass destruction are likely to be the principal threats to the Alliance over the next 10 to 15 years. Instability due to failed or failing states, regional crises and conflicts, and their causes and effects; the growing availability of sophisticated conventional weaponry; the misuse of emerging technologies; and the disruption of the flow of vital resources are likely to be the main risks or challenges for the Alliance in that period. All of these factors can be inter-related or combined, most dangerously in the case of terrorists armed with weapons of mass destruction.”

Given this strategic context, the CPG details the kinds of operations the Alliance must be able to perform in the future and the kinds of capabilities that will be needed:

“The Alliance will require the agility and flexibility to respond to complex and unpredictable challenges, which may emanate far from member states’ borders and arise at short notice. The Alliance will also require effective arrangements for intelligence and information sharing. As in the past, intelligence and lessons learned from operations will also inform capability development.

In order to undertake the full range of missions, the Alliance must have the capability to launch and sustain concurrent major joint operations and smaller operations for collective defence and crisis response on and beyond Alliance territory, on its periphery, and at strategic distance; it is likely that NATO will need to carry out a greater number of smaller demanding and different operations, and the Alliance must retain the capability to conduct large-scale high-intensity operations.

Regardless of its overall size, each operation is likely to require a command and control structure able to plan and execute a campaign to accomplish a strategic or operational objective, employing the appropriate mix of air, land and maritime components. It also requires forces that are structured, equipped, manned and trained for expeditionary operations in order to respond rapidly to emerging crises.”

While the CPG defines NATO's top priorities among capability requirements, it is for individual Allies to determine the exact details of these capabilities. NATO's defence planning processes also play a role.

Implementation of the broad changes listed in the CPG is leading to the development of more usable capabilities for future operations and missions, thereby ensuring that the Alliance remains effective, credible and relevant in the 21st century.

The focus is now on the implementation of the CPG by member countries. Two aspects, in particular, are being pursued: monitoring and evaluating the fulfilment of the required capabilities; and improving NATO's processes for identifying, developing and delivering the required capabilities. ■

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# Providing forces for current operations

**N**ATO has been engaged in a systematic and deliberate process of transformation for many years to ensure that it has the forces, structures and procedures required for today's – and tomorrow's – security challenges.

In addition to NATO's regular defence planning processes, NATO has launched a number of far-reaching initiatives to overcome shortfalls in its military capabilities for operations. The Prague Capabilities Commitment (PCC), which was launched at the Prague Summit in November 2002, is the most recent measure of this kind. Under it, Allies have made firm political commitments to improve their capabilities in the following eight fields:

- chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear defence;
- intelligence, surveillance and target acquisition;
- air-to-ground surveillance;
- deployable and secure command, control and communications;
- combat effectiveness, including precision-guided munitions and suppression of enemy air defences;
- strategic air and sea lift;
- air-to-air refuelling;
- deployable combat-support and combat-service-support units.

The Allies have made significant efforts to boost capabilities through the regular defence planning process and exceptional programmes like the PCC. However, the current operational tempo and the need to sustain forces far from home under difficult conditions, such as in Afghanistan, has stretched the ability of countries to make available the necessary quantity and quality of forces, including the resources to support them. The Allies are considering a range of steps to meet these challenges.



## New approaches to overcoming shortfalls

To effectively overcome shortfalls for current and future operations, countries should, where appropriate, increase the pace of transformation in their armed forces. They could, for example, make their forces more deployable, sustainable and usable for NATO operations.

Allies are examining how to develop further financial incentives and multi-national arrangements in support of NATO's priorities. This will include better ways of targeting existing funds to meet the requirements for operations. NATO is also exploring ways of enhancing national political support for participation in operations.

Alongside these measures, NATO is examining steps to ensure that adequate reserve forces are available for all Alliance operations.

### NATO Response Force

Conceived at the Prague Summit, the NATO Response Force (NRF) is a multinational force of up to 25,000 personnel. It is designed to respond rapidly to emerging crises across the full spectrum of Alliance missions, ranging from disaster relief or peacekeeping to high-intensity war-fighting.

The NRF is made up of land, air, maritime and special forces components,



and can commence deployment with as little as five days' notice and sustain itself on operations for 30 days, or longer if re-supplied. It can be used in the initial phases of a crisis situation that requires a rapid response, a strong signal of Alliance determination, and a substantial force.

The NRF reached full operational capability by the time of the Riga Summit in November 2006. However, in October 2007, Allied defence ministers concluded that due to exceptionally high operational demands, it had become necessary to develop a new approach to planning and organizing future rotations of the NRF.

The ministers directed that a new, graduated force option should be developed, within the agreed NRF concept as an interim solution, as long as operational requirements remain so high. ▶

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The NRF concept remains unchanged. The force will be able to perform the full spectrum of missions for which it was created. It will also continue to play its important role of promoting the ongoing modernization of NATO forces.

What has changed, in essence, is the number of forces to be kept on permanent stand-by. Instead of the 25,000 previously foreseen, NATO will maintain a smaller but robust core. This will provide a basis to which larger forces can be added – up to full size if necessary.

### **Special Forces Initiative**

Special operations forces are extremely versatile, mobile and adaptable forces that are increasingly required for modern military operations.

At the Riga Summit, Allied leaders launched a Special Forces Initiative to increase the ability of special operations forces from member countries to train and operate together. Several member countries have agreed to develop better coordination and training of their elite forces. ■

# Developing capabilities for tomorrow's operations

**The Alliance programme of defence transformation aims to provide a full spectrum of capabilities for all future operations.**

Certain measures have been taken through the normal force planning process. This includes the guidance agreed by NATO defence ministers in June 2006, whereby the Alliance should be able to conduct a greater number of small-scale, division/brigade-size operations, while still retaining its ability to carry out corps-size and larger operations.

In addition to these measures, special efforts are under way to reduce short-falls in critical capabilities, including:

- key enablers such as intra-theatre lift (the means necessary to deploy or move forces and capabilities within the theatre of a given operation), strategic air and sea lift, and helicopters;
- information superiority; and
- capabilities for bringing military support to stabilization and reconstruction in all phases of a crisis situation.

## Increasing strategic lift

With the Alliance increasingly engaging in expeditionary operations in remote areas, strategic lift is a crucial capability. It is necessary to bring troops and equipment quickly

and safely to the operational theatre. It is also essential for providing humanitarian assistance to people during disaster-relief operations.

A number of initiatives are ongoing in the area of strategic lift, such as:

- *The Strategic Airlift Capability (SAC) initiative:* Within this framework, a NATO Airlift Management Agency was established in June 2007 to acquire and manage three Boeing C-17 strategic transport aircraft on behalf of 15 member countries and two Partner countries. Initially, the capability will comprise three SAC aircraft flown by multinational aircrews. A multinational military structure will be created in Europe to command and control the aircraft. An initial operating capability is foreseen for early 2009.
- *The Strategic Airlift Interim Solution:* Sixteen NATO and two Partner countries participate in this initiative, which is a multinational arrangement that provides assured access to up to six Antonov An-124-100 aircraft for ▶



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## Special efforts are under way to reduce shortfalls in critical capabilities

national purposes and in support of NATO or EU operations. It is an interim solution pending the introduction into service of the Airbus A400-M aircraft.

- *NATO Deployable Air Traffic Management capability*: Work is under way to provide airport and air navigation services to both civil and military aircraft operating in all weather conditions, in support of expeditionary operations in areas where host nation support is not available or insufficient.
- *Sealift Capability Package*: To assist in rapidly transporting forces and equipment by sea, six Allies are arranging for assured access to several roll-on/roll-off ships. Other Allies have been invited to join or have shown an interest in joining.
- *Movement Coordination Centre Europe*: Established at Eindhoven Airbase in the Netherlands in July 2007, this facility aims to coordinate the use of air, land and sea

lift resources in support of NATO and EU activities and operations, in order to make more effective use of limited national assets. It also coordinates air-to-air refuelling activities between participating countries.

### Improving information superiority

Information superiority is a central element of NATO's transformation. It aims to ensure that information and situational awareness are more quickly available to member countries than to potential adversaries. By sharing information, data and intelligence reliably, securely and without delay during NATO-led operations, information superiority helps member countries achieve their desired ends with smaller forces.

At the Riga Summit, Allied leaders agreed to support efforts to achieve information superiority. Key to these efforts is the implementation of a NATO Network-Enabled Capability, which aims to make all operational elements, from the strategic down to tactical levels, procedurally and digitally interoperable.

NATO is also seeking to improve information superiority through an airborne Alliance Ground Surveillance system. Proposals for initiatives to enhance Alliance defence against cyber attacks

and improve maritime situational awareness are also being developed in time for the Bucharest Summit in April 2008.

### *Alliance Ground Surveillance*

The development and acquisition of the Alliance Ground Surveillance (AGS) system is a key element of the Alliance's transformation and an essential enabling capability for the NATO Response Force (NRF) and other forces. The AGS is an airborne, stand-off ground surveillance system that can detect and track vehicles, such as tanks, trucks or helicopters, moving on or near the ground, in all weather conditions. This system will provide enhanced situational awareness before and during NATO operations, which is essential for political decision-makers and military planners.

The value of an airborne system has long been recognized. Over the years, there have been many attempts to identify an approach to develop and acquire such a capability. In the meantime, a number of national airborne ground surveillance systems have been fielded. For instance, during NATO operations in the Balkans in the early 1990s, the United States' Joint Surveillance Target Attack Radar System (JSTARS) and the French HORIZON system provided air surveillance. ▶

In September 2001, NATO member countries agreed to develop an Alliance-owned AGS capability, operated by a NATO command force. Efforts are focused on an unmanned aerial vehicle-only solution, based on the off-the-shelf Global Hawk, fitted with a radar sensor and a developed ground segment. The aim is to have an initial operational AGS capability by 2012. In the meantime, the NRF is being supported by US JSTARS.

### **Support to stabilization and reconstruction**

Experience has shown that, in many cases, peace can only be sustained through stabilization and reconstruction. Support for such efforts is often an essential part of missions, even while combat operations are still under way. In coordination with other international efforts, NATO is therefore addressing the need to support stabilization and reconstruction in all phases of a crisis, starting with planning.

Alliance support for stabilization and reconstruction can range from contributing to a safe and secure environment, to temporarily filling gaps or supporting other organizations when they cannot operate due to a hostile security situation or do not have the necessary resources. NATO can also support security-sector reform (demobilization, disarmament and reintegration) and bring military support to humanitarian relief operations.

Under the NATO-led International Security Assistance Force, Provincial Reconstruction Teams are providing support to stabilization and reconstruction in Afghanistan.

Close civil-military cooperation is key to ensuring the correct mix of capabilities in support of civil populations. NATO facilitates such cooperation through a range of civilian instruments and capabilities developed in the framework of its civil emergency planning activities. These assets improve planning and preparedness, and play an important role by serving as an interface between a variety of ministries and the military. Military planners can draw on civilian expertise in areas such as critical infrastructure protection, transport, communications, food, water, agriculture, health and industry. ■

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# Optimizing existing assets

## Lessons learned

NATO is one of the few international organizations with extensive experience in the planning and conduct of large, complex, multinational operations. The success of an operation heavily depends on the degree of interaction between NATO's political and military authorities and the Organization's ability to adapt to changing circumstances during an operation.

Lessons learned are drawn from this experience and are systematically fed back into the system at the military level. NATO is currently considering the development of a NATO-wide lessons learned policy in time for the Bucharest Summit that would extend this process also to the political side of NATO.

By making the process NATO-wide, it would encompass lessons learned at all levels, with implications for NATO's Military Authorities, NATO's main committees and its internal processes, and/or the interaction between NATO Headquarters and the capitals of countries that contribute to NATO operations. There is a wealth of valuable information, which could be better utilized to identify and implement improvements to NATO's operations and capability development.

## Reviewing NATO's command structure

The NATO command structure is being reviewed, with a view to making it more effective for its operational and transformational tasks, and more affordable in manpower and financial terms.

The main focus of the review is the manning of the structure. It is therefore examining the missions, roles and tasks of the peacetime staffing of the structure in its present geographical distribution. While each command will continue to play a substantial role within a balanced command structure, their roles and tasks will be amended to meet the needs of the Alliance's new level of ambition.

The last major restructuring was launched at the Prague Summit in 2002. It resulted in a significant reduction in the number of headquarters and Combined Air Operations Centres, and also reflected a fundamental shift in Alliance thinking. At the strategic level, there are two commands: an operational command, Allied Command Operations, and a functional command, Allied Command Transformation, which serves as the engine of military transformation. ►

Both commands are accountable to the Military Committee for the overall direction and conduct of all Alliance military matters, and come under the political authority of the North Atlantic Council.

### *Allied Command Operations*

Allied Command Operations, which is located at Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe (SHAPE), near Mons, Belgium, is responsible for all Alliance operations. The levels beneath SHAPE have been significantly streamlined, with a reduction in the number of headquarters, and the command arrangements for NATO operations have been simplified.

The operational level consists of two standing joint force commands, one in Brunssum, the Netherlands, and one in Naples, Italy – both of which can conduct operations from their static locations or provide a land-based Combined Joint Task Force (CJTF) headquarters; and a robust but more limited standing joint headquarters, in Lisbon, Portugal, from which a deployable sea-based CJTF headquarters capability can be drawn.

The component or tactical level consists of six joint force component commands, which provide service-specific – land, maritime or air – expertise to the operational

level. Although these component commands are available for use in any operation, they are subordinated to one of the joint force commanders.

The joint force command in Brunssum has an air component command at Ramstein, Germany; a maritime component command at Northwood, the United Kingdom; and a land component command at Heidelberg, Germany.

The joint force command in Naples has an air component command at Izmir, Turkey; a maritime component command in Naples; and a land component command at Madrid, Spain.

Supporting the air component commands are static and deployable Combined Air Operations Centres, which direct NATO air operations.

### *Allied Command Transformation*

Based in Norfolk, Virginia, Allied Command Transformation (ACT) oversees the transformation of NATO's military structure, forces, capabilities and doctrine. It is enhancing training, improving capabilities, testing and developing doctrines, and conducting experiments to assess new concepts. It is also facilitating the dissemination and introduction of new concepts and promoting interoperability through-

out the Alliance. ACT also has a Staff Element at SHAPE in Belgium, which is primarily responsible for resource and defence planning issues.

ACT includes the Joint Warfare Centre in Norway, a Joint Force Training Centre in Poland and the Joint Analysis and Lessons Learned Centre in Portugal. It also supervises the NATO Undersea Research Centre in La Spezia, Italy.

There are direct linkages between ACT and Alliance schools and NATO agencies. ACT is also linked into US transformation initiatives, since it is co-located with the US Joint Forces Command, with which it shares a double-hatted commander.

A new NATO Maritime Interdiction Operational Training Centre in Greece, associated with ACT, reached full operational capability in December 2007. In addition, a number of nationally or multi-nationally sponsored centres of excellence focused on transformation in specific military fields will support the command. ■

# Reforming NATO Headquarters



NATO has been in a state of change since the end of the Cold War, adapting and transforming itself to meet new security challenges. A constant effort is required to keep the business processes at NATO Headquarters closely adjusted to the Alliance's political and military needs and priorities.

"Headquarters reform", applied in the widest possible sense of the

term, is one of the initiatives that has been launched to address these new needs and priorities. Its main purpose is to optimize the procedures and structures used by Allies to exchange information, coordinate policies and take collective decisions based on consensus.

The reform initiative aims to improve interaction with member state capitals and national delegations. This is

particularly important in areas such as political consultation, operational planning, partnerships, defence planning (capability development), public diplomacy, and the financing of operations and capabilities. Another key focus is to improve decision-making by the North Atlantic Council and the implementation of its decisions.

The drive for change coincides with the construction of a new headquarters for NATO and the opportunity this offers to make adjustments more easily before the actual move to the new buildings takes place. The objective is to modernize staff structures and procedures, give greater room for staff-level civil-military interaction and streamline the entire committee structure of the Organization. ■

- For more information:**
- **Comprehensive Political Guidance:** [www.nato.int/issues/com\\_political\\_guidance](http://www.nato.int/issues/com_political_guidance)
  - **Prague capabilities package:** [www.nato.int/docu/pr/2002/p02-127e.htm](http://www.nato.int/docu/pr/2002/p02-127e.htm)
  - **NATO Response Force:** [www.nato.int/issues/nrf](http://www.nato.int/issues/nrf)
  - **Strategic lift capabilities:** [www.nato.int/issues/strategic-lift](http://www.nato.int/issues/strategic-lift)
  - **Operational capabilities:** [www.nato.int/issues/capabilities](http://www.nato.int/issues/capabilities)
  - **NATO's new military command structure:** [www.nato.int/issues/military\\_structure/command/index-e.html](http://www.nato.int/issues/military_structure/command/index-e.html)
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