

2003 An Intense

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The Italian MBT "Ariete".

2003 is likely to be an intense year, indeed. Since we achieved FOC last December, some people would think that most of the work was done. However, nothing could prove to be further from the truth.

Now in the NATO arena, the six newly qualified HRF (L) HQs are competing for resources, range allocation, funding and ... glory. Competition is likely to be intense. So, NRDC-IT has planned its share, the output of which is the 2003 training calendar. There were many drafts when it was being put together, as you would expect, whilst our eye was mainly on the IOC and FOC preparations.

Let us see the main events of this year:

- In January, a Mobile Training Team from The NATO School - SHAPE in Oberammergau arrived in force and taught us a lesson - more than one lesson in fact. They conducted the "Combined NATO Staff Officer Orientation and Crisis Management" course, for a grand total of 124 participants, many from our affiliated units from outside the HQ. Guest speakers featured COMNAVSOUTH, a three star General, the NATO political advisor, a former CNN journalist and others.
- Response Cell to ex "Disciplined Warrior 03" in Verona: this exercise is a Command Post Exercise named "DW" that took place in Verona, Italy, from 24 Feb.

to 04 Mar. DW 03 aimed at improving the capabilities of the Southern Region to carry out crisis response operations, in particular where Peace Support Operations are concerned. It used modern simulation techniques to replicate the flow of information and the decision making processes in a deployed military HQ. Staffs serving at NATO commands were participating in the exercise, as well as personnel from the Turkish General Staff. The exercise also aimed at training personnel from the HU Defence forces, that took the opportunity to enhance experiences in planning for multinational operations. We provided some 15 staff that represented the Corps, covering all the major functions.

- Functional Training: a large number of Branch study periods will take place, allowing for the first time both internal and external staff to study, comment on and refine specific areas such as doctrine, tactics, techniques and procedures, together with the opportunity to review SOP/SOLs post FOC.
- CPX/CAX "Sharp Dagger 03": this exercise took place at the German Army simulation centre in Wildflecken, from late April until the beginning of May (many comments were made about the choice of timing...). It involved exercising 250 staff from HQ, on extended hours, with back up from the Signals Brigade and Support Regiment. It simulated a CRO, degenerating rapidly into a WF situation and the German computer system will help us by showing how we fair.
- NRDC-IT response cell to ex "Mare Aperto 03": In May we provided about 15 staff who played the land element in a maritime exercise carried out by the Italian Navy MCC. For the Navy MCC, this exercise constitutes their IOC.



The Italian Self Propelled Howitzer "M 109L".

- LCC Response Cell "Northern Light 03": after a well deserved summer leave (unless we are selected to go somewhere more exciting), we will take approximately 130 staff, so UK and NL



Training Year

forces may enact an amphibious landing in a broader NATO-led operation. It will take part in Brittany, England and Scotland in the second half of September. We will experience the thrill of sailing, for a while

- During the year, some 30 Officers/NCO from all branches will take part in various ARRC study periods, to improve and update their professional capabilities and skills. In the meantime, ARRC and others will be sending representatives along to our study periods as well.



Mission rehearsal exercise (MRE) for NRDC-IT Staff and subordinated Divisions.

Moreover, a number of innovations have been inserted:

- Individual Military Training-1: the first basic skills refreshment course for all staff took part in February, totalling some 50 Officers, NCOs and other ranks. Classes included practical lessons on subjects such as "mine awareness, hand grenade throwing and NATO radio procedures". Another two periods are scheduled for later this year in September and December. OK, we could have done better, but ... "practice makes perfect".
- Battlefield tour: next October we will visit two major battlefields, Marengo (Italian Independence War) and Montecassino (WWII) with an historian explaining them in detail. We can always learn a great deal past battles, both from the winning and the losing side. If we don't learn from past mistakes, we are doomed to repeat them in future ... (ad lib quote from the Lessons Learned Cell).



Female soldiers of the Tat. Spt. Rgt. on training.

- Adventure training: for a full five days, this July we will roam the mountains, rucksack on our backs. This will produce team spirit, cohesion...and a lot of blisters! It will take place in a breathtaking place, Passo del Tonale, where we will be lodged in a Mountain Troops facility. Start training....
- Arid/desert seminar: since it is better to prevent than to remedy, COMNRDC instructed us to start thinking about deployment in a huge array of areas, from mountainous to sea, from jungle to ...anywhere, including desert area. The aim of this seminar will be to familiarise staff with the problems of deploying and fighting in an arid/desert environment, and to draw conclusions from recent deployments such as "Desert Shield" in 1991, and the more recent deployment of US/UK forces to the Gulf area.



Securing the area.

