

NATO Response Force

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NRF 3: Mission accomplished!



End of tour for NATO Rapid Deployable Corps Italy (NRDC-IT) as Land Component Command (LCC) for the third rotation of the NATO Response Force (NRF).

On 14 January 2005 NRDC-IT handed over the NRF-LCC colours to the 1 German/Netherlands Corps during a ceremony held in Munster for the fourth rotation of the NATO Response Force, NRF 4.

The Commander of 1 (GE/NL) Corps, Lt. Gen. Norbert van Heyst (German Army) received the NRF flag out of the hands of the Commander, Allied Joint Forces Command Naples, Admiral Michael G. Mullen. The outgoing LCC Commander Major General Luigi Pellegrino (Italian Army), the NRDC-IT Chief of Staff, relinquished the NRF flag and brought to a close the third iteration of the NRF.

NRF 3 rotation represented a fundamental step in the development of the NRF project as during this phase the Initial Operational Capability (IOC) was achieved. A very intense training that involved all the components of the NRDC-IT in the NRF certification process for 12 months, six of those spent for the preparation phase and the remaining six in stand-by role.

NRDC-IT conducted a number of exercises in close coordination with superior Headquarters Joint Force Command Naples, that was providing the Deployable Joint Task Force staff, and mainly with the NRF Brigade and its units, namely the Alpini Taurinense Brigade based in Turin.

NRF 3 saw an increase of force strength to approximately 70% of its full strength and capabilities while the two previous rotations were mainly based on limited initial capabilities. This provide the Alliance a real "tool" able to conduct most of the NRF missions even if with some constraints related to shortfalls in the force generation.

As a staff we had a great benefit from this experience because we improved our procedure to work in a joint environment and we have now a better understanding of how maritime and air units work. The maritime and air components complete a 12-month rotation, the UK Maritime Force and a mix of assets available to the Allied Air Component Command Izmir were part of the NRF 3 and will remain activated for the NRF 4.

But this is just a step in our involvement in the NRF project due to the fact that all the High Readiness Force headquarters are taking part in the NRF rotations and we will back "on duty" in July 2009 for NRF 9.

