

# HQ NRDC-ITA Communication Strategy

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*In May 2008, the Commander issued his Vision Statement, an integral part of the HQ Communication Strategy. The author of this article explains the background and methodology to its creation.*

## COMNRDC-ITA Vision Statement

'NATO's premier High Readiness Force Headquarters that is adaptive, deployable and able to successfully conduct operations across the full military spectrum. A unique, challenging and rewarding environment that empowers, motivates and fulfills its members to be part of a winning team.'

## BACKGROUND

Successful communication in today's information environment requires a well-coordinated approach. The Commander's Communication Strategy is an element of the Commander's larger overall strategy that, on operations, supports and is supported by a broader strategic communication effort. When in a Permanent Headquarters, it is an integrated process to promulgate the Commander's message, synthesizing all means of communication and information delivery. It is therefore necessary to ensure that the HQ as a whole is engaged in the process that leads to its creation.

**The Vision Statement above is the critical part of the Communications Strategy.** The vision is the starting point of the entire process. A process that is simple, understandable and enduring. Setting a clear, unambiguous and inspiring vision that acts as the focus for communication work has been paramount. The strategy has been designed to provide HQ NRDC-ITA and its affiliated formations with additional guidance for the current year as well as to provide first orientations and outline priorities to 2011.

## METHODOLOGY PLAN

The aim of the Methodology Plan is to identify the methods to be used, the structures to be created and the steps to be taken in order to create a comprehensive measured and resourced Communication Strategy.

## EXECUTION – CONOPS

**Stage 1 - COMNRDC-ITA Vision Analysis.** This phase was aimed at:

- Gaining a clear understanding of COMNRDC-ITA vision.
- Identifying the objectives to achieve in support of COMNRDC-ITA vision.
- Identifying the effects supporting the achievement of the cited objectives.

The HQ NRDC-ITA contextual analysis (SWOT) concluded this phase.

**Stage 2 - Systems, Stakeholders and Communication Means & Opportunities Analysis.**

**Stage 3 - Communication Plan Development.**

**STAKEHOLDERS**

The target of the communication strategy is the range of stakeholders that are engaged with NRDC-ITA. The following have been identified.

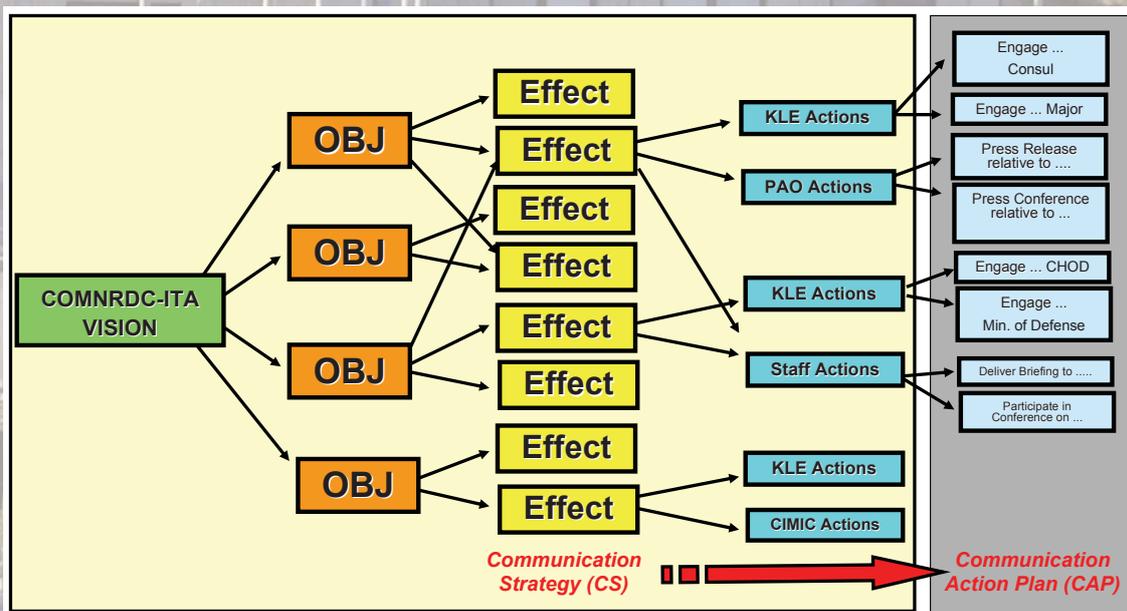
- Superior NATO HQs.
- Sibling NATO HQs.
- MOD ITALY.
- Contributing Nations MODs.
- Local Community.
- NRDC ITA Personnel.
- Civil Organisations.
- HQ NRDC-ITA Personnel.
- Support Brigade.
- Subordinate Units.

**Engagement Methods.** A number of methods may be used to engage stakeholders. Amongst these will be:

- Internal knowledge of NRDC-ITA personnel of each stakeholder.
- Formal engagement (meetings, interviews etc).
- Social engagements.
- Questionnaires.

**Output.** The key output from the analysis of stakeholders will be a list of key messages that we would want to communicate to each stakeholder and activities to be carried out to influence them in ways that are critical to COMNRDC-ITA vision achievement.

**COMMUNICATION STRATEGY ANALYSIS - SEQUENCE OF ACTIVITIES**



**WORKING STRUCTURE**

To ensure that appropriate parties are engaged throughout the Communication Strategy development, and that appropriate direction and guidance are given throughout, a two-tier structure will be set up, as follows:

- Level 1: Communications Strategy Working Group (Info Ops Group reinforced) chaired by DCOS CS (ACOS IOB will direct the WG).
- Level 2: Command Group.

**BRIEFING AND INFORMING**

There was and continues to be a clear need to ensure that all are kept informed and that there is appropriate buy in to both process and results from across the HQ. This is achieved through the following:

- regular reports, including publishing of key deliverables after COM NRDC-ITA endorsement.
- verbal and written briefings.

**ENDNOTE AND CURRENT STATUS**

In NRDC-ITA there are currently no experts (or qualified Staff) in either communication strategy or marketing. The work continues to be based on common sense and sound military judgment. The status of art, at time of print, can be found below.

**COMMUNICATION STRATEGY - STATUS OF ART**

MILESTONES	9 APR	30 APR	30 MAY	17/24 JUL	15 SEP 03 OCT	17 OCT	07 NOV	21 NOV	NOV 2008 NOV 2009
<b>STAGE 1</b>									
COMNRDC-ITA Vision	█								
Objectives / Effects / SWOT		█							
<b>STAGE 2</b>									
Stakeholders Analysis			█						
Positioning: Questionnaire Dvp./Distr.				█					
Positioning: Questionnaire Coll./Eval.					█				
Communications Means & Opportunities Matrix						█			
Communication Strategy Paper							█		
<b>STAGE 3</b>									
Communication Strategy Action Plan								█	
CS Action Plan Evaluation (12 months)									█

