

## Civil support for military operations and emergency responses

Planning and conducting modern military operations as well as responses to disasters or humanitarian crises is a complex process. Military planners and commanders often call on expertise and capabilities from the civilian sector when mounting an operation. Close cooperation and interoperability between military and civilian actors is vital, and NATO plays an important role in facilitating such cooperation. Many Partner countries are actively involved in this work.

The need to support NATO's Military Authorities with a civilian dimension was identified very early in NATO's history. In 1956, the Report on Non-Military Cooperation by the Three Wise Men stated that "security today is far more than a military matter". After the end of the Cold War, the increasing importance of civil resources in responding to challenges in the evolving security environment was recognized in the Strategic Concepts developed in 1991 and 1999.

At the Riga Summit in November 2006, Allied leaders underlined that today's security challenges require a comprehensive approach involving a wide spectrum of civil and military instruments. This was also reflected in the Comprehensive Political Guidance, endorsed at Riga, which set out the framework and priorities for all Alliance capability issues, planning disciplines and intelligence for the next 10 to 15 years.

NATO has a range of civilian instruments and capabilities at its disposal to support the military authorities as necessary. These include specialized committees, networks of expertise, an operational centre and international staff elements. The Alliance's civilian and military assets complement one another and can be dovetailed to achieve a desired goal.

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*Close civil-military cooperation is essential in today's complex security environment.*

“The interaction between Alliance forces and the civil environment (both governmental and non-governmental) in which they operate is crucial to the success of operations. Civil military cooperation is interdependent: military means are increasingly requested to assist civil authorities; at the same time civil support to military operations is important for logistics, communications, medical support, and public affairs. Cooperation between the Alliance’s military and civil bodies will accordingly remain essential.”

(NATO Strategic Concept, Article 60 – April 1999)

Coordinated civil-military planning is becoming especially important in the context of NATO’s military support to stabilization and reconstruction in theatres of operations in Afghanistan. Over the years, it has also been used effectively, for example, in responding to the Kosovo refugee crisis in the late 1990’s, various natural disasters in the Euro-Atlantic area, and a devastating earthquake in Pakistan in 2005.

### Providing civilian expertise

Civil support to the military takes the form of advice provided over a variety of civilian areas. Advice and support are demand-driven. In other words, NATO Military Authorities must request such help if they consider it necessary.

Civil capabilities can be used by military authorities at all times for advice on technical matters during peacetime (preparedness), the planning stages of an operation and the execution phase. For example, transport experts analyze civilian or commercial air and sea lift capabilities and provide results to military planners, thereby helping the military to identify more cost-effective and readily available strategic transport solutions for military operations.

Civil emergency planners support military authorities by assisting them in implementing civilian advice and effectively using civilian resources for operations. Civil experts can accompany military teams on-site to provide on-the-spot evaluations and analysis. In addition, during major international events, such as the NATO Summit in Riga in November 2006 or the Olympic Games in Greece in 2004, civil experts have supported the military in providing protection against possible attacks using chemical, biological, radiological or nuclear agents.

### **Support for stabilization and reconstruction**

Civilian expertise may increasingly be required in the future to advise the military in the context of support for stabilization and reconstruction efforts, in coordination with the host nation. This could include advice on issues such as rebuilding local industry, relaunching agricultural production, reconstructing health and civil communications infrastructure.

Close civil-military coordination between actors in the field is an important element of current NATO operations. The Provincial Reconstruction Teams established across Afghanistan are a good example. These small teams of civilian and military personnel work in the provinces to extend the authority of the central Afghan government as well as to help local authorities provide security and assist with reconstruction work.

Steps have been taken since the 2006 Riga Summit to increase the capacity of NATO forces to support stabilization and reconstruction efforts in all phases of a crisis. Primary responsibilities for stabilization and reconstruction would normally lie with other actors,

such as local and international organizations and non-governmental organizations. However, security concerns may hinder these actors from undertaking these tasks.

Military troops may therefore be called upon to begin the early phases of post-conflict reconstruction or to support other organizations for an interim period. Through NATO Civil Emergency Planning, military planners can draw on civilian expertise in areas such as critical infrastructure, transport, food, water, agriculture, communications, health and industry.

## NATO civil capabilities and instruments

NATO's civil emergency planning activities are conducted under the overall guidance of the Senior Civil Emergency Planning Committee (SCEPC). Activities cover specific areas in which civil support may be required by NATO's Military Authorities for both collective defence operations (covered under Article 5 of NATO's founding treaty) and "non-Article 5" or crisis-response operations, which encompass military operations as well as disaster and humanitarian relief. This support is provided as necessary through a range of civilian capabilities and instruments.

Eight Planning Boards and Committees are composed of national representatives across a range of civilian sectors. They can also draw upon the expertise of a network of 350 civil experts located in NATO and Partner countries across the Euro-Atlantic area. In addition, staff serving in the civil emergency planning section of the Operations Division at NATO Headquarters routinely provide advice and support, and can act as an initial crisis-response capability.

Two key instruments have been developed to implement and assist civil support to military operations: the Civil Capabilities Catalogue and the Rapid Reaction Team Concept.

In the area of disaster response, the key operational instrument is the Euro-Atlantic Disaster Response Coordination Centre (EADRCC). It coordinates responses among NATO and Partner countries to natural and man-made disasters in the Euro-Atlantic area. The EADRCC is administered at "49", involving all NATO and Partner countries.

Disaster response is not the only area in which Partner countries are involved. In fact, most of NATO's civil emergency planning activities are carried out with NATO's Partner countries and their cooperation is regarded an integral part of work in this area. Partner countries are also represented on the Senior Civil Emergency Planning Committee and in the Planning Boards and Committees. Many Partners contribute actively in providing civil support to the military and valuable expertise to the Alliance.

NATO's activities are closely coordinated with other international organizations such as the United Nations, in particular the UN-Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Assistance (UN-OCHA)

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*Coordination with other international organizations is essential. The EADRCC organizes international exercises to practise and improve coordination mechanisms between international actors.*

“A group of 350 civil experts located across the Euro-Atlantic area are selected based on specific areas of support frequently required by the military.”

and the European Union. One of the most important aspects of cooperation is to be informed about the activities of the various actors involved in disaster relief. Cooperation with other international organizations is therefore a very high priority for NATO. Every year a large international exercise seeks to enhance cooperation with other international organizations such as the International Committee of the Red Cross, the International Atomic Energy Agency, the Office for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons and the World Health Organization.

### Planning Boards and Committees

Under the authority of the Senior Civil Emergency Planning Committee, the Planning Boards and Committees are the means by which civil support to military operations is actually carried out. They cover specific areas of expertise such as transport, communications, civil protection, industrial planning and supply, medical matters, food and agriculture. At the request of military planners, the Planning Boards and Committees can carry out studies on specific areas to support military operations. For example, the Planning Board for Inland Surface Transport conducted a study on rail networks in Afghanistan.

### Network of civil experts

A group of 350 civil experts located across the Euro-Atlantic area are selected based on specific areas of support frequently required by the military. They cover civil aspects relevant to NATO planning and operations including crisis management, consequence management and critical infrastructure. Provided by nations, experts are drawn from government and industry. They serve for three years, participate in training and respond to requests for assistance in accordance with specific procedures known as the Civil Emergency Planning Crisis Management Arrangements. The Planning Boards and Committees are responsible for maintaining and updating this network of experts.

### The Civil Capabilities Catalogue

The Civil Capabilities Catalogue is a list of 13 areas comprising civilian assets and expertise which provide a “reachback” capability for the NATO Military Authorities. This capability can be used during crisis-response operations, from the force commander located in the area of operations up through the entire military chain of command to the highest strategic levels.

By using the “reachback” capability, any military level with a request for information or advice on a civilian matter can address this need for civilian expertise through a fast and simple process. The expert might be at NATO Headquarters, in a national ministry or a commercial business. This capability is used in real-world situations, such as in Afghanistan, and is frequently tested during exercises. It can be accessed through a variety of communications networks such as telephone and video link.



*Civilian and military assets can be dovetailed to achieve a desired goal.*



*The importance of protecting critical infrastructure, such as power stations, has been brought into sharp focus in the post 9/11 security environment.*

## “REACHBACK”

NATO Civil Emergency Planning provides expertise to the military on a real-time basis in the form of advice and support in the following civil areas:

- Transport (air, sea, inland surface)
- Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear/Weapons of Mass Destruction
- Medical
- Critical Infrastructure
- Civil Communications
- Food and Agriculture
- Civil Disaster Response
- Industrial Preparedness

Civil capabilities available:

- *Population movements*: Provision of medical or other support
- *Mass evacuation*: Provision of medical or other support
- *Airports and Seaports of debarkation operations*: Advice on civil/commercial aspects
- *Commercial transport assets*: Advice on chartering and leasing
- *Incidents involving chemical, biological, radiological or nuclear agents*: Detection, monitoring and containment
- *Incidents involving weapons of mass destruction*: Analysis and mitigation of impact on civil populations
- *Chemical products*: Identification and evaluation of potential hazards, handling precautions
- *Naturally-caused epidemics*: Analysis of possible impact on NATO operations
- *Critical Infrastructure*: Advice on protection, prioritization and reestablishment of sectors and networks
- *Civil surge capacity*: Evaluations to meet military requirements in crisis-response operations
- *Communications*: Usage/limitations of radio, broadcast and public warning systems

## The Rapid Reaction Team Concept

In early 2006, the Senior Civil Emergency Planning Committee approved a deployable instrument for rapidly evaluating civil needs and capabilities to support a NATO operation or other emergency situation. The Rapid Reaction Team Concept complements the Civil Capabilities Catalogue and enables the NATO Military Authorities to “call-forward” experts in response to military requests. Designed to fill in capability shortfalls identified by the NATO Military Authorities, a Rapid Reaction Team can be deployed within 24 hours of the approval of a request for advice.

Such teams, composed of civil experts taken from the Planning Boards and Committees, can be deployed to assess civilian requirements across the functional areas of transport, communications, civil protection, industrial planning and supply, medical matters, food and agriculture. The Rapid Reaction Team Concept takes the Civil Capabilities Catalogue to the next level



Commercial shipping experts support NATO's counter terrorism operation Active Endeavour in the Mediterranean.



Medical expertise is one of the key areas in which the military can request advice and support through “Reachback”.



Civilian agricultural experts provide advice to the military about the impact on deployed troops of pesticides used in the agricultural sector.



*Civil communications experts are prepared to respond to requests from NATO's military planners in areas such as electronic communications, usage of radio, broadcast and public warning systems.*

by providing “boots-on-the-ground” support in the form of experts tailored to the military requestor’s requirements.

### **NATO civil emergency planning staff**

NATO civil emergency planning staff routinely provide advice and support to strategic and operational levels to ensure that detailed planning effectively takes account of civil capabilities. They facilitate the essential interface between the NATO military actors, NATO’s committees, national civil agencies and the network of civil experts. They also serve as an initial response capability to a crisis by forming a Crisis-Management Element as foreseen in the Civil Emergency Planning Crisis Management Arrangements.

Civil emergency planning staff actively participate in planning for military exercises, which are designed to test the use of civilian elements in support of military operations. Such was the case in Exercise Steadfast Jaw 2007 in which the military made several requests for support to civil experts. Staff regularly give training courses to military staff officers at the NATO School in Oberammergau, Germany, and the NATO Defense College in Rome, Italy, on civil emergency planning issues of ongoing interest to NATO military operations.

### **The Euro-Atlantic Disaster Response Coordination Centre**

Created in June 1998, the Euro-Atlantic Disaster Response Coordination Centre (EADRCC) is an operational tool for coordinating responses among NATO and Partner countries to natural and man-made disasters in the Euro-Atlantic area. Since 2001, the EADRCC also has a role in coordinating responses and consequence-management actions following a potential terrorist act involving chemical, biological, radiological or nuclear (CBRN) agents.

In addition, the Centre acts as the focal point for information sharing on disaster assistance among the EAPC countries. As part of its operational role, the EADRCC plans and organizes major international field exercises in order to practise responses to simulated natural and man-made disaster situations and consequence management.

An Inventory of National Capabilities for use in CBRN incidents has been developed and is handled by the EADRCC. It provides quick access to essential information. The Inventory registers capabilities (civil and military) that NATO and Partner countries could make available to national authorities as a coordinated contribution towards the protection of civilian populations in the event a CBRN incident (medical assistance, radiological detection units, aero-medical evacuation). For example, use of the EADRCC has been included in operation plans for military support to major public events such as NATO summit meetings.

Since its launch, the EADRCC has coordinated assistance from NATO and Partner countries to more than 30 operations around the world from refugee crises to forest fires. It has demonstrated that it is



*The EADRCC handles an inventory of national capabilities (civil and military) for the protection of civilian populations in the event of CBRN incident.*

flexible, adaptable and capable of executing a range of humanitarian tasks. Any response to a complex emergency requires both civil and military efforts. The EADRCC is an effective part of much needed civil-military coordination. For example, during NATO operations in response to Hurricane Katrina and the Pakistan earthquake, military liaisons and civil experts were co-located in the EADRCC to help provide coherent civil-military support to the disaster response. This allowed military representatives to funnel civil expert information directly into the operational command levels.

The Centre's mandate also allows it to respond, subject to the Allies' agreement, to a request for assistance from the Afghan Government in case of natural disasters. It stands to reason, that the EADRCC should be able to respond to requests for disaster assistance emanating from an area where NATO is engaged militarily. However, the responsibility for disaster response remains, as before, with the stricken nation. This means that any assistance provided by a NATO military commander or the EADRCC would be in support of national authorities and/or the United Nations.

## Milestones

### 1950

- The Planning Board for Ocean Shipping, the first of the Planning Boards and Committees, is established to provide the North Atlantic Council with guidance of shipping possibilities for military and civilian purposes in case of war and crisis.

### 1953

- The policy on NATO Cooperation for Disaster Assistance in Peacetime is approved.

### 1955

- The Senior Civil Emergency Planning Committee is established.

### 1956

- The Report of the Three Wise Men recognizes that security is far more than a purely military matter.

### 1972

- Eight NATO Civil Wartime Agencies are established to make available civilian experts to provide advice to the Alliance on main commodity resources and international refugee problems in case of war.

### 1991

- The new Strategic Concept leads to a fundamental revision of the aims and principles of civil emergency planning activities and procedures.

### 1993

- Procedures for the coordination of disaster assistance are revised to allow out-of-area assistance, if requested by an international organization, and to facilitate cooperation with, and assistance to, Partner countries.

## EXAMPLES OF CIVIL SUPPORT FOR MILITARY OPERATIONS

*International Security Assistance Force in Afghanistan:* Civil experts provided advice to in-theatre commanders in Afghanistan on commercial toxic chemicals, thereby allowing commanders to make operational decisions on their handling – an example of the use of civilian “reachback” capability.

*Operations in support of Allied countries in the early stages of the second Iraq conflict:* Civilian transport experts analyzed market capability and gave advice on how to transport military equipment in a rapid and cost effective manner to an area of high interest.

*Military actions following 9/11:* Civilian ocean-shipping experts provided advice to Allied navies on commercial standards and international law regarding the search of ships and tracking of commercial shipping, in the framework of NATO's maritime counter-terrorist operation, Active Endeavour.

*Military exercises:* During Exercise Steadfast Jaguar in Cape Verde in 2006, civilian experts on inland surface transport and ocean-shipping experts gave advice on the suitability of harbour facilities and ferries for international use. A civilian disaster-response expert also provided in-theatre assistance to military and local officials on aspects of evacuating populations in the event of a volcanic eruption.



*Military liaison and civil experts were co-located in the EADRCC to provide coherent civil-military disaster response following the earthquake in Pakistan.*

## Milestones *(continued)*

### **1998**

- On the basis of a Russian proposal, the Euro-Atlantic Disaster Response Coordination Centre (EADRCC) is created.
- Together with UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, the EADRCC helps coordinate offers for international assistance in response to severe flooding in Ukraine.

### **1998**

- The first civil emergency planning seminar involving Mediterranean Dialogue countries takes place in Greece.

### **1999**

- At the request of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees, the EADRCC coordinates a strategic airlift of relief items to Albania to the initial influx of refugees from Kosovo.
- The EADRCC responds to Turkey's request for assistance following a major earthquake.

### **2000**

- Civil emergency planning activities are reviewed in line with the 1999 Strategic Concept, and include support for both NATO collective-defence and crisis-response operations.

### **2004**

- EADRCC supports the Greek authorities during the Athens Olympic Games.

### **2005**

- EADRCC coordinates disaster assistance after Hurricane Katrina hit the United States and an earthquake devastated Pakistan.
- Civil aviation experts provide advice on commercial airlift information for NATO's disaster-response operation in Pakistan.

### **2006**

- Civil protection experts advise in-theatre commanders in Afghanistan on toxic chemicals.

### **2006**

- Riga Summit endorses initiatives to increase the capacity of NATO forces to bring military support to stabilization and reconstruction efforts in all phases of a crisis.