



Initial Visit
20-24 January 2020
Ohrid, Republic of North Macedonia

Minutes of the meeting

North Macedonia Core Planning Team Participants:

- Col. Kire Andov – Civil-Military Cooperation
- Ms. Valentina Atanasovska – Camp management
- Mr. FerikBeluli – Logistics, transport and Vital Cross-Border facilitation
- Mr. SerafimBuloski – Municipality Ohrid
- Mr. AgronBuxhaku – Director Crisis Management Center
- Mr. Samir Demiri – Admin Support
- Mr. Antonio Dodevski – Mountain Rescue
- Prof. Col. Metodija Dojchinovski - Evaluator
- Mr. Daniel Gjorgjevski - International Organizations / Exercise Coordinator
- Mr. Zdravko Jakovlevski – Logistics, transport and Vital Cross-Border facilitation
- Mr. Perica Jovanovski – Logistics, transport and Vital Cross-Border facilitation
- Mr. Igorche Karafilovski – ICT
- Maj. Ace Karajovanovski - Emergency Medical Teams
- LtCol. Sashko Kuzmanov – CBRN
- Mr. Tode Maleski – Regional Crisis Management Center Struga
- Mr. Borce Milevski – Logistics, transport and Vital Cross-Border facilitation
- Ms. Marija Milkova – Head of LEMA
- Mr. Marjan Miloshevski – Ministry of Interior, Ohrid
- Mr. Ace Minovski – Evaluator
- Mr. Ivica Naumovski - Urban Search and Rescue
- Mr. Petre Nakov - NICS
- Mr. Dashmir Nasufi – Municipality Struga
- Mr. Resul Kaba – Municipality of Struga
- Mr. Marjan Nojkov - Media
- Mr. Toni Petreski - Logistics, transport and Vital Cross-Border facilitation
- Mr. Robret Risteski – Head of DISTAFF
- Mr. Ali Samet – Water Rescue
- Ms. Sanja Sazdovska - Emergency Medical Teams

- Mr. Gazmen Sherifi - Media and simulated press
- Mr. BlagojcoSpasov - Logistics, transport and Vital Cross-Border facilitation
- Mr. Stole Stolevski – Logistics, transport and Vital Cross-Border facilitation
- Mr. DragiTarcugovski - Scenario Designer
- Mr. MitkoTemelkoski – Regional Crisis Management Center Ohrid
- Ms. NadicaVckova - Media and simulated press
- Mr. AritonVejseli - Scenario Designer
- Dr. UrimVejseli – Exercise Director

Balkan Medical Task Force

- LtCol. Zharko Micovic – Commander Balkan Medical Task Force

NATO Core Planning Team Participants:

- Diane Acurio – Head Evaluators;
- Shannon Bauer – Media and simulated press;
- Michael Berna – Water Rescue;
- Hadrian Borcea – NATO Civil Expert: Emergency Medical Teams and Telemedicine;
- Fritz Brohs – Lead Scenario Designer;
- Ian Cameron – NATO Civil Expert: media and simulated press;
- Lars Hillerström – Urban Search and Rescue;
- Christopher Levesque – CBRN;
- Thomas Penner – NATO Civil Expert: Logistics, transport and Vital Cross-Border facilitation;
- Sabir Ahmadov – EADRCC and International Organizations;
- Wim Vanhamme – Exercise Coordinator

Executive summary

The setup of this Initial Visit was a primer, in duration and number of participants. The meeting its primary purpose was to acquaint the DISTAFF (directing staff) of the Republic of North Macedonia with their NATO counterparts, discuss all the aspects of planning, conducting and evaluating the “NORTH MACEDONIA 2020” EADRCC Consequence Management Command Post and Field Exercise.

This exercise will be unique in offering two exercise elements that have never been practiced before: mountain rescue and illegal migration.

NATO EADRCC Field Exercises offer a small window of opportunities for the Host Nation to push through changes in the Crisis Management System.

We, ahead of the Main Planning Conference, agreed on the exercise objectives, decided what training to provide and ensured the potential exercise sites provide sufficient opportunities to keep the national and international teams busy for the duration of the exercise.

The meeting also agreed which International Organisations to invite to the exercise.

Agreed exercise objectives:

- Support national authorities in building resilience through improved disaster preparedness, planning, prevention and response, and strengthen their capability to manage potential civil emergencies;
- Use the Next-Generation Incident Command System, at all operational levels;
- Improve cooperation and tools available to partners;
- Practice EADRCC procedures and capabilities, in order to improve cooperation among Allied and partner nations during a consequence management operation, including response to chemical, biological or radiological incidents;
- Demonstrate/use new technologies that can improve international disaster response¹;
- Strengthen North Macedonia its capabilities to receive international assistance and effectively organize and co-ordinate consequence management operations involving international response teams;
- Facilitate cross-border co-operation among neighbouring countries, including by practicing the provisions of the Memorandum of Understanding on the Facilitation of Vital Civil Cross Border Transport;
- Practice civil-military cooperation with active military participation in a civil catastrophe;
- Conduct a “Virtual Exercise”²;
- Exercise the use of the Virtual On-Site Operations Coordination Centre (VOSOCC);
- Practice, as appropriate, co-ordination and co-operation between NATO and International Organizations and Non-Governmental Organizations.
- Practice internationally agreed guidelines, including the INSARAG guidelines for Urban Search and Rescue Teams (USAR)³;
- Familiarise Civil Experts with CEP Crisis Management Arrangements (CMAs) in terms of its capabilities, responsibilities and mechanisms (e.g. CEPC, EADRCC), supporting the overall NATO Crisis Response System (NCRS).

Agreed exercise elements

- Simulated Public Information and Media play;
- Use of social media, including NICS social media tools;
- Fake news and disinformation campaigns;
- Internet, energy and communications black-out;
- Suspicious (CBR) accident (suspicious, possibly linked to counterterrorism);
- Emergency Medical Teams, ROL / EMT;
- Telemedicine: teams can test their own telemedicine, should they wish.
- Virtual Reality sites;
- Water rescue;
- Urban search and rescue;
- Mountain search and rescue;
- Military assets in a civil-coordinated catastrophe;
- Dike breach;

¹GIS Systems: MapAction, ESRI, ViaSat (satellite communications),VITO (remote sensing)

²Train On-Site Commanders, LEMA, Team Leaders, ...

³OSOCC-UCC-EMTCC set-up

- Mass movement of people / refugees / illegal migrants / ...
- Virus outbreak;
- Site survey / assessment;
- Shelter for people;
- Field hospital.

Agreed Training activities:

- CBRN and medical teams: Non-Binding Guidelines and Minimum Standards for CBRN first responders;
- Occupational safety awareness;
- Next-Generation Incident Command System;
- Media training on public information / disinformation / deep fake ...;
- Protection of Civilians;
- Table-top and Command Post exercise to test the command structures involving staff members of the DISTAFF, LEMA, OSOCC, UCC, EMTCC, as well as liaison officers and team commanders;
- Virtual reality training;
- Water rescue;
- Mountain search and rescue;
- Urban Search and Rescue: INSARAG guidelines;
- NICS: at MPC, FPC and EX;
- LEMA, OSOCC, On-Site Commanders training for interaction with evaluators and DISTAFF: perhaps immediately following the Final Visit;
- Cyber/hybrid training;

Agreed International Organisations

- AU – African Union
- CARITAS International
- ERCC - European Response Coordination Centre
- GIZ - Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit
- ICRC – International Committee of the Red Cross
- IFRC – International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies
- OSCE - Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe
- UN CT - UN Country Team
- UNDP – United Nations Development Programme
- UNESCO – United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
- UNFPA – United Nations Population Fund
- UNICEF – United Nations International Children Fund
- UN IOM – United Nations International Organisation for Migration
- UN OCHA – United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
- UN OCT – United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism
- UN RC – UN Office of the Resident Coordinator
- USAID – (through US Mission to NATO)
- WHO – World Health Organization

Evaluation

The EADRCC Consequence Management Command Post and Field Exercises are not aimed at evaluating participating team but are focused on the exercise objectives.

As a result, not all the teams come in a “complete setup”. For example, many teams leave their self-sufficiency component at home during the exercises. This has (discussed) consequences for the host nation.

Minutes of the meeting

Virtual OSOCC (On-Site Operations Coordination Centre):

- The V-OSOCC is the principal platform for exchanging information between LEMA and the international disaster response community.
- The training day of the exercise shall comprise 2 hours training on V-OSOCC.

Next-Generation Incident Command System:

- NICS will be fully integrated into the exercise. The Republic of North Macedonia will use it at all the operational levels.
- North Macedonia will use NICS to supply maps to the Public Information Centre (PIC).
- NICS will be used as a communication system between exercise elements, but back-up solutions must be in place (e.g. Austrian Communications Element).
- North Macedonia are aware that UN OCHA could bring a MapAction team.
- NICS is ready to provide situational awareness to all the participants. However, we must take into account that not all the participants are authorized to install software on their mobile phones. North Macedonia should supply sufficient (perhaps 100+) mobile devices to support this.
- Nations with participating teams will be encouraged to share their real-time location with North Macedonia whilst travelling to the Host Nation. Thus, the Host Nation can speed-up the border crossing processes and test their own systems.

Emergency Medical Teams Coordination Cell (UMTCC):

- This will be the first exercise to practice OSOCC – UCC – EMTCC coordination.
- EMT experts recommend using the United Nations Blue Book: Classification and minimum standards for foreign teams in sudden onset disasters.

Role-players and dummies:

- Role-players are essential to the success of Field Exercises.
- 30 role-players per hour (rph) are required to keep the Balkan Medical Task Force operational.
- EMT-1 units need 5 to 10 rph.
- 1 Make-up artist per 10 role-players is required.
- “recycling” role-players requires additional make-up artists and transport capabilities at short notice.
- Role-players need training prior to their deployment.
- Dummies are needed for more complex situation (e.g. capsized ships)

- Dummies must be available in several weights. For USAR, they should weigh between 80kg and 100kg each

Chemical, Biological and Radiological (CBRN):

- CBRN Accident: 1 or 2 police officers are available to make the scene more realistic.
- Biological: test highly contagious diseases, e.g. in the illegal migration scenario.
- Radiological: North Macedonia has materials available;

Cross-border facilitation:

- Land border crossing: North, East, South, West border crossing points + 2 airports (Skopje and Ohrid).
- Fast track lanes will be made available
- Police escort for convoys: 1 in front and optional 1 in back (depending number of vehicles). No need for special convoy markings.
- Host nation must know well in advance where teams want to refuel.
- Announced arrival at border will be required.
- Departure after ENDEX will be arranged upon request (1 day in advance).
- Good to know average speed of the convoys
- Insurance: green card equivalent required
- Canine: dog passport + obligatory vaccinations (to be included in exercise instructions);
- Ohrid Airport: best option for teams' arrival and departure. All arrivals through Skopje would be a logistical nightmare. Ohrid Airport is very flexible and ready to provide a lot of support.
- Announce dangerous goods, bulky luggage and cargo upfront.
- Visa requirements: very good, self-explanatory website is available.
- The Host nation provides transport between airport and BoO.
- EADRCC will contact the Movement Coordination Centre Europe (MCCE) and try to get "chartered" transport between Brussels and Ohrid.

Real-Life support:

- At the Base of Operations: 1 room (in the main building) equipped with a bed and medical equipment and manned by 1 doctor and 1 nurse (24/7h). One ambulance should also be available.
- At the Base of Operations: a mini veterinary post with 1 veterinarian.
- At each exercise site: 1 ambulance equipped for trauma accidents.
- Physical security at the base of operations and exercise sites will be provided by the Police (1 or 2 officers per exercise site, 24/7).
- Communications: police will use TETRA, internet will be available at all sites.
- UHF/VHF frequencies must be announced and authorized.

Emergency Medical Teams (participating):

- Participating EMTs do not provide real-life support.
- Doctors and paramedics' licenses: North Macedonia need to investigate the requirements.
North Macedonia asset to be included in the exercise: gynecology ambulance (special dummies needed 😊).

- Nations can bring telemedicine teams.
- BMTF:
 - Will participate in full capacity (10 modules).
 - 86 staff.
 - Need a flat surface of 50m x 100 m and a secured perimeter.
 - No CBRN capacity.
 - Have 3 ambulances too.
 - Will bring 15-20 beds to the exercise.
 - Their exact location/position still to be determined, but two sites are certainly suitable.

Exercise sites:

- North Macedonia presented exquisite exercise sites. During the Initial Visit the experts of NATO and North Macedonia added a few more, thus providing sufficient capacity and flexibility to cover all the incidents in the lead-in scenario.
- North Macedonia will provide a detailed list of all the potential exercises. This list will allow us to uniquely identify each site and the Base of Operations by name or coordinates.
- The What3Words grid system will also be available for those who wish to use it.
- Experts of North Macedonia and NATO will decide which ones will be used after the Main Planning Conference (when we know the appetite of the nations).

Uncategorized, but equally important:

- Cyber injects: media, NICS, V-OSOCC and LEMA would be the best locations.
- Telecommunications blackout: test specific USAR procedures for a very short time.
- Get “canned answers” from JCBRN CoE
- First team arriving must establish an RDC. Do we script this (invite a nation to set it up, or do the real thing: first come, you do it).
- Helicopter Mi-17: need to clarify what it can and cannot be used for.
- Civil-Military cooperation: Unexploded ordnance (UxO), engineering.
- Concrete blocks: need to dry 5 months. We need to take a decision immediately following the MPC.
- Media: real-world versus SIMPRESS. We need to participants aware of the real-world journalists and their tricks.
- Laminated tags for the convoys: easier for the check-points at BoO.
- Badges: several colours
- Dining/catering in the BoO: MKD to investigate. Need to take into account vegetarian, halal and kosher meals.

Urgent to do's:

- North Macedonia: List of exercise sites to uniquely identify them by name or coordinates.
- EADRCC: create template for presentations at MPC (done).
- Russia as an observer: stress the positive aspect of this. EADRCC to inquire appetite at NATO HQ. (Started: ASG OPS is in favour and will consult the Private Office).
- Invitation letter for MKD participants to MPC (done).

Main Planning Conference:

- Marketing event
- Presentation on Crisis Management Center
- Detailed presentation (high-quality visuals) of BoO and exercise sites
- Be prepared for questions. Hot topics: food, medics (licenses) cross-border transport
- Prepare the working groups: nations will want to find out as much as possible.