

VIII. Évfolyam 3. szám - 2013. szeptember

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LESSONS LEARNED FROM THE MULTINATIONAL LOGISTIC TRAINING PROGRAM MAGLITE 2013/1

Abstract

The exercise organised within the framework of the MAGLITE 2013/1 Multinational Logistic Training Program was conducted in June 2013 with the participation of three nations: Hungary, The United Kingdom and the Czech Republic. The Training Program was held at the Faculty of Military Science and Officers Training of the National University of Public Service. The exercise with its content and operational design approved itself as a great challenge for the hungarian officers' syndicate. In the article the author summarizes the lessons learned from the exercise and describes the possibilities which may improve its succesful execution in the future.

A MAGLITE 2013/1 Multinacionális Logisztikai Kiképzés 2013 júniusában került végrehajtásra három nemzet, köztük Magyarország, az Egyesült Királyság és a Cseh Köztársaság tisztjeinek bevonásával. A képzési programnak a Nemzeti Közszolgálati Egyetem Hadtudományi és Honvédtisztképző Kara adott helyet. A júniusi gyakorlat tartalmát és koncepcióját tekintve új kihívások elé állította a gyakorlaton résztvevő magyar tiszti munkacsoportot. A szerző cikkében összegzi a gyakorlat végrehajtásának főbb tapasztalatait és azokat a lehetőségeket melyek a jövőben tovább segíthetik a gyakorlat sikeres végrehajtását.

Keywords: *Logistics training program, Joint Logistics Operations ~ MAGLITE, Logisztikai képzési program, Összhaderőnemi logisztikai műveletek*

PRELIMINARY STEPS OF THE EXERCISE MAGLITE

First part of the Multinational Logistics Training Program MAGLITE 2013/1 was conducted in June 2013 at the Faculty of Military Science and Officers Training of the National University of Public Service with participation of three nations: Hungary, The United Kingdom and The Czech Republic.

The exercise MAGLITE is based upon the Joint Logistics Operations Course (JLOC) organized for the senior officers (majors, lieutenant colonels) of the Army, Navy and Air Force in Deepcut at the Defence Logistics School. In spite of the fact, that JLOC organized mainly for the British officers, nowadays it is getting more international due to the invitation of foreign higher rank officers by the Defence Logistics School. MAGLITE is traditionally held in Hungary, where the officers studying at the Department of Operational Logistics joining the British syndicates can get knowledge in the field of operational level military decision making process. MAGLITE also provides a good opportunity for them to improve their common and specialized language skills and get some experience of common staff work.

In April 2013 I arrived to Deepcut to attend a coordination meeting organized by the British party. During the planning meeting I was familiarized by our partner from the British Distaff (DS)¹ Major Hutton-Fellowes with the changes in operational scenario, the joint operational area (JOA) and the size and composition of the British contingent taking part in the operation. Due to the minor changes in operational scenario we had to reconsider the size and role of our contingent which would take part in operation. Since the Humanitarian Assistance task taking place in Africa from our side demanded mainly distribution of aid from the UN bases, we had to put together a completely new force structure with logistic elements that is capable to conduct logistic operations in the operational area. The new force structure also had to give the opportunity to the Hungarian-Czech planning team to work on operational level. By the end of the meeting we agreed to deploy altogether one transport battalion, an engineer company including two water purification platoons in their structure and two infantry battalions for force protection. For ownlog a hungarian and a czech National Support Element has been created as well. The new hungarian-czech force structure was in possession of logistic troops and their necessary military assets to enable the UN² and NGO³'s effort to alleviate the current Humanitarian Crisis and provide C2⁴ logistic functionality to the UN and NGOs. According to the agreement I started to work on the new TOE⁵ still in Deepcut.

After arriving home the designated members of the Military Logistic Institute immediately started their direct preparation for the exercise.

During the period of preparation we put together the necessary exercise documentation and sorted out to the officers who were taking part in the exercise. We also created the project map for the exercise. Due to the lack of experience in operational level planning, an expert from the MoD⁶ was invited who guided the hungarian participants through the steps of planning process. The preparational period of the exercise was complicated by the fact, that our team in the role of the Operation Planning Team of the Joint Force Command had to follow the new planning directive that was published in the Staff Service Regulation of HDF⁷. Two hungarian officers were delegated to each of the British Syndicates who from one hand played the role of the liaison officers of the HUMFOR⁸, from the other hand took part in the

¹ Directors' staff

² United Nations

³ Non Governmental Organization

⁴ Command and control

⁵ Table of Organization and Equipment

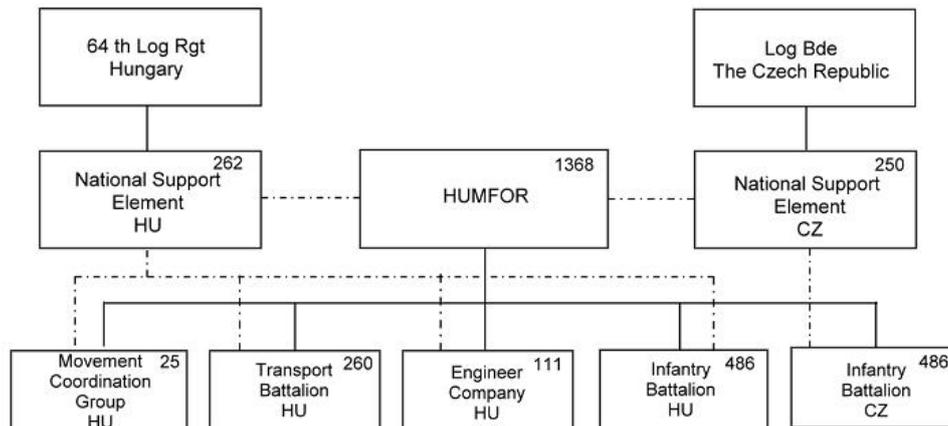
⁶ Ministry of Defence

⁷ Hungarian Defence Forces

⁸ Humanitarian Forces, consisting of hungarian and Czech force elements

British MDMP⁹. Since there are some significant differences between the British MDMP and the COPD¹⁰ used by NATO countries, I gave a common overview for them about the steps used by the British party during the planning work.

The situation in the period of preparation has been complicated further by the fact that we faced a serious flood in the country. Since the exercise was planned to take place in the NCO Academy in Szentendre that is situated alongside the Danube river, for safety reasons we had to move the exercise back to the University for one day.



1. Figure. Staff Table of HU-CZ Contingent (made by the author)

EXECUTIONAL PERIOD OF THE EXERCISE

The Operational Area of the exercise was in Nejeru, a fictitious state in north-eastern part of Africa. There are famine and drought in Nejeru, thus several UN and NGO's are operating in the eastern part of the country trying to provide humanitarian assistance to local citizens.

An analysis of the Humanitarian and Development situation in NEJERU focused on the effects of war on displaced persons, the ravages of drought, hunger and HIV. The previous leadership's refusal to allow foreign agencies much scope in country has been replaced by a far more open approach, and this combined with diplomatic pressure will allow the Humanitarian Aid situation to be addressed. A UN Humanitarian Coordinator has been appointed and OCHA¹¹ has begun to synchronise operations. Cluster activities are being implemented and a Humanitarian Action Plan (HAP) is taking shape. However, the UN and the agencies do not have free access to all parts of the country; in particular the northern half of the country is largely denied to them and conditions in the IDP¹² Camps here are thought to be deteriorating fast.

The situation is complicated by the fact, that the UN agencies are limited by the numbers of vehicles and logistic assets in country and requests for assistance from the Nejeran Defence Forces (NDF) to provide assistance with aid distribution have been refused and the northern part of the country is controlled by a hostile organization called Muslim League of Freedom (MLF). NDF as directed is defeating the Muslim rebellion of the Muslim League of Freedom and see the humanitarian problem as something that should be left to others to deal with. The NDF are assessed as overstretched, inadequately resourced, and entirely committed to their

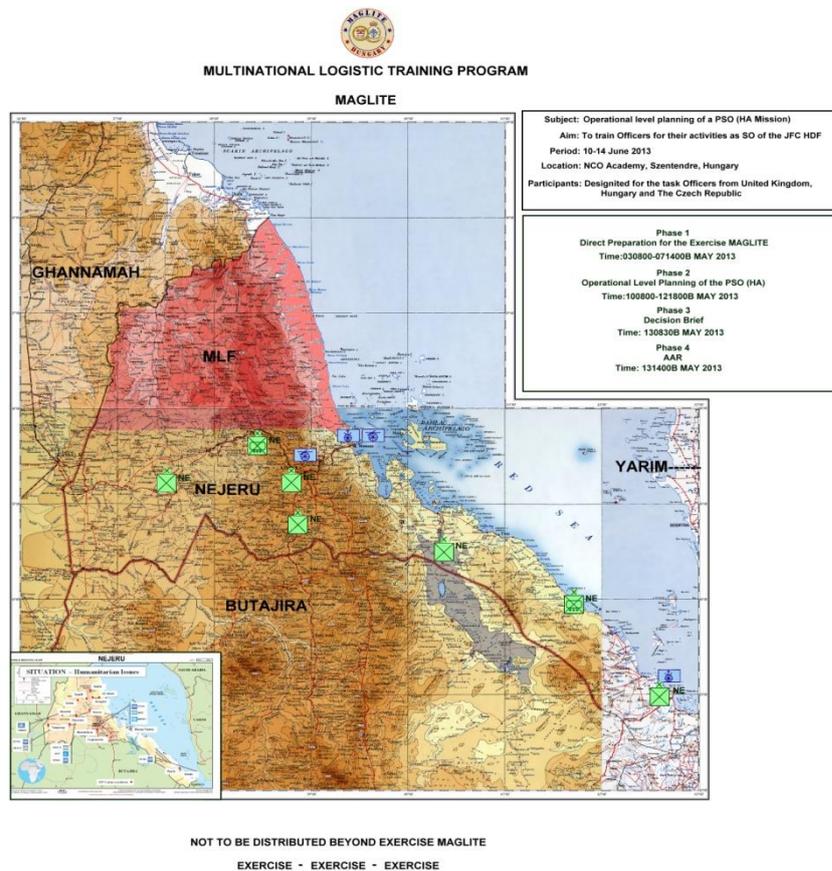
⁹ Military Decision Making and Planning Process

¹⁰ Comprehensive Operational Planning Directive

¹¹ Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs

¹² Internally Displaced People

existing operational challenges. They consent to the activity of NGOs and the UN but remain unable to provide either logistic lift or force protection to the humanitarian effort.



2. Figure. Project Map of MAGLITE
(made by the author)

The UK and the HU-CZ forces' mission was to conduct operations in the NEJERU JOA¹³ which would include the offload and distribution of designated equipment and aid from SPODs¹⁴ and APODs¹⁵ and also to provide military support to the UN (and designated NGOs) to enable the distribution of humanitarian aid within JOA. In need they had to be prepared to offer C2 logistic functionality to the UN and NGO organisations and support the maintenance of secure LoCs¹⁶ and logistic hubs within JOA, in order to create the conditions within NEJERU for the attainment of the MSTP¹⁷ as part of the wider cross government stabilisation plan. Military Strategic Transition Point will have been reached when the UN and the government of NEJERU can stabilise the humanitarian crisis without external military support and military-led capacity building activity is underway, allowing the UK forces to hand over to the internationally appointed follow-on force. The Military Operational Endstate has been achieved when, in the short term, the deteriorating humanitarian situation has been ameliorated and the UN and NGOs working within NEJERU, have the capacity to deal with the Humanitarian Crisis without external military support. [1]

In the executional period three UK and a HU-CZ syndicate were formed from the participants. Each of the syndicates started their planning work independently of one another.

¹³ Joint Operational Area

¹⁴ Sea Port of Disembarkation

¹⁵ Air Port of Disembarkation

¹⁶ Line of Communication

¹⁷ Military Strategic Transition Point

Finishing the Mission Analysis a briefing was organized with the aim to give some guidance on development of different courses of actions and the contingent strength taking part in the operation has been limited to 3000. After the briefing it became clear, that such a big reduction in presence of multinational forces in the JOA would make the HUMFOR contingent not indispensable in the operation bearing in mind the initial 5000 strong UK joint forces. To resolve the situation the HUMFOR contingent received a specified task that limited the distribution of humanitarian aid for one IDP camp only. This decision was handed over for the UK syndicates as a caveat that has to be made in consideration in their planning process.

By the end of the operational planning process each of the syndicates have made their courses of action that were reported to Brigadier McLeod, commandant of DLSPA in the framework of Course of Action Brief.

LESSONS LEARNED FROM THE EXERCISE MAGLITE 2011/1

After finishing the Exercise MAGLITE an After Action Review (AAR) was held by the director of Military Logistic Institute where the strong and weak sides of the exercise have been identified. Findings are as follows:

- Preparation for the exercise MAGLITE 2013/1 was a model and elicited universal admiration of the British side;
- Cooperation between the University's and the Garrison Brigade's staff was exemplary, without any friction in spite of the serious flood situation in the country;
- IT¹⁸ infrastructure and network provided by our University for the period of the exercise has proved its efficiency and contributed to the success of MAGLITE considerably.
- The infrastructure provided by the National University of Public Service was acceptable bearing in mind the situation, catering service and lodging has to be improved for the next exercise;
- The level of professional knowledge of our MSc officers met the requirements but their language skills have to be improved so they can understand the native english speech. In my opinion NATO STANAG 3.3.3.3 should be the entrance level to take part in MAGLITE.
- Map work (electronic, paper) during the exercise has to be improved significantly.
- In the preparational period MSc officers have to spend more time studying the HDF's Staff Service Regulation which is a key element for their planning work.
- The cooperation amongst the UK and HU-CZ syndicates was fluent during the whole period of the exercise;
- The cooperation between the UK and HU DS has been improved significantly thanks to the instructors in the UK DS who are fully committed towards Exercise MAGLITE;
- According to my experiences gained in last three years I can state that the British Distaff shares the detailed task with us only in last moment or during the executional period of the exercise which doesn't allow us to prepare our officers, and leads to the described above complications that is why completely unacceptable for us. If we are taking into consideration the fact that before the exercise the British participants have a one week long preparation within the framework of JLOC, we start the exercise under the unequal conditions and our role is reduced only for an assistance.

¹⁸ Information Technology

CONCLUSION

Multinational Logistic Training Program MAGLITE is playing very important role in the educational process of the National University of Public Service. It prepares the MSc officers to solve logistic planning tasks on operational level and learn the steps and content of the MDMP which role is nowadays fading away during the staff work.

Although there are some misunderstandings and differences of opinion with our British partners, we have to keep on working and developing MAGLITE which has a key position in the educational process of the Military Logistic Institute.

References

- [1] Joint Commander's Mission Directive to CJLogFO- Op KREMITY, Exercise paper for MAGLITE 2013/1