

## MODERNIZATION OF THE TRAINING LEŠŤ FACILITIES

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The article elaborated the issue of the development and modernization of the training Lešť facilities from personal experience of the ISAF operation in Afghanistan, which could increase efficiency in the training of individuals, small groups, organic military units up to company level and the variety of military branches alignments, counter-terrorism operations and peace-building activities terms and activities of convoys movements, which is currently one of the most important capabilities of current military operations and anti- terrorism combat. The article suggested the possibility of convoy training in the Lešť drill field through the ordinance training area for convoys, providing comprehensive, intensive, effective, safe, economically and environmentally acceptable training. The establishment of tactical - shooting training area for convoys significantly increases the possibility of the Lešť training facility and is unique in the universal world's understanding comprehension (terrain, technology, and training capacity) and may become another firm contribution the Armed Forces of Slovak Republic to solve one of the current problems.

**K e y w o r d s:** modernization, training facility, Lešť, field drill, convoys, training area, Afghanistan, ISAF

### INTRODUCTION

The suggested solution is a result of a scientific research and personal experience in the ISAF operation in Afghanistan on the theme "The Modernization of a training facility of Armed Forces focused on the Lešť training area Lešť." The article is concentrated on the modernization of the training facilities which can raise the effectiveness of an individual training, small group training, organizational army groups training (within the company) and variety of group training in the battle, antiterrorist, peacekeeping and rescue conditions. In addition activities that concern convoy movement, which is one of the most important qualifications in present operations against terrorism are involved.

#### 1 EXPERIENCE FROM AFGHANISTAN

Capt. Martin RATKOVSKÝ went to Kandahar, for six months tour of duty with expectations, excitement and the respect from the position Movement and Maintenance Projects Officer RC(S) HQ ISAF. A great challenge in his professional career was also his enthusiastic desire to achieve success in the strong environment as the RC(S) HQ ISAF in Kandahar. He did not have a lot of time for his personal feelings after the arrival at the international airport in Kandahar because he had to concentrate on his new work there. He hoped that he was professionally well prepared for this work in the Afghanistan NATO ISAF combat operation to assume the duty from the former commander. At this point he realized how responsibility was entrusted by NATO to our country and its military forces. In the title of "Movement Maintenance Projects Officer RC(S) HQ ISAF" there was a lot of mystery that he could only imagine during the training in Slovakia and Oberammergau in Germany. Any kind of training cannot cover all requirements of needs. However, that the theory and the standard methods are one thing and real situation is the other. It is true that it is better to see

it once than to hear it hundred times. The differences between training and reality are considerable. Psychical pressure, responsibility for the decisions, work in the international atmosphere, dusty environment, extreme climate conditions, emphasis on hundred percentage performance and especially existing war conflicts are some situations which cannot be simulated during the training. The working position in HQ KAF required 24/7 concentration.

After assuming command he could learn much from his British subordinate who by the way, was on the sixth mission. Apparently, everyone tends to change matters on his own picture after arriving. Particularly, if you work in so advanced a team, where team-work, collective action and dependency is very important. Assuming an office was very progressive and a week later he and his CJ4 commander, the deputy commander of HQ RC(S) and the KAF commander went to a „Theatre Movement conference“ in Kabul. During the conference he realized how demanding his six months position would be. The conference confirmed that the most intensive combat tasks, the military operations, coalition convoy units and convoys of contactors, which supplied coalition units, took place in the territory of the southern regional headquarter RC(S). During the next few weeks he gained plenty of experience which helped him to form the big picture of his responsibility and the complexity throughout his function in this military operation. The situation in this area started getting worse after the beginning of Ramadan. The attacks on coalition convoys and also on less protected convoys ISAF contractors, which supplied the ISAF units with fuel, food and the others important things for living, increased. Incomprehensible were attacks on humanitarian convoys (WFP – World Food Program). The consequences of attacks were not only the material losses but also wounded soldiers (WIA) and what was the worse those were soldiers killed in action (KIA). According to this data he was inspired to form a statistic survey which could help to

increase the overview about the places, tactics and the consequences of the attacks on the convoys. After two months he had his material completed. On the basis of obtained information he suggested the creation of the Joint Movement Coordination Centre (JMCC), subordinated under his command as a part of the logistics department. The place of service 24/7 was to be the main operational centre which could provide the most accurate data concerning all the convoys and their movement in the region. All the Regional Headquarters and the most of the civilian contractors were gradually integrated into this new system of deconfliction and coordination of the convoys with assistance of the commander RC(S).

The improvement of the procedures was recommended by the command of ISAF for the Regional Headquarters as the best method for the planning and coordination of military and civilian convoys.

In January 2009, he was selected by the commander of RC(S) to the Joint Force Training Centre in Bydgoszcz in Poland as an instructor for the training of the new personnel for the logistics department. Before leaving for Poland, he had spent an enormous amount of time preparing a presentation for teaching material processed under the revised Regulation 4200 SOP Movement control in RC (S), which incorporate all the proposed changes and in particular the creation a Joint Movement Coordination Centre as the logistical supportive element for the accurate information about all convoys and their movements in the region. After the SOP 42000 approval by the RC (S) Commander he attended all the CONOPS Level 2 briefings, which the operational commander's intention and where its expression evaluated deconfliction operations with the planned convoys.

After returning from Poland he was added to the team, which participated in the operation which was to assess the passage of the Main Supply called Route Highway 4 (Arizona) at the border crossing with Pakistan Spin Boldak - Chaman, due to expansion of U.S. forces. The preparation and conduction of the operations convinced him about the high professionalism of all members of the team, especially their access and responsibility for the task.

The results of a detailed report concerning the movement of convoys and thus more effective coordination within the operational area were very tangible, for example, in September 2008 every 375th vehicle was assaulted, but in March 2009 every 2 756th vehicle only!

In the first part of the article we want to draw attention not only on the planning and coordination of convoys in the combat zone, but especially to the wealth of experience in working in

an international environment, the level of contact and genuine feeling that he made the good reputation for our country and our armed forces. However, he got a little greyer and a bit more serious after coming back from the mission, but he came back with belief that all over the world, there are people we can get on well with, cooperate and learn something from them and also that we have something to offer.

The experiences with the convoys, he acquired in the mission, convinced him how important and very often the role of the units and their clusters in the international missions is a movement, transportation of persons and material on the roads in the terrain is. The importance of movements that ensure military, police, humanitarian, rescue and medical tasks should visibly grow in clusters and units operating in the vulnerable areas and countries with "illegible" and the unstable political and social situations. Due to military activities of the local, predominantly, paramilitary and very well equipped and organized sections with significant terrorist activity and the manifestations and often unpredictable and aggressive behaviour of the population, present a high risk for the moving units and clusters being attacked. The gained experience shows that a large percentage of attacking peacekeeping units, including health and life losses take place especially during these movements.

## 2 TACTICAL - SHOOTING AREA FOR CONVOY TRAINING

Addressing this issue, we assume that the role of "combat convoys" will increasingly grow in the coming years. In particular, as for example in Afghanistan, where the political and military command of NATO's had taken extensive measures, the success of combat, anti-terrorism and peacekeeping operations will largely depend on the optimal management of "convoy issues." Therefore, the issues of actual convoy experience, is given great attention. For these reasons, the security and protection is prerequisite for the successful transfer. Therefore, in the risk areas so-called "convoy with a protective function" will be established for the safety of persons carried, ensuring the material and achieve the objective.

The function of the convoys is the transport and the protection. They are fundamentally different from the stream of the vehicles. Besides the standard transport function, the protective function is highlighted as a priority and ensures the successful completion of the transfer target in risk situations, violence movement prevention and armed threats of transported people and materials. This requires thorough knowledge of the situation

in the area of convoy movements, detailed tactical training, equipment for security forces and their ability to creatively, quickly and resolutely solve the foreseeable and unforeseeable risk situations.

The convoy activities is different according to the character of their route, roads, terrain quality and weather conditions. The preparation and organization of the convoy movements is different in mountainous or vegetation covered terrain and in built-up, open or uncovered and covered (sand, rocks, snow) country.

Convoys are mainly divided according to their specific destinations:

- **Military convoys** are mostly set up in foreign peacekeeping missions. They are used to plan security escorts for VIP parties and to transport units in the territory designated for such purpose. Surveys, patrolling, monitoring, demining, reconstruction and resolution of civilian riot outbreaks of armed resistance from terrorist elements.
- **Humanitarian convoys** are mostly established to supply vulnerable areas and to ensure the transportation of food and fluids, makeshift shelters, clothing and medicines.
- Police departments have **police convoys** to transport dangerous people, classified documents, large sums of money and providing transport VIP people.
- **Rescue and medical convoys** are essential to cope with the rapid and orderly transportation in situations of major disasters, ecological and natural disasters, large epidemiological diseases and in these needs of urgent treatment and removal from affected areas.

The protection of rescue, medical and humanitarian supply convoys are generally provided by military or police security escorts.

An important area to be addressed is the systemic security of convoys by technical solutions.

It is mainly a technical safeguard for weapon, and armoured vehicles, and equipment of the convoys and the monitoring systems of danger of attack, against landmines, attack by small arms, gun-carriers, grenades, and missiles.

An equally important area of security convoys and the goal of reconnaissance is the tactical operation of convoys (survey route, sweeping, withdrawal, re-routing), and its ability to attack its ordinance.

It is very important that the urgent need for training of tactical and ordinance handling of moving convoys to protect units and clusters during military operation is addressed.

Convoy's movement training cannot be performed on public highways. Movement in this free terrain and the open communications are not ecologically desirable.

Modelling of critical situations in convoy movement requires sophisticated driving skills. It may only be assigned in suitable areas. There are a variety of traps and conflicts, often using live ammunition, small weapons, grenade and rocket launchers and machine guns, mined or otherwise artificial or natural obstruction sections.

Training rooms should be allocated well equipped with convoy's armament evaluation devices, and camera and training systems because of higher training efficiency.

Their link to the training stimulation technology would also enable high quality, constructive simulation and training by staff and the military, police commander for rescue and medical sections for successful transfer into the real world.

Developing a training area with all of the functions depends on specific priority training areas, real terrain configuration, ballistic protection and the nature of legislative-legal and environmental factors and assumptions which allow for its installation and operation.

The training area should restore not only the preparation of its components (intermediate and intensive against foreign missions), but also the ensure ability to make foreign components sent within NATO, EU, UN missions and also in training the security forces of countries in which the above-mentioned organizations called 'Reconstruction programs to restore infrastructure and standard of living of the population crisis areas.

According to the above, we propose to build a training facility area tactical-ordinance training convoy, which provides a comprehensive, effective, robust, secure, environmentally and economically acceptable individual training programme for small groups, organic troops from the platoon to the higher military unit level.

#### a) **combat actions:**

- training of tactical thinking, contact behaving and participation in the fight during the movements,
- training combat of radiation, chemical and engineer reconnaissance during movements,
- training of various forms of movement, moving closer to the problematic point or object, variations and modification of activities in the movement,

- training organization movement of escape training, circumventing the variant and response to external stimuli in the convoy attack training,
- use of weapons, grenades and heavy machinery by convoy movement,
- reconnaissance, mine clearance, chemical and radiation cleaning, disinfections and rodent control,
- training trap convoy attack, attack operations on the mobile adversary,
- Management of artillery fire on a moving convoy and guidance of air support in different situations in connection with the convoy,
- combat tactics in a convoy, and so on,
- exploration and occupation of the cave and channel systems in the terrain,
- on-line monitoring of the preparatory phase and in-house training activities by means of unmanned reconnaissance resources,

**b) anti-terrorist activities:**

- training of tactics in the fight against the individual or group terrorist elements, training of ensuring risk area and adjacent terrain searching of the terrain, villages and vehicular traffic,
- training of control activities on the roads and in the village,
- training of patrolling particularly exposed objects and techniques,
- a training of seizure and escorting suspects,
- armed struggle against the terrorists on the roads,
- weapons, explosives and booby traps search training and their capturing and damaging

**c) peace-keeping activities:**

- training of management, command, organization and running of duty in the peacekeepers position,
- training of activities on check point and observation point,
- training of negotiating, patrolling and escorting,
- training of solving public resistance including ethnic disputes,
- training of reconnaissance and overcome mine field and traps,
- training of providing humanitarian aid,

- training of searching of banned goods and seizure,

**d) rescue activities:**

- traffic accidents,
- search of people in danger, their extraction, transport and first aid,
- liquidation of consequences of accidents,
- work with rescue dogs.

High rates of expediency and multifunctionality of shooting and tactical training area convoys would allow the training of:

**a) military qualification:**

- qualifications of all ground forces, particularly the members of the parachute, reconnaissance, mechanized, chemical, engineer and communication units
- military police
- peacekeeping units
- medical units
- helicopter aviation
- students of the Academy of the Armed Forces and courses of all fields,

**b) the police qualification:**

- State Police, particularly intervention units,
- customs administration,
- security agencies.

Tactical-shooting training convoy areas with their design and technical design should meet the methodological requirements for:

- a) **simulation training** - methodological simulation of various tactical issues in the framework of tactical training and subject matter and address the issue by various methods, using the stimulus of training devices as the solution of the situation with a sharp weapon, ammunition, FX, shooting MILES system or practice ammunition;
- b) **situational training** - complex comprehensive tactical situations training with methodological input in the planned activities by creating unexpected situations requiring fast decision-making, creative thinking, resourcefulness and assertive and bold solutions in terms of stress and boundary loads.

A practical solution to all the requirements for training systems for military convoys,

emergency workers, medical personnel and humanitarian workers, is the formation of tactical-shooting training area convoys organized as a special training ground situated in an appropriate field with ballistic certificate. As a suitable terrain appears to be the Lešť training room - military districts and mostly because of the following:

- use of appropriate conditions for the parade of troops brought forth all kinds of units and the use of multilateral and effective use of training ground,
- links to drill field with the already constructed drill fields for the training ground conflict in an urban area of the VP Lešť ( Military area),
- possibility to connect to the simulation centre in the military area,
- suitable space for such training ground is already in plane for the shooting with valid certificates of vulnerable zones in the area shooting fighting vehicles. The operation and use of shooting fighting vehicles would remain unchanged,
- access for training units and components from other countries under favourable training and logistics conditions.

Developing a tactical-ordinance training area convoys significantly evaluate options for the Lešť training facilities and its own, unique the real world situation (terrain, technology, training capacity) may become another real benefit OS SR, in the solution of this problem.

There is the real assumption of financial participation of transnational participants in its operations and compensation for the financial burden.

## CONCLUSION

Based on theoretical analysis, interpretations of the results obtained, and personal experiences of Captain Martin Ratkovský the operation of the ISAF operation in Afghanistan may be used for military practice recommendations that lead to the conclusion for building the training facilities at Lešť tactical ordinance area will provide a comprehensive, robust, efficient, safe, economically and environmentally acceptable training facility. The area should allow for individual training, small group, organic troops training from the platoon to higher military unit level, for anti-terrorism ranging, peacekeeping and training rescue situations convoy movements with a protective escort is also included in the programme.

The developing of a tactical-ordinance training area, strongly evaluate training options. Training facility Lešť is unique in the real world for experience in terrain, technology and training capacity may become another benefit the Armed Forces of Slovak Republic in solving the current problem.

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