

The MISSION

Issue 28 – April 2025



#WORKINGTOGETHER4IRAQ

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The MISSION

Dear readers,

Time flies and April is already here. We are entering into period of hotter weather, and bringing you new Mission full of fresh articles from contributors all across NMI.

NMI continuously conduct organisational advisory activities with our counterparts in the Government of Iraq and its Security Institutions. This magazine represent a joint contribution of all of us, tries to capture the mission's efforts and progress to assist the Iraqi institutions on their way to a brighter future. Interesting articles highlight the progress and achievements of advisors and colleagues from the whole NMI team and we are constantly prove our commitment — Building Safety and Security Together.

On these pages you will find a reflection of the different experiences and challenges that have defined our mission. You, dear readers, play an undeniable role in our community. Therefore, we continue to encourage you to actively participate in our work by developing and sharing your suggestions and ideas. Only through joint effort and work we can improve and enrich the content of our magazine. So I invite all of you to continue your passionate work, reading, and when possible, contributing, not only to this printed product but also to our digital output.

Enjoy the magazine and be sure to remind your contacts to become followers on our various social media platforms. NMI usernames/tags can be found on the back cover of each issue of The Mission magazine.

Let's continue #WORKINGTOGETHER4IRAQ

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NMI Public Affairs Office



Building Integrity in the Ministry of Defence

By A-4 Maartje HOFs (NLD), Deputy Head, SPCB



How does one building integrity and fight corruption in an institution? What are the systems that need to be set up and how does this work in reality? Unfortunately, there is not a one fix, solution or system that allows us to answer these questions. The United Nations Convention Against Corruption sets out actions to be taken, however there are as many systems as there are countries, and these are very tightly linked to their history, culture and subsequently governance structure.

However, there are good practices and standards that can help, and NATO Mission Iraq seeks to support the Iraqi Ministry of Defence in integrating and building integrity in its institutions. Building integrity means applying and reapplying the principles of good governance. The first step is to identify principles, and those are: efficiency, effectiveness, transparency, accountability, participation, rule of law, responsiveness. The second step is to understand critical areas of corruption or weak integrity. Generally speaking these are: human resources, procurement/contracting, and opaque systems.

The third step would be to understand how to apply the principles to the critical area. To provide a clear example of this to the Iraqi Ministry of Defence, an exchange and learning visit was organized from 16 to 21 February 2025. Key Senior Iraqi leadership in charge of the Building Integrity work, visited Italian anti-corruption entities: National Anti-Corruption Agency; Ministry of Defence Office for Administrative Inspections; and the Anti-Corruption Referent in the Italian Army. The National Anti-Corruption Agency is an independent national agency/body tasked with anti-corruption. It has three powers: (1) regulatory: issuing guidelines, clarifying laws; (2) power of overseeing and checking the application of laws; (3) power to impose sanctions (administrative sanctions/fines).



The Ministry of Defence Office for Administrative Inspections lies within the Ministry of Defence mandate allows them to verify the application of the correct procedures. The Anti-Corruption Referent in the Italian Army, also within the Ministry of Defence, is responsible for prevention corruption prevention and improving transparency referents at every Armed Force of ITA MoD, in this case the army.

Visiting these different institutions all had the same goal: understanding how they institutionalized the principles of anti-corruption and integrity in their institution.

The Iraqi Delegation was able to see how the Italian system works. The Italian structure has focused on a centralized system that institutionalizes specifically the principles of Transparency and Accountability. Their focus on critical risk areas is based on risk assessments on key positions, procurement and ensuring more transparent systems, trickling down from a legal and national framework into each administrative authority, including the Ministry of Defence. Each institution has the obligation to create action plans for three years based on the same set of principles and critical areas. Having done so, Italy tackles key risk areas in a structured manner.



Having shared their practices with the Iraqi Delegation, the latter wants to implement some of these in their own structure, starting with focal points in their service commands and considering how to be more transparent. Jointly with NATO Mission Iraq, the Ministry of Defence Building Integrity Committee will review their Building Integrity Action Plan to reflect these changes.



Branch and Service Schools' Assessment Meeting The value of the "best and honest advice".

By OF-3 César RENEDO (ESP-A), Branch Coordinator, TDD



an opportunity to share this. On request of M7 himself, who sees the need of having an assessment of the Branch and Service Schools & Training Centres of the Iraqi Armed Forces on how far they already have reached NATO standards, the meeting was conducted.

Already at the end of last year, M7 Director formulated a first vague-request: "I want to know you're honest and frank assessment of the Schools, I need it for improvement, I need to know...". Therefore, from this initiative on, TDD, in close coordination with M7, started the process.

Based on the "Snapshot", a document that not only reflects the results of three areas on a scale from 1 to 5, but also more importantly, stresses short-falls and make recommendations, the Schools' assessment was planned according to NATO standards on an individual assessment of the respective advisor as the subject matter expert of the school or training centre.

On 9th and 10th of February, the first Schools' assessment meetings were initially held at the Military Training Directorate (M7). Both meetings were chaired on IRQ side by M7, Director Staff Major General Adnan Salman Anad, who had requested the meeting on that special topic and TDD Director, Brigadier General Andreas Kühne, as NMI's high level representative. The meeting was conducted also in cooperation with the respective School and Training Centre Commanders, TDD's Branch Heads, Branch Coordinators and Senior Advisors.

The aim of the meeting was to present to M7, and Schools and Training Centres' Commanders the advisors' assessments of the Schools and Training Centres according to NATO standards. To date, TDD advisors have been not only advising but also assessing their schools. The assessment results are focusing on three main areas: curriculum, faculty and institution, and this was





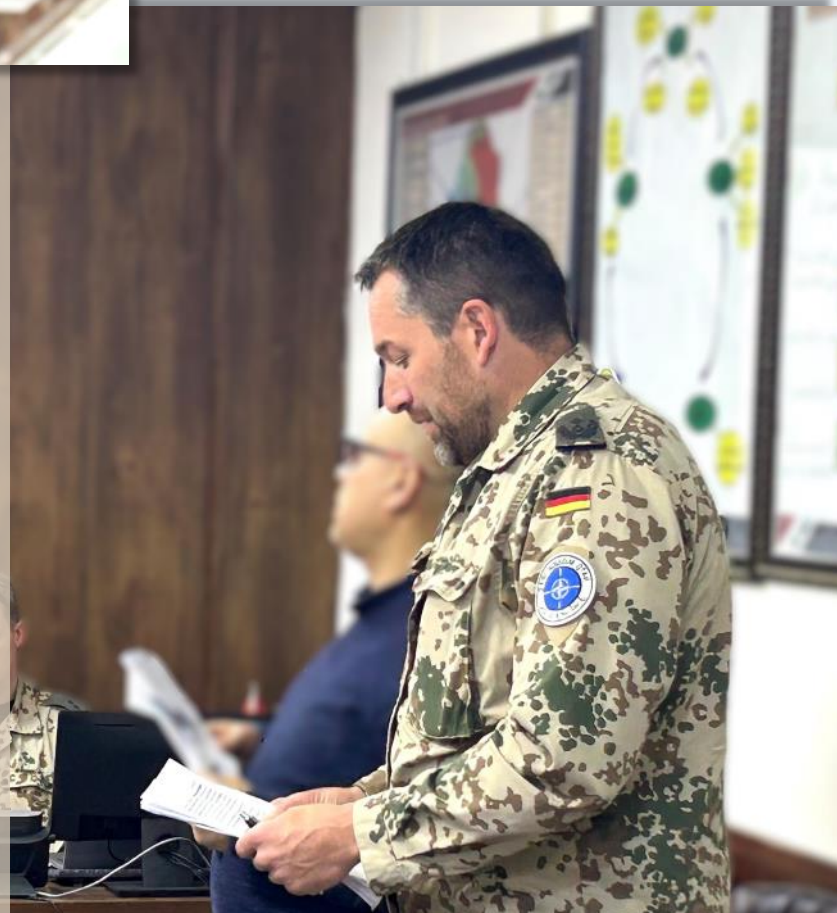
Notwithstanding identifying shortfalls and deficits of the Schools in front of such a great and hi-ranking audience could lead to uncomfortable and embarrassing situations for both sides, a professional advisor must always give his plain and frank advise, this is what the advisors did, and their efforts were highly appreciated by their counterparts.

As a result of the assessment meeting, the School Commanders and the advisors will continue working shoulder to shoulder to bring the Schools closer to NATO standards, always considering and respecting the Iraqi Army requirements, professionalism and background of Schools' cadre.

The first annual School assessment meeting is another step forward that proves what the value of honest advice really is.

Therefore, the assessment neither is about the quality of the school nor based on comparable factors. With regard to a possible preparatory training of a standardized Infantry Battalion, in which Schools and Training Centers will play a significant role, the previous alignment of the System Approach to Training is paramount.

After the introduction of M7 and Director TDD, each advisor exposed the results of his school or training center, the advisors explained the key achievements and key shortfalls of their entity based on their expertise, an how to improve the level. Although the main objective of the meeting was the Schools' assessment, other remarkable goals were achieved additionally. Firstly, the meeting has been an extraordinary opportunity for the Schools' Commanders to expose directly to their own Chain of Command their main challenges and deficits; secondly, the relevance of reaching NATO standards within the schools has been emphasized, understood and agreed; and thirdly, the rapport between the school Commanders and the advisors has been reinforced.



Forging CBRN Readiness: Multinational CBRN Light Recce Training

By OF-3 Julia BRUECKNER (DEU-A), CBRN Senior Advisor, TDD

TRAINING DEVELOPMENT DIVISION

CBRN threats remain a critical concern in Iraq, a country that has previously endured the devastating effects of chemical warfare. Chemical warfare agent (CWA) attacks suffered by the Iraqi population and the continuous threat from their residues reinforced the need to strengthen their CBRN defence strategy. Today, Iraq is actively addressing this challenge through institutional development, international cooperation, and specialized training programs. A major component of this effort is the CBRN Incident Response Centre (IRC), which is responsible for handling the sampling of CBRN agents in the country and analysing CWA in its laboratory. To enhance its capabilities, NATO Mission Iraq (NMI) CBRN



that are aligned to NATO doctrine. As part of this mission, a Mobile Advisory Training Team (MATT) from Romania was requested to conduct a three weeks CBRN light reconnaissance training in close coordination with the NMI CBRN advisors. The MATT was tasked with instructing a diverse group of officers, non-commissioned officers, and civilian specialists to operate effectively in CBRN-contaminated environments us-

advisors play a crucial role in advising and instructing personnel that are involved in the training of the CBRN responder teams (CBRN light recce teams).

The trainings and workshops conducted by NMI personnel from the Training Development Division (TDD) are focused on training the Iraqi instructors at the various branch schools of the IAF. The goal is to achieve self-sustainability in conducting courses



A Focus On Practical Training

In previous workshops, the NMI advisors already assessed the capabilities of the Iraqi CBRN responder teams and tailored the course content closely to their requirements. Therefore, one part of the training included the NATO-standard CBRN warning and reporting system (ATP-45) which was an entirely new concept for many of the trainees. The team leaders and their seconds-in-command were instructed to use NATO orders, navigating the complexities of planning, executing, and commanding missions.

The trainees were highly motivated and eager to draw comparisons and improve their procedures.

The training was mainly focused on using the newly gained information in practical scenarios. First, they worked in isolated scenarios—single-threat exercises focusing on one situation at a time—advancing into simulated contamination zones, and relaying their findings through carefully crafted ATP-45 messages. At the final phase of the training, the exercises evolved into multi-threat scenarios. Teams had to make split-second decisions while navigating complex orders and reports.





forming a better understanding of NATO interoperability. The trainees were comprised of members of the active unit that is responsible for handling CBRN sampling throughout the country as well as training staff from the IRC. They're professionals in their own right, not only participating in training scenarios but also using their knowledge to react to real life threats and taking samples of sites in which CWA were deployed by opposing forces.

Ultimately, this training should become the foundation of building a training course for key personnel and instructors from other CBRN units as self-sustainability in training at Iraqi institutions is the main effort of the Training Development Division of NMI.

During the last training days, joint operations between Romanian and Iraqi reconnaissance teams were conducted. The Iraqi group leaders had to coordinate with a NATO team in order to manage the different tasks given to them by their command, and thus merging the different styles and methods into one cohesive team. The Romanian MATT played a vital role in making this joint training possible, as the Iraqi CBRN troops need to be able to operate in a combined force environment in order to prepare for CBRN threats in symmetrical warfare.

Training NATO Interoperability

The objective of this training was to train the coordination between Iraqi and NATO troops, subsequently



DCB Project Equipment Delivered!

By MCIV-7 Jeremy NOWERS (GBR) Head, Language Advisory Team, PSE

The NATO Mission Iraq (NMI) is actively pursuing its long-term objective (LTO) as outlined in the Joint Action Plan with the Iraqi Chief of Defence (CHOD). This objective focuses on enhancing language proficiency within the Iraqi Armed Forces in order to foster interoperability, and strengthen collaboration with NATO partners. This initiative encompasses the teaching of key languages such as English, French, German, Italian, Spanish, and Turkish at the Iraqi Defence Languages Institute (DLI), which is at the heart of this ambitious LTO.



In alignment with the CHOD's directive, NMI, through NATO's Defence Capacity Building (DCB) project and in collaboration with the HALO Trust, delivered essential IT/AV equipment, to the DLI on Monday 10th March.

The first 11 sets comprising: smartboard, whiteboard, projector, and visualizer.



Training sessions will be conducted for DLI teachers to effectively utilize this equipment for enhanced language instruction.

Additionally, 14 more sets will be distributed to the English Language Sections within Service HQs and MOD Directorates in the following weeks, amounting to an investment of approximately €0.25m.



This milestone marks the culmination of nearly 2 years of dedicated efforts. A heartfelt appreciation is extended to all contributors from NMI, DCB, and HALO Trust for their valuable contributions to this significant achievement.



Combining School Training Capabilities and becoming “Strong together”

By OF-3 Michael HENSCHKE (DEU-A), Senior Advisor EME School & OF-3 Oliver DOERRIES (DEU-A), Senior Advisor Transport and Supply School, TDD

In February 2025, the Electrical Mechanical Engineering School (EME School), in cooperation with the Transport and Supply School, conducted a combined convoy and rescue exercise in Taji, Iraq. This basic field exercise was not only a chance to showcase the capabilities of both schools but also an opportunity to demonstrate how their resources and expertise can complement each other. By conducting the entire exercise with material and vehicles provided by the schools themselves, without external support, the event highlighted the self-sufficiency and practical experience of the participants. The exercise was divided into 4 phases which were conducted over three days.

Phase 1: Sand Table Training

The exercise kicked off with a sand table training session. Here, participants were introduced to the exercise’s overall framework and objectives. The phase focused on ensuring that everyone—whether a student or instructor—understood the sequence of events and their individual roles within the exercise. This allowed for clear communication and alignment across the teams before transitioning to more hands-on phases.



Phase 2: Medical Training

Next, a medical training session prepared the participants for potential injuries that could occur during the exercise. Since also attendees from currently running courses participate in the exercise, the whole class received an extra training in medical procedures.



The Iraqi medical school supported this training with two instructors who had been highly motivated to show treatment of injured people in accidents as well as in combat situations. They trained along the MARCH schema, a modern kind of structured medical treatment, along with NATO standards.

lated truck accident occurred, with two casualties and the need for a rescue operation. The participating teams conducted field inspections, provided medical care, and successfully towed the vehicle, demonstrating their readiness and operational proficiency. This phase not only tested the theoretical knowledge gained in earlier stages but also the practical ability to handle real-time situations under pressure.

Building Future Training Synergies

An important takeaway from the exercise was the potential for future collaboration between the EME School and the Transport and Supply School. By conducting exercises like this, both schools can enhance their practical training programs, adapting the difficulty, complexity, and content to suit various course levels. The integration of students from ongoing courses provided invaluable hands-on experience, reinforcing the theoretical knowledge students acquire in the classroom.



Phase 3: Practical Field Training

The third phase brought participants to the field, where they carried out the practical steps of the exercise. From convoy management to responding to an accident, students practiced their assigned tasks under realistic conditions. This phase reinforced the importance of teamwork and coordination, as well as provided an opportunity for both schools to demonstrate their capability to train and manage operations independently. With every repetition, the performance improved and the students were visibly pleased to show what they had learned.

Phase 4: Convoy Scenario Demonstration Day

The final phase integrated all elements of the exercise into a demonstration of the convoy operation. A simu-



Moreover, the exercise demonstrated how these schools could independently organize and execute such operations using their own resources. This self-reliance is a significant aspect of military training and ensures that students are equipped to face challenges without relying on external support.

Positive Feedback and Future Prospects

The exercise was visited by several high-ranking officials, including General Officers from both the EME and Transport and Supply Directorate. Their feedback was overwhelmingly positive, with both praising the professionalism and effectiveness of the training. They highly appreciated the effort of the schools as well as the support by NATO NMI. It is clear that this exercise marks the beginning of a promising future for collaboration

between the two schools, providing an excellent foundation for future training initiatives.

Conclusion:

The combined convoy and rescue exercise in Taji demonstrated the strengths and capabilities of both the EME School and the Transport and Supply School. By leveraging their own resources and bringing students from ongoing courses into the fold, the exercise not only enhanced the participants' readiness but also showed how such exercises could be used to continuously improve training programs. Moving forward, this kind of hands-on, adaptable training will undoubtedly be crucial in ensuring that both schools remain at the forefront of practical military education.



Initial Planning Conference (IPC) for Command Post Exercise (CPX) LEAPING LION 2025

By A-5 Rense J. de VRIES (NLD), Senior Advisor NATO Interoperability, MAD

After the Train the Trainer (T3) workshop of the Core Planning Team (CPT), it was now the time to conduct the Initial Planning Conference (IPC) for Command Post Exercise (CPX) LEAPING LION 2025. The IPC starts with the Exercise Specifications, in NATO terms, Stage 1 EXSPEC.

The Exercise Specifications are the basis for Stage 2, the Planning Phase, which starts with the IPC. A Main Planning Conference (MPC) and a Final Coordination Conference (FCC) will follow this in May 2025. After the FCC, the CPX is planned to be conducted at HQ 9 Armoured Division in Taji 07 – 11 September 2025.

In a week of hard work the team produced the products for the MPC, CPX LEAPING LION, with the goal of designing the best Training Objectives for the Primary Training Audience 35 Brigade (35Bde) of 9 Armoured Division (9AD).

The team developed General Information and Specific Information to set the scene for the Operation. Within the scenario, enemy forces of a neighbouring (RED) country have invaded the country and have pushed back Border Forces. A Guard Force is conducting delaying Operations (in NATO terms a Tactical Activity as part of Defence Operations). 9 AD are moved to a Staging area to prepare for a Conventional Warfare Attack to restore the border. This attack will be conducted in a joint fashion, and Enemy Forces will be outmanoeuvred where possible, destroyed when needed and pushed back over the border. The next phase is the Defence Operation at the border.

In this phase, a Cordon and Search operation will be conducted in the Brigade Area of Operation.

For this purpose, 35Bde is reinforced with a battalion Special Forces. In this operation, but not solely, special attention is foreseen for Protection of Civilians, Women Peace and Security, and International Humanitarian Law.

In all Phases Combat Support and Combat Service Support are integrated and support from enablers from the Higher Command is part of the Tactical Planning and conduct of the Operation.

To train COM and staff 35Bde and 9AD in Tactical Planning for Land Forces, a German MATT team will support a T3 workshop of three weeks in Taji. This team has already trained these officers (the trainers) from 9AD, 1(SF) Division and the CPT and Service Commands in October 2024.

The officer directing the Exercise, LTG Jabbar N. Karam, and the OPR from CHOD, sMG Nasr Abdali Abbas Al Allazawi, were both present, received the Outbrief of the IPC, and issued additional Direction and Guidance.

The IPC represented a step forward to reach the outcome of 2025, “To have the proficiency to use NATO processes to plan, prepare, execute and review collective training”.



Intelligence Advisor's Creative Thinking Workshops

By OF-2 Helge HOFFMEISTER (DEU-A), Junior Intel Advisor, TDD

"Can I get this for my own courses?" That was an Iraqi participant's reaction to the Creative Thinking Workshops conducted by an intelligence advisor of NMI's Training Development Division (TDD). In the first quarter of this year, five Train-the-Trainer workshops with different methods have been conducted at the Directorate General for Intelligence and Security Development Centre (DGIS DC) with the goal of further improving the creative skills and methodology of its personnel.

One of the skills of all intelligence work in NATO is the capability to think creatively and make use of creative strategies in a cooperative environment. Therefore it is a given that the instructors of DGIS DC, who are responsible for most of the training within DGIS, must be skilled also in the use of creative thinking techniques. Furthermore, there always is a great benefit in adding more tools to every instructor's toolbox for methodology.



Divided into five separate workshops, each with a different topic, a group of about eight instructors and analysts from different parts of DGIS learned a variety of creative thinking skills. Those new skills then were trained in realistic scenarios ranging from security issues at the Syrian/Iraqi border to Iraqi Armed Forces' cooperation with NMI.

Even the best and most creative ideas can only truly shine with a solid basic structure and presentation, so skills for these areas were also taught.

The literary basis of most taught topics was "The NATO Alternative Analysis Handbook". This work is a comprehensive collection of a variety of creative thinking, structuring, diagnostic and challenging techniques published by the NATO-School in Oberammergau (DEU). The contained information was not only used for presentations but also summarized into a series of NATO standardized booklets, which were handed out after each workshop to the instructors.



Participants have been introduced to and used the structure of PMESII/ASCOPE as well as terminology in line with NATO probability standards.

Each workshop ended with a comprehensive presentation on the respective scenario in which the participants could demonstrate their skill in the newly learned creative thinking techniques and make use of the given standards for structuring.

While the acquiring of skills in this manner was certainly of great benefit to instructors and analyst alike, there has been a further advantage created



by these workshops. While discussing the many creative techniques for analysis and structuring, the participants related the scenarios to their day-to-day work and were able to see ways in which to improve themselves by implementing those ideas. Through creative debate within the diverse group of participants and with the advisor from TDD, new and fresh ideas for the development of the intelligence process within DGIS were birthed and spread.



C-UAS Workshop at Besmayah Training Center

By OF-3 Alberto Ruiz BIELSA (ESP-A) , Besmaya Training Center Senior Advisor, TDD

On February 16, 2025, NMI Advisors hosted an unprecedented Counter-Unmanned Aerial Systems (C-UAS) workshop at the Besmayah Training Center where 62 Special Combat & Tunnels Course students and cadre discussed about the evolving drone threat in modern warfare. With the continued rise of unmanned aerial systems (UAS) on the battlefield, military operations are being fundamentally altered. The workshop highlighted how UAS have been used in recent conflicts and presented the most advanced countermeasures currently available to neutralize this growing threat. This workshop was divided into three parts:

PART 1:

The Iraq-Daesh Conflict: UAS as a Tactical Tool

The ongoing Iraq-Daesh conflict marked a significant turning point in the use of UAS in combat. Daesh (ISIS) employed drones not just for surveillance, but as tools for lethal attacks. Their tactics, techniques, and procedures (TTP) included using UAS to drop explosives on military targets, disrupt communications, and scout enemy movements. These drones, often commercially available models, were modified for lethal payloads and

operated in swarms to overwhelm defences. The asymmetric warfare of the Daesh fighters, utilizing UAS in unconventional ways, forced military commanders to rethink defence strategies, making it clear that small, off-the-shelf drones might already have become game-changers in modern conflicts.

PART 2:

Ukrainian-Russian War: Drones Shaping the Future of Warfare

The current Ukrainian-Russian war has showcased the dramatic impact drones have on near-peer warfare. Both sides have leveraged drones for reconnaissance, precision strikes, and electronic warfare. UAS allow real-time surveillance of enemy positions, precise targeting, and even direct attacks on high-value assets. The use of drones in this conflict has highlighted their role as force multipliers, enabling smaller units to execute operations with unprecedented efficiency and accuracy. The lessons learned presented in this workshop highlighted that drones have not only become a tool for tactical advantage but are reshaping the operational planning and execution of military strategies.





PART 3:

UAV Systems: The Key to Countering the Drone Threat

As UAS continue to pose a significant threat to military operations, countermeasures are becoming increasingly crucial. The last part of this workshop showed the attendees several advanced C-UAV systems designed to neutralize these airborne threats. Among the leading technologies is the Cervus III, developed by a Spanish manufacturer, which specializes in detecting and jamming drone communications. Radio Frequency guns are another popular option, capable of disrupting a drone's control signals, effectively grounding them. The Anti-Drone High Power Electromagnetic Wave Truck offers a unique approach, using directed energy to disable UAS from a distance. Additionally, systems like AUDS, CROW, and Enforce Air 2 are designed to detect, track, and disrupt drones in real-time. Red Sky 2 is another notable system that offers advanced counter-drone capabilities,

ensuring that military operations remain protected from airborne surveillance and attack.

The Importance of Awareness and Preparedness

The rise of drone warfare underscores the critical importance of staying ahead of evolving threats. Modern military operations cannot afford to underestimate the potential of UAS. Whether used by insurgents or in conventional warfare, drones are a potential tool on the battlefield. Being equipped with the latest C-UAS technologies and ensuring personnel are trained in drone defence are essential for maintaining operational superiority. This C-UAS workshop conducted in Besmayah Training Center by NMI advisors served as a timely reminder that in today's high-tech warfare environment, awareness of the UAS threat is just as vital as preparedness with the appropriate countermeasures. As conflicts continue to evolve, staying ahead of drone technology will be a key factor in ensuring mission success.



First impression for NMI on KIRKUSH Military Training Base (KMTB)

By OF-5 Michael STEINHEIMER (DEU-A), OF-3 Cesar RENEDO (ESP-A), OF-2 Dennis HEEGER (DEU-A), Combat and Combat Support, TDD

TRAINING DEVELOPMENT DIVISION



On 18mar25 a site survey by an air move was conducted to KMTB in the DIYALA province around 95km north-east of BAGHDAD and close to the Iranian border. The aim was on the one hand to establish first contact with the Infantry School and KMTB Base Commander, on the other hand to evaluate the situation in the new venues of the Armor School, the newly established Mechanized Infantry School (MechInf), the Artillery

School as well as the Artillery NCO School that all currently are relocating their schools from Bagdad to KIR KUSH. Up to now, due to operational limitations, it remains a challenge to establish the advisory mission at the Infantry School. In addition, the current security situation and additional operational limitations restrict moves to KIR KUSH only to air moves.

With support of the Dutch Tactical Helicopter Detachment, the NMI representatives from J2 and J3, J3 Force Protection, as well as from the Training Development Division (TDD), arrived at the spot. KMTB Base Commander OF-5 Mohammed Ali Jasim Al-Tamini met NMI's representatives at his office together with OF-7 Walid, Khalid Hussein (Artillery Director), OF-6 Fakhri, Abdallah Naji (Artillery School Commander), OF-6 Saddam (Infantry School Commander), OF-5 Sinan, Ali Ahmed (Liaison Officer Armour School). For NMI, this was the first visit at the Infantry School and the new place for the Artillery, Artillery NCO, Armor School and the future Mechanized Infantry School. Locating a broad variety of capabilities in one venue, could push the effort of integrating combined arms activities in the school's curriculum forward.





to refurbish the venue and make it suitable to move in the shared compounds. Both Schools will be able to train 250 soldiers each at the same time. A date for full operational command (FOC) cannot be determined right now, as stated by the Artillery Director.

For the location of the Armour School, the Commander OF-6 Taha, Aswad Mahmod joined and led the delegation of NMI. He presented the already achieved progress and explained his refurbishment plan.

At the Infantry School NMI was presented a well-established school but with the need of NMIs support to align with NATO standards. The School delivers training for currently 150 Officers of the Infantry Branch and courses for officers of other branches to benefit from the combined arms approach. The biggest concern for the future by the School COM is the higher demand for shooting ranges that will occur due to the relocating schools.

The Artillery School and their Non-Commission Officers Wing still have a lot of work to do, in order



Currently he is at KMTB on a daily basis, in order to supervise the work and fulfil the relocation from BESMAYAH by the end of mar25. In the coming months, the MechInf Wing will split from the Armour School to form a MechInf School at KMTB together with parts of the 9th Divisions Combat School. For now, the main effort is to accomplish FOC jul25. All participants of NMI and the IRQ Army were delighted by the potential due to the space for field training and the opportunity to focus on the combined arms approach with all the branches located at KMTB.



National Defence College (NDC) conducted VTC with Hellenic National Defence College

By OF-4 Georgious ALPOUS (GRC-A), NDC advisor, PSE



The Professional Security Education (PSE) Division is working with the DUFMS Institutions' Deans to modernize curriculums, develop the faculty and improve institutional infrastructures

In this context, on March 6, a VTC was held, by NMI/ PSE, at the NDC premises, with National Defence College faculty members, NMI PSE advisors and the Hellenic National Defence College (HNDC).

Participating in the VTC was COM HNDC Lt Gen Athanasios SARDELLIS, the Dean of the NDC, SMG Ali Handool Al-Shammari along with significant administrative and faculty members from both the institutes. The NMI participants were NDC senior advisor Col (GRC Army) Georgios ALPOUS, and MCIV Mr Alexandar SPASEZKY, NATO/ DEEP coordinator.

The scope of the VTC was to investigate future areas for cooperation between the two institutions, and to scope the potential form of this cooperation. During the VTC, the two institutes had the opportunity to present their mission, vision and future perspectives.

After the initial presentations, the discussion mainly focused on the HNDC international senior course in applied strategy and defence diplomacy (ISCASDD) and the possibility to offer a seat for a NDC faculty member to attend it. This course is a 3-month course, taking place every year at HNDC premises, from October to December. It was initially founded in 2014 and since then 134 foreign (non-Greek) students have graduated.

The overall aim of the course is to produce informed and capable leaders, who can effectively analyse and address, contemporary defence challenges. Graduates must be prepared to contribute to strategic decision-making and policy formulation, within their respective organizations, enhancing national and international security. The course encourages interdisciplinary approaches, integrating insights from politics, economics and history, to prepare students for future roles in the defence and security sectors. The NDC proved to be extremely interested in the ISCASDD course, because it seems to include some important topics that the NDC considers to add to its curriculum, and especially to the defence diplomacy section.



In this context, the NDC Dean SMG Ali Handool Al-Shammari commented that it would be very fruitful to the NDC to conduct virtual presentations and workshops with the HNDC. At this point MCIV Mr Alexandar SPASEZKY stated that DEEP is willing and ready to fully fund an out-of-country-activity (OoCA) to HNDC premises, next October, so that there will be an on-site cooperation. COM HNDC Lt Gen Athanasios SARDELLIS responded that HNDC would be glad to cooperate with the NDC in the context of a formal agreement under the approval of the Chain of Command. The two institutes agreed that there are several areas of common interest and ways for cooperation. The role of NMI in this will be to develop this mutual desire for cooperation into an official partnership, beneficial for both institutes.



HELLENIC NATIONAL DEFENSE COLLEGE (HNDC)

The College was established in Thessaloniki, in 1950. HNDC remained in Thessaloniki until 1952 when, it was moved to Athens, and settled in the "Hellenic Military Academy", building complex, that operated until 1978. From 1978, the College was relocated to the facilities of "SAKETA" camp until 1984, when it was finally transferred to its current location.



The college's mission is to educate the officers of the Armed Forces, Hellenic Police, Fire Service, and Hellenic Coast Guard, as well as senior officials of ministries, organizations, and Civil Sector entities, in defence studies, in order to be able to think and act strategically, enabling them to prevail in this increasingly complex, dynamic, and uncertain security setting.

The HNDC also cultivates the spirit of cooperation and synergy among students of different branches of the Armed Forces, Hellenic Police, Fire Service, Coast Guard and the entities of the Civil sector related to civil defence. Additionally, The College serves as a think tank in the field of the Armed Forces, on matters of defence policy and national security strategy. The college actively pursuing international collaborations with universities from other countries.

These collaborations contribute to enriching the academic environment and fostering international cooperation in education.

The partnership with the University of Plymouth in Great Britain since 2010 is notable, especially with the accreditation of the College Modules as equivalent to the postgraduate certificate stage of the Program with a credit value of 60 credits, offering thus the opportunity to the students to be enrolled in it. Additionally, the College has established a partnership with the Bundeswehr University of Munich (German Armed Forces University). This agreement, focusing on training three German officers annually at the ISCASDD, demonstrating the college's efforts to expand its international partnerships and collaboration beyond its previous bounds. The cooperation also concerns the Metis Institute for Strategy and Foresight of the University. Exploring possibilities for further cooperation in other subjects with the Bundeswehr University of Munich indicates a commitment to broadening academic exchanges and enhancing educational opportunities for the students.



Train the Trainer at the Iraqi 1st Military College

By OF-3 Bader BRETT (GBR-A), Senior Liaison Officer, PSE

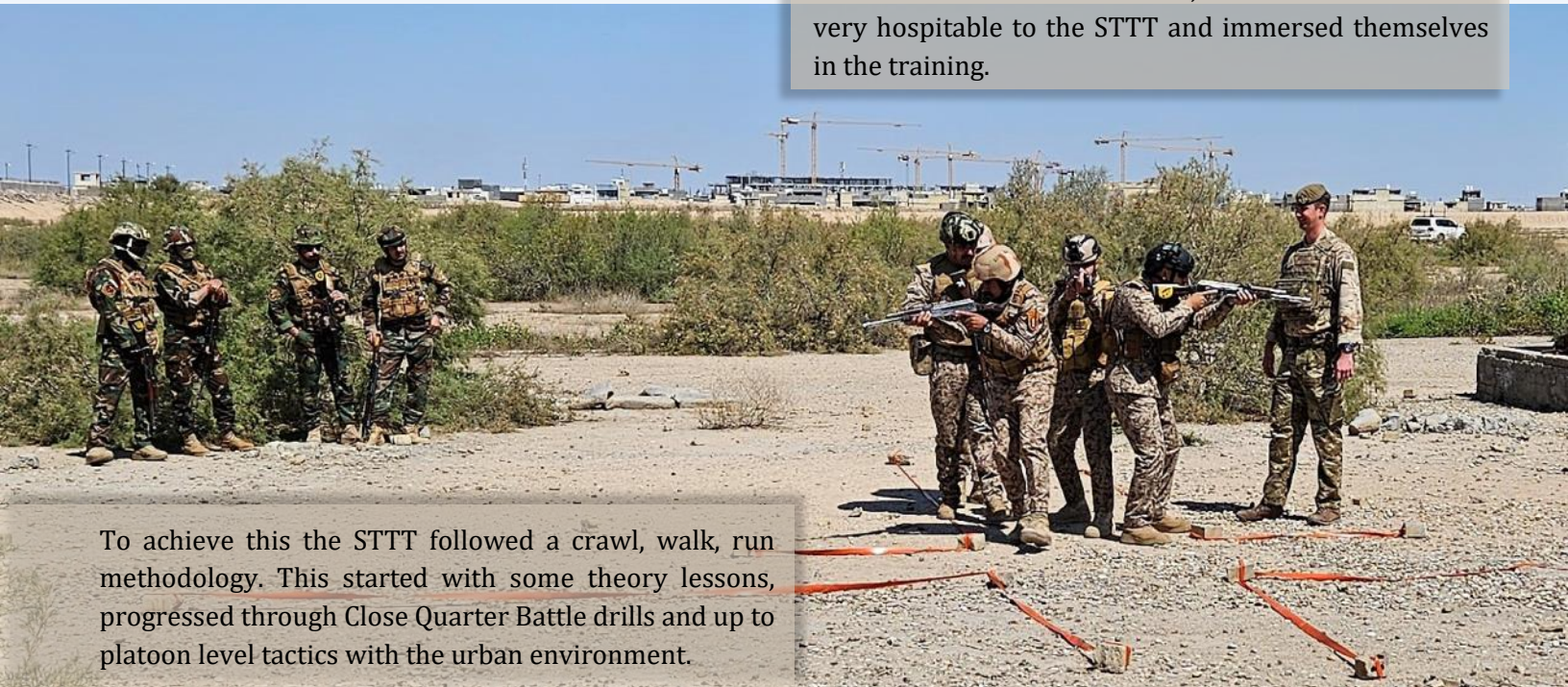
On the 12-13 March Sgt Chris Morris delivered an Explain, Demonstrate, Imitate and Practice (EDIP) workshop that he had designed for 1st Military College (1st MC). This was part of the foundation work towards Long Term Objective 11, supporting Trainer Continuing Professional Development (CPD). Topics varied from rope work, sword drill, CIED, Skill at Arms. Twenty-two trainers graduated from the workshop.

Between 22-27 March 2025, a four person Short Term Training Team (STTT) comprised of British Army personnel from the 1st Battalion the Princess of Wales Royal Regiment (PWRR) deployed to Iraq to deliver follow up training. The aim of this support was to train instructors at 1st MC in a Train the Trainer package using Operating in Built Up Areas (OBUA) as a vehicle to develop their practical training skills.

The workshops developed the instructors; demonstrating how they could use the lessons taught to train their own officer cadets in engaging methods.



There were 22 Iraqi students from the 1st MC, made up of Platoon Commanders and Warrant Officers / SNCOs. Participation was exceptional throughout. Instructors prepare themselves quickly for numerous questions while teaching; Iraqis strive for a perfect solution in many things, which can be challenging in the urban operations environment. Overall, the students were all very hospitable to the STTT and immersed themselves in the training.



To achieve this the STTT followed a crawl, walk, run methodology. This started with some theory lessons, progressed through Close Quarter Battle drills and up to platoon level tactics with the urban environment.





The UK STTT provided a fantastic opportunity to demonstrate the Iraqi-NATO partnership. This included a series of lesson and exercise demonstrations at Al-Rustimayah showing what the instructors had learnt to both the MC and NMI leadership, and leading to further engagement between the headquarters.

NMI continues to explore options for future learning with the Iraqi Army in various aspects of military training and operations supporting their expertise and experiences. Next up for the 1st MC is two day Trainer CPD workshops led by their own trainers. Subjects over the next 12 months include Physical Training, C-IED, Navigation, Medical and Skill at Arms.



The Combat Cigar Club: An Unmissable Social Gathering in Iraq

By OR-8 Charles LELIEVRE (CAN-A), IKM and SCRO Staff Assistant, SCRO

In the heart of Baghdad, every Friday evening, a unique event brings together around one hundred people: the Combat Cigar Club. Born a few years ago, in a particular military and social context and currently administered and organized by MWO Charles Lelievre and WO Alex Desjardins, both from Quebec, Canada, this club has become much more than just a gathering. It embodies an atmosphere of camaraderie, relaxation, and sharing in an environment often marked by regional and political tensions.

The Combat Cigar Club is a place where members of the UIII community, composed of a consortium of international civilians, diplomats and military personnel, come together to interact and form strong bonds, far from the challenges and rigor of their every day professional duties. The event takes place in a friendly and relaxing setting, accompanied by quality cigars, good and pleasant music, as well as passionate discussions on a variety of topics, ranging from geopolitics and local culture to reminiscing on professional accounts and personal anecdotes.

The Combat Cigar Club also offers a welcome escape, a moment of respite in a country that, despite its challenges, remains a place of resilience. It serves as a perfect example of how social spaces, though simple, can play a crucial role in fostering strong human connections in difficult environments.



With a different theme every Friday night, from “Hey, remember the ‘80s” to French cabaret to Country music night, the Combat Cigar Club reminds its participants of the importance of human connections, regardless of the circumstances. It demonstrates the art of savoring life's small pleasures, even in the midst of regional tensions of conflict.



One of the most fascinating aspects of this gathering is the diversity of its participants, comprised of NATO members. Coming from a multitude of diverse backgrounds, they not only join to unwind after a busy week but also to build bridges between cultures and experiences. The conversations held here are sometimes intense, sometimes light, but always enriching and entertaining.



30 km Norwegian March

By OR-7 Ivar LUNDBY (NOR-A), Staff Assistant, KLE Analyst, SCRO

On Saturday March 22nd The Norwegian Contingent in Union III arranged the Norwegian March. An 18.6mile (30km) ruck march around the compound of the base.

The Norwegian Foot March is a military endurance test. The march was first held in 1915 as a test of marching endurance for soldiers in the Norwegian Army. A strategic goal was to be able to move larger units of troops over a great distance swiftly and in a manner that enabled them to efficiently be prepared for combat – even after the march by carrying their rucksack / weaponry of 11 kg. The goal today is to stimulate the general interest of marching over extended distances amongst military and civilian personnel.



However it is a race against oneself, where mental endurance plays a key role. Before the race, the participants were encouraged to set goals for their own performance and of course reevaluate them based on their individual progress. Safety was also a key factor and the great team of helpers made sure that the participants had easy access to water and energy drinks during the march.

All in all the march was a success and there were many smiling, albeit sore athletes as they got their diploma of completion and the bronze or silver covered pins as a memento of their efforts. The Norwegian Foot March would not have been able to arrange if it weren't for the fantastic helpers from several of the NMI nations supporting their Norwegian colleagues.



In the morning the 22nd of March the Norwegian Contingent arranged the traditional march in Union III. Over 150 participants joined in the march and many nations were represented. Because of the test requirements the march has to be completed as a speed march or a run, and the participants in Union III gave it their all to complete within the timeframe of somewhere between 4 hours and 30 minutes and 5 hours, depending on several factors.

The Norwegian Foot March is not a race against each other and there is no first place medal.



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