

# The MISSION

Issue 25 – December 2024



Building Safety and Security Together

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***We welcome your ideas and comments!***

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# The MISSION

Dear readers,

We are going into December with a new edition of the NMI magazine, bringing you fresh articles from contributors all across NMI.

2024 is coming to an end, the year we celebrate the sixth anniversary of the establishment of the mission. This magazine tries to capture the mission's efforts and progress to assist the Iraqi institutions on their way to a brighter future.

In this issue, you will find articles that showcase our progress towards NMI's long-term objectives. Most articles highlight the activities, we are carrying out with our Iraqi counterparts, but the magazine also shows some of our Union III off-duty activities.

We meet with our fellow Union III residents every day, but we know little or nothing about most people's work. This is an opportunity to learn more. I invite all of you to continue your passionate work, to continue reading, and when possible, to contribute., not only to this printed product but also for our digital output.

Therefore, we invite you to visit the Public Affairs Office in Building 6B, Room 207 or contact us via e-mail at:

[pao.nmihq@nmi.nato.int](mailto:pao.nmihq@nmi.nato.int), [nikola.vlasic@nmi.nato.int](mailto:nikola.vlasic@nmi.nato.int).

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.

Thank you to all the members of the Mission, without whom there would be no content. And we would like to extend special thanks to those who have gone the extra mile in writing articles for Mission magazine.

Let's continue to build safety and security together.

Magazine editor: OF-3 Nikola VLAŠIĆ (HRV)

NMI Public Affairs Office





# German MATT training Tactical Planning for Land Forces

By A-5 Rense DE VRIES (NLD), Senior Advisor OCC E&F Core Planning team, MATT, MAD

On 6 November 2024, the German Mobile Advisory and Training Team (MATT) successfully completed its six-week deployment as part of the NATO Mission Iraq (NMI) in Baghdad. During their tour, the team educated and trained experience Iraqi staff officers in Tactical Planning for Land Forces in Combined Arms at the brigade level, in accordance with NATO's Allied Procedural Publication (APP) 28, to enhance interoperability with NATO. Theoretical instruction was complemented by a staff exercise in which these con-



Objective (LTO) 19 (NATO Interoperability). LTO 19 includes two Lines of Effort: (1) conducting collective training and exercises, first at brigade level, subsequently also at the operational level; (2) to enhance knowledge of and experience in conducting exercises for the unit selected for NATO's Operation Capability Concept Evaluation and Feedback (OCC E&F) program.

cepts were practically applied. The participants were drawn from the Iraqi Core Planning Team, the Staff of the 9th Armored Division, the Staff of 1st (Special Forces) Division and the different Service Commands.

This training was planned and executed at the direction of the Chief of Defense, General Al-Lami Abdul Amir Rashid Yarallah of the Iraqi Armed Forces (IAF), and stems from his ambition to align the Iraqi Armed Forces with NATO standard planning procedures as outlined in the end state of NMI's Long-Term





To assess whether a unit in the OCC E&F program meets the standards for certification in the program, the Partnership Division (PD) of NATO's Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe (SHAPE) will require an exercise according to NATO standards. A selected unit will need generally 3 to 5 years in the OCC E&F program to be certified. For Iraq, the first important step will be the Expert Team Visit (ETV), planned for mid-2025.

The training program conducted by the German MATT, which was the third out of a series of four, is considered a success and received high recognition from the Iraqi Armed Forces and NMI. The fourth training programme is planned for spring 2025, with preparations and refinements of the course content already underway. This follow-up program will include a train-the-trainer module, so that Iraqi officers will actually take part in training their own officers. The objective is that Iraq should become self-sustainable in Education,



Training, Exercise and Evaluation (ETEE), aligning the Iraqi Army Training Bulletin (ATB) with the NATO Military Training and Exercise Plan (MTEP).





# Mobile Advisory Training Team 19 – Advanced Resuscitation

By OF-3 Andy WAINSCOT (GBR), OF-3 Roberto RIZZO (ITA), OR-9 Giovanni ANTONINO (ITA), MATT, TDD

Enhancing and evolving the medical capabilities of the Iraqi Armed Forces (IAF) is of strategic value to the Government of Iraq. Advanced Resuscitation forms a vital part of the medical chain, improving casualties' outcomes and was highlighted as a priority area for development.

On 15 Oct 2024, Colonel (OF-5) Mohammed AL-HASANI, Dean of the Iraqi Military Medical School (IMMS), warmly welcomed the Mobile Advisory Training Team (MATT) 19 from Italy, responsible for developing and delivering the course to support the NATO Mission in Iraq, facilitated through the Training Development Division (TDD).

The Italian team were composed of Lt Cdr (OF-3) Roberto Rizzo (Marine Nursing Officer) and Sgt Maj (OR-9) Giovanni ANTONINO (Marine Nurse). Major (OF-3) Andrew WAINSCOT (IMMS Advisor – TDD) supported the team.

18 IMMS (16 Military, 2 Civilian) instructors formed the participation group for the course with a large cohort of female instructors benefitting from the teaching. These



had a variety of clinical backgrounds; Nurses, Doctors, Biomedical Scientists, Combat Medics etc.

The overall aim of this course was to ensure a comprehensive knowledge was gained by the participants in Advanced Resuscitation, enhancing their professional performance and preparing them in educating and training the next generation of IAF clinicians who attend the IMMS.

Subjects covered included the assessment and treatment of patients via cardio pulmonary resuscitation, airway and pneumothorax management, intravenous and intraosseous access for circulatory management, burns, analgesia and casualty evacuation. A mixture of theory and practical lessons were utilized to keep the participants eager and engaged, as well as utilizing Tactical Combat Casualty Care/ NATO aligned content to aid future curriculum development.

Particular highlights included the interactive lessons utilising the newly donated NATO medical training equipment and the informative visits of the NMI Dutch Medical Team.

Across 3 days of the course, the NMI Dutch Medical team, led by Lieutenant(OF-1) Kevin



Van De Burght, with his team of Combat Nurses and Medics, visited the IMMS to deliver practical lessons. This features use of a state-of-the-art Ambulance and movement of casualties as well as many other practical techniques benefitting casualty management.

On 29 Oct 2024, the course culminated in a series of practical scenarios ran by the Italian team and Dutch counterparts to test and reinforce the learning received.

The course concluded in a graduation ceremony on 30 Oct 2024. Brigadier General (OF-6) Andreas KÜEHNE (Director – TDD), presented the certificates to each proud participant alongside the Dean of the IMMS. All participants and staff enjoyed a celebration, including local cuisine to thank everyone for their hard work.

In summary, these exceptionally interactive lessons and practical scenarios really brought to life the theoretical



concepts delivered during the course for the participants and were extremely well received, the level of instruction was outstanding. This collaboration with subject matter experts, both Iraqi and NATO, highlighted the strong partnership that has been built and continues to go from strength-to-strength, a great success!





# Transport and Supply School 400

By OF-3 Alexander KUEHN (DEU), Trans & Support School, TDD

**T**he Transport and Supply School (TSS) is located at the Taji Military Complex and has been advised by NMI since October 2022. Under the command of OF-6 Ali, Saad Hassan, the school has developed significantly. The school now successfully runs approximately 30 courses per year. This trains around 1000 students for different roles, such as platoon commander, unit commander and others. Furthermore, the TSS is responsible for all driver's license training of the Iraqi Armed Forces (IAFs). The delivered training courses are prerequisite for operational effectiveness.

The TSS welcomed the new NMI advisor in September 2024, whose focus is to support the school's ongoing development, utilizing his extensive knowledge and experience gained as a Logistical Staff Officer in the German Army. In addition, the TSS will benefit from his expertise as instructor having been based extensively at the German Logistic School. He is more than familiar in understanding the implementation of NATO aligned training techniques and best practices on driving skills of Mercedes Benz 1017 type of trucks, used at TSS. A further goal is to achieve long-term TSS improvements across several topics including the construction of a new drivers range in Taji and the implementation of English language courses. This will link with out-of-country activities for the students and instructors of the TSS to observe NATO practice, aiming for IAFs alignment.

A further area of development led by the TDD Advisor is the continued strengthening of the basic logistical knowledge of the trainers. Therefore, a trainer could be sent to a national course of a logistics platoon commander in order to empower his skills and to enhance the development of NATO interoperability and standardization.



In conclusion, the TSS is making great strides towards the goal of training students up to NATO level in partnership with TDD.





# Intelligence Briefing DIYALA Province

By OF-4 Jan LUEBKE (DEU), Advisor ETAT, TDD

***"No further questions – great briefing!"*** With these words, Brigadier General (OF-6) Andreas KUEHNE (Director – Training Development Division (TDD)) concluded the Iraq led Intelligence Briefing about the DIYALA Province on 24 Oct 2024. The Briefing took place at the Directorate General for Intelligence and Security Development Center (DGIS DC) and was the result of a four day cross-divisional workshop conducted by advisors of the Ministerial Advisory Division (MAD) and TDD.



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The idea for this briefing and the associated workshop arose during a meeting between Brigadier General KUEHNE and Major General (OF-7) Adnan Mahmoud MUTAR (Head of Intelligence Analysis Directorate at DGIS DC). Both Generals met in the end of September to discuss the planned movements of branch schools from the greater Baghdad Area to DIYALA province. Therefore DGIS DC offered to hold a briefing on the province in order to share their knowledge about the region.

In a cross-divisional approach, MAD and TDD advisors took up the opportunity to accompany and advise the process with a workshop for the purpose of aligning intelligence products and processes closer to NATO standards. Nine analysts with a large variety in their field of work (analysis, open source intelligence, imagery) formed the participation group for this workshop.

The overall aim of the workshop was to ensure a comprehensive knowledge about the intelligence preparation of the operational environment (IPOE). Further subjects covered included the different steps of the IPOE and practical examples of how to use them on the respective level. The focus was laid on step one of the process, area evaluation for a certain region, resulting in







the briefing for DGIS DC staff and NMI personnel.

A mixture of shortly introducing the concept and results of a certain phase as a lecture and practical parts, where the participants had to bring in their knowledge and skills in order to create the necessary foundations for the briefing was employed. Both, the results and the feedback of the participants, underlined the effectiveness of this approach.

In summary, the result of the workshop is threefold. Firstly, improving and evolving the capabilities of the Iraqi Intelligence and Security Organizations is of strategic value to the Government of Iraq and has a direct impact on the security situation in the country. Conducting intelligence support in a way close to NATO standards

enhances Iraq's interoperability in the intelligence community with NATO and was highlighted as a priority area for development.

Secondly, the exchange between subject matter experts, both Iraqi and NATO, underlined the common goal to increase the effectiveness of the Government of Iraq. Additionally, it has reinforced the strong partnership between Iraq and NATO.

Thirdly, the collaboration between MAD and TDD for this process is the gold standard of how NATO Mission in Iraq's (NMI) divisions should cooperate in cross-divisional approaches to ensure a comprehensive approach with regards to the advisory of their counterparts.



# Exercise “Charge of the Braves”

By OF-3 Josep PERIS GANCEDO (ESP), BETC Advisor, TDD

## **Cadre development on practical and collective training in urban terrain at BETC.**

In October 2024, NMI advisors from the Training Development Division (TDD) advised Iraqi partners on the exercise “Charges of Braves” conducted at the Besmayah Training Centre (BETC). “Charge of Braves” was a force training exercise (FTX) where an infantry platoon reinforced by medical evacuation (MEDEVAC) and explosive ordnance disposal (EOD) enablers carried out an offensive activity against a DAESH-type enemy established into a build-up area.

The final day of the exercise was presented to Iraqi Major General Adnan, Director of Military Training Directorate for the Iraqi Armed Forces. It was an example of the training that BETC can deliver working in close collaboration with the forces, as long as the 59th Brigade of the 17th Division of the Iraqi Ground Force Command sent a platoon to undergo the course, and with other Schools, like Bomb Disposal School and Military Medical School, which supported the activity with specialized expertise.



The advisory focus was on how to design, programme, and conduct collective training on urban terrain. In addition, the aim was on how make a better use of the



training centres as a hub where both the units of the force, the specialists and the branch schools can merge and conduct realistic and combined training.

The exercise took place at the BETC, Iraq’s largest military training area. BETC has been in the training business for more than 20 years and its cadre has



# at Besmayah Training Center

By OF-3 Josep PERIS GANCEDO (ESP), BETC Advisor, TDD

conducted extensive activities with both national and international military units for many years. Both the facilities and the professional team of the BETC turn it into an excellent location to further develop Iraqi Security Forces training efforts in close collaboration with NMI's advising.

NATO's advisors provided Iraqi counterparts with support about the NATO training system, always focusing on the methodology used rather than in the content by itself. Special attention was given to the integration and harmonization of all the different units involved in order to create a cohesive and seamless fighting force.

The exercise "Charge of Braves", in Besmayah is part of a broader effort to build up Iraq's military capabilities following the long-term security reforms undertaken by the Government of Iraq to create a safer coun-



try. As Iraqi units develop its ability to train collectively in every time larger formations, they become a more resolute force and one-step closer to interoperability with NATO partners, thus contributing to the stabilization of Iraq and the wider region.



# FIRE EAGLE – Danger from above!

By OF-4 Christian HARDTKE (DEU), Arty School, TDD

Seeing modern conflict media coverage, precise long distance fires and unmanned aerial systems (UAS) or simple “drone” based target location and engagement is getting more and more prevalent. Therefore, fast, precise and deeply internalized procedures for the combined application of UAS and indirect fires must be the focus of modern fire support.

The Training Development Division of NATO Mission in Iraq (TDD NMI) combined the need of integration of sensor-to-shooter (S2S) procedures with the opportunity of combined school efforts. After intensive preparation talks and advising efforts the Intelligence and Artillery School joined forces in workshops and planning conferences to kick off the development process.

Starting not from scratch but with a sheet of paper the rich experience of Iraqi personnel and the suggestions of NATO advisors formed a solid action plan. With a complex group of stakeholders, including Intelligence and Artillery school and directorate as well as force providers and the army aviation command the common aims were set.

The Artillery Directorate took the lead, designated an exercise director and moderated the final planning conference (FPC). With the combined force of Artillery Directorate, Artillery School and the Training Regiment as well as the other vital force providers the goal was set. On October 20, they all hit the road and went to the desert. All forces joined in “Camp Tash” training area 100 km southwest of Baghdad and started final preparations. After multiple days of practice and a visit of DCOS Training and M7 as well as NATO Senior Artillery Advisor LTC Christian H., the exercising force pushed forward to a more than respectable outcome.

As the highlight at the end of an intensive preparation phase with the advisors of NATO Mission in Iraq (NMI) the final live firing of exercise “Fire Eagle” was conducted on October 26. Numerous high-ranking guests - among them also the I-CHOD - attended the Distinguished Visitors Day (DVD). The exercise focus was the combined use of radar systems and reconnaissance drones with a wide variety of Iraqi artillery weapon systems.





Starting from 120mm mortars over 155mm self-propelled howitzers to 122mm multiple rocket launchers a wide range of ammunition was brought to effect. The applied technical sensors observed and adjusted the trajectories and impacts. All data and pictures were displayed for the audience as a life feed,

making it easy to understand their relevance in combined operations.

At first, the Mortars fired. After a test shot, the distribution of impacts showed the perfect platoon alignment as UAS called fire for effect. Fire missions of both towed and self-propelled howitzers showed the devastating power of precisely fired shells.

As the dust settled, BM 21 rocket launches took over. The high number of rockets fired affected a large area with deadly shrapnel. Finally, direct engagement with M198 and M109 Howitzers in close proximity of the visitors stand left no doubts about the firepower of modern day's artillery.

A further step towards modern armed forces and an impressive achievement by the Iraqi artillery was made. Knowledge has been consolidated and experience generated to facilitate further implementation of S2S operation procedures and techniques. But the mission is not yet fully accomplished – return to work.



# Iraqi Command College Visit to Turkish National Defence University

By Dr. OF-3 Mehmet Sadettin DİNÇER (TUR), Command College Advisor, PSE and MCIV-7 Aleksandar SPASESKI (MKD) DEEP Coordinator, SPCB

The Iraqi Command College is a significant professional military education institution that trains Iraqi officers for command and staff positions.

NATO Defense Education Enhancement Program (DEEP) in collaboration with NMI Professional Security Education (PSE) Division and Specialized Programs Coordination and Cross-Cutting Themes Branch (SPCB) enabled five faculty members from the Command College to visit Turkish National Defense University in Istanbul, Turkey between 20 and 25 October 2024.

This visit was an opportunity to introduce Command College to aspects of curriculum and faculty development in professional military education institutions in a NATO member country, to provide a military education program that combines mutual strengths and perspectives from Turkish and Iraqi military traditions, and to become familiar with Turkish Professional Military Education Systems.

In this context, the delegation visited the Turkish National Defense University (TR-NDU) Rectorate, Joint Warfare Institute Directorate, Atatürk Strategic Studies and Graduate Institution Directorate, Army, Naval, Air Force War Institute Directorates, Naval Academy Command, Air Force Academy Command and Turkish General Staff Multinational Joint Warfare Center Command.

The delegation greatly appreciated the opportunity to observe highly effective, dynamic, versatile academic, military and foreign language education delivered at the TR-NDU institutes, and academic/sports facilities provided to cadets.





The delegation followed the activities with great interest and appreciation, and it agreed that the activities were very valuable and extremely informative. In addition, the visit emphasized the importance of cooperation at different levels and in different fields between military educational institutions.

In conclusion, this out of country activity was exceptionally fruitful, productive and met all objectives in full. The outcomes were:

- Enhanced faculty experiences for the Iraqi Command College.
- Expanded horizons and continued development of the Iraqi faculty members.
- Opportunities to identify deficiencies by comparing with Turkish Professional Military Education.
- Benefits from experiencing and comparing curriculum studies with a NATO member country in the same region.

The PSE Command College Advisory Team, OF-5 Recai KARAKAYA, OF-3 Mehmet Sadettin DİNÇER and OF-3 Michal STARZYNSKI look forward to continuing their robust and enhanced cooperation with the Command College into the future.



# School of Military Communication (SMC) participates in International

By OF-5 Pascal BAUNACH (DEU), Advisor (ETAT Comms School),

**HF Exercise NOBLE SKYWAVE – Crowning the best HF Operators in the world.** Every year in October, the international HF Radio Communication Exercise NOBLE SKYWAVE brings the world a bit closer together. Organized by the Canadian Armed Forces, the exercise for 2024 is a competition of 26 countries and over 300 military HF radio stations from all over the globe. For 3 days, 24 hours a day, the participating nations compete in different categories, ranging from contacting the highest number of overall radio stations, to contacting stations across the longest distance. These 3 days not only displayed the vast number of military HF stations competing to be the best HF Operators worldwide but also have demonstrated the wider operational impact of having independent radio communication as a military enabler. In case of enemy effects on more common means of communication like telephone, satellite communication or short-range VHF/UHF, HF communication is a strategic and tactical redundancy to maintain Command and Control (C2).

**Preparation is the key to success.** Weeks of training and preparation were completed in advance of the exercise by the IRAQI personnel, supported by Advisors from Training and Development Division (TDD) of NMI. The focus lied on developing the participants in NATO procedures and standards to optimize exercise interop-

erability. The pronunciation and understanding of English language under the difficult atmospheric noise interferences when you talk to someone in 6000 miles distance needed particular attention.



**Unforgiving environmental conditions, less power and more precision.** Physics are the basis for all radio wave transmission; therefore, the IRAQI operators in the SMC had to deal with significant challenges. Heat, wind and dust were constantly affecting the radio equipment and building up antennas with correct grounding was hard to achieve. Additionally, the dry and salt deficient soil inhibits radio wave propagation severely. Therefore, the Iraqi personnel utilized a water and salt mixture to assist with the soil's physical problem. Finally, the sun activities in October were severe. Electromagnetic bursts from our star were causing considerable interference with the ionization of the upper atmospheric layers - which is actually required for long-range HF communication. To sum up, physics are an unforgiving reality and adaptability and initiative as





shown by the IRAQI personnel is key to cope with these challenges. Concerning the equipment, the SMC had to use their 150-Watts radios compared to last year's 400-Watt radios to fire the waves into the atmosphere. To compensate for that disadvantage the IRAQI personnel had to be even more precise with their Antenna and radio configuration. Having a slight deviation in the Antenna direction can add up tremendously at distances over 6000 miles.

**Final results and way ahead.** The good cooperation of the SMC with TDD and its Advisors during the preparation phase led to an excellent overall result, given the circumstances and challenges. They achieved a rank of 12th of over 300 participating stations and a rank 4th of all 26 countries. The SMC showed its high expertise in the field of worldwide HF communication and could even improve the result from NOBLE SKYWAVE 2023. The enthusiasm, the training and the application of NATO standards in voice procedures led to this extraordinary outcome as well as their drive and innovation to overcome the mentioned obstacles. NMI together with its IRAQI counterparts at the SMC have to build upon



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this success and continue to drive improvement to the next level. This will aid enhancement of the IAF C2 capabilities, aligned to NATO standards, benefitting integration of the IAFs. TDD and wider NMI is looking forward to a bright future and continuing its close cooperation with the SMC.





# The Russian War against Ukraine - Lessons Learned for Today's and Tomorrow's Conflicts

By OF-4 Michael HELLERFORTH (DEU), Advisor, PSE

The understanding of the need to learn from war is nearly as old as the military profession itself. Military minds like Caesar, Vegetius or Sun Tsu have written largely about this need in works that have stood the test of time. But the most famous reflection on what we call "Lessons Learned" today, can be found in a work that has become canon at all military institutions worldwide: "On War", written by Carl von Clausewitz and published nearly 200 years ago in 1832.

ly conducted. In turn, this requires a constant study of changes to conflict and – most important – the need to incorporate the findings into military planning, preparation for conflict, and training of forces.

On 23 October, the Iraqi War College was the location of an event dedicated to following Clausewitz' advice by having a closer look at the current War in Ukraine and extracting crucial lessons needed for tomorrow's conflicts. To that effect, Colonel Petr Vohralik of the



In this famous book, the author, himself a veteran of the Napoleonic Wars, reflects on the duality of military conflict, by calling war a chameleon. According to his ideas, war, whilst staying essentially the same in nature, was constantly changing in the way it was actual-

Czech Army gave a presentation to the Faculty and student body of the War College, with the DUFMS President in attendance.

This event was conducted in the wake of a speech on NATO, given at the War College a fortnight earlier by DCOM NMI, Brigadier general Buls. After her presentation, the audience had shown huge interest both in NATO as well as in the Russian War against Ukraine, by asking General Buls numerous questions. This enthusiastic response led the War College Faculty and its counterparts at NMI to initiate a follow-up event on short notice.

Colonel Vohralik started by reiterating key facts about NATO, clarifying open questions and deepening the audience's understanding of the legal, political and military aspects of this Alliance. He made it clear, that NATO was a political organization with military capabilities, comprising 32 independent, sovereign members, dedicated to peace, stability and collective





defense. In this context, he explained how NATO partners worldwide, including Iraq, actively profited from close cooperation, advancement of stability and peace as well as support in case of need.

Incidentally, the War in Ukraine is one example of the importance of NATO partnerships in a difficult world. While NATO is no belligerent power itself, it actively supports Ukraine against an illegal, unprovoked and brutal aggression by a country that has not only broken the UN Charter by invading a sovereign country but also gone against firm guarantees it had itself given in international treaties.

As the speaker explained, Ukraine was a good case in point of the principles laid out by Clausewitz. He reflected on the need for training and preparation before conflict, initiative at all levels, mission command under fire, the need for reserves and the training of second echelon forces, the impact of technology and importance of the resilience of both modern states as well as societies.

These points were rounded out with explanations how the three classical domains of Land, Sea and the Air had been joined by Cyber and Space as part of the battlefield.

The presentation finished with another thought straight out of Clausewitz: The fact that War was not an isolated event but a political act – and that no conflict should be started without having an attainable objective or end state in mind. Wars usually do not end after total victory but after conflict has culminated and political actors have negotiated. Given the fact that in the present case the aggressor had started the conflict out of hubris, without having given thought to the possibility of not attaining absolute goals on short notice, this meant that the conflict was not going to end anytime soon.

The symposium ended after a lengthy question and answer session and a spirited discussion among the students on what the lessons identified might mean for the Iraqi forces.



# Support to Civil Authorities for Emergencies and Natural Disasters

By A-4 Mahmut NUR (TUR), Advisor CM, MAD

**O**n 27–31 October 2024, NATO Mission Iraq's Ministerial Advisory Division organized a workshop on Military Support to Civil Authorities for Emergencies and Natural Disasters, supported and conducted by a Spanish Military Advisory Training Team from the Unidad Militar de Emergencias (UME). The workshop took place at the Iraqi Engineering Support Department in Al Kasra, near Baghdad. The event was chaired by the Iraqi Major General Hussein Athab Salman, underscoring Iraq's commitment to enhancing its crisis management capabilities.

The workshop aimed to deepen the understanding of Crisis and Disaster Management, equipping Iraqi officers and civil authorities with the knowledge needed to respond efficiently to both natural and man-made crises. The program also served as a platform to identify capabilities and resources available within Iraqi agencies that could support civil responses, assess crisis and disaster planning scenarios, and build a network between national and international partners.

The MATT, consisting of three officers and one non-commissioned officer, collaborated closely with the Iraqi team to provide specialized course sessions, tailored to the unique needs of and circumstances in Iraq. Each day focused on a different theme, designed to build a comprehensive understanding of both Spanish and Iraqi disaster response models and to foster collaboration between military and civil emergency responders.



Day 1: The workshop began with an introduction to UME, covering its establishment, mission, organizational structure and core responsibilities. Spanish officers shared insights on how UME is structured to respond quickly and effectively to emergencies, setting the stage for in-depth discussions on adapting these principles to Iraq's needs.

Day 2: The focus shifted to Spain's comprehensive disaster management framework. The sessions detailed how Spain's military and civil authorities coordinate to manage and mitigate the impacts of natural disasters, providing the Iraqi participants with practical examples of inter-agency co-operation.







and extreme weather events. Spanish experts presented risk assessment techniques and strategies for enhancing community resilience, highlighting successful case studies from Spain and other disaster-prone regions.

Day 5: The final day centered on urban search and rescue operations. Participants explored best practices in locating, rescuing, and providing medical aid to victims trapped in collapsed buildings or other hazardous environments. Practical exercises helped participants to understand the essential skills and rapid-response techniques necessary for effective urban rescue missions.

On 31 October 31, the workshop concluded with a closing ceremony celebrating the participants' achievements. Leaders from various Iraqi military and civil units, alongside international representatives, acknowledged the progress made in enhancing Iraq's preparedness for emergencies. The ceremony marked the success of the collaborative effort between NATO, Iraq and Spain, setting a strong foundation for ongoing partnerships in disaster response and crisis management.

Day 3: This day covered the Ministry of Defense's capacities in supporting the Ministry of Interior during crises. Spanish officers discussed specific protocols, logistical resources, and coordination mechanisms that ensure a united response during large-scale emergencies, drawing parallels to potential applications within Iraq's own defense and security structures.

Day 4: The team addressed Iraq's primary natural disaster risks, with a particular focus on earthquakes, floods,





# American University of Iraq - Baghdad (AUIB) – Support to Cyber Security

By OF-5 Davy JONES (GBR), Branch Head Cyber Security, MAD

One of the essential ingredients for success for the NATO Mission Iraq, our interlocutors and institutions we support, is the building of capacity and capabilities. The best way to do this is to look for solutions within the Iraqi MoD (I-MoD) and from within the borders of Iraq.

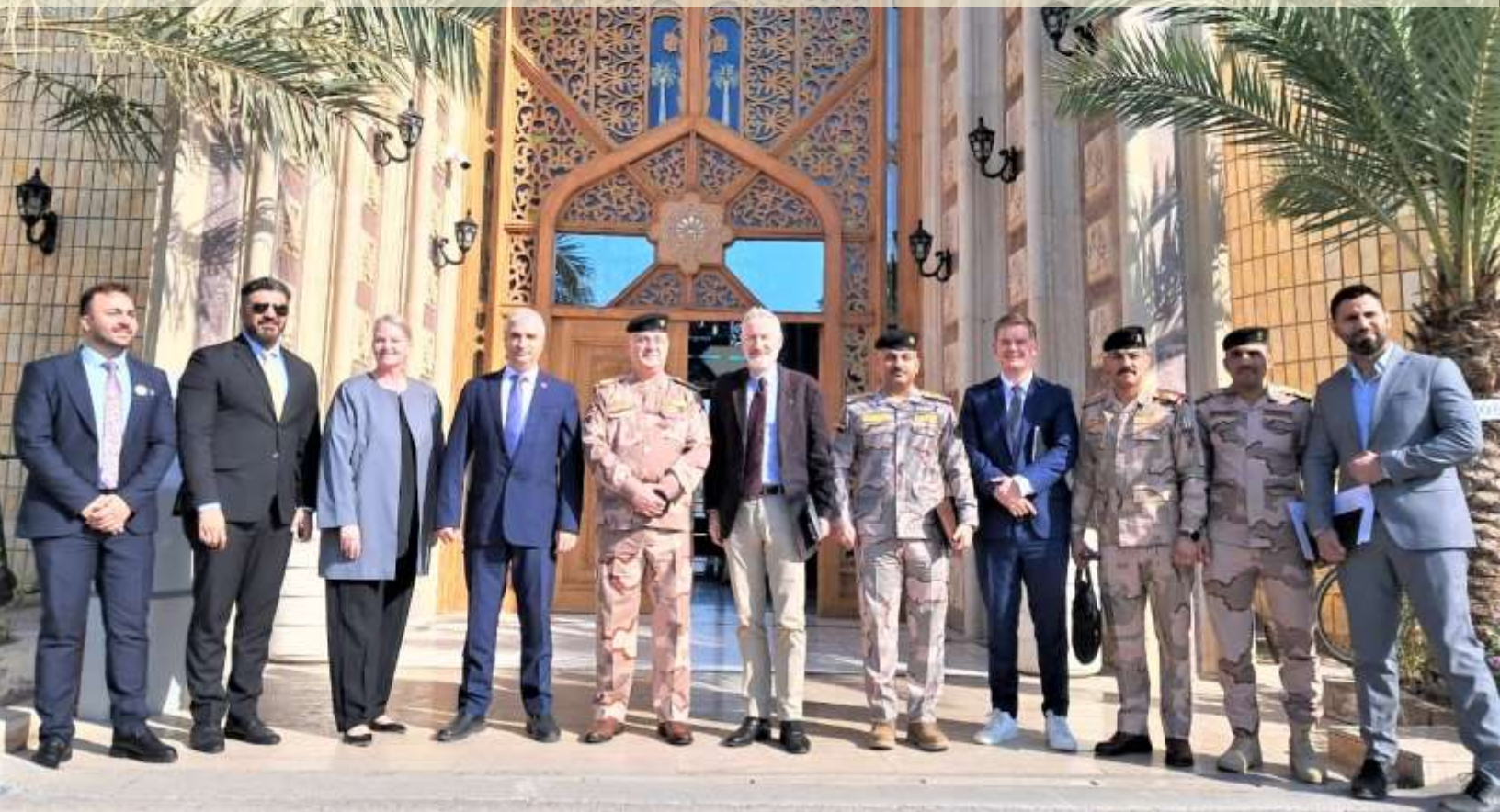
Cyber Security continues to be a high priority area for the I-MoD and one strand that the NMI Cyber Branch have been working on in support of the Cyber Security Directorate (CSD) is facilitating the necessary professional training for its staff. NMI in the recent past have provided workshops; with Mobile Advisory Training Teams (MATTs) from Italy and Spain, coming into country to provide courses and Iraqi personnel going overseas, to partner nations, to attend training. These have proven extremely valuable to cyber staff to be initially developed, however more sustainable solutions are also being implemented in parallel.

A real solution is to grow and train your own talent in country and the Branch has reached out the American University of Iraq – Baghdad (AUIB), a quality provider of accredited training in IT and cyber including

courses via Cisco; GIAC; CISSP, as well as a BSc in Computer Science. We had a meeting with AUBI CEO Ziad Chaaban, his team and Major General Alaa Abdulazeez, Director CSD, and his team to discuss his Directorate's training requirements.

As we hoped, there was a great discussion and quickly mutual ground and direct areas of support that AUBI could provide CSD, were presented. This was an extremely positive meeting and excellent foundations made for a strong future partnership between I-MoD and AUBI. Next steps included AUBI carrying out a training analysis on CSD requirements and working on a funding model that will include the Branch Head working with international partners to assist with a solution.

NMI Advisor for Cyber Defence, Frederik B. Frederiksen: "AUIB is an organization with much experience in working with both public and private entities on all matters of cyber security. We are looking forward to supporting the partnership in the future and see the next steps come into fruition."





# A Game of Friendship – Winning Together

By OF-5 Davy JONES (GBR), Branch Head Cyber Security, MAD

Following Exercise RED LIGHTNING in September 24, a closer working relationship being forged between NMI and 9th Armored Division. An opportunity developed for a game of football between NMI and 9th Armoured Division to be played in Taji, by kind invitation of the Division's COS Staff Brigadier General Haider Al-Tamimi.

Following a period of several weeks' preparation, including training sessions on the gym pad at Union III and final selection, on 12 November 24, the NMI football team boarded two NLD Helidet CH-47 Chinook transport helicopters from the EHP for the short hop to Taji. A memorable journey, especially several of the NMI team as it was the first time they had been on a helicopter.



A large enthusiastic and noisy crowd welcomed the teams onto the pitch, with the NMI squad donning a new football uniform for the occasion. Right from the start the Iraqi team were well drilled, strong and confident in their play. NMI players worked hard and enthusiastically competed well but in the end their efforts were not quite enough as the 9th Armored Division team deservedly won the fixture 5-2. For both teams the result was not the most important,



breaking down cultural barriers through sport, comradeships and enjoying a unique experience trumped the result and friendship was the winner.

At the final whistle players' exchanged shirts and awards were presented, including player of the match from each team and the match trophy was shared. OR8 Uwe Rentmeister said the game was an "outstanding experience and the enthusiasm of the crowd made for a super atmosphere".

Finally, thanks to the British Army Football Association, who provided 9th Armored Division players and officials with gifts of England shirts and balls. Colonel Davy Jones Vice Chairman of the British Army Football Association commented "I was really pleased to be able to gift England national shirts and balls to 9th Armored Division".





# Union III Lap Challenge – “The race is not always to the swift”

By OF-5 Davy JONES (GBR), Branch Head Cyber Security, MAD

I created the Union III Lap Challenge for adventures in individuals to cover 250, 500 or 1000 miles by walking or running around the infamous Union III 1 mile circuit in support of their mental health, fitness, and general wellbeing. It is on target to be the largest participatory sporting event throughout the Union III this calendar year, and also seen as the most inclusive sporting endeavour, as individuals complete it as quickly or as slowly as they like, just like the tortoise and the hare. Everyone who achieves their target distance will receive a personalized certificate and their name proudly placed on the honour board in the Union III gym.

So let's hear a couple of stories from participants on how they have approached the challenge to date. Who are the tortoises and who are the hares?

## ***The French Approach – Cpt Nicolas Meyer (FRA)***

When I heard about the challenge, I immediately said yes and with a competitive outlook I said to myself how quickly could I complete the challenge? My colleague

***“A tortoise and hare decide to race.  
The hare is so confident in the lead  
that he naps while the tortoise keeps  
going to win”.***

***Aesop's Fables***

proud of. I would encourage everyone to participate from athletes to beginners just walking a few miles a day. Give it a go.

***The British Approach – Mr. Charles Davies, Director MAD & Ms. Taniya Brookes***

At home in London I normally walk to work; three and a half miles along the Thames Path from Tower Bridge to Buckingham Palace or the Foreign and Commonwealth Office. So despite the excellent gym facilities here at UIII, when Col Jones set out his proposal I jumped at the chance to fix my slightly sedentary NMI lifestyle, and also “en passant” get some much needed Vitamin D. I decided that as the challenge was starting with six months left of my tour, I would aim to walk a mile to lunch and a mile to dinner each evening. Work sometimes interferes with that plan and I fail to do one or



both laps, so I make up for lost miles on Saturdays with a pre-breakfast, pre Lunch and pre dinner lap. A mile in the full midday sun at lunchtime, even walking, raises the core body temperature. In the evening there is a small community of those doing laps. I usually walk anti-clockwise round the camp so I am going with the earth's rotation and there is less resistance and drag. I am at 65 miles now, and with two R&R breaks still to come before ENDEX, it is going to be nip and tuck, and go down to the wire, as to whether or not I complete the 250 miles to earn my place on the Honor board in the gym.





### Ms. Taniya Brooks, J1 Cell

As a NMI Mission Civilian, I promised when I left the British Army, yes it was 20 years ago I would never subject myself to forced physical exertion again, until the idea from Col Jones reached my busy inbox! Having returned to NMI from my summer R&R, and my approaching holiday to Barbados over the Christmas and New Year period, I thought why not. So hastily I dusted off my trainers, and started my lap count. Starting 8 September 2024 I have completed 43 miles and am going strong. Its great doing the laps now the temperature is cooler, and doing them during the lunch period resets me mentally for the afternoon ahead. Will I reach the 250 miles before my end of tour, who knows, but honestly its great getting out, its great seeing others doing the challenge and it's great to know I am getting healthier.



Union III Lap Challenge is an all year around event, so no restriction on when you can start. So if you are up for a personal challenge please contact Colonel Davy Jones on [david.jones@nmi.nato.int](mailto:david.jones@nmi.nato.int)

# NATO Mission Iraq on Social Media



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