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Newsletters

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EDITORIAL

by Martin Howard, NATO Assistant Secretary General for Operations



NATO Civil Emergency Planning and the South Caucasus

NATO's Civil Emergency Planning (CEP) activities have been effective as a means of engaging partners in practical cooperation with the Alliance. Furthermore, CEP activities have often served as a catalyst for enhancing Partnerships and giving them a more operational dimension. The South Caucasus offers us an example of a positive trend that goes to the core of NATO's outreach activities. CEP support does not necessarily flow purely in the direction Allies to Partners. On the contrary, the South Caucasus has offered many occasions where Partners have assisted other Partners. This encapsulates one of CEP's principles – an inclusive approach whereby information, expertise and best practices are shared among all nations and each actor can bring its specific added value to the task at hand. This also illustrates a less well known side of NATO. Most would expect a political-military alliance such as NATO to offer military support only. But, advice and assistance in the civilian sphere have been drivers in promoting outreach and cooperation, hence strengthening the political dimension of Partnership.

The South Caucasus is an area of strategic importance for the Alliance. Given the high priority that NATO places on energy security, CEP's activities help to promote peace and stability in the region by reinforcing local capabilities. CEP is uniquely placed to do this given its inter-agency approach. CEP offers interfaces between NATO's structures and ministries as diverse as Interior, Emergency management, Health and Transport in 50 EAPC nations – a vast civil network going well beyond NATO's more visible interlocutors in Ministries of Defence and Foreign Affairs.

The CEP "toolkit" is steadily expanding and assistance to the South Caucasus illustrates its use. In 2005, NATO assisted Armenia with an extensive restructuring of its rescue service into a National Crisis Management Centre. This was conducted in the framework of Armenia's Individual Partnership Action Plan and involved international staff and national experts who advised the Armenian authorities on the setting up of crisis management procedures. More recently, following the crisis in Georgia in August 2008, a team of CEP civil experts helped the Government of Georgia in assessing damage to critical infrastructure across sectors ranging

CEP QUOTE

The potential for continued successful engagement of partners is great. With its vast pool of expertise ranging from radiological protection to infrastructure security and crisis management, NATO CEP can be an essential catalyst and supporter of reform in the Caucasus and Central Asia.

Bob Simmons, NATO Deputy Assistant Secretary General for Security Cooperation and Partnership and Special Representative for the Caucasus and Central Asia.

from agriculture and health to gas and electricity. The team also advised on mitigating measures. This was the first deployment of a civilian team in accordance with CEP's new Rapid Reaction Team concept. Within 48 hours of NAC approval, civil experts arrived in Tbilisi. In November 2008, the Azerbaijani Government requested a CEP Advisory Support Team (AST) to provide expertise on CBRN training, CBRN capability development and crisis management systems. This was the first example of implementation of the AST concept.

In addition to the Rapid Reaction Team and Advisory Support Team concepts, the EADRCC and an extensive programme of international field exercise are further tools in CEP's toolkit which serve to strengthen national, regional and local capabilities. The pool of civil experts which provide the backbone of CEP's advice function represent a huge resource at the disposal of the South Caucasus and which can be tailored to specific needs. The countries of the region contribute high quality experts to this pool, as you will gather from some of the contributions in this newsletter.

One of CEP's challenges is to consolidate this toolkit and make it efficient, effective and flexible to the needs of individual customers, in coordination with bilateral assistance packages and actions of other international organisations.

Ministerial perspectives on CEP in the South Caucasus

The following national contributions have been collected from Armenia's Ministry of Emergency Situations, Azerbaijan's Ministry of Emergency Situations and Georgia's Ministry of the Interior.



A VIEW FROM ARMENIA

Armenia uses Civil Emergency Planning effectively to advance its relations with NATO



The Armenian Ministry of Emergency Situations' Rescue Service began effective cooperation with NATO more than ten years ago within the framework of "Partnership for Peace", in particular, through training activities, conferences, meetings, expertise and technical assistance. These forms of cooperation are reinforced and broadened from year to year and, at present, are among the key fields in Armenia-NATO relationship.

In the area of civil emergencies, in the framework of the NATO-Armenia Individual Partnership Action Plan (IPAP), Armenia attaches great importance to the establishment of its Crisis Management Centre. The Centre will ensure stable and reliable management of the country at all the times both during peace and conflict.

The Armenian Government's "2008-2012 Activity Plan" envisages approving the project document of the Centre in 2008-2009. The period from 2009-2012 will see implementation of the operational phase. The Government has already allocated premises for the Centre.

It is necessary to expand capabilities for natural and man-made risk assessments, prevention and management. For these purposes, disaster assessment geo-information systems (GIS) have been established, and plans for population protection against different types of disasters (earthquakes, landslides, chemical accidents etc.) have been developed.

Currently, a top priority is the effective implementation of training and preparedness programmes for state and local authorities, staff members of organisations and the public in general. Such programmes can be conducted in Armenia but also abroad. The Crisis Management State Academy has been established for the above-mentioned schemes. About 500 students are enrolled and about 2000 specialists are being retrained. Measures are being taken to raise awareness and improve education of state and local actors, personnel from various organisations, and for the general population.

Mher Shahgeldyan, Minister of Emergency Situations, Republic of Armenia

Ministerial perspectives on CEP in the South Caucasus

To raise public awareness effectively, a designated floor with a briefing centre, TV studio, computer centre and offices has been allocated to the Armenian Rescue Service "Emergency Channel". Briefings, press conferences, seminars, working meetings and discussions are already being held here.

Much is being done to ensure sharing of experience with countries that have accumulated extensive rescue experience; every year about 100 specialists take part in events providing training and methodology. In particular, 18 rescuers of the Armenian Rescue Service participated in Exercise Uusimaa 2008 in Helsinki, Finland in the framework of PfP and demonstrated a high level of skill.



A number of seminars and workshops have also been held with the rescue services of France, Germany, Belgium, Great Britain, Switzerland, USA, Estonia, Sweden, Japan, Russian Federation, Georgia, Ukraine, Belarus, Bulgaria, Italy, Romania, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova and Tajikistan.

Development of information systems for disaster management has been given top priority by Government decrees. Schemes for centralised warning systems have been approved for Yerevan and implementation has already begun in certain districts.

Strengthening cooperation with international organisations specialised in the field of chemical, radiological and biological weapons is also a focus for the Armenian Government. In this context, cooperation with NATO, the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons, as well as with the UK's Department of Trade and Industry Department has been progressing successfully. Bilateral cooperation between Armenia and Switzerland is being strengthened and a programme to support the Armenian rapid reaction system in emergency situations has been agreed.

The Ministry of Emergency Situations of the Republic of Armenia continues to attach significant importance to partnership with NATO and believes that cooperation in the field of civil emergencies will further enhance and strengthen overall relations between Armenia and NATO.

A VIEW FROM AZERBAIJAN



NATO-Azerbaijan cooperation in the field of CEP: a way forward



Civil emergency planning is an important dimension of the overall system of national security in Azerbaijan. Protection against natural and man-made disasters remains high on the national agenda. Moreover, protection of multi-faceted complex critical infrastructure is vital for the development and well-being of societies and economies. Critical infrastructure increasingly transcends national borders and represents an essential element of economic interdependence among states. However, these factors underline our vulnerabilities making it necessary to further develop national capacities and extend international cooperation.

These trends are particularly relevant for Azerbaijan, taking into consideration the importance of the state's oil strategy and regional energy security. Successful economic development has led to the construction and modernisation of critical infrastructure throughout the country, much of which has national but also international significance. Furthermore,

Ministerial perspectives on CEP in the South Caucasus

Azerbaijan is located in a seismically active zone where natural disasters (floods, landslides etc.) are frequent, posing risks to the population, the environment as well as critical infrastructure and facilities.

In December 2005, in order to address these and other priority issues, the President of Azerbaijan decreed to establish the Ministry of Emergency Situations (MES). Under this Decree, Azerbaijan's civil emergency planning system was thoroughly reorganised and various agencies were brought together under the authority of a single Ministry. This contributed to the development of a unified CEP system with regulatory and policy frameworks. Currently, the MES is responsible for early warning, prevention and consequence management of emergencies in Azerbaijan. Having completed an initial build-up period, the MES has started to engage in performing its tasks in different areas, including eliminating consequences of emergency situations in the Caspian basin.

An important aspect of MES activity is close interaction with partners and international organisations. To this end, agreements were signed and practical cooperation has begun with a number of international partners. In this context, particular focus is placed on cooperation with NATO. Cooperation with NATO has been particularly significant for the MES in many ways. First, it provides a useful forum for the exchange of views in EAPC format, building mutual understanding and developing tools and guidelines relevant to national practice. Involvement of Partners in CEP-related exercises is another dimension which helps develop practical skills and exchange of experience. In this context, the role of EADRCC needs to be underlined since it links exchange of information with assistance during "real" emergency situations.

Second, bilateral cooperation with NATO CEP occupies a prominent place for the MES. The focus on CEP-related objectives in Azerbaijan's IPAP will further strengthen the MES's capabilities. In this regard, the NATO Advisory Support Team (AST) mission to Azerbaijan in November 2008 and the implementation of its recommendations with NATO support will contribute to the success of relevant IPAP objectives.

Building on its current successes, Azerbaijan's MES looks forward to further extending and deepening cooperation with respective NATO CEP structures. A further milestone of our cooperation with NATO will be the implementation of the CEP Advisory Support Team's recommendations, with the support of NATO and its member states. NATO's expertise in education, training and curriculum development is also a focus of our aspirations for further cooperation. The MES intends to further contribute to NATO CEP. At as initial step, this will include hosting EAPC CEP events in Azerbaijan and contributing a Voluntary National Contribution (VNC) to the EADRCC.

In conclusion, it worth remembering that like many other modern risks and challenges, potential disasters make it essential to strengthen international cooperation and assistance mechanisms. This, in turn, requires development of national capabilities to warn, prevent and effectively manage the consequences of all types of disasters as well as to provide international assistance.



A VIEW FROM GEORGIA

NATO-Georgia cooperation in the field of Civil Emergency Planning



Georgia has been actively developing its national system of civil emergency management. In December 2004, the Emergency Situations and Civil Safety Service was established, building on the Division for Emergency Situations and Civil Defence. The Service was established primarily to avoid potential emergencies, mitigate their consequences as well as organise measures to reduce their impact. Thanks to greater Government attention, important changes have been made in terms of improving the effectiveness of this service. For example, the Rescue Base, located on the Tbilisi Sea, was significantly reinforced. CBRN teams as well as mountain, water, urban search and rescue teams have

Shalva Janashvili, Deputy Minister of Internal Affairs, Republic of Georgia

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been established within the Rescue Detachment. In the spirit of sharing experience among countries and with a view to optimising resources, the Firefighting Service, Emergency Situations Division and Civil Safety Service merged to form the Emergency Management Department (EMD) in December 2005. This process was conducted in the context of reforms within the Ministry of Internal Affairs.

The Emergency Management Department prepared the National Response Plan on natural and man-made disasters, later approved by Presidential Decree on August 26, 2008. Currently, firefighters and rescuers undergo intensive training at the Department's rescue training center including modern programmes and specially designed scenarios for practical exercises. The specialised programme related to emergency management issues has been designed for local government authorities and specialists. This program offers training opportunities once every two years.

Since 1997, the Ministry of Internal Affairs has been actively cooperating with NATO in the field of Civil Emergency Planning. Examples include EAPC formats of the Food and Agriculture Planning Committee (FAPC) and Civil Communications Planning Committee (CCPC) held in Georgia in 2001 and 2002. In addition, the Planning Board for Inland Surface Transport (PBIST) Working Group meeting was organised in 2007 by the Ministry of Economic Development with active input from the Emergency Management Department. Georgia regularly takes part in SCEPC meetings in EAPC format and its subordinated Planning Boards and Committees. Georgia enjoys successful collaboration with NATO and partner countries and other international organisations on the basis of bilateral agreements.

A further step in advancing cooperation with NATO and Partner countries was the signing of the Memorandum of Understanding on Facilitation of Vital Civil Cross Border Transport on October 30, 2007. This document serves as a valuable instrument for increasing speed and efficiency of humanitarian assistance, whenever necessary.



Georgian CBRN team

For several years, we have been participating in international exercises held under the auspices of the Euro-Atlantic Disaster Response Coordination Center (EADRCC) such as Ferghana 2003, Idassa 2007 and Uusimaa 2008. These exercises provide excellent opportunities to increase competence and interoperability between the different services participating in the exercise.

However, ongoing cooperation is not limited to training but also practical aspects from which we benefit greatly. For example, during the flood management process in Spring 2005, significant international assistance was offered to Georgia through cooperation with the EADRCC. This aid was sent to the affected regions and brought much needed relief to the victims. In October-November 2005, the Emergency Management Department through the EADRCC sent a specialised team with humanitarian cargo to Pakistan to manage earthquake consequences. Immense support was provided by the EADRCC in dealing with the consequences of the forest fires in 2006, in particular, fire rescue aviation assets which were mobilised from Turkey and Ukraine. Most recently, support from the Allied countries was especially beneficial after the Russian military aggression of August 2008. During that period, two NATO CEP Advisory Support Team visits to Georgia were carried out. The main purpose of the visits was to support the Georgian authorities in assessing disruptions to civil critical infrastructure and to advise the Government on further measures to ensure the restoration of essential services. It cannot be underlined enough that the efforts of NATO's CEP community to assist Georgia at this very crucial moment were most highly appreciated.

In conclusion, NATO-Georgia cooperation in the area of civil emergency planning is intensive and successful. However, there is always room for advancing still further. Continuing fruitful collaboration will deepen our expertise and develop Georgia's capabilities. In parallel, we realise that these relations should be mutually beneficial and we stand ready to play our part in handling the civil emergency challenges in the Euro-Atlantic area.



Georgian firefighters

Armenia's agricultural sector and cooperation with NATO



The Republic of Armenia pursues the policy of active partnership with NATO and takes consistent steps to broaden and diversify the scope of cooperation. Armenia-NATO relations are being developed within the framework of the Individual Partnership Action Plan (IPAP). The Armenian Ministry of Agriculture is also actively involved in the implementation of specific IPAP goals.

The agricultural and food sector occupies a central position in Armenia's economy. This sector represents approximately 25 % of GDP, of which agriculture accounts for 19% (National Statistics Service data, 2008). About 36% of Armenia's population lives in rural areas and 75 % of total demand for staple food is satisfied by domestic production. The agricultural sector is thus central to food security and rural livelihoods.



In April 2004, the Government of Armenia adopted a "Sustainable Agricultural Development Strategy" document. The overall objective of the strategy is to promote sustainable agricultural development, to ensure increased food security and the income of rural populations. The document also refers to the development of international cooperation as a good basis to tackle the problems present in agro-food sector.

Currently Armenia is a member of the UN Food and Agriculture Organisation, World Trade Organisation, IFAD, OIE and other international organisations. Within the framework of the "European Neighbourhood Policy", a number of activities are underway to harmonise Armenian legislation with European legislation in the agro-food and food safety sectors. Since 1996, the European Commission's Food Security Programme in Armenia provides practical assistance in the form of state budget support.

The added value for Armenia of cooperation with NATO/CEP in the Food and Agricultural Planning Committee (FAPC) can hardly be overestimated. FAPC has capacities in agricultural expertise and technical assistance which are provided through its network of civil experts. The Armenian Government is taking steps to diminish the effect of the financial crisis. However there is strong evidence of the necessity for technical assistance and relevant expertise which could be provided by the FAPC and its civil experts.

The solution to Armenia's current problems depends not only on the allocation of sufficient funds but also on the level of qualified specialists. Since deepening our knowledge base and enhancing experience are priorities, it is important that Armenian agricultural specialists actively participate in training sessions and seminars organised by NATO.

We are very interested in the implementation of integrated projects in the South Caucasus, especially given the current financial crisis which primarily affects food security. We would like to draw attention to the following issues which we would welcome as a subject for a research project or relevant training and expertise:

- regional research on prevention of diffusion and spread of endemic diseases of agricultural animals in the buffer zone. This would help keep the epidemiological situation in the region stable and would help solve a number of problems related to food security;
- an investigation into socio-economic situations and the development of measures aimed at improving living standards of farmers in high mountainous regions;
- a survey on preservation of genetic resources of wild crops used in traditional food (e.g. falcaria or siskleweed, chervil etc), as well as coordination of their use through proper cultivation (harvest period and quantity);
- development of measures aimed at enhancing production of seed and potato plants which are virus-free and virus-resistant using bio-technical methods.

The NATO CEP Advisory Support Team visit to Azerbaijan

November 2008

Kimmo Kohvakka, Managing Director of the Finnish National Rescue Association, is a NATO CEP Civil Expert for the Civil Protection Committee. He participated in the CEP Advisory Support Team visit to Azerbaijan which took place from 16-22 November 2008. The aim of this visit was to provide expertise at the request of the Azerbaijan Government on CBRN training, CBRN capability development and crisis management systems. Mr. Kohvakka provides a personal view of his experience.

Strengthening preparedness in Azerbaijan



In May 2008, the Ministry of Emergency Situations (MES) of Azerbaijan requested an Advisory Support Team (AST) to provide advice on the development of its emergency preparedness and response capability and to strengthen its crisis management system. The AST mission was launched from 16-22 November 2008 and was composed of civil emergency planning experts drawn from across the EAPC.

Given that this mission was the first deployment of a CEP Advisory Support Team and having been selected from the CEP pool of civil experts, my decision to join the effort was easy. The mission preparations started with contacts from NATO CEP defining clear mission objectives which were very challenging. The mission started with pre-briefings and planning conducted by team leader Dr. Denisa Ionete of the NATO International Staff. The team brought together an excellent group of professionals bringing experience on legal, administrative, operational and training system evaluations.

Emergency consequence management is a very challenging area in which to conduct evaluations and on which to give advice. Management systems at national level consist of vast areas of expertise and capabilities pertaining to threat assessment, risk analysis, preparedness planning, response, training and organisation. As in any nation, expertise in these areas is spread over a large number of governmental, regional and local agencies. The challenge from a consultant's point of view is to form a whole picture and to make an accurate estimate of the actual capability.

The mission took place mainly in the Baku area with a particularly informative visit to the North West Region. We were hosted principally by MES Deputy Minister Faig Tagi-zadeh. We conducted visits with experts from different areas of the MES administration including civil defence, fire and rescue services, maritime rescue, training and education and legal issues. We were also introduced to the operational command system at national, regional and local levels and we were shown a broad spectrum of examples of emergency services material readiness.

Barely three years since its launch, the Azerbaijani Ministry of Emergency Situations has undertaken a tremendous amount of work. MES officials have already faced challenges such as creating a nationwide administration with far reaching responsibilities and close co-operation with other ministries and agencies. There was a strong feeling of innovative development in all aspects of the Azerbaijani officials' work. A number of improvements illustrated an impressive



Visiting a civil defence forces base and training center in Baku

The NATO CEP Advisory Support Team visit to Azerbaijan

national effort towards developing better preparedness including development of a comprehensive training system combining previous fire service and civil defence training systems (National Emergency Academy), establishment of a 112 emergency call center system, development of GIS-based systems, regional emergency management centres, technological development as well as an extensive legislative package.

During the five days in Azerbaijan, the AST provided advice on the spot and shared experience faced by other nations undergoing similar development or reform projects. Projects such as the CEP non-binding guidelines and minimum standards for first responders in CBRN incidents proved valuable sources of information. The Industrial Planning Committee report on technological developments provided basic guidance for procurement examples. The key to giving good advisory support is for experts to provide guidance general know-how and best practices. This is because every nation has a unique working environment, infrastructure and culture and advice has to be interpreted taking into account the specific national respective.

The challenge for an individual expert is to understand the strategy and development plan in which a nation is working, before examining more detailed structures. In this type of mission the time frame in which to form the big picture is limited. Background information is also limited as only few documents are available in English. As a small group of experts, we also faced a practical challenge : whether to conduct interviews and visits together with the advantage of being able to benefit from several interpretations, or to split up to cover more ground with the disadvantage of relying on fewer interpretations. Preliminary questions in written form to the nation with answers in English from the nation are a valuable tool and essential to the efficiency of such visits. A pre-meeting among civil experts before the mission was helpful in order to formulate and plan the visits and enhanced the effectiveness of the visit. Careful planning is required since time is limited in the discussions, and further reduced with interpreters.



Innovative first response: motorcycle equipped with basic rescue materials (see lower right). Excellent both in dense traffic and off-road circumstances.

field of civil protection. In addition to the mission being a valuable learning experience, we were welcomed with warm hospitality despite the tight schedule and we had opportunities to get a glimpse of Azerbaijani culture and food – an unforgettable mixture of East and West. Among the team members, I particularly appreciated the constructive, warm and cooperative atmosphere in a spirit of developing together capabilities for emergency situations.

Although the AST concept has already proved its worth, lessons can be learned from these experiences. CEP is developing the concept, form, working tools and additional guidance in the future to enhance the capability of assistance.

In conclusion, the host nation support provided by Azerbaijan to the mission was excellent. Experts were given the possibility to obtain necessary background information which was offered primarily by the heads of administration, ministries and agencies responsible. There was a genuine desire at all times on the part of the Azerbaijani authorities to develop the nation's capability in the



The backbone of Civil Emergency Planning at NATO is a network of over 350 civil experts drawn from industry, business, government and other public administrations drawn from across the Euro-Atlantic area. Experts such as Neil MacFarlane of the Food and Agriculture Planning Committee (FAPC), can provide advice to NATO's Military Authorities on the effective use of civilian resources during the planning and execution phases of a NATO operation. Experts can also provide advice to national authorities, in the event of a crisis, on issues including CBRN and consequence management. In August 2008, Neil MacFarlane participated as a FAPC expert in the NATO Civil Emergency Planning team sent to Georgia in the aftermath of the crisis. In this article, he gives a personal account of the practicalities of participating in this mission.



Mission to Georgia-August 2008

Whilst it would have been better if the circumstances had not occurred, I was very pleased to participate in NATO's Civil Emergency Planning mission to Georgia last August 2008. My career has been in food production and distribution so it was very satisfying to be able to apply the knowledge and skills I have acquired to a country in crisis. The training sessions provided by NATO for such occurrences have been based on fictitious scenarios. In the event, it is remarkable how close they came to reality. The role playing, leading discussions and eliciting information from the representatives of the affected state, were particularly valuable.

The NATO Staff Officer kept me fully informed by email and phone as the visit was initiated and arrangements made. I left the UK on Wednesday 20 August and returned on Friday 22 August 2008. News and the Internet gave me a general overview of the situation prior to departure and the mission briefing in Munich en route to Georgia was informative. The full briefing on Thursday morning at the hotel covered all of the practical issues although a more detailed sitrep by NATO on the situation in the country would have been helpful. A map of the country with the extent of the invasion identified was created with the assistance of the Georgian Food Ministry and this enabled the scale and scope of the problems to be identified more clearly.

All travel arrangements were on time and uneventful, accommodation and sustenance were adequate and therefore excellent, particularly for Georgia, considering the crisis situation!

Given the number of people I had to meet, the time available was just about adequate. However, as the situation was evolving even as we departed, an extra day would have been helpful.

The team was composed of thirteen experts who were continually coming from and going to various locations. Logistics worked well. It was unreasonable to expect regular debriefs, but an informal session on Thursday evening kept most of us up to speed.

The diversity of areas covered was, to say the least, impressive, encompassing agriculture, electricity production and distribution, oil and gas distribution, rail transport, seaports, aviation, telecommunications, health and social issues. It is testimony to the training, which we have all received from NATO that the experts from the various Planning Boards and Committees worked seamlessly together with no problems. We all reported to Evert Somer. I am grateful for the advice and support he gave me and I kept him informed of my work. This arrangement worked well.

The points made above are largely concerned with practical arrangements. However, for me, the deployment was made all the more worthwhile thanks to the calibre and expertise of the people I met. Without exception the NATO team and CEP experts whom I accompanied were extremely knowledgeable and experienced in their individual and widely differing fields. Similarly, the staff of the Georgian Ministry of Agriculture and Food were high quality and spoke excellent English. They gave their time, night and day, to give me as full an insight into their situation as possible.

The timescale of the deployment I believe underlines these points. The NAC authorised the mission on 19 August, experts were deployed 20 to 23 August and their report was with SCEPC on 25 August. Hardly an hour was wasted!

In conclusion, I would like to underline the reasons why I went on this mission. First, it was out of loyalty and pride for NATO and its work and second, because it presented me with a highly rewarding challenge.

A VIEW FROM GEORGIA'S CIVIL AVIATION PLANNING COMMITTEE EXPERT

David Bulbulashvili has been a NATO civil expert for the Civil Aviation Planning Committee (CAPC) since 2005. Trained as a pilot-mechanical engineer, he is currently a specialist in flight safety with the Georgian Civil Aviation Administration. His role as a CAPC expert in General air transport management involves providing advice to NATO's Military authorities on the effective use of civilian resources for NATO operations. He has been an active participant in the STEADFAST Move exercise series.



There is no doubt that participation of experts from former Soviet Union countries, and in particular countries of the Caucasus region, in NATO's EAPC format is of inestimable value.

Meetings that bring together professionals from a particular sector, provide participants with invaluable experience and benefits such as understanding the NATO "culture", communication, information sharing, creating networks of personal contacts and many more intangible aspects. The fact that experts are kept updated on current information via committees, are invited to participate in committee discussions and in the development of manuals also indicates that communication channels between NATO experts are well organised. For those interested, there are many avenues which can be used and which are of great mutual benefit both to the Alliance and to individual nations.

But what goes on behind the scenes? I would like to draw attention to a number of realities that affect many civil experts.

As I mentioned above, the system is open to and well organised for all participants. There is no discrimination with respect to experts. Some are active, take initiatives, are responsible, unconstrained by language barriers, show a willingness to cooperate and contribute. For me, it is especially motivating to work with such people and I imagine NATO particularly welcomes such individuals.

However, there are also experts who have language difficulties principally connected with understanding. Comprehension of what other speakers are saying, often in different accents, using specific acronyms is difficult and frequently results in such participants remaining silent. Taking into account that experts are not obliged to participate actively in meetings, for instance there are no mandatory presentations to be given during the session, and combined with the fear of making grammatical mistakes, several experts have a tendency to feel distanced from the process.

We have occasions when such situations can last for several years and the input from highly experienced experts remains fairly limited. I find this a pity as we are missing out on very valuable resources. I am not proposing to organise language classes to improve experts' language skills. I also understand that in most cases the pool of experts to chose from is very limited, however, I believe that improved methods have to be defined that will better guarantee experts' effective integration into the system.

I would like to make the following recommendations:

1. All acronyms used in discussions should be listed and included in the package of documentation provided to newly appointed experts from CIS countries with a strong recommendation to study it very closely. This will instantly improve participants' basic understanding of discussions.
2. During the first year, experts should be assigned a couple of tasks on which they would be required to work and which would result in a written report to the particular committee.
3. During the second mandatory NATO expert training session, at least 5 minutes floor time should be set aside for presentations. The subject matter could be an overview of the current situation in their particular field of expertise.

These recommendations maybe challenging. However, I believe that such measures would offer experts a genuine chance to overcome their fear of public speaking and presenting in meetings in an international environment. They

will acquire a much greater sense of being part of process, and providing an important contribution to it. This, in itself, should motivate them and initiate willingness to participate more actively and pay greater attention to necessary language improvements. These are essential elements to remain engaged in the process.

From a practical point of view, I would like to highlight that I have benefited greatly from participating in SHAPE sponsored Exercise STEADFAST Move in 2007, 2008 and 2009. Here, along with fellow experts from the Civil Aviation Planning Committee (CAPC) and the Planning Board for Ocean Shipping (PBOS), we have assisted over 30 EAPC nations practice deployment procedures using commercial resources during a table top exercise at the Transportation School in Izmir, Turkey. Our assistance in the SHAPE Strategic Lift Cell helped ensure that nations were familiar with availability, operational characteristics and the constraints found in the commercial aviation market.

Finally, from a national perspective, I consider that we should do more to improve visibility of NATO civil experts back home. At the moment, I don't know if anybody in my country knows that I have gained valuable information, contacts, best practices that can be used to the benefit of my country. I am not blaming any person or organisation. Rather, I think it is simply a gap in the system. I would abstain from any recommendation on the matter and leave the door open for further discussion, as necessary.

In conclusion, I would like to take this opportunity and to underline my appreciation for NATO. It is an organisation that I am proud to be a part of and I thank it for everything it has given me and my country.

A VIEW FROM NATO'S SCIENCE FOR PEACE PROGRAMME

The NATO Science for Peace Programme brings together scientists and experts from NATO and Partner countries on a regular basis to work on programmes of common concern. It aims to contribute to security, stability and solidarity among countries by applying science to problem solving. The project below is of relevance to CEP's activities in the field of disaster preparedness in the South Caucasus.

NATO Science Programme contributes to important earthquake research in the Caucasus

Spitak, Armenia, December 1998. An earthquake with a magnitude of 6.9 on the Richter scale struck at 11:41 local time. The consequences were catastrophic: 25,000 people killed; 20,000 injured and over half a million left homeless. The Caucasus region is seismically very active and earthquakes pose a constant threat: Baku, Azerbaijan, 2000; Tbilisi, Georgia, 2002. Both quakes caused loss of life and severe economic damage. In order to help mitigate the effects of earthquakes in the region, it is critical that local experts have access to the latest equipment and proven methods to carry out essential hazard assessment.

In response to this need, a three-year NATO Science for Peace (SfP) programme was awarded in July 2008. The project, entitled "Caucasus Seismic Emergency Response", is being led by eight experts from NATO member and

NATO CEP and the South Caucasus

partner countries, with the overarching goals of building capacity in the region and promoting sustainability, stability and cooperation. The official project launch is scheduled to take place during the NATO week in Georgia in May/June 2009.

On a practical level, the project is providing the necessary funding for equipment such as seismographs, accelerographs and strong motion recorders, which will be installed at selected sites in Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia.



The South Caucasus is a seismically active zone. Earthquakes present frequent risks to civil populations.

Project task forces from each country will be set up and trained in the deployment of equipment, digital seismic data processing and analysis, and basic skills in first aid, etc. These task forces will be ready to move quickly into neighbouring countries that may need their assistance, enabling them to gather data from what is known as “first day’s aftershocks”, a critical factor of in-field investigations.

A Communication Network for earthquake data acquisition and information exchange between the countries will also be established using the latest and most reliable GPRS/GPS techniques.

Through this project, Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia will work together to build inter-regional cooperation that will encourage unhampered response in the event of strong earthquakes. All of the data and information gathered as a result of this project will be shared with the relevant public officials responsible for disaster response in each country.

Earthquakes in any country cause destruction. In developing regions such as the Caucasus, the effects are even more disastrous, often setting the countries back economically by many years. This situation then has the potential to lead to social unrest and ultimately threatens the secure development of the region as a whole. It is hoped that the results from this NATO Science for Peace project will make a significant contribution to improved seismic risk assessment for the region. With more information available on the potential hazards, countries will become less vulnerable, and ultimately better prepared to respond to the earthquake threat.



The South Caucasus region

DEVELOPMENTS IN THE SENIOR CIVIL EMERGENCY PLANNING COMMITTEE

A preview of the SCEPC Plenary in June 2009

The SCEPC Plenary Session in EAPC format in June will provide Partners the opportunity to share their views on challenges and opportunities with regard to Civil Emergency Planning, highlighting areas of particular interest as well as areas where Partners see a benefit from NATO/CEP support. Furthermore, the activities of the PB&Cs will be an important focus at the Plenary with the usual report by the PB&C Chairs providing a comprehensive insight into the accomplishments and challenges of each committee. Sharing information on exercises and training opportunities remains an important element of SCEPC Plenary meetings. The EADRCC’s exercise "ZHETYSU 2009", combining a field exercise element with a table top exercise, will be an important focus under this topic. Finally, Sweden will present the new 2009 CEP Handbook to the SCEPC Plenary. The CEP Handbook, a national contribution by Sweden, provides a very practical overview of civil emergency planning and crisis management structures in Euro-Atlantic Partnership Countries. In this context, the CEP Handbook is an important contribution to fostering cooperation among EAPC nations.

**SCEPC
Currently on the table**

- CEP Review
- Preparation of the June 2009 plenary

LOOKING AHEAD

➤ 3-4 April	NATO Summit	Strasbourg-Kehl
➤ 4-5 June	SCEPC Plenary	NATO HQ, Belgium
➤ 1-2 July	CEP-Afghanistan Support Workshop	NATO HQ, Belgium
➤ 6-8 July	New experts Introductory Session	NATO HQ, Belgium
➤ 5-11 September	EADRCC Exercise Zhetysu 2009	Kazakhstan
➤ 10-11 December	SCEPC Plenary	NATO HQ, Belgium

SCEPC and PB&Cs Calendar

➤ 22-23 April	EADRCC Main Planning Conference Exercise Zhetysu 2009	Almaty, Kazakhstan
➤ 23-24 April	CCPC Plenary	NATO HQ, Belgium
➤ 6-7 May	PBIST Plenary	NATO HQ, Belgium
➤ 20-22 May	JMC Plenary	Bern, Switzerland
➤ 27-30 May	FAPC Plenary	NATO HQ, Belgium
➤ 15-16 July	EADRCC Final Planning Conference Exercise Zhetysu 2009	Almaty, Kazakhstan
➤ 9-10 September	CAPC Plenary	NATO HQ, Belgium
➤ 14-15 September	PBOS Plenary	NATO HQ, Belgium

The Euro-Atlantic Disaster Response Coordination Centre

The Euro Atlantic Disaster Response Coordination Centre (EADRCC) is a Partnership body where Partners and Allies are equal stakeholders. The EADRCC's field exercise programme is among the finest in the world. These exercises are among the biggest international civilian protection training opportunities and bring together teams from across the Euro-Atlantic area.

ZHETYSU 2009



The Euro-Atlantic Disaster Response Co-ordination Centre (EADRCC) is organising a consequence management field exercise in cooperation with Kazakhstan, the host nation, and will be conducted from 5-11 September 2009.

Exercise ZHETYSU 2009 is a contribution by Kazakhstan to the Partnership for Peace (PfP) program. It will be the ninth EADRCC field exercise and the first EADRCC exercise hosted by Kazakhstan.

An Initial Planning Conference (IPC) for the exercise was held at NATO HQ in October 2008 in order to discuss the lead-in scenario, participation and review host nation support arrangements for the exercise. More than 25 Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council (EAPC) nations participated in the Conference as well as the Civil Protection Committee, the Joint Medical Committee, the Food and Agricultural Planning Committee, and UNOCHA.

Numerous participants are expected to participate with the capabilities to deal with different aspects of emergencies, for example Search and Rescue teams, CBRN expertise, as well as observers and assessors. ZHETYSU 2009 will also allow NATO and Partner countries to practice disaster response mechanisms and capabilities and to enhance co-operation in emergency situations.

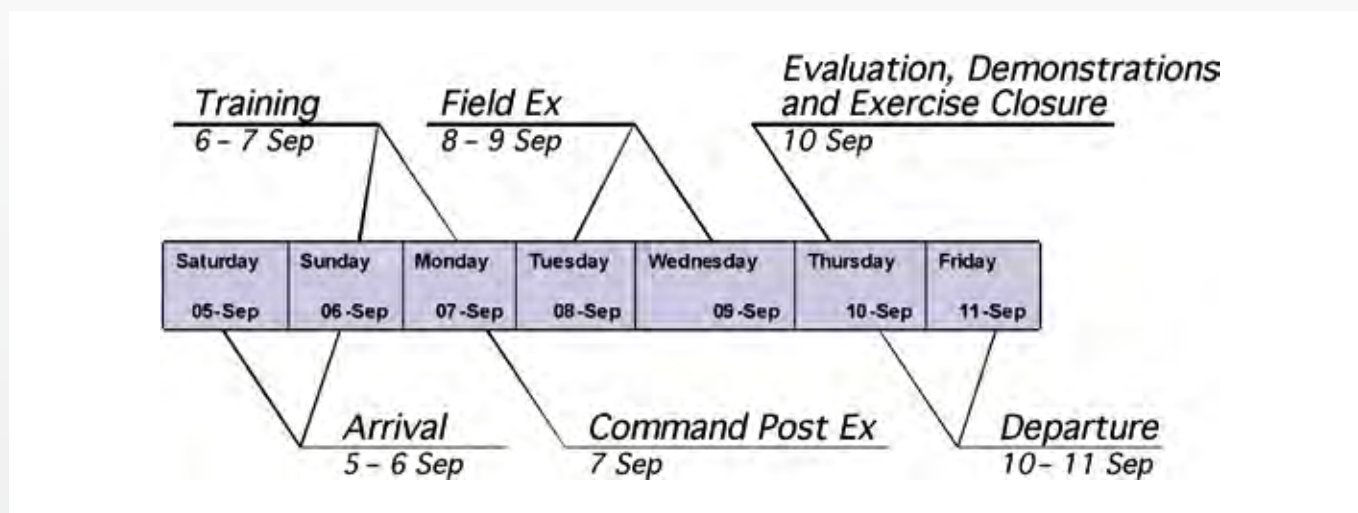
THE SCENARIO

On 6 September 2009, in Almaty and Almaty Oblast, an earthquake measuring 6.7 will occur unexpectedly. It measures 8.9 on the Richter scale at the epicentre, 45 km south-west of Almaty.

The towns of Almaty, Talgar, Kaskelen and Kapchagay are in the disaster zone. According to preliminary reports, more than 200,000 people are affected by the earthquake. Within the disaster zone, Almaty, Kaskelen and Talgar are the worst hit. Almaty and Kaskelen, Talgar and Ili districts of Almaty Oblast are left without electricity or drinking water; telephone and mobile phone systems are knocked out, and motorway bridges

suffer varying degrees of damage. Shock waves cause mudflows in the foothills. Damage to industrial installations cause chemical contamination of the environment. The runway at Almaty airport is damaged which makes it difficult for heavy-lift aircraft to land. The Government of Kazakhstan asks the international community for help.

The schedule for the exercise is set out as follows:



EXERCISE OBJECTIVES

There are five principal objectives to this exercise. First, it will provide the opportunity to practice EADRCC procedures and EADRU capabilities in order to improve cooperation between EAPC nations during a consequence management operation. Second, it allows Kazakhstan to strengthen its capabilities to receive international assistance and effectively organise and co-ordinate consequence management operations involving international rescue teams. Third, the participating international organisations will be able to practice coordination and cooperation between each other. Fourth, it is hoped to facilitate regional cooperation between the various neighbouring countries. Fifth, it will serve to train and practice the guidelines of the International Search and Rescue Advisory Group (INSARAG) for urban search and rescue teams (USAR).



Field Exercise site, Kazakhstan

So far 22 Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council (EAPC) nations have shown interest and a desire to contribute resources and/or staff to the exercise. There are still two planning conferences planned before the exercise begins, namely the Main Planning Conference which will be held from 21-23 April in Almaty, and the Final Planning Conference which will be held from 15-16 July, also in Almaty.

CEP IN OTHER INTERNATIONAL ORGANISATIONS

As NATO's Civil Emergency Planning activities do not take place in a vacuum, this table provides an overview of useful links to other organisations also active in the field of Civil Emergency Planning.

ORGANISATION	WEB SITE
European Commission	http://ec.europa.eu/environment/civil
	http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/justice_home/terrorism/dg_terrorism_en.htm
EU Monitoring and Information Centre (MIC)	http://ec.europa.eu/environment/civil/prote/mic.htm
EU Commission Human Aid Office (ECHO)	http://ec.europa.eu/echo/index_en.htm
United Nations Office of the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UN-OCHA)	http://ochaonline.un.org
The Organization for Security and Co-Operation in Europe (OSCE)	http://osce.org
International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA)	http://iaea.org
IAEA Incident and Emergency Centre (IEC)	http://www-ns.iaea.org/tech-areas/emergency/incident-emergency-centre.htm
IAEA Guidance for First Responders to Radiological Emergencies	http://www-ns.iaea.org/tech-areas/emergency/emergency-response-actions.asp
Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW)	http://www.opcw.org

CEP COURSES AND EVENTS

Below is a list of upcoming events in other international organisations:

ORGANISATION	EVENT	DATE	PLACE
IAEA	International Symposium on Nuclear Security	30 March-3 April	Vienna, Austria
Wilton Park	Civil-Military Strategic principles: creating common goals for stabilisation operations	22-25 April	Vienna, Austria
OPCW	Advanced Training Course in Civil Defence against Chemical weapons	25-29 May	Lazne Bohdanec, Czech Republic
OPCW	International Basic Course on Assistance and Protection	8-12 June	Krasevac, Serbia
Swedish National Defence College	International Crisis Management Course	8-19 June	Stockholm, Sweden
Wilton Park	Improving civil-military coordination in response to sudden onset disasters	28-30 September	Tbd
Wilton Park	The South Caucasus and wider Black Sea neighbourhood : Prospects for Euro-Atlantic Integration	9-12 November	Azerbaijan

Further information is available on e- Prime, the Partnership Real-time Information Management and Exchange System.

If you would like to contribute to "perCEPtions", the CEP newsletter, please contact **Clare Roberts, CEP, NATO HQ** cepd@hq.nato.int