

## **ACTIVATION OF FORCES WITHIN JOINED MULTINATIONAL OPERATIONS**

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*The forces are activated to develop the joined multinational operation and this process requires the movement into the theater of operations and the transfer of authority. Therefore, the generated operative forces receive in proper time the order of activation issued on the grounds of the detailed plan for the force movement.*

**Keywords:** activation; deployment; transport; operation.

The activation process of the forces engaged in the development of the joined multinational operation needs two very important and complex activities, meaning the movement into the theater of operations and the transfer of authority. In this respect, on the base of the political-military decision, in proper time, the generated operative forces receive the order of activation issued on the grounds of the detailed plan for the force movement.

The operation of force deployment and concentration in the theater of operations represents an important stage of the force projection and its execution requires the knowledge and training of the deployment and transfer procedures and of those referring to the capability and inter-operability of the communication means, capabilities of fighting support and logistic support, possibilities of self-support in the theater of operations, assuring needed equipment in the areas with extreme climates and CBRN collective and individual protection means.

The capacity of deploying rapidly forces in the frames of multinational operations represents one of the key problems in the field of the development of military capabilities within NATO and EU. The movement of the

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Romanian army forces from the national territory into the theater of operations is a complex action which needs a detailed activity of planning; the planning procedures are chosen according to the available time up to action. When time does not represent a key factor, it is better to choose detailed planning. But when time is limited and the immediate result of planning is the engagement of forces in crisis situations, the movement planning should be made in shorter time but properly. The deployment capability is assured by national contribution and also by using joined air and naval means of transport for forces, equipment and logistic stocks into the theater of operations and depends mainly on the availability of the movement capacities needed for forces within NATO borders or outside them.

In the situation in which the deployment is made in an area inside the Alliance borders, the host nation support (HNS) represents an important advantage, but in the operations developed outside the Alliance space and in an environment that does not offer the needed infrastructure for a good deployment, it is likely that the deployment of forces be made with some difficulties. In such a situation, through the contribution of members, the Alliance should assure most of the infrastructure in such a way that the deployment of forces, including the logistic support, be made properly. The capability of deployment in less permissive environments requests the existence of an initial unit of forces to assure a favorable environment for the deployment of forces.

In the case of the deployment of the Romanian contingent, the movement of a structure may be executed according to the situation; the distances and transport means by marching on vehicles, transport on road, railway, air or naval routes or combined.

Taking into consideration that, usually, the transport on air and naval ships is used, it is necessary to establish basic, reserve and return movement itineraries towards the embarking sectors, the waiting for embarkation ones, the embarkation ones, the concentration and disposition areas after transport, basic and reserve movement routes towards forward bases or operation areas, and the final sectors in the area of operation. No matter the movement procedure, these elements should be established long enough before the scheduled departure time.

In the case of air transport organized by NATO or UN, you should establish: the embarkation point and the airport name; the effectives and limits of time referring to the moment when the technique, equipment and people are ready for embarkation; cargo loading tables with dimensions and maximal weight for air transport; kind and quantities of dangerous transported loads (ammunition, explosives, fuels and oils, acids etc); the confirmation that drivers accompany the technique transported by air.

Large, heavy airplanes belonging to air transport companies are used for the Romanian Government air transport with the following specifications: type and number of planes; name of arriving airport and estimated arriving time; loading table for each flight; plane destination (for pallets and gross); unloading means at destination, including requests for drivers if the load contains vehicles without drivers; means of transport at destination (in the area of mission); technical stops on route (for long distance transports); flights schedule; projected costs for air transport. The personnel is usually transported apart from the technique and materials in special designed planes; the transport of personnel together with the technique and materials is accepted only in very special cases. The number of planes needed for the transport of people, technique and materials is determined in accordance with the type of available planes and their characteristics (number of seats, useful weight, number and dimensions of doors and traps) and with the weight and dimension of transported technique.

The naval transport is executed by transport ships for passengers and general materials belonging to naval companies; the most proper ships for military transports are those of type Ro-Ro, ferry-boats and general cargos.

In the case of naval transport, the elements to be established are: embarkation port; time when loading is ready for embarkation; details of loading cargo table (number and types of vehicles and containers, total weight and volume, etc); type and quantity of dangerous loads; demands, if needed, for passenger ships; sailing period; details referring to passengers; projected cost for transports.

The naval transport is executed with independent transport ships or in convoy system in order to make some groups of forces in forwarded bases or in established sectors. The commander (command) of the naval unit organizes the ship transport (embarkation, convoys, security); in the period between embarkation and debarkation the transported forces are subordinated to the ship commanders<sup>1</sup>. Similar to air transport, for the deployment in a permissive environment, naval ships belonging to civil companies should be taken into consideration.

The railway transport is usually executed to the embarkation port (airport) or destination, in the area of missions, if the distance is short (as it was the case, for example, in Bosnia-Herzegovina). On national territory, the units are transported by regular or special trains, commanded and controlled as military trains.

In the theater of operations, if this is a permissive one, the railway transport represents the main movement procedure of forces on long

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<sup>1</sup> *F.T.-3, Land Forces General Tactical Manual*, Bucharest, 2006, art. 564.

distances, but it can be also used for short distances when road communications are not available or when the situation requests an economy of resources or technique.

The railway transport should be mainly used for supplies in the theater of operations and on relatively short distances from the location of the military structure. This means of transport can be also used in the situation of pre-positioning forces outside the theater of operations and future moving into it. However, this procedure is more often met in the transport of material stocks and supplies for forces in the logistic bases or in the national support elements situated in the proximity of the theater of operations.

Taking into consideration the tendencies of extending the area of development of the joined multinational operations, at least the transport of personnel echelons by air remains the first choice in the movement plan as it offers the most rapid deployment of a military structure. The limited resources of air transport means in the situation of the deployment of a military structure in a permissive environment demand the planners to call for civil resources and combine them with the military ones to assure the rapid movement of forces and means. In such a situation, we consider that it would be better to identify in proper time the civil air operators and establish cooperation protocols to assure their availability of transport in areas of risk without any previous notification.

The deployment of forces from the national territory/from the operative sector into the theater of operations may be generally divided into three stages: moving forces and means towards embarkation points and embarking personnel, technique and materials on transport means; transport; concentrating (regrouping) forces and means in established concentration sectors inside the theater of operations.

Depending on the availability of transport means, the embarkation of materials, equipment and stocks on naval, railway or air means could start during the preparation stage for the deployment in order to achieve the synchronization between the arriving of personnel echelons and the materials and equipment ones. In such a situation, the action of the forwarded detachment or the support of the assigned multinational forces in the debarkation ports/airports/railway stations is very important, and the capabilities offered by the host country (if they are valid) facilitate the development of forces in a high degree.

The deployment of forces for the participation to the joined multinational operation inside the Alliance borders or outside them and their concentration present some particularities generated by the operative level of the structure, by its role within the multinational structure of forces designed

for the operation, by the support level of the host country, by the forces assigned to the deployed structure and by the permissive level of the environment. According to NATO conception, this stage of receiving forces and means starts with the arriving in the debarkation points in the theater of operations and ends with the movement of forces and support elements from the debarkation points.

The commanders of the forces in charge with the concentration areas organize the reception in the theater of operations and the future movement in the established concentration sector where the transfer of authority is to take place. Excepting the case of fighting, the fighting support and service support forces may come before or in the same time with the fighting forces in the debarkation points. In order to ease the management of personnel not belonging to the units as well as the flow of units into the theater, the command of the unit (subunit) should assure communication and connection support with the structures ruling the replacement. The units' commands send precursory detachments to process the forces and the support equipment as well as the materials in the debarkation points.

One of the key points of action during this stage is represented by the coordination of the future movement towards the destination sites, an activity executed by the personnel knowing the configuration of the movement disposition, the reception and the final destination. That is why we consider that the forces executing the movement should be received, as a rule, by the multinational forces commanding the future operation. Even in these conditions, the concentration of forces and means needs a detailed plan, coordination and a permanent connection with the multinational structure of forces that is to command the operation.

The concentration areas/sectors of forces and means can be positioned in a permissive or hostile environment but, no matter the conditions, the concentration should be simple and realistic, prepared in details, to be developed rapidly and secretly during night or in conditions of reduced visibility and be executed taking into consideration all aspects of the situation. In some conditions of permissive environment, the concentration of forces and means belonging to the deployed structure may be executed during daytime.

In the situation of the deployment in a permissive environment, these areas (sectors, camps) should be prepared carefully by the forwarded detachments of the Joined Multinational Force and by the forwarded detachment belonging to the moving structure. They should assure, if this is the case, the possibility of rapid, organized exit of the units from the sector, of a dispersed, hidden disposition of forces, their protection against the actions of insurgent forces and terrorist elements, access roads for transport means,

the possibility of rapid gathering of forces in case of danger and their movement on reserve directions/sectors, food and sheltering conditions, proper sanitary epidemiologic state conditions, local sources for supplying with different materials, mainly water, land fields for helicopters, possibilities for maintenance and medical care and communications.

The concentration of forces and means is greatly influenced by the movement procedure chosen for the deployment and, implicitly, by the arriving of forces and means in the debarkation points. In the case of transport by air or naval ships, after debarking in the debarkation points (POD), the forces come first into areas located in covered sectors where they are stationed during debarkation. Later, they flow from the transit areas to the gathering area for each structure and enter in the concentration sector located inside the responsibility area. The station disposition of a military structure within the concentration area/sectors contains searching elements, security elements, main forces, the command system and the logistic system<sup>2</sup>.

In the case of concentration of forces in a non-permissive environment, without a proper infrastructure belonging to the host country or made by the multinational forces, the importance of the forwarded detachment actions becomes decisive to assure the immediate capacity of reaction and the operative status. In such a situation, the planners should choose the variant of movement for forces and means which assures the highest level of operability of the structures arriving in the debarkation points.

According to NATO rules and mechanisms, during the participation to joined multinational operations, the authority is given to the command structures of the Force leading operations in a certain area to fulfill the agreements included in the memos. The order for the transfer of authority usually contains the following elements: national authority making the transfer of authority; to whom it is addressed; who is informed about it; sending conditions; sending method (fax, email etc.); classification (secret, non-secret); structures subjected to the transfer of authority; day for the official transfer ceremony; command relationship and level; structure deployment site; deadline for the preparation of operation (day and hour); any other information referring to the forces receiving the transfer of authority (special equipment, weapons, limits/restrictions during missions). The transfer of authority is issued based on the official documents which institutionalize the participation of the Romanian Army forces in the frames of a Joined Multinational Force.

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<sup>2</sup> *F.T.-3, Land Forces General Tactical Manual*, Bucharest, 2006, art. 576

Therefore, we consider that the deployment operation of the forces taking part to the joined multinational operation into the theater of operations represents an important stage of this operation and a real challenge for the general staffs through the complexity of planning, execution, logistic support, protection of forces, command and control of forces designed to be introduced into an environment usually hostile and into a complex multinational frame.

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