THE NATO HUMINT CENTRE OF EXCELLENCE AS DEPARTMENT HEAD FOR HUMAN INTELLIGENCE EDUCATION AND TRAINING IN NATO

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Abstract:

NATO recognizes the NATO HUMINT Centre of Excellence (HCOE) as a mature organization, with a remarkable contribution to the overall development of the Human Intelligence capability within the Alliance. Another step toward improving the HCOE performance in this field has been recently accomplished; in the 2nd of September 2015, during a ceremony organized at the Headquarters Supreme Allied Command Transformation (HQ SACT), in Norfolk, Virginia, The United States of America, the HCOE officially became "Department Head for Human Intelligence Education and Training" in NATO. According to the Memorandum of Agreement signed during the event, the HCOE is responsible for matching the ACT requirements with E&T solutions, and liable for the coordination of those solutions. The importance of this status, subsequent challenges and ways to follow are further debated in this paper.[1]

Key words: NATO, HCOE, Department Head, HUMINT, education, training

1.Introduction

The NATO Secretary General document "Building Capability through Multinational and Innovative Approaches" [1] is the starting point behind a series of major changes in the way NATO addresses its capabilities` development.

Subsequent to this directive, a Multi-National Approach (MNA) Task Force (TF) led by the Allied Command Transformation (ACT) was established with the aim to identify the best options to improve the NATO capabilities at reduced costs through multinational approach and burden sharing. The whole process underwent three phases of work, focused on several areas of interest: Acquisition, Operation and Maintenance, Capability Initiatives and Organization of Forces, Innovative Solutions, and Preparation of Forces, each of them dedicated to a designed Working Group (WG):

Phase 1 - Information gathering, aiming to capture potential initiatives and liaison with other NATO TF and the EU to synchronize and de-conflict efforts;

Phase 2 - Assessment, involving interaction with nations to identify potential multinational projects;

Phase 3 - Reporting, focused on the production of this final report and associated socialization.

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[1] DISCLAIMER: This paper expresses the views, interpretations, and independent position of the authors. It should not be regarded as an official document, nor expressing formal opinions or policies, of NATO or the HCOE.

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Within its initial workshop (WS), the Preparation of Forces Working Group (PFWG)[2] addressed eight proposals, one of it recommending NATO Centres of Excellence (COEs) as Hubs for Education and Individual Training (E&IT) in NATO, in their respective areas of expertise. Out of the eight proposals addressed, ACT is considered the lead for three of them – Individual Training and Education Program (ITEP), Distributed Training and Exercises (DTE), and Shared Scenarios; the Framework and Sponsoring nations are the lead for COEs as Hubs for E&IT; and four proposals required a nation volunteering to lead coordination efforts to validate the value of these projects and proposals to the Alliance and/or individual nations.

Four COEs attended the WS and presented their initial feasibility study information: Civil-Military Cooperation (CIMIC), Cyber Defense (CCD), Defense against Terrorism (DAT) and Human Intelligence (HUMINT). Excepting CCD which did not have training capabilities, the other COEs expressed their intention to become a hub for E&IT in their field of expertise. Although MILMED did not attend the WS, it passed on their intention to also become a Hub.

It pertained to the WG to identify the requirements to become a hub for E&IT, privileges and obligations coming out of this status – a process that further involved a long process of reflection, debates, negotiation, analysis and modeling of different scenarios.

Within the final report of MNA TF released on 09 September, the project COEs as hub for Education and Individual Training has been included into the Tier 1.5 - Projects that could provide a significant benefit consistent with the intent of Smart Defence[3].

This paper further examines the development of HCOE from the position of providing certified NATO HUMINT education and training to the status of Department Head for HUMINT education and training in NATO.

2. The NATO HUMINT Centre of Excellence – common facts and figures

The NATO HUMINT Centre of Excellence (HCOE) has been officially accredited in July 2010, having as mission to provide the highest quality NATO HUMINT-focused services and products in response to the requirements and needs of the NATO Command Structure (NCS), NATO Force Structure (NFS), NATO Nations, and, when feasible, Partner Nations.

The HCOE management team and subordinated sections (see fig. 1) strives to consolidate the institution position as central point of HUMINT expertise within NATO and to place it at the spearhead of all major HUMINT initiatives within the Alliance [3]. These efforts are reflected into an extensive program of work carried on in support of NATO, on four main directions: standardization, concept development and experimentation, education and training, lessons learned and analysis.

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[2] composed of military and civilian personnel from ACT, ACO, IMS, IS; PFWG presentations can be accessed on ACT portal at the following address:
https://transnet.act.nato.int/WISE/CollaboCat/Multinatio/Preparatio
[3] Meanwhile, ACT/JFT engaged itself to continue its work to widen this project to encompass all NATO Education and Training Facilities, Partner Training Centres and national institutions in a new Tier 1 project named 'Smart Training'. (Direct Support Team (DST) - Smart Defence, Status Report 4 on Smart Defence Multinational Projects, 20 March 2012 DI(STR)(2012)0008 REV3)

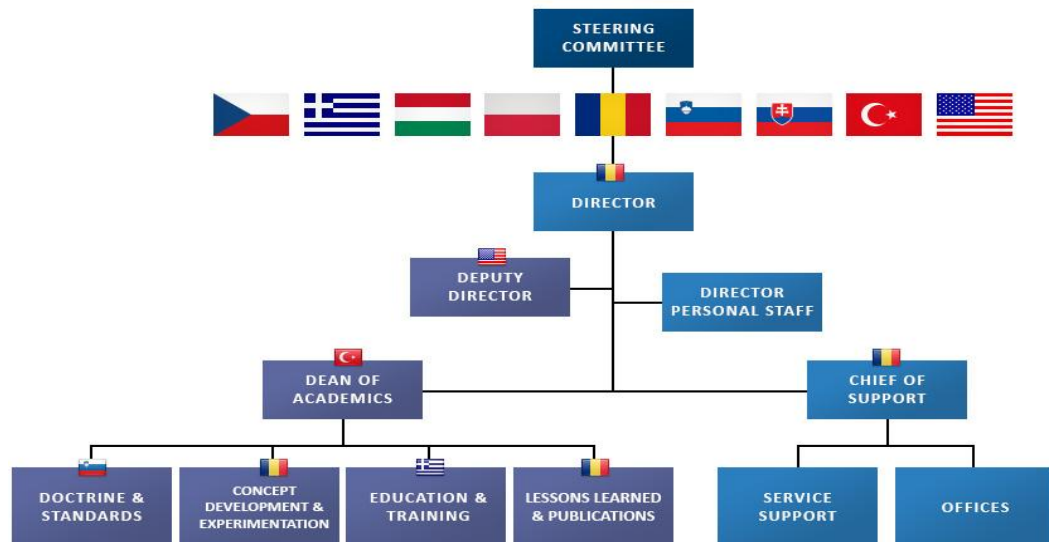# THE NATO HUMINT CENTRE OF EXCELLENCE AS DEPARTMENT HEAD FOR HUMAN INTELLIGENCE EDUCATION AND TRAINING IN NATO

Fig.1 HCOE Organization chart [2]

To understand the fundaments of HCOE candidateship for HUMINT E&T Department Head capacity, it would be useful to briefly list a series of institutional achievements to date, as real enablers for a high-quality exhibition of HCOE at this level:

- the HCOE Director chairs the NATO HUMINT Working Group (NHWG) and NATO HUMINT Technology Working Group (NHTWG), which gives the HCOE a front seat to better capture operational issues and provide NATO solutions;
- HCOE is hosting and filling in key positions in the premier NATO HUMINT Exercise Steadfast Indicator, (SFIR);
- HCOE ensures custodianship for NATO HUMINT doctrine, AJP2.3, and NATO HUMINT Tactics, Techniques and Procedures, AIntP-5, and provided SME support to completion/ revision of NATO HUMINT Policy and SHAPE Directive for HUMINT, AD65-7;
- HCOE released specialty studies in support of doctrinal development and E&T process (NATO HUMINT Operator Handbook, HUMINT Support to Maritime and Air Operations) and conducts a broad range of research projects – as Human Aspects of the Operational Environment (HAOE) [4], NATO HUMINT Operator Toolset, HUMINT in Human Network Analysis & Targeting, HUMINT in the cyber environment, etc.;[4]
- HCOE provides HUMINT standardization, advanced and systems "train the trainer" courses;
- HCOE manages a solid HUMINT data collection – LL/BP capability.

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[4] Most of the HCOE products are classified, but there are notable research contributions available to the public, as well [5]

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Fig.2 The NATO HCOE – internal view

Nonetheless important, the HCOE established an impressive network serving its working relations. Beside the NATO strategic headquarters, HCOE has connections with and provide support to the Emerging Security Challenges Division – NATO HQ, the Joint Force Training Centre (JFTC), Joint Warfare Centre (JWC), Joint Analysis and Lessons Learned Centre (JALLC), NATO Special Operations HQ, NATO School Oberammergau, Joint Forces Command Naples, Joint Forces Command Brunssum, ACCI, NCIA, NATO operations HQs (KFOR, ISAF/Resolute Support) and maintains academic outreach with the US National Intelligence University, University of Oradea, Land Forces Academy, and others.

3. The NATO HUMINT Centre of Excellence – Hub for HUMINT Education and Individual Training in NATO

The matter for the NATO HUMINT Centre of Excellence (HCOE) establishment as a Hub for HUMINT Education and Individual Training (E&IT) in NATO have started early in 2011, when the Deputy Chief of Staff Joint Force Trainer, NATO HQ SACT, advanced this proposal under the aegis of the NATO Secretary General document "Building Capability through Multinational and Innovative Approaches" [1].

The scope behind this endeavour was to increase the effectiveness and efficiency of NATO HUMINT education and training by maximizing the potential available in the HCOE, already recognized for its impetuous activity performed in multiple dimensions of the HUMINT capability. In this way, the HCOE synergy of like-minded professionals jointly tackling difficult issues creates better results in the HUMINT functional area while saving time, energy and resources.

In relation with ACT, the HCOE outlined from the incipient phase of this project that it has:

- the capability to provide basic[5] training to the interested Nations through a cooperative (burden sharing) multi-national venture, or complementary to their own internal training capabilities, and
- the capacity to assume the role of the NATO "central hub" for HUMINT education and training, to include Office of Primary Responsibility (OPR) and Curriculum Control Authority (CCA).

As the HCOE Steering Committee approved by decision no. 72/NOV 2011 the ACT request regarding HCOE to become Hub for HUMINT E&IT in NATO, our institution continued the work on adjusting its capabilities and procedures to the new requirements.

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[5] This was a "game changer" since the HCOE did not have from inception the charter/authority to conduct basic training on behalf of interested nations; it was supposed to only supplement (not replace or develop) internal HUMINT education and training, which is considered a national responsibility.

The initial direction and guidance (08MAR12) offered by the Deputy Chief of Staff Joint Force Trainer (JFT)/ Allied Command Transformation (ACT) regarding the E&IT programme framework was supposed to ensure the alignment of the NATO E&T development, facilitation and measurement at compatible levels of quality and accreditation with a diverse, global education and training system.

In this respect, a series of key elements of the E&T programme framework have been outlined as parameters from which roles and responsibilities derive:

- Requirement Authority (RA) – vested at ACOS/DCOS level and designated to define required capability/ required performance competency, aligned with SACEUR's Annual Guidance on ETEE and synchronized with the evaluation process led by SHAPE; it also entailed the review of requirements, capabilities and competencies, and providing advice to the Department Head on the status of theoretical support (concepts, doctrine, policy, procedures);
- Department Head (DH) – responsible for translating operational requirements into education and training objectives within a programme, module and course, their standards and development;
- JFT – holding the final authority within the E&T business and leading the accreditation process.

The E&T system's structure and functions have been further consolidated and optimised into the Bi-SC 75-2 Education and Training Directive (E&TD) (October 2013)[6] and the new NATO Education, Training, Exercises, and Evaluation (ETEE) Policy (MC 0458/3 from SEP14). Thus, the DH functions are detailed to the extent to:

- lead, conduct and approve the Training Needs Analysis (TNA), supported by JFT and the RA;
- translate the operational requirements into education and training within a subject, programme, module and/or course, and apply the educational standards to which the programme, modules and courses will adhere;
- recommend changes to the RA (and if necessary to JFT);
- lead and conduct the Annual Discipline Conference on behalf of JFT, with participation from the community of interest (RA, Subject Matter Experts (SME), E&T institutions and affiliated organisations).

4. Steps toward the Department Head capacity

4.1 HCOE and the Quality Assurance seal

According to the NATO ETEE Policy, given the variety of institutions engaged in the delivery of NATO E&IT, the Quality Management principle requires quality assurance and quality control at various levels, to ensure that the planned and systemic approach to building, maintaining and improving the execution of education and training activities is aligned to the required standards.

The Quality Assurance (QA) Process ensures that NATO's standards, in line with international Educational Standards, expressed in Educational Goals and derived Educational Standards are met.

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[6] Within the hierarchy of NATO's E&T directives, Bi-SC 75-2 subordinates: Bi-SC 75-7 Education and Individual Training Directive, Bi-SC 75-3 Collective Training and Exercise Directive, and Bi-SC 80-6 Lessons Learned Directive.

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The QA objective is to implement quality improvements in the four identified areas of quality within E&T: [6]
- the whole structure involved (academic, admin, supporting functions);
- institutional (in-situ) QA policy, to provide appropriate guidance;
- quality systems, to enable the goals achievement; and
- the review and improvement process.

Until the new approach of the E&T process in NATO, HCOE courses have been designed, developed, delivered, evaluated and managed in accordance with the NATO Education and Individual Training Management System (NEITMS). The HCOE has followed the NATO accreditation criteria, and used to be periodically screened by SACT to ensure that its E&T activities satisfy all appropriate standards and regulations.

With the new regulations regarding the QA, after a self-evaluation report delivered by HCOE to ACT, in November 2012, a Quality Assurance JFT team performed an evaluation visit at HCOE in order to assess different aspects of interest regarding the standards applied, internal procedures, available resources and information management (NATO Policy and QA, Instructional Systems Design, curriculum development, analysis and evaluation, human resource development, instruction) necessary to validate the QA criteria.

As a result of the visit, HCOE was conferred by ACT, in 18JAN13, with CONDITIONAL ACCREDITATION, having several fields to improve in order to receive full QA accreditation recognition: educational theories and processes reflected in course documentation, theory objectives vs training control documents, curriculum design, assessment strategy, and the internal communication plan. However, the HCOE was commended for a series of best practices regarding the orientation training and development, instructor recruitment, continuous improvement process, E&T support elements, and quality research, reinforced by the lessons learned capacity.

In a short period of time, a committed effort of the HCOE management team and the experts involved in the E&T area determined the award of our institution by the Deputy Chief of Staff JFT, on behalf of the Supreme Allied Commander Transformation, with the QA UNCONDITIONAL ACCREDITATION at 15OCT2013. In this respect, the accreditation letter makes reference to: [7]
- sound internal quality assurance systems and procedures for the assurance of quality standards;
- procedures effectively applied at each Depth of Knowledge level to ensure the quality of individual curriculum;
- effective and regular processes of reviewing the quality of programmes and the standards of curriculum, and implementing the required changes, developments and enhancements;
- accurate, complete and reliable information about the quality of the institutions programmes and the standards of its curriculum.

Since June 2013, a series of HCOE internal documents support the whole QA approach:
- the *HCOE Quality Assurance Review Directive*, establishing the Dean of Academics as Office of Primary Responsibility (OPR) for QA management in HCOE, and stating the processes, roles and responsibilities of the staffs involved in the self-assessment activity for the implementation and development of quality standards;

- the *HCOE Quality Assurance Policy*, which covers the basic and general principles to achieve, develop, and maintain quality standards and performance in HCOE; and
- the *HCOE Quality Assurance Strategy*, guiding the implementation of the Quality Assurance Policy.

4.2 HCOE – DH for HUMINT E&T in NATO

At 29 May 2015, the Military Committee has released his approval for HCOE to become DH for HUMINT education and training in NATO (the document IMSM-0264-2015). The formal approval has been followed in the 2nd of September 2015 by a ceremony organized at the Headquarters Supreme Allied Command Transformation, in Norfolk, Virginia (USA), when the NATO HUMINT Centre of Excellence (HCOE) officially became "Department Head for Human Intelligence Education and Training" in NATO.

During the event, Col. Eduard SIMION – the HCOE Director – and Vice Admiral (ESP N) Javier GONZALEZ-HUIX (the Joint Force Trainer head), on behalf of HQ SACT, signed the "Memorandum of Agreement between NATO HUMINT COE and Headquarters Supreme Allied Command Transformation (HQ SACT) concerning The Appointment of NATO Human Intelligence Centre of Excellence as the Department Head for Human Intelligence Education and Training" (fig. 3).

Fig.3 Aspect from the signing ceremony of the Memorandum of Agreement (left - DCOS JFT Vice Admiral (ESP N) Javier GONZALEZ-HUIX, right - Col. Eduard SIMION – the HCOE Director) [8]

The document restates the hierarchy of the system and sets up the roles and responsibilities associated to the specific functions, complementary to MC 0458/3 (NATO Education, Training, Exercise and Evaluation (ETEE) Policy, 03SEP2014) and Bi-SC Directive 75-2 (ETE Directive, 02OCT2013).

According to the Memorandum, the HCOE as DH has to fulfill a series of responsibilities: [9]

- coordination and collaboration with DH Coordinator (DHC) for managing HUMINT E&T; this includes delivery of E&T solutions with designated facilities;

- lead of the TNAs required to fill HUMINT E&T gaps identified in the final TRA report;
- compiling a HUMINT E&T programme in accordance with the requirements; this will be nested within the broad NATO Intel Training Programme published by the DHC on an annual basis;
- provide assistance to HQ SACT DCOS JFT with the assessment of E&T solutions;
- recommend improvements to the DHC and RA;
- organize the Annual Discipline Conference (ADC) for HUMINT E&T;
- participate in other programming boards, conferences and WGs as appropriate, in order to execute DH functions;
- provide analysis of HUMINT related lessons identified;
- provide SME support to individual and collective NATO-led training events.

While some of the responsibilities would not raise difficulties in their practical application – based on previous experience and practice, a series of aspects still need internal assessments and actions to be fully achievable.

5. Considerations on the HCOE new roles and responsibilities as DH

5.1 New status – new requirements

The newly acquired capacity as DH requires structural and procedural adaptation of HCOE, in order to better meet the expectations.

First of all, there is a sustained process to reconfigure the HCOE organizational chart, in order to establish the supporting entities (a DH section) and to include in the job descriptions the correspondent functions within all sections. This process will include the preservation and enhancement of the internal Quality Assurance practice.

Second, the DH capacity itself needs adjustments. The curricular authority of the DH in relation with other E&T providers in support of NATO is somehow lost. Because HCOE is not directly subordinated to ACT, it requires direct liaison authority and/or administrative control to effectively engage/ coordinate E&IT activities with all NATO countries and institutions involved in the process. Even more, these relationships need to be established and vetted by those nations/ organizations with HUMINT equities.

A third challenge is to effectively act as DH and function as part of the Global Programming development methodology. Once the result of the TRA (where HCOE will provide specialized support, as required) and the Strategic Training Plan will be approved and provided to the DH, HCOE has to lead the TNA, making recommendations to ACT in order to improve the available solutions, purposed to meet E&T deficiencies identified through the TRA, and eliminate potential duplications. The solutions recommended by the DH will be then validated by ACT, or the MC if ACT`s means and capabilities are surpassed.

As evolution and developments occurs within a subject, the triad JFT-RA-DH ensures that all new aspects of DOTMLPFI[7] are injected appropriately into the subject's education and training architecture [10]. HCOE is excellently fit from this perspective, as long as it covers key aspects of doctrine management (regular revisions, supporting studies and research, terminology standardization, lessons learned process), education and training (throughout the available courses and on request SME support, NATO exercises support, etc.), materiel (technology-related research and development), facilities (the overall E&T

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[7] Doctrine, Organization, Training, Materiel, Leadership and education, Personnel, Facilities, Interoperability

and exercise infrastructure available to support NATO) etc. The value-added to all these efforts is the symbiotic relation of HCOE with the front-line fora of the HUMINT Community of Interest in NATO – NHWG and NHTWG.

Last but not the least, HCOE has to embrace academic best practice in order to boost its communication outreach (as described in the HCOE Quality Assurance Strategy [11]) and to enhance the quality of the academic products. The establishment of an Academic Board (permanent or ad-hoc entity) may be a solution for some of the incumbent challenges related to this topic.

To cover all these aspects, HCOE, as DH, has to use the resources of direct staff coordination and the framework of the Annual Discipline Conference.

5.2 The Annual Discipline Conference (ADC)

Naturally, the E&IT programme framework has to include an appropriate forum for collaboration between the stakeholders involved in the process itself (and here is a large range to list, beside the NATO hierarchical structure, to include the Transformation Network), but also in relation with the customers.

Under the guidance of HQ SACT, the ADC reviews the adequacy of the programmes used to satisfy NATO's E&T requirements, and should be as inclusive as possible, involving the appropriate stakeholders. The intent is to ensure E&T remains aligned with evolving needs, available technology and resources (in this respect, DH issues a Discipline Alignment Plan).

The JFT guidance for the establishment of a Discipline Conference focused on a series of functions that such an event has to technically fulfill:

- to ensure updated information sharing (course design, E&IT products and services, development opportunities, etc.);
- to facilitate coordination between stakeholders (in order to ensure synergy of efforts, acquire national support, determine participation of Subject Matter Experts (SMEs), enhance the execution of the programme);
- to return operational feedback (based on the Lessons learned/ Best practice process);
- to outline recommendations and way ahead to follow in all critical aspects: programme development and execution, goals and standards, interoperability, support, etc.

These lines of development determine a technically focused event, with effects on the overall institutional approach to the E&IT cycle, from programme inception to E&IT delivery, feedback collection and programme adjustment and development.

A delicate challenge is to determine the most feasible environment to conduct the conference, in order to ensure the proper audience and contribution. The natural option would be the HCOE host and strictly following the described directions in order to reach the purpose.

But, what if the Discipline Conference would largely address the specialty development as a whole, and the E&T background will generously embrace an academic debate facet (additional to the technical-methodology one)? Gathering E&T specialists with a specific occasion may leave space to additional activities with profitable results…

Another point of reflection is the manifestation/ contribution in the ADC of the special relation between HCOE and the NATO HUMINT Community of Interest represented by the NATO HUMINT Working Group and NATO HUMINT Technology Working Group.

6. Conclusion

Definitely, the honor for HCOE to be chosen as Department Head for HUMINT E&T in NATO is doubled by a great responsibility and hard work for the staff to accomplish the important tasks deriving from this new capacity.

We are confident that HCOE, by its means and capabilities, will bring a significant contribution both to the NATO HUMINT E&T process and the comprehensive development of the HUMINT capability in NATO, too.

The DH position also strengthens the academic flavor of the HCOE activity. It has to be associated with the development of an appropriate interface with the academic entities, a more consistent presence in the academic fora, the development of the practical activity in this domain, increasing the networking portfolio and consolidation of the own community of interest.

More details about the HCOE activity are available online at www.natohcoe.org, where will be also reflected the further developments of his performance as DH.

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