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Environmental protection as a part of armed forces members´ preparation

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Ochrana životného prostredia ako súčasť prípravy príslušníkov ozbrojených síl

Veronika Mitašová[1], Josef Senčík[2]

[1]Žilinská univerzita v Žiline, Fakulta bezpečnostného inžinierstva, Katedra krízového manažmentu, Univerzitná 1, 010 26 Žilina, veronika.mitasova@fbi.uniza.sk

[2]Výzkumný ústav bezpečnosti práce, v.v.i., Jeruzálemská 9, 11652 Praha 1, sencikj@vubp-praha.cz

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Abstract

The Contribution deals with the environment protection issues in the context of armed forces members´ preparation to fulfill tasks of national and international crisis management. The paper is focused on current status of the environment and its protection in Slovak and Czech Republic military training areas. Based on the above conclusions are drawn.

Keywords: training, preparation, armed forces, environment, safety

Abstrakt

Príspevok sa zaoberá problematikou ochrany životného prostredia v kontexte prípravy príslušníkov ozbrojených síl na plnenie úloh v domácom a zahraničnom prostredí. Pozornosť je venovaná predovšetkým vplyvu výcviku, ako súčasti celkovej prípravy, vo vojenských obvodoch na stav životného prostredia. Zameriava sa na ochranu prostredia v priestoroch vojenských výcvikových obvodov v Slovenskej a Českej republike. Na základe posúdenia súčasného stavu sú formulované závery.

Kľúčové slová: výcvik, príprava, ozbrojené sily, životné prostredie, ochrana

Introduction

The negative impact of human activities on the environment is unquestionable. Generally, human activities threaten all environmental components. Such activities are also military training. Practice shooting, movements on vehicles, or combat operations undermines environmental components in the military training areas. However, because the

military training areas are isolated from normal human activity, they are also a suitable place for the occurrence of many plant and animal species.

Increasingly relevant is the question of environmental protection in training, but also the environmental protection training areas in general. This paper aims to describe and evaluate the current state of the area concerned in the Czech and Slovak Republic, and on this basis to draw conclusions.

Explanation of terms used

Because of the diversity of definitions and explanations of basic concepts related to the contribution and the military training areas we consider it appropriate to include those from which we came.

Environment according to the Law of the Slovak National Council no. 17/1992 Collections is everything that creates natural conditions of existence of organisms including humans, and is a prerequisite for their further development. Its components are especially the air, water, rocks, soil, organisms. Environmental pollution is associated with the presence of physical, chemical and biological substances in the environment that are a result of human activity and are foreign for the environment. Damage to the environment is further deterioration of the environment by the pollution or other human activity [1].

The paper does not address pollution and damage to the environment in general, but the changes due to the activities of armed forces in military zones. The preparation takes place largely outside. Soldiers during training negatively affect the environment. Therefore, in order to be ready to perform tasks in the national and international operations, he must complete a comprehensive training. The Armed Forces of the Slovak Republic training takes place in the structure [2]:

- joint training,
- professional training,
- final training.

Training is carried out in various forms, including interpretation, demonstration, training and exercises. It is divided into individual training, training of key personnel and group training. Its contents depend on the complexity of the operation. A distinction is standard operation, challenging operation and very demanding operation. Preparation for each operation is unique. Fig. 1 contains the basic requirements for the skills and knowledge acquired after completing the training.

KEY PERSONNEL		MILITARY OBSERVER	
THEORETICAL KNOWLEDGE	PRACTICAL SKILLS	THEORETICAL KNOWLEDGE	PRACTICAL SKILLS

- The operation's mandate - Information on the history, customs and traditions - Principles of use of force - The content of valid documents - The obligations arising from the office - Subordination of units - Mine safety principles - The principle of protection of classified information	- First Aid Basics - Task scheduling - Reading from the map, orientation according to GPS - Radio communications in English - Movement on unfamiliar terrain - Shooting from the allocation of weapons - Use PIO	- Under the regulation of the peace operation - Operating techniques (patrolling, monitoring, negotiation) - The role of the military observer - Risks of space - Principles of cooperation with organizations within the peacekeeping operation	- First Aid Basics - Map reading - Orientation by GPS - Communication in English - Movement on unfamiliar terrain - Off-road vehicle with 4x4

Fig. 1 Requirements for preparedness staff after completing training for participation in international peacekeeping operations (according to [2])

The contents of required skills, abilities and knowledge, which must, after completion of training members of the Armed Forces of the Slovak Republic have, varies according to whether they apply to military observers or key personnel. Military observer is a member of the organization's peacekeeping operations international crisis management, whose tasks and activities are dependent on the specific characteristics of the mandate and operations. The UN peacekeeping military observer is seen as an expert who provides operations headquarters vital and critical information used as a basis for making decisions. Military observers are members of peacekeeping operations who are fundamentally always unarmed. [3] Key personnel are a summary term for commanders and specialists in various areas of military activity occupying distinctive features (now with this fact is related to the name "key").

Of the required skills and abilities arise directly activities that adversely affect the environment in the place of exercise. Such are, for example shooting, operation of motor vehicles on the ground, movement in the field and others. The environment may be from this point of view threatened release of hazardous substances, the destruction of soil, fauna, flora, eventually excessive noise. Above the other hand, areas intended for direct training are surrounded by areas, buffer zones. Now these areas are of great importance in the protection of nature. The reason is that these "protective zones" are years isolated from any other use, eg. agriculture, mining, industry, transport, as well as many other human activities. [4]

It is for these reasons, it is appropriate and necessary to pay due attention to just issue of environmental protection in military training areas, which are primarily designed just for training - training of the armed forces and armed security forces.

Environmental protection and preparation of the armed forces of the Slovak Republic in military districts

Preparing of members of the Armed Forces of the Slovak Republic is necessary for deployment to the entire spectrum of operations. Care must be taken to protect the environment where the training takes place. Duties of the Armed Forces of the Slovak Republic in relation to environmental protection are elaborated in more legislation. Resolution of the Government of the Slovak Republic č.531 / 1994 was ordered to the Ministry of Defence of the Slovak Republic,

project strategies, policies and priorities of state environmental policy of the Slovak Republic into the policies, strategies, concepts, programs and relevant legislation. Based on this requirement has been developing the “Concept of environmental protection” by the Ministry of Defence of the Slovak Republic for the period 1996 - 2015 [4]. More detail about environmental protection in the Armed Forces of the Slovak Republic is elaborated in logistics doctrines, directives or guidelines.

Training of the Armed Forces of the Slovak Republic is carried out both in the areas of services and secondly in military districts. Military district is territorial unit and administrative unit used to perform tasks of defense and state security (according to the Act of the National Council of the Slovak Republic no. 281/1997 Coll.).

On the territory of the Slovak Republic from 1 January 2011 are three military districts in which they are established military training areas [4]:

- Military District of Záhorie - Záhorie military training area, a military training area Kuchyňa and military training area Turecký Vrch,
- Military District of Lešť - military training area Lešť,
- Military District of Valaškovce - a military training area of Kamenica nad Cirochou.
- At present there are already inactive military circuits/districts (hereinafter referred to as) [6]:
- Military District of Gavúrky,
- Military District of Ivachnovský lúh,
- Military District of Javorina,
- Military District of Silická planina.

The Government of the Slovak Republic in 2004 approved a national list of proposed sites of European significance, which includes many areas that are at military bases and have even been included in Natura 2000. This is a testament to the diversity of animal and plant species. Such areas must be protected.

Military District of Záhorie is composed of three military training areas. These serve to prepare the ground forces for overseas missions, such as an air base and a practice shooting range artillery. The uniqueness of the environment of the site, however, is also addressed through environmental protection, as follows [4]:

- Part of the military perimeter Záhorie is part of a protected area - protected area of Záhorie and protected area of Malé Karpaty;
- Part of it is included in the Natura 2000 conservation program;
- Military Training Area Turecký Vrch belongs to a protected bird area Malé Karpaty;
- Military District of Záhorie began to implement several projects in cooperation with the Ministry of Defence, the Ministry of environment, State nature Conservancy of the Slovak Republic and Military forests, state enterprise (project "Habitat restoration of sand dunes in a military training area Záhorie," project "Wetland restoration Záhorské lowlands," project "Conservation of endangered species and their habitats in the military training area of Turecký Vrch").

Another military district is a military circuit Valaškovce in the east of the Slovak Republic. Military Training Area on its territory serves as a tank firing range, parade ground combat vehicle guidance or training ground for collaboration air and ground forces. This area is from the perspective of environmental protection very specific, which resulted in the declaration of part of the military area as a national nature reserve Kyjovský forest.

The last military district Lešť, lying in the middle of the Slovak Republic is the most important and also the most used. In addition to the training of the Armed Forces of the Slovak Republic are currently preparing the armed forces of other NATO member countries or the EU. There are ongoing multinational exercises, but also the preparation of armed

security forces and rescue. Military district Lešť provides conditions for combat training, coordination of air and ground forces, and many others. According to available sources, the military circuit Lešť in the field of environmental protection is still only at the beginning [4].

Instructions for trainees stay units and individuals in the military training area perimeter Lešť defining the obligations of commanders exercising folders under "4.3 Environmental Protection" [7]:

- Each commander is obliged to get acquainted with the "Emergency regulations for disposal of accidental releases of substances harmful to water in the training area Military circuit Lešť", which lists all the rules and procedures that must be followed in the training area Military circuit Lešť and procedures for dealing with environmental accident, reporting and subsequent disposal;
- Each commander is obliged to develop its own "Emergency Regulations" for leading into the training area;
- Each commander is obliged to comply with all laws on environmental protection, dispose of the resulting hazardous waste (oil absorbents, rags, etc.) so that they comply with all the requirements of the Act no. 223/2001 Coll. And hazardous waste must be stored in sealable container, labeled identification sheet in emergency tray;
- Each commander is obliged to have their own emergency kit and be responsible for staff and members of the emergency team.

Environmental protection and preparation of Army of the Czech Republic Military Districts

The legal basis of military districts is the law of defense of the Czech Republic no. 222/1999 Coll. Specifically its sixth part, which stipulates that military circuit/ training area is defined parts of the territory, which is intended for national defense and armed forces training.

In the Czech Republic are active only four military districts on January 1, 2016, [9]:

- Boletice,
- Březina,
- Hradiště,
- Libavá.

Military areas in the Czech Republic are biologically valuable, because they have a high diversity of plant and animal species, like the Slovak Republic. Their preservation is therefore very important. Military District of Boletice serve to prepare the ground forces in the shooting and tactics of struggle, operation and management of vehicles. It also allows training in overcoming water obstacles. Its territory was declared by the occurrence of rare species of birds for bird area of Boletice [10].

Brdy military district was abolished in January 2016. This multifunctional space was used, in addition to the actual preparation of the Army of the Czech Republic, also very limited as a tourist location.

On its territory there are important natural sites of European format. They are [11]:

- Hrachoviště - botanical location,
- Felbabka - botanical location,
- Octárna - botanical location,
- Ledný stream,
- Ohrazenický stream,
- Padrťský stream,

- Mešenský stream,
- Padrťské ponds.

These locations have been one of the main reasons why the Brdy Military District of law no. 15/2015 Coll. canceled [12]. Subsequently, the Government Decree no. 292/2015 Coll. [13] and Decree no. 293/2015 Coll. [14] declared a protected area.

Conclusion

Training troops is necessary to be able to perform the tasks well. Training adversely affect the environment in the training areas. But often they occur in specific kinds of plants and animals. This is due to military activities and isolation from ordinary human activities such as industry, transport and the like. Based on the above it can be stated that the use of military bases for military training and environmental protection in them are not in direct conflict. Although the primary use of these areas for military purposes, in the positive sense of their existence has also helped to conservation. In recent years a number of important sites declared protected areas (protected area, protected bird territories and others). However, it still remains a lot of places which deserves protection as well.

The trend of environmental protection in the EU and NATO is growing. Member States must reduce the negative impacts of military activities on the environment. Currently the Czech Republic does not have enough experts in the defense of nature, who would pay the mentioned area [15]. Despite this obstacle may be the overall state of the environment in relation to military activities in the Czech Republic and Slovakia evaluated as acceptable. The Armed Forces of the Slovak Republic cooperate in the implementation of projects of the European Commission aimed at protecting the environment (LIFE-Nature and LIFE +). CR again elaborated index preventive method when assessing the likelihood of military training formed the NATO Training Impacts Matrix, to the methodical process called Hazard & Impact Index [4]. Even these facts are evidence of the interest of both countries in the area of environmental protection in the training of soldiers.

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Autor článku:
Ing. Veronika Mitašová
Mgr. et Mgr. Josef Senčík