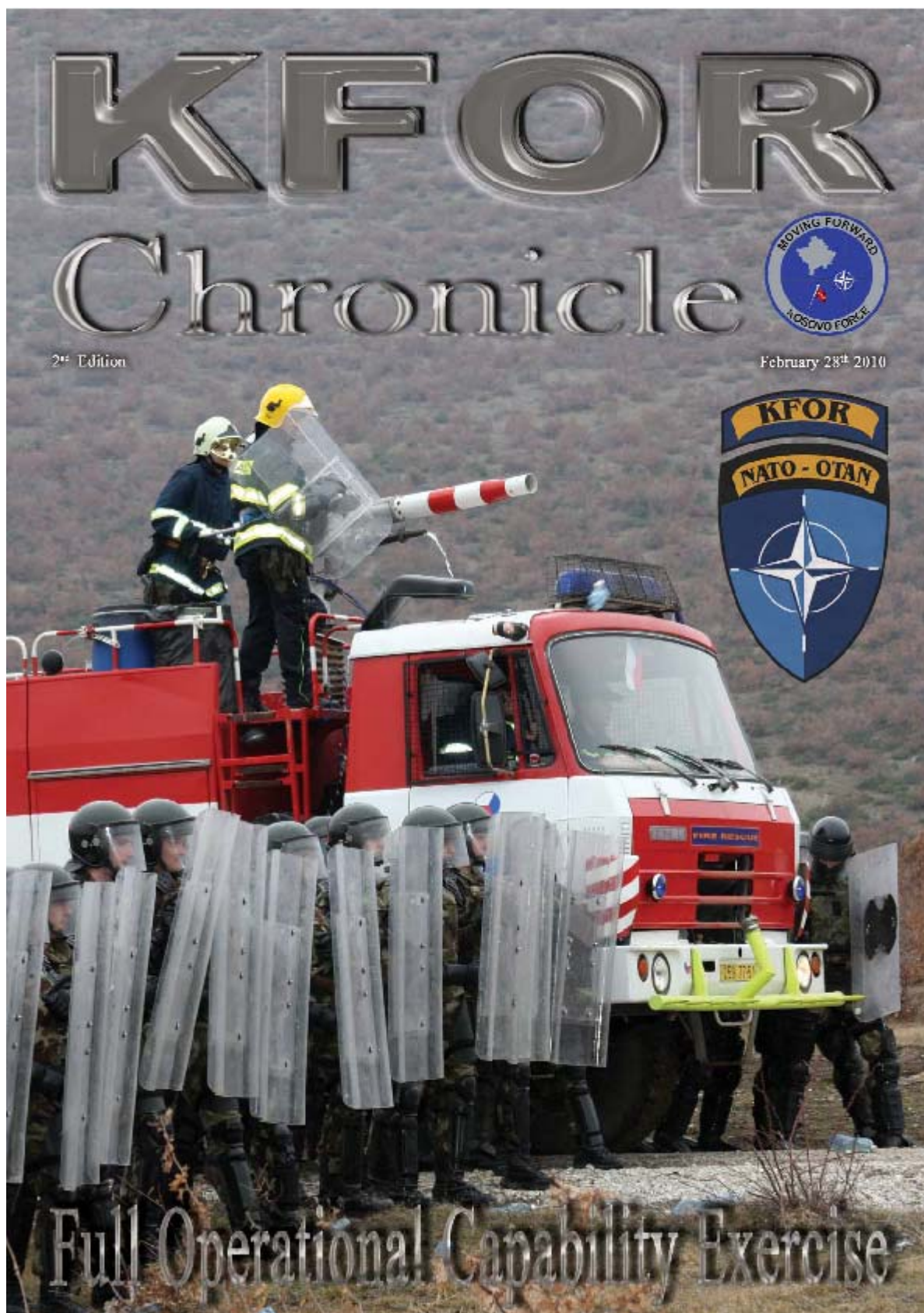


Bijlage C: Artikel in de NATO Chronicle



Life Threatening in New Structure: "Fast Pelican"

Story and photos by Major Patrick Van Hoesele, Belgium Air Force

With less specialized assets in every National Support Element, it was expected that after the transformation into a Multinational Battle Group, no nation would be capable to solely guarantee a rapid reaction to a life threatening incident.

Because the safety of our soldiers is our main concern, the only acceptable solution was to set up a multinational, interagency team. This had to be a fast intervention team at high readiness with all the necessary elements to face any imaginable situation.

Denmark, France, Greece and Morocco combined their assets and trained their people to work together as a team. Although convinced of the necessity, achieving a multinational cooperation is hard at working level. Military personnel like Military Police,

medical teams, recovery specialists, etc have to work together with civilian fire fighters and Gendarmerie. Not only their specialties were different, but also their native languages. English may be the common language amongst officers in a HQ, but that is not true for the average soldier in the field. But with a common aim and lots of training, these difficulties can be overcome and turned into advantages.

The system works as follows: after a report that an incident has happened and that the life of a military or KFOR civilian is in danger, the Tactical Operation Centre (TOC) of the Multinational Battle Group North (MNBG N) will alert the "Fast Pelican"-team. This team will assemble in 5 minutes and after receiving the necessary information the team is ready to drive towards the scene to secure the victims.

The team consists of:

- a command element that guides the team and stays in contact with the TOC;
- a security element that assures the safety on route and at the spot of the incident;
- a medical element that gives the team its life-saving capability and;
- a rescue element that can liberate a victim out of any situation.

Unless the information clearly supports the contrary, the whole team will be deployed. This is necessary because some remote places in MNBG N area of responsibility are almost a 2 hour drive away. Due to this, it is better to deploy too much equipment, than not enough.

The mission of saving lives is a strong motivator for this test-bed for the multinational cooperation at the basic level. As a mutual understanding and trust will increase, this experience will for sure serve as a basis for further expansion of the multinational in the Battle Group.

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