

THE EXPERIENCES OF A PIONEER LOGISTIC TASK IN AFGHANISTAN

EGY ÚTTÖRŐ LOGISZTIKAI FELADAT AFGANISZTÁNI TAPASZTALATAI

A Magyar Logisztikai Mentorcsoport első váltás a Magyar Honvédség missziós történetében először hajtott végre olyan logisztikai feladatot, melynek rendeltetése nem a támogatás, hanem a műveleti felkészítés volt, s mint ilyen, a harckiképzés részeként újszerű szerepet vállalt. Az első, ilyen jellegű misszióként olyan problémákkal kellett szembenézni, mint a magyartól eltérő, amerikai rendszer-alapú technika és logisztikai eljárási rendszer, valamint a kiképzési tapasztalatok hiánya, ezért a felkészülés során különös figyelmet kellett fordítani a logisztikai eljárások tanulmányozására és a kiképzési metódus megválasztására.

The Hungarian Logistic Mentor Team /HLMT/ (first shift) had a pioneer role during the mission - history of Hungarian Defense Forces as it was the first time a Hungarian logistic element executed not a supply task but to train for operations as an organ part of combat training in Afghanistan. As first assigned mission it had to face several problems, such as the lack of experiences concerning the main aspects of logistic training that is based on American logistic techniques and procedures so the performance for this task needed particularly pre-read up logistic subjects and training methods.

INTRODUCTION OF CONTACTED ORGANIZATIONS

The Logistic Mentor Team fulfilled its task under command and control of NATO Training Mission – Afghanistan (NTM-A), Combined Technical Advisory Group- Army (CTAG-A), Branch School Directorate, Combat Service Support Capabilities Directorate (CSSD) as a subordinated element of German Armed Forces Technical Advisory Group (GAFTAG) mentoring Afghan Combat Service Support school (CSS school). To understand of the main task of HLMT it is necessary to overview the role and place of the above mentioned organizations.

„The mission of the NTM-A, in partnership with the Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan (GIROA) and the international community, is to plan, program, and implement structural, organizational, institutional and management reforms of the ANSF in order to develop a stable Afghanistan, strengthen the rule of law, and deter and defeat terrorism within its borders.

NTM-A provides advisors, mentors, and trainers to help both the Ministry of Defense (MoD) and Ministry of Interior (MoI) to organize, train, equip, employ, and support the ANSF in order to defeat the insurgency, provide internal security, extend and enforce the rule of law, set conditions for economic development, and gain the trust and confidence of the citizens of Afghanistan.

„CTAG is a subordinate command of NTM-A. It supports NTM-A's mission of programming and implementing the generation and development of the ANSF in order to enable the GIROA to achieve security and stability in Afghanistan. CTAG's mission is to train, advise, coach and monitor ANATC in order to establish a doctrine, education and training system capable of supporting the development of a professional Afghan National Army (ANA)” [1]

ANATC (Afghan National Army Training and Education Command) is an intermediate command of the ANA, reporting directly to the chief of the General Staff. Its mission is to train and educate the ANA's soldiers; train leaders; develop doctrine; and establish training and education standards.

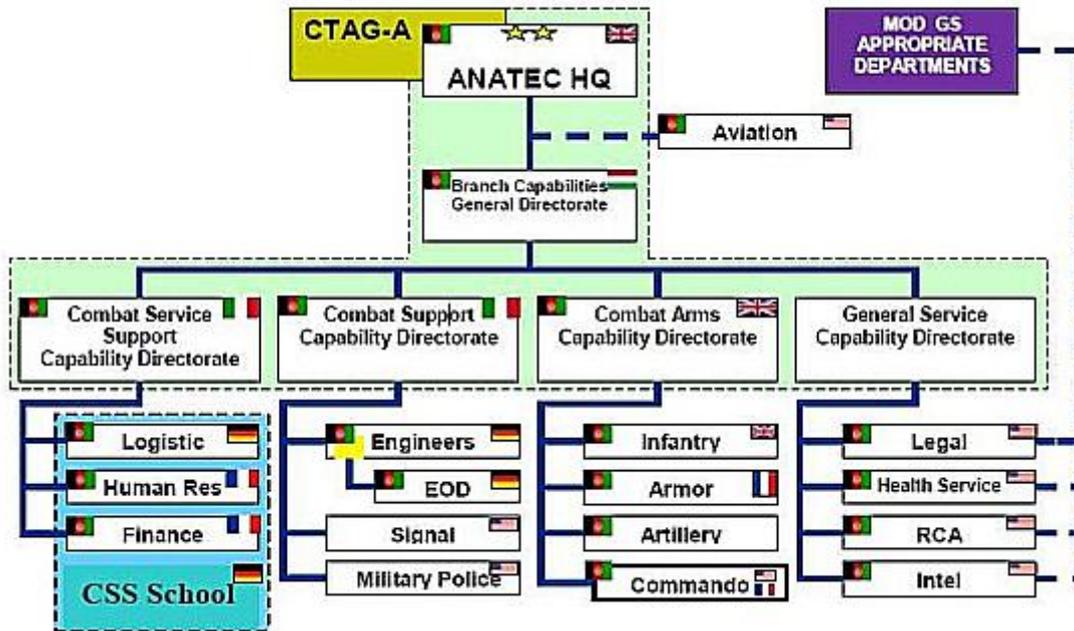
The CSS School is directly subordinated to the Branch Schools Directorate (the CSS Directorate), which is itself subordinated to the ANATEC HQ. The CSS School, run by Afghan Trainers (officers and NCO-s) mentored by the GAFTAG, is

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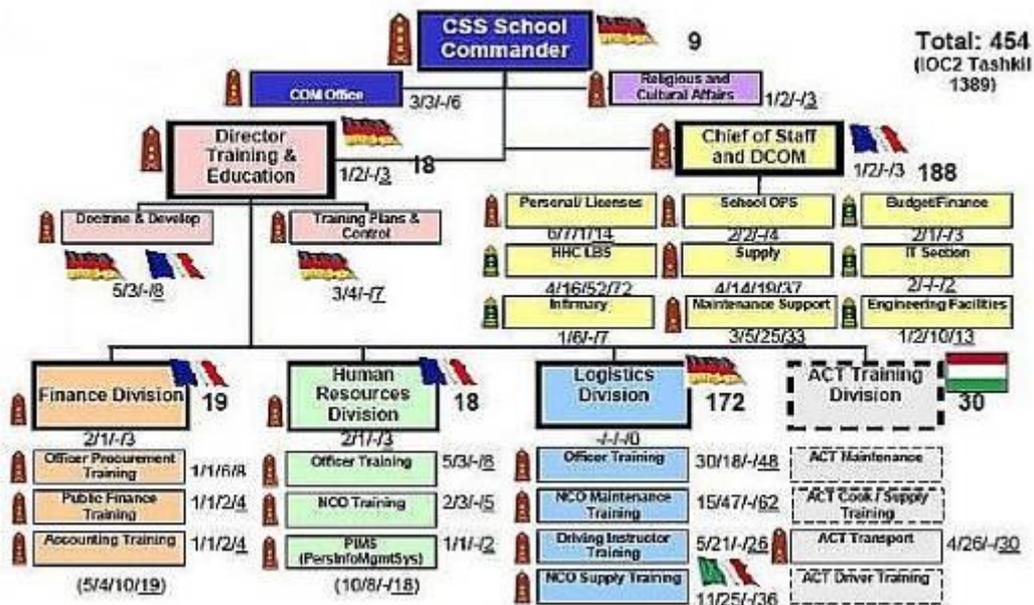
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a long term global project aiming to ANA's autonomy in the field of logistical education and training. It is designed to reach its full operational capabilities in 2012. ANA CSS School is in link with CTAG Command Plan. It has already proved its efficiency by building-up an Afghan qualified training team which has trained for example many driving instructors, Mobile Kitchen Trailers operators or mechanics.



1. picture: Subordination



(The flag signs nationality of related mentors)

2. picture: The Structure of the CSS School

THE MAIN MISSION, TASK AND STRUCTURE OF GAFTAG

„In 2002 the German Armed Forces Technical Advisory Group (GAFTAG), within an overall bi-lateral Assistance Programme between the Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan (GIROA) and the German Government, established in coordination with the Afghan Ministry of Defense (MoD) a Drivers and Mechanics School (DMS). This project was funded by the German Ministry of Foreign Affairs and executed by the German MoD. After a meeting in 2007 between the German Chancellor, Angela Merkel, and the president of the Republic of France, Nicolas Sarkozy, it was decided to enlarge the engagement and France wanted to participate in this project.

In April 2008 was the starting point for the building-up of the ANA logistic school on the basement of the former DMS. In November 2008 the first French mentors joined the GAFTAG, and then Italian mentors conducted supply courses for NCO-s. In March 2010, the logistic school increased and became the CSS School.” [2]

According to above sentences GAFTAG is a German led international mentor team assigned to advise the personnel of CSS School on the score of the following tasks:

- Assist the Afghan National Army in order to build up a capable and sustainable CSS School,
- Develop and establish Branch specific courses for officers and NCOs, support and lead the Logistics Advanced Combat Training (ACT) within means and capabilities,
- Assist the Afghans to educate, train and inspire all students in order that each graduate is a competent, courageous and honourable officer/NCO/soldier in the ANA Logistic Corps,
- With funds related to the AFG/GER bilateral contract and funds coming from the Afghan Trust Fund, support the build up of the required infrastructure of the ANA CSS School.

EXPERIENCES OF HLMT INTEGRATED INTO GAFTAG

The main task of the HLMT as a relevant new element of GAFTAG was to mentorize ACT (Advance Combat Training) division of proposal part of CSS school conducting five specializations: driving, cooking, transportation, maintenance and supply (it means storage-management and documentation) on a temporary established training area that was not completed concerning accommodation, real life support aspects (kitchen, sanitary containers, and training aid-material aspects (fuel, models, transparent). The aim of ACT is to teach basic logistic skills in order to achieve individual training preparation for logistic soldiers before they get there first operational assignment to units.

The main principles determined mentor activity of HLMT:

- Afghans train Afghans, the mentors just advise, check and supervise.
- Pairing mentors with Afghan key personnel: the team is composed of three persons: the mentor, the mentee and the interpreter (Hungarian did not have Hungarian/Pastu-dari interpreters so it was necessary to deal a contract with local workers who could translate from English to Dari-Pastu).
- Common development of mission training plans, training intentions, training documents and aids. (It was difficult to establish German based training programmes because they are different from Hungarian Military terminology and structure. Using technology and logistic chain made the planning process more difficult because they based on American system so the first priority to assign Hungarian mentors was the language skills and knowledge of American military logistic system.)
- Development cooperation of basics, procedures and regulations of logistic(doctrine),
- Training in methods and didactics of education and principles of adult education, improvement of the professional knowledge ANA trainers

The main aspects and experiences determined mentor activity of HLMT:

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Generally:

- ACT is an individual special training not involving unit-training requirements.
- The training focuses not only on training process, but on some operation tasks of the base and sustenance of general military order and discipline.
- The mentor activity does not involve procurement of materials and tools for operating the base, design the budget, financial management, replacement of missing materials rooted from damage, but the mentors have to sign commitment towards German responsible officers concerning the mentioned issues.
- The mentors do not have an opportunity to encroach in Afghan personal decisions
- To sustain discipline is allowed by Afghan commander of the base, mentors must not order Afghan soldiers.
- Every mentor is responsible for all the trainers in his sections and achieving of training aims.

Trainers related:

- According to assessments of trainers they are good-performed concerning professional skills but in point of sustaining discipline and military order trainers are not on sufficient and expected level. It must be improved!
- Their skills for solving of problems are not completed so they need the assistance of mentors
- Documentary system is incomplete, material management and the kept record-system is disordered, chaotic.

Students related:

- The students are privates who got over basic warrior training their tribal-composition need at least two interpreters (dari and pastu) during the training.
- Their selection and differentiation dispense with skill-based system, the training input requirements (writing-reading skills, pre-qualification) are not kept. Most of them cannot write and read, the level of their motivation is very low by reason of cultural roots. This attitude exists mainly on cooking specialization along of Pastu traditions by which to cook is a female role.
- The students aren't used to theoretical training; they can sustain concentration maximum for 40 minutes after that their concentration abilities decrease rapidly. So to choose the training method is very important and sensitive aspect of the mentor activity that can determine three way poles during the training: emphasizing of visual and practical method, permanent repetition and award.

Summarized the past six months I guess that this mission could achieve the prior aims and got experiences the members of this mission proved the high-level performance of Hungarian soldiers worked in a multinational team trained Afghan soldiers in a different culture of a warzone.

Keywords: logistic training, logistic specializations, logistic mentor team

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- [1] CTAG-A OPORD 09-001 Update 6, 2010, Afghanistan
- [2] CSS School Handbook, 2010, German Armed Force Technical Advisory Group, Afghanistan