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ASPECT OF CONTRACTOR SUPPORT TO OPERATIONS FOR OPERATION PLANNING PROCESS

A MŰVELETTÁMOGATÓ BESZÁLLÍTÓK ALKALMAZÁSÁNAK SZEMPONTJAI A MŰVELETEK TERVEZÉSI FOLYAMATÁBAN

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Abstract

Before military power will be used for any kind of purposes, the operational commander supported by the staff starts planning the future operation. In the steps of planning process they have to consider many aspects; one of the questions must be answered how to support combat forces during the operations. If we look deeper inside of the question, we can identify a lot of potential solution for this question, based on different NATO and EU doctrines. Nowadays, the Contractor Support to Operations becomes one of the more and more popular solutions for the provision of different modes of logistic support that military forces need to conduct the operation.

Keywords: Contractor Support to Operations, operation planning process

Absztrakt

Katonai erő bármilyen célra való alkalmazását megelőzően a törzs támogatása mellett a műveleti parancsnok megkezdi a jövőbeni művelet tervezését. A tervezési eljárás lépései alatt számtalan aspektust kell figyelembe venniük; az egyik fontos megválaszolandó kérdés a műveletet végrehajtó erők logisztikai támogatásának módjára vonatkozik. A kérdés mélyebb elemzése során, figyelemmel a vonatkozó NATO és

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EU doktrínák tartalmára, több lehetséges megoldást találhatunk. Napjainkban a művelettámogató beszállítók alkalmazása egyre nagyobb népszerűségnek örvend a katonai művelet végrehajtásához szükséges logisztikai támogatás nyújtása területén.

Kulcsszavak: Művelettámogató beszállítók, Művelettervezési eljárás

Introduction

The military forces need different modes of support to conduct combat activity in the designated Joint Operation Area (JOA). There are many factors that the commander and the staff must take into consideration during the Operation Planning Process (OPP) to synchronise the military activities according to the lines of operation. The actions of the military units cause effects to create the conditions in the operational environment into the directions of the desired end states. The military actions of the forces need proper and synchronized logistic support in time and space. The Contractor Support to Operations (CSO) in the field of logistics is more and more important nowadays, just consider the emerging technologies, the exploding development of the information technology, and the appearance of the modern weapon systems. The latest developed systems need special knowledge and experience that are sometimes available only in the civilian sector. This article does not want to analyse neither OPP nor the CSO, but I would like to highlight some of the aspects between them.

Planning the military operation

When the staff at any leading level starts developing a plan for the future mission, the commander and the operation planning staff start analysing the given tasks, the operational environment and framing the problem. The next challenges are the development of different Courses of Actions (COA) to solve the problem and the approval of the proposed COA. As mentioned before, there is a very important question that must be answered during the decision-making process; how the proper logistic support will be provided for the troops? The provision of the adequate logistics support is a very complex process involving many stakeholders, forming an interconnected system or Joint Logistics Support Network (JLSN) including the activities, infrastructure and routes

linking them. The available resources, characteristics of the operation (size, duration and tempo) and terrain determine this network as well.

The information and data about the operational area also have an impact on the design of this network. The Operational Liaison and Reconnaissance Team (OLRT) or the Joint Logistic Reconnaissance Team (JLRT) provides data more frequently about the environment of future military actions. The planning teams are facing unanswered questions during the process, they formulate a series of Request for Information (RFIs) to these teams deployed into the future operational area to find right answers during the process. The list of requests contains questions regarding the potential logistic resources both military and commercial. There are many factors having influence on the applicability of the commercial logistic solutions or CSO. These factors can be the potential resource, the characteristics of the operation and the possible threats in the operational environment.

Summarising the paragraph above, the logistic support network is to synchronise all logistic functions in the operational area determined during the OPP based on the data and information provided by the reconnaissance teams. This network contains all logistic resources available for the units, so the CSO can be part of it. That is why the JLSN represents a point of contacts between the OPP and CSO. The network has an area where the elements have responsibility for the support of forces, and an influence area where the CSO and other organisations have impact on the logistic support. The JLSN is described in the Figure 1.

Without going deeply inside of the NATO OPP, we cannot avoid pointing out something about it. Generally, there are two main categories of the NATO's plans, the Defence Planning to build capabilities for the future challenges and the Operation Planning for the current tasks and crisis response to prepare the forces to execute the allied operations. For governing the planning process, NATO uses its own Comprehensive Operation Planning Directive (COPD) to support the other functional areas, it uses Functional Planning Guidance (FPG) to cover each area.

The aim of this article is to demonstrate the points of contacts between OPP and CSO according to JLSN focussing on the logistic functional area. Regarding the NATO policy, the nations and the NATO organisations should provide the logistic resources in peace, crisis or in conflict as well. Following this responsibility, the staff during the OPP

has to identify the required logistic resources and capabilities for the deployment, sustainment and redeployment of the allied forces consulting with the nations and other relevant actors including the contractors.

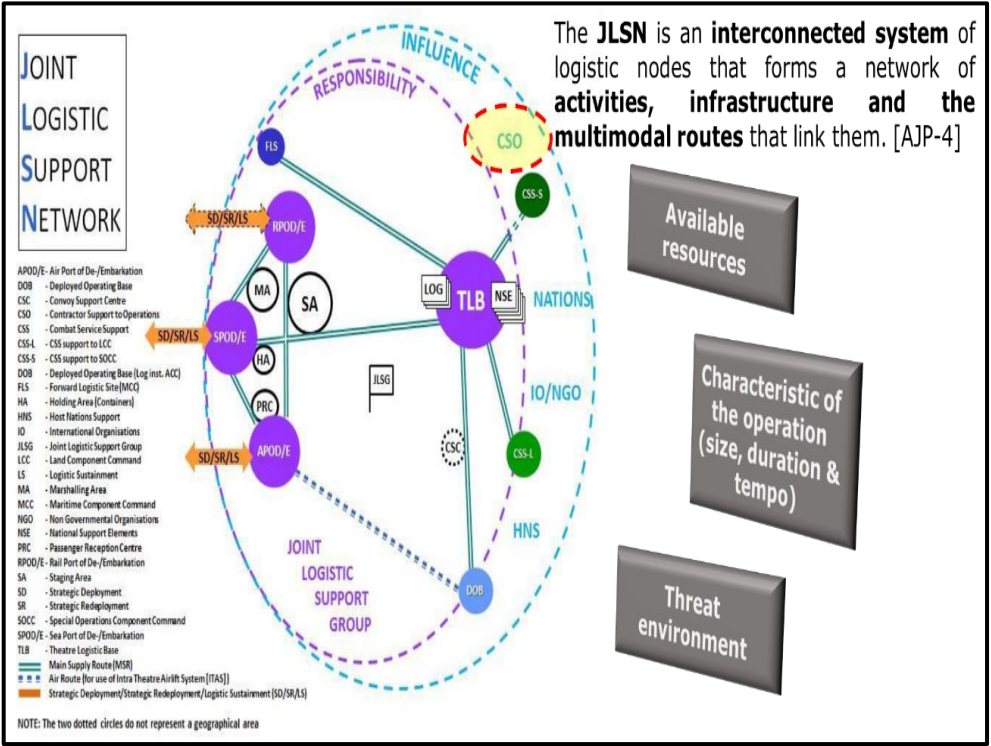


Figure 1: The Joint Logistic Support Network [5, 1-6]
(Complemented by the author)

Modes of multinational logistic support

The military operations need proper provision of different modes of logistic support to achieve the campaign objects. In a real multinational environment, during a NATO operation, this support consists of both national and multinational solutions. The modes of possible support versions are depicted in Figure 2. The core item of the logistic planning is always a primacy of operational requirement, and the implemented solution is usually a mixture of these modes provided by the elements of JLSN. Practically, on one hand, the CSO recently becomes more and more important taking the changeable security environment into consideration, on the other hand, the military logistic planners have to

reduce the logistic footprint, and the cost of sustaining operations, avoiding the deployment of logistic assets in parallel.

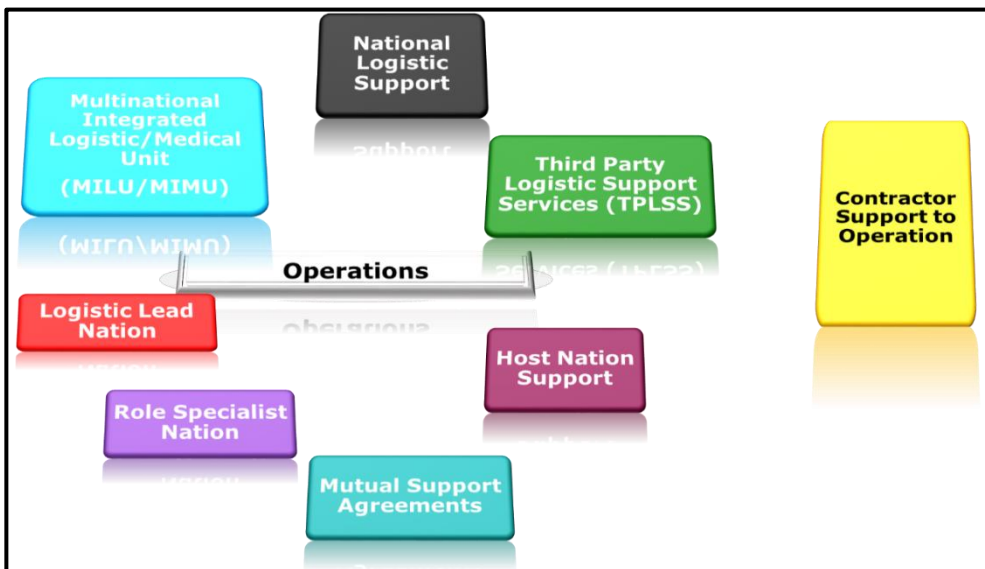


Figure 2: Modes of Multinational Logistic Support
(Compiled by the author)

Contractor Support to Operations

The importance of the CSO has been proven by a wide range of national and organizational policies. The European Union, the NATO, the United States of America, and the United Kingdom also have their own principles and policies that apply to peace, crisis and conflict implement during exercise and operation. Following the way of thinking related the connection between the OPP and CSO, please let me cite different terms that describes the CSO.

For example, the European Union (EU) concept mentions that the adequate military logistics complemented and reinforced by civilian capabilities and resources are essential to meet with the necessary flexibility the broad range of operational requirements that Common Security and Defence Policy operations may involve. Following to explain the CSO as a method of support that has become vital for all type of military operations, e.g. in the field of logistics. The fact that forces of EU member states are reducing their organic military capacities and the potential host nations may have limited capabilities to provide Host

Nation Support (HNS) can lead to an increased need for CSO. The concept also notes that the contractor support in EU-led military operations mainly focuses on logistic support functions; but in general, it can provide an essential part of the support to the military. [1, 9]

The other approach to the CSO is the method of the United States of America. The cited Joint Publication mentions the Contractor Logistic Support (CLS) and the Interim Contractor Support (ICS). They characteristically represent other sources of logistic support and are integral to provide service and material solutions to the warfighter for sustained operations. The ICS provides temporary contractor support instead of the organic capability for a predetermined time allowing a Service to defer investment in all or some required support resources while an organic support capability phased in. For the effectiveness, CLS/ICS must be planned and coordinated, so that usage requirements are tracked, accountability is maintained, and tactical distribution requirement are met. [2, 38]

The United Kingdom doctrine mentions the CSO process as an integral part of logistics and movement and transportation planning should provide advice for the planning of commercial logistics support options and solutions in support of the preparation, planning and conduct of operations. [3,136] Based on this short sentence, we can state that the CSO is an important part of the OPP, and the logistic planning process conducted in parallel with it.

Summarising the paragraphs above the CSO may be defined as a competent commercial solution to provide support to the military forces based on the support requirement of the operational commander and can be a right tool to optimise the use of resources in the most efficient and effective way. The basis of the provision of the CSO is a contract.

Logistic planning

The logistic estimate is an integral part of the OPP. The logistic planners have to pay attention to several planning factors affecting the logistic support of military operations. At the end of the planning procedures, all the events must be synchronised and organized in a proper way to conduct military operations very successfully. In a multinational environment like NATO, synchronisation and optimisation have a critical role in all parts of mission planning, but in the field of logistics it is

a focal point. The nations and NATO must ensure (individually and collectively) the provision of logistic resources to support the Allied forces during peace, crisis and conflict. The logistic planners have to be able to identify the civil and military logistic resources and capabilities required to deploy, sustain and redeploy Allied forces to match NATO's Level of Ambitions and carried out by the Strategic Commands in a close consultation with nations or other relevant actors, like contractors according to the phases of the military planning.

Planning phases and the CSO

The NATO COPD provides a guidance about the planning phases of the military operations at all leading level of the Alliance. Figure 3 describes the strategic and operational level planning phases but focuses only on the connection points between phases and CSO based on the possible involvement of the logistic planners related to the contracted services.

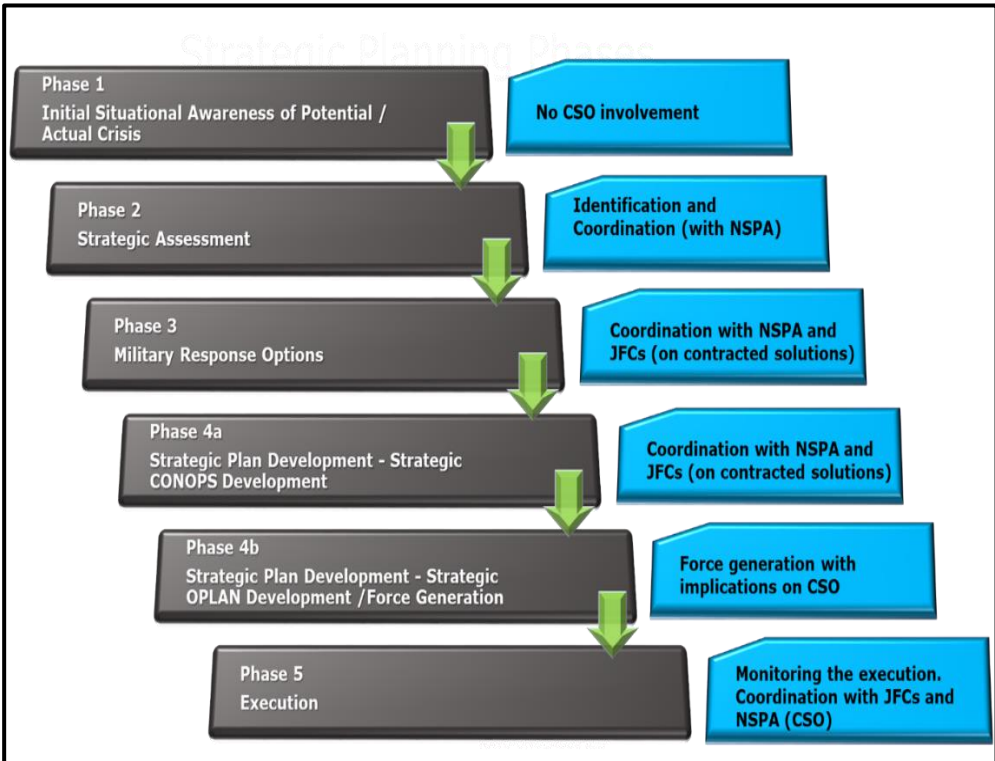


Figure 3: Planning Phases and Contractor Support to Operation
(Compiled by the author)

Phase 1 assists to identify the relevant emerging crisis, and to support Nord Atlantic Council and the NATO Headquarters staff in their NATO Crisis Management Process. In this early stage of the military planning there is not any CSO related issue.

When the staff steps to phase 2, the logistic planners have to identify all of the logistic requirement and limitations in close coordination with the NATO Support and Procurement Agency (NSPA) on the Basic Contractual Instrument and the potential contracted support solutions.

The aim of phase 3 is to develop a logistically supportable Military Response Option determining the requirements of the Strategic Lift, theatre logistics, medical, engineering, host nation support and other outside agencies, coordinated with the NSPA and the Joint Force Command (JFC) assigned for the given operation.

Phase 4 is divided into two sub-phases, one for development of the Concept of Operation (CONOPS), the other for the Operation Plan (OPLAN). The aim of these phases are to design the logistic architecture. To achieve this goal, the logistic planners have to analyse the key logistic factors and review the method of logistic support agreement regarding the multinational, host nation support, lead nation, role specialised nation and the CSO in close coordination with the NSPA as the appointed Contract Integrator for NATO operations. The contractor support is a part of the logistic concept (CONLOG) of the CONOPS. During this phase, the NSPA starts to develop the potential contracted solutions referring to the requirement set up earlier. This phase also provides a timeframe to the Force Generation process as well, that has also implication on the CSO involvement to fulfil the shortfalls of the force generations.

Phase 5 described in figure 3 is the execution phase of an approved military operation. The logistic subject matter experts have to monitor the ongoing logistic tasks, coordinate the implementation of contracted solutions with the JFCs and NSPA focusing on deployment and sustainment of the forces contributing to the Recognized Logistic Picture (RLP) of the given operation.

Finally, in phase 6 as Transition, the logistic planners are focussing mainly on redeployment of Allied forces.

The keywords of logistic support are the Deployment, Sustainment and the Redeployment of the forces.

The mode of logistic support, including commercial solutions as well, based on the requirements and limitations of logistic support.

Contractor Support to Operations in NATO

After this short overview on the topic, I would like to focus on the NATO CSO policy. Firstly, let me introduce, how CSO is defined in the Alliance. The most important Allied Joint Doctrine for logistics says that CSO is the use of pre-planned or ad hoc contracted commercial support to operations in order to perform selected logistic support services. It enables industry to provide certain aspects of logistic support based on the supply of goods and services not available through force generation (note by the author: NATO OPP, Phase 4.b). This enables NATO commanders and the Troop Contributing Nations to optimize the use of military resources and capabilities in situations where commercial solutions can be deployed based on the level of threat and available security. [5, 63]

To sum up, it can be stated that CSO is a pre-planned or ad hoc commercial support to the forces in the field of selected logistic support services, which gives the possibility to the industry to provide materials and services to the combined forces when some shortfalls remain during the NATO force generating process (NATO OPP, Phase 4.b). Also, the CSO provides another option to optimize the military resources where the commercial support is available, and the threat environment allows to use the CSO.

Furthermore, the CSO as a force multiplier has high value for example to the deployment of the forces with a short notice. As it was mentioned by Brigadier General Bellini about the deployment of the forces „Getting there is half of the battle!”² Nonetheless, of course the commercial services can be used for the sustainment phase mainly when the situation has been stabilized and the threat is getting lower. From the point of view of the forces it allows to release the military manpower and can provide more comfortable military installations for the longer missions instead of the austere facilities for the Alliance Operations and Missions. An example, Camp Novo Selo in Kosovo, where the NSPA as a contract integrator provides the full spectrum of camp services for

² BG Bellini Mark A – Consideration for Deployment of Forces U.S. Army War College, March 1991.

the inhabitant nations in the framework of KFOR³ sharing the cost by boots on the ground.

The commercial support could be used as a pre-planned solution under the national or NATO arrangements, where the NSPA is the contract integrator to provide logistic support for the NATO Headquarters on short notice. The NSPA provides services to the NATO HQs and under special circumstances to the NATO nations as well, based on the existing Rapid Usable Enablement Contract (RUEC) for exclusive use of Allied Command Operation (ACO) with the possibility of use by the nations having the permission of Supreme Allied Commander Europe (SACEUR). On the other hand, for responding to unforeseen requirements during the operations the Ad hoc contracting can be used, but this way has a risk to increase the cost of provided services.

The related NATO Military Committee policy says, that the CSO is the use of pre-planned and/or ad hoc commercial contracts developed and run by the applicable military headquarters or through NATO agencies, that are entitled to perform required activities to support efforts of military forces. The commercial support comes into account when the military capability is not available (shortfalls in force generation), or the contractors have the capability to provide the given services in a cost-effective manner. [4, 4] The NATO always analyses how military effects could be delivered in economic ways. One of the possible options to reduce the logistic footprint is the use of contracted solutions to allow faster deployment of the forces. During a long-term military engagement, the military forces need the rotation causing disadvantages in the field of experience and continuity. In this case, the contracted services represent good solutions to avoid these limitations. Another aspect for using a CSO is, when the military forces initiate a CIMIC⁴ project to support the military operations or the operation reaches the desired end-state.

Under these circumstances, the planners should take into consideration to use contracted solutions for delivering services in order to fulfil the military tasks but also to reduce the cost. For that reason, the CSO could provide a few tools for the planners. Figure 4. shows the potential and feasible type or forms of the contracts.

³ Kosovo Forces, NATO peace support mission launched in 1999 under the United Nation Security Council Resolution 1244. Approximately 3700 troops of 28 country as of 08. 06. 2022, <https://jfcnaples.nato.int/kfor/about-us/welcome-to-kfor/contributing-nations>.

⁴ In this context: Civil-Military Cooperation

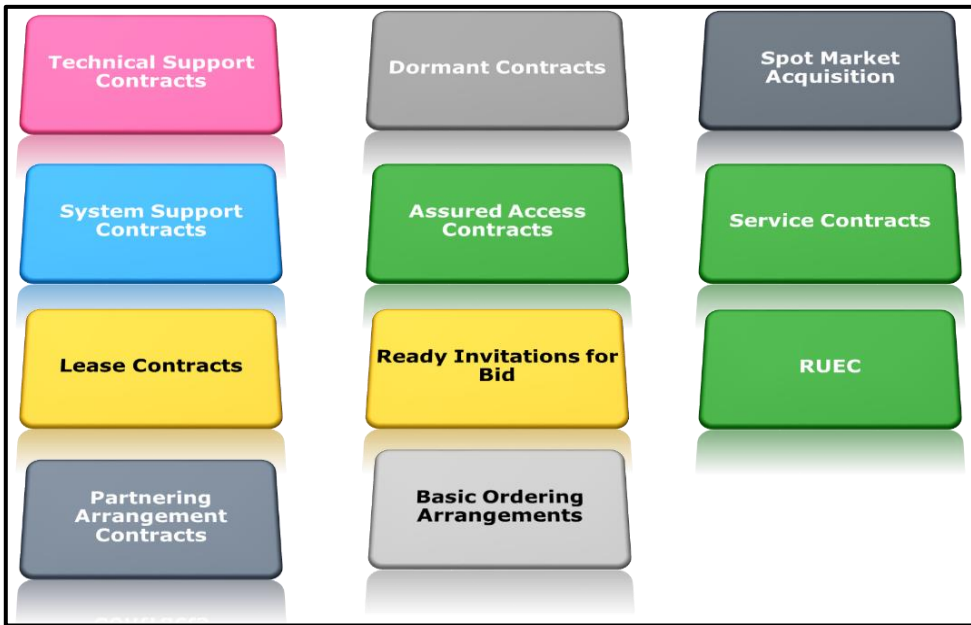


Figure 4: Forms of Contracts
(Compiled by the author)

The Technical Support Contracts can provide an existing capability (technical advice or support) of industry specialist directly on the spot where the assets and military forces are used. Sometimes the contracts contain the maintenance of the weapon system delivered by contractor logistic service. Under these type of services, the industrial partners can provide the maintenance for the entire life cycle of the equipment or a part of it. For a temporary use of some property, the lease contracts can provide real property to the military forces on a cost-effective way with an option to buy them at the end of the period. The partnering arrangement for a long period creates the opportunity to use sub-contractors for a given individual elements of the required support. The dormant contracts and the assured access contract can be a right way to have contracted goods or services only when they become required. The Ready Invitations for Bid (RIFB) contracts are prepared and current, but without the involvement of potential contractors. They get them just in case of the requirement is needed. The Basic Ordering Arrangement (BOA) mainly the means of NATO agency, where a call-off capability is important. For instance, BOA is part of a framework agreement for an individual element. If the goods are continuously available in the market, the spot market acquisition can be one of the potential solutions to fulfil the requirement. Such a long term AOM⁵ as

⁵ In this context: Allied Operations and Missions

the KFOR is, the service contract can provide the required services in the field of real-life support (APOD⁶, fuel supply) after an international competition. The RUEC contract provides a flexible pre-arranged way for provision of time or mission critical logistic, infrastructure, engineering and or medical services at high readiness on a cost recovery basis.

Risk of the CSO involvement

After the short overview of the military planning and involvement of CSO in the military operations, we have to take a look at the disadvantages of the commercial solutions as well. The risk management is a vital part of the operations planning to protect the military power and capabilities in the operational areas. Although employment of contractors in enduring operations has the benefit to release military force from the tasks in a less dangerous environment, can jeopardize the military power in a short and long terms as well. This kind of effects should be handled by using the risk management. This is a process of identifying, assessing and controlling threats to an organization, in our case to the military forces. The risks can come from a variety of sources including financial uncertainties, legal liabilities, technological issues, accidents or natural disasters. Employing contractors in the operational area means that non-military persons will appear in the military installations causing risks. Among short time risks, you can find the interoperability of the contracted personnel. The lack of knowledge in the field of military support concepts, doctrines and procedures, the compatibility of the equipment and the interchangeability of supplies have direct impact on the sustainability and combat effectiveness. As part of the command and control system, the commander of military forces should maintain the appropriate level of coordination with the contractors on the support activities of NATO funds contracts. As the commanders have responsibility for the logistic support of the assigned forces, they need also the authority and the visibility them to have influence on the logistic support system as well. When nations fund the contract, the relationship between the NATO commander and contractor has to be based on the agreement of NATO and nations as a part of command and control system developed for the operation. For that reason, the legal status is also an important aspect of the usage of contractors in the operational area. The legal status of them depends on the nature of operations, and normally shall not perform private security functions.

⁶ In this context: Aerial Port of Debarkation

Generally speaking, their status could be governed by the host nation law or by the status of forces agreement developed for the given operations. In a long-term risk, caused by the usage of commercial solutions instead of military capabilities is the reduced number of military assets offered by the nations during the force generation process. In this case, the nation's decisions to use contractors instead of military assets, these potential commercial solutions can jeopardize the force planning, and causing the cutback of military capabilities.

In general, among the potential risks of usage of contractors for support military operations, the operational security is a sensitive area. This risk appears both on operational level in form of contractors' detailed knowledge of military plans and intentions, and on the tactical level as well, where contracted personnel can observe local military capabilities and actual activities. The operational level risk can be accepted in the case of strategic deployment where contractors can play an important role for a long period. The risks on tactical level can be lower when the contractors' nationality are the same as the troop provider nations, and it can be higher in case of a host-country or third country contractors. In this case, this personnel is needed to be monitored frequently.

Summary

The military operations need robust logistic support. The OPP determines the required force structure and capabilities of the mission. Planning of the operation needs an integrated logistic support planning to have the proper level of resources in the operational area involving commercial solutions as well identified in an early stage of planning. The commercial solutions consist of different type of contracts, that were made and tailored to fit different circumstances and they can also have advantages and disadvantages for the military forces. The planners must take both the cost and benefit into consideration in order to offer the best solutions to the decision makers during the planning process as it is detailed in this article. The contracted solutions are an important part of the military operations, a right way to reduce the effective cost of a military operation, it can be a right force multiplayer, but can never take over the role of military manpower and cut the military power off from its capabilities. The planners should identify the contractors' related risks and they should manage it according to the importance of operational security issues.

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