

THE STRATEGIC VISION FOR DEFENCE

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Abbreviations

3D	Diplomacy, Development, Defence
3D-L&O	Diplomacy, Development, Defence and Law & Order
AAR	Air-to-Air Refuelling
ABNL	Admiral BeNeLux
ACC	Air Component Commander
ACO	Allied Command Operations (SHAPE)
ACT	Allied Command Transformation
ADIV	General Intelligence and Security Service (<i>Algemene Dienst Inlichting en Veiligheid</i>)
AGS	Alliance Ground Surveillance
AIV	Armoured Infantry Vehicle
AJP	Allied Joint Publication
ASD	Aviation Safety Directorate
ATCC	Air Traffic Control Centre
ATS	Administrative and Technical Secretariat
AWACS	Airborne Warning and Control System
BDL	Short-term (<i>Beperkte Duur/Durée Limitée</i>)
BELPO	BELgian federal Science Policy Office
BENESAM	Belgian-Dutch Naval Cooperation (<i>BElgisch-NEderlandse marineSAMenwerking</i>)
BEST	BELgian Soldier Transformation
B-FAST	Belgian First Aid & Support Team
BMD	Ballistic Missile Defence
BMDOC	BMD Operations Centre
BRIC	Brazil, Russia, India & China
C3	Command, Control & Communication
C4	Command, Control, Communication, Computer
CAOC	Combined Air Operations Centre
CAS	Close Air Support

CBRN	Chemical, Biological, Radiological, Nuclear
CDP	Capability Development Plan
CDSCA	Central Office for Social and Cultural Action (<i>Centrale Dienst voor Sociale en Culturele Actie</i>)
CICP	Commonality & Interoperability Consolidation Programme
C-IED	Counter-Improvised Explosive Device
CIMIC	Civil-Military Cooperation
CIS	Communications and Information Systems
CMRE	Centre for Maritime Research and Experimentation
CMT	Tripartite Class Mine Hunter (<i>Chasseur de Mines Tripartite</i>)
CPV	Coastal Patrol Vessel
CRC	Control and Reporting Centre
CSDP	Common Security and Defence Policy
CSO	Optical Space Component (<i>Composante Spatiale Optique</i>)
CSOC	Cyber Security Operations Centre
C-SOCC	Composite Special Operations Component Command
CSW	Confined and Shallow Waters
DIRS	Defence, Industry and Research Strategy
DLD	Defence Laboratories Department
DOVO	Explosive Ordnance Disposal Service (<i>Dienst voor Opruiming en Vernietiging van Ontploffingstuigen</i>)
EAI	European Amphibious Initiative
EATC	European Air Transport Command
EDA	European Defence Agency
EEA	European Economic Area
EGUERMIN	Naval Mine Warfare School (<i>École de GUERre des MINes</i>)
EOD	Explosive Ordnance Disposal
EODS	Explosive Ordnance Disposal Service
EPRC	European Personnel Recovery Centre
ERJ	Embraer Regional Jet
ESA	European System of Accounts
EU	European Union

EUBG	European Union Battle Group
FAC	Forward Air Controller
FNC	Framework Nations Concept
FST	Forward Surgical Team
FTE	Full-Time Equivalent
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
HALE	High Altitude Long Endurance
HRF-M	High Readiness Forces-Maritime
HSE	Hazardous Site Evaluation
HUMINT	HUMan INTelligence
HZIV	Auxiliary Sickness & Invalidity Insurance Fund (<i>Hulpkas voor Ziekten Invaliditeits Verzekering</i>)
ICT	Information and Communication Technologies
IED	Improvised Explosive Device
IKE	Multiservice Kennel Unit (<i>Intermachten Kennel Eenheid</i>)
IMINT	IMagery INTelligence
IS	International Staff
IS	Islamic State
ISAF	International Security Assistance Force
ISR	Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance
ISTAR	Intelligence, Surveillance, Target Acquisition and Reconnaissance
ISTC	International Special Training Centre
IV-NIOOO	Institute for Veterans - National Institute for War Invalids, War Veterans and War Victims (<i>Instituut voor Veteranen - Nationaal Instituut voor Oorlogsinvaliden, Oud-strijders en Oorlogsslachtoffers</i>)
JAPCC	Joint Air Power Competence Centre
JFC	Joint Forces Command
JSS	Joint logistic Support Ship
KLM	Royal Museum of the Armed Forces (<i>Koninklijk LegerMuseum</i>)
KMS	Royal Military Academy (<i>Koninklijke Militaire School</i>)
KSOO	Royal Academy for Non-Commissioned Officers (<i>Koninklijke School voor Onderofficieren</i>)

LCF	Air Defence and Command Frigate (<i>Luchtverdedigings- en CommandoFregat</i>)
LIInK	Air Information Hub (<i>Lucht Informatie Kruispunt</i>)
LMV	Light Multirole Vehicle
LPD	Landing Platform Dock
LTTV	Light Troop Transport Vehicle
MALE	Medium Altitude Long Endurance
MARSUR	MARitime SURveillance
MCG	Movement Control Group
MCM	Mine CounterMeasures
MIK	Maritime Information Hub (<i>Maritiem Informatie Kruispunt</i>)
MNFP	Multi-National Fighter Program
MOD	Ministry of Defence
MPPV	Multi Purpose Protected Vehicle
MRTT	MultiRole Tanker Transport
MSA	Maritime Situational Awareness
MSO	Maritime Security Operations
MUG	Emergency medical services (<i>Mobiele UrgentieGroep</i>)
NAHEMA	NATO Helicopter for the 1990s Design and Development, Production and Logistics Management Agency
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NCIA	NATO Communications and Information Agency
NDC	NATO Defence College
NDPP	NATO Defence Planning Process
NEO	Non-combatant Evacuation Operation
NFH	NATO Frigate Helicopter
NGI	National Geographic Institute
NRF	NATO Response Force
NSPA	NATO Support and Procurement Agency
OCCAR	Organisation for Joint Armament Cooperation (<i>Organisation Conjointe de Coopération en matière d'Armement</i>)
OEM	Original Equipment Manufacturer

OSCE	Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe
OSINT	Open Source INTelligence
QRA	Quick Reaction Alert
R&D	Research and Development
R&T	Research and Technology
RDOIT	Rapid Deployable Outbreak Investigation Team
REMUS	Remote Environmental Monitoring Unit System
RHID	Royal Higher Institute for Defence
ROV	Remotely Operated Vehicle
RRV	Rapid Reaction Vehicle
SAR	Search And Rescue
SFSG	Special Forces Support Group
SHAPE	Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe
SIBCRA	Sampling and Identification of Chemical, Biological, Radiological and nuclear Agents
SIGINT	SIGnal INTelligence
SOCOM	Special Operations COMmand
SOF	Special Operations Forces
STOL	Short TakeOff and Landing
SWIFT	Society for Worldwide Interbank Financial Telecommunication
TFEU	Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union
TSS	Territorial Support Service
UAS	Unmanned Aerial System
UAV	Unmanned Aerial Vehicle
UN	United Nations
UNIFIL	United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon
USV	Unmanned Surface Vehicle
UUV	Unmanned Underwater Vehicle
VJTF	Very High Readiness Joint Task Force
VSW	Very Shallow Water
Zr. Ms.	His Majesty's (<i>Zijner Majesteits</i>)

Foreword by the Minister of Defence



Dear Reader,

My Government colleagues and I have favoured a positive vision of the future of Belgian Defence. I firmly believe that accomplishing this strategic vision will ensure the security and freedom of all Belgians on a long-term basis and will largely contribute to our prosperity and well-being. This vision of the future also strengthens the Euro-Atlantic anchoring of Belgian Defence. Since the end of the Second World War this anchoring has guaranteed our security and that of all our European and trans-Atlantic fellow citizens.

In May 2015, I presented a strategic vision note to my Government colleagues on the future of Defence up to 2030. We immediately agreed on my analysis of the (future) Belgian security environment that you will find hereafter in the first chapter. Based on this note, my collaborators, the experts of my fellow ministers, and the Defence Staff have worked hard on different possible scenarios for the future of Belgian Defence, inspired by ideas coming from the Parliament and the academic world. On 22 December 2015, the Federal Government took the decisions of principle¹ that were necessary to draw up this strategic vision and the Preamble by the Government² accompanying this strategic vision.

I am proud of what we have achieved!

This vision honours the Government agreement which stated: “The Government will again provide the army with the means needed to perform its tasks properly.”

A Defence of 25,000 full-time equivalents in 2030 has been chosen. The defence personnel of the future will focus even more on the military specific tasks and as such the core business of Defence. They will be increasingly supported by civilian service providers to do so. Combined with a strong rejuvenation, this evolution will boost the operational readiness of Defence. The Government also opted for a budgetary path that must lead to a healthy balance between personnel costs, operating costs and investments in 2030 and that will release an investment budget of 9.4 billion euros³ for the Belgian military capabilities up to 2030. Our future capabilities will enable us to accomplish our multilateral solidarity and our will to contribute to a more European defence.

¹ See Annex A.

² See Annex B.

³ 2015 euros.

The decision path leading to this strategic vision for Defence proceeded step by step. Taking into account the different political visions, we have succeeded in creating positive prospects for Defence and hence for its key stakeholder, i.e. the Belgian population, as well. Investing in Defence is an intergenerational issue. The decisions taken by this Government will also have an impact on the security of future generations.

This strategic vision offers the defence personnel the prospect of a modern and efficient organisation with opportunities for everyone. It offers the prospect of a Defence able to maintain a broadly deployable toolbox for the purpose of the defence policy of current and future Governments. It offers the prospect of a Defence based on multilateral solidarity towards NATO, the EU and the UN. It offers the prospect of a Defence committed to supporting the building of a more European defence. And last but not least, the strategic vision offers the prospect of a Defence which plays an important role in defending the security, the freedom, the prosperity and the well-being of all Belgian citizens.

Once again I would like to express my sincere thanks to everybody who helped in bringing about this historical turning point for Defence: my fellow politicians, members of Parliament, my Defence Staff, academics, the members of my private office ... During this term of office we will start the practical realisation of this vision which will also remain a guide for future Governments.

Finally, I wish you a pleasant reading of the strategic vision for Belgian Defence towards 2030.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'S. Vandepuut', written over a horizontal line that extends to the right.

Steven Vandepuut
Minister of Defence



Introduction

This strategic vision is based on a general framework, namely a Defence of 25,000 Full Time Equivalents (FTE) and a budget for investments in major equipment of 9.4 billion euros⁴ (2015 euros) until 2030. Furthermore, this vision is built around 9 principles described in Annex A. Besides the analysis of our security environment (approved in May 2015) which clearly points out the security challenges for our country, these principles form the guiding thread of this strategic vision. **The first chapter** of this vision thus includes the analysis of the security environment with updated figures.

This document determines the capability portfolio⁵ for our Defence towards 2030, within the investment budget and the personnel envelope. Three intermediary chapters, each of them structured around a number of specific principles, are the steppingstones from the security environment to the description of the future capabilities.

Chapter two highlights principles no. 1 and 3a. Principle no. 1 clearly determines the core tasks of Defence, namely collective defence, collective security and the protection of Belgian citizens all over the world. Principle no. 3a underlines that the capabilities of Belgian Defence should allow it to perform the core tasks in an appropriate way. Chapter 2 thus sketches the outlines for the capabilities starting from the different core tasks our Defence has to carry out in the security environment.

In order to carry out the supporting role of Defence within the framework of internal security, it is important that Defence strives to intensify cooperation with the national security actors. This will strengthen interdepartmental efficiency on the national territory (principle no. 6). A part of this chapter is dedicated to the optimisation of this support.

Chapter three addresses the political will to maintain a pioneering role for a more European defence. This willingness is to be found in principle no. 3c which states that our country should



This strategic vision is based on 25,000 Full Time Equivalents (FTE) and a budget for investments in major equipment of 9.4 billion euros (2015 euros) until 2030.

⁴ All figures referred to in this document are in constant 2015 euros.


⁵ According to NATO, a military capability includes the following Lines of Development: doctrine (how to employ military means, e.g. the combined air-ground engagement during a military campaign), organisation (organisation in the event of engagement, e.g. a combined arms Battlegroup), training (how the operational preparation is done for these means), materiel (all material aspects needed by the military forces in order to operate effectively, e.g. weapons and spare parts), leadership and education (how superiors are trained for operations at different levels within the armed forces and the necessary training in order to engage personnel and deploy materiel), personnel (availability of qualified personnel for engagement and support), infrastructure (immovable property like military quarters and training facilities for supporting the armed forces) and interoperability (the possibility to engage our own armed forces with those of other NATO member states).

participate in filling European capability gaps⁶. Principle no. 6 follows suit, as it proposes elaborate forms of international cooperation in support of a more European defence policy. The security environment clearly shows the need for a greater European military autonomy, both in matters of policy and in the field of capabilities. This ambition has immediately visible consequences for the future capability portfolio of Defence.

Chapter four describes the importance of a recapitalisation of Defence that is based on multilateral solidarity, and the way it will improve the internal budgetary balance of the defence effort by 2030. It is essential that Defence should be given sufficient investment budgets if it wants to further take part in generating multilateral security in the future. In addition to this, the necessary operational resources and personnel budgets should be released in order to sufficiently contribute to the multilateral Euro-Atlantic burden-sharing within the framework of collective defence and collective security. Principles no. 2, 3b and 3d hint at this need when underlining the necessity for a defence budget based on multilateral solidarity for a capability output in line with multilateral solidarity. They also refer to a balanced internal costs structure for Defence.

Chapter five details the capability portfolio by 2030.

A balance between the military capabilities, based on the three core tasks, is defined in principle no. 3a. Principle no. 3b then provides for a balance among the four capability dimensions (intelligence-cyber-influence, land, air, maritime) with at least one credible and sustainably deployable combat capability per dimension. Principle no. 3e introduces additional equilibriums by also laying stress on non-kinetic and civil-military capabilities.



This document determines the capability portfolio for our Defence towards 2030, within the investment budget and the personnel envelope.

The emphasis put on the strategic support capabilities of this capability portfolio – which, most of the time, correspond to European capability gaps (principle no. 3c) – has already been mentioned above. With this capability portfolio, Defence has a clear heading for the long term, towards 2030. The following chapters will give the necessary guidance for the implementation of this strategic vision, based on the other principles.

Chapter six sets out the guidelines for a continuous pursuit of an efficient Defence⁷ (principle no. 4). The functioning of Defence will be rationalised as much as possible by building structures that follow the processes, and not the other way around. For Defence, the key process is: generating military capabilities for the execution of operations within the framework of the three core tasks. Defence should thus focus on military specific tasks and as much as possible make use of market opportunities for supporting tasks and services within the framework of a sourcing policy.

6 *Capability gaps are the shortages at the European level for certain defence capabilities that complicate autonomous European military engagement.*

7 *An action is efficient if the efforts and expenses concerned make an effective contribution to the achievement of the objective (= effective) and if, at the same time, the costs are proportionate to the profits.*

This chapter also pays attention to a continued rationalisation of the competence development and the military medical support. As stated in principle no. 4, this strategic vision also enables a further rationalisation of the infrastructure.

Another possibility of improving our national security policy is to take advantage of the existing and developing links between Defence, the national research institutions and the industry for the increased support of our security interests. Defence can thus strengthen the efficiency of the security policy. As mentioned in principle no. 8, this objective can enable the transfer of know-how, technology and employment to our society.

Chapter seven brings forward the ambition with regard to personnel, i.e. to rejuvenate Defence by developing a more flexible personnel policy. This chapter is completely built around principle no. 9 which asks to assess the education/training and the personnel regulations of servicemen, and to consider which adjustments bring about a more dynamic personnel policy. The aim is to abandon the principle of Lifetime Employment as much as possible in order to make Defence a younger organisation and therefore better adapted to its core business. The creation of a modern Reserve is an integral part of the efforts provided to strive for a more flexible personnel policy. Obviously, this ambition regarding personnel should be further developed. The social partners should be involved as much as possible, not only as representatives of the Defence personnel members, but also as experts on these questions.

Finally, **chapter eight** provides the steps for the implementation of this strategic vision. This will be achieved through an implementation plan for the geographical distribution of the quarters. This plan will be valid for the duration of the strategic vision. A proposition for the military programme Act which ensures the legal anchoring of the investment programmes for major equipment for the duration of this strategic vision is also planned in the four months following the strategic vision (see principle no. 7). Furthermore, this strategic vision forms the foundation on which a series of individual projects will be elaborated and coordinated at the political level with the aim to build together and step by step the future of Defence.



The Belgian Security Environment up to 2030: Continuously Uncertain and More Complex

The future always remains uncertain. The rapidly increasing complexity of the world is, however, remarkable. This is due to the exponentially rising pace of sociological, economic, political, environmental and technological change. This far more complex world is an important factor in defining the place Belgium wants to occupy in the global security environment. Through its composition, Belgian Defence needs to be able to adapt quickly and flexibly to this environment. Today's multipolar world will persist in the years to come, as new poles of power will equally

“**The Europe of NATO and EU countries needs to extend its policy instruments in this multipolar world, as to be not merely a pawn but a player in this new global constellation.**

take their place on the world stage. At the moment, this transition period is already causing an increasing amount of friction. New poles of power, but also a growing number of non-state actors try to (re) define their role in the current system of global governance. The community of states is thus going through a period of change which can generate uncertainties and even instability.

In a more fragmented world, regional security dynamics will become more important again. The Europe of NATO and EU countries, already an important economic pole today, needs to extend its policy instruments in this multipolar world, as to be not merely a pawn but a player in this new global constellation. The regional European framework is already the most important dimension of the Belgian security policy, primarily through the multilateral framework of NATO and the EU, but additionally also that of the OSCE (Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe).

The United States are Europe's most important global security partner. They ask the European countries for a more important contribution to the stabilisation of the European periphery. Europe will increasingly have to take up the role of a security provider instead of being a security consumer. The United States are indeed progressively shifting their focus to the security situation in Asia, as it can have a more profound effect on the status of the US as a global power than the friction in the European periphery. This observation only reinforces the need for the European countries to become a more autonomous military security player in and around the European continent.

“**The European countries need to become a more autonomous military security player in and around the European continent.**

Now more than ever, security in both Belgium and Europe is connected with peace and security in the world. Non-military means play a central role in the promotion of a tolerant, safe and prosperous world. However, Defence remains a necessary tool in the states' toolbox. All security experts are in agreement on this. The military instrument is necessary to protect not just the Belgian society and interests, but also the universal values anchored in the European DNA. Because of these values and Europe's economic prosperity, the European societal model remains attractive to other countries and their population. In contrast however, extremists can influence the Belgian and European population directly and attack the values on which this open and tolerant Belgian and European society is built. Extremists are by definition prepared to use extreme means and in this context, the threat of military retaliation remains a very useful power tool.

a. Europe: an Island of Peace Surrounded by a Periphery in Chaos

Especially its economic but also its social and political integration make Europe – and particularly the EU – the most important reference for the Belgian international security policy. Reality today is that this Europe in peace is surrounded by a periphery in chaos.

1. The European Southern Periphery



The terrorist organisation IS manages to execute large-scale and cross-border military operations in Syria and Iraq which attract Western radicalised youths. These young people are a threat to our internal security.

The Arab Spring has led to a clear deterioration of the security environment south of Europe and in the Middle East. What started as a wave of democratisation based on universal values did not result in a lasting emancipation of the population. For a long time to come, these regions will probably be plagued by cross-border extremist groups, domestic and regional conflicts, a social-economic situation with no prospect of improvement and weak and/or authoritarian regimes with limited internal and external legitimacy. According to the Fragile States Index this southern European periphery, consisting of North Africa, the Sahel, the Horn of Africa and the Middle East, includes the most fragile countries in the world⁸.

The EU and the European countries need to continue to play a role in the stabilisation of these countries, if necessary by using military means. Moreover, the societal instability in

“The stability of the southern European periphery will be subjected to more pressure in the years to come.

these countries also has a direct negative impact on the security, well-being and prosperity of European citizens. This is the spill-over of international terrorism, piracy, international crime (trafficking in drugs, arms and human beings), illegal immigration and refugee flows.

However, instability is not inevitable. In Chad for instance, the European Union has shown that the combination of military intervention and the development of administrative capacities can provide a permanent solution to long-lasting conflicts. In Libya by contrast, a successful military action of the European countries in 2011 was not followed by an equally bold civil-military stabilisation phase. This failure led to the destabilisation of not only Libya, but also large parts of the region (including Mali).

The conflict in Syria provides the clearest illustration of the link between external and internal security, namely the participation of radicalised foreign fighters in this conflict and their subsequent return to Europe. This conflict also shows that non-intervention carries a cost at the national and European level. Furthermore, the stability of the southern European periphery will be subjected to more pressure in the years to come because of the impact of demographic and climatic evolutions. The entire region will experience a strong population growth over the next few years. This will be especially the case in West Africa. The region's fragile ecosystems will have even more difficulties in dealing with this demographic growth, especially given the additional climatic impact on this region. Local authorities do not have sufficient means nor resilience to carry out the necessary adjustments. Without sufficient support from Europe to allow them to adapt to changing climatic circumstances local tensions will rise because of the additional pressure on food security, water security and energy security. This reality increases the likelihood of military stabilisation missions in this region in the future.

⁸ The Fragile States Index 2015 (<http://fsi.fundforpeace.org/rankings-2015>)

Within the framework of the Common Foreign and Security Policy, the EU pays particular attention to reinforcing security and establishing stable governance in the southern periphery. NATO is also clear about the importance of this region for the Euro-Atlantic security⁹, which is why it has invested in regional partnerships over the past decades. Conventional deterrence supports European diplomacy and other preventive efforts here as well.

ii. Central Africa

Although Central Africa borders on the southern European periphery, the direct impact of this region on European security is rather limited today. Nevertheless, a direct link between this region and our country remains because of the presence of a significant diaspora from this region in our country. The Great Lakes region is the centre of political and military friction in Central Africa, and the Democratic Republic of the Congo remains one of the most fragile states of this region. The Belgian government wants to continue to contribute to the stabilisation of Central Africa and of the Great Lakes region in particular, through a national comprehensive approach¹⁰, in which Defence also plays a structural role. The Belgian expertise in this region allows our diplomacy as well as our intelligence services to build up credit on a global level. This credit can then be used for other issues that have an impact on the Belgian and European security interests.

iii. The European Eastern Periphery

The situation in the eastern periphery of Europe is also back on the security agenda, in a way that we have not seen since the end of the Cold War. The interference of Russia in the east of the Ukraine, the annexation of Crimea, and the earlier disinformation and military actions in Transnistria¹¹ and Georgia confirm the fact that Russia does not resign itself to the expanding NATO/EU sphere of influence even though this expansion is merely reflecting the sovereign wish of the former Warsaw Pact countries and former Soviet Union republics to join NATO and the EU. Russia's attitude in the eastern European periphery will determine Europe's security and military position towards Russia for a long time. NATO has made a clear response by refocusing on its collective defence task¹². After the Cold War this task had lost its

⁹ As indicated in the declaration of the NATO summit in Wales (NATO. "Wales Summit Declaration", 5 September 2014 (http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/official_texts_112964.htm)).

¹⁰ The comprehensive approach is an integrated security approach combining, depending on the situation, the most efficient mix of civilian and military policy instruments (not necessarily the hard security actors such as the military and police, but also actors active in humanitarian support, development cooperation, justice, education, agriculture,...) in order to address a security threat in a preventive or reactive way. The comprehensive approach used to be called the 3D or 3D-L&O approach, which mainly focused on Diplomacy, Development, Defence, and Law & Order.

¹¹ Transnistria is a pro-Russian and de facto independent part of Moldova.

¹² See definition in chapter 2.



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Russian Prime Minister Medvedev attends a military parade on 31 March 2014 in Crimea, shortly after the illegal annexation of the Ukrainian peninsula by the Russian Federation.

significance compared to NATO's other two core tasks: crisis management¹³ and security cooperation.

The status of Russia as a global power is threatened by its economic and demographic situation. These factors do not contribute to a stable foreign and security policy. This

“Russia’s attitude in the eastern European periphery will determine Europe’s security and military position towards Russia for a long time. NATO has made a clear response by refocusing on its collective defence task.”

is apparently not what the Russian authorities are looking for, as they seek to maintain their status as a global power by focusing on their military power through investments in conventional and nuclear capabilities and by making political use of their important export-oriented defence industry.

The huge Russian nuclear arsenal also led the European NATO countries to confer a lasting important role to the Alliance with regard to nuclear deterrence.

¹³ See definition in chapter 2.

At the moment, the EU does not focus on the military dimension for the reinforcement of security in the eastern periphery of Europe. Here, NATO clearly takes the lead. However, the EU's large toolbox offers more than just an added value in this matter. In the Ukraine the EU provides economic, financial and humanitarian support as well as assistance in the development of civilian security forces. In addition, economic and financial sanctions have been taken against Russia. However, in the long run, we cannot exclude a military role for the EU (as well as the UN) in the matter of crisis management in Eastern Europe. The roles of NATO and the EU are thus very much complementary in the reinforcement of the integrity of their East European member states against Russian interference.

Both organisations, as well as good coordination between them, are necessary to provide an adequate response to the use of all available (including

military) Russian means of power, a way of acting that is defined today as “hybrid warfare”¹⁴. It is to be expected that the Russian authorities will continue to implement this negative version of the comprehensive approach in order to destabilise countries in Eastern Europe who look to the West for their future. The East European countries expect the other NATO member states – including Belgium – to increase their military presence in the East and to maintain a sufficiently high contribution to the burden and risk sharing of military deterrence. In recent years, Belgian Defence has actively contributed to this, notably by participating in the air defence in Eastern Europe, but also by carrying out mine-clearing activities in the Baltic Sea and participating in NATO exercises in this region with our land forces. NATO is developing a renewed policy in Eastern Europe, specifically for the land forces, aimed at provisioning and prepositioning heavier means, as was the case for a long time in Central Europe during the Cold War.



The roles of NATO and the EU are thus very much complementary in the reinforcement of the integrity of their East European member states against Russian interference.

¹⁴ Hybrid warfare combines military and non-military means and methods to destabilise countries. Russia, for instance, uses hybrid warfare in the Ukraine and Georgia by supporting opponents of the local government with civilian and military means and by using military and civilian elements of power, such as the media and the economy, to the detriment of another country. Therefore, hybrid warfare is also regarded as a negative form of the well-known comprehensive approach of the EU, which uses an appropriate combination of civilian and military means to stabilise areas within the framework of crisis management.

iv. The European Northern Periphery

Due to global warming, the strategic relevance of the Arctic region could increase significantly by 2030, as shipping routes through the Arctic Ocean will become easier to navigate and the reserves of energy and other raw materials present in this region will become more accessible. In time, this would mean for Belgian ports that the shipping routes to East Asia will become shorter: by 40% to Japan, 30% to Korea and 20 to 25% to the important Chinese ports, compared to the current route through the Suez Canal. Climatologists estimate that by 2030 the entire Arctic Ocean will be ice-free by the end of summer, which would shorten the distances even further. Russia has already started to reinforce its governance in this region, also by reopening military bases. Several other Arctic countries are also developing their capability to reinforce their governance. Still, most specialists assume that for the time being the northern European periphery will remain quiet as far as security is concerned.

v. NATO and EU: Key Pillars of the Belgian Security and Defence Policy

After the failing of the Belgian neutrality policy during both World Wars of the twentieth century, Belgium became one of the founders of the post-war security architecture, based on multilateralism, in which – besides the UN – NATO and the EU take up a prominent place.

Belgium occupies a central position within NATO and the EU as host country of the main institutions of both organisations, such as the NATO headquarters and SHAPE (Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe), NATO's most important military command. Brussels is also de facto the capital of the European Union because of the presence of the main EU institutions. The important link between Belgium and both NATO and the EU testifies to the desire of the Belgian authorities to safeguard the security of Belgium through multilateral anchoring with allies that are closely related ideologically and geographically. In an uncertain world, with a growing number of security threats at the borders of Europe, both organisations will undoubtedly continue to play a main role in the safeguarding of European security for the next fifteen years.

The Belgian authorities consider NATO and the EU to be complementary organisations. They underline the necessity for a greater integration of the European defence effort to support a credible and balanced NATO as well as the possibility for the EU to carry out



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The Belgian statesman Paul-Henri Spaak became Secretary General of NATO in 1957. He stood at the cradle of strengthening international cooperation through the Benelux, the UN, NATO and the European Community.

military interventions autonomously within its own periphery. Moreover, this is also the wish of the United States.

b. European and Belgian Security from a Global Perspective

It would be unwise to examine the European and Belgian security environment exclusively from a regional point of view, focusing only on the European periphery. On the one hand, the EU is a global economic power, which also has the continuous ambition to become a global political power. On the other hand, Belgium is a prosperous country, thanks to its extremely open economy that can only thrive when all is well in the rest of the world, with free and safe global flows of goods, people, capital, services, and information.

It would be unwise to examine the European and Belgian security environment exclusively from a regional point of view, focusing only on the European periphery.

i. Security of Global Flows



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The port of Antwerp is an essential hub for international trade as the second largest port in Europe and a top 20-port worldwide. Protecting the maritime supply lines is of global, European and national interest.

Flow security is aimed at the protection of “flows” (of goods, raw materials, people, capital, services, and information) that are not constrained by territoriality anymore, but do have a link with the interests of a country or group of countries and their economy and society.

A global flow – such as international maritime transport – is not a new phenomenon, but it becomes all the more important in a globalised economy.

Consequently, the protection of maritime supply lines is directly connected with the performance of the Belgian and European economies. In 2015 Belgium was ranked 19th in the world¹⁵ by tonnage of the commercial fleet controlled by Belgian companies and persons. Belgium was thus ranked higher than Russia, the Netherlands, and France. Given its high economic importance, Belgium has to contribute proportionally to the global protection and safeguarding of the maritime flow.

Nearly 90% of the European Union's external trade is done by ship. The port of Antwerp is the second biggest port of Europe. According to the National Bank of Belgium the added value of the Belgian seaports (Antwerp, Ghent, Liège, Zeebrugge, Brussels and Ostend) for the Belgian economy was 30.4 billion euros or 7.7% of GDP in 2013. In the same year the Belgian seaports accounted for 259,168 FTE in direct or indirect employment or 6.5% of domestic employment.

In our multipolar world no country benefits from disrupting these global flows. However, military conflicts arising from the fragmentation of the political global governance can have a negative influence on these global flows in the decades to come. For example, several countries in East and Southeast Asia, particularly China and its neighbours, are investing in submarines on a massive scale, in order to be able to claim access to maritime areas and deny it to adversaries should a conflict erupt.

“**Military conflicts arising from the fragmentation of the political global governance can have a negative influence on these global flows in the decades to come.**”

Flow security also consists of relatively new areas, such as the protection of the cyber environment. This environment has not only become a part of everyday life, closely linked to the physical and social well-being of the Belgian and European population, it has also become the

backbone of the Belgian and European economy. As an essential part of the worldwide economic and social tissue, the cyber environment has more and more security consequences. The use of this environment by security services and as an additional dimension for (the support of) warfare is the most direct link between security and the cyber environment, and it should also be taken into account.

¹⁵ United Nations Conference on Trade and Development. *Review of Maritime Transport 2015*. UNCTAD: Geneva, October 2015, p.36 (http://unctad.org/en/PublicationsLibrary/rmt2015_en.pdf).

The Society for Worldwide Interbank Financial Telecommunication (SWIFT) has its headquarters in Belgium, in La Hulpe in Walloon Brabant. SWIFT is an international cooperative organisation which facilitates cross-border payments. More than 8,000 financial institutions from about 200 countries are affiliated to SWIFT. Ensuring a secure Belgian data network is essential for the global financial security.

Another very important flow is ensuring the energy supply. Energy security is an important issue, since energy can be used to put pressure on countries. Russia has already demonstrated this several times. Moreover, Europe relies very heavily on energy import, largely through the unstable eastern and southern periphery.

ii. The United Nations under Pressure

After the Second World War, the United Nations were mandated with a central role in maintaining global security and regulating the use of the military power instrument. The Government agreement states that the Belgian government wishes to contribute in a credible and lasting way to this role of the United Nations, given its direct impact on Belgian security and interests. From a military point of view this implies a continued significant deployment of our Defence in UN military operations, including UN-mandated NATO and EU operations.

However, it is troubling that the position of the UN as central organisation for peace and security in the world has come under pressure. On the one hand, this is due to the fact that the new emerging powers are focusing more on their own regional spheres of influence, which reinforces the fragmentation of the world into regional poles. On the other hand, there is an imbalance between the new geopolitical realities and the current representativeness in the United Nations Security Council.

The development of a multipolar world could lead to friction and armed conflicts in overlapping areas of influence, but also an open conflict between the new poles cannot be excluded. It is necessary to pay due attention to the fact that the emerging powers are investing heavily in their military power. Whereas the European defence effort has decreased substantially in recent years, that of the BRIC countries (Brazil, Russia, India and China) increased by 38 to 132%¹⁶ between 2006 and 2015. Three of these countries have nuclear weapons. These weapons also remain an option for other emerging regional powers. If the security situation in East Asia deteriorates further, this could lead to an enhanced nuclear proliferation in this region.

¹⁶ Sam Perlo-Freeman, Aude Fleurant, Pieter D. Wezeman & Siemon T. Wezeman. "Trends in World Military Expenditure, 2015", SIPRI Fact Sheet, April 2016, p.2 (<http://books.sipri.org/files/FS/SIPRIFS1604.pdf>).

c. Defence as the Last Bulwark of Belgian Internal Security

As friends are rare in the cyber environment, a proper national capacity for action is necessary. In 2014 the Belgian media reported that there were strong suspicions that friendly nations were responsible for the hacking of a subsidiary company of Belgacom between 2011 and 2013.

The growing influence of international security issues on our internal security is first of all dealt with by reinforcing international security. However, ensuring security on the national territory should not be overlooked. Thus, Defence is preferably deployed

within the framework of common international operations in order to prevent an actual threat on the national territory. However, Defence also is and remains a security actor on the national territory, inter alia for specialised tasks such as air defence, maritime patrols, or the clearance of explosives from both world wars and of parcel bombs, in particular within the framework of counter-terrorism.

Defence is preferably deployed within the framework of common international operations in order to prevent an actual threat on the national territory.



© Ketevan Kardava

Two casualties of the suicide bombings committed by IS on 22 March 2016 at Brussels Airport and in the Brussels metro.

In addition, Defence is also the last bulwark of the societal security within Belgium. For instance, within the framework of counter-terrorism Defence can temporarily participate in supporting the police for the surveillance of critical infrastructure and societal sensitive targets. Defence also contributes to consequence management in the event of disasters on the national territory by deploying troops, but also by offering specialised means of transport, logistic support, assistance in the case of nuclear/biological/chemical accidents, medical assistance, maritime command support, execution of engineering works, etc. As climatologists expect more extreme weather conditions, the already existing task of Belgian and European Defences to render assistance in the case of disasters will become even more

“ In addition, Defence is also the last bulwark of the societal security within Belgium. ”

relevant in the years to come. Specifically for Belgium this may, for instance, involve an increased deployment during floods. During the floods of 2014 the British government was severely criticised because it could not make enough soldiers available in time to offer assistance.

Belgian Defence has also already lent support in dealing with national cyber incidents since it has considerable expertise in this high-tech area.

Reinforced coordination and cooperation between the national Belgian security actors, including Defence, could considerably improve the efficiency and effectiveness in ensuring security, well-being and prosperity on the national territory.

**“The need for security is high.”
(Government agreement of 9 October 2014)**

The analysis of the Belgian security environment up to 2030 shows that the security on the streets of Belgium and the protection of the Belgian economic interests remain closely connected with the security situation in the world. Global flows such as maritime transport, energy flows or information shared in cyberspace are essential to the freedom, security, well-being and prosperity of all Belgians. Conflicts in the world can disrupt these flows and thus bring international security issues into our everyday life.

The world is becoming more and more complex, and international security is under pressure because of growing fragmentation in several poles of power. Europe is surrounded by security threats arising from the unstable European periphery.

Therefore, it is essential for Belgian Defence to contribute to a more European security and defence effort, to a continuously strong Euro-Atlantic military alliance, and to the global efforts of the United Nations. This safeguards our national security in a multipolar world in a relevant way.

To this end, Belgian Defence needs to be sufficiently adaptive and deployable with adequate flexibility in order to be able to participate in a spirit of solidarity within an international framework, but also to remain the ultimate and structural security actor in Belgium, for societal security.



A Balanced Positioning of Belgian Defence in the Security Environment

Defence is an important actor that meets the need for security identified by the analysis of the security environment. Moreover, Defence is an essential instrument for a credible foreign and security policy.

“A modern Defence remains one of the crucial components of our security and an absolute necessity to conduct a credible foreign and security policy.”
(Government agreement of 9 October 2014)

The essence of our Defence is to contribute to the security of our citizens and the protection of our values and worldwide interests. These form the basis for our freedom, well-being and prosperity. Because of the strong European anchoring of our interests and values, the national and European security policies are inextricably linked.

Defence contributes to international security in order to prevent existing threats from having a negative effect on our society and new threats against our territory from originating. Defence also contributes to the protection of global flows, which are of vital importance to our open economy and thus to the prosperity and well-being of the population.

Starting from the analysis of the security environment and the core tasks of Defence, this chapter describes which position our Defence needs to occupy by 2030 in order to ensure our security, prosperity and well-being.

The analysis of the security environment and the input of Belgian Defence experts have shown several possible core tasks that Defence should carry out in the future. Three core tasks have been selected, i.e.:

- contribute to the collective defence¹⁷ through NATO to defend the Alliance’s territorial integrity;

¹⁷ *Collective defence against an armed attack violating the territorial integrity of the NATO member states in Europe and North America is at the very heart of the 1949 NATO treaty and is enshrined in Article 5. According to this article an attack against one of the NATO member states shall be considered an attack on all member states, which can, if they deem it necessary, use armed force to restore the territorial integrity. By ensuring interoperability between NATO forces, by striving for sufficient and adequate military capabilities in the member states, by joint training and by joint planning, NATO provides an effective collective defence with military means.*



On 25 February 2015 the Minister of Defence organised a seminar in support of the development of the strategic vision. The Minister asked a group of experts from the academic, diplomatic, financial and economic world as well as from the media and the military to give their vision on the tasks and capabilities of Defence for the period until 2030.

- contribute to the collective security¹⁸ through crisis management operations¹⁹ in a multilateral or international framework, preferably mandated or organised by international security organisations, to ensure peace and security in the world;
- protect Belgian citizens all over the world.

¹⁸ Collective security consists in ensuring peace and (physical) security within the framework of (potentially) armed conflicts. This takes place outside the Belgian borders and usually outside NATO and EU borders. Collective security is directed at security crises that do not directly threaten our territorial integrity or that of our allies, contrary to collective defence, but that (can) endanger our security and our interests (and those of our allies). These interests also include the pursuit and maintenance of an international order based on rules that protect the safety of a population. Different military and civilian means and ways exist to contribute to collective security, e.g. through (civil-) military crisis management operations, diplomacy (including defence diplomacy), development cooperation and disarmament. The core task of Belgian Defence specifically consists of a contribution to the collective security through crisis management operations.

¹⁹ Crisis management operations are operations with civilian and/or military means to prevent a security crisis from escalating into a conflict, and to end or (help) to settle an ongoing conflict that can have an impact on the security and interests of our country and our allies. Crisis management operations can also take place within the context of the Responsibility to Protect a population that is being exposed to (an important threat of) physical violence, which goes against maintaining a rules-based international order. Crisis management operations can also contribute to the consolidation of stability in post-conflict situations. The more restrictive definition used in this document does not consider deployments within the framework of collective defence or international humanitarian operations through military means to be crisis management operations. Military deployment within the framework of crisis management operations can involve conflict prevention, preventive military deployments, peacekeeping, peacemaking, peacebuilding and peace enforcement.

“The **core tasks of Belgian Defence** are **collective defence, collective security** and the **protection of Belgian citizens all over the world**. Defence can also always be deployed by the government within the framework of national and international missions according to the capabilities available.”
(principle no. 1)

These core tasks are inextricably intertwined. For example, collective security and collective defence contribute to peace and security in the world. More stability in the world fosters the security of Belgian citizens all over the world and on the national territory.

The definition of these core tasks is important, since they determine the capabilities in which Defence should or should not invest.

Principle no. 1 states that Defence can always be deployed by the government within the framework of national and international missions, according to the capabilities available. These means can be available because of the ongoing operational deployment being below the level of ambition or because they are in the operational preparation phase. Besides the core tasks, principle no. 1 refers to the deployment within the framework of military tasks that are not regarded as core tasks and that will consequently not be taken into account when sizing our military capabilities.

“The definition of these core tasks is important, since they determine the capabilities in which Defence should or should not invest.”

Nevertheless, Defence can also contribute significantly to the security policy of the Belgian state by undertaking these non-core tasks. These additional tasks of Defence are:

- Deployment in support of internal security²⁰ (e.g. for counter-terrorism, for national crises and for consequence management in the event of disasters). In national crisis situations, the government can always decide to commit Defence capabilities for internal security purposes. This deployment can entail a temporary limitation of the deployment possibilities for the three core tasks;
- Humanitarian missions, both national (e.g. support of Defence for the housing of refugees in Belgium) and international (e.g. the provision of a C-130 transport aircraft for humanitarian aid or in support of B-FAST²¹);

²⁰ “Internal security” concerns any deployment of Defence on the national territory for the benefit of the societal security, in addition to the deployment on the national territory within the framework of collective defence. Collective security and ‘the protection of Belgian citizens all over the world’ are two core tasks that go beyond the framework of deployment on the national territory, considering their expeditionary nature. For the time being, collective defence (mainly within the framework of NATO) also represents a task of Defence that is mostly expeditionary.

²¹ Belgian First Aid and Support Team: fast intervention structure of the Belgian authorities to provide emergency aid abroad. This structure is a cooperation between the ministries of Foreign Affairs, the Interior, Public Health, Budget, and Defence. Defence supports B-FAST according to the capabilities available at that particular moment.

- Defence diplomacy²²;
- Support to the enforcement of international treaties on arms control, arms inspection²³, non-proliferation and disarmament.

This chapter will specify how the (core) tasks relate to the security environment and what impact the general positioning of Defence in this environment has on the future capability configuration. The capabilities themselves will be treated more in detail in chapter 5.

a. The Appropriate Balance Between the Core Tasks ‘Collective Defence’ and ‘Collective Security’ for the Contribution of Belgian Defence to Security in the European Periphery and the World

The term ‘collective’ in ‘collective defence’ and ‘collective security’ refers to the fact that both core tasks are essentially a European and often a Euro-Atlantic issue. If our Defence wants to make a relevant contribution to European security – which is the broader frame of our national security – all Belgian defence capabilities have to contribute to these core tasks in an appropriate way.

‘Collective security’ concerns a contribution to stability outside the national borders (and those of our allies), in places that matter to our own security. By contrast, the focus of ‘collective defence’ is on defending the national and allied territory and on preventing a violation of the territorial integrity through military deterrence.

The analysis of our security environment shows that Europe can expect even more security threats, especially in its direct eastern and southern periphery. In the future these two areas will be the primary focus of European, including the Belgian, armed forces. The security environment

All Belgian defence capabilities have to contribute to these core tasks in an appropriate way.

The term ‘collective’ in ‘collective defence’ and ‘collective security’ refers to the fact that both core tasks are essentially a European and often a Euro-Atlantic issue.

analysis has shown two significantly different theatres, in which the threat requires a different approach. However, in both theatres, only a collective European and transatlantic approach can create the desired security. In the north collective peace will probably prevail until 2030, but after that it is possible that collective vigilance will be required for this European peripheral region as well.

²² The purpose of defence diplomacy is to forge a bond of trust between different countries through several military trust-building actions, such as exchanges of military personnel, visits of ships and aircraft, contacts between defence staffs, joint training and exercises. This additional task will be performed by the available capabilities of Defence, and can for instance take place during the operational preparation phase.

²³ In 2014 Luxembourg, Belgium and the Netherlands have merged their arms control agencies into the Benelux Arms Control Agency. This agency uses military capabilities (e.g. for verification flights) without these capabilities being specifically earmarked for this additional task of Defence.

Since the violations of the Ukrainian territorial integrity by Russia in 2014, the security dynamic in the eastern European periphery is once again primarily aimed at collective defence through NATO. For Belgium NATO remains the main organisation to ensure collective defence of our territory and that of our European and North American allies.

The additional measures taken by the NATO member states directed at East and Central Europe create an increased level of conventional deterrence. This fits in with NATO's broader deterrence strategy to which Belgium also contributes. At the moment, NATO's existing deterrence initiatives are complemented by means that can offer a specific response to a hybrid threat. Effective intelligence services are an essential first link in quickly identifying and understanding hybrid threats, in order to respond rapidly and avoid escalation, for example through the deployment of Special Operations Forces. Averting hybrid threats also requires a reinforcement of the comprehensive approach and thus the use of all power elements to support stability and security.

In this respect, the EU will be a natural partner of NATO within the framework of collective defence. After all, the EU itself and its member states have the necessary complementary non-military power means that are employed during a comprehensive approach. A good example of this is the

**NATO's existing
deterrence initiatives
are complemented by means that
can offer a specific response to a
hybrid threat.**




© Belgian Defence - Matek Azouig

In the context of strengthening the deterrence initiatives of NATO in Eastern Europe, our motorised land forces participate in NATO exercises with their Piranha vehicles.

current economic sanctions imposed by the EU on Russia because of its aggression against Ukraine.

The security dynamic in the southern European periphery is experiencing a negative development. Up until today, the spillover of insecurity from this region has not posed a direct threat to the European territorial integrity, but it does have an impact on internal security. The EU (through the Common Security and Defence Policy), the UN and separate European countries – either within the framework of a coalition of the willing or not – are the most active actors in this southern region, alongside regional security organisations and local national actors. They contribute to the reinforcement of international security by means of civilian and military crisis management. Recently NATO has also again underlined its growing concern about the southern flank.

Within the framework of collective security, Defence is an active policy instrument that is preferably deployed to intervene before an armed conflict actually breaks out or before failed states emerge and with them armed groups who can threaten our security or

 **Interventions can be carried out within the framework of collective security to stop an armed conflict and subsequently contribute to the building of a stable and secure society, in coordination with other international and interdepartmental actors.**

interests. In the last few years, these types of deployment of our Defence to prevent (or stop the development of) security crises have occurred in the Central African Republic, Niger, the Palestinian territories, the Democratic Republic of the Congo,... These engagements notably included assistance in building a secure society and the development of national security actors who are accountable for their actions.

When in spite of all this armed conflicts still break out, interventions can be carried out within the framework of collective security to stop them and subsequently contribute to the building of a stable and secure society, in coordination with other international and interdepartmental actors. The operations in Chad, Mali, Somalia, the Gulf of Aden, Syria, and Iraq are just a few examples of these types of deployment.

The analysis of the security environment indicates that this southern region has a continuing and even growing need for European crisis management, with or without military support. In collective security Defence is but one of the actors in a joint approach with civilian actors (comprehensive approach). Defence only takes the lead in an intervention to effectively stop an armed conflict. Stabilisation can take place by providing assistance in ending a conflict, by providing security, and by contributing to the start-up of the reconstruction after the military part of a conflict has ended (follow-up phase, reconstruction). At that moment, the security situation is often still too precarious for civilian relief organisations. Intelligence services will then play an important role in determining the necessity to intervene and in understanding the best way in which to proceed. The successful and the structural approach of a security



© Belgian Defence - Nicolas Deplanque

Early 2013, at the start of the French operation Serval aimed at preventing the conquest of Mali by extremist rebels, our C-130 transport aircraft supported the French troops.

situation within the framework of collective security largely depends on an adequate coordination between military actions on the one hand and those of other governmental and non-governmental actors on the other hand. The effectiveness of the military deployment depends on the extent to which Defence can cooperate with other actors. This comprehensive approach does not only have an international dimension (primarily through the EU and the UN), but also a national interdepartmental dimension.

“ According to the current security analysis and its expected future evolution it does not seem appropriate for Belgian Defence to focus exclusively on collective defence.

According to the current security analysis and its expected future evolution it does not seem appropriate for Belgian Defence to focus exclusively on collective defence – as it did during the Cold War. The instability in the southern European periphery poses a growing threat to the internal security of Belgium and its neighbouring countries. Therefore, seen from a European security perspective, it is important that the southern periphery is sufficiently covered and that Europe can continue to contribute to the creation of security and stability in this region.

The analysis of our security environment describes how a change in the global positioning of the United States forces the European countries to take more autonomous military action in their own periphery. In the future, the European countries will be less able to call on the strategic support



From a European security perspective, it is important that the southern periphery is sufficiently covered and that Europe can continue to contribute to the creation of security and stability in this region.

capabilities of the United States such as tanker aircraft, large transport aircraft, reconnaissance drones, long-range precision missiles, Special Operations Forces, offensive cyber capabilities and intelligence gathering. However, those capabilities are essential for, among other things, crisis management operations at the borders of Europe. This means that the European countries will have to invest more in these capability gaps in order to obtain the necessary autonomy.

Impact on the Belgian Defence Capabilities



Moreover, we must also be able to globally contribute to ensuring collective security if our interests, prosperity, and well-being seem to be threatened elsewhere.

Belgian Defence makes a balanced contribution to both collective defence and collective security in the European periphery. Moreover, we must also be able to globally contribute to ensuring collective security if our interests, prosperity, and well-being seem to be threatened elsewhere (piracy, terrorism,...).

As far as capabilities are concerned this implies that choices must also be guided by the multilateral framework in which our defence policy is determined. The needed capabilities are identified within NATO through the NATO Defence Planning Process (NDPP) as well as within the EU through the Capability Development Plan (CDP). In this matter, NATO proceeds in a more mandatory way than the EU. In addition, Belgian Defence should also rely on sufficient combat capabilities to be able to participate in the burden and risk sharing for operational deployments within a NATO, EU, and UN framework.

The Air Combat Capability: a Spearhead for Collective Defence

At the moment, the spearhead of our contribution to NATO's collective defence is the air combat capability, assured with the F-16-multirole²⁴ combat aircraft. This capability is particularly appropriate for collective defence, since these aircraft can be deployed quickly and over large distances. This capability contributes to the territorial dimension of collective defence on the Belgian (and soon the Benelux) territory by means of aircraft on Quick Reaction Alert as well as to NATO's broader deterrence through, among other things, air defence of the Alliance borders.



© Belgian Defence - Malek Azoug

Belgian F-16 over Lithuania. For several years our combat aircraft have been ensuring the air defence of the Baltic States within the framework of NATO.

But for our air combat capability to be able to continue to contribute to NATO's deterrence in an effective and credible way, it is essential that this is done with high-tech air assets that offer a lasting advantage over the combat

“ For our air combat capability to be able to continue to contribute to NATO's deterrence in an effective and credible way, it is essential that this is done with high-tech combat aircraft. ”

²⁴ Multirole: the possibility to use a platform to execute both air defence and air attack missions, as well as ground attack missions, reconnaissance and direct support of ground troops.

aircraft of possible adversaries. Therefore, we comply with the request of NATO to acquire modern combat aircraft, which are technologically more advanced and designed to integrate developing technologies over the next decades. These aircraft need to be available to be deployed for NATO's collective defence for the coming decades.

The 34 new modern combat aircraft also need to be multirole so that they can be deployed in the best possible way to ensure security at the European borders within the framework of collective security.

The efficient deployment of an air combat capability strongly depends on tanker aircraft, both for collective defence and for collective security. In the past, European combat aircraft could always count on the United States' air refuelling capability. As a result, Europe has developed only a limited capability itself. At the moment, this essential operational logistic capability of the combined European defence forces is too limited to allow an autonomous European deployment with combat aircraft at the borders of Europe. Several European countries have taken action, for instance through the European Defence Agency (EDA), to fill this capability gap.

Therefore, it has been decided that our country will reinforce the European air-to-air-refuelling capability through a contribution to a European pool of tanker aircraft corresponding to the capability of one tanker aircraft and through the acquisition of refuelling kits for the future A400M transport aircraft. This will be done within the framework of EDA programmes for the reinforcement of this capability.

At the Transatlantic level Defence will also continue to contribute to NATO's AWACS command and control aircraft, which form a strategic support capability for the deployment of our combat aircraft, both within the framework of collective defence and collective security. Furthermore, AWACS aircraft are also essential for intelligence gathering and for airspace surveillance.

The Navy: a Second Spearhead for Collective Defence

The Belgian ports are European external borders within the framework of European security. They are essential to an effective organisation of collective defence at NATO level. Therefore, our ports and the connected European sea lines of communication have to be kept free of mines at all times. To this end, the current mine hunters will be replaced by six new mine countermeasures vessels equipped with an adequate mine countermeasures toolbox, which will allow a future-oriented concept of use and will also easily respond to the new technological evolutions of the coming decades. The new ships will offer not only the accomplishment of the national tasks within the framework of collective defence but also a contribution to the expeditionary deployment within an international framework in order to keep the European maritime supply routes open. Belgian Defence thus maintains a capability for which it has an internationally recognised expertise and that will remain relevant in the future.

The Surface Combatant capability (based on of multi-purpose frigates) is important for the protection of maritime supply routes that are indispensable to the Belgian and European economy.



© Belgian Defence - F930 Leopold I

In 2015, the Belgian frigate 'Leopold I' participated in the protection of the French aircraft carrier 'Charles de Gaulle' from which combat aircraft performed missions over Iraq and Syria.

However, today our current frigates are insufficiently equipped. The submarine threat is growing in the European periphery as well as all over the world, and NATO is requesting that additional efforts be made by the European member states. The purpose is to better equip our current frigates for anti-submarine warfare and for the monitoring of European maritime supply routes that also have a global security dimension. That is why their

“The Surface Combatant capability (based on multi-purpose frigates) is important for the protection of maritime supply routes that are indispensable to the Belgian and European economy.”

capability will be reinforced in the short term by the integration of new, already acquired NH90 frigate helicopters as a combat capability aboard these ships. To this end, these helicopters will be equipped with modules adapted to the engagement against submarines and surface ships. It has also been also decided to replace the two current frigates with new ships of the

same type that will be the spearhead of our contribution to NATO's collective defence in the future.

Just as the new combat aircraft, these new multirole frigates will also be deployed in missions within the framework of collective security, such as the expeditionary protection of supply routes or counter-piracy missions. These tasks aim to protect the maritime interests of our country and play a part in the protection of Belgian citizens on board our merchant fleet, which is an important fleet at a global level as shown in the analysis of the security environment.

It will be examined whether our Navy can participate in the functioning of the Dutch Joint Logistic Support Ship (JSS) in order to be able to offer an additional contribution to the operational logistic support of the Admiral Benelux fleet (ABNL) and to the autonomous deployment of the Belgian and European maritime capabilities. Just as with the combat aircraft, this operational logistic support is essential to the reinforcement of the effectiveness of the combat capability, i.e. the frigates. In consultation with the Netherlands, this platform also offers the possibility to have a medical Role 2²⁵ on board and to support land operations from the sea, such as evacuation operations.

Civilian and military ships are most vulnerable when they are moored. In port they are an easy target for actions that can be very effective with limited means. NATO has stressed the importance of developing specific capabilities against this threat. Based on the existing knowledge within NATO, Belgian Defence will develop a harbour protection capability, which can make a significant contribution to the maritime deployment, within the framework of both collective defence and collective security, in an expeditionary way as well as for our own ports.

The Optimisation of Land Forces for Motorised Deployment and Special Operations

Given the renewed importance of collective defence, NATO is bringing the focus back to mechanised land forces with tracked vehicles and high firepower²⁶. However, taking

 **The motorised land forces as the spearhead of the Belgian deployment within the context of collective security.**

into account the budgetary context, the reality regarding personnel and the large number of necessary investments in all capability dimensions, it is not realistic for Belgium to redevelop a heavy land capability by 2030, while keeping the current motorised land forces²⁷.

The government has explicitly opted to maintain and modernise the existing motorised land forces

²⁵ See paragraph 'medical support' in chapter 5.

²⁶ Mechanised land forces with tracked vehicles have the best protection, the highest firepower and a very good tactical mobility (in combat). Disadvantages are their reduced operational mobility and the fact that many of these systems are difficult to transport by air.

²⁷ See chapter 5, section b. paragraph i. on the combined arms motorised capability in which the specificities of this type of land forces are explained.



© Belgian Defence - Daniel Orban

Belgian motorised land forces ensure the safe conduct of the European Union Training Mission in Mali with their Dingo vehicles.

so that they can remain the spearhead of the Belgian deployment within the context of collective security. This strategic vision will allow a complete re-equipment of the Belgian motorised land forces, for manoeuvre, combat support as well as combat service support elements. This equipment is necessary for their operational preparation and deployment, and to meet the desired level of ambition. This equipment is just as necessary to ensure the individual safety of the servicemen and to take a step toward a more networked deployment. Because of the optimisation of its vehicles in terms of protection and deployability, our motorised capability based on wheeled vehicles is specifically suited for operations within the framework of collective security. Motorised land forces fully meet the deployment conditions for crisis management operations in the southern European periphery (North Africa, Sahel, Middle East). Thus, for the duration of this strategic vision the focus will primarily be on flexibly deployable land forces to ensure stability and security in this southern European periphery, and secondarily, on interventions worldwide within the same context of crisis management. Additionally, these motorised land forces can also be deployed within the framework of rapid interventions

This strategic vision will allow a complete re-equipment of the Belgian motorised land forces.

against hybrid threats, supporting collective defence within the framework of NATO. It will thus remain possible for the existing and future Belgian land forces to make a meaningful contribution to the NATO stand-by forces within the framework of collective defence (NATO Response Force (NRF) and Very High Readiness Joint Task Force (VJTF)).

© Belgian Defence - Special Forces Group



Operators of our Special Forces are training together with a German helicopter and a Norwegian submarine during a NATO exercise in Norway.

Furthermore, while staying within the current budgetary path and the planned means for investing in major equipment, it is also possible to widen the deployment possibilities of our para-commando troops within the framework of a general reinforcement of our Special Operations Forces capability, a capability which is more and more demanded by NATO, especially when dealing with hybrid threats. The two current para-commando battalions will be transformed into two Ranger battalions which will primarily focus on the support of the Special Forces, as Special Forces Support Group. Today the para-commando troops are primarily airborne units²⁸. The transformation of the para-commandos into Rangers in support of the Special Forces widens their deployment possibilities, ensures the lasting

²⁸ *The particularity of airborne units is that they are deployed from the air by parachute, as well as from an aircraft or helicopter. In the case of Belgium especially by parachute and from an aircraft (assault landing). The tactical advantage of this deployment method is the surprise effect. It involves light troops with limited deployment period, limited operational mobility, and little protection and firepower. Ever more effective air defence systems and well-equipped opponents have made this method of deployment very risky. As a result, the deployment of airborne troops in armed conflicts is therefore currently very limited. The feasibility to deploy these units has already been improved by reinforcing their motorised character through the recent decision to equip the troops with Rapid Reaction Vehicles.*

relevance of these units in the future, and considerably reinforces the Belgian deployable capabilities in a NATO and EU context. Besides the reorientation of the para-commando troops themselves, the Belgian Special Forces will be reinforced both quantitatively and qualitatively, and in the future will have specialised air assets at their disposal (Special Forces Aviation). The entire Special Operations Forces capability²⁹ will be able to contribute to all core tasks, but it is especially a clear reinforcement of the Belgian possibilities to contribute to NATO's new deployment concepts within the framework of collective defence. This is further emphasised by the participation of Belgian Defence in the NATO project

The two current para-commando battalions will be transformed into two Ranger battalions which will primarily focus on the support of the Special Forces, as Special Forces Support Group.

for a Composite Special Operations Component Command (C-SOCC), which will be created together with the Netherlands and Denmark. For Belgian Defence this contribution will be based on a national Special Operations Command (SOCOM). An important basic mission of the Special Forces themselves as well as of their Support Group (the Rangers) is providing local ground troops in an armed conflict with military assistance. This military deployment form is increasingly preferred to an active armed external intervention and plays an ever more important role in crisis management operations within the framework of collective security.

The deployment of combined arms motorised land forces (including their own combat support and combat service support elements) requires additional essential support capabilities.

Our important strategic air transport capability is an element in ensuring the expeditionary deployment of these troops. The future A400M transport aircraft and a possible participation in the Joint Logistic Support Ship will reinforce the expeditionary deployment capability and their logistic and medical support.

Other air support assets, such as combat aircraft and drones, will allow for additional precision firepower as well as the necessary intelligence gathering to obtain a good situational awareness.

Teams for chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear warfare, explosive ordnance disposal teams and military construction teams contribute to a safe deployment of the motorised land forces, as well as to other forms of expeditionary deployment.

Helicopters can supply additional mobility and can be deployed for medical support of ground troops.

A non-kinetic capability such as influence support teams contributes to the engagement of the combined arms motorised capability (as well as of other capabilities), allowing the deployed troops to better understand and work with the local population and execute

²⁹ The Special Operations Forces capability consists of the Special Forces (Special Forces Group), the Special Forces Support Group (2 Ranger battalions) and the Special Forces Aviation.

influence operations. In combination with military construction, these teams can provide the population with humanitarian assistance in support of the military deployment and revive social aid³⁰. This non-kinetic support capability is also essential to the development of an effective comprehensive approach in an engagement zone.



© Patrick Bouillon

The cyber environment is an essential environment for the success of the military operational deployment. Strengthening our own military cyber capability is a necessity.

³⁰ See chapter 5, section a, paragraph vi giving examples for the Influence capability.

Military Cyber Capability: Essential for Deployment Within the Framework of Collective Security and Collective Defence

A military cyber capability contributes to the defence of communication and weapon systems that are crucial to armed forces, but it also has to be able to participate in offensive actions within the expeditionary deployment.

“The cyber dimension has been added to the dimensions in which NATO exercises collective defence, as it has been noticed that cyber attacks can have the same effect on the territorial integrity of NATO countries as conventional attacks.”

In addition to the contribution of cyber capabilities to the deployment within the framework of collective security, it should also be pointed out that since 2014 these capabilities have been recognised as essential capabilities for NATO's collective defence. The NATO summit in Wales added the cyber dimension to the dimensions in which NATO exercises collective defence, as it has been noticed that cyber attacks can have the same effect on the territorial

integrity of NATO countries as conventional attacks. Therefore, our military cyber capability also needs to be reinforced to meet the needs of collective defence. NATO considers this a national responsibility, but expects the countries that have important NATO facilities on their territory to take the lead in the matter of cyber protection.

b. A Modern Approach to the Core Task 'Protection of Belgian Citizens Worldwide'

Our citizens live all over the world. The safety of these Belgians is ensured in the first place by the contribution of the Belgian authorities to security in the world, notably through diplomatic action, development cooperation and the deployment of Defence, mainly within the context of the core task of 'collective security'. However, situations can occur in which there is a direct threat against Belgian citizens or groups of Belgians in a particular country, region or city, or against individual Belgian citizens who perform specific duties. When local authorities are no longer capable of ensuring the safety of our fellow citizens, Defence must be able to intervene in order to ensure their physical safety worldwide.

When Belgian citizens abroad are faced with a direct threat, this is identified in first instance by our military intelligence service, which is in close contact with the Belgian diplomacy and consular services, the Belgian intelligence and security services, and the intelligence services of partner nations. This service provides the Belgian authorities with intelligence and makes it possible for the government to take appropriate measures.

In most cases the threat against Belgian citizens abroad builds gradually, thus allowing the Belgian authorities to react in stages, if possible in consultation with other countries and at the European level.

De Consular services are responsible for informing Belgian citizens under threat, encouraging them to take appropriate measures, such as leaving the country by civilian transport before the security situation deteriorates further.

However, at a certain moment the authorities can decide that an effective and immediate evacuation of national citizens is necessary because their safety can no longer be guaranteed. Defence can provide transport with its strategic means of transport when the civilian transport no longer works. At the moment, our strategic means of transport consist of air transport only. In the future, this could possibly be expanded with strategic maritime transport.

If there are indications that the security situation in a specific region can change dramatically and that the safety of our citizens is in danger, the authorities can decide to preposition soldiers and equipment for a fast intervention. Prepositioning can be organised on land or, possibly in the future, at sea through the JSS and an amphibious company. Prepositioning takes into account the fact that because of the current proliferation of war weapons, potential opponents can have relatively heavy weaponry at their disposal, which would entail that evacuation operations require armoured motorised assets, if necessary even supported by air assets.


In case of imminent or direct threats against our citizens, without the possibility to preposition,

Defence will continue to be able to execute a military evacuation of citizens (Non-Combatant Evacuation Operation - NEO). A flexible detachment adapted to the operational assessment, ranging from a reinforcement of the security teams on the spot to a SOF Task Force³¹, must be able to deploy within that context by means of air transport assets.

In the future, the actual organisation of evacuation operations will be increasingly international and multilateral, for which France is and remains the most evident strategic partner. This partnership is reflected, among other things, in the Belgian participation in the command structure of the Rapid Reaction Corps in Lille.

Belgium provides an evacuation contribution within an international framework with a focus on Sub-Saharan Africa and the Great Lakes region for historical reasons, whereas other countries take the lead in other regions. Our military capabilities should also be able to contribute to evacuation operations around the world, possibly under the leadership of other countries.

Besides evacuation operations aimed at repatriating large groups of people, Belgian Defence also has to be able to execute direct actions across the world when Belgian citizens are in danger, if necessary, to free Belgian hostages.



In the future, the actual organisation of evacuation operations will be increasingly international and multilateral.

³¹ The maximum configuration of a SOF Task Force consists of one SOF Task Group and one Ranger battalion.

Special Forces operators can also ensure the protection of Belgian citizens whose job requires them to stay in unsafe areas, as is mainly the case for embassy staff. In addition, they also carry out from time to time Close Protection missions to protect delegations.

c. Optimisation of Support Provided by Defence to Internal Security

Internal security is not one of Defence's core tasks. However, Defence plans to support internal security, for there is an obvious interconnection between internal and external security, as has become very clear with the increased terrorist threat on our territory.

Ideally, our security is ensured as far away from our borders as possible through expeditionary deployment within the framework of collective security. Today however, it is a fact that terrorism linked to other security issues constitutes a threat to our security, including that on our own territory. In addition, the direct consequences of global warming will cause more extreme weather, and thus potentially lead to an increased deployment of Defence for consequence management of disasters.

“ In view of the permanent reality that Defence is the last bulwark for the security of our society, it will optimise the use of its capabilities – set up around the three core tasks – within the framework of internal security. ”

In view of the permanent reality that Defence is the last bulwark for the security of our society, it will optimise the use of its capabilities – set up around the three core tasks – within the framework of internal security.

That being said, Defence already carries out internal security missions in a structural way. On the one hand, it makes the specialist assets available that are covering the territorial aspect of collective defence for a role in internal security (combat aircraft, coastal patrol vessels). On the other hand, Defence takes up some territorial tasks because of its (historical) expertise (Explosive Ordnance Disposal Service (EODS), Search and Rescue helicopters, national missions of the military intelligence service, some capabilities of the military medical support).

Two combat aircraft are permanently available to NATO on the national territory for Quick Reaction Alert missions (air defence) and can also be deployed, for reasons of interdepartmental efficiency, for missions within the framework of internal security (air policing), such as the counter-terrorism Renegade³² mission. The same goes for the Navy's coastal patrol vessels that are always on standby to follow up any military threats in our maritime area of responsibility. These vessels can also execute tasks within the framework of internal security, such as fisheries control, the fight against trafficking (drugs, human

³² *Renegade: the deployment of combat aircraft for the interception, identification, diversion and – as a last resort – neutralisation of civil aircraft that can be used as terrorist weapons, as during the attacks of 11 September 2001.*

beings...), enforcement of environmental regulations, as well as the provision of support in case of natural disasters and incidents. From the authorities' point of view the contribution of these capabilities to internal security is an optimisation of the use of the state's resources. Today, there are also capabilities and missions primarily or partly aimed at supporting internal security. For example, the Search and Rescue capability with helicopters is aimed at internal security. Certain sub-capabilities of the military medical capability, in particular the possibility to organise an emergency hospital in the military hospital, the organisation of an emergency mortuary in the military hospital or the capability to produce medicine also aim at internal security in the first place. Other military capabilities are additionally adjusted to their contribution to internal security, like the EOD/C-IED³³ national response and the EODS that is responsible for cleaning up historical ammunition.

Search and Rescue with helicopters and the tasks allocated to the EODS within the framework of internal security will continue to be covered by the defence budget. Defence will as much as possible rely on sourcing for the role of the EODS to clean up historical ammunition.



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The military capability for the disposal of improvised explosive devices plays an important role in ensuring internal security within the framework of counterterrorism.

The possible options for the future of the SAR helicopters will be studied on the basis of business cases, as a separate implementation topic and taking into account the capability orientations of this strategic vision. The future of the medical support is discussed in more detail in chapters 5 and 6. However, the military medical support will continue to pursue a supporting role within the framework of internal security. Today Defence can also rely on

³³ Explosive Ordnance Disposal/Counter-Improvised Explosive Device.

structures allowing a good interdepartmental coordination in terms of internal security, i.e. the Maritime Information Hub and the province commands described in chapter 5.

Apart from the limited structural tasks, the expertise of Defence and the capabilities available are used at national level during national crises. However, in the first instance they are intended for the expeditionary deployment. The capabilities referred to include:

- the surveillance detachments made available by the land forces because of the higher terrorism threat;
- manpower and assets (ships, vehicles, engineer vehicles) for consequence management in case of flooding or other disasters;
- CBRN teams in case of chemical disasters;
- Special Forces in support of the Police special units;
- The use of the Military Hospital for the coordination, triage and care in the event of mass casualties;
- The cyber capability to solve hacking of firms;
- Transport helicopters for the transport of wounded;
- The employment of the military Aviation Safety Directorate (ASD) in the event of air accidents with civilian aircraft;
- The replacement of the civilian air traffic control by the military Air Traffic Control Centre.

As noted previously, the deployment of Defence by the government within the framework of internal security, according to a substantial level of ambition, will be to the detriment of the deployment possibilities for the three core tasks.

As pointed out, this strategic vision will optimise the commitment of the support provided by Defence within the framework of internal security.


This strategic vision presents two additional military capabilities that are more particularly related to internal security, i.e. the reserve companies (currently under study) for the specific reinforcement of the land forces for tasks within the framework of internal security and the Air Information Hub to ensure interdepartmental coordination (see chapter 5).

“Elaborate forms of cooperation with other national and international security partners will be strived for, in order to strengthen the national efficiency of Defence and in support of a more European defence policy.”
(principle n° 6)

If certain military capabilities, indispensable to the three core tasks, can also help the authorities to take care of internal security in a more efficient way at interdepartmental level, it goes without saying that this path should be pursued. A reinforced coordination with other national security actors (including private companies³⁴) can contribute to achieving

³⁴ For instance telecommunications and IT companies within the framework of cyber security.

this objective. It is important for our civilian security actors to know to what extent Defence can ensure that military capabilities can be made available for a national deployment. Cooperation and coordination with other national security actors active in the same field will be pursued (for instance: Civil Protection in the CBRN field and military construction; civilian hospitals for the Military Hospital) and could lead to synergies. A win-win situation can be considered for comparable civilian and military capabilities through the procurement

**Cooperation and coordination with other national security actors active in the same field will be pursued and could lead to synergies.**

(or even dual use) of common (identical) equipment and the joint organisation of some lines of development, like education and training, support and infrastructure (co-location).

An increased cooperation can also contribute to reinforcing coordination between Defence and the other national security actors within the framework of the European

Comprehensive Approach. For the time being, this approach is essentially applied within the framework of civil and civil-military crisis management operations within the context of the EU's Common Security and Defence Policy. It also gains in importance within NATO. NATO has requested that closer links be created with the other Belgian security actors such as the Crisis Centre of the Ministry of the Interior, Police and Civil Defence, within the framework of the NATO defence planning and the civil-military operational deployment. Defence will actively contribute to the reinforcement of these links.

A stronger legal framework will be developed for the deployment of defence capabilities within the framework of internal security. Generally speaking as well as within the specific framework of intelligence gathering, this approach would offer more clarity and legal certainty to the servicemen deployed.

The optimisation of the role played by Defence within the framework of internal security can contribute to building up the public support that is needed in order to create sufficient stability to execute the strategic vision up to 2030.

d. Potential for Adaptation

The extent to which Defence is capable of continuously adapting to the security environment, represents an important element for the organisation to remain a relevant security actor in a volatile security environment.

This potential for adaptation is only possible if Defence itself has a clear vision of the trends of the security environment and regularly checks if changes in this environment impose adjustments to the defence policy and to the means made available to this end. A vision, however strategic, remains a vision that should adapt to a new reality.

The organisation of military capabilities is often a time-consuming process, first of all because the period of time required for the development and procurement of a weapon system is often a long one and secondly, because of the time the implementation of all lines of development needs before actually becoming a capability³⁵.

Defence forces with a broad portfolio will always be found to be flexible if new capability emphases are necessary after a change in the security environment³⁶. The opportunities to further develop existing capabilities are simply more numerous within a Defence with a broad portfolio.

Defence forces with a broad portfolio will always be found to be flexible if new capability emphases are necessary after a change in the security environment.

The broad capability portfolio of this strategic vision (see chapter 5), the clear will of a capability anchoring at European level (see chapter 3) and the development of a defence R&T policy at national level (see chapter 6), will give concrete expression to the potential for adaptation of our Defence.

Furthermore, this capacity to adapt goes beyond the material dimension. It is also determined by adapted personnel regulations and by the extent to which Defence manages to acquire and retain knowledge of other engagement doctrines and is able to rapidly (re)-integrate them into the Defence training and structures. Maintaining its own robust capacity for military specific competence development (see chapters 5 and 6) guarantees this.

³⁵ As referred to in the introduction, a military capability includes following lines of development: doctrine, organisation, training, equipment, leadership and education, personnel, infrastructure and interoperability.

³⁶ Thus, giving the MALE drones the possibility to be armed leaves the option open for the future to proceed to an actual deployment of these devices to support the ground troops with a tactical fire support.



Actively Strive for a More European Defence Through Anchoring our Capabilities with Partners

Given the analysis of the security environment, our country primarily wants to build security in Europe and around the continent. This priority is reflected in the « collective defence » and « collective security » core tasks, in which the European security environment and the two major European multilateral security organisations are central. For Belgium, as a middle-sized European country, this strategy also is best suited to maintain an influence on the European and international security.

The pursuit of a more common European security policy, both through the EU and within NATO, remains the central and constant element of our foreign policy, and therefore our security and defence policy. Moreover, from a security perspective, these Euro-Atlantic organisations are very complementary. Since the rebalancing of the United States towards Asia, the EU and NATO have also urged on the need to strengthen European military capability cooperation (Pooling & Sharing)³⁷. This should allow European countries to cover the entire spectrum of military capabilities in a more efficient manner. This approach is essential to provide security in their own periphery, with an increased autonomy, as mentioned before.

Considering the current European political integration into the defence area, task specialisation among European Defences does not seem a politically realistic option in the short term.

Today, European capability cooperation is still not optimal, because each country has a strong national focus on its own defence policy and planning.

In addition, there is not enough guidance from the European level in order to coordinate this defence policy (including the capability policy) in a top-down way. This is not much of a surprise, knowing that security and defence matters are not handled by a supranational institution such as the European Commission, but by the EU Member States themselves via intergovernmental structures.

³⁷ It concerns the EDA Pooling & Sharing programme, the NATO Smart Defence programme and the Framework Nations Concept, which is also supported by NATO. Pooling & Sharing focuses on achieving an economy of scale. Pooling is about supporting common national capabilities between a certain number of partner countries or multilaterally. Sharing implies the creation of a joint capability with rules on the use of capability on a national base (commensurate with the national contribution).

Considering the current European political integration into the defence area, task specialisation³⁸ among European Defences does not seem a politically realistic option in the short term. Task specialisation would imply that one or more Defences develop a military capability for the benefit of all European countries, while other countries would develop different capabilities for serving the whole. Even with a new security strategy at EU level, a more compelling and efficient division of military tasks and related military capabilities is not feasible without a supranational authority.

In the fifteen years to come, the main actors of defence policy within Europe will more than probably still be the European national states. It would therefore be premature, and even dangerous to have Belgian Defence specialise unilaterally in some capabilities at this point. After all, in the absence of a clear-cut overarching European political framework, no reciprocity can be expected from other countries. Moreover, the reality is that countries that are already cooperating with us today on defence matters are not seeking specialisation in terms of tasks and military capabilities³⁹.

How can a middle-sized European country such as Belgium, for which a more European defence is desirable and which at the same time aspires to actively enhance the European supranational character, contribute in an efficient way to this more European defence in the current context? Two complementary options will be discussed below: contribute to the filling of capability gaps at a European level, and develop as many national capabilities as possible, together with strategic partner countries.

These elements that clearly appear in the Government agreement and in the sixth principle will be further developed hereafter.

**"The Government will continue to work on strengthening international cooperation - within the framework of Benelux, as well as on a bilateral basis and at a broader multilateral level – to increase pooling & sharing with our allies and to develop more common procurement programmes with them."
(Government agreement of 9 October 2014)**

³⁸ A fictitious example of task specialisation consists in creating a Western European navy, including the Benelux countries, France, Germany and the United Kingdom. Belgium would entirely turn its marine towards mine countermeasures vessels in support of the six countries. The Netherlands would only supply amphibious vessels, France submarines, Germany frigates and destroyers and the United Kingdom aircraft carriers. This option implies that specialised national capabilities be able to support all needs of this Western European navy. In the case of this fictitious example, Belgium would have to invest in dozens of mine countermeasures vessels, without being able/allowed to maintain other capabilities.

³⁹ Nevertheless, as indicated hereafter, far-reaching defence-related cooperation initiatives, such as the Belgian-Dutch naval cooperation, already include a specialisation for specific components of military capabilities (lines of development).

“Elaborate forms of cooperation with other national and international security partners will be strived for in order to strengthen the national efficiency of Defence and in support of a more European defence policy.”
(principle no. 6)

a. Filling European Capability Gaps

The main European capability gaps have been known for a few decades. At the Euro-Atlantic level, the need for strategic enablers is the most stringent, allowing combat capabilities to operate efficiently. We are talking about tanker aircraft, large transport aircraft, reconnaissance drones, long-range precision missiles, Special Operation Forces, offensive

“With regards to our budgetary possibilities, and in compliance with our defence policy, our country will contribute to these joint European strategic enablers. The latter will enable an autonomous European military engagement in the European periphery and at the same time enhance the capabilities of the transatlantic partnership.”

cyber capabilities, means of gathering intelligence and maritime logistics. Through EU and NATO pooling programmes, which are often targeting these enablers, medium-sized Defence forces can contribute proportionally to the achievement of these capabilities. A country such as Belgium is therefore not necessarily compelled to reduce its national capability portfolio to organise a strategic enabler in an efficient way.

With regards to our budgetary possibilities, and in compliance with our defence policy, our country will contribute to these joint European strategic enablers. The latter will enable an autonomous European military engagement in the European periphery and at the same time enhance the capabilities of the transatlantic partnership.

b. Strengthening the Common Development of our Defence Capabilities with Strategic Partner Countries

The capabilities of our Defence can also help strengthening European capability defence cooperation, by favouring their joint organisation with strategic partner countries. This would enable these capabilities to be scaled up and to be supported more efficiently.

Looking ahead to an increasingly smaller Belgian Defence, the very organisation of the support needed for a specific military capability is less and less proportional with the size of the operational capability itself. From a capability perspective there is an incentive in favour of an economy of scale to support our defence capabilities. This can only be implemented through an extensive integration with the military capabilities of strategic partner countries. Geographical proximity is crucial if the lines of development of a capability that are devoted to « education », « organisation », « training », « equipment maintenance and management » and « infrastructure »⁴⁰ are to be organised in a common way.



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In November 2013 a new infrastructure for the common Belgian-Dutch naval cooperation was inaugurated at Den Helder in the Netherlands.

⁴⁰ The textbook example is the Belgian-Dutch naval cooperation. From a Belgian perspective, this cooperation model is the most important benchmark for further cooperation initiatives with our strategic partner countries. This particular cooperation actually consists of an integration between both navies, with a common organisation of the support (doctrine, command, maintenance, education, training, logistics) of the identical multi-purpose frigates and the identical mine hunters. Identical systems are a very important driving force in this deep defence cooperation. The national sovereignty of both countries is enhanced by the Belgian-Dutch naval cooperation, as the extended national capability of action outweighs the loss of national autonomy because of the joint organisation of lines of development. Belgian Defence also established close cooperation relationships with France for the instruction of its pilots. This cooperation focuses on one single line of development of a capability. However, like for the navy, it includes the joint organisation of various supporting lines of development for our training aircraft, the Alphajets, with France.

“The capabilities of our Defence can also help strengthening European capability defence cooperation, by favouring their joint organisation with strategic partner countries. This would enable these capabilities to be scaled up and to be supported more efficiently.”

A well-balanced partnership is the key to success. If the differences in the benefits brought by cooperation are too different for the individual partner countries, a relation of dependency could emerge instead of a partnership.

From this reality, it is quite logical that our Defence should first seek for well-balanced partnerships with its neighbouring countries (Germany, France, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, the United Kingdom)⁴¹, before trying to strengthen its cooperation with other EU and NATO member states.

The example of structural cooperation between the Benelux countries, within a flexible cooperation structure (the Benelux Defence Cooperation) should extend to our other neighbouring countries. A cooperation structure has to offer guidance as well as impulses to enhance cooperation at the political and military strategic level, and open the door to bottom-up initiatives. These structural cooperation bonds can also provide opportunities for a systematic dialogue on the national defence capability planning, for the purpose of setting up a (partially) common planning. Pursuing identical equipment indeed offers the best possible basis for extensive cooperation in all lines of development sustaining a military capability.

In order to line up the defence planning of – and, more generally to strengthen capability cooperation between – partner countries one needs to be a reliable partner. The recapitalisation of Defence (see chapter 4) and its anchoring through this strategic vision as well as a military programme Act (see chapter 8) contribute to this effect.

A Belgian Defence equipped with an extended capability portfolio, strongly anchored at a European level – and striving, whenever possible, to provide a solution to the European capability gaps and the Euro-Atlantic needs – remains the most logic approach towards a more European defence.

“A Belgian Defence equipped with an extended capability portfolio, strongly anchored at a European level – and striving, whenever possible, to provide a solution to the European capability gaps and the Euro-Atlantic needs – remains the most logic approach towards a more European defence.”

⁴¹ In addition to strong capability cooperation links requiring a geographical proximity, there are of course other forms of important capability and operational cooperation with other countries, such as the United States, that is one of our major partners.


This European capability anchoring also favours a more coherent European defence policy (whether via NATO or CSDP⁴²). Filling European capability gaps increases the number of opportunities for European action. A common capability support with our partner countries also helps building bonds of trust, mutual reliance, and therefore in time, a national defence policy, which also has to take other parties into account and thus should be done increasingly in consultation.

In a more fragmented world, in which new and older powers keep investing in the military instrument of power, the Europe of the EU and NATO countries can send a strong signal by speaking more often with a single voice, supported by the real possibility of conducting common (autonomous) military engagements.

c. Impact on Belgian Defence Capabilities

Our defence policy orientation outlined above provides us with incentives to invest, as a public authority, in essential strategic support capabilities through European programmes.

Close international military cooperation with our neighbouring countries – our strategic partner countries – will enable us to generate more efficiency for the support of our own capabilities in a direct manner. This gives us the opportunity to do more with the same amount of personnel and within the limits of the planned budgetary path. Working with our strategic partner countries to organise the national capabilities



The operational commitment of our national capability remains a decision taken by our government alone. This decision does not necessarily have to be taken together with the partner country with which we cooperate on capabilities.

in a more efficient way increases the deployable capabilities within the framework of the defence and foreign policy of our country. The capability for action of the Belgian State is therefore enhanced and prevails over the dependence created by the common organisation of lines of development with a strategic partner country. The operational commitment of our national capability remains a decision taken by our government alone. This decision does not necessarily have to be taken together with the partner country with which we cooperate on capabilities⁴³.

Without any claim to completeness, a few possible forms of cooperation for a European capability anchoring will be mentioned in regard to the various capabilities

⁴² CSDP: Common Security and Defence Policy.

⁴³ The common support and operational preparation of our frigates with the Netherlands, never hindered their deployment in a NATO, EU, UN or any other multinational squadron, or in an escort group (of an aircraft carrier for instance), even if the Netherlands were not participating.

identified in chapter 5. Defence will further strengthen its capability anchoring through already existing contacts with our neighbouring countries.



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A Defence with a Balanced Budget Through Recapitalisation Based on Multilateral Solidarity

This chapter underlines the importance of recapitalising Defence by 2030, both to strengthen the solidarity-based character of our Defence within a multilateral framework and to achieve a balanced Defence budget in 2030.

a. A Recapitalisation of Defence Based on Multilateral Solidarity

It is important that our country faces its responsibilities at the international level in the area of defence, in accordance with its position in the world and in Europe. This is a determining factor in the international perception of our country in the world⁴⁴. As the fourth most open economy worldwide, Belgium strongly depends on foreign trade. It is therefore vital that our country is perceived positively on the international scene.

Our defence policy focuses on a multilateral and solidarity-based contribution, with a special emphasis on ensuring European security. We can only bring a solidarity-based contribution to the operational and capability needs of the two major European security organisations, namely NATO and the EU, if Defence manages to invest sufficiently in its capability evolution and can rely on the necessary personnel and operating budget.

The NATO standard for a solidarity-based national defence effort⁴⁵ amounts to 2% of the GDP. This percentage was confirmed at the Wales NATO Summit in 2014. It was decided at this summit that all countries which do not spend 2% of their GDP on Defence would have to reverse this downward trend and aim to move towards the 2% guideline within a decade. This would be the only way for these countries to meet the capability goals set by NATO and

It is important that our country faces its responsibilities at the international level in the area of defence, in accordance with its position in the world and in Europe. This is a determining factor in the international perception of our country in the world.

⁴⁴ International Chamber of Commerce. ICC Open Markets Index 2015. Paris: International Chamber of Commerce, September 2015, p. 11 (<http://www.iccwbo.org/Global-influence/G20/Reports-and-Products/ICCs-OPEN-MARKETS-INDEX-3RD-EDITION-2015/>).

⁴⁵ The defence effort is the sum of the budget actually spent on defence by a country, of the defence-related pensions and of other related expenditures.



During the NATO Wales summit in September 2014 US president Obama calls on the NATO member states again to make sufficient investments in defence.

help filling NATO's capability gaps. It was also decided that NATO Member States currently spending less than 20% of their annual defence effort on the procurement of new major equipment, would aim, within a decade, to increase their investments to 20% or more to meet this criterion⁴⁶.

“We can only bring a solidarity-based contribution to the operational and capability needs of NATO and the EU, if Defence manages to invest sufficiently in its capability evolution and can rely on the necessary personnel and operating budget.”

NATO statistics reveal that the average defence effort made by European NATO Member States currently represents 1.5% of the GDP⁴⁷. If we only consider European countries which do not have any nuclear capability (all but the United Kingdom and France), this percentage falls to 1.2%.

⁴⁶ Beside these input criteria, there are also output criteria, such as a sufficient burden and risk sharing for NATO operations, a sufficiently deployable Defence with a sufficient sustainability and the implementation of NATO standards and doctrines, so that NATO armed forces can operate jointly and effectively.

⁴⁷ “NATO publishes Defence expenditures data for 2014 and estimates for 2015”, Brussels: NATO Public Diplomacy Division, 22 June 2015, p.6 (http://www.nato.int/nato_static_fl2014/assets/pdf/pdf_2015_06/20150622_PR_CP_2015_093-v2.pdf).

“Starting with this legislature, the Government has decided to break the downward budgetary trend for Defence.”

Like many European countries, Belgium has cashed a peace dividend since the end of the cold war. With the exception of Luxembourg, today all our neighbour States (in green on the chart below) have a substantially higher defence effort relative to their GDP.

Starting with this legislature, the Government has decided to break the downward budgetary trend for Defence, as it no longer meets the reality of our security environment, nor the will to maintain a safe, free and prosperous Europe together with our allies on the long run. It has been decided to recapitalise Defence in a way that reflects our multilateral solidarity. This budget-related multilateral solidarity will enable our country to remain a credible partner and maintain our solidarity within NATO and the EU. This is part of the Government agreement and appears in principle no. 2 of this strategic vision.

“Belgium will remain a credible partner and will maintain its solidarity within NATO (...).”
(Government agreement of 9 October 2014)

“The multilateral anchoring of Belgian Defence that generates a solidarity-based security, has also to be supported by Belgium with budgetary means.”
(principle no. 2)

The strategic vision takes the budgetary path of Defence, as decided in 2014 for this legislature, as a starting point. This path will be mitigated until 2019 included, by transferring 100 million euros from the interdepartmental provision to Defence every year. These funds will be used to reimburse the debt and to pay for current investments⁴⁸. It has also been decided to use 200 million euros from the reserves of Defence’s budgetary funds⁴⁹ during the 2016-2019 period to invest in major equipment, with a special focus on investments for ground forces. This extra budget renders additional investments in major equipment possible, in addition to the basic amount of 9.2 billion euros foreseen in the period 2020-2030 for this type of investments.

⁴⁸ This is not about investments in specific military equipment, but about the replacement of specialised tools and major infrastructural maintenance.

⁴⁹ These three funds were closed on 31 December 2015 by decision of the Council of Ministers of 1 October 2015. They were replaced by one new fund for Defence starting on 1 January 2016. The remaining credits are still available on the previous funds.

From 2019 on, the budgetary path will follow a progressive and linear growth in order to reach a defence effort of 1.3% of the GDP by 2030.

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The table below shows the evolution of the defence effort (defence budget and pension-related costs for the military personnel) and the corresponding evolution in terms of percentage of the GDP. During the drafting process of the strategic vision, an estimated average economic growth (and therefore a

growth of the GDP) of 1.5% above the inflation⁵⁰ was taken into account. This 1.5% is based on the economic forecasts made by the Federal Planning Bureau.

2015	3,8 Bn €	0,94%						
2016	3,8 Bn €	0,91%	2021	4,2 Bn €	0,94%	2026	5,5 Bn €	1,14%
2017	3,8 Bn €	0,91%	2022	4,5 Bn €	0,98%	2027	5,7 Bn €	1,18%
2018	3,8 Bn €	0,90%	2023	4,7 Bn €	1,02%	2028	6,0 Bn €	1,22%
2019	3,8 Bn €	0,88%	2024	5,0 Bn €	1,06%	2029	6,3 Bn €	1,26%
2020	4,0 Bn €	0,90%	2025	5,2 Bn €	1,10%	2030	6,6 Bn €	1,30%

Table 1: The defence effort planned for 2015-2030 and its % of GDP according to the budgetary path of the strategic vision.

The budgetary path for the recapitalisation of Defence leads to a solidarity-based defence effort towards 2030, which exceeds the current average of the European NATO countries without nuclear capability. Considering that in the meantime other European countries have also decided to recapitalise their Defence this decision should allow us to join the middle group of NATO countries by 2030.

⁵⁰ Inflation does not have to be taken into account as all figures in this document are presented in constant euros 2015.

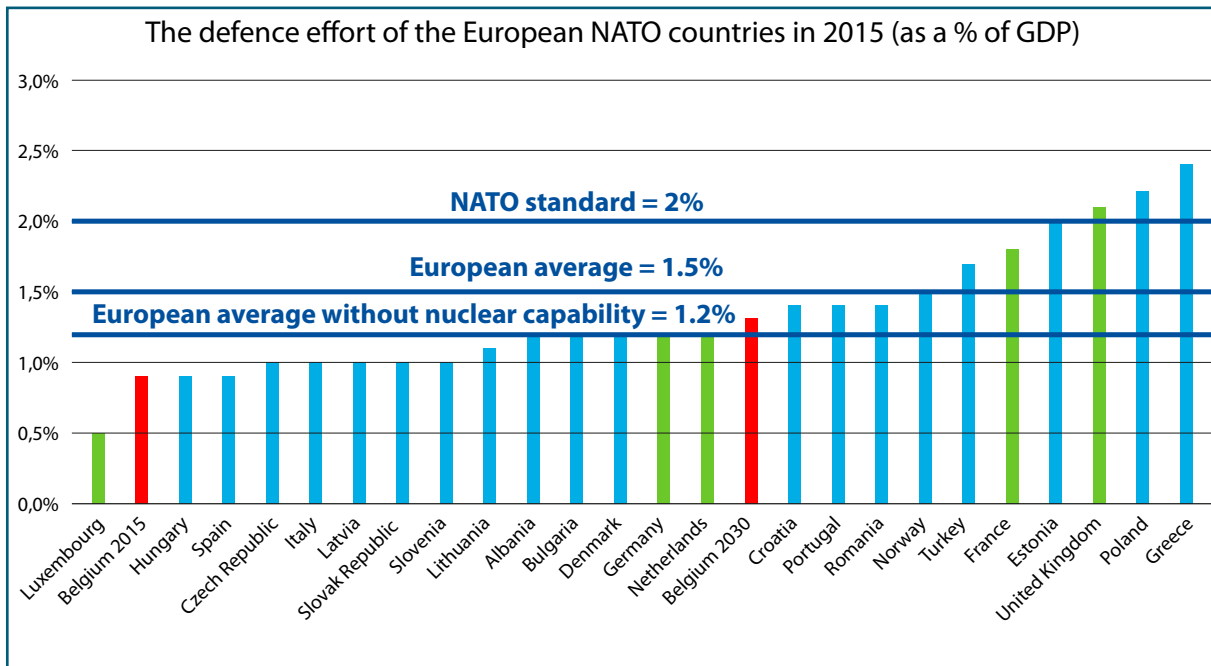


Chart 1: The defence effort of the European NATO countries in 2015 (as a % of GDP)

As stated in the table below, the linear increase of the Belgian defence effort will give way to an increased defence budget from 2019 on. These figures are also expressed in constant euros 2015.

2015	2,5 Bn €		
2016	2,4 Bn €	2021	2,7 Bn €
2017	2,4 Bn €	2022	2,9 Bn €
2018	2,4 Bn €	2023	3,1 Bn €
2019	2,4 Bn €	2024	3,3 Bn €
2020	2,5 Bn €	2025	3,5 Bn €
		2026	3,8 Bn €
		2027	4,1 Bn €
		2028	4,3 Bn €
		2029	4,6 Bn €
		2030	5,0 Bn €

Table 2: The defence budgets planned for 2015-2030 according to the budget path of the strategic vision.

The first instalment of the 9.2 billion euros for investment budgets on major equipment (for the 2020-2030 period) will be available for payments in 2020. Compared with the defence budget of 2.4 billion euros for 2019, the additional budgetary effort made during the 2020-2030 period will be 13.8 billion euros. This will be detailed in the next subchapter.

b. A Balanced Budget for Defence in 2030

Thanks to the above-mentioned relative global increase of the defence effort and the defence budget, the internal cost structure of Defence will be rebalanced by 2030. The main criterion in this regard is the ratio between personnel costs, operating costs and investment costs. Before discussing this ratio, a word of explanation should be given on the need and on the

practical content of this recapitalisation according to the different budgetary lines of the global cost structure of Defence.

The overall cost structure of Defence can be subdivided in 11 different budgetary lines: investments in major equipment, debt, investments in infrastructure, contributions to multilateral investments, investments in R&T, additional sourcing in replacement of duties without military specificity, small equipment investments, functioning, activity-related personnel expenditure, personnel and pensions. These 11 budgetary lines are shown hereafter in a chart representing the planned global cost structure for Defence and in the corresponding table of figures.

		(in constant euros 2015)					
		2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
N A T O	Investments in major equipment	0	0	54.000.000	68.720.000	77.280.000	174.063.763
	Debt	124.198.300	155.304.322	149.528.636	176.005.287	151.094.580	164.001.431
	Investments in infrastructure	27.551.000	26.148.890	37.497.775	35.267.403	28.324.563	45.000.000
	Contributions to multilateral investments	19.528.000	18.689.532	16.010.681	16.580.470	19.439.172	19.046.890
	Investments in R&T						
	Additional sourcing in replacement of 'duties without military specificity'		0	2.673.325	15.747.251	41.007.246	79.341.000
	Small equipment investments	24.581.000	39.800.159	50.708.295	27.264.014	18.570.829	35.000.000
	Functioning	614.824.616	606.975.932	598.496.030	603.202.515	620.579.545	619.007.392
	Personnel (activity-related expenditure)	89.105.498	92.179.818	89.935.926	81.387.241	73.121.995	60.000.000
	Personnel	1.553.661.573	1.486.330.293	1.437.722.062	1.373.727.286	1.323.020.028	1.262.711.602
	Pensions	1.320.811.951	1.365.875.132	1.402.606.520	1.443.353.265	1.488.982.319	1.530.641.645
TOTAL = defence effort	3.774.261.938	3.791.304.077	3.839.179.250	3.841.254.732	3.841.420.276	3.988.813.723	
GDP	401.610.000.000	415.859.550.291	421.999.209.005	428.229.512.288	434.551.798.395	440.942.266.018	
Defence effort as % GDP	0,94%	0,91%	0,91%	0,90%	0,88%	0,90%	
Defence budget (= defence effort without pensions)	2.453.449.987	2.425.428.945	2.436.572.730	2.397.901.467	2.352.437.958	2.458.172.079	
Annual difference of the defence budget		-28.021.041	11.143.785	-38.671.263	-45.463.510	105.734.121	
N A T O	% investment costs as a % of the defence effort	4,5%	5,3%	6,7%	7,7%	7,2%	10,1%
	% operating costs as a % of the defence effort	16,9%	17,1%	17,0%	16,8%	17,7%	18,4%
	% personnel costs as a % of the defence effort	78,5%	77,7%	76,3%	75,5%	75,1%	71,5%

Chart 3: The global evolution of the budgetary lines of the defence effort 2015-2030 and the evolution of the corresponding percentage of the defence effort for the personnel budget, the operating budget and the investment budget.

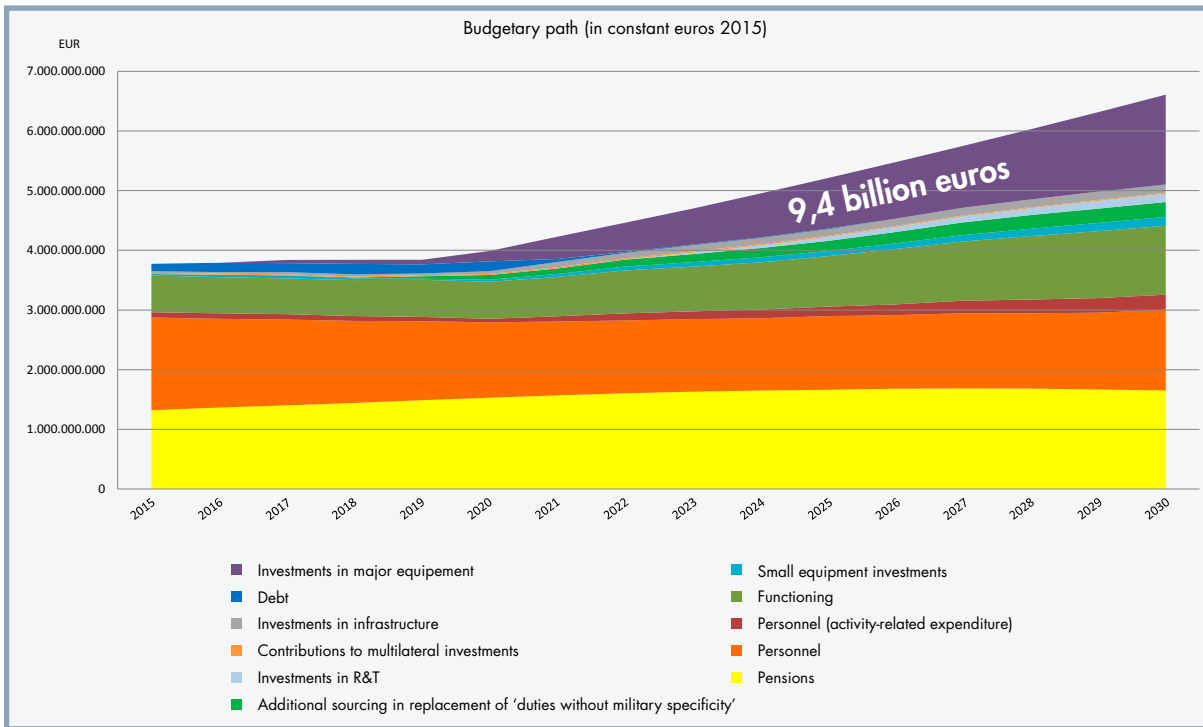


Chart 2: The global evolution of the budgetary lines of the defence effort 2015-2030.

	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030
	372.026.342	490.689.774	601.561.550	735.255.554	845.623.798	947.546.823	1.035.266.892	1.176.398.185	1.330.313.952	1.502.575.920
	50.462.208	15.076.248	11.711.342	9.740.447	12.001.867	0	0	0	0	0
	90.000.000	90.000.000	105.000.000	105.000.000	110.000.000	120.000.000	130.000.000	130.000.000	140.000.000	140.000.000
	19.889.302	20.548.107	20.360.308	20.120.555	17.442.200	15.445.946	15.445.946	15.445.946	15.445.946	15.445.946
		2.000.000	23.000.000	43.000.000	68.000.000	87.000.000	100.000.000	115.000.000	130.000.000	140.000.000
	90.000.000	115.000.000	135.000.000	155.000.000	170.000.000	190.000.000	213.000.000	230.000.000	240.000.000	250.000.000
	50.000.000	65.000.000	75.000.000	85.000.000	85.000.000	95.000.000	107.000.000	123.000.000	138.000.000	148.000.000
	659.668.907	719.150.556	748.981.173	790.003.086	845.893.898	926.660.427	991.905.747	1.062.859.564	1.120.454.233	1.155.019.979
	87.688.228	119.078.381	129.818.780	146.388.557	158.908.921	180.000.000	210.000.000	230.000.000	245.000.000	250.000.000
	1.237.540.895	1.220.534.203	1.216.254.635	1.210.518.709	1.233.441.593	1.233.621.451	1.259.352.866	1.261.648.134	1.287.769.660	1.353.091.265
	1.569.745.744	1.604.241.308	1.631.344.966	1.650.874.201	1.663.878.481	1.680.761.231	1.686.601.750	1.683.590.233	1.667.300.660	1.653.611.944
	4.227.021.626	4.461.318.577	4.698.032.754	4.950.901.109	5.210.190.759	5.476.035.878	5.748.573.200	6.027.942.062	6.314.284.451	6.607.745.055
	447.426.711.107	454.006.515.682	460.683.082.089	467.457.833.296	474.332.213.197	481.307.686.921	488.385.741.140	495.567.884.392	502.855.647.398	510.250.583.389
	0,94%	0,98%	1,02%	1,06%	1,10%	1,14%	1,18%	1,22%	1,26%	1,30%
	2.657.275.882	2.857.077.269	3.066.687.788	3.300.026.908	3.546.312.278	3.795.274.647	4.061.971.450	4.344.351.829	4.646.983.791	4.954.133.111
	199.103.804	199.801.387	209.610.519	233.339.121	246.285.369	248.962.369	266.696.803	282.380.379	302.631.962	307.149.320
	12,6%	13,9%	16,2%	18,4%	20,2%	21,4%	22,3%	23,8%	25,6%	27,2%
	18,9%	20,2%	20,4%	20,8%	21,1%	22,1%	22,8%	23,5%	23,7%	23,5%
	68,5%	66,0%	63,4%	60,8%	58,7%	56,5%	54,9%	52,7%	50,7%	49,3%

Investments in Major Equipment

The recapitalisation of Defence will create an investment margin for major equipment procurement programmes amounting to 9.4 billion euros up to 2030. This will allow Defence to modernise weapon systems that remain relevant and to focus on new capabilities. This investment budget will be spent on investments in the capabilities described in chapter 5.

Given the importance of the anchoring of investments planned until 2030, not only for our society and our allies, but also for the business world, the Government agreement foresees the creation of a military programme Act. This point is mentioned in principle no. 7 of this strategic vision.

“A military programme Act which will include the **investments in major equipment** of Belgian Defence for the duration of the **strategic vision**, will help generate stability and predictability for the effective realisation of a credible Belgian Defence by 2030 towards society, our allies and the business world.”
(principle no. 7)

Debt

The budgetary line for “debt” covers the payments for past contracts relating to investments in major equipment. These investments mainly include the payments for the A400M transport aircraft, with smaller amounts for the procurement of the Rapid Reaction Vehicle, which was decided in 2015, the improvement of the protection of the ISTAR battalion’s Pandur and the consolidation of the F-16 combat aircraft and the frigates.

Investments in Infrastructure

This budgetary line specifically covers all investments in infrastructure, including the maintenance works which are borne by the owners, such as replacing roofs and external carpentry works. The operating costs related to infrastructure belong to the budgetary line “functioning”.

For decades, savings have been made on Defence infrastructure. The modernisation of ageing buildings in order to bring them in line with new standards, especially with regards to sustainability, will take several years. To finance this modernisation, the budget for infrastructure investments will be increased from 28.3 million euros in 2019 to 140 million euros in 2030. In a first estimate a reduction of the number of military quarters, proportionate to the evolution towards a Defence of 25,000 FTE, has already been taken into account.

Contributions to Multilateral Investments

The budgetary line for “contributions to multilateral investments” mainly covers the budgets for the NATO infrastructure investment programme to which all allies must contribute and the NATO investment programme for the modernisation of the AWACS fleet (see chapter 5). In addition, contributions are made to smaller investment costs for NATO and the Eurocorps.

Investments in R&T

Defence does not currently meet the EDA standard for investments in Research & Technology (R&T), requiring 2% of the defence effort to be spent on R&T, of which at least 20% should be done through European collaboration programmes. In 2013, only 0.2% of the defence effort was spent on R&T⁵¹.

Defence’s R&T investments correspond to the budget Defence wants to spend on research in the field of innovative technologies that could eventually result in interesting applications for Defence⁵². R&T research can lead to the development of future-oriented military applications, which are often equally important for innovation of civilian technologies and applications. From a Belgian point of view, the industry sector usually takes the lead for this development.

R&T as a standard of innovation is mainly used by the EDA. The other EU bodies, NATO as well as the national and regional authorities use mainly an R&D standard which includes both R&T and the resulting development. This strategic vision specifically sees a role for research within and financed by Defence for military innovation that is further developed by the industry afterwards. Therefore, emphasis is given to EDA’s R&T standard. The national R&T policy also should contribute to strengthening European defence cooperation.

Increasing the contribution of Defence to R&T is essential to give a positive impetus to the pragmatic partnership mentioned in chapter 6 between Defence, our industry and our research institutions. Today, this limited budget is included in the operating costs of Defence (budget line “functioning”). As from 2022, additional investments will be made in this field, and as from 2023, all R&T investments will be covered by a separate budget line that will reach a level of 140 million euros in 2030. With this increase of R&T spending to 2% of the defence effort in 2030, Defence will meet the EDA standard and will be among the best-performing EU member states in this field, according to the current NATO and EU statistics.

Increasing the contribution of Defence to R&T is essential to give a positive impetus to the pragmatic partnership between Defence, our industry and our research institutions.

51 *National Defence Data 2013 of the 27 EDA Member States*. EDA: Brussels, May 2015, p.37.

(http://www.eda.europa.eu/docs/default-source/documents/national-Defence-data-2013--27-eda-ms_updated.pdf).

52 *Of course, the industry and research institutions also contribute to R&T.*

Additional Sourcing in Replacement of 'Duties Without Military Specificity'

The wave of retirements within Defence will be mainly compensated by the extended use of sourcing. This will be achieved, as provided for by the Government agreement, by outsourcing tasks for which no military expertise or experience are required and which can be carried out more efficiently through the civilian market. By 2030, activities which are currently carried out by a total number of 5,000 military FTE should be taken over by enterprises or other public authority bodies for the benefit of Defence. Chapter 6 lists the fields which are currently being considered: the territorial services inside and outside the quarters (Territorial Support Service, including the outsourcing of catering activities, part of the surveillance of the military quarters and maintenance), the white fleet, the technical-logistic support of weapon systems at industry level, the support and management of the current training areas, as well as the storage and distribution



By 2030, activities which are currently carried out by a total number of 5,000 military FTE should be taken over by enterprises or other public authority bodies for the benefit of Defence.

of equipment, clothing and material. These activities will be outsourced stage by stage, according to the retirement of the personnel currently active in these areas.

Today, the 5,000 FTE to be compensated by this type of sourcing represent an annual wage cost of some 275 million euros. It is assumed that the sourcing of these services will not exceed 90% of the wages that are paid to the current personnel. Therefore, as from 2017, a budgetary line for “additional sourcing in replacement of ‘duties without military specificity’” will be created. This budget will add up to a maximum of 250 million euros.

Small Equipment Investments

The budgetary line for “small equipment investments” enables Defence to maintain existing (weapon) systems and to purchase, among others, the tools, machines, furniture and electronic equipment needed in support of the day-to-day functioning of Defence.

This budgetary line must be proportional to Defence’s new major equipment. Generally, to determine the necessary budgets for this budgetary line, the Defence Staff takes into account about 10% of the investments in major equipment. Consequently, the small equipment investments will increase to 148 million euros in 2030.

Functioning

This budgetary line is planned to be gradually increased from 607 million euros in 2016 to 1,155 million euros in 2030.

This increase is mainly related to the rise in the “operating costs for the equipment of the military capabilities” mentioned in this vision. Indeed, these costs increase from 236.1 million euros in 2016 to 607.7 million euros in 2030. They include the costs related to the maintenance and upgrade (small modifications) of the (weapon) systems⁵³ of these

⁵³ The outsourcing of the maintenance of the mine hunters is a current example of this.

capabilities, but also the costs related to fuel, the procurement of new types of ammunition and the replenishment of ammunition used for operations (estimate) and training purposes. The increase of the budgets needed for this part of the budgetary line is mainly due to a rise in the operating costs of the weapon systems owing to the higher technicality of the new systems. Civilian firms are already today taking care of an important part of the technical-logistic maintenance and servicing of these (weapon) systems. As this trend will only increase in time, it will require additional operating budgets. Furthermore, the introduction of new weapon systems leads to increased operating costs for initial one-time expenditures in the start-up period (programme costs, initial education and training for technicians and operators, participations in pools for spare parts and ammunition, the procurement of an initial stock of ammunition for a weapon system ...). As several new weapon systems will be introduced within Defence, especially during the period 2025-2030, this will lead to an additional increase of the operating costs during this period. The ammunition and fuel consumption of some specific systems will also increase, due to an increase in education and training, to strengthen the operational preparedness of our defence forces.

During the same period, the “operating costs within the framework of general support of Defence in the field of equipment” will also significantly increase from 125.9 million euros to 197.7 million euros. However, this increase is mainly the result of choosing for a service contract for the education and training of our combat pilots (instead of purchasing a replacement for the Alpha Jet training aircraft) and contributing to the development of a NATO ammunition pool for the air assets in support of a flexible operational engagement, as well as for the sake of efficiency.

This budgetary line also covers the “operating costs for infrastructure” which are expected to increase from 83 million euros to 139.5 million euros in 2030. In 2016, one third of the operating costs for infrastructure will be spent on utilities (water, heating oil, electricity and gas). This part of the operating costs for infrastructure will remain stable

in the coming years and could eventually decrease by improving the sustainability of the defence infrastructure (through investments on the “infrastructure” budget). The remainder of the operating costs for infrastructure mainly includes service contracts for all sorts of maintenance, repairs and small renovation works. The amounts budgeted for these tasks over the last few years were far too low in relation to Defence’s real estate. The projected increase will enable Defence to catch up on the current backlog and to return to a normal level of activity after 2030 for this part of the budgetary line “functioning”.

A last part of this budgetary line covers the “operating costs not related to equipment”. These will also significantly increase from 162 million euros in 2016 to 210 million euros in 2030. This rise is due to the increased education and training costs, owing to the growth of education and training abroad, the increased recruitment costs in order to maximise the application of the BDL personnel regulations (see chapter 7) and the increased operational

As several new weapon systems will be introduced within Defence, especially during the period 2025-2030, this will lead to an additional increase of the operating costs during this period.

deployment of Defence, besides the existing operating costs, especially for NATO, the EU and Eurocorps, which are also covered by this budgetary line.

Activity-Related Personnel Expenditure

The level of training for servicemen is being raised in order to bring the capabilities into line with the NATO standard and thereby meet the expectations regarding the enhanced operational engagement of Defence.

In order to achieve this, the budget for activity-related personnel expenditures is being increased from 92 million euros in 2016 to 250 million euros in 2030. This budgetary line covers all allocations relating to operations, as well as the allowances for weekend work and intensive service (related to training on the one hand and to structural needs such as permanent services on the other hand).

Personnel

These are the (basic) salaries of the personnel. Defence has to maintain an attractive position on the labour market in order to enlist the (technically) educated personnel it needs and provide the operational capabilities with personnel complying with the mental, physical and medical requirements. Part of this budgetary line will also be spent on the introduction of more flexible wages in order to attract and retain the people with the appropriate profiles within Defence.

Pensions

The pension costs represent the expenditures for the payment of the pensions of the Defence personnel. In order to determine this budgetary line, the actual expenses have been extrapolated to the future according to the expected retirement of personnel, based on the current personnel regulations.

Thanks to the subdivision of the defence effort in budgetary lines, it is now possible to analyse the evolution of the balance between the personnel costs, the operating costs and the investment costs as part of this effort.

For historical reasons, the major part of the Belgian defence effort is currently spent on personnel costs. Consequently, there is very little budget left for operating and investments. This historical distribution differs substantially from the international benchmark based on a more balanced distribution as referred to in principle no. 3d.

“For the duration of the strategic vision (2016-2030), we will strive towards a **better balance within Belgian Defence**, by means of a cost structure for Defence with a strong **decrease** in the proportion of **personnel-related costs** within the Belgian defence effort.”
(principle no. 3d)

It is generally accepted that personnel costs are balanced if they don't exceed in an important way 50% of the defence effort. NATO expects that at least 20% of the defence effort is spent on investments in major equipment, as mentioned above. Considering also the investments in infrastructure and R&T, the optimum investment percentage ranges between 20 and 30%. Consequently, in order to have a balanced Defence, the remaining operating costs should vary between 20 and 30%. The Belgian government has decided that our Defence of the future should strive for this balanced distribution of the defence effort by 2030.

“**The recapitalisation of Defence based on multilateral solidarity ensures the desired internal balance within the defence effort by the end of the period covered by this strategic vision.**”

For the conversion of the 11 budgetary lines of the global evolution of the Belgian defence effort towards the three main parameters of a (balanced) defence effort (namely the personnel, the operating and the investment costs), the NATO subdivision has been taken into account. The budgetary lines relating to “investments in major equipment”, “investments in R&T”, “debt”, “contributions to multilateral investments” and “investments in

infrastructure” belong to the investment costs category. Considering their nature, NATO categorises small investments in equipment as operating costs; so does the current document.⁵⁴ The budgetary lines relating to “small investments in equipment”, “functioning” and “additional sourcing in replacement of non-specifically military duties” constitute the operating costs.

The lines relating to “activity-related personnel expenditure”, “personnel” and “pensions” cover the personnel costs within the framework of the defence effort.

The evolution of the percentages of the personnel, the operating and the investment costs as part of the defence effort appears at the bottom of the table showing the global budgetary evolution (table 3). It is quite clear from this that the percentage of personnel costs will decrease considerably from 78% in 2016 to the ideal value of 49% in 2030, and that the

⁵⁴ According to European legal requirements (economic classification “European System of Accounts” (ESA) 2010), the small investments in equipment are however categorised as investments at the national level.

expected operating and investment budgets will meet the standard of 20-30% in 2030. Consequently, this recapitalisation of Defence based on multilateral solidarity ensures the desired internal balance within the defence effort by the end of the period covered by this strategic vision. Another budgetary chart is reproduced below, this time according to the categorisation of the personnel, the operating and the investment costs.

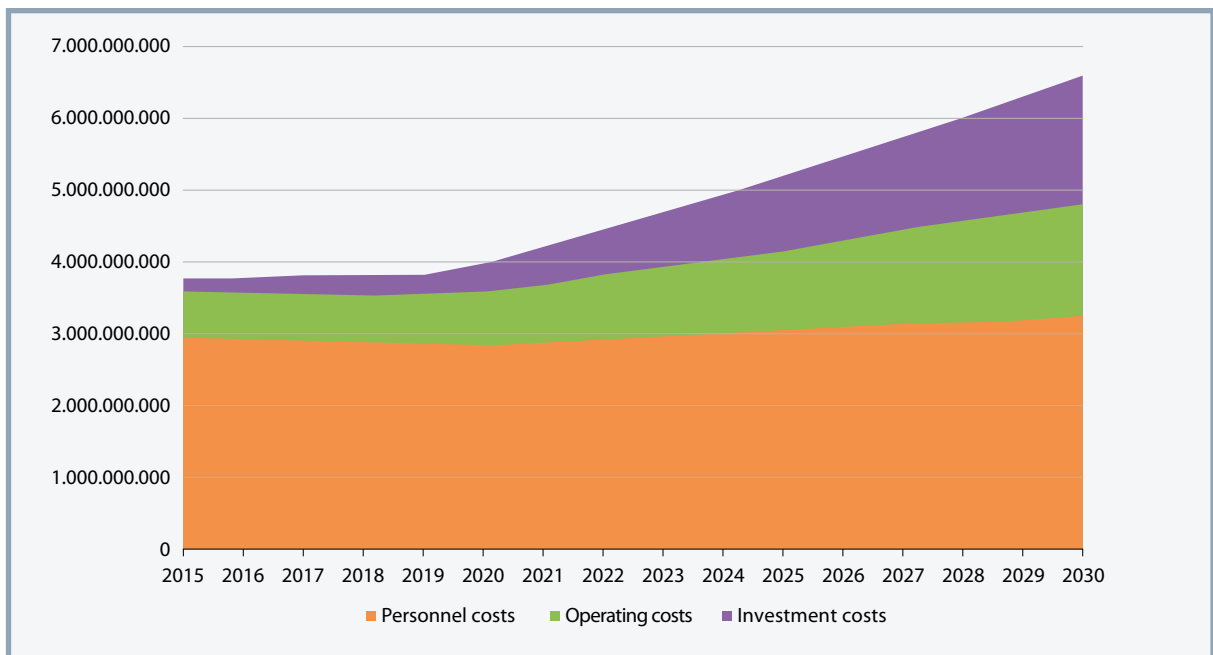


Chart 3: The global evolution of the personnel costs, the operating costs and the investment costs as part of the defence effort 2015-2030 (in constant € 2015).





The Capability Portfolio by 2030

Based on the analysis of the security environment, chapter 2 described how Belgian Defence will position itself in the years to come and what the consequences are on its capabilities. Chapter 4 explained the precise budgetary framework to fund these capabilities. This chapter will elaborate on the level of ambition and will provide guidance for the distribution of the budgetary means, the estimated timetable for investments and the personnel envelopes for the various future capabilities.

The extent to which the rationalisation principles referred to in chapter 6 can be implemented, will become clear during the execution of the strategic vision. This may possibly require (limited) shifts in the personnel envelopes planned for 2030. Nevertheless, the mentioned figures give a very clear guidance for the future organisation of the capabilities of Defence.

In this chapter, a clear budgetary framework is used based on conservative estimates for the various capabilities. Thus, from the start of the implementation of this strategic vision, there is a clear perspective on the evolution towards a balanced and gradual realisation of the capability portfolio up to 2030. Both the level of ambition and this budgetary estimate set clear boundaries for the development of this capability portfolio. The precise figures for the investments needed for the realisation of this level of ambition will however only become clear at the end of a procurement procedure. Should there be important differences in the equipment's purchase price throughout the duration of the strategic vision, it goes without saying that the related investment programmes nevertheless shall be carried out in accordance with the budgetary estimates. This restriction allows avoiding foreclosure effects with respect to other procurement programmes planned at a later stage.

All investment budgets below are expressed in constant 2015 euros so that the relative impact of the investments is immediately visible. These investments are also linked to a timing in which the actual procurement of this equipment will take place. Depending on the timing of the investments up to 2030 in the military programme Act, the investment amounts shall be adjusted for inflation, while the 9.4 billion euros (€ 2015) for investments in major equipment shall not be exceeded. The total amount of 9.4 billion euros planned to be invested in major equipment will be liquidated in the period up to 2030.

This chapter also gives a first indication about the evolution of the current Defence capability portfolio towards the portfolio of the future. Whenever appropriate, we will propose ideas for the reinforcement of the supporting role of some capabilities within the framework of internal security and how their European anchoring can be achieved, in compliance with chapter 3. The precise impact of these two capability aspects will only become clear in the course of the strategic vision. The outcome must be a more efficient (and thus also more effective) Defence, as provided for in principle no.6. Depending on the international military cooperation opportunities, the

international alignment of the procurement timetable of some capabilities will possibly have an impact on the distribution of the procurement programmes proposed below.

Additional studies will still be conducted for some (support) capabilities. These concern more in particular the organisation of reserve companies, the realisation of the replacement capability for the current white fleet, the future organisation of the SAR mission with helicopters, the disposal of historical ammunition by Defence, the relevance of maintaining the A109 helicopters as training capability, the integrated operational preparation of the Ranger battalions' amphibious company, the organisation of a central operational preparation and support structure for the medical support and a participation in the Joint Logistic Support Ship.

This chapter gives an overview of the personnel envelope after the implementation of this strategic vision in 2030. However, in practice, the target figure of 25,000 FTE for Defence will already have been reached in 2024.

The necessary investments for the essential operational support and command of the capabilities (of the four capability dimensions) will also be dealt with below. This information will be further clarified in a next chapter that emphasises the rationalisation and the reinforcement of the efficiency of Defence. Based on the general philosophy that the operational capabilities play a central role, the main rationalisations logically will be found in their support. This does not alter the fact that this support is essential for the proper functioning of all four capability dimensions, and that it fully contributes to the effectiveness of Defence.

With the evolution of the capability portfolio by 2030 that is being described below, the provision of the Government agreement, according to which important investments are put forward for all dimensions and more in particular for combat capabilities, is being met. Moreover, this also complies with principle no.3a related to a balanced Defence:

“For the duration of the strategic vision (2016-2030), we will strive towards a **better balance within Belgian Defence** by means of **capabilities** allowing an **appropriate completion of the core tasks.**”
(principle no. 3a)

“For the duration of the strategic vision (2016-2030), we will strive towards a **better balance within Belgian Defence**, by means of a **balance among the four capability dimensions** (intelligence-cyber-influence, land, air, maritime), with **at least always one credible and sustainable deployable combat capability per dimension**. The **risk sharing** aspect is **essential to an output based on solidarity** and **requires a sufficiently broad national toolbox with sufficient combat capacity in each dimension**. This toolbox **assures the Belgian government of a lasting influence and impact on international security**. It makes Belgium a credible partner at international level. In order to generate this solidarity-based output within a multilateral framework and in support of the national interests, an equally solidarity-based input by means of a defence effort based on solidarity is of the utmost importance.”
(principle no. 3b)

“For the duration of the strategic vision (2016-2030), we will strive towards a **better balance within Belgian Defence** through a **stronger emphasis** on the **strategic support capabilities** (strategic enablers) that are indispensable to support our own combat capabilities and that often result in a better approach to remedy the European capability gaps. These strategic enablers can be acquired at national level or through a participation in an international cooperation.”
(principle no. 3c)

“For the duration of the strategic vision (2016-2030), we will strive towards a **better balance within Belgian Defence** through a stronger emphasis on the **non-kinetic and civil-military capabilities** that are important for the prevention of armed conflicts, for stabilisation after an armed conflict and for a contribution to security in the conflict area.”
(principle no. 3e)

The parameters of 9.4 billion euros (€2015) budgetary means for investments in major equipment, a personnel envelope of 25,000 FTE in 2030, the will to maximise the efficiency of our Defence through an increased use of civilian services – if this approach is cost-reducing – and a strong European capability anchoring, allow for a balanced and broadly deployable military capability portfolio by 2030, with modern equipment and a sufficient sustainability. This approach offers the best guarantee to:

- allow the government to conduct a defence policy offering a valuable contribution to collective security and collective defence;
- maintain capabilities that have a sufficient potential for adaptation, in order to rapidly respond to changes in the Belgian and European security environment;
- be able to contribute in an active and effective way to a more European defence, that constitutes the essential basis for a more European defence policy and that is ready to take up the challenges of a multipolar world.

On the next page you will find an overview of the level of ambition per capability dimension, of the personnel envelope and the investments in major equipment for the various capabilities by 2030.

a. Capability Dimension Intelligence-Cyber-Influence

Content, Personnel, Investments and Level of Ambition

Capability Dimension Intelligence-Cyber-Influence									
Capability	Content	Personnel in 2030	Personnel planned in September 2015 (personnel on 1 January 2016)	Delta 2030 in comparison with the personnel planned in 2015	Investments in major equipment 2016-2030 (million €2015)	Level of Ambition			
						Form of deployment	Sustainability	Deployment Time	
Military intelligence service		xxxx	yyy		54,5		unlimited	permanent	
Medium Altitude Long Endurance (MALE) reconnaissance drones	2 MALE drones in the short term and 4 additional drones in the long term	120	117 (101)	+3%	490	1 MALE-drone	6 months (per year)	5 to 10 days	
High Altitude Long Endurance (HALE) reconnaissance drones	participation with personnel in NATO program	12	7 (1)	+71%	0 ⁵⁵	participation in NATO Alliance Ground Surveillance (AGS) program	unlimited		
Intelligence gathering by means of satellites (Space-based Imagery intelligence (IMINT))	participation in French project (Composante Spatiale Optique)	39	54 (44)	-28%	45,7	national data processing	unlimited		
Intelligence, Surveillance, Target Acquisition, Reconnaissance (ISTAR)	ISTAR-teams	700	641 (524)	+9%	172,35	ISTAR-teams for every type of deployment	unlimited	3 to 10 days	
Cyber	cyber defence and cyber offensive	199 + Reserve	included in « Military Intelligence Service»		10,2		unlimited	permanently available	
Influence	influence support teams	166 + Reserve	195 (98)	-15%	7	influence support teams for every type of deployment	unlimited	10 days	
TOTAL dimension Intelligence-Cyber-Influence (without military intelligence service)		1236 + Reserve	1014 (768)	+22%	779,75				

55 The NATO support facilities of this capability are co-funded by all NATO member states, thus also by Belgium, through the budgetary line "contributions to multilateral investments". However, our country has not participated in the investments for the procurement of these devices and the budgetary line "investments in major equipment" does not provide for any investment contribution to upgrades.

Investments Contents

Capability Dimension Intelligence-Cyber-Influence		
Capability	Investments in major equipment 2016-2030 (million €2015)	Investment projects and envisaged timing
Military intelligence service	54,5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Operational intelligence: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Analysis tools: 17 million euros (2020-2030) ▪ Signal Intelligence programs: 30.5 million euros (2020-2029) ▪ Open Source Intelligence programs: 7 million euros (2022-2028) ■ 2 MALE drones in the short term: 180 million euros (2021-2025) ■ 4 additional (European) MALE drones in the longer term: 310 million euros (2029-2030)
MALE reconnaissance drones	490	
HALE reconnaissance drones	Contribution in kind (personnel)	
Intelligence gathering by means of satellites (Space-based IMINT)	45,7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ participation in French project (Composante Spatiale Optique): 45.7 million euros (2018-2021)
Intelligence, Surveillance, Target Acquisition and Reconnaissance (ISTAR)	172,35	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ combat vests (Belgian Soldier Transformation - BEST): 6.5 million euros (2017-2022) ■ individual weapons: 1.82 million euros (2022-2023 and 2027-2028) ■ thermal observation: 2.1 million euros (2025-2027) ■ upgrade Pandur reconnaissance vehicles: 31.06 million euros (2020-2024) ■ tactical drones: 18 million euros (2021-2023) ■ mini drones: 9 million euros (2021 and 2024) ■ multi-sensor combination: 17 million euros (2020-2030) ■ replacement battlefield surveillance radar: 4.5 million euros (2020-2022) ■ light version of the common international motorised platform: 38.69 million euros (2025-2030) ■ armoured logistical evacuation vehicles (Combat Recovery Vehicle and Protected Recovery Vehicle): 5.0 million euros (2020-2022) ■ replacement of the 8-ton Astra trucks: 5.0 million euros (2028-2030) ■ replacement of Unimog trucks by armoured light trucks: 21.78 million euros (2021-2026) ■ replacement LMV (Light Multirole Vehicle): 11.9 million euros (2021-2025)
Cyber	10,2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ updates of the Cyber Security Operations Centre: 10.2 million euros (2016-2030)
Influence	7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Influence Analysis & Info Management Tools: 7 million euros (2021, 2024, 2027-2028 and 2030)

I. Military Intelligence Service

The military intelligence service referred to as ADIV (Algemene Dienst Inlichting en Veiligheid (General Intelligence and Security Service))⁵⁶ supports Defence from the strategic to the tactical level. This service is also in charge of gathering intelligence abroad for our government. The activities of this service are consequently complementary to the mainly national mission of the Security of the State.

In order to obtain a clear view of a situation abroad, it is essential to have personnel on the spot. It is therefore of the utmost importance to rely on an effective and judicious security apparatus abroad, consisting of specialised personnel. This apparatus must be deployed in priority in areas where our national interests are at stake or where a possible deployment of military means is probable.

During operations abroad, the intelligence apparatus is composed of members of the military intelligence service, of tactical elements of the ISTAR capability and of members of the other dimensions' operational capabilities.

The military intelligence service is also in charge of the monitoring and analysis of influence (including propaganda) by external actors, among others through the cyber environment, within the framework of its mission.

Current and Future Content

The military intelligence service continues to work at the current level, with an improved support for the military operations.

Investments in software will be made to improve the support of the analysis. It is essential for the operational deployment to be able to rely on an intelligence gathering capability in the field of signal intelligence (SIGINT) (for instance, sources of communication). In order to reinforce Defence's intelligence and influence capabilities, the cyber environment has to be at the forefront. In addition to intelligence required for the support of cyber operations, following domains shall be further developed: the monitoring of social media, one of the most important sources of Open Source Intelligence (OSINT) and the introduction of virtual agents with the goal to gather intelligence from third parties or groups on the Internet (Human Intelligence - HUMINT).

The current Intelligence and Security School will be transformed into a Centre of Competence for intelligence and security. This centre will keep pace with the complex operational environment to make sure that the operators of the intelligence and security community always receive a high-quality education and training.

⁵⁶ The mission of the military intelligence service referred to as ADIV is defined in article 11 of the Act related to the intelligence and security service of 30 November 1998.

Reinforcement of the Support to Internal Security and Possible Cooperation at the National Level

“Defence shall count on a modern military intelligence service, organised and equipped for the protection of the national interests as provided for by law and for the support to military operations. A study shall be carried out on the role, the competencies, the funding, the internal organisation and the capabilities of the intelligence services and on the cooperation among them as well as on the management and the control of these bodies. Their operating shall be optimised based on this study.”

(Government agreement of 9 October 2014)

The military intelligence service will further reinforce the synergies with other national actors, as laid down in the Government agreement. The reinforced coordination of the missions of both Belgian intelligence services as well as the coordination with the



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Minister of Justice Koen Geens and Minister of Defence Steven Vandeput sign the agreement between the State Security and the military intelligence service to commonly train analysts in a unified Belgian Intelligence Academy starting in 2015.

integrated Police forces and the Public Prosecutor's Office must make sure that all necessary domains are covered in an appropriate manner while avoiding useless overlaps. Synergy in the support of the various actors should lead to enhanced efficiency and consequently to the possibility to offer more security with the same means. The recently established Belgian Intelligence Academy is a perfect illustration of this. The Centre of Competence for intelligence and security will constitute the military pillar of this organisation while the education/training capabilities and skills of our partners will also be used.

Within our country, the military intelligence service has unique capabilities such as IMINT, SIGINT and cyber intelligence. It can also use the information provided by the tactical sensors of the ISTAR capability. These means will be integrated in the national security mechanism, taking into account the priority that will be given to the support of the core tasks of Defence and within a legal framework yet to be defined.

Possibilities for a European Capability Anchoring

Although structural international cooperation in the field of intelligence is not always easy, there are opportunities at the Benelux level. The objective will consist in eventually creating an OSINT Centre of Excellence in Brussels.

Within the framework of the Benelux Defence cooperation, a project has been launched on the rationalisation of the Defence Attachés network through a cooperation between Belgium and the Netherlands, in which the first steps have recently been taken.

II. HALE and MALE Reconnaissance Drones

General Points

The relative importance of the use of drones in operations as a strategic support capability increases. Therefore they need to be further integrated in the Belgian capability portfolio. Reconnaissance drones are part of the ISTAR capabilities. Through the ISR aspect (Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance), an ISTAR capability provides the situational understanding needed to give guidance at command level during operations and to enhance the security and efficiency of the actions in the field. "Target Acquisition" is, in this context, the process of target acquisition that is based on ISR and that provides the correct data for precise kinetic interventions.

In addition to the HALE drones, the MALE drones and the ISTAR capability are also an integral part of the ISR means.

Drones must be deployable for networked operations (in real time) in a complex operational air space.

For the time being, the Belgian drones are limited to the tactical level. In terms of capability classification, these B-Hunter drones are situated in the upper part of the spectrum of tactical drones, just under the MALE drones. The MALE drones, in turn, are the category

under the HALE drones. The expertise acquired with the B-Hunter drones will be used to develop and reinforce the HALE and MALE capabilities as well as the tactical drones.

HALE Reconnaissance Drones

Current and Future Content

Today, our Defence does not have any HALE drones and does furthermore not have any access to this capability through international cooperation.

Our Defence will not invest in HALE drones but will participate in the NATO HALE capability (the Alliance Ground Surveillance programme (AGS)) through a personnel contribution to the data exploitation centre. The AGS HALE drones (five Global Hawks) will be made available to NATO from 2017-2018 onwards.

The exploitation of the data collected by these drones requires the integration of our armed forces into a secured integrated digital network that guarantees the interoperability between the capabilities of the various dimensions at international and national level.

Possibilities for a European Capability Anchoring

These drones will fill important capability gaps at European level. Our contribution to the AGS programme reaffirms our permanent will to reinforce the deployment possibilities of NATO as essential European security organisation.



NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg is briefed on the Global Hawk drone that will be operational from 2017-2018 onwards within the framework of the NATO Allied Ground Surveillance programme.

MALE Reconnaissance Drones

MALE drones are smaller than HALE drones and their possibilities are also more limited but they are more flexible in use and less expensive. The primary mission of the MALE drones consists of ISR, but certain types can also be armed and used for close tactical fire support in order to offer, among others, a precise and rapid tactical fire support in protection of ground forces.

Tactical drones are still indispensable, but the more capable MALE drones are gaining more prominence in support of operational deployments. The operations in Afghanistan and in Libya as well as in Mali have highlighted the important shortage of this strategic support capability at European level.

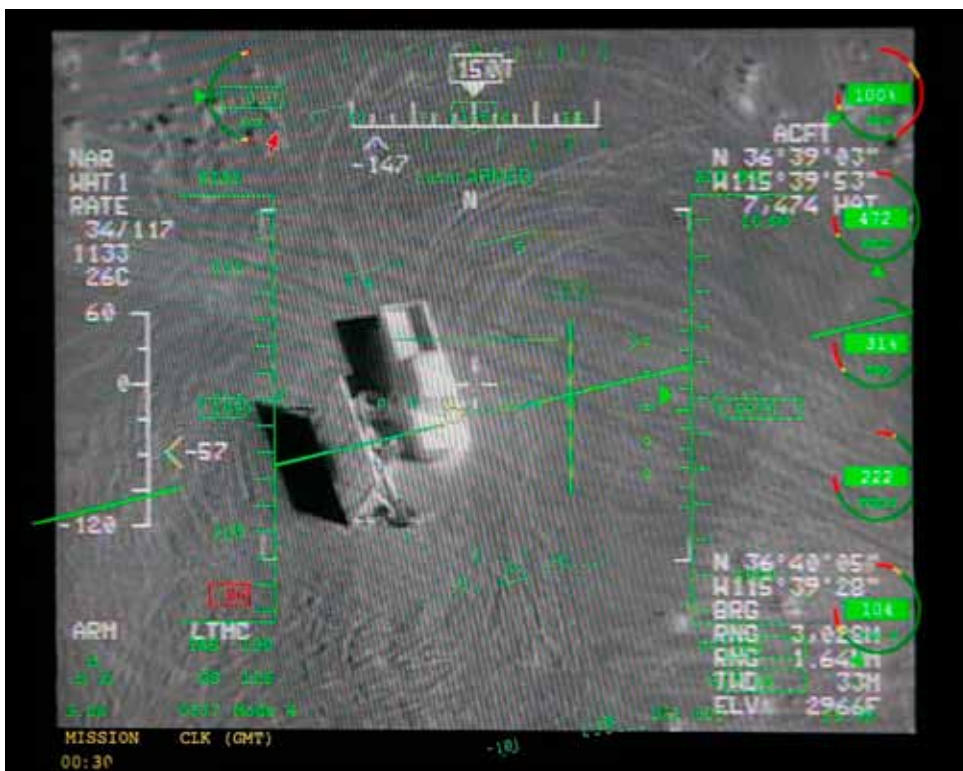


Image from an American MALE drone.

Current and Future Content

For the time being, Belgian Defence does not have this capability. Defence does however have tactical drones that are just under the level of the MALE drones. Based on this expertise, Defence will first acquire two MALE drones and the related control and communication systems. During the second half of the strategic vision, investments will be made through a participation in a MALE programme (preferably developed in Europe) with the final aim to acquire four additional (European) systems (including the support systems).

The cost of the first two MALE drones, which will be acquired in the short term (2021-2025), has been benchmarked with the cost of similar Dutch drones. This price takes into consideration the complete system, including the airframe (as well as the sensors), the ground-based control station and related equipment. Considering the Dutch benchmark, one ground-based control station per drone is planned to assure optimal deployment possibilities. The procurement of one single station per drone increases their ability to deploy and consequently their efficiency. The planned integration of these aircraft in our air space offers an important increase in value for training purposes and for the possible execution of national tasks within an interdepartmental framework.

Our MALE drones will have the possibility to carry out armed operations. Actual arming (and the related ammunition's operating costs) shall however be subject to an additional government decision.^{57 58}

Reinforcement of the Support to Internal Security and Possible Cooperation at the National Level

The MALE capability could also offer a support to internal security. In this respect, MALE drones could, for instance, carry out tasks for the (federal) Police forces, Customs and even for environmental services. For surveillance missions, they are complementary to helicopters, because they can discretely hover over an area for longer periods of time. The data collected by the drones of Defence could consequently be exploited at the Maritime Information Hub and in the future Air Information Hub.

Possibilities for a European Capability Anchoring

These MALE drones fill an important capability gap at the European level that both NATO and the EU have identified and are trying to solve. Our contribution to this capability implies therefore an important capability reinforcement of the European potential for military actions. At the same time, these drones offer possibilities to actively participate in building more European defence cooperation. This materialises, on the one hand, in joining (if possible) a European project for the development of a MALE drone, which reinforces the European strategic autonomy, and on the other hand, in starting a close partnership with our neighbouring countries to pool our MALE drones, which will enhance efficiency. France already has MALE drones in use. If the same type of drones is bought by our country or together with neighbouring countries, new cooperation opportunities could occur in the field of support (maintenance and logistics), training and education but also with respect to operational deployments with these strategic partner countries.

Within that framework, Belgium offers an added value because of its long experience in integrating unmanned aircraft in a complex air space and in the development of

57 The potentially needed ammunition (basic stocks) for both drones in the short term and for the four drones in the long term amounts to 20 and 40 million euros respectively; the purchase of ammunition falls under the operating costs.

58 The other countries using this type of drones (France, Italy, the United Kingdom) have, since their integration in Defence, also kept open the option of a deployment within the framework of tactical fire support. In the meantime, the British and Italian governments have effectively decided to arm their drones.

real-time networked operations with ground troops, combat aircraft and the Maritime Information Hub. These elements could constitute the foundations for cooperation with our neighbouring countries with regards to training and education on tactical air-to-ground integration, including real-time imagery analysis, tactical situational understanding, close air support (CAS) and the practical deployment of drones in a complex operational air space.

III. Intelligence Gathering by Means of Satellites (Space-Based IMINT)

This capability generates intelligence at a strategic level that is complementary to ISR through drones, among other things because of their capacity to map areas and facilities worldwide.

Current and Future Content

Belgian Defence has been participating in the French Helios programme related to a satellite-based imagery intelligence capability (IMINT: Imagery Intelligence) since the nineties. The Helios system will reach its end-of-life by 2020 and France plans to launch the CSO (*Composante Spatiale Optique*) programme to follow it up. In 2012, Belgium decided to also participate in this program. BELSPO⁵⁹ has already invested in this capability as it is of crucial importance to the Belgian space industry. The planned military investment budget is intended to fully meet this decision as regards Defence and will allow Belgian Defence to participate in this programme in accordance with its needs. The start-up of CSO is planned in 2022 at the latest.



In 2022 at the latest the new CSO satellites will transmit images from space in support of our intelligence services.

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Reinforcement of the Support to Internal Security and Possible Cooperation at National Level

Like all other IMINT of the military intelligence service, the space-based IMINT can be integrated into the national security apparatus, considering the priority for the support of the core tasks of Defence and in a yet to be defined legal framework.

⁵⁹ Federal Public Planning Service Science Policy

Possibilities of a European Capability Anchoring

This programme contributes to the possibility for European autonomous action in the field of intelligence and military operations. It enables us to keep a national access to a capability through international defence cooperation and to continue an important partnership with our strategic partner France.

This participation of Belgian Defence in the costs could make an additional cooperation with other (strategic) partner countries possible.

IV. Intelligence, Surveillance, Target Acquisition, Reconnaissance (ISTAR)

The ISTAR capability forms the core of the deployable intelligence and security support and consists of command and control elements, an analysis capability as well as of the requisite sensors. The command and control elements guarantee the proper functioning of this ISTAR capability in support of each type of engagement of the other dimensions.

The analysis capability includes all source and specialised analysts who guarantee the situational understanding, in close cooperation with the analysis capability of the military intelligence service.

To ensure intelligence gathering in the future complex environment, this capability contains a mix of sensors: ground reconnaissance, human intelligence, tactical Unmanned Aerial Systems (UAS), tactical signal intelligence, radars and ground sensors.

This capability plays a central role in the joint⁶⁰ intelligence community.

Current and Future Content

The current sensors will evolve into a modern set of sensors. They must be capable of operating in a networked environment in order to guarantee the integration of all relevant information in due time. The existing capability of battlefield surveillance radars will be replaced.

Based on the experience and expertise acquired with the tactical B-Hunter drones, Defence will buy new tactical drones that will be integrated into this capability.

A study conducted by the Defence staff has showed that the further development of the Pandur combat vehicle, which is currently the basic vehicle of the ground reconnaissance capability, is to be considered as the best solution to make this capability deployable in a complex theatre of operations in the shortest possible time.

⁶⁰ *Joint: that integrates the various components of the armed forces. The contributions of the different components of the armed forces are integrated on the joint level to obtain an outcome that is higher than the sum of the separate contributions.*



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The observation camera of the Pandur combat vehicle supports the production of tactical intelligence in a networked environment. The ISTAR capability is an essential Combat Support capability of the land forces.

Reinforcement of the Support to Internal Security and Possible Cooperation at National Level

The tactical sensors of the ISTAR capability can also be used in the national security system, considering the priority for the support of the core tasks of Defence and in a yet to be defined legal framework.

Possibilities of a European Capability Anchoring

The existing close cooperation between the Benelux countries on the common organisation of education and training as well as on the support of systems will be further developed, just like the military cooperation with the French “*Brigade de Renseignement*” (Intelligence Brigade).

The common purchase of UAS and ISTAR sensors can offer an opportunity to intensify cooperation in the various lines of development when exploiting these systems.

v. Cyber Capability

Defence is an organisation strongly oriented towards technology and is therefore to a large extent dependent on the cyber environment. The reinforcement of the technological

nature and the digitisation of Defence will continue unabated. Defence will therefore rely ever more on the cyber environment. The growing integration of unmanned military systems in the capability portfolio reinforces this phenomenon. Our adversaries will try to sabotage, destroy or seize our weapon systems and networks through cyber actions. Dependence on the cyber environment also represents a threat to cyber security in Belgium because of the growing interweaving of internal and external security.

Defence must be able to offer an appropriate response to this reality. Therefore it will further develop its own cyber capability, consisting of a defensive, offensive and intelligence pillar. This capability must guarantee an adequate level of cyber security of the communication and weapon systems of Defence and at the same time be capable to identify, manipulate and disrupt networks and systems of an opponent in order to restrain or destroy its freedom of action.

The cyber-intelligence pillar guarantees the situational understanding needed to maintain our own freedom of action in this essential military dimension.

Current and Future Content

Today, Belgian Defence is already developing a CSOC (Cyber Security Operations Centre) for the cyber defence of the armed forces' communication and information systems (CIS). This strategic vision plans additional means and personnel for this cyber capability in the short term.

For the time being, we have no offensive cyber capability. The necessary investment budgets and additional personnel are provided for in this strategic vision in order to rapidly develop this additional cyber capability. The offensive cyber capability in support of the expeditionary operations will be essentially based on a reach-back capability, physically located in our own country.

Defence will investigate whether the development of its cyber capability can be further reinforced with specialised reservists.

Reinforcement of the Support to Internal Security and Possible Cooperation at National Level

As stated in chapter 2, our military cyber capability has a territorial approach within the framework of NATO's collective defence. The reinforcement of the military cyber capability will also offer opportunities to reinforce our national cyber capability within the framework of internal security. Belgian Defence will have one of the most important cyber capabilities in our country. As such, Defence will be able to contribute to internal security (more in particular through its expertise in the field of intelligence and malware), in line with the coordinating actions of the Belgian Cyber Security Centre for ensuring our cyber security⁶¹. The cyber dimension of internal security is a priority of the government.

⁶¹ *Cyber security is a situation where the protection of the cyber environment is proportional to the cyber threat and to the possible consequences of cyber attacks. Cyber security stands for an absence of dangers or damage caused by the disruption, the breakdown or the abuse of ICT systems.*

**“Considering the dangers facing our institutions, our enterprises and our citizens, cyber security will constitute a priority.”
(Government agreement of 9 October 2014)**

As stated previously, cyber threats will possibly arise in our country because of the growing interweaving of internal and external security. The cyber environment can be used to inflict damage on our economy, our industry and the scientific potential of our knowledge society. In case of insufficient protection against cyber attacks, our economy is exposed to risks that are likely to affect our country’s attractiveness in terms of investments. Brussels is also one of the diplomatic capitals of the world and Belgium hosts important institutions of international organisations. Defence will strive for interdepartmental partnerships at national level for the acquisition of systems, for education, for training and for common exploitation.

Possibilities of a European Capability Anchoring

Besides interdepartmental cooperation, we also strive for a more intense multinational cooperation in the cyber domain. Within that framework, Defence will further develop its leading role with respect to malware sharing, which represents a relevant contribution to NATO’s cyber capability.



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Belgian cyber specialists participate in a NATO cyber exercise from their own facilities. These NATO exercises are coordinated by the NATO Cooperative Cyber Defence Centre of Excellence located in Estonia.

From 2017, Defence will make one cyber specialist available to NATO's Cooperative Cyber Defence Centre of Excellence in Estonia.

vi. Influence Capability

In a hybrid and civil-military operational environment, capabilities should be developed to influence the attitude and behaviour of specific target groups, both locally and globally in benefit of a military deployment. Moreover, it is important to optimise civil-military cooperation both for an effective comprehensive approach and to respond effectively to hybrid threats.

The influence capability should be able to give advice on influence and civil-military cooperation at strategic, operational and tactical level, as to prevent the actions of other (military) actors from having negative effects on our operational and strategic objectives.

This capability consists of Influence Support Teams that support the operational deployment by positively influencing the local population and authorities, our adversaries, etc., and by proposing responses to the adversaries' propaganda. These teams also ensure



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A Belgian civil-military cooperation team (CIMIC team) with a local interpreter is supporting our operational deployment in Afghanistan within the framework of ISAF by establishing contacts with the local authorities.

the civil-military cooperation (CIMIC) through contacts with the civilian authorities, the local population and international, governmental and non-governmental organisations. The Influence Support Teams work in direct support for the military present in theatre and seek to align the military operations as much as possible with the civilian actions. They coordinate military actions in close cooperation with the civilian authorities and the actors of the international community, which can also involve medical assistance and military construction means.

When deployed in a post-conflict reconstruction phase, these teams can also assess the actions necessary for the restoration of public services such as electric power and drinking water supply, road infrastructure, waste removal, telecommunications, police, health or legal services, public administration and economic recovery. In this way, other civilian actors and (non)-governmental organisations, and in a first phase, usually military actors (military construction, military medical support), can restore the functioning of these public services. Consequently, the opponents who want to disturb security in a particular area are denied an important possibility to maintain or reassure themselves of the support of the local population. This support of the local population is moreover a crucial asset for the realisation of sustainable solutions for the local security.

These non-kinetic military effects shall mainly support the combined arms motorised capability when deployed within the framework of collective security.

However, the specialists of these teams can also be deployed in support of the Special Operations Forces capability or, in general, as a joint support capability. This influence capability is an essential link in the general coordination of influence and of strategic communication.

The influence support teams can rely on specialists in local culture and customs. They determine the human factors that influence cooperation between servicemen and local civilian actors in an area of operations. The efficiency of the military operations conducted within the framework of a comprehensive approach is consequently maximised.

The influence capability, including the civil-military interaction (civil-military cooperation - CIMIC) in the event of an operational deployment, is one of the most important non-kinetic military capabilities. Principle no.3 e recognises its importance in guaranteeing a balanced capability portfolio by 2030.

Besides a direct influence in the field during operations, this capability also includes more global activities in support to our military operations and to counter hybrid threats through the media and cyber environment and the production of a counter-narrative. These activities are coordinated with the strategic communication and in close cooperation with the Belgian military intelligence community, from the tactical to the strategic level, because it is responsible for the detection of hybrid threats and propaganda. A close cooperation with our Communication Department will also be indispensable for a genuine strategic communication.

Current and Future Content

The investments planned are intended to reinforce the capability of the influence support teams in the virtual world (social media, the Internet).

After 2020, the intention will be to develop the capabilities of these teams through sourcing and the use of specialists from the civilian world (reservists) by a gradual increase in operating means.

A structural partnership between Defence, industry and research institutions with respect to the influence capability can be particularly interesting in order to gain access to specialised capabilities in domains such as psychology, sociology, communication, journalism, culture, languages, religion, history and marketing.

Reinforcement of the Support to Internal Security and Possible Cooperation at National Level

Within the framework of internal security, this capability could, through the Influence Support Teams, give support to a national influence strategy (among other things to directly counter external threats), within a yet to be defined legal framework and in support of national security actors.

Possibilities of a European Capability Anchoring

Within NATO, the Netherlands play a leading role in the field of CIMIC, through the CIMIC Centre of Excellence. All our CIMIC specialists currently attend a training course in that centre. A cooperation is also existing between our influence capability and the Dutch « *Civil en Militaire Interactie Commando* » (Civilian and Military Interaction Command). The existing cooperation with both organisations could be reinforced considering the importance of the non-kinetic capabilities in this strategic vision.

Contacts and cooperative initiatives with the French and German influence and CIMIC centers (the “*Centre Interarmées d’Action sur l’Environnement*”, the “*Bundeswehr Operational Communication Centre*” and the “*Deutsches CIMIC Zentrum*”) also exist. These initiatives will be extended where possible.

b. Capability Dimension Land

Content, Personnel, Investments and Level of Ambition

Capability Dimension Land								
Capability	Content	Personnel in 2030	Personnel planned in September 2015 (personnel on 1 January 2016)	Delta 2030 in comparison with the personnel planned in 2015	Investments in major equipment 2016-2030 (million €2015)	Level of ambition		
						Form of deployment	Sustainability	Deployment time
Combined arms motorised capability	built around 5 motorised manoeuvre battalions with related combat support and combat service support	5,276 ⁶²	6,083 (4,979)	-13%	1,878.31	Force Headquarters ⁶³	6 months (annually)	10 days
						combined arms Battle Group (800 to 1,200 FTE) among others, for crisis management operations	unlimited	10 days
						combined arms Battle Group (1,250 FTE) for EUBG ⁶⁴ / NRF ⁶⁵ / VJTF ⁶⁶	6 months (annually)	5 to 10 days (EUBG/NRF) 3 days (VJTF)
						2 combined arms companies (2 x 250 FTE) if no contribution to EUBG/NRF / VJTF Battle Group	6 months (annually)	10 days
Reserve companies	Reserve companies for consequence management and surveillance tasks on the national territory (under study)	reserve			0	reserve companies under the control of a territorial staff for a national deployment	unlimited	5 to 10 days

⁶² 2,415 FTE motorised manoeuvre; 608 FTE motorised combat engineers; 451 FTE motorised artillery; 1,122 FTE motorised logistics; 320 FTE motorised CIS; 160 FTE brigade staff; 200 FTE support positions for direction of Territorial Support Service (TSS).

⁶³ The personnel needed for the organisation of Force Headquarters are drawn from the motorised brigade staff (160 FTE) that is included in the personnel numbers of the combined arms motorised capability.

⁶⁴ EU Battle Group.

⁶⁵ NATO Response Force.

⁶⁶ Very High Readiness Joint Task Force.

Capability	Content	Personnel in 2030	Personnel planned in September 2015 (personnel on 1 January 2016)	Delta 2030 in comparison with the personnel planned in 2015	Investments in major equipment 2016-2030 (million €2015)	Level of ambition		
						Form of deployment	Sustainability	Deployment time
Special Operations Forces (SOF)	Special Forces (potentially supported by a Special Forces Support Group) 2 Ranger battalions (potentially supported by Special Forces)	1,309 ⁶⁷	1,597 (1130)	-18%	167.23	Joint Forces Command ⁶⁸	maximum 2 months (several times a year)	3 days
						contribution to the Composite Special Operations Component Command (C-SOCC, NATO cooperation with Denmark and the Netherlands) from the national Special Operations Command (SOCOM)	12 months (with one-year recovery time)	3 days
Special Operations Aviation	4 SOF-aircraft	38	0 (0)	+	130	SOF Task Group ⁶⁹ (potentially supported by a Ranger company)	unlimited	3 days
						SOF Task Force (in maximum configuration consisting of 1 SOF Task Group and 1 Ranger battalion) for rapid intervention (among which evacuation operations)	maximum 2 months (several times a year)	3 days
						amphibious company with integrated operational preparation (under study) with the Dutch or the French Marines	6 months (with one-year recovery time)	10 days
						2 specialised SOF aircraft	12 months (with a recovery time of maximum 1 year)	3 days

⁶⁷ The total number of FTE for the Special Forces Group operators who are the core of the SOF capability (tier 1 SOF) is 225 FTE. The Special Forces Support Group consists of two Ranger battalions (954 FTE) including Combat Support and Combat Service Support. As Special Forces Support Group, the Rangers are organically organised as a combined arms unit. A Ranger battalion includes 359 FTE manoeuvre, 42 FTE combat engineers, 60 FTE logistics and 16 FTE liaison artillery. 80 FTE are also planned for SOCOM and 50 FTE for TSS.

⁶⁸ The Joint Forces Command is set up from the national Special Operations Command (SOCOM).

⁶⁹ The SOF Task Group is composed of Special Forces Group operators.

Tactical air transport	4 multirole transport helicopters (NH90 type)	394	581 (528)	-32%	41.1	2 multirole transport helicopters	12 months (with a recovery time of maximum 1 year)	10 days
Military construction	military construction teams	212 + Reserve	420 (343)	-50%	33.64	military construction teams for every type of deployment	unlimited	10 days
CBRN capability	teams for the management of chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear hazards	112	149 (115)	-25%	22.74	military CBRN teams for every type of deployment	unlimited	3 to 10 days
Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD) / Counter-Improvised Explosive Devices (C-IED) capability	Explosive Ordnance Disposal Service	236	345 (315)	-32%	9	military EOD ⁷⁰ / C-IED ⁷¹ teams for every type of deployment	unlimited	3 to 10 days
Joint logistic support outside the combined arms motorised capability and outside the SOF capability	general logistic support, Movement Control Group, Military Police, ammunition depots	493	912 (843)	-46%	included in the combined arms motorised capability			
Joint Communication and Information Systems (CIS) outside the combined arms motorised capability and outside the SOF		210	343 (264)	-39%	included in the combined arms motorised capability			
TOTAL dimension Land		8,280 + Reserve	10,430 (8,517)	-21%	2,282.02			

⁷⁰ The disposal and the destruction of ammunition.

⁷¹ The disposal and destruction of improvised explosive devices.

Investments Contents

Capability Dimension Land		
Capability	Investments in major equipment 2016-2030 (million €2015)	Investment projects and envisaged timing
Combined arms motorised capability	1,878.31	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ modernisation of the personal weaponry: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ individual weapons: 17.14 million euros (2022-2023 and 2027-2028) ▪ combat vests (BEST): 66.07 million euros (2017-2022) ▪ individual night sight: 15 million euros (2022 and 2025-2027) ▪ thermal observation: 12.49 million euros (2025-2027) ▪ heavy machine guns: 1.27 million euros (2025) ▪ light mortars (60mm): 1.40 million euros (2020) ■ modernisation of means of communication: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ multirole radio sets: 55 million euros (2021-2022 and 2026-2027) ▪ satellite communications: 81 million euros (2021-2027) ▪ tablets for the Battlefield Management System: 7 million euros (2021-2025) ■ jammers against improvised explosive devices: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ for troops on foot: 2.5 million euros (2023 and 2026) ▪ for vehicles: 12 million euros (2025-2027) ■ replacement of Unimog trucks by light armoured trucks: 155.93 million euros (2021-2026) ■ armoured logistical evacuation vehicles (Combat Recovery Vehicle and Protected Recovery Vehicle): 35.40 million euros (2020-2022) ■ armoured heavy trucks: 33.13 million euros (2021-2024) ■ replacement of Astra 8-ton trucks: 55.54 million euros (2028-2030) ■ light version common international motorised platform (to replace Dingo and Piranha): 629.85 million euros (2025-2030) ■ median version common international motorised platform (to replace Dingo and Piranha): 378.62 million euros (2025-2030) ■ replacement LMV (lynx): 125.05 million euros (2021-2025) ■ training equipment for duel simulation: 17 million euros (2020-2021) ■ team trainer for Spike missile: 3.5 million euros (2021) ■ investments combat engineers: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ replacement of generators > 20kVA: 5.08 million euros (2026-2027) ▪ mobile bridging equipment: 3 million euros (2026) ■ Route Clearance Package to clear roads of IED: 12 million euros (2021-2023) ■ investments artillery: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ mobile long-range precision artillery: 48 million euros (2027-2029) ▪ short-range radar to locate enemy fires (rockets, artillery, mortars) and UAS: 3 million euros (2020) ■ investments in logistics: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ armoured logistical evacuation vehicles logistics-specific (Protected Evacuation Vehicle): 10 million euros (2022-2024) ▪ replacement of generators > 20kVA: 9.43 million euros (2026-2027) ▪ shelters: 9 million euros (2023-2024) ▪ containers for special Combat Service Support: 23.63 million euros (2025-2027) ▪ trailers for special resupply: 7.2 million euros (2028-2029) ▪ armoured trucks for handling of containers: 26.63 million euros (2028-2030) ▪ follow-up software: 7 million euros (2030) ▪ tractor trucks: 9.45 million euros (2026-2028)

Special Operations Forces	167.23	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ modernisation of the personal weaponry: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ individual weapons: 5.56 million euros (2022-2023 and 2027-2028) ■ combat vests (BEST): 19.86 million euros (2017-2022) ■ individual night sight: 9 million euro (2022 and 2025-2027) ■ thermal observation: 6.3 million euros (2025-2027) ■ heavy machine guns: 2.23 million euros (2025) ■ light 60mm mortars: 0.60 million euros (2020) ■ light 81 mm mortars: 0.67 million euros (2020) ■ night sight for 40mm automatic grenade launchers: 1.02 million euros (2020) ■ [TTV: 54.9 million euros (2019-2021)] ■ replacement of the Unimog trucks by light armoured trucks: 31.03 million euros (2021-2026) ■ armoured logistical evacuation vehicles (Protected Recovery Vehicle): 2 million euros (2020-2022) ■ replacement of Astra 8-ton trucks: 14.55 million euros (2028-2030) ■ paratroop equipment: 19.5 million euros (2024 and 2028)
Special Operations Aviation	130	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ 4 SOF⁷² aircraft : 130 million euros (2025-2027)
Tactical air transport	41.1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ upgrades: 30.6 million euros (2020-2023 and 2028-2030) ■ participation in international training centre: 10.5 million euros (2020-2022)
Military construction	33.64	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ modernisation of the personal weaponry: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ individual weapons: 0.82 million euros (2022-2023 and 2027-2028) ■ combat vests (BEST): 3.04 million euros (2017-2022) ■ dump trucks with trailers: 12.2 million euros (2028-2029) ■ heavy cranes: 5.2 million euros (2029) ■ armoured heavy trucks: 2.47 million euros (2021-2024) ■ tractor trucks: 2.91 million euros (2026-2028) ■ bridging sets: 7 million euros (2030)
CBRN capability	22.74	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ modernisation of the personal weaponry: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ individual weapons: 0.36 million euros (2022-2023 and 2027-2028) ■ combat vests (BEST): 1.32 million euros (2017-2022) ■ light sampling SIBCRA/RDOIT⁷³ kits: 1.2 million euros (2021) ■ CBRN reconnaissance vehicles: 9.62 million euros (2029-2030) ■ medium-sized mobile decontamination stations, including trucks: 6 million euros (2021) ■ protection tents: 4 million euros (2028)
Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD)/Counter Improvised Explosive Devices (C-IED) capability	9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Defence's part of the interdepartmental investments for the replacement of the ammunition processing facilities in Poelkapelle: 9 million euros (2022-2023)

72 If possible, additional investments shall be made within this budget to buy kits for medical evacuation and SOF kits for the NH90 multirole transport helicopters.

73 SIBCRA/RDOIT : Sampling and Identification of Biological, Chemical and Radiological Agents/Rapid Deployable Outbreak Investigation Team.

I. Combined Arms Motorised Capability

The composition of a combined arms Battle Group depends on the mission it has to execute and on the environment in which it is deployed. A typical composition consists of a command and control element, a 500-men strong manoeuvre battalion (a mix of infantry, armoured vehicles for direct fire support, own reconnaissance means and mortars), combat support elements (artillery, engineers, ISTAR), combat service support elements (logistics, medical support, command and communication means) and sometimes also other mission-tailored capabilities, such as air assets (helicopters and drones). In its largest configuration, a combined arms Battle Group is about 1,200 men strong. A combined arms company is also a combined structure but is limited to some 250 men. With the integrated operational preparation of the various manoeuvre, combat support and combat service support elements, the combined arms concept makes a rapid deployment possible.



The rifleman version of the Piranha combat vehicles in action during an exercise in the Baltic States. The Piranha combat vehicles constitute the heaviest means of the current motorised capability.

Motorised land forces use wheeled armoured vehicles for their deployment. These vehicles offer protection and firepower combined with a high mobility in the engagement area (operational mobility). Motorised units can be deployed for mounted or dismounted operations in which they can use their wheeled armoured vehicles either as a means of transport or to support

combat with available on-board armament. Because of this they can rapidly adapt to the conditions in the field (urbanised area, wooded area, open plains ...) and to enemy threats.

Current and Future Content

Since 2014, our land forces have been operationally prepared in a reinforced manner according to a combined arms deployment concept comparable to the French concept. This allows for combined arms formations to be deployed at short notice, which increases our land forces' responsiveness. This concept also remains the basis for any deployment throughout the duration of the strategic vision. The investments described in this strategic vision should enable the sufficient equipment of all units with new and modern material in order to optimise the operational preparation and deployments. The current pooling system for combat vehicles will be stopped.

By 2030, combined arms motorised Battle Groups or companies will be deployed with adapted command structures, according to the level of ambition described in the table. The deployment takes the international framework of the EUBG, NRF and VJTF into consideration. All vehicles of the combined arms motorised capability will be air transportable by means of the future A400M transport aircraft. In this way, the first elements can be rapidly projected into the theatre of operations. The participation in the Joint Logistic Support Ship, referred to previously, would, in addition, offer the possibility to transport an important part of a Battle Group at one time⁷⁴.

Besides the command and control elements that are indispensable to a deployment at the level of combined arms Battle Groups and companies, a brigade-level operational preparation structure will be maintained. In this way, Belgium can - subject to a limited operational preparation - meet the level of ambition that NATO requires, namely the deployment of a motorised brigade within the framework of collective defence. Although such a deployment scenario is unlikely, this form of organisation increases the potential for adaptation of our land forces. This structure also offers opportunities for an international integration into a divisional structure of one of our strategic partners.


Investments will also be made in security and interconnectivity to improve the deployability of our land forces and more in particular, of the combined arms motorised capability. To this end, the personal weaponry will be modernised with a new individual weapon, smart combat vests (Belgian Soldier Transformation - BEST) which will include integrated communication and information technology, night vision, thermal observation means, heavy machine guns and light mortars. Besides the smart combat vests, interconnectivity will be reinforced with the modernisation of communication means (multirole radio sets, mobile satellite communications and tablets for the Battlefield Management System). During engagements, security will also be ensured by investing in jammers (against improvised explosive devices).

⁷⁴ The military logistic services that guarantee the rapid deployment of contingents are essential to shorten the deployment time.

A solution will also be proposed to remedy the current lack of combat vehicles within the motorised manoeuvre battalions and related Combat Support elements. To this end, part of the LTTV (Light Troop Transport Vehicle), that are planned for the SOF capability (Special Forces Group and Ranger battalions), will first be used by the motorised units. During the period 2025-2030, all motorised manoeuvre battalions and their Combat Support and Combat Service Support units will be equipped on the basis of a common international motorised platform in various types. In this way, the LTTV can be transferred to the SOF capability.

The lighter version of this common international motorised platform will replace the current MPPV (Dingo 2)⁷⁵ vehicles in their Command Post/Rifleman/Scout versions and the current AIV (Piranha)⁷⁶ vehicles in their Command Post/Rifleman versions. The median version of this common international motorised platform will replace the current MPPV with heavy (.50) machine gun and the current Direct Fire 30mm and Direct Fire 90mm AIV. Throughout the duration of this strategic vision, all basic vehicles of the motorised brigade will consequently be replaced for both the manoeuvre battalions and the Combat Support and Combat Service Support units that guarantee the combined arms nature of the motorised capability.

Therefore, the lighter version of the common international motorised platform will also be bought in an engineering, Forward Air Controller (FAC)⁷⁷ and Recovery⁷⁸ version, as is already the case with specific MPPV and AIV versions. In addition to this, all Lynx Light Multirole Vehicles (LMV) that are indispensable to command and liaison will be replaced.



By 2030, the combined arms motorised capability will consist of 5 motorised manoeuvre battalions, fully equipped and in a uniform way.

By 2030, the combined arms motorised capability will consist of 5 motorised manoeuvre battalions, fully equipped and in a uniform way (combat and support vehicles, individual equipment). The number of the Combat Support and Combat Service Support elements will be aligned on this figure.

The manoeuvre battalions will maintain their direct fire support capability. The firepower and the combined arms character of the manoeuvre battalions will also be reinforced with the (re)-integration of mortars, equipped with guided precision ammunition. Mini-UAS (Unmanned Aerial System)⁷⁹ will reinforce the reconnaissance elements of the manoeuvre battalions.

⁷⁵ Multi Purpose Protected Vehicle.

⁷⁶ Armoured Infantry Vehicle.

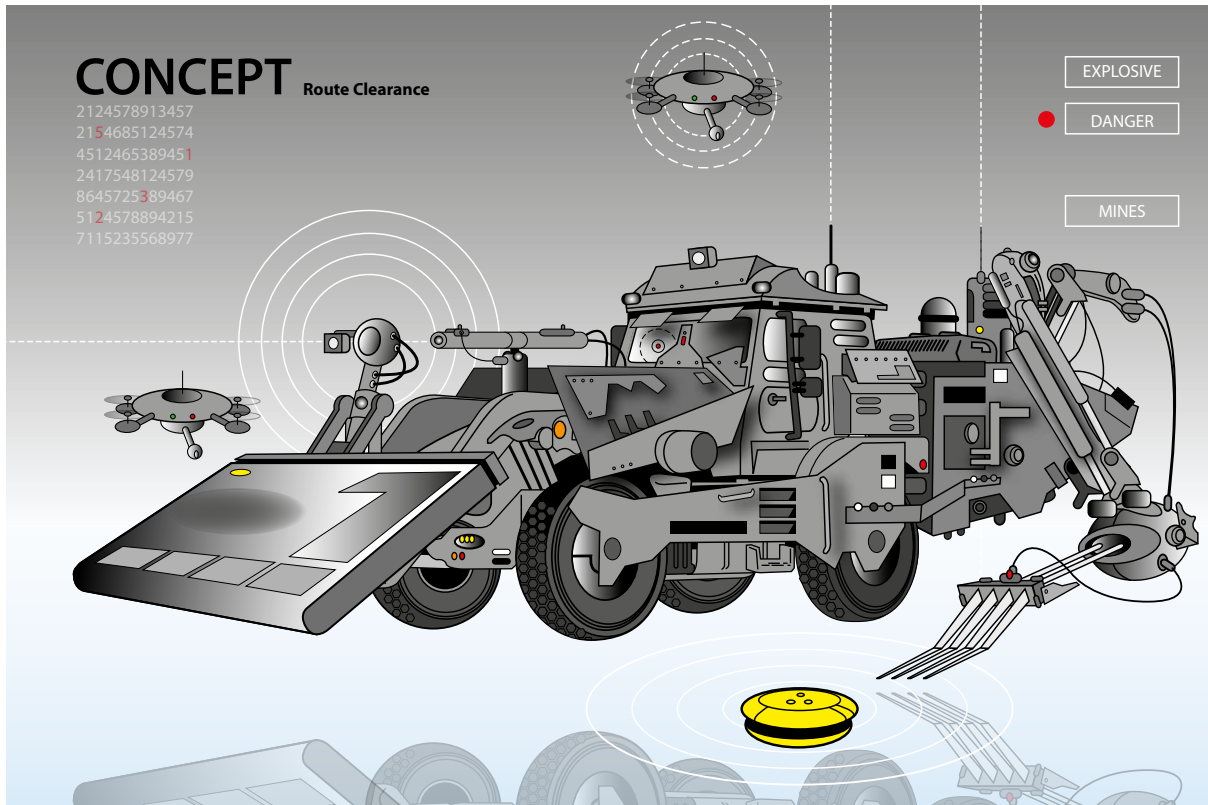
⁷⁷ For artillery.

⁷⁸ For the logistic elements.

⁷⁹ See ISTAR capability.

The investments in individual equipment, means of communication and vehicles referred to above to a large extent also apply to the Combat Support⁸⁰ and Combat Service Support elements. Besides, specific investments will be made for these capabilities.

Wheeled bridging equipment and route clearance packages to clear the roads of IED⁸¹ will be bought for the motorised combat engineers, which conduct actions within the framework of mobility, counter-mobility and survival support. This reinforces the safe deployment of the combined arms motorised capability.



A concept representation of the future Belgian capability to clear roadside bombs. These roadside bombs are responsible for an important number of casualties during military operations today.

The current artillery will evolve towards one long-range indirect precision fire support battery, equipped with air transportable wheeled vehicles, a shorter range indirect fire support battery based on the current 105mm artillery pieces, supplemented with one battery of sensors consisting of radar operators, forward observers and the necessary liaison elements with the supported units. All artillery pieces will be equipped with precision ammunition. After the arrival of the new long-range artillery pieces, the 120mm mortars that are currently operated by the artillery will be reintegrated into the manoeuvre battalions.

⁸⁰ The CIS means have already been referred to previously.

⁸¹ Improvised Explosive Devices.

Within the framework of escalation dominance when deploying combined arms Battle Groups and companies in crisis management operations, these indirect precision fire support means will, among other things, be capable of rapidly and efficiently delivering precision fire in the Belgian area of responsibility, from a central position in a compound. This will be coordinated with other fire support means and air assets. The artillery will also use a (short-range) radar system able to locate adversaries firing grenades, rockets and mortars. By linking these radar data directly with the indirect fire means this threat can be efficiently addressed. This radar will also be effective against Unmanned Aerial Systems (UAS/small drones).

The current limited-range air defence artillery (Mistral missiles) will be abandoned.

The ISTAR capability described in the dimension Intelligence-Cyber-Influence is also the core of the deployable intelligence and security support of the operations in the capability dimension Land. The various elements of this capability are indispensable as tactical Combat Support for all forms of deployment within the level of ambition of the Land dimension⁸².



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By means of the Battlefield Management System on board military vehicles and in headquarters, it is possible to command operations in an effective way and to ensure that the position of our own and friendly troops is known and that the movement of opponents can be transmitted.

⁸² The engaged formations of the Land level of ambition are: the combined arms motorised Battle Groups, the combined arms motorised companies, the SOF Task Groups, the Ranger battalions and the Ranger companies.

The modernisation planned for the communication assets (multirole radio sets, satellite communication and tablets for the Battlefield Management System) of the combined arms motorised capability is valid for Defence as a whole. 530 FTE CIS personnel are linked to them, among whom 210 FTE are general joint support, without being related to the Land dimension specifically. They support all capability dimensions and are in charge of territorial support. In the Land dimension table, these personnel are mentioned separately as the joint CIS capability but the necessary investments have been integrated in the general investments of the combined arms motorised capability (personal weaponry and vehicles) and in the specific investments for communication means.

The CIS support of deployed detachments is structured around standard modules that can be deployed in a joint and multinational framework, where the final user's interoperability and autonomy are ensured. The technical complexity is centrally managed by specialised CIS personnel. The growing needs in connectivity and services for the support of operations require robust strategic and tactical connections based on the use of satellite communications.

The logistic capability of Defence is responsible for the supply of food, fuel, ammunition, spare parts and equipment and assures the sustainability of the deployed capabilities. It is also in charge of the repairs and maintenance of the land forces' equipment.

The nature of the deployment and the distance from the national territory require deployable logistic support that can rapidly and in a modular way adapt to the specific needs of each mission. It must also easily integrate into a multinational framework (Joint Logistic Support Group). With a view to overall efficiency, logistic support on the national territory will be organised as much as possible in cooperation with civilian

“ With a view to overall efficiency, logistic support on the national territory will be organised as much as possible in cooperation with civilian partners or through outsourcing, if it is cost-reducing and if the effectiveness of Defence can be guaranteed. ”

partners or through outsourcing, if it is cost-reducing and if the effectiveness of Defence can be guaranteed.

During an operational deployment, a maximum centralisation of the logistic means is strived for in order to limit the number of logistic compounds, means and movements while guaranteeing an optimal logistic support with minimum footprint. Throughout the duration of this strategic vision, Belgian Defence will be able to catch up in the field of equipping the logistic capability, with armoured vehicles that are adapted to the reality of the theatre of operations, in which there is a permanent threat outside the compounds. These are armoured protected recovery vehicles, armoured protected evacuation vehicles, armoured trucks for the transport of containers and armoured heavy trucks.



All future logistic vehicles deployed in operations will be armoured.

The 1,735 FTE of this sub-capability are distributed between direct logistic support within the motorised capability and the Ranger battalions and a second part encompassing the joint logistic support. The 493 FTE of this joint logistic support are being separately referred to in the table of the level of ambition of the Land dimension but the necessary investments in general and specific equipment have been included in the investments of the combined arms motorised capability and the Ranger battalions. This joint logistic support includes the general logistic support, the Movement Control Group (MCG), the Military Police and the ammunition depots.

Possibilities of a European Capability Anchoring

Within the land forces, cooperation with neighbouring countries has been well developed in terms of quantity. With the Netherlands and Luxembourg it even takes place within the structural framework of the Benelux defence cooperation. Besides, our country also has a structural cooperation with France within the Rapid Reaction Corps in Lille and through our contribution to the Eurocorps. The Dutch-German cooperation structure and the Benelux defence cooperation have also generated cooperation with Germany for land (sub-)capabilities. These forms of cooperation are primarily focused on the exchange of doctrine, common training and operational preparation (within the framework of EUBG and NRF). However, there is considerable potential for further intensification of cooperation with regard to the lines of development “education/training” and “equipment” (acquisition, logistic support and maintenance, configuration management). Economies of scale in these areas can enhance our efficiency.



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In 2016 the first common Belgian-Dutch course for artillery piece commander of the heavy (120mm) mortars was organised in Belgium, led by the Belgian artillery. This common course is the result of the strengthened cooperation between Belgium and the Netherlands concerning artillery education and training for which a division of roles has been agreed upon in order to ensure a better efficiency and interoperability.

Consequently, in accordance with the principles developed in chapter 3, the objective for the land capabilities in general is to reinforce the current forms of cooperation in the short term and to deepen the capability anchoring. A good example in this context is the common organisation of education and training in indirect fire support and logistics, within the Benelux defence cooperation, for which each of the three countries specialises in different parts of the courses.

Therefore, based on the capability programmes of this strategic vision, opportunities for cooperation need to be identified and pursued as soon as possible by comparing and aligning the defence planning of our land forces firstly with those of our strategic partner countries. The orientation of the land forces in our neighbouring countries should also be taken into account, in order to have as many opportunities for common deployment in the future as possible, thus enabling common support of identical systems. Within the time frame planned for the acquisition of a replacement capability for the MPPV (Dingo) and the AIV (Piranha), from 2025 up to and including 2030, already one programme in our neighbouring countries seems to qualify at the moment, i.e. the French Scorpion programme. This programme would allow for the replacement of the basic vehicles of the combined arms motorised capability by different types of a common

“ The development of the combined arms motorised capability shall therefore, if possible, take place within the broader framework of a long-term strategic cooperation of our land forces with one or more strategic partner countries.

international platform, i.e. a lighter version suitable for troop transport and adaptable to manoeuvre, combat support, and combat service support units, and a median version suitable for reconnaissance and combat missions of manoeuvre battalions. A possible cooperation with France can offer a major opportunity to provide more efficient support (including training, doctrine, maintenance, logistic support) to our combined arms motorised capability.

In view of the renewed focus on and configuration of the combined arms motorised capability, it is also important that the participation of the Belgian land forces in any overarching command levels contributes to reinforcing the efficiency of the foreseeable operational engagement. The development of the combined arms motorised capability shall therefore, if possible, take place within the broader framework of a long-term strategic cooperation of our land forces with one or more strategic partner countries, in which the development lines will be organised in common and our motorised brigade will be integrated in the overarching command structures of this/these strategic partner country(ies).

II. Reserve Companies

Defence has the big advantage that reserves can be integrated into its personnel to provide a specific additional capability during peak periods.

In view of the core tasks “collective defence”, “collective security” and “the protection of Belgian citizens all over the world”, the focus is rather on a specialised Reserve that can make a contribution through specific duties that are not – or not sufficiently – available within Defence itself.



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Today, only professional military personnel can be deployed for national surveillance missions in case of an increased security threat. This task should be partially taken over by reserve troops in the future.

In order to allow Defence to continue to focus on its core tasks while making an important and efficient contribution to the support of internal security during peak periods, it will be examined if the existing non-specialist Reserve can be renewed and reactivated.⁸³

The objective would be to organise reserve companies consisting of light infantry. These reserve troops would be able to use leased commercial vehicles and other material (vehicles, equipment, and armament) already present within Defence.

The reserve companies could be attached to the manoeuvre battalions of the combined arms motorised capability, which would also be responsible for their operational preparation.

⁸³ When the current policy remains unchanged, this non-specialist Reserve will cease to exist within the next five years due to a lack of young recruits.

They could be led by a centralised territorial staff structure (cf reform of the province commands of chapter 6), integrated into the Defence staff.

III. Special Operations Forces (including Special Operations Aviation)

Special Operations Forces (SOF) are elite troops that are used as a strategic support capability.

According to NATO doctrine, Special Operations Forces have three basic missions:

- special reconnaissance: reconnaissance and surveillance activities as well as special human intelligence operations for gathering strategic and/or operational information;
- direct action: limited offensive actions to conquer or destroy specific targets, or to capture prisoners or free hostages;
- military assistance: supporting allied forces in the entire spectre of violence, from giving basic training to supporting these troops, in particular through direct actions, or by serving as liaison with air assets or intelligence sources.

The core of the Special Operations Forces capability consists of the Special Forces, the operators of the Special Forces Group.



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The operators of the Special Forces have been giving military assistance to the Iraqi government troops since 2015. Whereas this mission primarily focused on giving training to the Iraqi Forces, it has evolved to an assist and advice mission from behind the frontline.

The core of the Special Operations Forces capability consists of the Special Forces, the operators of the Special Forces Group.

A Special Forces Support Group (SFSG) can assist the Special Forces by providing force protection, as a quick reaction force, as a force for securing the environment during direct actions, for diversion and deception operations, and for “seize and hold” operations. In addition, the SFSG can execute special operations autonomously, especially “military assistance”-type of operations. The Special Forces Support Group is essential for reinforcing the capability of the Special Forces, in order to participate in rapid response

operations (counter-terrorism, rescue of hostages, protection or evacuation of Belgian citizens).

Furthermore, a SOF capability also consists of joint enablers from all dimensions.

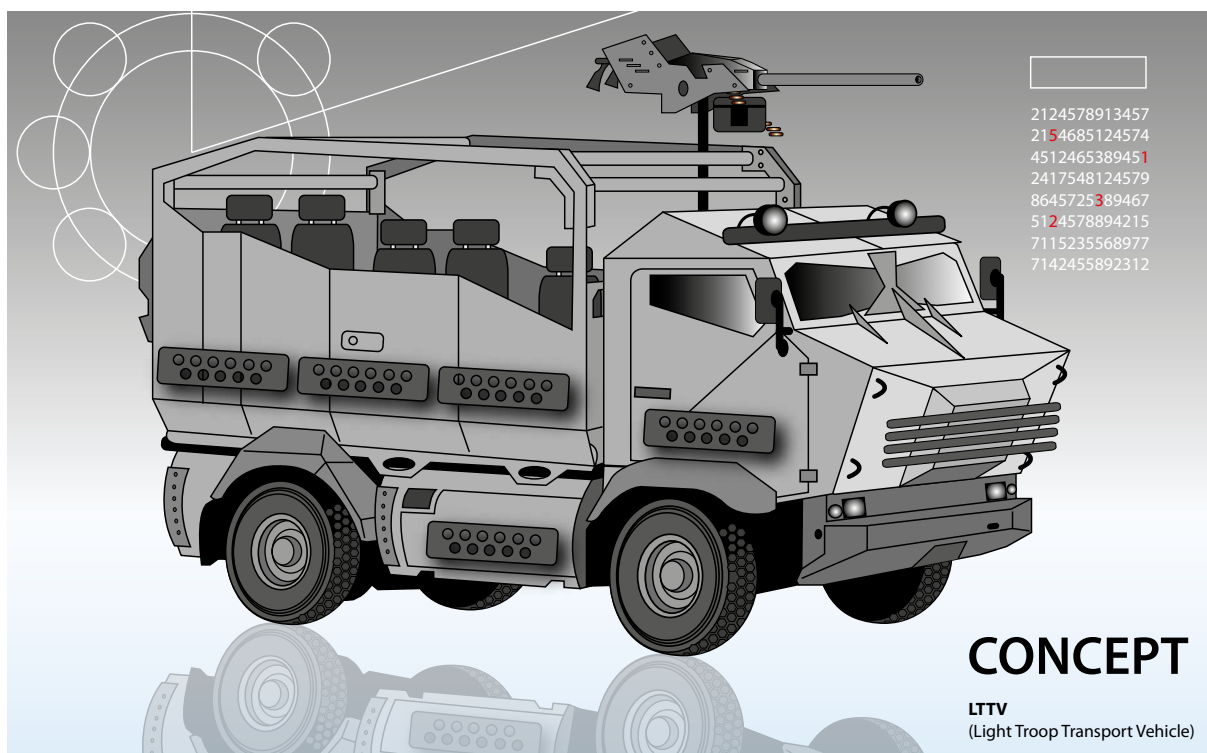
Current and Future Content

The future Special Operations Forces will consist of the operators of the Special Forces Group, members of the Special Forces Support Group and specialised air assets. In addition, some personnel members of the joint enablers will receive specific SOF training. This includes EOD/C-IED teams, dog teams, a medical support capability and influence support teams.

The Special Forces of the current Special Forces Group constitute the core around which a reinforced SOF capability will be built. The Special Forces Group will grow to a total of about 225 FTE.

The Special Forces Support Group will be based on the current para-commandos within our Defence and will consist of two Ranger battalions. The Special Forces Support Group must be able to deploy with the same reactivity as the Special Forces themselves. Therefore, the Ranger battalions need to be continuously (structurally) organised as a combined arms unit. They also need to have the same SOF mindset. For that reason, the SOF competence centre (see section e. “Command and Operational Support of Capabilities”) will not only include the Benelux parachuting school and the commando training centre. A new competence centre will be established that will provide specific Special Forces training to the Special Forces Group operators, to the Special Forces Support Group personnel, and to selected personnel of the joint enablers whose mission is to support these operators.

The basic vehicles of the Special Forces and the two Ranger battalions are light motorised vehicles of the RVV (Rapid Reaction Vehicle) and LTTV (Light Troop Transport Vehicle) type. These LTTVs will be acquired in various versions, adapted to the combat support and combat service support elements integrated in the Ranger battalions. The acquisition of the RRVs has already been approved by the government, whereas the acquisition of the



Concept representation of the future Light Troop Transport Vehicle (LTTV), a light but armoured wheeled vehicle. The LTTV will be the basic vehicle of the Special Operations Forces (Special Forces and Rangers) complementing the Rapid Reaction Vehicle.

LTTVs will take place in the period 2019-2021. Other investments in major equipment will be realised concurrently with those of the combined arms motorised capability.

Parachuting remains one of the many means of insertion of these troops. Therefore, the requisite investments will be made in new parachuting equipment. This way the Belgian international expertise in this field, demonstrated by the Benelux parachuting school, can be kept up-to-date.

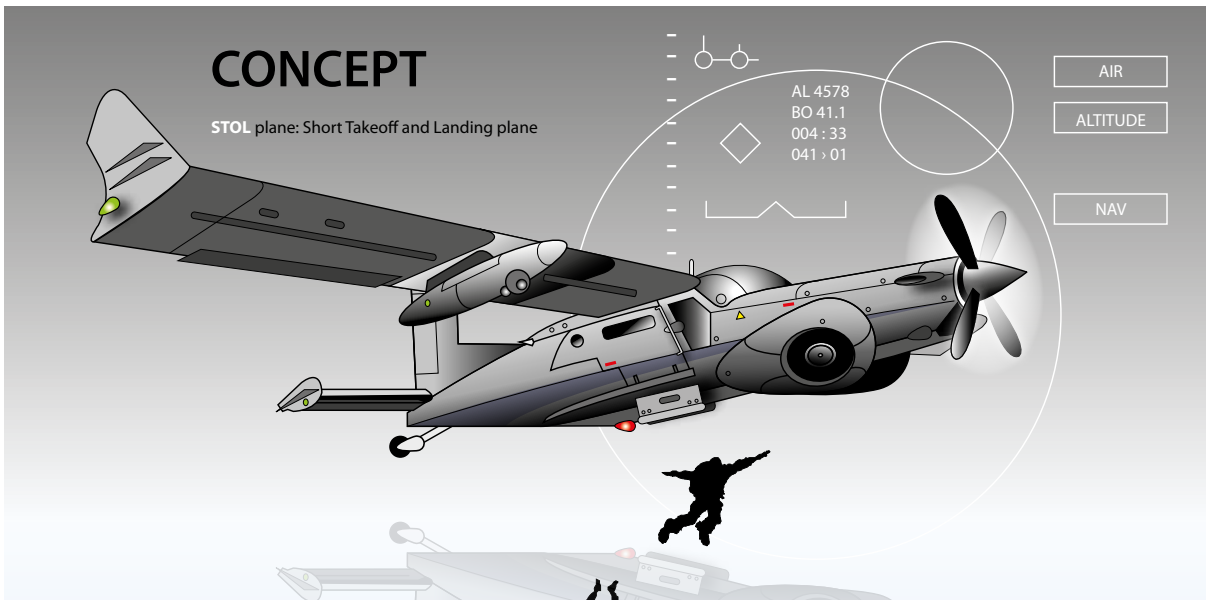
In addition to these investments in major equipment, small investments will constantly be necessary to develop the Special Forces and the Rangers and to maintain their operational capability. This involves means of insertion (amphibious, diving and parachuting equipment, systems for land mobility), specific armament, optics, C4 (Command, Control, Communication, Computer), and ISR.

Another aspect of the reinforcement of our Special Operations Forces capability is the will to create a specialised SOF Aviation based on four small Short TakeOff and Landing (STOL) aircraft which can operate from short and poorly prepared runways and have a relatively large range and unobtrusive nature which makes them suitable for SOF insertions and extractions and for

“ Another aspect of the reinforcement of our Special Operations Forces capability is the will to create a specialised SOF Aviation. ”

resupplying. These aircraft can potentially be equipped for medical evacuations and for the support of Special Forces in the field of ISR and Close Air Support.

It will be examined if it is possible to acquire kits to deploy the NH90 multirole transport helicopters as SOF helicopters and for medical evacuation, within the budget for SOF Aviation.



An impression of the future Short Takeoff and Landing aircraft of the Special Operations Forces. These planes are an important force multiplier because of their relatively important range and high speed.

The national operational preparation structure of the Special Operations Forces, SOCOM (Special Operations Command), will form the basis for the Belgian contribution to the NATO cooperation for a specialised operational SOF command structure (Composite Special Operations Component Command (C-SOCC)) which will be generated together with Denmark and the Netherlands.

As indicated in chapter 2, the SOF capability will also be deployed within the framework of the core task “protection of Belgian citizens all over the world”. On the one hand, this can involve operations that have a clear tie with the missions of the SOF capability, such as direct actions to rescue hostages or to protect citizens in danger. On the other hand, this capability must also remain able to carry out evacuation operations of citizens up to the level of a SOF Task Force (a SOF Task Group together with a Ranger battalion). Our SOCOM will be the basis for providing a Joint Forces Command when rapid response operations, including evacuation operations, need to be carried out.

One of the companies of the Ranger battalions will be an amphibious company. Amphibious troops are specialised in executing operations on land launched from the water, often by means of landing craft from amphibious mother ships, called Landing Platform Docks (LPD). This specialised amphibious company is an important



Today our para-commandos already train together with the Netherlands and France that have amphibious troops and vessels. The picture shows a Dutch landing craft next to a Belgian Zodiac.

reinforcement of Defence's current amphibious capability and directly supports the amphibious capability that already exists within the Special Forces Group. The possibilities to integrate the operational preparation of this amphibious company with the Netherlands or France will be examined, since both countries have Marine battalions. The amphibious capability of the Special Forces Group already works closely together with its Dutch colleagues and has identical vessels. An amphibious company within the Rangers is a necessary capability and at the same time reinforces and widens the Belgian-Dutch or Belgian-French defence cooperation. An integrated operational preparation with Dutch or French Marines is subject to an agreement with the partner country, and investments will have to be made in coordination with this country.

“ One of the companies of the Ranger battalions will be an amphibious company.”

Reinforcement of the Support to Internal Security and Possible Cooperation at National Level

Within the framework of counter-terrorism, Defence's Special Forces are already deployed for direct actions under supervision of the Police. Defence could reinforce the

cooperation with the Police's Special Units by organising training and the acquisition of equipment in a more structured way together. To this end, the legal basis needs to be adapted.

Possibilities of a European Capability Anchoring

In general, Special Operations Forces (SOF) are a strategic capability. Europe has an important shortage of this capability, which both NATO and the EU consider to be a priority.

Through a NATO programme Defence will work together with Denmark and the Netherlands to set up an international SOCOM (C-SOCC) which can be deployed in expeditionary operations.

“Through a NATO programme Defence will work together with Denmark and the Netherlands to set up an international SOCOM (C-SOCC) which can be deployed in expeditionary operations.”

Defence will also continue to provide instructors for the International Special Training Centre (ISTC) in Pfullendorf, Germany which offers specialist training to the Special Forces of NATO member states. In this centre our instructors work together with their American, Danish, Dutch, German, Greek, Italian, Norwegian, and Turkish colleagues.

Within the Benelux Defence Cooperation, Defence already cooperates with the Dutch *Korps Commandotroepen* for education, training, operations, acquisition of equipment, and command and control structures. This cooperation will be intensified to achieve more synergy and thus more efficiency. The possibility to reinforce the good cooperation with the French, German, and American Special Forces in a structural way will also be examined.

The Benelux parachuting school in Schaffen, Belgium is one of the main realisations of the reinforced Benelux Defence Cooperation, initiated in 2012. Common training as well as other areas of cooperation, such as air supply, will be further developed and if possible, expanded. The same kind of internationalisation will be pursued for the commando training centre of Marche-les-Dames, also in Belgium.

The integrated operational preparation of a Belgian amphibious company with Dutch or French Marines, still to be examined, indicates the will to expand in an innovative way the European defence cooperation through capability anchoring, in accordance with the ideas developed in chapter 3. The reinforcement of the European amphibious capability is demanded by both the EU and NATO. This initiative would also add to the European anchoring of our Defence through the existing amphibious partnership between the Netherlands and the United Kingdom, and also reinforces the position of our country within the European Amphibious Initiative (EAI) cooperation.



Since 2014, an important part of the parachuting training of Belgium and the Netherlands has been organised in common in the training centre of Schaffen, Belgium. Both countries gain in efficiency by organising a common and specialised training.

IV. Tactical Air Transport

Multirole transport helicopters are used for the transport of goods and personnel. They provide the motorised troops with additional mobility. They can also make airmobile operations of the Special Operations Forces possible, and can be used as medical evacuation helicopters⁸⁴.

Current and Future Content

Belgian Defence has four NH90-type multirole transport helicopters, the acquisition costs of which have already been absorbed. The investments that are planned concern upgrades.

The A-109 helicopters will no longer be used in operations. Whether or not a limited number of these helicopters will be maintained will depend on a study which will examine the efficiency of keeping these helicopters as a training capability to support the operational preparation of the multirole transport helicopters (as well as the NATO frigate helicopters).

⁸⁴ As indicated above, the budgets of the Special Operations Aviation will be reviewed for the possibility to acquire SOF kits and medical kits for the NH90 helicopters.

If this is the case, the possibility will also be examined to use them in support of internal security, within the framework of their training mission, for instance to support certain police tasks.



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The NH90 helicopters strengthen the airmobile character of our land forces. Making use of fast roping, troops can be deployed rapidly, without the helicopter having to land.

Reinforcement of the Support to Internal Security and Possible Cooperation at National Level

An agreement⁸⁵ already exists today allowing for the use of the multirole transport helicopters in a non-structural, specific, and temporary way to assist Civil Security during firefighting operations. In practice, this kind of support is usually provided in case of large wildfires for observation, transport of intervention teams, evacuation of persons, but also for actual firefighting. As from 2016 the process to operationalise the multirole transport helicopters as firefighting helicopters will be started, making use of a firefighting set acquired by the Civil Security. The training costs and operating costs are also reimbursed by the Civil Security.

In addition to its use in firefighting, this helicopter can also be used during consequence management in case of disasters, for instance for the transport of casualties or to carry out or coordinate rescue actions. This helicopter could also be used to carry out transport in

⁸⁵ Memorandum of Understanding between the Minister of Defence and the Minister of the Interior on the support of Defence within the framework of large-scale wildfires, 21 May 2014.

case of a rapid deployment of surveillance detachments or for a SOF intervention on the national territory. The sensors of these helicopters can also be used as an ISR capability on the national territory (combined with the military analysis capability), within a legal framework yet to be defined and in cooperation with other national security actors.

Possibilities of a European Capability Anchoring

The common production and development of the NH90 helicopters during their entire life span is provided through NAHEMA, the NATO Helicopter Management Agency which is the international programme office of the NH90 core countries (Belgium, Germany, France, Italy and the Netherlands).

A common pool for spare parts for the various NH90-type helicopters of our country and the Netherlands has already been set up.

The training on NH90 simulators will be developed as internationally as possible. At the moment, the basic training for these helicopters is provided in cooperation with Germany. In the longer term, Defence will examine if it is possible to join the German or alternatively the French NH90 Training Centre. In that case Defence personnel could also be employed in this training centre.

In the short term political guidance will be given for the development of a common helicopter command with the Netherlands, a project that was set up in 2013 but has until now only resulted in limited forms of cooperation (coordination of training, operations, and procedures). However, the final aim of this project is to be a step towards a European structure for a common operational command, following the example of the successful EATC which focuses on transport and tanker aircraft.

v. Military Construction

Military construction contributes to the expeditionary deployment by repairing (or even building) major road infrastructure, and by building or installing military constructions, especially infrastructure for compounds or for personnel protection.

Furthermore, military construction is of major importance to the reconstruction phase after the main combat actions during an armed conflict have come to an end. This capability is essential for a quick restoration of public services such as the availability of power, drinking water, road infrastructure, waste removal, telecommunications, and so on. This is important in order to win and keep the support of the local population against opponents.

Military construction carried out for the benefit of local communities also helps to ensure the support of the population for the foreign and local troops that are present during the reconstruction phase of a conflict. These troops provide security when restarting the local political, social, and economic process that should eventually lead to a structural solution of a conflict.



© Belgian Defence - Pierre Bogaert

The excavators of the military construction (engineers) can be deployed both in direct support of our troops and to carry out projects for the local population that contribute indirectly to the stabilisation of the security situation in a conflict zone.

Missions in support of the local population are carried out in close cooperation with the influence capability. The latter capability is responsible for the civil-military interaction which gives guidance to military construction actions (e.g. by prioritising).

Deployment within the framework of international crisis management in case of disasters and international humanitarian missions is also possible.

Current and Future Realisations

The current elements of military construction within the multimodal engineering battalions will be maintained. The current Field Accommodation capability, which has a similar mission, will be integrated into the military construction. Today both units already work closely together to build compounds for all Defence units.

The planned investments are intended to replace the major military construction equipment, as well as to acquire semi-permanent bridging systems (logistic bridges).

Efforts will be made to maintain the current deployable infrastructure equipment until 2030.

For the execution of its missions, the military construction can count on reserve personnel providing specific knowhow that is only required in specific cases. In addition, reservists will also be called upon to provide fast and specific additional capability, for instance when restarting public services or building a compound.

Reinforcement of the Support to Internal Security and Possible Cooperation at National Level

Within the framework of internal security, the military construction can support consequence management in case of disasters, and it can also be deployed for national humanitarian missions (e.g. building accommodation for refugees).

An enhanced cooperation with similar capabilities of the Civil Protection (part of the Civil Security) will be pursued.

Education and training, acquisition of equipment and its support will be integrated as much as possible in order for the civilian and military services to become more efficient in terms of both budget and operations. This makes it easier to use military equipment for national missions, and for civilian equipment to be also used by the military.

The Civil Protection could also form a pool of reservists for military engagement. A possible military engagement of their equipment could be considered.

Possibilities of a European Capability Anchoring

The military construction has the ambition to acquire future equipment together with our strategic partner countries.

vi. CBRN (Chemical-Biological-Radiological-Nuclear) Capability

The CBRN capability provides joint support to the mobility and survival of armed forces through the detection of CBRN agents and the decontamination of vehicles, equipment, and personnel.

Current and Future Content

Defence will reinforce its CBRN capability, building on its current capabilities.

New CBRN reconnaissance vehicles will be acquired for the HSE teams (Hazardous Site Evaluation) that assess sites which are suspected of being contaminated.

Equipment for forensic sampling and field identification will also be acquired as well as equipment to maintain our home-based reach back capability (DLD⁸⁶) for the examination of samples taken by SIBCRA⁸⁷ teams and RDOIT⁸⁸.

Part of the mobile decontamination stations and tents will be replaced.

Specialised CBRN reconnaissance and sampling teams will be able to support the Special Operations Forces capability.

Together with the medical capability, medical CBRN teams will also be trained to decontaminate casualties in a CBRN environment and they will be able to provide specialised transport.

Reinforcement of the Support to Internal Security and Possible Cooperation at National Level

Because of the proliferation of CBRN weapons and improvised devices, military CBRN capabilities are more likely to be deployed in case of terrorist acts on the national territory. In light of a terrorist threat and the potential use of CBRN agents by terrorist groups, advisers, a decontamination capability, specialised CBRN reconnaissance and CBRN forensic sampling teams can be made available to support the Civil Protection and the Federal Police. Moreover, the CBRN capability can also be deployed in case of disasters (e.g. chemical disasters such as the one in Wetteren in 2013).

An enhanced cooperation with similar capabilities of the Civil Protection will be pursued. Education and training, acquisition of equipment and support of this equipment will be integrated as much as possible in order to enhance the efficiency of civilian and military services both budgetarily and operationally. This makes it easier to use military equipment for national missions and civilian equipment by the military.

⁸⁶ DLD: *Defence Laboratories (département laboratoria van Defensie – département laboratoires de la Défense)*

⁸⁷ SIBCRA: *sampling and identification of chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear agents*

⁸⁸ RDOIT: *rapid deployable outbreak investigation team*



© Belga

Defence CBRN teams that are specialised in protection measures against chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear warfare supported the Belgian security services during the chemical disaster in Wetteren in May 2013.

The civil services could also form a pool of reserve personnel for military engagement. A possible military engagement of their equipment could be considered. This offers possibilities for upscaling the capabilities both for national and military engagement, whenever necessary.

Possibilities of a European Capability Anchoring

NATO encourages its member states to pool capabilities in order to generate economies of scale and make their support more efficient. Within this framework cooperation between Germany and the Benelux countries in a multinational CBRN battalion is now being developed. This battalion should make common education and training of CBRN specialists possible.

VII. Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD)/Counter-Improvised Explosive Devices (C-IED) Capability

The EOD/C-IED capability provides joint support for the neutralisation of ammunition and the dismantling of explosive devices (whether or not improvised) during the deployment of our contingents. In addition, this capability also provides support to the neutralisation of ammunition during operational preparation.

This capability works together with the CBRN capability for IEDs equipped with CBRN agents.



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A Belgian EOD/C-IED team prepares the demolition of ammunition during the ISAF operation in Afghanistan.

Current and Future Content

The investments that are required for the expeditionary deployment of the EOD/C-IED capability are closely related to those for the combat engineers and are carried out in common. Part of the investment budgets for major equipment of the combat engineers (included in the combined arms motorised capability) is intended to be used for the EOD/C-IED capability. This involves the Route Clearance Packages that are necessary for clearing and destroying improvised explosive devices during expeditionary deployment.

Support to Internal Security

Nowadays, a major part of the EOD/C-IED capability is already concentrating specifically on supporting internal security. The most important investment during the period of the strategic vision for this capability is oriented towards internal security, namely a dismantling facility. It will be primarily used for cleaning up the historical ammunition pollution in Flanders Fields. Half of this investment has been financed through interdepartmental cooperation. The removal of this historical ammunition pollution does not tie in with the current military mission of the EOD/C-IED capability, but it does occupy a large part of this capability's personnel and equipment. As indicated in chapter 2, Defence will continue to carry out this task of internal security, but it will do so with less military personnel by using outsourcing as much as possible, which should also allow for optimised operating costs.

In addition to its expeditionary deployment the EOD/C-IED capability will continue to support internal security in case of threats requiring specialised military expertise, such as the neutralisation and disposal of IEDs, for instance of terrorist origin, or the neutralisation of more recent war ammunition.

Possibilities of a European Capability Anchoring

The Benelux defence cooperation is increasing its cooperation with regard to EOD/C-IED doctrine, documentation, education, and training.

c. Capability dimension Air

Content, Personnel, Investments and Level of Ambition

Capability Dimension Air								
Capability	Content	Personnel in 2030	Personnel planned in September 2015 (personnel on 1 January 2016)	Delta 2030 in comparison with the personnel planned in 2015	Investments in major equipment 2016-2030 (million €2015)	Level of ambition		
						Form of deployment	Sustainability	Deployment time
Multirole air combat capability	34 new combat aircraft (including a reserve for attrition)	1,976	2,576 (2,517)	-23%	3,592.5	6 High Battle Rhythm combat aircraft	unlimited	3 days
Air-to-air refuelling and strategic (medical) air transport capability	1 Multirole Tanker Transport aircraft	(personnel see A400M)			300	2 Quick Reaction Alert (and Air Policing) combat aircraft	unlimited	15 minutes
	7 A400M transport aircraft with 2 air-to-air refuelling kits	668	973 (900)	-31%	93	1 Multirole Tanker Transport within the EDA pool	unlimited, from an international perspective	3 days
Command and surveillance aircraft	participation in the NATO Airborne Warning And Control System (AWACS) capability	38	43 (41)	-12%	included in the "international contributions" budgetary line in the global costs chart	4 A400M transport aircraft (of which 1 or 2 can be deployed as refuelling aircraft)	unlimited	3 days
Air Information Hub (Link)	interdepartmental civilian-military coordination structure for the airspace	(integrated within the CRC)				participation in the NATO AWACS capability	unlimited	5 days
TOTAL dimension Air		2,682	3,592 (3,458)	-25%	3,985.5	command capability for interdepartmental engagement and coordination in the national airspace	unlimited	permanent

Investments contents

Capability Dimension Air		
Capability	Investments in major equipment 2016-2030 (Million €2015)	Investment projects and envisaged timing
Multirole air combat capability	3,592.5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ 34 combat aircraft (including the attrition reserve): 3,412 million euros (2020-2030) ■ last F-16 modernisations: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Commonality & Interoperability Consolidation Program (CICP): 21 million euros (2017-2019) ▪ Weapons & sensors: 30 million euros (2017-2018 en 2021) ▪ Final operational upgrade: 15,5 million euros (2024-2025) ■ start of modernisations for the new aircraft: 114 million euros (2027-2030)
Air-to-air refuelling and strategic (medical) air transport capability	300	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ 1 Multirole Tanker Transport aircraft: 300 million euros (2024-2027)
	93	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ 2 kits for air-to-air refuelling (AAR): 37 million euros (2027-2029) ■ contribution to the Belgran-Luxembourg training centre (flight simulators): 56 million euros (2020-2024)

I. Multirole Air Combat Capability

Multirole combat aircraft can execute air defence, air attack, ground attack and reconnaissance missions (as a link in the ISR chain). These combat aircraft also play an important role in the support to the land forces by maintaining air superiority and providing Close Air Support. They can also support maritime flotillas.

Current and Future Content

This strategic vision provides 66.5 million euros of investments to maintain the 54 F-16 combat aircraft deployable until the end of their life cycle. As from 2023, the F-16s will be replaced with a fleet of 34 new modern combat aircraft, including a reserve for attrition. In total, this investment represents nearly 3.6 billion euros for this capability, and already includes a first part of the upgrades for the new aircraft.

Based on the available deployable combat aircraft, six aircraft can be permanently engaged in expeditionary tasks and two aircraft in air defence missions within the NATO framework (QRA). This level of ambition is based on a binational distribution of the QRA role between Belgium and the Netherlands. Within the QRA role, the Control and Reporting Centre monitors the airspace and guides the combat aircraft in charge of interception⁸⁹.

As from 2023, the F-16s will be replaced with a fleet of 34 new modern combat aircraft.

As from the introduction of the new combat aircraft, an adapted support will be needed regarding mission preparations and debriefings, armament and self-protection parameters, flight simulators and digital cartography. This support will be networked as much as possible at a multinational level.

Support to Internal Security

At national level, in addition to other forms of air policing, multirole combat aircraft also carry out a counter-terrorism mission (Renegade) as part of internal security, given the fact that they are anyway always ready to execute the military NATO air defence mission (QRA).

⁸⁹ The Control and Reporting Centre will be addressed under point e. below (“Command and Operational Support of Capabilities”).

Possibilities of a European Capability Anchoring

The efficiency and effectiveness of the future air combat capability should be reinforced as much as possible through cooperation agreements with EU and NATO member states. For each of the five candidates to replace the F-16, there are opportunities for close cooperation at European level, in most of the cases even with a neighbouring country. The acquisition of a replacement capability for the F-16, which will enable a close cooperation for the lines of development with one or several partner nations, may ensure an optimisation of the support of this capability.



© Belgian Defence

The current F-16 combat aircraft surrounded by the five candidates for its replacement. At the top, the Eurofighter Typhoon followed by: the Boeing F-18 Super Hornet, the Dassault Rafale, the Lockheed-Martin F-35 and the Saab JAS 39 Gripen.

The common Benelux Quick Reaction Alert and air policing are a major step towards more European defence cooperation. This approach will indeed generate more interdependence for the execution of a sensitive defence mission (from a sovereignty point of view), like Renegade. As from 2017, Belgian and Dutch aircraft will ensure the security of the Benelux airspace in turns. This Benelux QRA cooperation also has an impact on France. There is indeed a bilateral agreement between Belgium and France on the execution of certain QRA missions above our territory (and vice versa). Given the fact that Dutch aircraft will also perform QRA missions above our territory as from 2017, the Netherlands have indicated that they want to enter into a complementary agreement

with France which would give the same competences to aircraft from the three countries concerned.

The training of combat pilots on Alphajet is currently organised in a binational way in France. In the short term, however, our Alphajets will progressively be removed from service. The aim is to integrate a multinational cooperation project based on operating costs, without buying our own aircraft. As a consequence, no investment budget has been planned for a replacement capability for these training aircraft.



Since 2004, the basic training on Alphajet of the Belgian and French fighter pilots has been organised in common on the French air base of Cazaux using aircraft of both countries.

ii. **Air-to-Air Refuelling and Strategic (Medical) Air Transport Capability**

Air-to-air refuelling and strategic air transport are two distinct capabilities. The aircraft mentioned below are able to perform both capabilities simultaneously. For that reason, they will be considered together.

Air-to-air refuelling is necessary for the execution of long-duration missions with combat aircraft and for the extension of their range. This capability also reduces the dependence on the support provided by the host nation in case of expeditionary deployments. Refuelling aircraft are also crucial for the deployment of transport aircraft on long distances and with heavy loads.

Strategic air transport allows for the deployment of troops and loads over strategic distances and within the desired response time. It ensures the expeditionary autonomy of Defence by ensuring the delivery of logistic and operational support. In addition to its engagement in core tasks, strategic air transport is a much requested capability for humanitarian operations, often to the advantage of civil actors.

Current and Future Content

Currently, Belgian Defence does not own any air-to-air refuelling capability. To this day, our combat aircraft fleet has never benefited from any support from national refuelling aircraft. Our fleet has been using the existing (often American) capability within NATO. The aim is to develop a national air-to-air refuelling capability based on a participation in a multinational pool of refuelling aircraft on the one hand, and on the A400M on the other.

Defence will take part in the EDA Multinational Multirole Tanker Transport (MRTT) Fleet programme, which will be implemented through the NATO Support and Procurement Agency. In this programme, the Netherlands, Poland, Luxembourg and maybe Norway and Germany will be acquiring 3 to 8 Multirole Tanker Transport aircraft in an identical



To this day, European fighter aircraft often have to rely on American refuelling capability. The procurement of a Belgian refuelling capability will contribute to enhancing the autonomous deployment of both Belgium and Europe.

configuration. These aircraft will be delivered as from 2019. Our country will eventually assume investment and operational costs into this programme equivalent to one MRTT aircraft. This aircraft will allow to refuel all types of combat aircraft and to efficiently and simultaneously combine the air-to-air refuelling capability with passenger and freight transport.

With the purchase of two kits the A400M transport aircraft will also be deployable as refuelling aircraft. Although these kits do not provide air-to-air refuelling for all types of combat aircraft, they will help reduce a capability gap at European level. From a national point of view, these kits are essential to ensure a refuelling capability which will be able to refuel our A400M transport aircraft⁹⁰.

The current strategic air transport capability of Defence is carried out by 11 C-130 transport aircraft. Over the 2019-2020 period, these aircraft will be replaced by 7 A400M transport aircraft. Just as the current transport aircraft, the new ones are suitable for air transport within the theatre of operations, in tactical conditions. To this end, they are equipped with self-protection systems and are able to land on improvised runways. The

⁹⁰ The MRTT aircraft from the planned multinational programme does not allow refuelling of the (Belgian) A400M transport aircraft.



© J.L. Brunet - Armée de l'air

The French A400M transport aircraft to be deployed operationally at the end of 2013 is transporting equipment and personnel for an operation in Mali.

A400M is equipped in a standard way for air-to-air refuelling. Just as the C-130, it can undertake paratroop missions. As soon as all A400M are operational, four aircraft will be deployable at all times.

Currently, Defence is also leasing an Airbus A321 for passenger and freight transport. The commercial leasing contract for this aircraft ends by the end of 2017. If available, we could switch to a leased MRTT aircraft, preferably integrated into an existing pool, before developing our own capability as mentioned above. The MRTT aircraft can also provide passenger and freight transport on strategic distances. The MRTT can also be equipped with a kit for the execution of strategic medical evacuation missions.

Besides the Airbus A321, the “white fleet” also includes two Falcon executive jets and four Embraer Regional Jets (ERJ). The government, the European bodies and the King’s Household call upon this fleet as well. Defence has historically been given this role. Furthermore, these aircraft are at the disposal of EATC partners as well.

The operational relevance of these aircraft is limited and this capability is (partially) available on the civil market. For this reason, a study will be carried out to determine the military-operational needs of Defence regarding this type of aircraft and identify the possible options (including contracting civilian means or maintaining/acquiring our own aircraft) in order to potentially ensure this capability. Future realisation of the needs of Defence regarding this type of aircraft might potentially also meet the needs

of other public services. Provided a contribution to expenses is being made and as long as this approach does not result in extra direct or indirect costs for Defence, common management of this capability could allow for economies of scale and might lead to win-win cost reduction for all partners, including Defence.

This study also includes a section on medical evacuation, which demonstrates the need to provide for medical evacuation with this type of aircraft, besides the possibility to organise those interventions with the C-130s, the A400Ms and possibly the MRTTs, as well as through international cooperation.

Possibilities of a European Capability Anchoring

Both programmes mentioned above (the Multinational MRTT Fleet programme and the A400M refuelling kits) represent our country's contribution to two sections of the EDA initiatives (partly in collaboration with NATO) to provide various solutions to the reduction of the European capability gap regarding air refuelling, by means of a European cooperation. These are two examples of European capability anchoring. The MRTT European cooperation programme provides for the common and rational organisation of the different lines of development. The A400M kits may also form the basis for cooperation in several fields, among other things through the EATC (European Air Transport Command, see below).

Acquiring a strategic medical evacuation kit could also be considered in collaboration with the MRTT partner nations in order to also meet this need.

The A400M project is an excellent example of European cooperation to ensure the European strategic autonomy, both industrially and as a solution to a European capability gap. Belgium, all our strategic partners (except the Netherlands), Spain and Turkey have contributed to the production and development of this aircraft. Defence will strive for a common continued development in collaboration with those partners.

The operational preparation of the A400M at national level will also be an example of intensive defence cooperation. This will be achieved notably within a common Belgian-Luxembourg A400M unit consisting of 7 Belgian aircraft and one Luxembourg aircraft. The integration of Luxembourg pilots has already begun based on the Belgian C-130s.

As several countries will own the A400M aircraft, the operating of the aircraft will be optimised within the EATC, while we will keep our own autonomy for managing national operations. From its Eindhoven headquarters, the EATC ensures the daily management of a varied pool of transport and refuelling aircraft. The aim is to extend the tasks of the EATC to different lines of development of the A400M (logistics, maintenance, training). This way, we should be able to implement a strengthened cooperation for this aircraft with our strategic partners and at European level. This common command and the use of identical aircraft provide for an important opportunity to reinforce the European defence cooperation.

At the moment, Belgian C-130 pilots follow a part of their training programme in a binational school in France. The aim is to keep the pilots' training within the framework of an international partnership, also after the introduction of the A400M.



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The first Luxembourg transport pilot receives his wings in June 2014. Until the commissioning of the Belgian-Luxembourg fleet of A400M transport aircraft, Luxembourg transport pilots will be flying the Belgian C-130 transport aircraft.

III. Command and Surveillance Aircraft

Command and surveillance aircraft⁹¹ are equipped with sensors and command means which are necessary for conducting coordinated air operations. Together with refuelling assets, these aircraft form the strategic support capabilities necessary for an effective engagement of multirole combat aircraft in large operations which require constant coordination with other countries' means. These aircraft are also important for the monitoring of troop movement in an engagement zone or at the borders of Europe, beyond the coverage of terrestrial radars and sensors.

Current and Future Content

Since its implementation in 1978, Belgium takes part in the NATO Airborne Early Warning and Control Programme, currently counting on a fleet of 16 E-3A AWACS aircraft. In the past, it was decided to take part in the further development of those aircraft. From 2019 to 2025, Belgium will contribute to the modernisation of these aircraft for a total amount

⁹¹ These aircraft form a C3ISR capability: Command, Control and Communication – Intelligence, Surveillance & Reconnaissance.



Command and surveillance aircraft of NATO, with on board Belgian military personnel, ensure the coordination and the management of air activities of the Coalition during the ISAF operation in Afghanistan.

of 33.5 million euros through the “Investments in international contributions” budgetary line. This programme will ensure that the aircraft remain operationally deployable and maintain their operational relevance until 2035.

Defence provides personnel for the NATO Air Base Geilenkirchen in Germany from where the AWACS operate.

Possibilities of a European Capability Anchoring

Currently, the AWACS fleet is the only truly common NATO capability (besides the NATO Command & Control structure). Participation in this AWACS fleet therefore represents more than a pure military capability. It shows the determination of NATO countries to acquire together the necessary capabilities for the implementation of a credible collective defence.

iv. Air Information Hub (LInK)

The good coordination between Defence and other national security actors within the Maritime Information Hub in Zeebrugge will also be implemented for the Air dimension: an Air Information Hub (LInK (*Lucht Informatie Kruispunt*)) will be

established within the Control and Reporting Centre. This LInK is an interdepartmental civil-military structure that will generate an integrated air picture at national level, primarily in collaboration with the Federal Police, Customs, Justice, Asylum and Migration, and environmental authorities, in order to combat illegal activities. It could also play a useful role for the fire services, the Government Crisis Centre and the Maritime Information Hub in the context of emergency and rescue operations. The LInK will also be able to coordinate the emergency services in the event of an aviation accident within the national territory.

d. Capability Dimension Maritime

Content, Personnel, Investments and Level of Ambition

Capability Dimension Maritime									
Capability	Content	Personnel in 2030	Personnel planned in September 2015 (personnel on 1 January 2016)	Delta 2030 in comparison with personnel planned in 2015	Investments in major equipment 2016-2030 (million euros €2015)	Level of ambition			
						Form of deployment	Sustainability	Deployment time	
Surface Combatant-capability	2 frigates	240	298 (243)	-19%	1,036	1 multipurpose frigate with embarked NATO frigate helicopter (type NH90)	36 months (followed by a period of two years with a deployment of 6 months per year)	10 days	
	4 NH90 maritime frigate helicopters	486	715 (647)	-32%	70.9				
Mine countermeasures capability	6 vessels (toolboxes included)	378	283 (201)	+34%	932	2 mine countermeasures vessels	unlimited	first vessel: 2 days second vessel: 4 days	
						1 mine countermeasures module for ports and shallow waters	unlimited	3 days	
Coastal patrol capability (Maritime Information Hub included)	permanence for operations in national waters and 2 coastal patrol vessels	63	59 (51)	+7%	6	command capability for operations in national waters ⁹²	unlimited	permanent	
						1 coastal patrol vessel	unlimited	2 hours	
Participation in the Dutch Joint Logistic Support Ship (strategic maritime transportation and logistical operational support) (under study)	contribution in kind (via personnel, operating budget, helicopter) (under study, is being coordinated with the Netherlands)	35	0 (0)	+	contribution in kind via personnel, operating budget, helicopter	participation in the Dutch Joint Logistic Support Ship			
	modules aquatic part	80	0 (0)	+	1.5	harbour protection module	unlimited	5 to 10 days	
TOTAL Maritime dimension		1,282	1,355 (1142)	-5%	2,059.9				

92 Via the interdepartmental Maritime Information Hub, competent for tasks related to internal security.

Investments contents

Capability Dimension Maritime		
Capability	Investments in major equipment 2016-2030 (million euros € 2015)	Investment projects and envisaged timing
Surface combatant capability	1036	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ 2 new multipurpose frigates: 1,003 million euros (2017-2019 and 2022-2030) ■ final upgrades current frigates: 27 million euros (2020-2024) ■ tactical drones: 6 million euros (2024)
Frigate helicopters	70.9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ 2 modules with sensors and weapons for the maritime combat helicopters (anti-submarine and anti-surface vessel warfare): 23 million euros (2023) ■ upgrades: 37.4 million euros (2020-2023 and 2028-2030) ■ participation in international training centre: 10.5 million euros (2020-2022)
Mine countermeasures capability	932	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ 6 new mine countermeasures vessels, MCM-Toolboxes included (mission package study incl.): 932 million euros (2021-2030)
Coastal patrol capability (Maritime Information Hub included)	6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ upgrade coastal patrol vessels: 1 million euros (2020) ■ new systems for command capability for operations in national waters: 5 million euros (2020-2021)
Harbour protection	15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ sensors for aquatic part: 15 million euros (2027-2028)

I. The Surface Combatant Capability (Frigate Helicopters Included)


The surface combatant capability is provided by military vessels from the frigate level on⁹³. A frigate is the smallest platform equipped with sensors and weapons capable of protecting other vessels, both merchant and military (such as amphibious vessels and aircraft carriers). Frigates are also equipped with self-protection means, namely sensors and weapon systems, in order to safely carry out their mission under combined submarine-, surface-, cyber- and aerial threats.

Frigate helicopters, tactical drones and small manned vessels are part of the surface combatant capability. Frigate helicopters and drones can significantly contribute to the maritime common operational picture and the collection of tactical intelligence. The helicopters are also forward deployable means for combatting submarines and surface targets. The small vessels are needed for the boarding⁹⁴ team on board the frigate.

Current and Future Content

Our navy's current multipurpose frigates both were originally developed during the Cold war to contribute in the fight against submarine threats. However, some of the submarine sensors and the embarked Lynx helicopter (sensor and weapon carrier) were not included in the acquisition of the frigates from the Netherlands in 2005. On the other hand, the deployment capability against asymmetrical threats and the capability for maritime security operations (such as counter-piracy) were reinforced by means of additional sensors. Today, NATO is asking once more for a reinforced capability against a rising submarine threat at the borders of Europe and elsewhere in the world, a capability that modern anti-submarine frigates can provide.

Both current multipurpose frigates will be replaced by two new multipurpose frigates as from 2025. (However, some investments will already be made for studies from 2017 onwards.) This replacement will take place together with the Netherlands. The frigates will have a reinforced anti-submarine capability thanks to intermediate- and long-range sonars, torpedoes and a maritime helicopter (the existing NH90 NATO Frigate Helicopter (NFH), but fully equipped), which can be engaged in anti-submarine and anti-surface warfare. They will also have a more important surveillance capability by means of integrated tactical drones.



Today, NATO is asking once more for a reinforced capability against a rising submarine threat at the borders of Europe and elsewhere in the world, a capability that modern anti-submarine frigates can provide.

⁹³ Destroyers and cruisers can also provide a surface combatant capability. However, considering their more important investment and operating costs, they are not achievable for our navy within the 2030 timeframe. The Netherlands, however, have four vessels belonging to the destroyer category: the air defence and command frigates.

⁹⁴ A boarding consists in going on board a ship and examine it.



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Concept representation of the future Belgian and Dutch multipurpose frigates. The aim is to procure identical ships in order to maintain the current close cooperation for support of these ships.

Our frigates will, if desired, be deployable in a ballistic missile defence-system⁹⁵, as they will be able to launch missiles capable of engaging ballistic missiles outside the atmosphere. This will have to be done in cooperation with long-range detection radar systems, for example on board air defence frigates. This BMD role can be supported through international contributions to the specialised NATO structures for this capability (the BMD coordination cell at the SHAPE in Casteau or the BMD Operations Centre (BMDOC) within the Air Component Commander (ACC) in Ramstein).

In the short term, the capability of the current frigates will be reinforced by integrating tactical drones and frigate helicopters. The helicopter capability will then be integrated on board according to the operational preparation and the operational deployment of the new frigates.

Two tactical drones will be used as a supporting surveillance capability to improve the maritime common operational picture, surveillance and the collection of tactical intelligence.

The current Alouette III type board helicopters will be decommissioned by 2020 at the latest. The arrival of the NFH is a significant upgrade of the frigate's possibilities. The Alouette III does not have any sensors, while the NFH can be used as an advanced sensor in order to contribute to the common operational picture of the submarine and surface

⁹⁵ *Ballistic Missile Defence systems (BMD) are able to protect deployed troops or a national territory against ballistic missiles. This is a very complex weapons system, not only based on interceptors but also on sensors and systems for battle management, intelligence gathering and communication, command and control. NATO is asking for a fair contribution of all partner countries in a BMD system that can protect the population, the infrastructure and the troops of the Member States. This request was clearly formulated in the new political guidance which is the starting point for the NATO Defence Planning Process.*



A sonar and torpedoes turn the maritime NH90 helicopter into a maritime combat capability that can be deployed from a frigate for anti-submarine warfare.

threat. The NATO Frigate Helicopter can also be equipped with weapon systems able to engage these very threats. Two modules comprising sensors and weapons for the frigate helicopters will be purchased in 2023 in order to reinforce the anti-submarine capability of the current frigates.

The four NATO frigate helicopters were supposed to replace the three current embarked maritime helicopters (Alouette III), and take over the search and rescue mission (SAR) in the context of internal security. SAR-helicopters are deployed for medical support and evacuations, mainly in national waters; however they can provide assistance on the

“ The orientation of the frigates as second spearhead of the Belgian contribution to the NATO collective defence implies that the frigate helicopters will firstly be engaged as embarked maritime helicopters.

entire territory. Until recently, SAR was carried out by five Sea King helicopters. The orientation of the frigates as second spearhead of the Belgian contribution to the NATO collective defence implies that the frigate helicopters will firstly be engaged as embarked maritime helicopters. SAR is clearly a mission of the public authority, and Defence will remain responsible for it. However, this strategic vision is clear that the NFH will primarily be used as a sensor

and a weapon carrier on board the frigates of our navy. These helicopters will also be used as a possible contribution to the Dutch Joint Logistic Support Ship. This form of deployment as a maritime helicopter also prevails over a deployment as a SAR helicopter.

Chapter 2 mentions a study conducted by Defence on the future of the search and rescue mission by means of helicopters. This study will determine whether the residual capability of the frigate helicopters enables them to carry out possible future SAR missions as well. The SAR study will also give an overview of other ways to carry out this SAR mission, as a Defence capability, without Defence having to invest in SAR helicopters and for which the aspect of cost reduction is a key element. This study has to take into account possible opportunities to achieve this capability, together with our strategic partner countries.

Possibilities of a European Capability Anchoring

The new frigates will be jointly developed, acquired and supported with the Dutch Defence. The Netherlands will remain leading party for the identical types of frigates within the Belgian-Dutch naval cooperation. This binational cooperation provides the necessary economies of scale to reduce the life-cycle cost.



The new frigates will be jointly developed, acquired and supported with the Dutch Defence.

The possibility of cooperating with other Defence forces for this capability is under constant investigation.

There could also be more cooperation with other European countries by using identical sub-systems, or for lines of development (such as doctrine or training), without using identical systems. Belgium maintains privileged relationships with the French and British navies, whereas the Netherlands has privileged relationships with the British and German navies.

A close cooperation already exists between Belgium and the Netherlands on the NFH. A common pool on spare parts has already been launched with the Netherlands. The operational preparation of our frigate helicopters is achieved in close cooperation with the Netherlands. Belgian Defence personnel are already present in the Netherlands for logistic support, education and training. Belgium and the Netherlands will act as one entity towards the industry and align their configuration management as far as these helicopters are concerned. After purchasing specific kits for anti-submarine and anti-surface warfare, there is further scope for deepening the cooperation.

In the short term, the necessary guidance will be given for the possible development of a common Benelux helicopter command, as a stepping stone for a European cooperation project.

The NFH is also used by France, and will be used later on by Germany, which allows for an increase of the cooperation with our strategic partner countries.

The common production and lifetime development of the NH90 helicopters are organised via the NATO Helicopter Management Agency (NAHEMA), being the international programme office for the NH90 core countries (France, Germany, the Netherlands, Italy and Belgium).

The basic training course for Belgian helicopter pilots is currently provided at a binational school in France. It is being studied how the training of our helicopter pilots can be continued in the future within a multinational setting.

With regard to the acquisition of tactical drones, it would be ideal to purchase one single type of drone within the Admiral Benelux fleet to guarantee a joint support, or within the context of a broader cooperation with Germany and/or France, where similar projects already exist.

ii. The Mine Countermeasures Capability

The new generation of mine countermeasures vessels are specialised ships for demining missions (including EOD/C-IED) at sea. The so-called “mother ship” keeps a safe distance from the mine threat and deploys a series of unmanned submarine, surface and flying devices, called the “MCM-toolbox”. These unmanned devices are used to detect, classify, identify and neutralise explosive devices. EOD/C-IED clearance divers can also be deployed. Unlike their predecessors, these vessels will be provided with the necessary self-defence capability in order to face an asymmetrical threat, with an improved endurance and a maritime command capability for mine countermeasures operations.

In addition to being operated from mine countermeasures vessels, some systems also need to be operable from land, in confined and shallow waters (CSW), such as ports and locks for instance.

Current and Future Content

Our maritime mine countermeasures capability currently consists of:

- six tripartite class mine hunters (CMT) (one of which being a spare);
- the command and logistical support ship Godetia – supporting the mine hunters;
- systems for clearing very shallow waters (VSW).

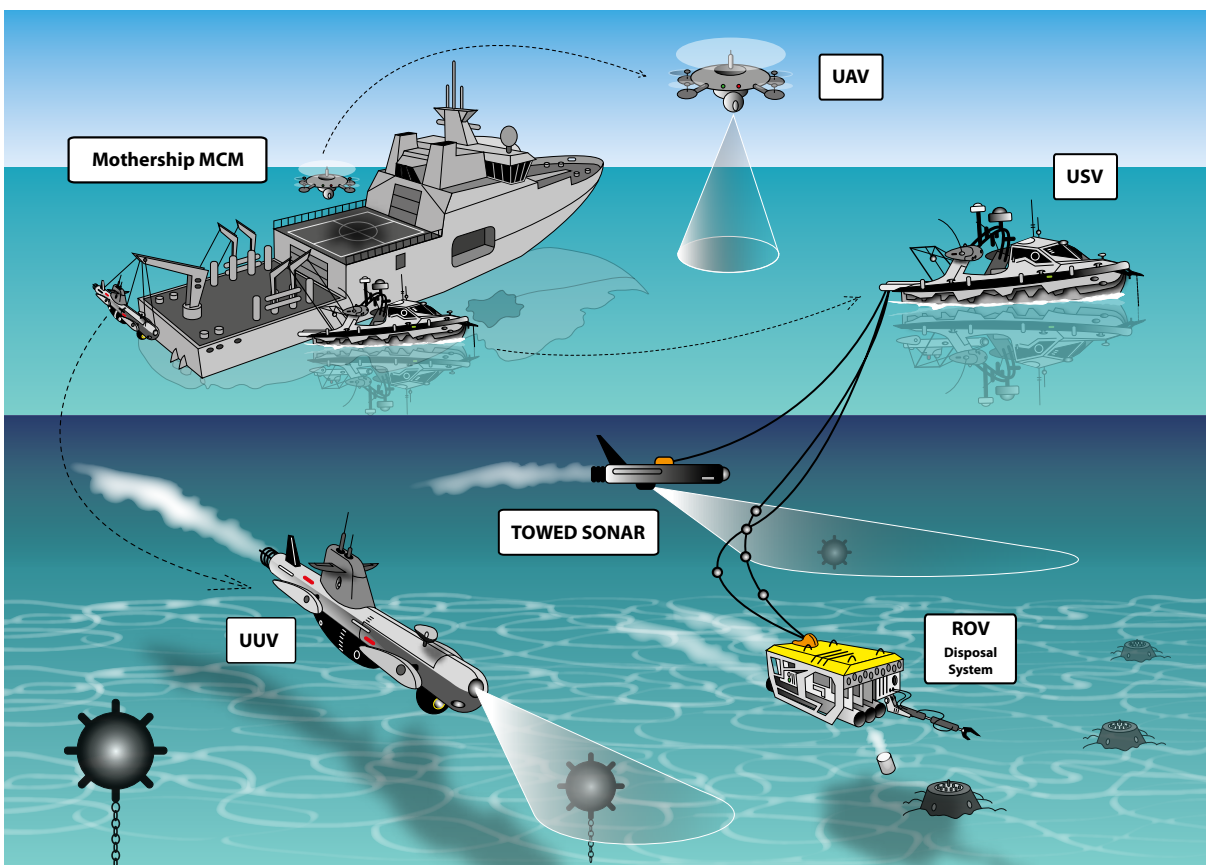
The tripartite mine hunters will reach the end of their lifespan by 2025. Compared with more recent platforms, and considering the technological evolution, current mine hunters are limited in terms of transit speed, duration of mine countermeasures operations, space required for a staff capability and self-protection means.

The Godetia that was built in 1965, is now 51 years old, which is well beyond its envisaged service life of 30 years.

The decision was made to purchase six new mine countermeasures vessels that guarantee both sufficient mine countermeasures capabilities deployable in our own waters and the possibility for a concurrent long-term expeditionary deployment.

As a command and logistics platform, the Godetia does not have to be replaced by a separate vessel. There will be enough staff capability on board the new mine countermeasures vessels through the use of command and control modules. As is the case now with the Godetia, this will allow to conduct multinational mine countermeasures operations. The new mine countermeasures vessels will also have a more important logistics support capability.

“ The decision was made to purchase six new mine countermeasures vessels that guarantee both sufficient mine countermeasures capabilities deployable in our own waters and the possibility for a concurrent long-term expeditionary deployment. ”



A complete overview of the systems of the future maritime mine countermeasures capability. From the relatively large mother ship, unmanned vehicles are deployed in the air (tactical drones), as well as on and under the water surface (Unmanned Surface Vehicles (USV) and Unmanned Underwater Vehicles (UUV) such as sonars, mine sweeping systems and mine clearing systems).

The new mine countermeasures platforms will be larger in order to meet the need for more autonomy, better self-protection and the use of unmanned modules. Thanks to their modularity, these vessels will also be deployable in a more multifunctional way for, among other things, maritime security operations. The larger size and the more important embarkation capability make it possible to take other capabilities on board, such as boarding teams or SOF, which represents an asset for other maritime operations in a (semi) permissive environment, including humanitarian missions. These vessels will also be used to educate and train personnel, including that of other navies (capability building missions).

In addition to the existing mine countermeasures vessels, the Belgian navy also developed a complementary mine-clearance capability for ports and shallow waters. These operations involve specific small unmanned vehicles (very shallow water modules), steered by an operator from the quayside or from a ship. This capability will be maintained and modernised.



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A REMUS Unmanned Underwater Vehicle can be deployed for demining ports and shallow waters, both nationally and during expeditionary operations.

Reinforcing Support to Internal Security and Possible Cooperation at National Level

In the context of internal security, this capability (vessels, divers, as well as land-based teams (mine countermeasures modules for harbours and shallow waters)) is essential for the removal of submarine explosive devices. It may be a matter of historical ammunition, or IED from a criminal or terrorist origin.

Possibilities of a European Capability Anchoring

The new mine countermeasures vessels will be jointly developed, purchased and supported with the Dutch Defence. Our Defence maintains its role as leading party for the mine countermeasures vessels within the Dutch-Belgian naval cooperation. As such, our Defence remains responsible for the material management. This requires an accurate sizing of personnel for training, education and material management. Like for the frigates, the operational command of the mine countermeasures vessels will be binational. Our Defence will remain in charge of the maintenance of all mine countermeasures vessels of the Admiral Benelux fleet.

The building programme for new Belgian and Dutch mine countermeasures vessels will be carried out on a binational basis at the least. However, this programme also has a European dimension as its implementation also takes place within the framework of an international programme, coordinated by the EDA. In October 2014, six member states of the EDA (Germany, Belgium, Estonia, Norway, the Netherlands, and Sweden) initiated a research project on the future of maritime mine countermeasures capabilities. These countries, together with Spain, Finland, France, Italy, Poland and Portugal also take part in the EDA 'unmanned maritime systems programme'. The programme in question wants to provide maritime mine countermeasures technology between 2015 and 2019, which will also be usable for our new vessels. These unmanned vehicles are considered as an essential element both by the EDA and the countries participating in this project. Developing these devices is regarded as a European capability priority by EDA. These cooperative relationships through the EDA can provide a basis for extending (parts of) the Belgian-Dutch programme, which reinforces more European cooperation on the acquisition, and perhaps at a later stage, the support and development of the new mine countermeasures vessels.

Together with the Netherlands, we will continue to play a leading role in the Euro-Atlantic maritime mine countermeasures niche capability.

Together with the Netherlands, we will continue to play a leading role in the Euro-Atlantic maritime mine countermeasures niche capability. The renewal of the fleet will perpetuate the international reach of the NATO Centre of Excellence for Maritime

Mine Countermeasures located in our country. This centre is part of the Belgian-Dutch EGUERMIN naval mine warfare school. It is responsible for education and training of international vessel crews and gives operational advice to decision-making and control organs within NATO.



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The Belgian-Dutch naval mine warfare school Eguermin ensures the education and training of the MCM specialists of both navies as well as of other NATO navies.

III. The Coastal Patrol Capability (Including the Maritime Information Hub)

This capability is carried out by coastal patrol vessels (CPV). Coastal patrol vessels are engaged in military operations in waters under the Nation's responsibility. The issue at stake is to ensure Maritime Situational Awareness (MSA), to guide and accompany foreign military vessels, and to make a wide range of specific military security-related interventions, such as the surveillance and protection of critical facilities.

These vessels are primarily designed and equipped to patrol independently in coastal areas. They feature appropriate seaworthiness and endurance, a small crew and a limited amount of sensors and weapons. These vessels cannot be deployed as a maritime combat capability due to their specific tasks and the corresponding equipment.



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One of our coastal patrol vessels escorts a Russian submarine that is passing through the Belgian Exclusive Economic Zone. Within the framework of NATO, there are agreements on the shadowing of foreign military vessels.

Current and Future Content

The coastal patrol capability is carried out by the two recently purchased coastal patrol vessels, directed and supported by a command capability for operations in our national waters. These coastal patrol vessels can be deployed very rapidly, and one vessel is permanently available.

Support of Internal Security

Chapter 2 already mentioned that this capability plays an important support role in the context of internal security for fishery control, the struggle against trafficking (drugs, human trafficking, weapons), the conservation of the environment and support in case of disasters and incidents. Therefore, personnel belonging to Customs and the Maritime and River Police are integrated in the navy command capability for operations in national waters. Together, they form the Maritime Information Hub. Each of the three bodies has its own tasks and databases containing information on the entire Belgian coastal area. They join their forces within the Maritime Information Hub to gather, analyse and share information.

Interdepartmental cooperation within the Maritime Information Hub might also prove beneficial for fire services, the government's crisis centre and the LInK in case of emergency and relief operations.



Personnel of Customs, the Police and of Defence are in constant interaction within the Maritime Information Hub in Zeebrugge to efficiently ensure the law enforcement and the security in the Belgian waters.

Possibilities of a European Capability Anchoring

With a limited investment, mainly in hardware and software, the Maritime Information Hub can comply with the NATO and EU maritime surveillance standards. The Maritime Information Hub of Zeebrugge is already integrated in the MARSUR network (maritime surveillance), a prime example of European defence cooperation. MARSUR (maritime surveillance) is an EDA project launched in 2006 and operational since 2014 in 18 EDA Member States, including Belgium but also countries such as the Netherlands, France, Germany and the United Kingdom. MARSUR is a network that enables European navies to automatically exchange information (such as vessels positions, headings, identification data, and pictures). This gives us a common picture of the situation in European seas and information on maritime GVDB operations. MARSUR is also a precursor of a broader civil-military project of the European Commission that will provide a common maritime information exchange structure for all maritime security stakeholders of the EU member states and the member states of the European Economic Area (EEA).

There is a structural cooperation with the Dutch and the British counterparts for the Maritime Information Hub since 2013 and with France since 2015. As the German Maritime Security Centre also wishes to join this cooperation structure, a de facto multilateral maritime security centre consultation among these 5 countries is created

for the North Sea region. Through structured consultation tangible agreements can be achieved on further cooperation and data sharing.

IV. Logistic Operational Support and Strategic Maritime Transportation via a Possible Participation in the Dutch Joint Logistic Support Ship

Vessels with a logistic support capability such as the Godetia and the Joint Logistic Support Ship Zr. Ms. Karel Doorman are important to increase the sustainability of maritime task forces in the area of operations. Logistic support ships may be unable to provide as much fuel as refuelling vessels, but they supply other forms of logistic support such as specialised maintenance, a broader medical support capability and the provision of spare parts, ammunition and food. The reason of existence of logistic support ships and supply vessels is to make sure that other vessels do not have to interrupt their operational activities to resupply in a port.

Current and Future Content Through European Capability Anchoring

Today, our country has a limited logistic support capability via the command and logistic support ship Godetia. This ship can provide specific support to a fleet of mine countermeasures vessels. In the new concept for the future mine countermeasures vessels, this support does no longer have to be provided by a specific vessel.

For the multipurpose frigates (Surface Combatant capability), our country is counting on the support of tankers and logistic vessels of partner countries during exercises and operational deployment.

NATO and the EU (EDA) both stress the importance of reinforcing the maritime logistic support capability in order to strengthen the autonomous deployment possibilities.

In the future, Defence wants to contribute to the European maritime logistic support capability by participating in the existing capability within the Admiral Benelux fleet. The possibility for our navy to supply personnel, operating means and/or a helicopter at short notice for the JSS will therefore be assessed. Belgian participation in the JSS depends on Dutch authorisation, but the Netherlands is seeking international cooperation to make this vessel fully operational.

The JSS offers other facilities as well, such as a limited amphibious support capability, in order to be able to operate independently of port facilities. A possible Belgian participation in the JSS would also mean that our Defence would receive, in agreement with its partner, an additional possibility of strategic transport of large volumes, for seabasing operations (the logistical support of troops from the sea), access to a helicopter sea base, and an additional option for humanitarian operations with the deployment of the JSS as a hospital ship.



The Dutch Joint Logistic Support Ship Zr. Ms. Karel Doorman. The Netherlands are searching European partner countries to fully operationalise the ship. Germany has already confirmed its participation and other European countries, including Belgium, also want to contribute to this maritime strategic enabler.

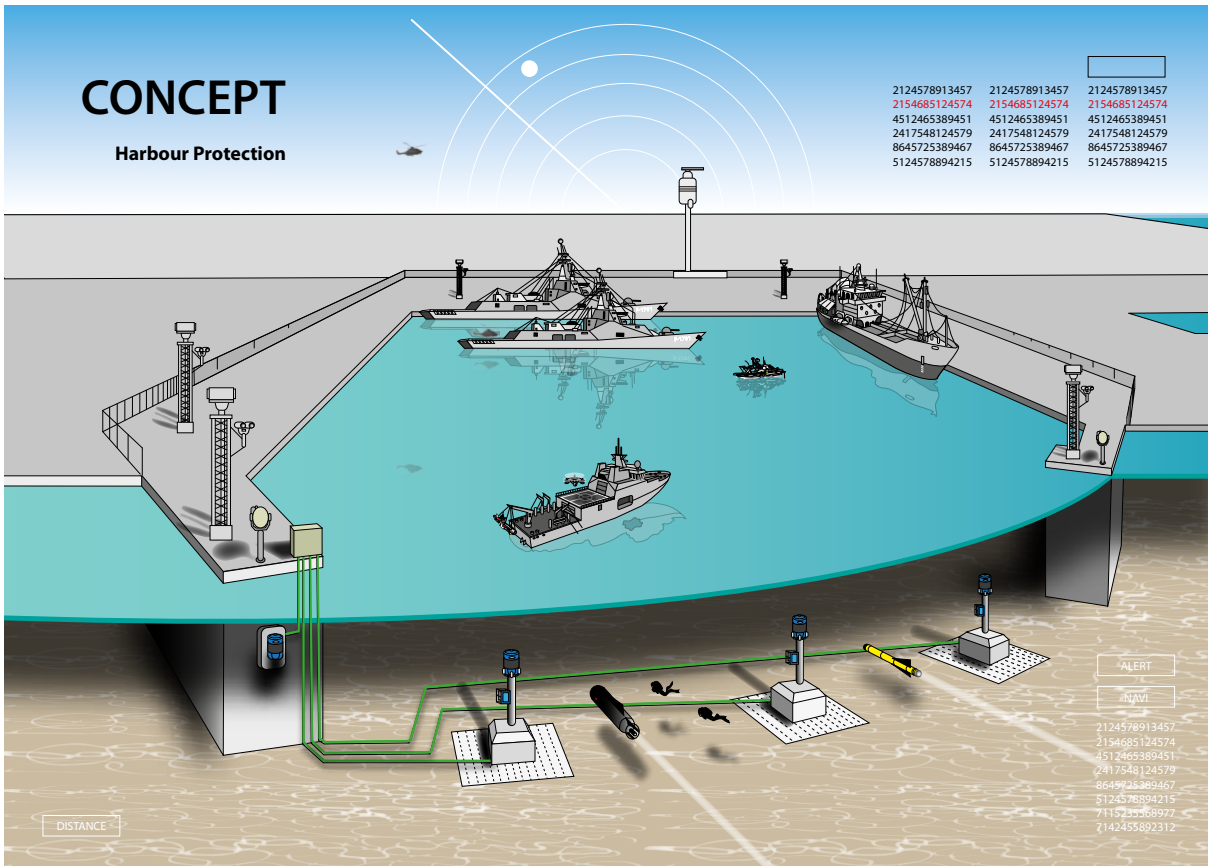
v. Harbour Protection

The harbour protection capability can protect vessels and critical port facilities. This capability includes an aquatic part to protect a port or vessels against a sea-based threat, with sensors (such as sonars), command and control systems, barriers and the personnel required to operate them. There is also a land-based part to protect a perimeter, composed of personnel and means, serving amongst others for the Force Protection, EOD/C-IED and engineering works.

Current and Future Content

NATO is asking our country (via the NATO Defence Planning) for specific expeditionary modules for harbour protection. These modules constitute one of the alliance's capability gaps. This shortfall is also identified within the EU.

This constitutes a new capability with respect to the aquatic part of the harbour protection capability. Defence will develop this aquatic part, in order to be able to deploy it on a permanent basis. The level of ambition does not include any land-based contribution. This contribution will preferably be made by an international partner, but our own troops could provide this harbour protection capability as well.



A concept representation of the different aquatic and land-based parts of a harbour protection capability.

Reinforcing the Support to Internal Security and Possible National Cooperation

This capability (assisted by modules coming from the joint motorised capability or the Ranger battalions) can also be deployed in support of internal security, for example in case of an increased terrorist threat against our ports.

e. Command and Operational Support of the Capabilities

The next chapter contains additional clarifications on the sharp reduction of FTE in some of the structures mentioned below. In this section we already want to underline the importance of these structures for the command and operational support of the capabilities of our Defence. The indicated sizing of these structures is necessary in order to ensure the operational readiness of our Defence. Many of these supporting structures also play a direct role in providing deployable capability.

Content and Personnel

Capability	Content	Personnel after reform	Personnel planned in September 2015 (personnel on 1 January 2016)	Delta in comparison with the personnel planned in 2015
Command and control	Defence staff (including components' staffs)	2,545	3,708 (3,471)	-31%
Competence Development (2,698 FTE in total after reform)	General basic and continuing education for officers, non-commissioned officers (NCOs) and volunteers	1,295	2,118 (1,983)	-39%
	Competence Centre Intelligence and Security	43	26 (30)	+65%
	Competence Centre Land	484	645 (623)	-25%
	Competence Centre SOF (Benelux parachuting school (190 FTE), commando training centre (110 FTE) and a Competence Centre Special Forces (30 FTE))	330	462 (441)	-29%
	Competence Centre Air (including basic training of pilots and the Belgian-French pilot training)	271	438 (398)	-38%
Medical support	Competence Centre Navy	179	255 (248)	-30%
	Competence Centre Medical	96	87 (77)	+10%
	Operational support as well as operational preparation	1,607	1,669 (1,381)	-4%
	Material Resources branch (specialised logistic and technical support)	1,250	2,965 (2,833)	-58%
	Management of sourced camps	60	(579 (569) part of the units)	-90%
	Meteorological Wing	63	147 (136)	-57%
	Flight safety	25	28 (24)	-11%
	Air Traffic Control Centre (ATCC) and Control and Reporting Centre (CRC) (air traffic control)	237	587 (252)	-60%
	Participation in international organisations (posts within components)	370	471 (427)	-21%
	Support Navy (logistics, maintenance, port services)	387	615 (474)	-37%
Multiservice Kennel Unit	80	(258, part of the units and CC Air)	-69%	

	Province commands	60	152 (151)	-61%
	Defence Laboratories	60	59 (60)	+2%
	Sports Centre Duisburg	0	22 (25)	-100%
	Bands	100	208 (197)	-52%
International posts, defence attachés, MOD, RHID (420 FTE in total after reform)	International posts (posts outside of components)	280	330 (309)	-15%
	Defence attachés and military advisers (and auxiliary staff)	50	68 (50)	-26%
	Policy unit of the Minister of Defence and Administrative and Technical Secretariat (ATS)	60	71 (76)	-15%
	Royal Higher Institute for Defence (RHID)	30	30 (28)	0%
TOTAL		9,962	15,161 (13,694)	-34%
TOTAL Defence (excluding military intelligence service and students)		23,442	31,552 (27,579)	-26%
Students		1,150	1,504	-24%

Investments Contents

Investment projects and envisaged timing	
Investments in major equipment 2016-2030 (million € 2015)	Additional capability support programmes
292.84	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ support equipment for the A400M: 4.7 million euros (2019) ■ equipment for airstrips: 12.3 million euros (2021-2023) ■ protected trucks (light and heavy) for the whole of Defence: 31.77 million euros (2021-2026) ■ trailers general Land: 10.55 million euros (2025-2027) ■ tractors trucks Air/Medical: 2.18 million euros (2026-2028) ■ command and liaison vehicle (replacement JMW(tynx)) for Air/Medical: 16.24 million euros (2021-2025) ■ ITTVs Medical: 4.8 million euros (2019-2021) ■ standard weapons, individual night sight and thermal observation for the whole of Defence: 11.14 million euros (2022-2028) ■ combat vests (BEST) for the whole of Defence: 28.06 million euros (2017-2022) ■ medical equipment (Role 2): 10 million euros (2021) ■ command and control Air (incl. radios, navigation and radar systems): 68.4 million euros (2017-2018 and 2020-2029) ■ tugboats in support of the Navy in the port of Zeebrugge: 12 million euros (2026-2027) ■ replacement Astra 8-ton trucks: 6.61 million euros (2028-2030) ■ light version common international motorised platform Medical: 64.99 million euros (2025-2030) ■ fork lifts: 9.1 million euros (2020-2021 and 2026)

I. Defence Staff

The Defence staff steers Defence's capabilities and processes. It encompasses the staff structures from the Chief of Defence level down to and including the components' staff level and their direct support.



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Different parts of the Defence staff are directly involved with the operational deployment. For example, the operations centre of Evere ensures the command and the coordination of the support of our operationally deployed troops.

Greater focus on the staff structures directly connected to the operational deployment should result in flattening the structure. The new Defence staff will make up about 10% of the personnel of the future Defence (2,545 FTE), which is a reduction of 30% compared to the 3,700 positions planned today. The scale of this reduction is even more radical when one takes into account that the Defence capability portfolio will be expanded. The extent to which the FTE of the Defence staff can be reduced is in fact limited, and depends in the

“ The new Defence staff will make up about 10% of the personnel of the future Defence (2,545 FTE), which is a reduction of 30% compared to the 3,700 positions planned today. ”

first place on the number of capabilities a Defence has and only in the second place on the respective size of these capabilities.

The structure of the new Defence staff is one of the implementation projects of the strategic vision.

Although the positions in the Defence staff are not operational deployable positions, Defence staff personnel can be sent to foreign operations as reinforcement, often in international command structures.

II. Competence Development

As indicated in the next chapter, Defence is strongly committed to making its competence development more efficient. The number of FTE in the competence centres providing specialised professional training strongly decrease, as well as those in the general education institutions responsible for the education of staff personnel and the general military education of our officers, NCOs, and volunteers. In total 2,698 FTE will still be employed in education (and training) within Defence. Besides, part of the posts in international organisations (both inside and outside of the components) is also connected



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The education and training of the technical experts of the Air Component. Considering its specific equipment, Defence will continue to ensure specialised courses in the future as well.

to this aspect of support. The amount of resources for competence management is linked to the multitude of professions within Defence and the necessity to provide servicemen with a specifically military basic training, and a constant maintenance and improvement afterwards.

In 2030 the personnel of the general training institutions for officers, NCOs, and volunteers will represent about half of the FTEs in the field of competence development. These personnel are in charge of the education of the students of Defence, and support the functioning of the general education institutions (administration, running of Territorial Support Service, sports).

The academic staff of the education centre for staff personnel (the modernised Royal Military Academy) also carries out scientific research for Defence in collaboration with the specific research staff of this centre. Together with the Defence laboratories (see below) the scientific research within this education centre constitutes the main capability for scientific research within Defence, and is thus an important part of Defence's R&T policy (see chapter 6).

Furthermore, about 1,150 FTE of students are planned in the general training institutions in 2030⁹⁶. This does not include Defence personnel attending additional education in the organisation within the framework of social promotion (see chapter 7) and continuing education.

Specialised military training is to a growing extent provided within international forms of cooperation. This can be organised on the basis of binational agreements such as the common pilot training with France for combat aircraft, transport aircraft and helicopters, and the binational navy schools and parachuting training with the Netherlands. Moreover, international training within a NATO framework, the NATO Centres of Excellence, has grown in importance. Defence contributes to these centres with instructors and through the NATO Naval Mine Warfare Centre of Excellence which has its seat in our country.

A significant part of the personnel employed within competence development also contributes directly to operations. For instance, the competence centre for airborne operations (the Benelux parachuting school) provides specialised personnel and resources for operational parachuting of personnel and equipment of the Special Operations Forces capability. This competence centre has a platoon of Pathfinders for the reconnaissance

⁹⁶ These 1,150 FTE are based on the education and training concepts mentioned below (see chapter 6). As for the academic education of officers the number of 1,150 FTE takes into account an annual recruitment of 120 students with an expected attrition of 50% at the end of the education. This results in a total of 380 FTE of students. In addition to these students every year about 20 officers start an education at other academic institutions (industrial engineer and medicine). Taking into account the duration of the education and a lower attrition a FTE of 75 students is planned. Officers recruited on the basis of a master's or bachelor's degree in order to meet certain specific recruitment needs of Defence receive an education and training of only one year. After attrition a FTE of 85 students is taken into account, resulting in a total of 540 students for the officers. As for NCOs an annual recruitment of 600 students is taken into account. An average training of 1 year for non-technicians and 2 years for technicians and an average attrition of 32% results in a FTE of 410 students. The model used also allows for an annual recruitment of 1,250 volunteers. Their training lasts 10 weeks, i.e. 5 sessions each year with on average 250 students. Taking into account an attrition of 20% the number is estimated at an average of 200 FTE.

of landing zones for airdrops, a platoon of Dispatchers who are in charge of parachuting personnel, and an air supply platoon in charge of parachuting and transport by helicopter of equipment. The commando training centre provides experts in rock climbing to reinforce units. The instructors of the various competence centres can and are employed in operations centres during international operational deployment. All competence centres can also provide training capability for operations abroad.

III. Medical Support

Medical support is an essential form of combat service support that needs to be adjusted to the level of ambition of the various capability dimensions. It is organised in accordance with the planned operational deployment for the three core tasks. However, proper coordination with national (medical) security actors and national health services has to be pursued permanently in order to optimise the supporting role of the military

“Medical support is an essential form of combat service support that needs to be adjusted to the level of ambition of the various capability dimensions. It is organised in accordance with the planned operational deployment for the three core tasks.”

medical elements within internal security and to guarantee maximum access to national operational preparation (training) possibilities for operational deployment.

In general, today the military medical capability (with a little over 1,800 FTE⁹⁷) represents only a small proportion of Defence as a whole. With 5.4%⁹⁸ this capability is relatively smaller than the ones in our neighbouring countries⁹⁹. The proposed evolution to 1,755 FTE for the overall medical capability in this strategic vision corresponds to a percentage of 7% for a Defence of 25,000 FTE, which is comparable to

the current situation in the Netherlands. This FTE number will be explained in detail below, in accordance with the three big pillars in which the military medical capability is organised: an operational pillar, operational preparation and support. In addition to the personnel of the operational pillar, a part of the personnel for operational preparation and support can also be deployed in operations. In the table “command and operational support” the 52 FTE of the medical capability that are part of the Defence staff as well as the 96 FTE manning the Competence Centre Medical are included in the total numbers of the Defence staff and as a part of competence development respectively. The remaining FTE of the medical capability are those included in “medical support” (1,607 FTE) in the table.

⁹⁷ Including the medical part of the Defence staff (66 FTE planned) and the Medical Competence Centre (87 FTE).

⁹⁸ 1,822 FTE according to the table of organisation of a Defence of 34,000 FTE.

⁹⁹ Germany: 9.7%; the Netherlands: 7%; France: 5.9%, and the United Kingdom: 5.6%.

The operational Pillar

The operational pillar consists of all medical capabilities that contribute directly to the operational deployment of the capabilities of the four dimensions. They are organised in accordance with the NATO provisions on this matter that are intended to allow for treating casualties as soon and as continuously as possible depending on the severity of their injuries. Recent NATO operations have made the timings in NATO's medical doctrine stricter and thus emphasised the importance of a rapid operational medical capability. As a result, forward¹⁰⁰ and tactical¹⁰¹ air assets for medical transport (helicopters and STOL aircraft) are gaining importance in this doctrine but they represent a capability gap at the European level. The military medical capability is in general not sufficiently available within NATO and the EU. Besides maintaining sufficient medical capability to be able to provide autonomous national medical support to our troops it is important that our Defence can

“The military medical capability is in general not sufficiently available within NATO and the EU.”

quantitatively contribute sufficient medical capability to the capability objectives of NATO and of the EU within the framework of multilateral burden sharing. Therefore, the level of our medical capability needs to be in accordance with Defence's general level of ambition for the four capability dimensions.

In the continuous healthcare chain, the

military medical capability does not provide the lowest level of medical care itself. But it is responsible for the training and operational preparation of each individual serviceman and for those who receive additional medical training outside of the medical capability. Every serviceman should at least be able to carry out basic medical procedures in order to save lives and avoid irreparable damage before more specialised medical support can take over. In NATO terminology, the non-specialised basic level of medical care is called Role 0.

The basic level of the specialised medical capability (thus within the operational pillar of our medical support) are the Role 1¹⁰² medical facilities that stabilise casualties in operations so that they can be evacuated. The Role 1 elements also provide medical treatment in a compound during operations, comparable to the care provided by a general practitioner and a nurse (primary healthcare). The Role 1 facilities are very close to the expeditionary capabilities and should be regarded as an essential combat service support element which should be integrated as much as possible into the combined arms operational preparation and training. Therefore, Role 1 medical facilities and deployable operational units should as much as possible be set up at the same place. Operational preparation and support of these Role 1 medical facilities shall continue to be run centrally, for maximum efficiency.

¹⁰⁰ Forward air assets carry out the transport of casualties between the site where the injuries were sustained and a Role 1 medical facility.

¹⁰¹ Tactical air assets carry out the transport of casualties between different medical facilities in the theatre of operations.

¹⁰² A "Role 1" medical treatment facility is defined by NATO as a medical response capability which is a national responsibility and which provides primary health care, specialised first aid, triage, resuscitation and stabilisation (NATO Standard AJP-4.10 Allied Joint Doctrine for Medical Support, NATO, May 2015).

According to the current NATO doctrine, life-saving surgical procedures are only performed at a higher level of medical operational support, i.e. the Role 2 medical capability. However, in recent years operational deployment has shown that a limited surgical capability in the first line of the specialised medical support is necessary to increase the possibilities of saving lives and avoiding permanent injuries. Our Defence wants to play a pioneering role in integrating this capability into the military medical doctrine. Therefore, Forward Surgical Teams (FST) are to be included in the Role 1 of our military medical capability. In general, a specific trauma-related surgical capability constitutes a capability gap in the medical capability of most European NATO countries. The investments planned in medical vehicles of the same type as those of the land forces (a light version of the common international motorised platform and LTTV) are connected with this basic level of operational medical support. These vehicles are deployed as ground evacuation assets. Forward and tactical air assets (helicopters and STOL aircraft) can also be deployed at this level or to provide the link to a higher level of operational medical support. At the moment, Belgian Defence does not have a sufficient capability in forward and tactical medical air evacuation (with helicopters or specialised tactical aircraft). The budget for SOF Aviation will be reviewed for the possibility to also acquire medical kits for STOL aircraft and/or NH90 helicopters, in order to offer a solution for this national capability gap. A Belgian contribution to this specific medical evacuation capability is also important since this is a European capability gap and it enhances Defence's possibilities to support internal security. However, the primary mission of these helicopters and



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During operation ATALANTA (2012-13) a serviceman with a gunshot wound is undergoing surgery on board a Belgian frigate. During counter-piracy operations, the torpedo storage room of our frigates is arranged as a surgery facility for a Forward Surgical Team to be able to quickly administer the appropriate medical care.

STOL aircraft will still be the direct support of the combined arms motorised and Special Operations Forces capabilities.

In addition to Role 1, a national Role 2¹⁰³ capability is indispensable to provide sufficient autonomous operational support and make a sufficient contribution to the multilateral capability burden sharing regarding NATO and EU medical capabilities. Role 2 medical elements are field hospitals where casualties can receive more specialised care including a full surgical capability with support and follow-up services. A Role 2 element has a basic structure (Role 2 basic) which, depending on the length and/or nature of an operation, can be expanded with more specialised modules (Role 2 Enhanced), such as a more extensive surgical capability, an intensive care module or a ward.



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The Belgian field hospital (Role 2) in Lebanon that provided medical support to the Belgian and UN troops from 2006 until 2009 at the beginning of the strengthened UN mission UNIFIL.

¹⁰³ A “Role 2” medical treatment facility is defined by NATO as an “initial surgical response capability” characterised by its ability to perform surgical interventions in addition to performing reception and triage of casualties, resuscitation and treatment of a shock. This treatment facility follows the Role 1 capability in which casualties are treated in first instance by a specialised emergency medicine team. A Role 2 facility ensures in its basic constellation (Role 2 Basic) the surgical capacity, including damage control surgery and surgical procedures for war traumas, to perform life and limb saving medical treatments. This way the patient can be transported within the specified time limit to the next hospital formation that has more extensive means. This Role 2 facility can be expanded by additional specialised medical modules to a Role 2 Enhanced which has all medical-technical modules to perform damage control surgery and damage control resuscitation making it possible to stabilise and prepare casualties for strategic (air) evacuation (NATO Standard AJP-4.10 Allied Joint Doctrine for Medical Support, NATO, May 2015).

The RDOIT (Rapid Deployment Outbreak Investigation Team) of the CBRN capability will be able to support the Role 2 in order to reinforce the medical CBRN capability which is also a capability gap in the European NATO countries.

The medical equipment and specialised medical-technical personnel of a Role 2 are employed in the centralised operational preparation structure of the medical capability (see below) when they are not deployed.

The current Belgian medical facilities of Role 1 and 2 levels will soon reach the end of their lifespan and need to be replaced as soon as the budget allows. To this end, an investment budget of 10 million euros will be provided in 2021 (in the budgetary line for investments in major equipment).

Our Defence will also continue to contribute to strategic medical evacuation (with air assets) which in the process of medical support usually follows a treatment in a Role 2 or Role 3 facility. Strategic medical evacuation can be provided using existing patient transport systems that can be installed in the current C-130 transport aircraft and in the future A400M transport aircraft and potentially through an international cooperation programme for a strategic medical evacuation kit for the MRTT pool.



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During the presence of the Belgian F-16s in Kandahar from 2008 until 2014, Defence also contributed with medical personnel to the international Role 3 field hospital that was located at the same compound.

Only on an ad hoc basis will Belgian Defence be able to contribute to an international Role 3¹⁰⁴ capability with specialised medical personnel (such as in Afghanistan in the

¹⁰⁴ A "Role 3" medical treatment facility is defined by NATO as a hospital response capability providing secondary health care at theatre level. A Role 3 must provide all the capabilities of the Role 2 Enhanced and be able to conduct specialised surgery, care and additional services as dictated by mission and theatre requirements. Thus, it is a military hospital responsible for an entire theatre of operations, such as a country or a large region (NATO Standard AJP-4.10 Allied Joint Doctrine for Medical Support, NATO, May 2015).



This Role 2 requires medical-technical personnel capable of treating complex injuries while working as a team in a less specialised and less comfortable environment than civilian hospitals, using specific medical equipment and applying specific procedures.

past years) and modules of the Role 2 capability. No specific investments are planned for a Belgian Role 3 capability. Only the big European Defences (Germany, France, and the United Kingdom) have a national Role 3 capability.

The current Belgian military hospital has evolved from a real Role 4¹⁰⁵ medical facility of the Cold War era (a hospital comparable to a general hospital, but for the military) to an institution focussing on the operational preparation of and the provision of services to operationally deployable military medical capabilities (see below). Among the European NATO countries only France and Germany still have real military hospitals (Role 4 medical capability) but they are also moving towards a specialisation of their hospital capability to military specialised areas and as an operational preparation and support capability for their other expeditionary deployable medical elements (Role 1/2/3). Today our military hospital only performs a limited range of military specialised curative care¹⁰⁶, and its services (mobile emergency units, ambulance, burns centre, orthopaedic surgery) ensure the specifically military operational preparation and training for a Role 2. This Role 2 requires medical-technical personnel capable of treating complex injuries while working as a team in a less specialised and less comfortable environment than civilian hospitals, using specific medical equipment and applying specific procedures. The curative care given by the Military Hospital also allows taking care of patients with specific military injuries before their treatment is continued in a civilian hospital. Specific military mental health care is also necessary to lend proper support to the operational deployment, and will continue to be provided. The curative care given by the Military Hospital also allows taking care of patients with specific military injuries before their treatment is continued in a civilian hospital. Specific military mental health care is also necessary to lend proper support to the operational deployment, and will continue to be provided.

¹⁰⁵ A "Role 4" medical treatment facility is defined by NATO as a definitive hospital response capability offering the full spectrum of definitive medical care that cannot be deployed to theatre or is too time consuming to be conducted in theatre (NATO Standard AJP-4.10 Allied Joint Doctrine for Medical Support, NATO, May 2015).

¹⁰⁶ Primary curative care (short treatment time, usually within one discipline) includes: emergency medicine, locomotive and sports medicine, Medicine-Nutrition-Fitness, immunology, mental health care, tropical and travel medicine, infectious diseases, sexually transmitted diseases, traumas resulting from pressure changes (hyperbaric medicine, e.g. in case of diving accidents), aviation medicine, and burns; secondary curative care (longer treatment time, mostly interdisciplinary) includes: traumatology (injuries caused by accidents or violence), urgent intervention, and locomotive disorders (incl. sports medicine).

The total number of FTE for the operational pillar¹⁰⁷ will evolve to 1,094 FTE¹⁰⁸ or 62% of the total medical capability. This number takes into account the level of ambition of the different capabilities in the four operational dimensions mentioned above. 1, 2 or 3 sets of personnel and means are provided depending on capability and level of ambition. Five sets are even planned for the strategic air evacuation.

The Operational Preparation Pillar

This pillar takes care of the operational preparation of the medical capabilities as well as the support to the operational preparation of the other components. It is calculated at 569 FTE (including the 96 FTE of the Medical Competence Centre) in the future.

The operational preparation pillar is responsible for verifying whether new recruits have an appropriate medical profile to work for Defence (selection) and for making sure that servicemen are medically fit to be deployed (evaluation and expertise).

Furthermore, this pillar provides the curative care within Defence as described above. The primary curative military care has already been outsourced to a large extent through the system of certified medical practitioners (civilian general practitioners, dentists, physiotherapists, ...). The operational preparation pillar of the medical support also includes medical-technical support such as radiology and laboratory analyses.

The Competence Centre Medical provides the military specific training to the personnel of the medical capability and support to medical training of the other capability dimensions (Role 0). Medical-technical education (for among others doctors, nurses, psychologists), both academic and continuing education, is provided in civilian institutes or interdepartmentally¹⁰⁹.

A last element of the medical operational preparation pillar is responsible for the training of medical elements, within the medical capability itself as well as for the combined operational preparation with the capabilities of the other dimensions. The medical training capability consists of the ambulance services, mobile emergency units (including the CBRN capability), the burns centre (including outpatient clinic), the operating wing and the hospital capability for orthopaedic surgery of the Military Hospital. The disciplines of the medical training capability are in accordance with the military specific operational preparation for the Role 2. Medical-technical personnel of the Role 2 capability who are not deployed participate in carrying out the services provided by the training capability. Today the different elements of the medical operational preparation pillar are centralised in the Military Hospital (with some decentralisation for curative care in the large quarters). The necessity to maintain a centralised military operational preparation structure in the future has been examined. Considering the fact that the military medical capability is

¹⁰⁷ As indicated above, the curative care provided in the military hospital and included in the operational preparation pillar also plays a role in the operational pillar. However, the total of 1,094 FTE does not include any FTE of the military hospital.

¹⁰⁸ 233 FTE for the Role 1 elements of the combined arms motorised capability, 64 FTE for the means of evacuation for the benefit of the combined arms motorised capability, 92 FTE for Role 1, FST and the means of evacuation of the SOF capability, 100 FTE for the air assets (including 9 FTE for tactical air evacuation and 25 FTE for strategic air evacuation, the rest belongs to Role 1), 42 FTE for Role 1 and FST of the Navy, 443 FTE for the Role 2 elements, and 120 FTE for the command and control structures of Role 1 and Role 2.

¹⁰⁹ For instance through the provincial schools for ambulance attendants and fire-fighting services.



First-aid training during the military initiation phase of the students of the Royal Military Academy. Instructors of the Medical Component support the medical education and training for the whole of Defence.

“ The medical training capability consists of the ambulance services, mobile emergency units (including the CBRN capability), the burns centre (including outpatient clinic), the operating wing and the hospital capability for orthopaedic surgery of the Military Hospital.

focussed on operational deployment, it is advisable to maintain a largely centralised and mainly military operational preparation structure.

A centralised and military operational preparation structure ensures a rapid availability of the military medical personnel working there and being operationally prepared within it. It also ensures that these personnel are sufficiently trained in the use of the equipment that will be used in operations and in accordance with the military medical procedures. Both the equipment and the procedures differ from those used in civilian health services. At the same time however, a close link should always remain between the medical central operational preparation capability and the national health services in order for our military medical-technical specialists to receive sufficient training and education for their operational deployment.

“ A centralised and military operational preparation structure ensures a rapid availability of the military medical personnel working there and being operationally prepared within it. It also ensures that these personnel are sufficiently trained in the use of the equipment that will be used in operations and in accordance with the military medical procedures.

A thorough evaluation has shown that a new vision on the activities within the Military Hospital through rationalisation and more interdepartmental and civil-military cooperation is to be preferred, in order to maintain an operational preparation structure for the military medical support. Besides rationalisation this new and more efficient role should also reinforce the specifically military character of the military hospital. This will be further discussed in chapter 6.



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An exercise of the medical CBRN capability. This capability is part of the mobile emergency units of the Military Hospital. The medical CBRN capability can be deployed in operations together with the CBRN capability and can offer specialised support within the framework of internal security.

Support Pillar

The support pillar consists of the medical support that is part of the Defence Staff (52 FTE) and the medical logistics (40 FTE). The medical logistics are in charge of the acquisition,

storage and distribution of medical equipment for operations and operational preparation. As is the case for the rationalisation of storage and distribution in the Material Resources branch described below, the logistic support of the medical support will be outsourced as much as possible.

An Integrated Health and Well-being Policy

An adequate health and well-being policy consisting of prevention, evaluation of the specific medical-military fitness, evaluation of work- and environment-related health effects, specific care and expertise is necessary to safeguard the potential of the Defence personnel and to optimise efficiency. To address these needs Defence develops an integrated health and well-being model through a systematic and methodical approach. This model guarantees the cohesion of all efforts designed to directly or indirectly improve, preserve or restore the physical and mental health of its personnel. This model will be realised by providing prevention, occupational medicine, psychosocial support and specific primary and secondary care in an integrated way. The future of this policy will be part of the analysis regarding a further improvement of efficiency of the military medical support (see chapter 6).

**“Defence will continue to adapt its medical-military legislation in order to respect well-being at work, and it will continue the integrated health and well-being model, taking into account all risks already experienced and all their consequences for the health of personnel, during and after their career.”
(Government agreement of 9 October 2014)**

Personnel Issues

Today the main issue for the medical operational support is finding sufficient medical-technical personnel to man the medical capabilities. This will continue to be a challenge. This is the case for all medical-technical personnel, such as nurses and doctors¹¹⁰. In the last few years significant efforts have been made in order to improve this situation. At this moment for instance, about 70 medical-technical officers are in training. Adapted regulations will contribute to the job satisfaction of these servicemen, while Defence can count on a higher availability and the development and maintenance of important know-how for the armed forces.

Another way to solve this issue would be strengthening the efforts to attract more doctors and nurses from civilian hospitals to the specialised reserve. In order to achieve this, additional initiatives will need to be taken in order to reinforce the link between Defence and employers (see also chapter 7) and to provide adequate military medical training to

¹¹⁰ For instance, in 2015 Defence had 83 military doctors whereas it needs 230, which is an occupation rate of 36%.

these reservists. The personnel regulations of the medical reserve need to allow them to be deployed in all operational circumstances.

Furthermore, a partner hospital system will be examined in order to gain better access to medical reservists (doctors and nurses). This system could be linked to services performed by military personnel in civilian hospitals, within the framework of their operational preparation for deployments, within a new regulatory framework for medical-technical personnel.

Reinforcement of the Support to Internal Security and Possible Cooperation at National Level

In general the military medical capability can make a valuable contribution to the support of internal security with those capabilities that are not deployed in operation. Because of Defence's level of ambition, relying on permanent deployment of certain elements, medical elements able to be deployed permanently should also be available. This means that medical elements will always be present in Belgium that are either preparing for operational deployment or reconditioning after deployment.

Furthermore, as indicated above, the operational preparation pillar of the medical capability needs to be involved with the national health services. Defence wants to specialise further in areas that are closely connected to the operational



Defence wants to specialise further in areas that are closely connected to the operational deployment.

deployment. This is part of the reinforcement of the efficiency of the military medical support discussed in chapter 6, and at the same time it can contribute to internal

security. Terrorist attacks or big disasters cause injuries that are comparable to military injuries in operations.

Both at the federal and the regional level the military medical emergency modules (ambulance and mobile emergency units) are already participating in the execution of emergency plans at the national airport and some SEVESO establishments. They also play a role in the position of "medical director" for the Brussels Capital Region and the province of Flemish Brabant.

Within the context of internal security and national health care, the existing interdepartmental cooperation partnerships with the Ministry of Public Health and that of the Interior will be formalised further, in particular in the field of CBRN, capacity for reception of victims in case of disasters, the emergency mortuary, and care of patients suffering from highly infectious diseases. As indicated in chapter 6, this should result in further rationalisation of the military medical support and particularly of the Military Hospital, which is also a reinforcement of internal security.



The Military Hospital ensured the role of hospital for disaster relief after the terrorist attacks of 22 March 2016. After stabilisation in the Military Hospital, the injured could be transferred to civilian hospitals all over the country. Casualties were laid out in the emergency mortuary for further identification.

Possibilities of a European Capability Anchoring

Today our troops in operations already use the medical structures of other NATO and EU countries and our medical capability contributes to UN, EU, and NATO operations. Just as for other capabilities, Belgian Defence wants to promote more defence cooperation in the medical field as well. At Benelux level a separate steering group on medical cooperation has been set up, and steps have been taken toward the common organisation of education and training, and the common development of doctrines. As far as capabilities are concerned, initiatives do exist (e.g. the creation of common Benelux capability within the framework of air evacuation¹¹¹ and an initiative for cooperation on blood banks) but the replacement of equipment of the medical elements creates opportunities for greater convergence of capabilities with our strategic partner countries. As already indicated above, this provides a basis for more operational cooperation, but also cooperation in the field of education, training, doctrine, logistic support...

¹¹¹ This specifically concerns a Casualty Staging Unit preparing patients for air evacuation.



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A Patient Transport Unit for intensive care can be easily set up in a Belgian C-130. Our Defence develops the capabilities for aeromedical evacuations together with the other Benelux countries.

The medical cluster of the Framework Nations Concept (FNC) is also very active in determining common procedures for operational medical support and the acquisition of medical equipment.

iv. Material Resources Branch

The budgetary means for investments in major equipment will allow the renewal of capabilities that remain relevant. In addition, new capabilities will also be developed. These investments will thus generate an additional need for specialised logistic and technical support.

Within the composition of the defence budget towards 2030, important new investments in infrastructure are also planned that will need to be guided as well. However, the goal is to strongly reduce the Material Resources branch that has been in charge of this mission within Defence until now (albeit with significant support from the civilian industrial world for the maintenance of weapon systems), by using additional outsourcing. As such, it will be a major challenge for Defence to reduce its own capability within the Material Resources branch while meeting the growing need for this kind of support through outsourcing.



The Competence Centre for Flying Equipment & Communication and Information Systems ensures, among other things, the maintenance and the support of specific information systems of Defence.

By 2030 this branch will include several fields.

Just as today, in order for Defence to be able to carry out its missions properly, it is essential that it is capable of carrying out the specialised maintenance of its avionics (flying equipment) and electronic systems, the maintenance of its territorial communications network and its operational Command, Control & Communication (C3) systems itself. Today this is done in the Competence Centre for Flying Equipment & Communication and Information Systems and by 2030 506 FTE will be provided for these tasks within the “Material Resources branch”.

This branch also encompasses: the Competence Centre Infrastructure (138 FTE planned by 2030) which manages the Defence infrastructure and properties, the Equipment Identification Centre (60 FTE) and the Defence Staff Headquarters Battalion (101 FTE).

The other current structures of this department (the Competence Centre “Supporting Equipment and Products” (Ypres), the Distribution Centre “Spare Parts” (Berlaar) and the Competence Centre “Mobile Equipment & Armament” (Rocourt, Zutendaal)) will be outsourced to a large extent. In total 445 FTE remain planned for this by 2030. Their current tasks will be carried out together with civilian partners. These involve:

- provision of specific clothing and equipment;
- acquisition, acceptance, storage, and distribution of equipment for the benefit of all Defence units, both at home and in operation;
- (partial) industrial maintenance of mobile equipment¹¹², armament, optronics and ammunition of Defence;
- prototyping and production of small volumes;
- destruction of conventional ammunition;
- storage at the industrial level of land systems equipment.

v. Management of Outsourced Training Ranges

The next chapter states that the training ranges of Belgian Defence will in the future be managed through outsourcing. These ranges are an essential part of the national operational preparation structure. Today the ranges are run locally with Defence personnel, representing an equivalent of 579 decentralised FTE. In the future this will be carried out by a private partner, while keeping 60 decentralised FTE to manage the outsourcing (for instance planning and security responsibilities). Besides major rationalisation of personnel this should also seriously reduce the costs of Defence.

¹¹² Besides the logistic battalions that directly support the land forces through a single-level maintenance concept for operational vehicles.

vi. Support Air

Various structures support both the territorial and the expeditionary deployment of the Defence air assets.

The Meteorological Wing meets the needs of Defence with regard to meteorological information. It has an important territorial task for the benefit of the military air assets of Defence and those of our partner countries. The Meteorological Wing is also essential for the preparation of an operational deployment, as it provides information needed to take into consideration the climatic conditions in the engagement area during the planned engagement period. Meteorological Wing detachments can be sent in operation and in support of the operational centres. The Meteorological Wing also supports the national civilian meteorological capability.

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During operation Guardian Falcon in Afghanistan, the Meteo Wing was responsible for the support of the operational deployment of the F-16s by gathering meteorological data.

The military flight safety (Aviation Safety Directorate) mainly has a territorial task. It issues and checks the measures taken to prevent air accidents. In case of an aviation accident involving a Belgian military aircraft or – if requested – any aviation accident in our airspace, this directorate is in charge of the investigation and analysis with regard to flight safety.

The Air Traffic Control Centre (ATCC) ensures the military air traffic control and is essential for the proper coordination between military and civilian air traffic in our national airspace, which is one of the densest in the world. As indicated above, the Control and Reporting Centre (CRC) carries out the air combat control. The missions of the CRC consist in monitoring the national (and in the future Benelux) and international airspaces within the framework of the NATO collective defence. The CRC is thus part of a chain of other NATO CRCs under the supervision of a NATO command structure. The CRC guides the combat aircraft that carry out Quick Reaction Alert missions. At the same time, these aircraft and the CRC also support internal security.

In order to support the expeditionary operations of Belgian Defence's air assets an air controller of the ATCC is always included as a liaison officer in order to ensure the integration of our aircraft on the deployed base.

During operations the CRC air combat controllers can be integrated into an international command structure. They can also act as liaison officer in the national Red Card Holder Team that is deployed in the Air Operations Centre to make sure that the national interests and the imposed restrictions (caveats) are observed.

At the moment both the ATCC and the CRC are under review to determine how their duties can be carried out more efficiently through closer national and international cooperation.

As indicated above, the Air Information Hub (*Lucht Informatie Kruispunt* - LIInK) will be integrated into the CRC.

vii. Support Navy

In the capability dimension Intelligence-Cyber-Influence as well as in the Land and Air capability dimensions, an important part of the logistic support (including maintenance) and the CIS support is integrated within the capability itself. This is not the case for the vessels of the dimension Maritime mentioned above. Besides the logistic and CIS positions on board our vessels, positions on shore are also necessary to maintain our naval capabilities deployable and to support their operational deployment.

Within the framework of the Belgian-Dutch naval cooperation the support of both Navies is partly carried out by a division of tasks. The logistic support of both the Dutch and Belgian fleet of multipurpose frigates happens from the Netherlands, while our country is responsible for the logistic support (including maintenance) of the mine countermeasures vessels of both Navies. The Belgian service in charge of the maintenance (mostly of the mine countermeasures vessels) is NAVLOG which counts 334 FTE today, tending towards 240 FTE by 2030. NAVLOG has technicians who gained experience on board of our vessels. They can also repair vessels abroad in case of operational need. NAVLOG largely uses outsourcing for maintenance activities.

The "support Navy" also encompasses the NAVSUPPORT service that is in charge of operational support, maritime communications, and the running of the naval base



To the left, a Belgian mine hunter, and to the right a Dutch mine hunter of the same class. All mine hunters of Belgium and the Netherlands are maintained in Zeebrugge, while the M-frigates of both countries receive their maintenance in the Netherlands.

in Zeebrugge, all of which are essential elements for the operational preparation and operational deployment of our fleet. This service today has 281 FTE and will still have 147 FTE by 2030, including 5 FTE for maritime communications. NAVSUPPORT supports the vessels of the naval base of Zeebrugge, so that they can carry out their missions in the best possible circumstances. This involves several sections such as a central administration, berthing parties, fire-fighting teams, a communications centre, protection of the naval base, surveillance, and a maritime military information service. All support services are centralised for all vessels.

The servicemen employed in the “support Navy” can be embarked to relieve the personnel on board our vessels.

viii. Multiservice Kennel Unit (IKE)

Today Defence already has a central kennel which is integrated in the Air Competence Centre. In addition, guard dog handlers can be found across Defence's units, in which they are part of the guard system. The total number amounts to 258 FTE.

This number will be drastically reduced because Defence will organise the guard system of the barracks less autonomously. In 2030 a separate Multiservice Kennel Unit IKE (*Intermachten Kennel Eenheid*) is planned with 80 FTE. As such, the use of dogs remains important for Defence. It involves Explosive Detection dogs at EOD and engineering units, tracking dogs (patrol dogs qualified to be used for the surveillance of sensitive facilities and patrol missions) and combat dogs for the Special Forces Group. Besides their relevance for expeditionary operations, these dogs can also be deployed within the framework of internal security.

Synergies with other public services that also use dogs (Police, Customs, Civil Security), as well as with other partners, both national and international, will be pursued as much as possible in order to organise and support the national military kennel capability as rationally as possible.

ix. Provincial Commands

The structure of the provincial commands will be adapted but their role regarding internal security will be maintained through a centralised territorial command, integrated into the operational command structures. A military representative will be maintained as liaison officer between the provincial governor and Defence. This allows a strong rationalisation of the current planned 152 FTE to 60 FTE, and specific infrastructure where the current provincial commands are housed can be abandoned.

x. Defence Laboratories (DLD)

The Defence laboratories support the logistic chain of the various Defence capabilities, for example by checking the quality of fuel and testing textiles.

They also provide the necessary scientific and technical support to the CBRN capability since DLD is certified to analyse CBRN agents. This certification also allows the Defence laboratories to contribute to the international struggle against CBRN weapons of mass destruction and to be involved in the support of internal security.

The Defence laboratories also have an important role to play in the safe deployment of our troops in expeditionary operations by controlling soil samples of sites where detachments are supposed to be stationed.

XI. Sports Centre Duisburg

The sports centre at Duisburg (22 FTE currently planned) will not be run by Defence anymore. A PPP construction will be set up for this sports centre, and it is being studied how Defence could maintain access to these facilities without providing FTE or having fixed costs. The running of a sports centre is not a Defence mission.

XII. Defence Bands

The bands (208 FTE currently planned) will be halved to 100 musicians, and will be reassembled into one Defence band. This capability is important in order to carry on the tradition, but it also needs to be adapted to the reality of a Defence that focuses on operational deployment.

XIII. Participation in International Organisations

The international posts of Defence, both inside (370 FTE) and outside of the components (280 FTE), not only provide a national voice at the international level, but also contribute to an important extent to the control and support of the operational deployment. As indicated above, personnel contributions to these international organisations will be assessed continuously to determine their need for the command and support of Defence's operational deployment. If necessary, other priorities will be set. For the time being, the personnel contributions for 2030 are based on the current contributions.

The international posts that are part of the intervention force (the total of the components with the operationally deployable Defence capabilities) are discussed first below.

The Land Component (150 FTE) mainly contributes to the Eurocorps, the French Rapid Reaction Corps Headquarters in Lille and to various NATO headquarters both at home and abroad¹¹³. In the past, the multinational Eurocorps headquarters in Strasbourg has been in command of NATO operations several times, always involving a significant participation of Belgian servicemen. The Belgian servicemen employed in Lille and Brunssum also participate in foreign multinational operations from these headquarters. Furthermore, the Land Component also cooperates at the Benelux level in several areas (parachute training, engineering, EOD, CBRN, C-IED, indirect fire support, civil-military interaction, logistic support, ISTAR, land exercises and training, Special Forces) in which land forces personnel are working in the command and control structure of the Dutch armed forces, in addition to liaison positions.

Today the Air Component (83 FTE) is represented in various international staffs and organisations for the planning and execution of air operations as well as for the

¹¹³ NATO headquarters in Evere, NATO Joint Force Command in Brunssum, the strategic-level headquarters Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe (SHAPE) in Mons and NATO Allied Land Command Headquarters in Izmir.



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Military personnel of the Eurocorps staff reinforced the ISAF command in Afghanistan on several occasions. Belgian military personnel also took part in this.

operational preparation of our units. For NATO this involves the headquarters in Ramstein, the Combined Air Operations Centre (CAOC) in Eudem and the Joint Air Power Competence Centre (JAPCC) in Kalkar, all of them in Germany. In case of a NATO operation these persons can be deployed within the NATO structure. Our Air Component also has a bilateral cooperation with France which involves the participation of our Defence personnel in the command and control structure of the Joint Force Air Component in Lyon. It also contributes with personnel to the permanent staff of the European Air Group in High Wycombe in the United Kingdom, to the European Personnel Recovery Centre (EPRC) in Poggio, Italy, and to the European Air Transport Command (EATC) in Eindhoven (the Netherlands). The EATC provides active support to operations through the coordination of air transport for the logistic operational deployment and supply. For the commissioning and technical support of the Air Component's weapon systems Defence has integrated some subject matter experts in cooperation projects with other nations, such as the F-16 MNFP (Multinational Fighter Program), within OCCAR (Organisation Conjointe de Cooperation en matiere d'Armement – Organisation for Joint Armament Cooperation) for the acquisition and support of the A400Ms, and within NAHEMA (NATO Helicopter Management Agency) and BENESAM for the NH90 helicopters.

The international positions of the Navy (137 FTE) are mainly to be found in the Belgian-Dutch headquarters and schools. Belgian and Dutch servicemen are responsible for the

planning and supervision of the Belgian and Dutch maritime units within the Operations Directorate of the bi-national headquarters Admiral Benelux. The persons active within NLMARFOR (the Netherlands Maritime Force Staff) are deployed in the various operations led by this staff (e.g. ATALANTA). Bi-national structures also exist to evaluate the frigates and mine countermeasures vessels during their conversion into vessels that can be deployed in operations. The bi-national schools provide education and training in technical and operational fields to Belgian and Dutch servicemen. Moreover, some Belgian servicemen work in Den Helder within the framework of material support. The Naval Component is also present in Northwood, the maritime headquarters supporting the NATO operations, as well as in Toulon, with the HRF-M (High Readiness Forces-Maritime), the personnel of which can be deployed in French maritime task forces.

Besides the international positions within the Defence components our Defence also contributes personnel to the headquarters of international security organisations. The importance that both Defence and the Belgian authorities attach to our multilateral partnerships should always be reflected in our positions within these organisations. This is also part of a multilateral solidary burden and responsibility sharing. These positions are also of the utmost importance from an operational point of view since the operational deployment of our Defence usually takes place within the framework of these organisations. Control and influence over these operations and the policy of these



The new seat of the NATO headquarters in Brussels (Evere) under construction.

international organisations are not just exercised by diplomatic positions, but also by military positions at the military-strategic level.

Defence is represented in the following international NATO structures at the military-strategic level: International Staff (IS) in Brussels, Allied Command Operations (SHAPE) in Mons, Allied Command Transformation (ACT) in Norfolk, Joint Forces Command (JFC) in Brunssum, NATO Defense College (NDC) in Rome, NATO Communications and Information Agency (NCIA) (mainly in Mons and The Hague) and NATO Support and Procurement Agency (NSPA) (mainly in Kapellen in Luxembourg).

Furthermore, our country also participates in the EU headquarters in Brussels, and occupies international liaison positions at the military-strategic level in coalition planning and command structures and the equivalent structures at a national level of France and the United States.

xiv. Defence Attachés and Military Advisers

A defence attaché is a serviceman or -woman who represents the Minister of Defence and the Chief of Defence in the countries for which he or she is accredited. A defence attaché has responsibilities in diplomatic and military matters as well as in the field of intelligence.

The defence attaché is the Belgian military representative in the military diplomatic environment, and plays a central role in defence diplomacy. The defence attaché can assist diplomats in diplomatic negotiations or other matters with important military operational and military technical aspects by using the professional experience and knowledge gained during his or her military career.

The defence attaché also plays an important military operational role in ensuring the local procedures for the core task “protection of Belgian citizens all over the world”.

In order to fulfil his military mission the defence attaché needs to maintain all necessary contacts with the local (military) authorities and with the international (military) representation in order to obtain a correct and up-to-date strategic overview of the country and the (military) actors involved. The defence attaché actively keeps up with the (military) developments, the security risks, and the opportunities in his region, in particular within the framework of possible, current or planned bilateral and/or multilateral activities and operations.

The role of the defence attaché as an essential link in the intelligence apparatus of our country has already been mentioned above. Within the applicable legal framework he or she informs the Minister of Defence, the CHOD and the Defence Staff about the military and defence policy of the countries of accreditation and about their armed forces.

Today Defence has a global network of 19 defence attachés and 2 military advisers, as well as staff personnel (68 FTE in total). Defence attachés do not necessarily reside in the country for which they are accredited. Whether they reside in their country of accreditation or not does not have any influence on their role and missions. Many defence

attachés abroad have an accreditation for several countries in the same region, and the defence attachés for the European countries work from the Defence staff in Belgium. In total, the 19 defence attachés are currently accredited for about 76 countries.

The military advisers are members of the Belgian delegations at the United Nations in New York and at the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe in Vienna. Some defence attachés are also military advisers for regional organisations.

The geographic distribution and the accreditations are the result of a recurrent analysis at the Defence level that considers not only the geopolitical security environment but also our bilateral and/or multilateral relations. The geographic distribution is also coordinated with the departments of Foreign Affairs and Development Cooperation in order to reinforce a national comprehensive approach with regard to security policy.

By 2030 the number of FTE for defence attachés and military advisers (and their support personnel) will be reduced to 50 FTE. This reduction will primarily be achieved by a further rationalisation of accreditations of defence attachés and by a more common approach of the national military representation with strategic partner countries. Today an initiative has already been taken at the Benelux level to issue complementary accreditations to defence attachés who would then work for both Belgium and the Netherlands.

xv. Policy Unit Minister of Defence and Administrative and Technical Secretariat (ATS)

The policy unit of the Minister of Defence will in the future also be able to rely on the Administrative and Technical Secretariat in which military experts of the Defence staff provide expertise and facilitate contacts with the Defence staff. As is the case with the rest of Defence, by 2030 the number of FTE will be reduced (to 60 FTE).

xvi. Royal Higher Institute for Defence (RHID)

The Royal Higher Institute for Defence is a think tank in the military-strategic field that has its own researchers and organises conferences and civil-military training in the same field. This institute is currently also in charge of the coordination and control of the scientific research within Defence. The future of this institute will be determined taking into account the emphasis that will be placed on a stronger and more centralised defence policy regarding R&T with a view to reinforcing the partnership between Defence, industry and research institutes (see chapter 6).



An Efficient Defence

The recapitalisation of Defence described in chapter 4 does not affect the search for enhanced efficiency leading to an even better performance.

An important example of this is to be found in chapter 2 about the positioning of Defence in the security environment. While on the one hand, Defence needs to focus on its three core tasks, it is also committed to offering maximum support to other internal security actors according to the capabilities available.

Furthermore, chapter 4 shows the willingness to strive for a more efficient support of our national defence capabilities through capability anchoring with our strategic partner countries.

“Elaborate forms of cooperation with other national and international security partners in order to strengthen the national efficiency of Defence and in support of a more European defence policy will be strived for.”
(principle no. 6)

Chapter 5 makes it clear that the downsizing of FTE will be even more important in the essential command and operational support capabilities than in the capabilities of the Intelligence-Cyber-Influence dimension and the Land, Air and Maritime dimensions. This is perfectly in line with a Defence wishing to be lean & mean, focused on the military specificity and as such an efficient Defence.

This chapter sets out the guidelines for this efficient Defence with regard to structures, sourcing of non-military activities, medical support, competence development, infrastructure, the bonds with the industry and the research institutions, the institutions under the supervision of the Minister of Defence and sustainability.

a. Structures According to Processes

This strategic vision offers a new opportunity for optimising the existing structures of Defence with respect to both quantity and content. The general rule is that the structures are based on the processes as a matter of principle. The processes have to focus on the core tasks of Defence and hence on operational deployment.

This immediately leads us to consider that the tasks currently being carried out by Defence but for which a more efficient alternative exists on the civilian market (with the same output but at lower cost) or within the public service, should not be organised by Defence anymore,

or at least not autonomously. This aspect will be further examined in the following subchapter dedicated to sourcing.

Secondly, the processes and therefore also the structures of Defence have to proactively adapt to the capability changes provided for in this strategic vision.

Finally, the expected internationalisation of the organisation of capabilities will lead to an



The general rule is that the structures are based on the processes as a matter of principle. The processes have to focus on the core tasks of Defence and hence on operational deployment.

increase of a networked functioning of our defence structure with both European structures and structures of cooperation partners rather than to an exclusively national defence structure. In the long run, some of our staff and command structures will be integrated for the most part into an international network, with a special focus on our neighbours.

All current contributions of our Defence to multinational command structures will also be assessed based on their future necessity. Those which offer no added value within the policy framework specified in this strategic vision will be re-examined. Special emphasis will be put on the integration of our structures into those of our closest partner countries based on our cooperation for the common operational preparation of our capabilities.

In chapter 5 the operational character of the capabilities in the field of command and operational support is indicated as well as the way some of them will be rationalised in the future while maintaining their functionality. Some structures which do not easily fit in with the processes relating to the core tasks, including the Sports Centre of Duisburg and the Defence bands, are being (partly) questioned. Other supporting structures which are not essential to the core tasks of Defence will also be rationalised. As the services provided by the Prince Albert Club and the Louise Residence could also be provided by both the existing catering facilities (including lodging) and services inside the quarters, and the existing catering on the market, these will not be run nor financed by Defence anymore.

b. Sourcing of Activities Without Military Specificity

As mentioned above, a Defence focused on operational deployment will have to be assisted as much as possible by civilian service providers with respect to supporting tasks and services. Tasks currently being carried out by Defence, but for which a more efficient alternative is available through civilian service providers or public partners, i.e. with the same output (both quantitative and qualitative) but at lower cost (taking into account a Life Cycle Cost approach), will not be carried out internally anymore, or at least not autonomously. Defence will achieve this by pursuing a sourcing policy applying to both the provision of services and the investment in equipment and infrastructure. A sourcing policy considers, in a structural way, whether to ensure/purchase specific services/equipment/infrastructure internally rather

than by cooperating with or outsourcing to civilian or public partners. This sourcing reflex is not new within Defence as several activities are already being sourced now. Today, Defence relies on civilian service providers for facility services (maintenance of technical installations, cleaning, upkeep of green areas), the white fleet (Airbus A321), commercial transport (taxis in Brussels, leasing of commercial vehicles), software development, computer equipment, primary health care and maintenance (vessels, aircraft and commercial vehicles).

“Tasks currently being carried out by Defence, but for which a more efficient alternative is available through civilian service providers or public partners, will not be carried out internally anymore, or at least not autonomously.”

Defence will carry on this policy in a more structural way and assess, for any current and new service/equipment/infrastructure, the opportunity of cooperating with or outsourcing to a civilian or public partner for the sake of efficiency.



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The replacement of the fleet of commercial vehicles started in 2015. The majority of these vehicles is now leased, including services such as roadside assistance. Leasing ensures that Defence has a fleet of new and modern vehicles at all times.

As from 2017, this enhanced sourcing policy will lead to the creation of a budgetary line for “additional sourcing replacing ‘duties without military specificity’” within the global cost structure of Defence. This line will be part of the operating budget.

“The **functioning of Defence** will be **rationalised as much as possible** taking into account important points of consideration such as cost-saving and effectiveness-enhancing measures. This implies, among other things, that servicemen will focus on military specific tasks, an increased use of market opportunities for supporting tasks and services and a rationalisation of the infrastructure.”
(principle no. 4)

Within the Defence Staff, several ongoing studies examine additional sourcing opportunities. The most important projects are:

- opportunities for broadening the existing sourcing of territorial services related to quarters and other territorial tasks (Territorial Support Service (TSS))¹¹⁴. The ultimate goal is to have in time global contracts rather than a vast number of separate contracts for each TSS subarea. This will ensure the creation of economies of scale, which means more budgetary benefits and fewer Defence personnel for maintaining the overview;
- the study on the white fleet examines to what extent its operational capability can be ensured by contracting civilian capability (see chapter 5);
- maximal sourcing of maintenance as well as the technical-logistic support of weapon systems at industrial level (depot level);
- outsourcing the organisation of the current training ranges;
- maximal sourcing of storage and distribution of equipment, clothing and material by a civilian partner.

Gradual sourcing will be applied where possible, taking into account the progressive downsizing of Defence personnel currently in charge of specific services.

The rationalisation of the medical support and competence development (see below) is also partly based on increased sourcing.

¹¹⁴ The sourcing scope for TSS will be broadened in the following areas:

- within the Facility Management area, the lodging, catering and cafeterias which are now mainly organised by Defence, will be outsourced, while the already partly sourced maintenance tasks (treatment of waste, gardening and clearing during the winter) will be entirely sourced from now on;
- the inferior levels of technical Facility Management, including the handyman services and small repairs, will also be entirely sourced in addition to the already sourced maintenance of technical facilities and statutory inspections;
- the surveillance of infrastructures, including reception, supervision and intervention, will be sourced according to the safety instructions, using as many technological means as possible;
- territorial packages and parcels services as well as post sorting and delivery will be subject to increased sourcing;
- sourcing will be applied to territorial mobility (such as individual and collective duty trips), eco-mobility within the framework of the home-to-work traffic of the personnel and the running of gas stations for military vehicles.

If consultation demonstrates that certain supporting services could be carried out more efficiently by or in cooperation with other public partners, then this could also be a

Gradual sourcing will be applied where possible, taking into account the progressive downsizing of Defence personnel currently in charge of specific services.

(complementary) approach. For example, the closure of the internal printing office of Defence will be partly compensated by the printing office of the Ministry of Finance, in addition to sourcing through civilian enterprises. Economies of scale could also be created between Defence and service centres of other public services with regard to the acquisition policy,

central accounting services, education, payroll, data management and security, as well as the management of both the fleet of (commercial) vehicles and the buildings of Defence.

The combination of all sourcing efforts is expected at least to lead to the replacement of about 5,000 FTE of the current personnel. Sourcing is indeed an important step to compensate the downsizing of Defence personnel and should enable military personnel to carry out more military specific duties.

In the short term, pilot projects will be launched to start up these sourcing initiatives as soon as possible, within the budgetary limitations. Considering the important start-up costs (tens of millions of euros) of these initiatives, the return on investment of these projects has to be studied with a long-term perspective. The overall objective is to reduce the current costs (including the personnel costs) by at least 10% for all sourcing agreements concluded.

Sourcing should enable military personnel to carry out more military specific duties.

c. Additional Efficiency-Enhancing Measures for the Medical Support

As mentioned in the previous chapter, the military medical support will be organised according to the level of ambition in the four capability dimensions, with a focus on operational deployment as requested by the Government agreement. For this purpose, the Government agreement asks for a further investigation of the three following aspects: the autonomy of the Medical Component, giving up tasks of a purely civilian nature and the necessity of maintaining the Military Hospital. These three issues have to be considered in the light of efficiency-enhancing measures for the military medical support with a view to operational deployment. As indicated in the previous chapter, a military medical capability focused on operational deployment can be achieved by maintaining a military hospital as a centralised operational preparation structure. A reorientation of this Military Hospital through rationalisation and increased cooperation at the interdepartmental, civilian-military and international level can however strengthen the efficiency of the future Military Hospital and as such the future military medical capability.

“The medical component is being thoroughly restructured (revision of the autonomy, giving up tasks of a purely civilian nature) with a view to operational deployment. Within this framework, the future and the necessity of the Military Hospital are being examined.”

(Government agreement of 9 October 2014)

The first question asked by the Government agreement with regard to operational deployment is whether to maintain the Medical Component as a separate component, or to consider its integration into the supporting services of the other components. When we benchmark ourselves against our neighbours, we find that medical support is provided by a separate “component” in both France and Germany, whereas the United Kingdom integrates its medical support into the different forces. The Netherlands apply a hybrid model including both a decentralisation into the different forces and a limited centralised structure. Therefore the Defence Staff will conduct a study, within the framework of the implementation project on the future structure of the Defence Staff, to determine the most appropriate type of autonomy for the medical support within the Defence structure. This study will take into consideration the specific regulations and organisation of public health in Belgium, as well as the experiences in other NATO countries regarding the added value of their medical support structure in relation to the efficiency of their military medical capability. Based on this study, a political decision will be taken on the autonomy of the military medical support, in addition to the other decisions regarding the future structure of the Defence Staff.

According to the Government agreement, a second possibility consists in giving up tasks of a purely civilian nature. Given the already quite limited tasks of an essentially civilian nature, this strategic vision will consider the ties between military medical support and the civilian world in a larger context in order to strengthen efficiency as much as possible. As the Military Hospital (the third aspect in the vision on medical support in the above quoted text of the Government agreement) plays an important role in the ties between military medical support and the civilian world, it will be further discussed in connection with these civilian-military ties.

The current interdepartmental and civilian-military contacts and projects offer the prospect of a positive interdepartmental, civil-military and maybe international partnership for Defence on the existing site of the Military Hospital. This partnership would contribute to anchoring a centralised structure for military medical operational preparation in the future, in a manner that is efficient and financially viable in a structural way. In the short run, these contacts and projects should be further materialised.

We will discuss the following three general aspects of the ties between military medical support and the civilian world, including the related efficiency-enhancing measures:

- military tasks of an essentially civilian nature which can be transferred to a private or public actor without affecting the deployment of Defence in an important manner;
- activities which are currently part of the military medical operational preparation and logistic support of Defence, but which might be organised more efficiently by the (increased) use of civilian service providers and civilian-military cooperation, without negatively affecting the operational capability of Defence;
- civilian tasks which are currently being carried out by Defence within the framework of operational preparation and whose content could be broadened for the benefit of the operational preparation of Defence and to optimise the Defence support to internal security.

Tasks of an essentially civilian nature which could be transferred to a private or public actor without largely affecting the deployment of Defence include the capability for production and storage of medicine of Defence, the hospital capability of the Military Hospital in the event of disasters and the emergency mortuary of the Military Hospital.

The medicine production capability can be given up by Defence considering its only limited operational relevance and because there are sufficient possibilities to outsource this capability to the civilian sector. Currently, Defence and the Ministry of Health have an agreement on the use of this production capability within the framework of public health. The disposal of this capability by Defence and the potential takeover by another actor will thus have to be coordinated at the interdepartmental level.

Since after studying the matter, it has been decided to maintain a centralised operational preparation structure through a further rationalisation of the current Military Hospital, the existing infrastructure for hospital capability in case of disasters and the emergency mortuary within the Military Hospital can also be maintained. However, internal security not being one of Defence's core tasks, this infrastructure must be kept operational without using the financial and personnel resources of Defence. The current studies and risk analyses

carried out in cooperation with the Ministry of Health with regard to these infrastructural capabilities will have to be finalised in the short run. They could be integrated into a broader overall cooperation between the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of the Interior, the Ministry of Justice and Defence for the creation of a national hospital for disaster relief. Besides the operating and maintenance costs of the hospital capability infrastructure in case of disasters and the emergency mortuary, an interdepartmental partnership has to take into account a contribution to the important overall infrastructure maintenance works of the Military Hospital (80 million euros in the short term).



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The emergency hospital capability of the Military Hospital is prepared to receive the wounded of the attacks of 22 March 2016.

Like the other logistic support of Defence (see chapter 5 “Material Resources branch”), the medical logistic support (storage and distribution), being an integral part of the medical support pillar, will be sourced as much as possible.

Furthermore, the military medical operational preparation centralised in the Military Hospital includes sub-capabilities which can be carried out more efficiently through the (increased) use of civilian service providers and by enhanced civilian-military cooperation, without adversely affecting the operational readiness of Defence. According to a first study of the Defence Staff, the overall operating costs (including the personnel and investment costs¹¹⁵) of the future Military Hospital can be rationalised by about 20 to 25% through the

¹¹⁵ Except for the important infrastructure investments.

organisation of the different sub-capabilities of the operational preparation structure for the medical capability according to a combination of five business models:

- (1) entirely sourcing sub-capabilities to civilian hospitals;
- (2) integration of deployable military personnel into civilian hospitals where they can exercise (if possible with military equipment);
- (3) integration of civilian personnel and equipment into the (renovated) Military Hospital for sub-capabilities which, basically, do not have much military relevance, but are essential to organise a medical activity with military relevance within the Military Hospital;
- (4) option (3) with the civilian personnel in the Military Hospital using military equipment;
- (5) a model where the personnel as well as the equipment and infrastructure for a sub-capability are provided by Defence.

At any rate, it is clear that the Military Hospital at Neder-over-Heembeek can no longer continue to exist in its current form. Today, the Hospital is mainly organised according to business model no. 5. The four other business models will be applied as much as possible to strengthen the efficiency of the Military Hospital as an operational preparation pillar of the operational medical support.

The final decisions on the future of the Military Hospital will be prepared by a technical working group at the intersectoral and interdepartmental level. First, however, the above-mentioned study of the Defence Staff will be further elaborated based on an independent audit on the short-term feasibility of these proposals.

This audit will also show to what extent an increase of civilian-military partnerships can contribute to civilian-military financing of the infrastructure works planned for the Military Hospital.

Furthermore, this audit will make any additional proposals with regard to the rationalisation of the operational preparation structure of the military medical capability, without affecting the necessary operational flexibility and autonomy. With regard to this aspect of the audit, the opportunities for a broad cooperation with external prevention and protection services will be studied in order to ensure cost-effective and qualitative occupational medicine adjusted to the operational needs of Defence. The audit will also draw up an inventory of the legal adjustments required to implement these (additional) proposals.

Additionally, the audit will identify the most appropriate legal structure for anchoring this central operational preparation structure. Given the focus on operational deployment, the future legal structure of the Military Hospital should provide the necessary autonomy to support the core tasks of Defence as well as flexible administrative management to ensure the regulations and needs of Defence. As mentioned above, the financial management of the Military Hospital should contribute to fair burden-sharing between all partners.

Finally, the audit has to consider the equitable balance in the existing partnerships of Defence with public and private actors with respect to the Military Hospital and submit proposals to obtain a better balance if necessary.

The results of this audit will have to be available by the end of 2016 in order to provide further guidance for the implementation project on the rationalisation of the operational preparation structure of the medical capability, the Military Hospital. As mentioned above, this project

will then be treated in a technical working group at the intersectoral and interdepartmental level. This working group will be set up in the short term so as to allow the other parties to prepare this file from their perspective by the end of 2016. The working group will be provided with a precise mandate and will base its proceedings on both the above-mentioned study of the Defence Staff and the independent audit.



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The operating wing of the Military Hospital is part of the operational preparation infrastructure for the operational medical support.

A last complementary element for strengthening the efficiency of the medical support, based on more efficient ties between military medical support and the civilian context, is to broaden the content of the civilian tasks which are currently carried out by Defence, for the benefit of better operational preparation. Broadening civilian tasks concurrently implies the optimisation of the role of Defence for internal security.

Currently, the medical-technical personnel of Defence (nurses and doctors) receive training within the Military Hospital. As mentioned above, these personnel can use deployable equipment to practise specifically military procedures. This training takes place in the ambulance service, the MUG (*Mobiele UrgentieGroep*, emergency medical services including the CBRN capability), the burns unit (including the day clinic), the operating wing and the hospital capability for orthopaedic interventions. The will to perpetuate a centralised operational preparation structure for the medical capability of Defence also means that there are enough patients and that the activities are geared to the operational needs. Therefore,

the aim is to extend the activities of the future Military Hospital to areas which are equally relevant for operational preparation due to their complexity and resemblance with injuries caused during operational deployment. This should also enhance the structural profitability of the Military Hospital. Issues to be considered include the development of a capability for (“dirty”) septic orthopaedic surgery, a capability for the treatment of highly infectious diseases and a stronger role for the military medical capability with regard to traumatology¹¹⁶. This broadening of the training opportunities (leading to increased effectiveness) will have to be realised without creating an oversized training capability for operational preparation. The broadening of the training capability of the Military Hospital does not in any way reduce the value of existing and future partnerships which consist in employing part-time medical-technical Defence personnel in civilian institutions to maintain their skills.

Maintaining scalable capabilities in case of national disasters through interdepartmental partnerships, and broadening the medical provision of care relevant for national emergencies and crises increase the opportunities of the Military Hospital of the future if it would be earmarked as a national hospital for disaster relief. Such a hospital could not only bring added value to the operational preparation of the military medical capability but also optimise the supporting role of Defence with regard to the medical aspect of internal security. Furthermore, a hospital for disaster relief could meet requests of international organisations in Brussels and also be partly financed by these organisations.

As Defence cannot assume a leading role with regard to internal security, the possible use of the Military Hospital as a basis for a future national hospital for disaster relief will depend on the participation of interdepartmental (the Ministry of the Interior and the Ministry of Health in the first place), regional and civilian partners in such a project, and if common financing can be found to cover the operating costs as well as the additional equipment and personnel needed for this role.

The opportunities (and related financing models) of transforming the Military Hospital into a national hospital for disaster relief according to the framework referred to above will also be examined by the above-mentioned audit.

¹¹⁶ *Treatment of injuries and wounds caused by an accident or an act of violence.*

d. Rationalisation of Competence Development

Defence will continue to invest maximum effort in the competence development of its personnel. However, the downsizing of FTE for competence development referred to in chapter 5 does indicate that Defence will have to rethink the organisation of its education and training to further comply with the high standards in the future.

The first issue discussed below involves the general principles for a more efficient and innovative approach of competence development.

Guidance will also be provided for a rationalisation of the academic, technical-academic, continuing and basic military education currently available at the Royal Military School and the Royal School for Non-Commissioned Officers, as well as in both Basic Education and Training Centres.

i. General Principles for a More Efficient Competence Development

The rationalisation of competence development will in the first place be achieved by the fact that Defence will no longer organise education and training which are also available in civilian institutions. The idea is to only maintain education and training organised by and within Defence as required by their military specificity. Examples of education and training without military specificity include sports education/training and education/training for catering personnel.

Additional rationalisation is possible with regard to the military specific education and training organised at national level. Studies are already being conducted to organise military education and training as much as possible at the workplace, within the units, and as part of the operational preparation process. The opportunity for overall implementation of blended learning¹¹⁷ will also be examined. This system could have positive effects on the functioning of Defence thanks to a more limited impact on the availability of the personnel involved in this type of education.

A third general element to rationalise competence development as much as possible, is to achieve maximum cooperation with other (military specific) education and training institutions of our strategic partner countries. This can be done by the common organisation of certain types of education/training and result in mutual optimisation through specialisation. In this way, we also contribute to the European capability anchoring as discussed in chapter 3. Common education and training can also be optimised by the use of common doctrines and similar equipment. As mentioned in chapter 5, an important part of the specialised professional education and training for the Air dimension as well as the greater part of this education and training for the Maritime

¹¹⁷ Blended learning is a combination of e-learning applications and interpersonal contacts between student and instructor which contributes to the rationalisation of the needs for both instructors and support (infrastructure, catering, surveillance, medical support ...).

dimension are already available in international training institutions organised together with France and the Netherlands, respectively. Especially the Navy has already achieved optimisation through partial specialisation. Our Defence also relies on NATO and EU institutions as well as the NATO Centres of Excellence for the education and training of its personnel.

II. **The Rationalisation of the Academic, Technical-Academic, Continuing and Basic Military Education and Training within Defence**

The organisation of the basic military education and training for all categories will be more centralised.

The Royal Military Academy (KMS (*Koninklijke Militaire School*)) will be turned into an education organisation that centralises all education currently offered to staff personnel within Defence. This education includes the academic education, the technical-academic education as well as the continuing education, for both officers and non-commissioned officers whereas today this education for both categories is given



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In the future, all basic education for staff personnel will be taught in the Royal Military Academy.

separately for the most part. A unique education organisation for staff personnel will create synergies and reinforce the cohesion of the different courses in terms of content so as to offer more efficient education in general to all staff personnel.

The general education for all categories will therefore be more centralised, allowing for efficiencies in terms of content and budget. However, the specialised professional

education and training will have to rely further on the different, be it rationalised, centres of competence, besides specialised professional education and training in the units, as a result of the specific characteristics of the capabilities and the different dimensions.

The current academic education at the KMS will also be largely rationalised¹¹⁸. The number of specialisations in the two main branches (Bachelor/Master in Social and Military Sciences and Polytechnic Bachelor/Master) will decrease considerably and will have a very military specific content. All Master's degree courses will be given in English (and therefore no longer in French and Dutch). The duration of education for the Master in Social and Military Sciences will be shortened by one year¹¹⁹. These adjustments have to be made while maintaining the Bologna accreditation standards for education.

The cadets' pay will be revised downwards during the first years of education and will gradually increase following the example of other military academic institutions within NATO.

The planned adjustment of the current education at the KMS should allow for a reduction by 40 to 50% of the number of senior staff currently envisaged and a reduction by 20 to 30% of the current overall operating costs (including personnel and investment costs). Taking also into account the rationalisations of the personnel of the KSOO and the Basic Education and Training Centres, a reduction by some 30% is achieved in the total number of personnel working in the "general basic and continuing education of officers, non-commissioned officers and volunteers".

As regards the education at the KMS, a closer partnership with civilian academic institutions will also be pursued in order to strengthen the academic education and research at the KMS. This can be achieved by an exchange of teaching and research personnel, the alignment of research areas and the pursuit of complementarity between certain fields of education. As a consequence, these fields of education will also be open to civilian students. The close ties with civilian academic institutions will also be supported by the research done at the KMS (and more generally within Defence). These ties can support our security interests in a complementary manner (see point f. below).

As regards the new academic education at the KMS, Defence will proactively look for further opportunities for interdepartmental cooperation and international military cooperation.

¹¹⁸ Besides, the renewed education for officers, the KMS will continue to pay special attention to physical and behavioural training. The military education will be organised through the more centralised structure for basic military education.

¹¹⁹ Four years instead of five. The Polytechnic education will still take five years to complete.

e. Principles Related to the Rationalisation of the Infrastructure

“Taking the needs of Belgian Defence into account, **regional balances** will be ensured during the implementation phase for the **geographical distribution** of quarters, personnel and capabilities. This strengthens the bonds with society.”
(principle no. 5)

As mentioned in principle no. 5, the decision of the new geographical distribution of Defence by 2030 will be detailed in the implementation plan for the geographical distribution of the quarters to be issued after this strategic vision. A few principles with regard to the rationalisation of the infrastructure are discussed below.

The Government agreement mentions that for the future distribution of the Defence units “the potential of the quarters, the costs and the balance with regard to regional distribution, the potential impact of sub-regional recruitment, the well-being of the servicemen, the regional embedment of the support to the Nation as well as a focus on current or future forms of multinational cooperation” will be taken into account. Consequently, all these aspects will be taken into consideration in the implementation plan for the geographical distribution of the quarters. Principle no. 5 places an additional focus on ensuring regional balances while specifying that, besides the quarters, a fair distribution of the personnel and the capabilities has to be achieved. The distribution of the capabilities will be based on both quantity and quality, while ensuring a regional balance with respect to their technicity.

An excessive centralisation of our Defence on our territory is not desirable. Of course, this has not prevented Defence, over the past years, from pursuing a policy aimed at adjusting its real-estate assets as much as possible to the actual operational needs. This policy will be maintained until 2030 and will allow for a rationalisation by reducing the operating costs.

The quarters which are no longer necessary to meet the needs of Defence will be sold. The proceeds of the sales will go into the budgetary fund of Defence¹²⁰ which is used¹²¹ among other things for the necessary infrastructure works in the remaining quarters and the investments required for this rationalisation.

To avoid lengthy sales procedures and accelerate certain infrastructure rationalisations, Defence will also rely on alternative financing where appropriate. More specifically, this involves exchange agreements with private and public partners receiving land and

¹²⁰ On 1 October 2015, the Council of Ministers decided that as from 1 January 2016, only 1 budgetary fund would be maintained for Defence. This fund brings together all receipts of the three previous funds. These receipts can be used by Defence as from 1 January 2016, in addition to the regular budget, and this for all kinds of expenditure: new investments, infrastructure works, operating or personnel expenditure. However, the receipts and expenditure have to remain in balance on an annual basis.

¹²¹ During the period 2010-2014, the sales of Defence real estate brought in nearly 17 million euros per year on average.

infrastructure in exchange of the building of new infrastructure, the renovation or even the maintenance of infrastructure for a fixed period of time.

f. Towards a Strategy for Additionally Supporting our Security Interests by Means of our National Research Institutions and Industry

The defence investments mentioned in the previous chapters are in the first place aimed at enabling the Belgian authorities to remain a security partner based on multilateral solidarity within the security environment described above.

Furthermore, these investments make it possible to establish ties between Defence, the industry and the research institutions which also contribute to enhancing our security. In practice, these will primarily be the bonds with the national industry and national research institutions, as our authorities are able to have a direct influence on them. Within a holistic defence and security policy, the close implication of actors involved in industry, service provision and knowledge acquisition constitutes a key component of national security. In addition, the bonds between Defence, the industry and the research institutions will always include an economic component (the derived value). The investments made by Defence can directly or indirectly produce a return on investment as know-how, technology and employment. The opportunity offered by the important investment amounts and R&T resources in this strategic vision with regard to research in areas of high technology could not only be an important driving force behind our research institutions but also contribute to the development and production of innovative systems by our industry. A return on investment, including know-how, technology and employment, also contributes to creating public support for these investments from both the population and the business world. However, it is clear that the desired close bonds between our Defence, our industry and our research institutions constitute in the first place a necessary and additional factor to strengthen our national security. From the security point of view of this strategic vision, the derived economic value and innovation resulting from the bonds between these three actors is nothing more than a side-effect.

“The efforts made to liberate the necessary budgets are, however, not only a question of intergenerational solidarity, but can also be a source of important economic incentives and innovation.”

(Government agreement of 9 October 2014)

“The efficiency of the investments in major equipment will be optimised by means of a **maximum return on investment to society through know-how, technology and employment, in compliance with national and European legislation in force.** To this end, the Ministry of Economy together with Defence, will define the implementation measures for a maximum economic return for defence procurement, among other things, by using article 346 TFEU, as referred to in the Government agreement.”
(principle no. 8)

At the core of the desired pragmatic partnership between our Defence, our industry and our research institutions is the support provided to our essential security interests. These security interests will be defined by Defence in order to apply article 346, 1, b of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union. This article concerns the protection of the essential security interests which are connected with the production of or trade in arms, munitions and war material. These essential security interests include for example the secured supply of indispensable components for our weapon systems, the guaranteed provision of vital services for Defence and research activities of direct relevance to our national security.

Moreover, the Ministry of Economy, Defence, the Regions and Communities (in charge of education and industry) as well as the umbrella organisations of our industry and education will have to collaborate closely to develop the pragmatic partnership between our Defence, our research institutions and our industry. The basic terms of this partnership will be defined within a “Defence, Industry and Research Strategy” (DIRS). This document will be edited under the leadership of the Ministry of Economy and Defence. This DIRS is one of the major projects to be developed based on this strategic vision and the essential security interests defined by Defence. Based on these essential security interests, the DIRS will point out the industry and scientific research areas of direct relevance to our national security (= the strategic industrial and research sectors within the framework of our defence policy). The DIRS will include both the focal points for R&T (Research and Technology) and the subsequent R&D (Research and Development) of the different competent authorities in Belgium. Of course, these areas must be in harmony with both the capabilities to be acquired as provided for in this strategic vision and the expected capability and technological priorities of Belgian Defence after 2030. This DIRS must specify how the public authorities (both the federal level and the level of the competent regional and community authorities) see the distribution of responsibilities for managing this security cooperation as well as

the contribution by the three stakeholders (Defence, industry, research institutions). All of this is essential to enable a methodical development of the ties between Defence, the research institutions and the industry which would be an added value for our national security.

The DIRS will show that Belgium is and will be able to develop competitive defence-related industrial competences and capabilities necessary for the protection of the essential security interests of our country. This competitive industry strengthens our country's credibility and opportunities to be considered a partner in international cooperation relationships. The investment programmes planned for our Defence are an additional incentive to establish close bonds between the European/international industry and our own industry. In this way, the Belgian industry and research centres can strengthen their contribution to the elaboration of a European industrial and technological basis which constitutes a key element for strengthening European military autonomy.

Maintaining the priority technology areas and industrial capabilities is a key aspect of the essential security interests of our country. The procurement of weapon systems by our own Defence however does not provide sufficient critical mass to develop a Belgian defence industry. This could be rectified through the contribution of our industry to an international industrial network. The presence of Belgian companies in the supply chain of important military equipment manufacturers (OEMs or Original-Equipment Manufacturers) in Europe and North America can also offer additional guarantees for our security.

In case of large contracts for the procurement of military equipment, the necessity to invoke article 346 TFEU will be analysed. Where appropriate, the necessity and the extent to which the essential security interests are being guaranteed will be considered. The priority technology areas referred to in the above-mentioned DIRS, or the related industrial activities, have been anchored in these essential security interests.

By ensuring the legal anchorage of the different procurement programmes for major equipment, the military programme Act (see principle no. 7 below) clearly establishes the capability priorities with respect to our industry and research institutions for the duration of the strategic vision. In this way, our industry will have the opportunity to position itself strategically in relation to the future military needs of Belgian Defence. This means among other things that our industry becomes an even more interesting cooperation partner for other (larger) international defence actors. Thanks to privileged contacts with our industry, these could increase their understanding of what to expect from the Belgian market for their products. Conversely, the Belgian industry is also offered opportunities through this cooperation with larger players (the OEMs) to gain access to new markets for its products. Furthermore, our Defence



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In 2016 the NATO Centre for Maritime Research and Experimentation organised an international conference in which the new technologies that will be used for the future mine countermeasures vessels were evaluated and presented to an audience of military personnel, researchers and representatives of industry.

is represented in a wide range of specialist military fora and research institutions¹²² within NATO and the EU (EDA) which also bring to light the capability trends and needs of our allies. Consequently, a constructive relationship between Defence and our industry will enable our industry to respond even better to needs other than those of our own Defence and to contribute to the consolidation of a more European technological and industrial basis.

The different public actors, in particular thanks to their activities within the framework of the DIRS, will foster a climate conducive to business-to-business contacts and initiatives between the OEMs and our enterprises so as to generate additional know-how, technology and employment.

¹²² For example the NATO Centre for Maritime Research and Experimentation (CMRE).

“A military programme Act which will include the **investments in major equipment** of Belgian Defence for the duration of the **strategic vision**, will help generate stability and predictability for the effective realisation of a credible Belgian Defence by 2030 towards society, our allies and the business world.”
(principle no. 7)

To support the pragmatic partnership between Defence, our industry and our research institutions, as mentioned in chapter 4, our Defence will gradually increase its R&T contribution as from 2022, with a view to reaching 2% of the defence effort in 2030 (currently this is 0.2%). This contribution is essential to give a positive impetus to this partnership for innovation (Triple Helix model).

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Floods in Bosnia and Herzegovina in May 2014 washed away mines of uncleared minefields. B-FAST used drone technology developed by the Royal Military Academy to map the dissemination of the explosive ordnance.

Besides other national research centres (academic as well as civilian and industrial), the research institutions of Defence (including the defence laboratories (DLD), the research

centres of the KMS and the military medical laboratories and research centres) will be important actors within this R&T policy. A unique centralised service, with national and international structural contacts in the world of research and industry, will ensure proper management and coordination of the R&T policy of Defence and will initiate cooperation with other national security actors, Defences of preferential partner countries, research centres and the industry within the framework of this policy. This R&T policy will also be developed within a European framework to reinforce the ranking of our country as an innovative society for defence capabilities. Different investment programmes for innovative capabilities such as drones, satellites, unmanned naval vehicles (see chapter 5) can constitute a solid basis to realise this ambition. The European integration of the R&T policy supported by Defence and coordinated in cooperation with the industrial and research world can contribute to maximising the opportunities for our industries with regard to their participation in the actual development phase of certain defence and security systems (Development).

For Defence, integration into a European R&T policy has the advantage of indirectly increasing the security of supply. Acting as a production and innovation centre with regard to essential know-how and components for weapon and security systems, our country will indeed have stronger assurances that its security needs and supply requirements will be met. Another advantage for Defence consists in developing a better understanding of both the opportunities for future capabilities and any technological developments that could adversely affect our security. Furthermore, it is essential for the economic sector and knowledge centres in this rapidly changing world to remain up-to-date on the latest developments in new technologies, security evolutions and industrial activities. Contributing to activities in these areas is the best guarantee to meet this security need.

Involving our industry in multinational development projects, based on the closer ties between our Defence and the industrial world, can also contribute to better account being taken of our military operational requirements.

g. Rationalisation of the Bodies under the Supervision of the Minister of Defence

On the one hand, the bodies under the supervision of the Minister of Defence¹²³ provide services of direct relevance to the missions and personnel of Defence. On the other hand, they play an important role in the remembrance of our military history and ensure the management of our military heritage.

It is important that they can keep providing these services and socially relevant tasks in the future. This is why it is necessary to make the financing of these bodies structurally viable

¹²³ *The National Geographic Institute (NGI), the Royal Museum of the Armed Forces (KLM), the Central Office for Social and Cultural Action (CDSCA), the Institute for Veterans - National Institute for War Invalids, War Veterans and War Victims (IV-NIOOO), the Historical Pool of Defence and the National Memorial of the Fortress of Breendonk (NGFB).*

through the rationalisation of their structures and missions. These rationalisations will also be carried out from the point of view of a Defence which increasingly focuses on its core tasks as described above. In specific terms, this means that only military positions necessary from a military and operational point of view will be maintained within these bodies. This restructuring will affect the existing financing and personnel which will be subject to systematic rationalisation.

Within the framework of this general vision we set about the task specified in the Government agreement to evaluate the three semi-governmental bodies of Defence (NGI, CDSCA and IV-NIOOO) and the Royal Museum of the Armed Forces and to decide on the major directions for their future. The Government has already taken a few decisions of principle on this subject.

“The Government will study the future, the place and the statute of the NGI, the KLM, CDSCA and the IV-NIOOO. Together with the two latter administrations, a working group under the supervision of the Minister of Defence will assess the pros and cons of a structural rapprochement between both semi-governmental bodies.”
(Government agreement of 9 October 2014)

The services provided by CDSCA (Central Office for Social and Cultural Action) that support the functioning of Defence in a direct way, such as the construction and rental of accommodation and part of the social services (child care as well as moral, psychosocial, medical social, financial or material support), will continue to be provided by this body. In the future, CDSCA will additionally assume the social action for the benefit of the veterans of the IV-NIOOO (the Institute for Veterans - National Institute for War Invalids, War Veterans and War Victims). CDSCA will no longer be in charge of holiday planning through its own travel agency. It will no longer organise welfare activities nor supply goods to servicemen abroad. It is appropriate to maintain a limited number of military personnel in the social services of CDSCA in the future.

“Along with its role in the commemorations, Defence has an important tradition with regard to the protection of heritage, particularly through the Historical Pool of Defence, the Centre for Historical Documentation and the Royal Museum of the Armed Forces. The Government wishes to continue this tradition.”
(Government agreement of 9 October 2014)

Besides CDSCA, the intention is to create a new semi-governmental body that will enable the rationalisation of the remembrance and military heritage and render it more autonomous (among other things through private-public partnerships). In the longer run, the new “Remembrance and Military Heritage Organisation” (by 2030 at the latest) will not employ military personnel anymore.

This organisation must ensure that the military heritage is better valorised although this heritage remains the property of the federal authority. In this context, cooperation agreements can also be concluded with the Communities for the operation of regional sites.

This transversal organisation will take over the duty of remembrance and also the management of the Belgian war graves from the IV-NIOOO and will integrate all heritage institutions currently related to Defence (the Historical Pool of Defence, the Royal Museum of the Armed Forces¹²⁴, the National Memorial of the Fortress of Breendonk). It must also enable a common policy with other heritage institutions of the federal authority¹²⁵ and independent museums¹²⁶ in order to reinforce the military and civilian remembrance.

The Auxiliary Sickness & Invalidity Insurance Fund (HZIV) is a social security body. This body is the best placed to take over from the IV-NIOOO both the social action for the benefit of war veterans, war invalids and war victims and the reimbursement of their medical expenses in a rationalised manner. Because of the decreases in the number of beneficiaries¹²⁷ these tasks could no longer be executed in an efficient way by a separate organisation. These tasks are more in line with the activities of the Auxiliary Fund. Consequently, the Auxiliary Fund will continue to be able to provide these services for the benefit of the beneficiaries in a qualitative manner.

The National Geographic Institute (NGI) is in charge of the production and distribution of the geographic reference information for the Belgian territory. In the future, this institution will be organised as a horizontal geo-broker that sees to it that geographical data are easily accessible to all public entities. The NGI will examine in more detail the opportunities for creating synergies with other public entities to rationalise its functioning as much as possible.

All rationalisations of the bodies under the supervision of the Minister of Defence should provide efficiency gains of a total of 20 million euros for the federal authority by 2030. This would be achieved mainly by both downsizing of personnel and decreasing of the subsidisation necessary for these institutions. About 120 military FTE currently

¹²⁴ *Parc du Cinquantenaire, Trench of Death, Kemmelberg command bunker, Gunfire in Brasschaat and Bastogne Barracks*

¹²⁵ *Such as the Fort of Loncin, the Fort of Eben-Emael and the Camp of Beverlo Museum at Leopoldsburg which are held under concession by non-profit organisations or local administrations.*

¹²⁶ *These include the Bastogne War Museum, the In Flanders Fields Museum at Ypres and the 1815 Memorial at Waterloo.*

¹²⁷ *War invalids, war veterans and war victims.*

employed in the bodies concerned will no longer be needed in the future. This military personnel will rejoin the headcount of Defence.

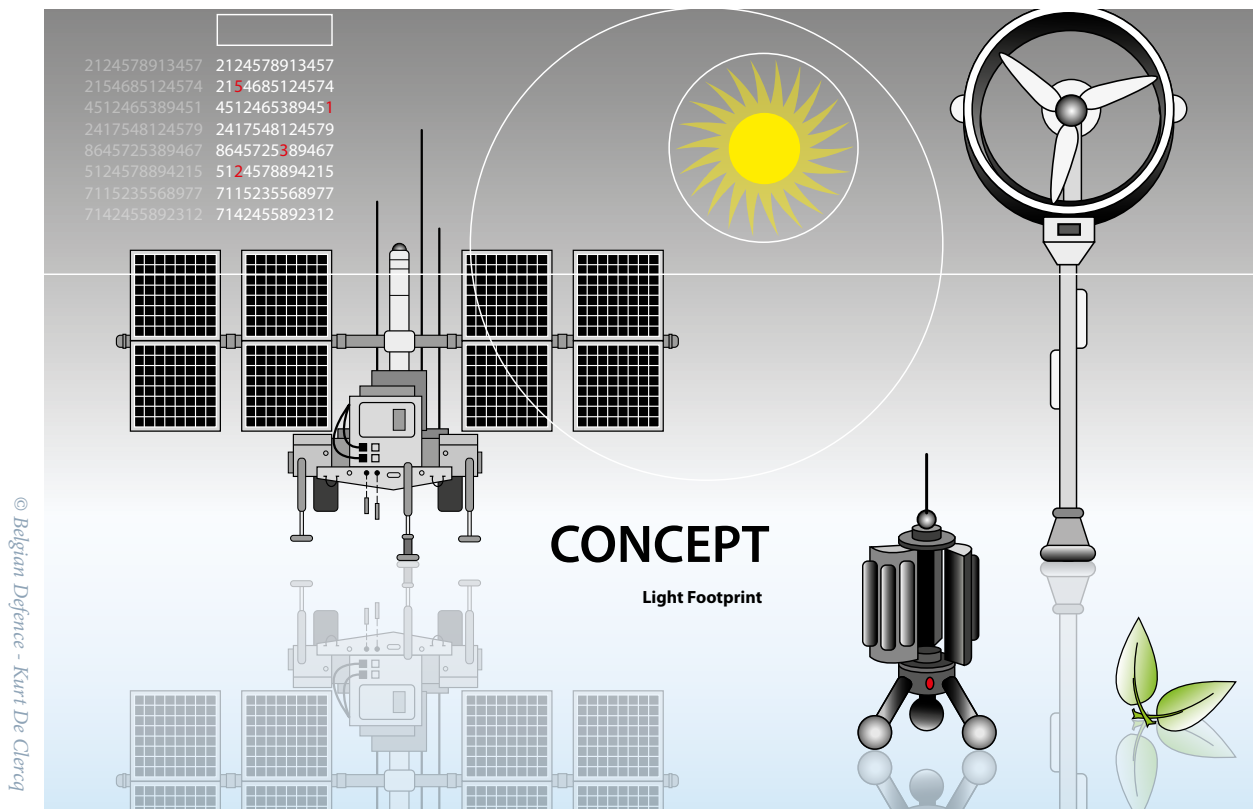
A global reform plan with regard to the semi-governmental bodies of Defence will be approved by the Council of Ministers. The further elaboration will be based on separate implementation files.

h. A Sustainable Defence

Sustainability is another important principle for the future. An action plan will be implemented to make Defence a more sustainable organisation by 2030.

To be sustainable, Defence needs to be more energy efficient, to increase the use of sustainable energy resources and to avoid waste in order to limit the national as well as the military operational footprint. For expeditionary operations this means a reduced pressure on the local population which will foster better acceptance of the military intervention and in this way contribute to its success.

The increase of the infrastructure budgets will enable an improved energy efficiency of the Defence infrastructure.



A combination of classic generators, solar panels, wind turbines and strong batteries, supported by a smart electricity grid, must allow military compounds to be less dependent on fossil fuels and local infrastructure and thus to operate more independently.

A sustainable Defence strives for maximum efficiency of the defence equipment life cycle, for example by limiting spare parts and maintenance interventions which also contribute to the efficiency and effectiveness of operational deployment.

In this matter too, an enhanced R&T policy (see above) with closer ties between Defence, the civilian research centres and our industry can ensure that our Defence will be able to seize any opportunity aimed at a more efficient functioning. Possible examples in this respect are hybrid generators and vehicles.

This sustainability aspect will also be considered within the framework of the sourcing initiatives.



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A Young Defence with a Flexible Personnel Policy



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People constitute the core and the added value of a military capability.

People constitute the core of a military capability. No weapon system, however effective it may be, can contribute to our defence policy without sufficient and trained personnel. Moreover, thanks to their motivation, creativity, empathy and adaptability to any situation, human beings represent the core and added value of a military capability.



People constitute the core of a military capability.

At the beginning of 2016, Defence's personnel envelope numbered some 31,000 FTE (about 29,500 servicemen and 1,500 civilians). By 2030, this envelope will be downsized to 25,000 (about 24,000 military FTE and 1,000 civilian FTE). This reduction in size will be

the result of the natural development of the workforce, since nearly half of the Defence personnel will retire over the next 10 years¹²⁸.

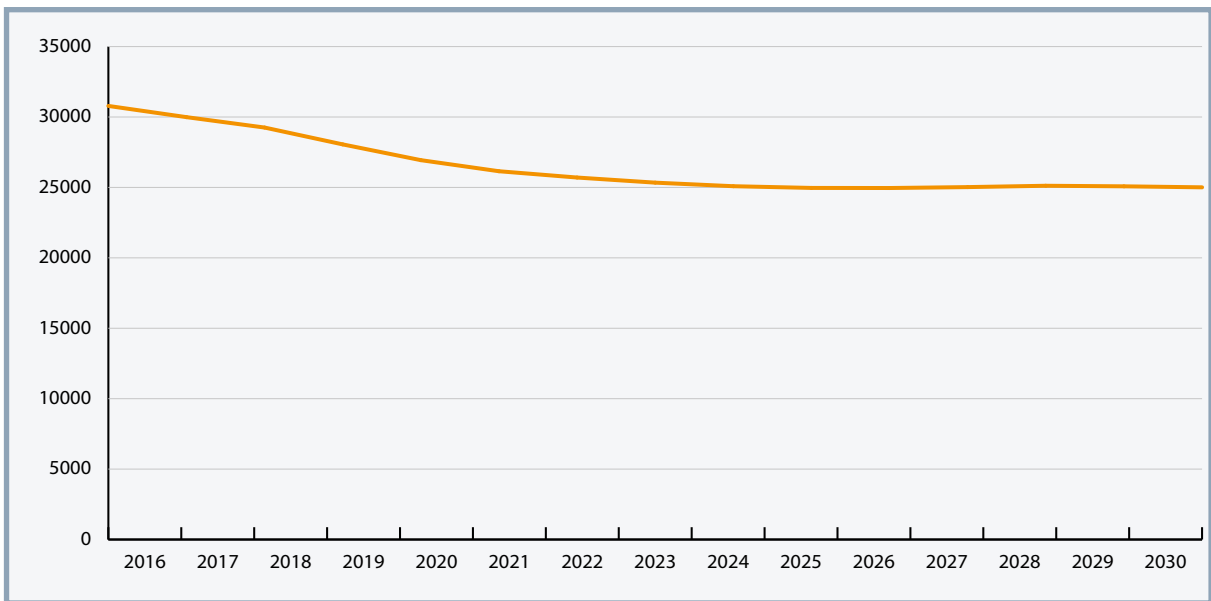


Chart 4: Evolution of the Defence personnel (in FTE) for the period 2016 to 2030.

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030
Recruitment military personnel	900	1160	1284	1409	1750	2100	2100	2100	2100	2100	2100	2100	2100	2100	2100
Civilian recruitment	50	50	50	50	50	50	50	50	50	50	50	50	50	50	50
Total number of personnel	30786	29990	29251	28055	26936	26149	25702	25339	25086	24964	24958	25023	25118	25078	25007

Table 4: Table of the planned military and civilian recruitment figures for the period 2016 to 2030.

“ Since the aim is to abandon Lifetime Employment as much as possible, it is essential to maximise recruitment.

The table above shows the evolution of recruitment expected for the period covered by the strategic vision. We can clearly see that military recruitment will gradually increase to reach 2,100 FTE in 2021 and then stabilise for the remaining part of the period covered by the strategic vision. The figure of 2,100 FTE

has been defined considering both the expected labour market situation and the competence development capability within Defence. Since the aim is to abandon Lifetime Employment as much as possible, as mentioned below, it is essential to maximise recruitment.

As shown by the chart, and despite recruitment maximisation, the workforce will already be reduced by 6,000 FTE in 2024. Therefore, Defence will have to move towards new structures and a new organisation at relatively short notice.

Besides the quantitative aspect of these recruitments, the recruitment policy also includes two qualitative aspects which will have a significant operational impact for Defence. On the one hand, Defence’s future new and more technical systems will require a larger number of skilled technical

¹²⁸ 47% under present conditions (the military retirement age is 56).

personnel, mainly specialised non-commissioned officers. On the other hand, all possible efforts should be made to cope with the current personnel shortage in the combat units, especially with regard to soldiers, in order to rapidly reinforce Defence's operational deployment capability in the short term. Both qualitative aspects will be considered among the main recruitment outlines for the period covered by the strategic vision.

"A more flexible personnel policy, with a reform of education/ training and personnel regulations based on an assessment of the current policy. With this increase of flexibility, aiming at **abandoning the principle of Lifetime Employment as much as possible**, Defence will become a younger organisation in general. The objective pursued is to lower the current average age of 40.6 years down to 34 years by 2030. For the years 2020 and 2025 indicative target figures related to the average age will also be fixed. In this respect attention will be paid to preserving a sufficient build-up of expertise, **aimed at operational deployment**. Giving new substance to the Reserve will also contribute to a more flexible personnel policy."
(principle no. 9)

a. Abandon Lifetime Employment as Much as Possible

"A more flexible personnel policy will enable Defence personnel to better meet the needs of the organisation.

Principle no. 9 provides for a more flexible personnel policy within Defence. An important way to achieve this goal is to abandon Lifetime Employment as much as possible. A more flexible personnel policy will enable Defence personnel to better meet the needs of the organisation. The increased flexibility is in line with the general trend in society where workers change jobs more easily, whether to take up new challenges and favour their personal development, or to better harmonise work and family life.

Defence is mainly in need of young military personnel with also the possibility to offer career opportunities in the organisation to a sufficient number of servicemen to enable them to take up technical and senior staff duties. Such duties require a build-up of expertise and ensure the necessary continuity at the military-technical as well as the operational level within the organisation.

Currently, Defence already has “Short-Term” personnel regulations (further referred to as BDL (“Beperkte Duur/Durée Limitée”) personnel regulations). These personnel regulations provide for a career ranging from 5 to 8 years. At the end of this period, the serviceman can, according to the needs of the organisation and his own wishes, either switch to active

duty status (until the age of retirement) or receive support for a job outside Defence. In March 2016, a total number of 850 (out of a total of about 29,500) servicemen were employed under the BDL regulations that were introduced in 2014. Since 2015, all soldiers enlisted have been employed under these regulations. However, it is still possible to increase the percentages of non-commissioned officers (for 2016: 38% BDL) and officers (for 2016: 3% BDL) and thus further abandon the principle of Lifetime Employment for all military categories.

“Defence is mainly in need of young military personnel with also the possibility to offer career opportunities in the organisation to a sufficient number of servicemen to enable them to take up technical and senior staff duties.”



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Candidate-soldiers are receiving their basic education and training. Since 2015, all soldiers have been enlisted under the personnel regulations for a short career. The aim is to also use these BDL personnel regulations to reduce Life Time Employment within Defence for officers and non-commissioned officers.

Today, the BDL period includes professional education and training. According to the general personnel regulations, it is not possible to receive academic education (academic education for officers at the Royal Military Academy and technical-academic education for non-commissioned officers) during this period. The period for return on investment is also insufficient to include an extensive academic education during the 8-year BDL period. If the BDL regulations were tailored to academic education, so that the 8-year period only starts counting after education is completed, this would allow a further reduction of Lifetime Employment.

A first assessment of the BDL regulations has shown that the flexibility of the personnel policy could be further increased by enabling Defence to offer additional short-term employment after the current BDL period. In 2016, a decision will be taken regarding the introduction and terms of an additional BDL period. In this respect, specific accompanying measures will have to be provided for, taking into account the higher age and more specialised profile of this group of servicemen leaving Defence. This will drastically change Defence's organisational culture.

The generalisation of the BDL personnel regulations has the advantage that it guarantees a more flexible personnel policy within Defence. The extent to which the personnel that has been enlisted under the terms of the BDL regulations is likely to have to leave the organisation, will depend on the needs of Defence itself, i.e. first and foremost the need to preserve a Defence consisting of 25,000 FTE with the appropriate profiles. With the recruitment number of 2,100 servicemen, the important number of retirements and the possibility of an additional BDL period, a significant increase in the number of servicemen reintegrating the civilian labour market, instead of switching over to the active duty career (i.e. Lifetime Employment), is however only expected to happen from the period 2026 to 2030 onwards. Abandoning Lifetime Employment will only be maximised after 2030, and only with a continued recruitment effort.

With regard to personnel leaving Defence after the end of the BDL period, Defence will make all possible efforts to enhance their chances on the external labour market. It will be examined which education/training and preferential partners are likely to facilitate the outflow of these servicemen and women. Legislation already provides for a "coaching period" for the BDL regulations which, however, will have to be effective in practice by 2019.

Most servicemen employed under the BDL regulations are planned to stay for a complete (first) period of 8 years. Therefore, the first large group of BDL servicemen will not reintegrate the labour market before 2022. According to a simulation, a maximum of 135 BDL servicemen will leave Defence each year during the period 2022 to 2030. The introduction of a potential

With regard to personnel leaving Defence after the end of the BDL period, Defence will make all possible efforts to enhance their chances on the external labour market.

The majority of personnel that will be recruited by the future Directorate of security within the Police are expected to be former servicemen.

additional BDL period could however slow down departures during this period. The majority of personnel that will be recruited by the future Directorate of security within the Police are expected to be former servicemen. In the first years the arrival of servicemen employed under the BDL regulations will be limited¹²⁹. However, later on this could become

a practical example of a preferential channel to absorb the outflow of the BDL personnel. Defence will also explore the feasibility of setting up preferential channels for the outflow towards other government services in the security sector and potentially the entire public service.

Additionally, Defence will explore all possible employment channels in the civilian sector, notably with the security sector, which is expected to become an important partner.

Feedback from private and public sectors to which servicemen could make the changeover in the past, shows that the qualifications, abilities and skills acquired within Defence are highly valued. Their strengths include loyalty, sense of discipline, planning and organisation, social skills, flexibility, knowledge of languages and technical background. Defence can rest assured that the members of its personnel are highly valued on the labour market, a situation that can be further enhanced by additional preparatory education and training.

b. A Permanent Role for Civilians within Defence

Despite the fact that a reduced Defence will focus more on the military specificity and will maximise the use of the opportunities on the market for support services, civilians will still have an important role to play within Defence in 2030. Civilian jobs are expected to employ 1,000 FTE, with 50 recruits each year¹³⁰.

In the future, these civilian personnel within Defence will have to provide the organisation with specialised expertise, both for the operational capabilities and for the supporting services of Defence. The majority of the civilian personnel supporting operational

In the future, these civilian personnel within Defence will have to provide the organisation with specialised expertise, both for the operational capabilities and for the supporting services of Defence.

¹²⁹ Nevertheless, this directorate offers an opportunity to reduce the older population of soldiers (and to a lesser extent, officers) within Defence more rapidly. However, due to a shortage of non-commissioned officers within Defence, it will not be possible to transfer this specific population to this directorate.

¹³⁰ Today, civilians within Defence are mainly civil servants covered by personnel regulations, besides a limited number of contracted personnel (figures of February 2016). The civil servants covered by personnel regulations represent 1,233 FTE out of the total of 1,531 FTE civilian personnel.

deployment will be part of the Military Intelligence Service, the cyber capability and the influence capability.



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The cyber capability of Defence will be reinforced by recruiting additional civilian cyber specialists.

Within the supporting services of Defence, civilian expertise in Defence research institutions (chiefly the Defence Laboratories and the Royal Military Academy) will remain and will even increasingly be necessary for the development of a reinforced R&T policy (see chapter 6). Civilian researchers within Defence will also maintain a leading role in the more specialised education at the Royal Military Academy in the future.

Additionally, the civilian personnel of Defence will remain involved in specialised logistic and technical support on the national territory.

The Defence Staff will further appeal to their expertise, mainly in the legal, budgetary and human resources fields. Currently, a large number of civilian jobs within Defence belong to the legal service. The growing juridification of society, the legal aspects of the development and the acquisition of planned capabilities as well as the importance of conducting military operations correctly within a complex legal framework imply that Defence will need to have permanent access to the necessary specialised expertise in the legal field.

A legal framework will be established for a possible operational deployment of civilian personnel such as legal advisors, based on the personnel regulations governing the Reserve.

Civilian jobs that help to reinforce the continuity within the organisation will also be maintained. These will involve the control of Defence's sourcing activities and support the management services within the Defence Staff.

This expected evolution of civilian personnel within Defence will involve both a large relative increase of highly qualified personnel within the organisation (level A) and a significant decrease of civilian jobs for which no diploma or certificate is required (level D).

c. A Younger Defence

An important goal of principle no. 9 is the rejuvenation of Defence. According to the model behind the table of the military and civilian recruitment figures, the current average age of military personnel of 40.6 years will lower down to 34.1 years by 2030. Due to limitations in recruitment, this decrease of the average age will be limited to 40.2 years until 2020, and will then drop to 35.8 years during the period 2020-2025. The wave of retirements will be at maximum height during this period.

However, the evolution of the average age in accordance with the current model will be affected by additional initiatives aimed at abandoning Lifetime Employment as much as possible and the possible evolution of the retirement age. These initiatives will be examined in the short term.

d. Invest Maximum Effort in Internal Recruitment

Maximising the use of the BDL personnel regulations will be combined with a maximum effort to make use of internal recruitment. This offers more growth opportunities in the careers of the



Promoting internal recruitment contributes to increasing Defence's attractiveness as an employer.

personnel. By internal recruitment, we mean the promotion to a higher personnel category or to a higher salary scale within the same category. Within Defence, internal recruitment is called "social promotion". Social promotion may or may not be subjected to obtaining an additional diploma. The assessment system will be adjusted in order to better evaluate the potential of the personnel concerned and assist them for their growth opportunities throughout their career.

Promoting internal recruitment contributes to increasing Defence's attractiveness as an employer. Furthermore, education/training attrition (see next chapter) is reduced to a minimum in case of social promotion as the candidates are familiar with the organisational culture and can rely on previously acquired skills.

e. The Need to Further Reduce Attrition

By attrition, we mean the accumulated departures of members of personnel before the retirement age or before the end of the BDL period. Attrition within Defence includes both education/training attrition (departure of personnel during the education/training or application period (3 years on average)) and career attrition. The table which contains the expected military and civilian recruitment figures takes into consideration the attrition of the last few years. Education/training attrition averages 50%, all military categories taken into account. Career attrition however only represents 2%.

It is important to note that reduction of especially education/training attrition will remain essential in the coming years to achieve the targeted medium-term personnel envelope of 25,000 FTE.

In this context, it will be indispensable once more to take a close look at the information given to candidates interested in starting a career within Defence, the candidates' screening and selection as well as their education and training. Persons enlisting at Defence need to have real perspectives of rapid operational deployment, supported by an optimal operational preparation.



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By means of familiarisation days 16-to-26-year-old are brought in contact with the daily tasks and environment of the military personnel in order to familiarise themselves with the different professions within Defence.

As mentioned above, strengthening internal recruitment efforts will also affect the reduction of attrition.

Despite some local successes, the different initiatives taken to minimise attrition in the past few years have not succeeded in reducing the flow of departures in general. Additional (innovative) initiatives will therefore be taken.

More attention will be paid to the use of the appropriate communication channels (including social media) in order to reach the appropriate target groups for the recruitment of Defence. These channels need to provide applicants with realistic and understandable information about Defence. Defence should act even more proactively towards potential applicants. From a general point of view, Defence has to become a more dynamic player on the labour market. Part of this could be achieved by taking initiatives aimed at more flexible methods of payment for bottleneck professions within Defence.

The selection procedure will place more emphasis on the practical skills acquired.

In the short term, new projects will be launched for the positions within Defence where education/training attrition is traditionally quite high. In 2016 and 2017, the traditional job days will be replaced by “familiarisation days”. Applicants will be offered the opportunity to familiarise themselves with the realities of the unit, and will be assessed based on their potential and their suitability for a specific profession.

Concerning basic education and training, initiatives have been set up recently to further improve the progressiveness of the programme. Additional investments will also be made to improve instructors’ education/training and the support in medical and sports coaching.

f. Assessment of Education/Training and Personnel Regulations

Principle no. 9 requires an assessment of education/training and personnel regulations aimed at their possible reform within the framework of a further increase of the flexibility of the personnel policy.

An assessment/study of the education and training policy will be carried out in 2016. Where appropriate, more flexibility will be introduced. Within this framework and if feasible, an acceleration of the flow of recruits to the units will be strived for.

The current, recently implemented, personnel regulations for the military personnel still offer many possibilities to achieve a more flexible personnel policy. These existing opportunities will first be further analysed and applied to a maximum. If afterwards flexibility still needs to be improved, the existing personnel regulations will be adjusted. For example, the age requirements for recruitment could be made more flexible for (the mostly technical) bottleneck professions within Defence.

As mentioned above, opportunities to further optimise the BDL regulations will be examined.

Furthermore, the assessment system will be reviewed in order to improve competence management with a focus on better identifying growth opportunities for the career of the personnel.

The necessity of additional transition options between the military and the civilian personnel regulations will be further examined.

g. A Modern Reserve

Chapter 5 indicated that in addition to the current focus on a mainly specialised Reserve¹³¹ in support of deployment for the core tasks, it will also be examined if the non-specialised Reserve could be reevaluated for the execution of specific surveillance missions in case of an increased level of threat and for deployments in the event of national crises or disasters (reserve companies).

Chapter 5 furthermore mentions other additional possibilities to reinforce the specialised Reserve for the following capabilities: cyber, influence and military construction. The increased use of civilian service providers (as a result of the sourcing policy) is also expected to attract specific profiles for the specialised Reserve (such as technicians,



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On 14 November 2015, the associations of reservists organised a colloquium with international speakers to gather ideas for the modernisation of the Reserve in our country.


¹³¹ This is, for example, of particular importance for the medical support.

mechanics, medical-technical personnel and logistic profiles).

In general, it is important that relations between Defence and the employers are developed to allow reservists to carry out their duties within Defence while having sufficient training opportunities. Employers

have to receive adequate information regarding the added value of the military duties of their employees for their civilian job. It is also necessary to examine which additional compensation measures could be taken in order to strengthen the win-win with regard to the Reserve, both for Defence and the employers.

A young and dynamic Reserve must equally strengthen the relations of Defence with the population and with the enterprises.



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The introduction of the BDL personnel regulations also creates possibilities for assigning reservist jobs to personnel reintegrating civilian life and wishing to maintain relations with Defence.

All these elements will be part of a study on a modern Reserve. The representatives of the associations of reservists will be involved as much as possible in the conception of this modern Reserve.

h. Pensions

An independent committee of experts (the National Pension Committee) is currently examining the future evolution of the pension build-up and the retirement age, especially for arduous occupations (thus possibly also some military positions). A list of such arduous occupations should be drawn up in the course of 2016. Subsequently, the Government will adopt a general point of view in this matter and then it will be possible to determine the consequences for the different positions within Defence.

Defence will start the adjustment of the military retirement age after the advice of the National Pension Committee. If the retirement age will be increased before 2025 this will affect the rejuvenation of Defence, and thus also the necessity and implementation of further sourcing.

The generalised use of the BDL personnel regulations will reduce the number of Defence personnel retiring in the capacity of servicemen and within the Defence organisation. This situation however is still decades away from reality. If Defence wants to strengthen its position in society, the current retirement age should converge to a socially acceptable

age. Defence will have to come up with solutions to provide older employees with 'workable work'.

It will be examined to what extent it is advisable for servicemen to extend their careers on a voluntary basis.

i. The Essential Role of the Social Partners

Acting as the representatives of the members of personnel and in view of their expertise, the social partners need to be involved to a maximum extent in any further development of the flexibility of the personnel policy, as well as in the process of modernising the personnel regulations for the Reserve and in a socially responsible convergence of the pensions.

The current dialogue with the social partners, which is constructive and greatly appreciated, will therefore be carried on in the same way.



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Next Steps

The vision and the perspective are clear. The foundations are present. The work can start.


It is crucial to apply the lines of action of this vision as quickly as possible in order to secure its effective implementation by 2030 and, with regard to rationalisation, to start several projects in the very short term.

Following this strategic vision, an implementation plan for the geographical distribution of the quarters for the duration of the strategic vision will be submitted to the Council of Ministers. This implementation plan will set a precise timetable for the adjustments to the geographical distribution of Defence. The purpose is to quickly and clearly inform the personnel concerned about their future. It is important that trade unions, unit commanders, unit warrant officers and unit corporals, as representatives of the personnel concerned, think along about the implementation of those changes. They are the ones who know their personnel best. They are also the ones who will be in charge of the actual implementation and guidance of those adjustments.

The development of the future capability portfolio of Belgian Defence will also require additional interactions with the EU and NATO for contributions to projects at a European level, as well as with our strategic partner countries. This may possibly affect the final content of the capability planning of our Defence, the aim being to align it as much as possible with our partner countries. The spread in time of the investments in major equipment for this vision will be laid down in a military programme Act for the period until the end of 2030. This act will ensure the necessary stability and predictability for the realisation of the capability portfolio. A bill will be proposed to the Council of Ministers about four months after the strategic vision. Imposing a tight schedule demonstrates the will to anchor the vision of the future described in this plan as much as possible. This anchoring is essential in order to continue positioning Defence as a credible ally within NATO and the EU and to be a reliable partner of the industry and research institutions. But more importantly, as Defence this is necessary in order to stay a reliable pillar for Belgian and European security.

“A military programme Act which will include the **investments in major equipment** of Belgian Defence for the duration of the **strategic vision**, will help generate stability and predictability for the effective realisation of a credible Belgian Defence by 2030 towards society, our allies and the business world.”
(principle no. 7)

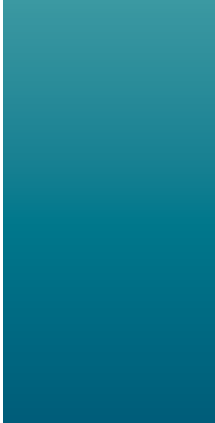
Thereafter, each specific file resulting from these plans will be submitted to the Council of Ministers. Of course, interaction will not be limited to the Council of Ministers. The implementation of this strategic vision will require a constant interaction between the government and the Minister of Defence, between the Minister and Parliament and between the Minister and the Defence staff. Defence will have to support continuous efforts in the field of communication and outreach in order to ensure a good interaction with the public opinion in general, and with the press, the political world and opinion leaders in particular, on the role of Defence and the necessary evolutions the defence organisation is going through for this purpose. Society should be well informed of the value of Belgian Defence and feel concerned with this policy domain in order to (keep on) support(ing) the necessary recapitalisation of Defence.



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The involvement of the entire government in the implementation of the strategic vision will be ensured by informing the working group for policy coordination “Future of Defence” at least every two months of all implementation projects. A commonly agreed dashboard will ensure follow-up. It will clearly show the political decisions to be taken for each project with the related timetable.

The main ‘next step’ will be to convert this strategic vision at all levels into projects that will bring more security, more liberty, more well-being and more prosperity to all our fellow countrymen and women. At the same time, those projects should contribute to creating more Europe to strengthen security in and around Europe and worldwide.



Annex A: The Major Principles of the Strategic Vision for Belgian Defence

- **principle no. 1:** The **core tasks of Belgian Defence are collective defence, collective security and the protection of Belgian citizens all over the world.** Defence can also always be deployed by the government within the framework of national and international missions according to the capabilities available;
- **principle no. 2:** the **multilateral anchoring of Belgian Defence that generates security based on solidarity, has also to be supported by Belgium with budgetary means;**
- **principle no. 3:** for the duration of the strategic vision (2016-2030), we will strive towards a **better balance within Belgian Defence, i.e.**
 - **principle no. 3a:** capabilities allowing an **appropriate completion of the core tasks;**
 - **principle no. 3b:** a **balance among the four capability dimensions** (intelligence-cyber-influence, land, air, maritime), with **at least always one credible and sustainably deployable combat capability per dimension.** The **risk sharing** aspect is **essential to an output based on solidarity** and **requires a sufficiently broad national toolbox with sufficient combat capacity in each dimension.** This toolbox **assures the Belgian government of a lasting influence and impact on international security.** It makes Belgium a credible partner at international level. In order to generate this solidarity-based output within a multilateral framework and in support of the national interests, an equally solidarity-based input by means of a defence effort based on solidarity is of the utmost importance;
 - **principle no. 3c:** a **stronger emphasis** on the **strategic support capabilities** (strategic enablers) that are indispensable to support our own combat capabilities and that often result in a better approach to remedy the European capability gaps. These strategic enablers can be acquired at national level or through a participation in an international cooperation;
 - **principle no. 3d:** a cost structure for Defence with a strong **decrease** in the proportion of **personnel-related costs** within the Belgian defence effort;
 - **principle no. 3e:** a **stronger emphasis** on the **non-kinetic and civil-military capabilities** that are important for the prevention of armed conflicts, for stabilisation after an armed conflict and for a contribution to security in the conflict area;
- **principle no. 4:** the **functioning of Defence will be rationalised as much as possible,** taking into account important considerations such as cost-saving and enhancing effectiveness. This implies, among other things, focusing servicemen on military specific tasks, an increased

use of market opportunities for supporting tasks and services and a rationalisation of the infrastructure;

- **principle no. 5:** taking the needs of Belgian Defence into consideration, **regional balances** will be ensured during the implementation phase for the **geographical distribution** of quarters, personnel and capabilities. This strengthens the bonds with society;
- **principle no. 6:** **elaborate forms of cooperation with other national and international security partners** will be strived for in order to strengthen the national efficiency of Defence and in support of a more European defence policy;
- **principle no. 7:** A **military programme Act** which will include the **investments in major equipment** of Belgian Defence for the duration of the **strategic vision**, will help generate stability and predictability for the effective realisation of a credible Belgian Defence by 2030 towards society, our allies and the business world;
- **principle no. 8:** the efficiency of the investments in major equipment will be optimised by means of a **maximum return on investment to society through know-how, technology and employment, in compliance with national and European legislation in force**. To this end, the Ministry of Economy together with Defence, will define the implementation measures for a maximum economic return for defence procurement, among other things, by using article 346 TFEU, as referred to in the Government agreement;
- **principle no. 9:** a **more flexible personnel policy**, with a reform of education/training and personnel regulations based on an assessment of the current policy. With this increase of flexibility aiming at **abandoning the principle of Lifetime Employment as much as possible**, Defence will become a younger organisation in general. The objective pursued is to lower the current average age of 40.6 years down to 34 years by 2030. For the years 2020 and 2025 indicative target figures related to the average age will also be fixed. In this respect attention will be paid to preserving a sufficient build-up of expertise, **aimed at operational deployment**. Giving new substance to the Reserve will also contribute to a more flexible personnel policy.

Annex B: Preamble by the Government for the Strategic Vision

Defence is an essential mission of the public authority. Investing in Defence both today and in the future is investing in the security of our society, and in the freedom, well-being and prosperity of all citizens.

As stated in the Government agreement, this government gives Defence back the means to execute its tasks properly. During the last three decades Defence has continuously contributed to the rehabilitation of our public finances by reducing the defence budget. The strategic vision that follows gives new breathing space to Defence in order to ensure our population that the armed forces will be able to contribute significantly to the security of our society in the years and decades to come.

Deployments of our Defence usually take place in cooperation with other countries within the multilateral framework of NATO, EU and UN. Our Euro-Atlantic partners expect us to make a solidary contribution to the NATO and EU efforts to maintain peace and security in Europe. In addition, we also have to be a solidary partner for the (civil-)military engagements of EU, NATO and UN, which safeguard our security and our common interests by promoting peace and stability at the borders of Europe and in the world.

That is why we as a government give a positive answer to the request of our partners to stabilise our defence effort (defence budget and pensions) in the short term, and why we foresee an increase in our defence effort by 2030. This effort will be situated between the current average of the European NATO member states without the nuclear powers and the general average of the European NATO member states. After all, a continued solidary multilateral burden and risk sharing is only possible when we invest sufficiently in our Defence. Our country occupies an important position within NATO and EU, as host country of their main institutions, among other things. We want to consolidate this position by making a contribution for defence capabilities at an appropriate level. A sufficient international operational burden sharing for Defence reinforces the credibility of our international policy, and contributes to the safeguarding of our worldwide interests.

With this strategic vision the government provides proper direction for the long term, which allows Defence to respond to the security challenges of tomorrow. Our security environment is constantly evolving and thus uncertain. It is the will of the government to maintain a broadly deployable national Defence, since this offers the best possible flexibility to deal with these security challenges. This will only be practically possible when we organise our Defence even more structurally together with our closest partners. This is also a contribution to a more European defence, which is necessary to be able to continue to safeguard the European security and interests in a more multipolar world. This government makes a strong commitment to a more European defence by a bottom-up European anchoring of the capabilities of our Defence.

This strategic long-term vision is necessary because of Defence's intergenerational nature. This government has to take decisions on investments in defence equipment that will only effectively be used by our servicemen within several years from now.

In accordance with the guidelines of the restricted cabinet of 22 December 2015 several important investment projects will be launched in the short term, such as the future fighter planes, the frigates, the mine countermeasures vessels, the drones, and the combat vehicles for the land forces. The investments in the equipment of Defence require a broad political consensus, for as a government we are aware of the significant efforts these investments demand. The government needs to make a clear and transparent commitment in order to be able to inform our population, our partners, and the industry in the best way possible.

This government also provides the appropriate guidelines for the future of the personnel and the functioning of Defence. Despite the fact that half of our servicemen will go into retirement in the next 10 years, our operational commitment needs to remain at the appropriate level. An important additional recruitment effort will ensure that Defence maintains 25,000 full-time equivalents (consisting of about 24,000 military and 1,000 civilian staff members). Our personnel policy will aim at young people and technological profiles to a maximum extent. Defence will use civilian services through sourcing as much as possible, allowing the servicemen to focus on the operational commitments, insofar as this results in a cost reduction. Sufficient operating resources will be provided to make an appropriate operational level of ambition and operational preparation possible. In the next 15 years Defence will rationalise and modernise fundamentally, in terms of processes as well as structures. In this respect, efficiency and focus on the key tasks are guiding principles.

In brief, this strategic vision sets the course for an evolution towards a structurally sound Defence with the proper balance between investments, and personnel and operating expenses.

Taking into account the above-mentioned intergenerational nature this government will not be able to bear all the efforts to get Defence on track for the future. The next governments will also need to continue to support the progressive development of a balanced Defence based on multilateral solidarity with a European anchoring.

Nevertheless, as a government we already take our responsibility to put Defence on the right track. In addition to the decisions for future investments (2020-2030) 200 million euros will be reserved during this term to invest in equipment in the short term. These funds are necessary to start resolving the shortages in individual equipment and combat vehicles for the land forces, to continue to ensure the operational readiness of our fighter planes, and to design the future of our frigates. The first major sourcing initiatives will also be launched in the short term, in order to make the transition to a Defence of 25,000 full-time equivalents feasible without having to compromise on operational capability. During the remaining three years of this term Defence will also recruit a sufficient number of young and technically skilled personnel.

This strategic long-term vision indicates the general direction for Defence until 2030. During this term and the ones to come this document will be translated into separate implementation

projects that should be the building blocks for the Defence of the future. It is up to this government to point the way ahead, and up to future governments to adjust this vision in order to provide the best possible response to the security challenges of the future.

As a government, we are in any case convinced that this vision and the initial impetus that we can give during this term are a positive turning point for our Defence. They open up a new perspective on growth for a Defence that safeguards our security, freedom, well-being and prosperity on all fronts today, and they will make it possible for Defence to continue to execute its tasks in the future.

