The 'Blue Green' Ship
A Look at Intelligence Section
Naval Service Reserve
UNOCI Mission in Côte d'Ivoire
EDITORIAL

Over the next two issues, to mark the establishment of the new Reserve Defence Force and the beginning of the integration process, An Cosantóir will feature a substantial number of features looking at the activities of our Reserve units. In this month’s magazine we have articles on the Naval Reserve, medics, and air defence, we also have a ‘vox pop’ of personnel, giving their views on life in the Reserve.

For those of you wondering what has happened to your October and November issues, you will be receiving a double-size issue commemorating 50 years of Ireland’s membership of the United Nations, from the Defence Forces’ point of view. This special issue, which will cover all of our UN missions since our first, UNOGIL, in 1958, up to the present missions in Liberia, Kosovo and Ivory Coast, among many others, will be coming out to coincide with the anniversary of our accession to the UN on December 14th.
Congratulations

Our photo shows Capt Anita Hogan (DF Psychologist) and Capt Brian Leahy (Student Counsellor, Cadet School) graduating with honours from Dublin City University with Masters of Science in Work and Organisational Psychology.

First for the Reserve

Lt Col Padraig Ua hUallachain, pictured here with Coy Sgt Walsh and 2/Lt Keogh, was one of four commandants promoted to become the first lieutenant colonels in the RDF.

Review

Armin Billy Galligan’s photos show Minister of State for Defence Mr Tom Kitt TD with Lt Col JJ O’Reilly (OC 94 Inf Br) inspecting the troops of 94 Inf Br in McKee Bks prior to their departure to Liberia. (See November’s Connect for more.)

A New Start

Minister for Defence Mr Willie O’Dea accompanied by Comdt Byrne inspects a Guard of Honour in Sarsfield Bks, Limerick on October 1st on a day of ceremonies to mark the establishment of the Reserve Defence Forces.
Charities Receive Proceeds

Three charities received the proceeds of an Open Day and Table Quiz held in Custume Barracks recently. Lt Col Michael Kennedy (OC 6 Inf Bn) presented cheques to Mrs Loretta Farrell (Friends of St Luke’s) for €3,000; Mrs Patricia Cleary (Special Olympics) for €3,000; and finally to Col Senan Downes (ABF) for €1,200.


Books for Liberia

Sgt David Nagle’s photo shows Gnr George Whelan (94 Inf Bn) accepting books donated from the students of Scoil Náisiúnta Íosa, Tallaght for School children in Liberia. Pte Liam McGuinness (94 Inf Bn) suggested the idea to collect books, after reading an article in An Cosantóir, to his sister Linda who is a Special Needs Assistant in the school. The pupils are from (l-r): Shona McGuinness (Liam’s niece), Matthew O’Connor, Noel Moran, Gnr George Whelan, Craig Curran, Mark Power and Louise Farrell.

Reserve Trophy

Armin Billy Gailligan’s photo shows Comdt Robert Hume with members of 5 Fd Med Coy, Galway, who reclaimed the Director of Medical Services Cup this year. (See pages 16-19 for more.)

New Colours

The colours of the NSR on parade for the first time.

4 W Bde RDF

The colours of 4 W Bde RDF on parade in Sarsfield Bks on October 1st. Photo: Armin Billy Gailligan.
Being in command of a Naval Service ship on patrol, sheltering while a violent storm wreaks havoc in waters where Ireland has responsibilities concentrates the mind. Every naval commander knows the old adage ‘ships are safe in harbour’ but that is not where ships are meant to be. However, to venture forth needlessly, steaming into danger is not without penalty. If his ship is modest, such a move, at the very least, is likely to quickly dissipate his contingent capability, and worse still it could result in injury to his personnel or damage to his ship. While traditionally it has been better to remain poised, ready to respond to an emergency situation, things must change as Ireland prepares to lay claim to one of the largest rafts of ocean area in Western Europe.

Under international law, in addition to a 200 nautical mile exclusive economic zone (EEZ) certain states may also exercise sovereign rights over the seabed and sub-seabed resources of the continental shelf. Ireland has a large continental shelf and is entitled to submit a claim to the United Nations for an area of ocean extending far beyond the 200-mile limit off its coast. This potentially will bring an area of almost 1 million square kilometres of the North-east Atlantic under national jurisdiction. In addition to natural resource benefits that may be derived from this area come responsibilities that Ireland is required to uphold under international law.

Government tasks the Naval Service with contributing to the maximum to all of the State’s
The case for larger ships with greater survivability and a capability to withstand harsh Northeast Atlantic conditions further offshore is clear if Ireland is to exercise sovereignty over its continental shelf.

Requirements at sea. Accordingly, these additional responsibilities will impact on naval operations. In addition, because Naval Service vessels express state sovereignty and political will at sea the fleet profile and required capabilities will also need examination.

The seas of the Northeast Atlantic are generally recognised as being among the most hostile in the world. A recent study shows that the most extreme wave conditions are in the storm track regions of the North Atlantic, west of Ireland. The effects of global warming will make this bad situation worse with climatologists forecasting more frequent and more violent weather patterns.

In the 2000 White Paper on Defence the Government decided that its commitment to a fleet replacement program was such that the Naval Service should have a modern eight-ship flexible flotilla. With three ships set to be decommissioned before 2010 and a further three before 2015, in the words of Price Waterhouse there is no ‘do nothing’ option.

Taking into account all these factors Defence Forces’ naval planners are looking at the Naval Service fleet replacement programme with a view to ensuring that it somehow future-proofs its new ships for service up to 2040 and beyond. They are looking at the Navy’s current service provision, taking into account the changing environment in which these services are delivered, and looking at potential new services, which policy makers may ask the Defence Forces to deliver.

The case for larger ships with greater survivability and a capability to withstand harsh Northeast Atlantic conditions further offshore is clear if Ireland is to exercise sovereignty over its continental shelf. Size is a key factor in determining hull survivability and from that stems crew and equipment survivability. But size is also a key factor in determining flexibility, one of the required fleet characteristics specified by Government.

What type of services should the flexibility envelope cover and where might these services be delivered? In considering this question it is worth looking at some of the enduring characteristics of naval forces. These include:

- Poise: The International Right of Freedom of the Seas allows access by naval vessels through 70% of the Earth’s surface. Once near a scene of crisis they may poise to facilitate political or other considerations.
- No Footprint: The tactical self-sufficiency of naval vessels is such that they have a range of several thousand miles, an endurance of several weeks, and do not necessarily require host nation support.
- Sovereign Status: Naval vessels enjoy the sovereign status of their state and accordingly they contribute significant political advantage in the context of crisis response. Forces deployed on a naval vessel are for all intents and purposes still on the sovereign territory of their own state.
- Rapid Response: Concurrent planning and relevant clearance can be undertaken while en route to a scene of crisis. Accordingly, with the increase in sprint speed of modern naval vessels they offer a relatively rapid response.
• **Low Risk:** The integral security of a naval ship is such that risks to the ship and its personnel can be lower when operating from the littorals.

• **Reversibility:** The ability of naval forces to deploy, withdraw and re-deploy, provides decision-makers with many options without being forced to commit at an early stage of a developing situation.

• **Flexibility:** One of the enduring characteristics of naval forces is their flexibility and their capacity to ‘role swing’ or deliver a variety of services simultaneously or sequentially.

Having acknowledged naval capability for furthering policy objectives in the international maritime domain the Government has already pointed towards the need to be able to act in the international arena. The tragic events associated with the tsunami in Asia and Hurricane Katrina in the US provide examples of the types of contingencies for which some states already have plans. Sadly, the events also provide examples of disasters for which some states were unprepared. In the aftermath of the tsunami, with infrastructure destroyed over thousands of square miles, the sea provided one of the few avenues of approach to deliver crisis response services such as medical, food, engineering and logistic support. It is not surprising then that the initial response used by governments was built around naval assets.

Today over half of the world’s population live within 30 nautical miles from the sea and indicators suggest this figure could rise to over 75% by 2020. Two-thirds of the world’s cities that have a population of more than 2.5 million are located on the coastline or on estuaries. The world’s population is forecast to rise by 50% reaching nine billion by 2050, with 95% of this increase in Third World countries. Some indicators suggest that the population of Africa could double in the next few decades.

In the final analysis, whether or not Ireland should have the capacity to deliver crisis response services from the sea is a matter for Government. In providing the appropriate advice, planners will have to consider, among other things, the implications of two significant developments in terms of Ireland’s international engagement.

Firstly, understanding fully the joint implications of Ireland’s commitment to international security necessitates an assessment of the military capabilities that Ireland can use in regional UN-mandated security missions. Ireland offers 850 personnel for overseas operations as part of the UN Standby Arrangement System (UNSAS).

Increasingly, the expectation in international operations will be for countries to have the capability to deploy, support, sustain and withdraw their individual contribution to international operations. As things currently stand Ireland is dependant on using commercial lift or that of the military forces of other countries. Developing the capability for a unilateral deployment, such as might be required in an international disaster or crisis, is something that might be of value, particularly if the penalty for depending on other parties has political, economic or indeed reliability implications. The second issue to be considered relates to Ireland and its overseas aid policy. Current Ireland Aid policy is informed by the Report of the Ireland Aid Review Committee. The detailed report highlights the need for Ireland to develop its capacity to react more rapidly to crises. It makes the point of the need to address public ownership of the aid programme, so the citizen can see more clearly where the State’s contribution to overseas aid is being utilised as it grows towards 0.07% of GDP.

The report highlights the need for increased effort in West Africa, specifically mentioning a number of countries, but it concedes that there are security considerations that bear on the provision of overseas aid in these areas. Of critical importance, the report highlights the need to strive for policy coherence. From a national perspective, at the highest level, this points towards a need to ensure that the activities of one government department compliment those of another. Ultimately it suggests appropriate cross cutting structures that go to the heart of delivering better government.

In recent times Naval planners, largely for the reasons articulated above, introduced the concept of the ‘blue green’ ship to the Defence Forces’ lexicon. In brief, it is a new type of ship for the Defence Forces, designed primarily for delivering services in the ‘blue’ environment (at sea) but, because of its size,
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advt
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designed with the flexibility, or ‘swing’, to deliver services to the ‘green’ environment (on land).

Subject to priority, it could, for example, be designed with the following capabilities:

* A flexible deck area capable of carrying a variety of loads from containers to vehicles, both military and civilian.
* A built-in medical facility that could be manned by national or NGO medical staff who join the ship at the scene of crisis.
* Accommodation capacity for evacuation operations or troop deployment.
* A command control communications centre for crisis co-ordination.
* An anti-radiation citadel to enable it function close to a crisis scene, gathering vital information in the case of radioactive fallout arising from civilian or other radioactive discharge, thereby assisting objective decision-making.

More recently, the concept is being called the ‘multi-role vessel’ following on the success of the New Zealand solution. Denmark has already launched its answer, the larger flexible support ship. Wherever one looks governments are looking for smarter, faster, economic solutions to the attainment of capabilities for the delivery of defence, crisis response and public services. But that is not all, governments are also looking for redundancy and, ultimately, flexibility: redundancy that will facilitate future-proofing, and flexibility that will ensure the delivery of the broadest spectrum of services possible.

For the Irish Navy many of the services it already provides are not necessarily military in nature. In many ways the Irish Navy provides a good example of a post-modern military organisation, where the division between military and public service provision is blurred. Looking to the future, there is every reason to believe that this will become more of the norm in many countries.

In crisis response there are compelling arguments for closer co-operation between the military and NGOs and for closer co-operation between a state’s medical service providers and its military. Public medical practitioners in conjunction with NGOs operating from a naval platform could provide vital medical services in an area where security or infrastructure might not be ideal.

The concept of task structuring the service provision in a crisis response scenario is the way it should be, depending on the need. It could be a mix of medical and security; medical and engineering; or medical, security and engineering. Ultimately, the desired effects will drive the optimum task structure.

Ireland is endowed with a sea area that is potentially 13 times the size of the state. A sea area where it is has sovereign rights over the seabed and sub-seabed resources for hundreds of miles offshore. A sea area for which it requires certain capabilities to uphold these sovereign rights: capabilities that have utility in the provision of value for money services in other environments.

No country can accurately forecast what crisis will befal its sphere of influence next year not to mention in ten years. What is clear, however, is that crises will happen. They may be the result of natural catastrophes, political instability, insecurity or a plethora of other causes.

In the past year the world has witnessed three major events resulting in gargantuan human suffering: the tsunami in Asia, hurricane Katrina in the US, and the earthquake in Pakistan. In addition there was a host of other humanitarian crises simmering below the ‘issue attention’ threshold, all worthy of international response. The ones for Africa, where Ireland already expends a substantial portion of its aid budget, are not good.

Government policy is to ensure that the capabilities that the Defence Forces attains through its Naval Service fleet replacement programme have flexibility. The central tenet to the ‘blue green’ concept is flexibility. The greater the flexibility of the crisis response capabilities, the greater the probability that it will have some sort of utility: utility that could complement the efforts of NGOs and others, such as state medical service providers.

‘Blue green’ ship for Ireland, yes or no? Ultimately, that is a matter for Government.

Notes
1 Ireland has never formally claimed an Exclusive Economic Zone.
2 White Paper on Defence 2000, Para 4.11.8
3 White Paper on Defence 2000, Para 4.11.4
4 See The global wave climatology atlas on the web at http://www.knmi.nl/onderzoek/ocean/waves/era40/atlas_bok.html
5 White Paper on Defence 2000, Para 4.11.4
6 In the 2000 Price Waterhouse study into the Naval Service and Air Corps the notion of a Naval Service ship before it becomes unreliable and more costly to maintain was set at 30 years. Three ships of the fleet will reach this critical life span by 2010 (LÉs Emer, Aoife and Aisling).
7 Size, however is not necessarily a major cost driver – as is often remarked ‘steel is cheap and air is free’. By far the major capital cost driver is the sophistication of the marine engineering and electrical/electronic technology including surveillance and weapon systems fitted to the hull. The major running cost driver is manpower.
8 See footnote 4 above.
9 According to AP Higgins they represent the sovereignity and independence of their state more fully than anything else can on the ocean; they can be met only by their equals there and equals cannot exercise jurisdiction over equals. The jurisdiction of their own state over them is therefore exclusive under all circumstances.
10 White Paper on Defence 2000, Para 4.11.4
12 From a European perspective a partial capability that cannot be readily used in a UN-mandated security mission because of lack of lift is considered by many not to be a capability.
14 It is not unusual for ships to be built with significant void spaces, which can be used to retrofit new equipment as technology and doctrine change.
15 This does not mean that its military capacity is diminished. On the contrary, proficiency in small-boat operations built up over many years of fishery protection has become a niche area for the Irish Naval Service. A niche area, that has clear utility in counter-drug or counter-terrorism operations.
16 The concept of provincial reconstruction teams in Afghanistan provides an example. However, there is a need to move very cautiously in order to avoid humanitarian and NGO activities being manipulated in such a manner so that it appears they are being used to achieve military objectives.
17 Issue Attention Cycle – see Down’s Issue Attention Cycle with the five stages of preproblem, alarms discovery-euphoric enthusiasm, realising costs of progress, gradual decline of public interest and post problem stage – Wayne Parsons Public Policy - 115.
To some the Shannon estuary is nothing more than a vast network of mud banks, channels, tides, rocks and islands, leading all the way up to Limerick City, but for the likes of PO Derek Richardson and A/Sea Jackie Sheehan it’s their playground.

“I’d hold on if I was you, Jackie is taking the wheel!” PO Richardson said with a laugh. After an exciting roller-coaster ride, and a couple of 360° doughnut turns that left me with a salt-stained face, I was glad to climb aboard the sanctuary of the Limerick Steamboat. Of course, taking people like myself out for jaunts is not the job of the Naval Reserve, but they like to use the opportunity to show what they’re made of.

With the re-organisation the NSR now comprises of four companies, each of 100 personnel, stationed in Dublin, Waterford, Cork and Limerick. Provisions for training, equipment and facilities are available to these units to ensure that they can train their personnel for service at sea.

Like all reserve units I have visited, Limerick NSR is full of professional and highly motivated people. The commanding officer, Lt Cdr Mick Foley, an accountant by trade, has been in the unit since 1978. He told me: “The unit is full of talented people. We have people with maritime navigation qualifications, shipmates and communications qualifications. We have a great team but it’s always been like this. We have some quite well-known people from the maritime world in our ranks: the last CO was Jim Corrigan, who was a chief engineer with Irish Ferries, and his vast ship building experience was a great asset to the Naval Service. Other people come to mind like Lt Cdr Bobby Maloney, who was a serious racing sailor out of Foynes, Monty Ahern, who was a seagoing officer with the Limerick Steamboat Company, and Jerry Kennedy, who worked with the Limerick Leader and actually got to go to Lebanon with his job.”

The unit operates out of Sarsfield Bks, where it has all its lecture rooms, and Kilrush, where there is an excellent berth and marina for all the unit’s sea training.

“Things are a lot different now than when I joined up,” Lt Cdr Foley told me. “We are very active these days, with 78 active personnel of whom 30% are female. Half of our man-days are now spent at sea, which we hope is making a major contribution to the Naval Service.”

Training is the main focus of the NSR. They do most of what standard army reservists do, but then they have to take their recruits through basic seamen-ship, small-boat training, knots and splices, ship’s husbands and navigation. Limerick NSR has several people who have studied up to yacht masters qualifi-cation and has others working towards achieving powerboat certificates with the Irish Sailing Association. Of course, they learn most when they go to sea. “Our objective is to provide ready-made seagoing personnel,” explained Lt Cdr Foley. “They mightn’t be at the same standard as their full-time colleagues but they would certainly be able to take up a position on a ship where they could get further training.”

All NSR units are provided with BP 18s (18-foot sailing boats) for basic sailing seamanship training. Much of these skills are not going to be of much use to the Naval Service, but are necessary skills nonetheless. These sailing skills can be put to the test on the Naval Service’s tall ships, Asgard and Tailte, or on the NSR sailing yacht, Greta.

Each unit is also provided with a rigid inflatable boat (RIB). These powerboats are also used by NS ships as their general-purpose boats, and all NSR
Enlisted personnel in the NSR do similar jobs to their NS counterparts and are able to fit fairly smoothly into crews on NS ships, but NSR officers would rarely have the same experience as their full-time counterparts. Although this limits the role they can play on NS ships they do assist in watch keeping, navigation and boarding.

“Most of us do completely different jobs on shore so going to sea is a challenge,” Lt Cdr Foley says. “Even though it is very busy and your sleep is thrown out of sync I find the experience very refreshing and very worthwhile.”

With the Naval Service operating 24 hours a day, every day, the NSR have a greater opportunity to integrate. As well as calling on their reservists for land-based duties the Naval Service also brings reservists on patrol. On this year’s NS exercises, for example, Limerick NSR Coy had two personnel on each ship with a further 20 taking part in different scenarios.

“One of the big changes for us,” Lt Cdr Foley says, “is that I can report directly to the Flag Officer almost as if I was a ship’s captain. We also now report into Shore Operations in the Naval Base, which is far more practical, and they look at us as an integrated part of the Navy.”

“What we need to do now,” he continued, “is to up-skill our people so that they can do even more at sea, such as boarding NCOs, gunnery or communications. It’s beneficial for the Navy to use reservists and we are quite happy with it too. The NSR is a good entry point into the Navy. If someone spends a few years with us and then decides to join the Navy they know exactly what they are getting into. This reduces the likelihood of dropping-out during training. The Navy have invested in us and they are now reaping the rewards!”

NAVAL RESERVE

A/Sea Tracey Delaney (19)
I originally only joined because my friends were joining up but I really got into it and I’m now applying for the Naval Service. ... it gives you great experience and loads of seatime, allowing you to make up your mind whether or not to join up full-time.

A/Sea Keane Ryan (19)
As ratings we are training most of the time. When we go to sea we fill up the spaces left when guys go on leave and we have to do everything they do, from mopping the ‘heads to going out on boardings. You are really treated as one of the crew.

I’ve always been interested in the Navy. I applied for a Naval Service cadetship but unfortunately I didn’t get it; there were only two places and I came third, but I’m going to apply again next year. In the meantime I’ve started college, doing construction studies in LIT.

CPO Pat Mahoney (Cadre Staff)
I’ve been working with the Slua Muirí in Cork and Limerick since 1993. I deal mainly with admin, rations, uniforms and the like but we also help out with the sea training as the cadre staff are qualified and trained on the RIBs and MTLs. More and more though, the NSR are now taking over the role of drilling and training their own personnel.

It’s a completely different experience working with reservists than it is with full-time personnel. I’m in Limerick today, Kilrush tomorrow, and Cork the day after. I get on very well with them and the commitment of the personnel in the Limerick unit makes my job even easier. They are very enthusiastic and self-motivated and want to be involved in everything.
One of the things I enjoy most is that I am instructing both PDF and RDF personnel together,” says Capt Stavrionas. “This has always been a fully integrated unit and there is no difference whether you are PDF or RDF. The two just work alongside each other.”

ADR is a model for the future integration of Reserve personnel into PDF units. It is also a prime example of how well PDF and RDF personnel can work alongside each other. We spoke to Capt Tony Stavrionas (Instr 1 ADR) and Sgt Danny Farrell (Instr 1 ADR) at this year’s Flycatcher Commanders and Gun Detachment Commanders courses about air defence, not an easy job with marauding PC-9Ms diving down for the kill.

1 ADR is the only unit in the Defence Forces that is made up of both PDF and RDF personnel. Out of the five batteries in the regiment three are made up of Reservists, based in Cork, Limerick and Dublin. Each battery consists of two Flycatchers and six EL/70s. The two PDF batteries are based in the Curragh, where No 1 Battery also mans a missile battery.

There is no distinction made between PDF and Reservists serving with the Air Defence Regiment. “If you want to be a gunner, gun commander or Flycatcher commander, everybody does the same course,” explained Sgt Farrell. “We are fully integrated and even more so now that we are all using the same equipment.”

The integration in 1 ADR has advanced to the stage were RDF personnel are brought in to instruct on courses. Capt Tony Stavrionas, who in civilian life is a steel fabricator with the Naval Service, is one such person. In the unit since 1977 he has come up through the ranks and is one of those people that are always eager to learn more. Every time a new piece of equipment came on line he was on the course.

“One of the things I enjoy most is that I am instructing both PDF and RDF personnel together,” says Capt Stavrionas. “This has always been a fully integrated unit and there is no difference whether you are PDF or RDF. The two just work alongside each other.”

The Gun Detachment Commanders (GDC) course on the Bofors EL/70 is four weeks long and the Flycatcher Commanders course runs for eight weeks. The two courses run alongside each other culminating in a joint tactical deployment.

The Flycatcher radar operates with a two-man team: the Battery Control Officer (BCO), a captain, and the Fire Control Officer (FCO), a sergeant or above. Everybody on this course has to be a GDC.

“Today I’m instructing on the Flycatcher course: bringing the students through the different drills on the radar, how to deploy it with three guns, and bringing them up to battle standards,” explained Capt Stavrionas.

Students learn how to place the radar and get it up and running. They have to learn how to plot the lanes, HiDACZ (High, Density, Airspace, Control & Zone), base defence zones, and weapons-free zones. They also carry out range practices with the guns, and finally there is the tactical deployment.

Students initially deploy without troops. “We can put what’s on the ground onto the Polar Plan Indicator (PPI) screen so the radar operator knows what the tactical situation is,” explained Sgt Farrell. “They need to know the location of civilian buildings and installations, and the locations of their battery,”

‘Blazing Skies!’

Wesley Bourke and Arnn Billy Galligan travelled to the Curragh to report on the activities of the most fully integrated unit in the Defence Forces, 1 ADR.

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any missile installations, and friendly forces. If defending an airfield they also need to know what lanes friendly aircraft are coming in on.”

All this information is needed so the operator knows what guns can fire on a particular attacking aircraft. It may not be safe for a gun to fire over transport lines or over radar or friendly troops, so the radar operator sets up a ‘taboo sector’ where the guns will not fire. The gun will track the attacking aircraft but will not fire at it until it leaves the taboo sector. Students then have to learn to marry the radar with the guns and how to lay them out properly. For example, a gun can operate 3kms away from the radar.

Once the guns are set in ‘remote’ mode and the radar operator presses the fire button, ten rounds are fired from each gun. The GDC’s job then is to ‘feed the beast’ (keeping the guns supplied with ammunition).

With the GDC course the main aim is to ensure that the gun detachment commander’s gunnery is at a very high level. After that the GDCs have to learn how to marry the two systems and how to work with the Flycatcher as a team.

The BCO orientates the guns, ensuring that they are pointing in the same direction as the tracking antenna. The GDC has to be proficient in laying out the guns using ‘direct’, ‘indirect’ or ‘laser’ method, depending on the scenario.

“The Flycatcher and EL/70 are known as a ‘guardian system’ once they operate together,” Sgt Farrell told me. “The radar has a 20km range and the system has a 95% hit probability: once you get your lock on and you get your lights up, you press the button and your target is gone,” he continued with a smile. “The system is designed to take out F-16s so I don’t think the Pilatus would have much of a chance: it’s a good job we aren’t actually firing at them!”

I attended the culminating tactical exercise, which saw the courses initially deployed in the Curragh Camp area. The N7 was used as an aerial runway and Kildare town was used as a base defence zone, and the area in between was a weapons free zone. Once that area was defended they picked up and moved to Turlough Hill, in the Dublin Mountains, which was designated a tactical area that could be ‘hit up’ at any stage. The final area to be defended was Baldonnel Aerodrome. Pilatus PC-9Ms from the Air Corps’ Flight Training School were used throughout the exercise, coming in at low level to attack the gun positions. As soon as the radar ‘locked on’ the pilots carried out evasive manoeuvres. “The pilot can break our tracking by using evasive manoeuvres,” Sgt Farrell said, “but we have Electronic Counter-Measures (ECM), which enables us to track onto the target even if the lock is broken.”

In three year’s time when the RDF makes the next move to integrate personnel into PDF units they will be looking at 1 ADR. “We have very professional and dedicated personnel,” Sgt Farrell said. “You’re not even aware who is Reserve and who is full-time; it’s all the same.”

It was very exciting watching the men and women of 1 ADR at work. Even in training it must be an eerie feeling for pilots to know they are being tracked by guns capable of firing 300 rounds a minute. With three guns operating together that would mean 900 rounds exploding around you every minute!

On the ground the comms reveal the story.

“Guns be ready to be activated. Is your safety area clear?”

“Yes the gun is clear.”

“Go to remote. Engage your target, blaze the skies!”
With the vast training area of Kilworth at their disposal teams from 3, 5, 11 and 27 Fd Med Coys took to the ground on a drizzly day in September to see who would be crowned as medics of the year. Due to their victory in last year’s Medical Cup 1 Fd Med Coy could not enter a team and instead hosted the competition, with their personnel acting as adjudicators.

The teams of eight from each company underwent a variety of tasks: foot-drill, route march, base camp, triage, navigation, grenade throwing and an obstacle course. Being a medical competition the triage section was weighted and it was worth an equal amount of points as all the other disciplines put together.

Trudging around Kilworth after the different teams you got to see first hand just what these medics were made of. Each team took everything very seriously and the determination in their faces said it all. Of the military aspects to the competition I found the base camp and obstacle course very interesting and entertaining.

“The base camp exercise is designed to see how they react to conditions out on the ground and that they can erect a camp that they are capable of operating out of overnight,” explained Sgt Joe Doran, 1 Fd Med Coy.

As we spoke the 27 Fd Med Coy team emerged from the woods. “They faired out well under the time allocated,” Sgt Doran told me. “It’s a quick part of the exercise and they did well. They kept quiet, erected their tentage, they set up an MAP, got their security up, and set up their running lines to their access and exit points. So the team leader was thinking.”

Only when talking to the teams themselves do you realise the calibre of these reserve medics. Sgt Anthony McGovern, 27 Fd Med Coy, St Bricins Hospital, told me: “All these guys have from basic first aid up to advanced first aid. We also do occupational first aid because this is a civilian qualification. Some of our unit are in the fire brigade, some are from the HSE, and we have doctors, nurses and EMTs. It’s great because we are getting the professionalism and knowledge from the outside brought into our classroom. Young recruits now are getting trained by A&E doctors and ward doctors on a Tuesday night: it’s a big change from when I joined.”

The obstacle course was brilliant and really put the teams to the limit of their physical and mental fitness. I even found myself getting stuck in and encouraging the teams who all finished drenched and covered in mud.

The course was put together by a close friend of 1 Fd Med Coy, Pte Terry Healy, Pt Instr, 4 Inf Bn.

“The obstacle course is designed to make them work as a team,” Pte Healy told me. “As a medical unit it is essential that they operate as a team so they can treat casualties more efficiently.”

There were six obstacles in the course, designed to test the teams anaerobically and aerobically, and above all to test their motivation. “One of the biggest challenges for me as a PT instructor when I work with the Reservists is trying to motivate people who are already very motivated!” said Pte Healy.

One 19-year-old architecture student from 3 Fd Med Coy came out of a mud-filled ditch smiling as if she was out for a Sunday stroll. “This is my third year in this competition,” Pte Nora Bulmer told me with a smile, “and that was the most amazing obstacle course I’ve ever done. It’s very good at getting the motivation up and getting team spirit going.”

The medical aspects of the competition were not for the squeamish. The triage area was filled with...
We had an excellent day. I've been in the Reserve for four years. I joined the medics because four of my family are in the unit and it's great experience for outside.

Col Maurice Collins
MD,
Director Medical Corps.
I think the day was a great success. This is the 10th year we've run it in this format and it's probably the last time we can use this format because of the re-organisation, but we will be looking to see how we can continue the competition: maybe we can run it through the Medical School.

From the point of view of the Medical Corps it is a very important competition because it is so multi-disciplinary. It combines all the participants' military and medical skills, which makes being a member of a military medical unit totally different to any other medical organisation.

I think the commitment of the medical services in the RDF is going to increase. Internationally it has been shown that no country can maintain medical services to its military without integrating their reserve medical forces, both to maintain the manpower and the skills required. The level of skills required in modern medical and paramedical services has moved on at such a pace over the last generation that we have to source those skills externally and we have to keep those skills up by practising in outside organisations, such as civilian hospitals and external ambulance services.

Not an easy task, I can imagine, for full-time professionals let alone reservists. However, Sgt Lisa Spellman (26), 5 Fd Med Coy, Galway, and her well-
A trained team showed that reservists are just as professional as their full-time counterparts. “We got on fantastic today,” she told me. “Everything went well,” the social worker student continued. “The casevac was excellent; we saved every casualty with 30 seconds to spare. We won the Director’s Cup two years ago and we are here to reclaim the title. We had a few new members to the team so they had to be trained up on trauma treatment, triage, casevac and multiple casevac: who gets brought out first and why, and who gets brought out last and why.”

And reclaim the title they did. All their hard work paid off and 5 Fd Med Coy took first place in this year’s competition with 3 Fd Med Coy finishing close behind.

I mightn’t exactly like to rely on them in a navigation exercise but if I ever have to call ‘Medic!’ and a Reservist comes to the scene I’ll know I’m in safe hands.

From October 1st 2005, 27 and 11 Fd Med Coys amalgamated and are now part of 62 Res LSB. 1 and 3 Fd Med Coys amalgamated and are now part of 31 Res LSB. 5 Med Coy is now part of 54 Res LSB.

Sgt Noel O’Regan.

Right: Col Maurice Collins presenting Sgt Lisa Spellman with the Director Med RDF trophy

Below right: Competitors during the obstacle course phase.
The Radisson Hotel, overlooking the Shannon in Athlone, was the location for PDFORRA’s 14th Annual Delegate Conference. The Conference followed the traditional, proven format, opening with the registration of delegates at 1500hrs and swinging straight into business until 1930hrs when that day’s session ended with a workshop on public speaking for delegates.

Day Two of the conference began with the discussion and adoption of financial motions and then moved on to policy motions before the first speech of the day, delivered by the Minister for Defence Mr Willie O’Dea.

In his speech the Minister addressed a wide range of topics. He began by praising the work of Defence Forces personnel, both at home and abroad, that he had come across during his visits to barracks throughout the country and on his trips to Liberia and the Balkans, where he said he saw “at first hand the dedication and professionalism of military personnel in bringing comfort and hope to those who are less fortunate than us”.

Mr O’Dea continued by addressing the issue of conciliation and arbitration and spoke about how situations such as arose during a recent dispute with PDFORRA concerning an incident in Donegal could undermine the process. The Minister said that this had come about due to PDFORRA engaging in activities outside the scope of representation. (This contention was strongly disputed by PDFORRA General Secretary Gerry Rooney in his follow-on address to conference.)

The Minister also stated his intention that the Government White Paper on Defence “will be fully delivered on, within the original schedule”.

He then went on to speak about the continuing efforts to address bullying and harassment in the Defence Forces, and the appointment of the Ombudsman, Ms Paulyn Marrinan Quinn.

Mr O’Dea also spoke of his intention to encourage larger numbers of females to join the Defence Forces.

The Minister’s address was followed by PDFORRA Gen Sec Gerry Rooney. In his speech Mr Rooney began by “recognising the sterling work of the Defence Forces over the past year”, in the carrying out of their duties both domestically and abroad. He then went on to address the commitment of Naval Service personnel demonstrated in their contribution to the increased operational capacity of the Service. However, he warned that early trends emerging in PDFORRA’s impact study on sea-to-shore rotation were indicating problems that needed to be addressed.

Mr Rooney also called on the Minister to protect the Defence Forces’ allocation by government, which he says “has fallen from 1.3% to 0.7%” in terms of GNP during the period 1995 to 2004.

While addressing the issue of Sustaining Progress the General Secretary refuted the Minister’s claims that PDFORRA had operated outside their remit in the Donegal incident.

The next stage of Mr Rooney’s speech dealt with ‘work/life balance’ for personnel of the Defence Forces. He welcomed some of the measures introduced in recent years such as term time, force majeure leave, and special leave, and their contribution to making the Defence Forces “more family friendly”. However, he highlighted PDFORRA’s concerns regarding the possible impact on its members of the introduction of the proposed EU Battle Groups and the “time critical” nature of their deployment.

Mr Rooney went on to deal with the negotiations on the post-1994 personnel issue. He said he was pleased to report that under the new deal post-1994 privates can now serve beyond the 12-year limit that was previously in place and that the NEC would be
Behind the Scenes

An Cosantóir has covered many of PDFORRA’s annual conferences but we have never looked at the behind-the-scenes work that goes on. So this time I met with the Chairman of the Conference Arrangements Committee (CAC), Paul Cooley, who filled me in on the vital work carried out in order to ensure the conference runs smoothly.

Paul, a CQMS with 56 Inf Bn RDF based in Costume Bks, Athlone, has 37 years service with the Defence Forces, and has been involved with PDFORRA for the last 10 years. During that time he was Secretary of the Athlone District, regional delegate, and Regional Secretary, before being elected to the National Executive four years ago.

As Chairman he told me about the composition and work of the Conference Arrangements Committee. “There are two main committees involved in organising and running the annual conference, the Conference Arrangements Committee and the Standing Orders Committee (SOC),” he told me. “Three of PDFORRA’s six regions supply a member each to the CAC, and the other three supply a member each to the SOC. The regional representatives are selected on an annual basis and they are joined on the CAC by a member of the National Executive.

Planning for this year’s conference actually began for the CAC early in 2004. “We had to come up with a short-list and a recommendation for the location of the 2005 Conference to put to the delegates at Conference in Letterkenny in October 2004,” Paul told me. In order to do that the CAC had to contact a number of hotels in the proposed region to check for availability and suitability.

“We have a number of criteria that we consider in the selection process,” Paul said. “The first and obvious one is size; they have to be capable of providing us with over 120 bedrooms and adequate conference facilities. After that we look at value for money, location, and availability.”

That process continued this year with the CAC checking out and short-listing a number of hotels in the Southern Region to put to delegates to choose for the Conference in 2006. (The delegates decided on the Tower Hotel in Waterford.)

While sourcing the venue for next year’s conference the CAC also had to put all the preparations in place for this year’s event in the Radisson Hotel, Athlone. This included a wide range of activities such as booking a photographer; audio-visual coverage to record the proceedings; ordering name tags; liaising with the hotel regarding the provision and timing of coffee breaks and meals; liaising with the NEC regarding guest/VIP lists; arranging for independent scrutineers for the voting; and myriad other tasks necessary in order to ensure the conference would run smoothly and efficiently.

“We arrive on the Monday of the Conference to check everything is in place,” Paul said. “Then when the delegates begin to arrive we check them off the manifest and sort out any problems with rooms or personnel; sometimes we get late substitutions in the delegates, so names and rooms don’t always match up and these all have to be sorted out.”

Throughout the Conference Paul is in contact with the NEC and the Chairman of the SOC through a head set, which allows the necessary people to be aware of any problems and get them sorted out as quickly as possible.

“Having been with the CAC for the last five years,” Paul told me, “has given me a lot of experience in dealing with all kinds of problems that can arise.”
advt
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Cpl Aaron Kedward (20)
65 Res Inf Bn (7 Inf Bn), McKee Bks.
Sports Science student.
When I first joined it was the old FCÁ. I’ve seen a lot of changes, including the introduction of the Steyr and the DPM uniform. The training that we are now being given has changed a lot. I can see great benefits coming out of it because of the interest that we are getting in the recruitment drive that’s been taking place. We also find that the troops are now staying in longer and with the new format we are getting a lot of influence from our PDF counterparts. We are attached to 5 Inf Bn and their instructors come over and give us advice regularly and that’s a great benefit to us.

We will be changing from an infantry company to a HQ company. I’ve done all my frontline courses so I’m looking forward to the change.

Pte Laura Kearns (21)
Business and German student.
I think the re-org is good because it is a step forward for the Reserve. It’s probably the biggest step they have taken since they allowed women to join up. I think the amalgamation and integration will have good repercussions for us. I think with all the training and equipment we will become more independent and able to look after ourselves.

Sgt Anthony Carey (23)
I’m a gun commander in the regiment. One of the biggest changes I’ve seen since I joined six years ago, was the introduction of the DPM uniforms. That was important because it makes Reservists feel on a par with the PDF. The resources that we are being given are improving all the time. We now have our own brigade training centre (BTC). I was a student last year on a Standard NCO course and this year I was an instructor attached to the BTC. If that is the future it looks good as the calibre of the people in the BTC and the calibre of NCOs they are turning out are top-notch.

I think the strength and biggest asset of the Reserve is its people.

Pte Ian Ryan (18)
65 Res Inf Bn (7 Inf Bn) McKee Bks.
I’ve only been in the Reserve a short time but I think the new structure will be good. It will bring the RDF and PDF closer together, improving our training and making us a better unit. Hopefully it will come to a stage were the Reserve will be able to send troops overseas. We will only be able to do this with the same training and knowledge as the PDF.

And I love the Reserve and the army life. I’ve been accepted into the army and I’m reporting to 5 Inf Bn after Christmas.

Cpl Mark Buckley (26)
31 Res Cav Sqn (3 Cav Sqn) Clonmel.
Factory worker.
I’m ex-3 Fd Med Coy and I transferred to the cav a few years back so I’ve seen some good changes and some bad. If they implement everything that has been proposed it is going to be a good Reserve. We are amalgamating with 13 Inf Bn and it’s looking good. We had a look at what the new cav role is and if all the courses that are proposed come through it will be very good for our corps. Our unit just completed a CTR course in the Cavalry School in the CSC, which was run with the YOs course, and the reports coming back are very good.

Looking Forward

What do you think of the changes that have occurred in the RDF over the last few years and what do you think lies in the future for the Reserve?

A/Sea Derek O’Rourke (32)
Dublin NSR Coy, Cathal Brugha Bks.
Paramedic.
In the last few years I’ve seen huge changes in the Naval Reserve, more so than the Army Reserve. We’ve been operational as a unit for the last three years, which means we can go to sea now for up to 42 days. Our people have visited countries such as Russia, Portugal and the USA while serving on Naval Service vessels.

October 1st means very little for us, as it is really just a name change. Full-time Naval Service personnel aren’t always available for patrols so they call on us to step in. The training now has to meet our job requirements. I think the future is bright. As Europe expands so will the role of the Naval Service and we will have to expand with them.
The West African country Côte d’Ivoire (Ivory Coast) lies sandwiched between Liberia to the west, Ghana to the east, and Burkina Faso and Mali to the north. It is roughly the size of France and has a population of approximately 17 million. The population comprises more than 60 ethnic groups, nine languages and three major religious divisions - Muslims in the north, Christians in the south and indigenous tribal religions throughout the country. Added to this mix are over four million foreigners, including 130,000 Lebanese and, up to November 2004, approximately 16,000 French - a figure which has since dropped to less than 6,000 and continues to decline.

The coastal city of Abidjan, with a population of four million, is the economic capital of the country, whilst Yamoussoukro remains the state capital. Côte d’Ivoire gained its independence from France in 1960. Sound economic policies led to massive growth and the country was soon the richest in West Africa, becoming the world’s largest producer of cocoa and Africa’s leading exporter of bananas, pineapples, rubber and sugar cane. Abidjan has one of the largest deepwater ports in West Africa, possessing 75 deepwater berths and a massive oil refinery, which will become even more important with the recent discovery of oil off the coast.

The country’s riches, however, were not evenly spread and many tribal alliances and old rivalries came into play when the spoils of prosperity were to be shared.

The elections in 1990 saw President Houphouët-Boigny, who had ruled the country since independence, emerge as victor while also heralded the arrival of Laurent Gbagbo, a man who was to play a major part in the troubles ahead. After Boigny’s death in 1993 his successor Henri Konan Bedie, facing an election in 1995, devised a policy of ‘Ivorianness’, which meant that only people who had proof of both parents being native Ivoirians could run for election. This triggered major inter-ethnic violence throughout the country and is one of the factors that led to civil war.

In December 1999 General Robert Guei, an ex-Chief of Staff of the army, took control after a coup d’état, promising free and fair elections. However his policies soon worsened the divisions and also added a new Muslim-versus-Christian aspect to an already seething cauldron.

The result was rioting, changing alliances, attempted coups, and attacks on state institutions. The army came out in support of Gbagbo and hundreds were killed on the streets of Abidjan. Finally, the national assembly was disbanded.

Gbagbo and his FPI party emerged as victors in new elections amid rumours of corruption. Calm slowly returned but the policies and behind-the-scenes manoeuvring continued to create instability.

In September 2002 civil war began initially with a mutiny by troops loyal to General Guei, who had been murdered along with his family and a number of other Gbagbo opponents. The rebels took most of the north of the country before being stopped in their advance southwards a few kilometres from Yamoussoukro by the intervention of French troops stationed in Abidjan.

(Once has retained a military presence in the country since the 1960s by virtue of a series of defence accords.) A ceasefire was followed by a peace deal signed in Linas-Marcoussis near Paris in 2003. A government of national reconciliation was agreed but President Gbagbo’s continual obstruction of the process led to a renewal of violence. Finally, in May 2003 the UN Security Council established the United Nations Mission in Côte d’Ivoire (MINUNCI) in an effort to stabilise the situation.

In April 2004 the force received a wider mandate, was increased in strength to just over 6,500 military personnel, and was renamed UNOCI.

While Liberia has understandably captured most of our attention due to the international coverage it received and the fact that we have a battalion serving with UNMIL, serious conflict and dangerous unrest have also taken place in Liberia’s neighbour to the east, Côte d’Ivoire. The Defence Forces provides two UNMOs to the UN mission operating in the country. Recently returned from a tour of duty with UNOCI, Comdt Mark Brownen (DDFC) gave us this report...
Having an English-speaking sector (West) and a French-speaking sector (East) has led to some difficulties, particularly in the passage of information and the reporting of incidents to FHQ and onward.

In the south a number of supposedly ‘popular’ militias, the largest of which was the Young Patriots, began attacking anyone they perceived as being anti-Gbagbo. The militias’ actions are usually described in the state-controlled press as being those of ‘concerned citizens’ and although the government has denied any control over them this claim is widely disbelieved.

In November 2004 government forces, citing rebel violations of the ceasefire, attacked the rebels, sparking off another cycle of violence. In a manoeuvre that avoided the UN-controlled areas of the ZOC they advanced north to attempt to take the rebel HQ at Bouake. The Ivorian air force, using SU-25 and Mig 23 fighter jets, with Mi 24 heli gunship support, began attacking rebel targets.

During one of these sorties jets, allegedly being flown by mercenary pilots, bombed the French battle group headquarters east of Bouake, for reasons which are not clear, killing nine French soldiers and an American aid worker.

Retaliation by the French was swift: as the jets landed at a base in Yamoussoukro they were met by French troops who opened fire and disabled the planes. Concurrently, French troops attacked the main airbase in Abidjan destroying or disabling much of the air force.

All UNMO teams were evacuated from the northern half of the country as the rebels attempted to counter-attack.

The destruction of the air force led to wide scale rioting by pro-government groups throughout the south. For the most part, government forces stood by as rioters in Abidjan destroyed businesses, schools, hospitals and plantations.

Programmes inciting people to rise against the French and any Europeans in the country were aired on radio and TV and French forces quickly set about securing their main base in Abidjan and the UN FHQ. The international airport was closed and taken over by Licorne forces and within 72 hours a major evacuation of French citizens had begun with convoys of expats being brought under military protection to the evacuation centre at the French base. Many casualties were sustained by mobs that attacked these convoys.

Within a week French air assets moved 8,000 civilians out of Côte d’Ivoire. By late November the mobs had left the streets, although many areas of Abidjan were still out of bounds. The French had established a safe zone around the UN FHQ protected by a Foreign Legion unit and all expats and UNMOs resident in the town were advised to move to the FHQ as it was the only protected zone in the city. During this period many businesses were destroyed, many people injured and killed, and both the UN FHQ and Licorne bases were attacked.

In early December, when the situation had stabilised somewhat, the UNMO teams, including the two Irish UNMOs serving with the mission, were redeployed. Lt Col Tom Rigney and I had just taken over from Lt Col Pat Herbert and Comdt Tony Bracken and we were deployed into the rebel-held north of the country. I went to the UNMO team located at rebel HQ in Bouake and Lt Col Rigney went to the extreme northwest of the country to the town of Odienne bordering Liberia and Guinea, almost 100kms from the nearest UN post.

The rebels in the north of the country are divided into six zones, each controlled by a military command.
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er (in many cases former NCOs from the government forces), who reports to the rebel HQ in Bouake. Both the military and political HQs of the main rebel group, the FN movement, are based in Bouake and the town has 15,000 troops defending it. Before the conflict the former Military College, Engineer school, Air Force academy, NCO training wing and a number of battalions were stationed in the town.

Our UNMO team was co-located with the Eastern Brigade HQ in Bouake run by the Moroccans, with a Ghanaian hospital and a Pakistani engineer company in support. Our team’s 11 members had an AO the size of Munster, most of it on roads similar to those in Liberia and with just as much jungle and poor infrastructure.

The beginning of the crisis saw a decrease in the services available in the north. Many of the hospitals have been destroyed in the fighting and many roads and bridges have been bombed and left impassable. The limited electricity supply comes from generating stations in the south and the government turns the power off as it likes.

The rebels control the town and warlords administer justice as they see fit with as many human rights violations and abuses occurring in the north as in the south. Mass graves were found in our AO and these are the subject of an investigation by a UN human rights team backed up by the UNMOs.

A French battle group with air support is also stationed near the town. One major feature of all French units deployed in Cote d’Ivoire is their active CIMIC teams. Much of the CIMIC work is being done with NGOs to try to stem the increase in poor hospital conditions and diseases across the north. Polio, once eradicated from the country, has begun to re-appear, as has yellow fever in the northern area bordering Burkina Faso. In our AO regular support was provided to an NGO dealing with leprosy in the area. The government-controlled areas still maintain an efficient health service but again, depending on the tribe, medicines may not be easily available in the area.

Following the November crisis the situation stabilised somewhat and only minor skirmishes took place within our AO. An arms embargo imposed by the UN Security Council was put into place and additional tasks, searching convoys, and inspecting rebel airstrips and battalions, fell to the UNMO teams.

A feature of the uneasy peace that exists now is the rise in the numbers of armed militias in the south and an increase in inter-tribal attacks and massacres in some areas. The increasing violence between tribes is also creating problems for the peace process.

Targets for DDRR (Disarmament, Demobilisation, Rehabilitation and Reintegration) were set for mid-July 2005 but were not met and plans for new elections and DDRR for October were also shelved due to the withdrawal of the rebels from the process. This took place after a refusal by the government side to cede to a number of their demands regarding the right to vote and the provision of independent monitors for the various electoral processes.

Currently, the UN force continues to police the ZOC and UNMO teams monitor the situation among the tribes and rebel groupings and try to put the mechanism for disarmament in place. The French troops are still the ‘muscle’ on call to the UN in case of another crisis and they continue to assist ONUCI with its mission. Gbagbo’s government looks set to take another term in office in 2006 with the rebels still an unresolved issue in a country that was once the economic success of West Africa but now remains a shadow of its former prosperity.

The Rebels

The main rebel group, the FN - Forces Nouvel (New Forces) - has both political and military wings. The military wing, known as Forces Armées Nationale de Côte D’Ivoire (FANCI), consists mainly of former NCOs from the government forces augmented by large numbers of Liberian mercenaries. The rebels, with an approximate strength of 45,000 troops, control approximately 55% of the country. Many of them do not possess any formal military training but have had many successes in spite of this. Clandestine assistance from neighbouring states is also apparent and was observed by various UNMO teams. Many of the Liberian fighters have now departed the area as stability and the DDRR process offers them more in Liberia than Côte d’Ivoire.
The purpose of intelligence is, simply, to reduce the degree of uncertainty about an enemy, or potential enemy, that may be experienced by policy makers and commanders in making operational decisions. At the strategic level this intelligence derives from information gathered in response to requirements placed by the government across the spectrum of national and international military, diplomatic, political and economic issues. This level of intelligence is focused on national threats and supra-national issues. At the next lower level, national intelligence is the integrated product of intelligence developed by all government departments covering the broad aspects of national policy and security. It is of concern to more than one department or agency and transcends the exclusive competence of a single department or agency. National intelligence is used to co-ordinate the activities of government departments to produce and carry out national policies, plans and programmes.

Military leaders are familiar with the principles and concepts of intelligence, including the process of direction, collection and processing of information, and its dissemination as intelligence in an appropriate form and by suitable means to those who need it. This process is capable of application in many other aspects of national life. Indeed, in the interest of national defence and security, it is essential that it be so applied.

The Defence Forces Strategy Statement 2005-2007 identifies the key role the Army, Air Corps and Naval Service have to play in ensuring the peace and security of the State and its people at home and abroad. Strategic Goal No 1 is "to enhance the Defence Forces’ capability in contributing to the security of the State". In the context of providing quality advice and support to the Minister for Defence and the Government, the provision of intelligence analysis and assessments is central to the achievement of this goal.

The focus for the Defence Forces Directorate of Intelligence is two-fold: the safety and security of members of the Defence Forces operating at home and abroad and the security of the State and its national interest at home and abroad. Military Intelligence seeks to provide accurate and timely assessments to Government, of any threat to the security of the State from internal or external sources, and of threats in countries/regions where the Defence Forces are deployed or will deploy.

The deployment of Defence Forces personnel on overseas peacekeeping missions is supported by strategic studies and ongoing monitoring of the political, military, social and economic situation in the areas of operation and neighbouring areas. This work is performed by officers and non-commissioned officers in the Defence Intelligence Section of the Directorate and is an essential element in the decision-making process at Defence Forces, ministerial.
“Irish officers and NCOs are becoming increasingly involved in intelligence appointments in UN or PfP/NATO PSOs and in EU and other military staffs.”

Right:
Intelligence forms the basis on which briefings for troops and mission preparations are planned and carried out.

Below:
Good intelligence plays an important part in protecting our troops serving on overseas missions by providing information on the security situation and possible threats.

and governmental levels, and a vital support to deployed troops.

Peacekeeping and peace support operations (PSOs), like all military operations, need intelligence. Not only is intelligence vital for the successful implementation of risky peacekeeping operations, but most such operations are now intelligence-driven. Commanders at all levels require military information support in order to effectively execute their tasks. Poor intelligence can lead to not having the right forces with the right equipment at the right time and place. This is often reflected in the number of casualties - either peacekeeper lives as we have seen in Rwanda and Somalia, or the lives of the innocents that the mission was initiated to protect. The genocide in Rwanda and massacres at Srebrenica serve to illustrate the latter.

Essential characteristics of intelligence in PSOs include: intelligence preparation for the peacekeeping environment; the integration of intelligence into all aspects of the planning and execution of peacekeeping operations; and the co-ordination of effort among intelligence units.

Irish officers and NCOs are becoming increasingly involved in intelligence appointments in UN or PfP/NATO PSOs and in EU and other military staffs. Currently, 19 members of the Defence Forces are staffing designated key intelligence appointments abroad, and this brings them into contact with other professional intelligence officers from European and other countries and international organisations. Many others, officers and NCOs, are working on intelligence staffs in missions worldwide. Our personnel provide reports on politico-military security activity in their respective regions and international developments on a weekly basis to the Director of Intelligence. In addition, as part of our contribution to the EU, we provide analysed intelligence on coun-
tries and regions of the world where the Defence Forces have a presence. Many of these countries are failed, or failing, states providing support and protection to terrorist organizations. This strategy of seeking out these significant intelligence appointments abroad has greatly increased our expertise at home, as well as developing a network of contacts.

Meanwhile, at home the National Security Intelligence Section of the Directorate deals with threats to national security in general and to the Defence Forces in particular. This includes a requirement to identify, monitor, assess and advise of, any threat to Irish national interests or the security interests of friendly states, emanating from individuals, groups and foreign intelligence services, resident in Ireland, operating in Ireland, or linked with individuals and/or groups in Ireland.

Counterintelligence also deals with acts of terrorism, regardless of whether they are initiated at home or abroad – thus straddling the domestic and foreign spheres.

In determining defence policy, cognisance is taken of the security environment in which the Defence Forces operates. Ireland has noted the new threats posed by international terrorism and the possible escalation in international tensions. In the period ahead the risks to international stability seem more likely to come from terrorist acts than from a conventional military threat.

A recently published UN report of the Secretary General’s High Level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change, entitled ‘A More Secure World: Our Shared Responsibility’, emphasises the need for collective security and for security to be addressed at the global, regional and national level. The report identifies six clusters of threats:

- Economic and social threats.
- Inter-state conflict.
- Internal conflict, including civil war, genocide and other large scale atrocities.
- Nuclear, radiological, chemical and biological weapons.
- Terrorism.
- International organised crime.

These threats are also identified in a report prepared for the European Council in 2003 by Javier Solana, EU High Representative for the Common Foreign and Security Policy, entitled ‘A Secure Europe in a Better World’. This report stresses, among other things, that no single country is able to tackle today’s complex problems on its own.

Speaking in Dublin last November the EU Counter-Terrorism Co-ordinator, Mr Gijs de Vries, stated that: ‘Terrorism is a global phenomenon that requires a global response…terrorism poses a serious threat to international peace and security, including the security of the EU…our citizens today rightly expect their governments to do everything in their power to protect them within the limits of the rule of law.’ He concluded: ‘European co-operation and coordination are essential to this fight.’

The role of intelligence in influencing foreign policy has grown as nations have broadened their contacts with the rest of the world. The ease of international communication and travel in today’s world has encouraged closer global ties. More importantly, the numerous repercussions that events in a far corner of the world may have on a country’s physical or economic security require that nations maintain a large number of liaison contacts.

Liaison for the purpose of exchange of information is a core requirement/function in any intelligence environment, particularly when capacity is limited. Cooperation with other agencies, both domestic and foreign, is essential in order to develop an optimal base. One of the implied tasks for Military Intelligence, emanating from the primary role of the Defence Forces in the defence of the State from internal or external threats, is to develop relationships with national/state/semi-state agencies and foreign and international organisations for the purpose of the timely exchange of quality information and intelligence. The Irish Military Intelligence Service benefits immensely from its linkage into larger organisations (intelligence agencies, contractors) with global assets and multiple sources. These relationships are very productive and are key enabling factors in the Directorate’s ability to identify and assess threats in a timely manner.

In order that the Defence Forces remain prepared to contribute to the State’s commitments in this regard, a high level of intelligence training is conducted by personnel throughout their careers. Intelligence training is now included on all officer and NCO career courses. In addition, personnel selected for appointment in the Directorate of Intelligence, and for intelligence appointments in the Defence Forces in general, undergo specialist training and on-the-job training.

The Defence Forces conducts its own Defence Intelligence and Security course. This is a combined course for officers and NCOs and is of five weeks duration. Some personnel will have completed this course prior to entering the Directorate, while every effort is made to ensure that the remainder undergo the course during their service in the Directorate. This course addresses the main areas of: general modalities and principles of intelligence work; defence intelligence; intelligence analysis; combat intelligence; intelligence in a multinational environment; and domestic security intelligence.

In addition to this course, Intelligence personnel undergo specialist training abroad, including courses and workshops through the Partnership for Peace (PfP) programme. These courses ensure that the Directorate of Intelligence maintains international best practice in this field. On-the-job training within the Directorate is continuous and consists of surveillance, and specialist weapons and communications training.

One particular area of training worth special mention is language training. The Defence Forces has its own Language School in the Military College and language training is especially encouraged because of our increasing overseas commitments and liaison contacts. There is a particular requirement for language skills in Military Intelligence. This is necessitated by the diverse nature of intelligence collection today, both at home and abroad.

Finally, specialist training is also conducted on thematic issues such as religion, culture, ethnicity, and radicalisation. These are identified as evolving issues to enable us to better understand the context for many of the threats that we face today and will continue to face in the future.

NOTES