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#WEARENATO

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COVER III: IAR-330 SOCAT FROM CÂMPIA TURZII,
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#WEARENATO

MADRID SUMMIT



NATO heads of state and government meeting in Madrid on Wednesday (29 June 2022) approved a new Strategic Concept for the Alliance, setting out the Alliance's priorities, core tasks and approaches for the next decade. The concept describes the security environment facing the Alliance, reaffirms our values, and spells out NATO's key purpose of ensuring our collective defence. It further sets out NATO's three core tasks of deterrence and defence; crisis prevention and management; and cooperative security.

The document defines Russia as the "most significant and direct threat" to Allies' security, while addressing China for the first time and the challenges that Beijing poses toward Allies' security, interests and values. The documents also states that climate change is "a defining

challenge of our time". The Strategic Concept is updated roughly every decade and is NATO's second most important document. It reaffirms the values of the Alliance, provides a collective assessment of security challenges and guides the Alliance's political and military activities. The previous version was adopted at the NATO Lisbon Summit in 2010.

At the Madrid Summit on Wednesday (29 June 2022), Allied leaders were joined by some of NATO's closest partners to address global challenges. Indo-Pacific partners Australia, Japan, New Zealand, and the Republic of Korea participated in a NATO Summit for the first time. The European Union and Georgia also took part in the meeting, as did Finland and Sweden, who have today been invited to become NATO members.

SURSA: nato.int

THE MINISTER OF NATIONAL DEFENCE AT THE NATO DEFENCE MINISTERS MEETING



Between 15-16 June, at Brussels, the minister of National Defence Vasile Dincu participated in the NATO Defence Ministers Meeting, chaired by the North Atlantic Alliance Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg.

During the ministerial, the talks were mainly focused on the establishment of the decision-making package and the strategic perspectives that substantiated the Madrid NATO Summit from June, on the defence component.

The Allied defence ministers discussed over a working dinner with their consecrated partner states, Finland and Sweden, as well as with the Eastern neighborhood countries, Georgia and Ukraine, about the security situation generated by the Russian Federation's brutal invasion of Ukraine, and the many ways of strengthening the NATO-UE partnership. The working dinner was also attended by the High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, Josep Borrell. During the first session of the

North-Atlantic Council, the officials discussed the medium and long-term adaptation of the defence and deterrence posture, while the second working session was dedicated to the defence resource allocation and common funding.

The NATO Defence Ministers Meeting is part of the wide adaptation process of the Alliance in the context of the deterioration of the regional, European and Euro-Atlantic security environment following the Russian Federation's invasion of Ukraine.

As part of the ministerial, the minister of national defence participated in a new reunion of the Ukraine Defense Consultative Group established at the initiative of the United States of America and chaired by the US Secretary of Defence, Lloyd J Austin.

Source: Ministry of National Defence
Press office

WAR OF ATTRITION IN UKRAINE

NATO Secretary-General Jens Stoltenberg warned in June that the world should be ready for a war of attrition in Ukraine. Meanwhile, Western states have stepped up their efforts to provide Kiev with modern weapons, in particular multiple missile launchers. That was a decision that irritated Moscow and made it resort to new threats against Ukraine and the West.

"Wars, by their nature, are unpredictable. And so we need to be prepared for the long term, because what we see now is that this war has become a war of attrition, in which Ukrainians pay a high price on the battlefield for the defense of their country, but in which we also see that Russia is losing a lot", said Jens Stoltenberg in Washington. "We must ensure that Ukraine remains an independent, sovereign and democratic nation in Europe and that President Putin is not rewarded for his aggressive actions", the Secretary-General of the North Atlantic Alliance concluded.

However, Stoltenberg emphasized that NATO is not a part of the conflict in Ukraine. At the same time, NATO has the responsibility to prevent the escalation of this war, so that it does not become a real war between Russia and NATO, which could cause more deaths, and more damage, the Secretary-General of the North Atlantic Alliance concluded.

Earlier in June, the US President said that Ukraine would receive advanced weapons, including HIMARS multiple missile launcher systems, with a range of up to almost 80 kilometers: "We will continue to be the number one in the world in terms of historic assistance to support Ukraine's struggle for freedom", Joe Biden said. The aid amounts \$ 700 million. According to the Department of Defense, the list includes HIMARS (High Mobility Artillery Rocket Systems) with ammunition, five anti-artillery radars, two anti-aircraft radars, 1,000 Javelin missiles and 50 launch control units, 6,000 anti-armor weapons, 15,000 shells with a caliber of 155 mm, four Mi-17 helicopters, 15 tactical vehicles, spare parts and equipment".

Shortly after Washington's announcement, London said it would provide Ukraine with multiple 80-kilometer missile launcher systems to deal with the Russian offensive.

These are American-made M270 systems that, according to the British Ministry of Defense, will significantly increase the capabilities of Ukrainian forces.

Marius BÂTCĂ

BRITISH EUROFIGHTER TYPHOON AIRCRAFT LANDED AT MIHAIL KOGĂLNICEANU

Four Eurofighter Typhoon aircraft of the British Royal Air Force (RAF) landed on the 57th Air Base in Mihail Kogălniceanu, on Wednesday, March 30th.

The British detachment, consisting of about 150 airmen (pilots and technical personnel) and Eurofighter Typhoon aircraft, has been deployed for four months to conduct Enhanced Air Policing missions under NATO command, together with the Romanian Air Force. This is the fourth rotation of the British Royal Air Force at Mihail Kogălniceanu, after those that took place in 2017, 2018 and 2021.

The Air Policing missions are planned a year before the deployment of the detachments and they have been carried out jointly since 2017. Their aim is to contribute to the development of the reaction and deterrence capacity, as well as to consolidate the interoperability between the Romanian Air Force and the allies.

Source: Ministry of National Defence Press Office

SAC Harry Roberts 140EAW, RAF Photographer



US AIR FORCE F-16 FIGHTING FALCON AIRPLANES DEPLOYED ON THE 86TH AIR BASE

510th Fighting Squadron/USAFE



On April 29th, six US Air Force F-16 Fighting Falcon aircraft from the Aviano Air Base, Italy, arrived on the 86th „Lieutenant Gheorghe MOCIORNIȚĂ” Air Base, also known as Borcea Air Base, to replace the 480th Expeditionary Fighter Squadron from Spangdahlem Air Base.

The detachment of the US 510th Fighter Squadron came to carry out missions and joint training with the airmen and aircraft of the Romanian Air Force.

The main objective of the joint training missions is to increase the interoperability between NATO allies, and it is a living proof of the high level of cooperation in the field of security and defense within the Strategic Partnership between Romania and the United States of America, sending a strong message of solidarity between the allies.

Source: Romanian Air Force Public Relations Office

STRENGTHENING THE EASTERN SIDE OF THE ALLIANCE

On Friday, April 15th, at the 90th Airlift Base, General Daniel PETRESCU, the Chief of the Armed Forces Command, attended the welcoming ceremony of the Portuguese Republic's detachment of about 180 military personnel deployed in Romania as a NATO measure to strengthen the Alliance's Eastern flank.

"Carrying out your missions in Romania is a valuable means of preserving peace. The Portuguese detachment will be integrated into the national and allied structures, in order to increase responsiveness, interoperability and, last but not least, to emphasize allied solidarity. The Romanian military personnel are looking forward to training along with the Portuguese troops again. We did our part. We have increased our own reaction capacity and we perform day and night, 24/7/365 activities in the field of land, air and sea forces. The presence of Allied troops in Romania is our new normal. I emphasize, once again, that the measures adopted are eminently defensive, adapted to the security situation in our area of responsibility", said

Valentin CIOBÎRCĂ



General Petrescu. The rest of the military personnel of the Portuguese detachment, consisting of about 220 soldiers as well as military equipment, arrived in Romania in the following days. The Portuguese military personnel is meant to carry out training activities together with the Romanian military personnel for six months.

Source: Ministry of National Defence Press Office



Bogdan PANTILIMON

Laurențiu TUROI

CERTIFICATION CEREMONY OF THE BRITISH ROYAL AIR FORCE DETACHMENT, AT MIHAIL KOGĂLNICEANU

The certification ceremony of the British Royal Air Force Detachment, which arrived to Romania in order to conduct enhanced Air Policing missions took place on Friday, April 8, starting 11.00, at 57th Mihail Kogălniceanu Air Base.

The activity was attended by defence minister Vasile Dîncu, his British counterpart State Secretary Ben Wallace, the Italian Defence Ministry Giorgio Mulé, the Chief of Defence Staff General Daniel Petrescu, commander of Torrejon Combined Air Operations Centre Lieutenant General Fernando de la Cruz Caravaca, the Ambassador of Great Britain to Romania Andrew Noble, and the Chiefs of Italian, British and Romanian Air Forces.

The event included a demonstrative performance of a joint enhanced Air Policing mission, conducted with four aircraft belonging to the British, Italian and Romanian Air Forces.

A media sequence consisting of a static exhibition and interviewing opportunities with Romanian and foreign military personnel were organized at the end of the ceremony.

The British detachment made up of approximately 150 airmen (pilots and technical staff) and Eurofighter Typhoon aircraft conducted, together with the Romanian Air Force military personnel, NATO-led enhanced Air Policing missions, over the following four months.

This is forth rotation of the Royal British Air Forces taking place at Mihail Kogălniceanu after the ones executed in 2017, 2018 and 2021.

The joint enhanced Air Policing missions contribute to the development of the reaction and deterrence capacity as well as to the increase of interoperability between the Romanian and Royal British Air Forces.

Source: Ministry of National Defence Press office



FRANCE REINFORCES BATTLE GROUP FORWARD PRESENCE IN ROMANIA

SHAPE, Belgium – The French Armed Forces are reinforcing NATO's multinational Battle Group Forward Presence (BG FP) in Romania with the SAMP/T surface-to-air missile defence system, or MAMBA in support of the Alliance's initiative to deter and defend the Eastern flank of Europe as a result of Russia's attack on Ukraine.

Since May 16, the French Armed Forces have been deploying the MAMBA last generation medium-range surface-to-air system as well as a centre of defence management in the 3rd dimension in Romania. This initiative shows the capacity of France to protect and reinforce this area of importance for the Alliance.

Implemented by approximately one hundred airmen, the MAMBA is a sophisticated weapon system that can ensure protection to the forces operating within the area. In order to enhance the system's efficiency and to meet the needs of the NATO Integrated Air and Missile Defence (IAMD), it is connected and integrated into the Romanian and NATO defence systems through a tactical data liaison.

Since May 1, 2022, the multinational battlegroup was set up with France as the framework nation supported by an alternating company of either Belgian or Dutch troops. It is part of the four additional battlegroups deployed by NATO to its Eastern flank along with Slovakia, Hungary and Bulgaria.

Source: <https://shape.nato.int>





ROMANIAN AIR FORCE FIGHTER JETS PERFORMED REAL AIR POLICING MISSIONS



Romanian Air Force aircraft in the Air Policing Combat Service carried out an Air Policing mission in the national airspace on Saturday, March 19th, to intercept and escort a civilian aircraft operating the WizzAir flight on the route Kutaisi (Georgia) - Warsaw (Poland), following the notification of the civil air traffic authorities about a bomb alert on board the aircraft.

The Romanian aircraft took off at 22:44 local time and, after interception, escorted the civil aircraft, in accordance with the legislation and procedures in force, until 23:33, when it left the national airspace.

The mission appointed by the NATO Combined Air Operations Centre Torrejón (CAOC) and coordinated at the national level by the Reporting and Control Center of the Air Component Command, in coordination with civilian air traffic authorities, was carried out in maximum safety.

Romanian Air Force aircraft, in the Air Policing Combat Service, carried out on March 22nd a new air policing mission in the national airspace, to intercept and escort a civilian aircraft operating the Turkish Airlines flight

from Moscow to Istanbul, following the notification of the civil air traffic authorities about a bomb alert on board the aircraft.

The Romanian aircraft took off at 17:58 local time and, after interception, escorted the civilian aircraft in accordance with the legislation and procedures in force, until 18:24, when it left the national airspace. The mission appointed by the NATO Combined Air Operations Centre Torrejón (CAOC) and coordinated at the national level by the Reporting and Control Center of the Air Component Command, in coordination with civilian air traffic authorities, was carried out in maximum safety.

A small-sized twin-engine aircraft, Beechcraft-type, with two persons onboard, flew, at low altitude, over the air space of Hungary, Romania, Serbia and Bulgaria, in the evening of 8 June.

We specify that the aircraft, which flew over the Romanian air space on route Oradea – Caransebeş - Drobeta Turnu Severin, did not display a hostile or dangerous behavior. The aircraft pilot did not respond to the radio interrogations or to the visual signals transmitted by the military interceptors, according to international rules in force.

According to the available data we have at this moment, the aircraft took off from Hungary, Debrecen area, around 17:30, without having a previously approved flight plan and without the transponder's electronic identification equipment turned on.

The aircraft was intercepted in the Hungarian air space by two JAS 39 Gripen military aircraft belonging to the Hungarian Air Force, at 17:38. The aircraft did not respond to the radio interrogation or to the visual signals transmitted by the military aircraft.

The aircraft entered Romania's air space around 17:49, through Oradea, being escorted by the two Hungarian military aircraft, based on the cross-border agreement signed between Romania and Hungary.

At 17:58, the Hungarian aircraft returned to the base, the target being taken over by two F-16 aircraft belonging to the US Air Force deployed to the 86th Air Base Feteşti, that were on a patrolling mission in the Romanian air space.

The mission conducted by the two American aircraft was similar: radio interrogation, visual identification and escort of the target aircraft.

At 18:36, the American aircraft requested approval to return to the 86th Air Base, their air policing mission being taken over by two Romanian Air Force F-16 aircraft, which took off from the same air base.

The Romanian military aircraft intercepted the target aircraft at 18:42 and continued the interrogation and escort mission. The target aircraft, which continued to choose not to respond to the radio interrogations and the visual signals, entered Serbia's air space around 19:00, for almost two minutes, within an area located between Drobeta Turnu Severin and Korbovo.

Around 19:09, the target aircraft crossed over Bulgaria's air space. The two Romanian F-16 aircraft completed their air policing mission and landed at Feteşti, at 19:46.

The Bulgarian authorities are currently investigating, on the ground, the area where the target was last seen in order to identify the aircraft and establish further details.

Source: Ministry of National Defence Press office



ROMANIA PROVIDES CRUCIAL SUPPORT FOR NATO'S ENHANCED VIGILANCE ON THE EASTERN FLANK

Bogdan PANTILIMON

General Jeff Harrigan, Commander Allied Air Command visited the Romanian Air Force air operations centre and Allied fighter detachments deployed in country to support NATO's enhanced posture along the eastern flank on May 25.



General Jeffrey L. HARRIGAN, general Daniel PETRESCU and general-lieutenant Viorel PANĂ

"Romanian fighter aircraft alongside British, Canadian, German, Italian, Portuguese, Spanish and American jets have done an outstanding job securing Allied skies and demonstrate Allied cohesion, commitment, and readiness in an impressive way. Besides the CRC's essential contribution to ensuring our awareness of the Black Sea coastline, Romania has been hosting Allied enhanced Air Policing fighter detachments since 2014. Since then, Romanian fighter aircraft alongside British, Canadian, German, Italian, Portuguese, Spanish and American jets have done an outstanding job securing Allied skies and demonstrate Allied cohesion, commitment, and readiness in an impressive way," said General Harrigan, during a visit of the Romanian Control and Reporting Centre (CRC) Crystal at Bucharest.

After his visit to the CRC, General Harrigan met with Allied fighter detachments from the United Kingdom, the United States and Italy deployed in support of NATO enhanced Air Policing and enhanced Vigilance Activities at the Romanian bases of Borcea and Mihail

Kogalniceanu. He also thanked the Romanian Air Force for the continued host nation support bedding down the fighter detachments in addition to their own flight operations.

The Romanian Chief of Defense stated that NATO Air Policing remains an essential component of Allied security. "Air Policing has represented, for more than six decades, a peacetime collective defensive mission. After the annexation of Crimea by the Russian Federation in 2014, enhanced Air Policing on the Eastern area of Alliance represented a part of NATO's Assurance Measures in order to have a firm deterrence and defense posture. Ever since the Russian Federation started the war in Ukraine, these combat missions and enhanced Vigilance Activities on the Eastern flank have become a necessity," said General Daniel Petrescu.

www.ac.nato.int



NATO DELEGATION VISITS



Between 9 and 13 May, 2022, Command Senior Enlisted Leader Warrant Officer Sara CATTERALL, Chief Master Sergeant Benjamin W. HEDDEN (the Command Chief for United States Air Forces in Europe and United States Air Forces Africa) and Adjutant-major Luc J. BRAEKEN (the Belgium Air Force Command Chief Master Sergeant) paid a visit to the Air Force Staff, the 86th Air Base, the 57th Air Base, the 71st Air Base, the Air Force Training School in Boboc, the Military School for Warrant

Officers and Non-Commissioned officers of the Air Force and the National Museum of Romanian Aviation. The Romanian Air Force delegation was led by Chief Master Sgt. Daniel-Narcis SÎNPETRU, the commanding non-commissioned officer of the Romanian Air Force.

This activity is part of the process of getting acquainted with the characteristics of the NATO Air Forces, the eAP evolution on the NATO eastern flank and of strengthening the bilateral relationships among the command

non-commissioned officers of the allied air forces. During the activities, members of the delegation addressed a number of topics of common interest, issues related to training programs for non-commissioned officers, warrant officers and professional soldiers in NATO countries and ways to increase the level of interoperability for joint deterrence and defense missions of the Alliance's airspace.

Stronger together!

Source: Romanian Air Force Public Relations Office



At the 71st "General Emanoil Ionescu" Air Base

On May 11, 2022, the NATO delegation consisting of Command Senior Enlisted Leader Warrant Officer Sara CATTERALL, Chief Master Sergeant Benjamin W. HEDDEN (the Command Chief for United States Air Forces in Europe and United States Air Forces Africa), Adjutant-major Luc J. BRAEKEN (the Belgium Air Force Command Chief Master Sergeant), Chief Master Sgt. Daniel-Narcis SÎNPETRU (the commanding non-commissioned officer of the Romanian Air Force), as well as Chief Master Sergeant Florin DEHELEAN, the commanding non-commissioned officer of the 71st Air Base, paid a visit to the 71st "General Emanoil Ionescu" Air Base.

The delegation was greeted by the deputy commander of the 71st Air Base, air force colonel Cosmin COSMA; in his greeting message, he stressed the importance of such visits, which provide a clearer picture of the leadership and new perspectives, as well as opportunities for the NATO partners to conduct operations at the

highest level. He also stated that the activity proved to be an important opportunity not only for the non-commissioned officers and warrant officers, but also for the entire personnel of the 71st Air Base.

During the visit, the NATO delegation learned more about the air base missions and facilities, as well as about the ongoing and future

infrastructure projects. The goals of this visit to the 71st Air Base were: getting acquainted with the characteristics of this air base, strengthening the bilateral relations, developing a stronger partnership, as well as creating cohesion among non-commissioned and warrant officers.

Source: Public Relations Office 71st Air Base



At the Military School for Warrant Officers and Non-Commissioned Officers of the Air Force



On May 12, the NATO military delegation of warrant officers and non-commissioned officers of the NATO Allied Air Command in Ramstein visited the "Traian Vuia" Warrant Officers and Non-Commissioned Officers Military School.

Chief Warrant Officer Sara CATTERALL, Chief Master Sergeant Benjamin HEDDEN, Adjutant-Major Luc BRAEKEN and Staff Master Sergeant Robert WYMAN had a private discussion with some of the students and wanted to find out more about the training of the Romanian Air Force non-commissioned officers and warrant officers. Our students were presented with career opportunities within NATO structures.

Source: the Air Force Warrant Officers and Non-Commissioned Officers Military School



9TH EOD WORKSHOP 2022



Master Seargent Marius TURENSCHI

The 9th edition of the biannual EOD Conference was held during 4-6 May at the EOD Center of Excellence in Trenčín, Slovakia. This activity was attended by military and civilian personnel from the EOD structures of NATO member states, as well as from international organisations.

The Romanian Air Force EOD Group was represented at the conference by two airmen, Master Sergeant Marius TURENSCHI, EOD Team Leader, and Master Seargent Eugen POCIOVALIȘTEANU, EOD Specialist non-commissioned officer in the EOD Air Force Staff Bureau. The conference, which is held every two years, focused upon the new trends in EOD specialist training (virtual reality / augmented reality) as well as on the specific training process conducted by each nation while preparing EOD specialists.

A special topic of interest was the conflict in Ukraine, taking into consideration the large amount of unexploded ordnance. The United Nations (UN) and the European Defense Agency (EDA) specific structures are already preparing to provide support to the Ukrainian people in order to safely remove these threats.



Romanian Air Force Lt. Alex Nasturel, 86th Air Base's F-16 Fighting Falcon structural repairs back shop chief (left), and 1st Lt. Jayce Webster, 52nd Mission Support Group project officer, take a photo together next to a U.S. Air Force C-130J Super Hercules at the 86th AB, Romania, April 1, 2022. Since February, the team has worked together nearly every day to coordinate logistics and support for the 480th Expeditionary Fighter Squadron, deployed to Romania in support of NATO enhanced Air Policing in the region. (U.S. Air Force photo by 1st Lt. Megan Morrissey)

52nd Fighter Wing Public Affairs, 86th Air Base, Romania



U.S. Air Force 1st Lt. Jayce Webster, 52nd Mission Support Group project officer (right), and Romanian Air Force Lt. Alex Nasturel, 86th Air Base's F-16 Fighting Falcon structural repairs back shop chief, trade uniform patches at the 86th AB, Romania, April 19, 2022. Since February, Webster and Nasturel have worked together nearly every day to coordinate logistics and support for the 480th Expeditionary Fighter Squadron, deployed to Romania in support of NATO enhanced Air Policing in the region. (U.S. Air Force photo by Tech. Sgt. Maeson L. Elleman)

ROMANIAN, U.S. LIEUTENANTS PERSONIFY NATO ALLIANCE

In the wake of increased security concerns along NATO's Eastern flank, the 52nd Fighter Wing did what it does best – deployed hundreds of multi-capable Airmen to support operations with hardly a moment's notice.

Though it's a scenario played out countless times throughout the Air Force's history, the locations, requirements, military response – and especially people – rarely stay the same, creating challenges that, in this line of work, could carry disastrous consequences if not carefully mitigated.

Though calling the situation stressful for the planning team from Spangdahlem Air Base, Germany, hardly does it justice, the 52nd Mission Support Group's project officer for the deployment, 1st Lt. Jayce Webster, found solace through the aid of his Romanian air force counterpart, Lt. Alex Nasturel – while also making a lifelong friend.

Recounting their first meeting, Nasturel and Webster said this friendship all started with a surprise encounter a few months ago.

"Alex was the first face I saw on base once we arrived on Feb. 6, and when Alex saw us, he thought we were some other unit," Webster said with a laugh. "From that day forward, we've worked together every day. When we showed up, we told him we were part of the 480th Expeditionary Fighter Squadron, and they started working to get us all settled."

Since the 480th EFS deployed their own F-16s, though a different model from their Romanian counterparts, Nasturel has acted as a crucial mediator for the 480th EFS' logistics needs.

Though their national origins differ, their tones, articulation, and presentation are mirror

images — each carries himself with a confident stride, is quick to the point in a conversation and can quickly rattle off all the necessary questions and responses when presented with a challenging situation.

"It's great for me," said Nasturel, a native of Fetesti. "It's a totally new experience working with new people and new ways of thinking. It really changed my day a lot and the way I go around things. Usually it was just simple, 'go find out what's broken and fix it – work on it.' Now I just add some logistics to the mix. I get to go over there and talk to Jayce."

By its nature, the NATO alliance is designed to build partnerships with multinational militaries forming together in countless different regions and environments to provide security and stability.

Given the enhanced Air Policing mission and the high tempo that joins the Romanian and U.S. forces together, it's easy to see the working relationship between Nasturel and Webster would need to be a well-oiled machine.

With Nasturel's mission expertise, coupled with his excellent language proficiency, despite English being his second language, Webster said he was the perfect man for the job.

"Alex has been a great counterpart from his host nation," Webster said. "This is my first time working in a foreign country. I didn't know what the language barrier would be like, so first off, him being good at English and him knowing all the entities on base and understanding the support side of the house and what we would need was great. He pretty much had all the answers."

Nearly every morning, the two meet to discuss and coordinate the logistical needs of each nation's forces at the base. When parts

break and need replacements, supplies run short and need replenishment, or the mission shifts and needs further coordination, it's Webster and Nasturel taking charge and seamlessly integrating to augment the supply chain.

Nasturel said that the experience has made him better and more experienced when it comes to mission planning as well.

"What I got to learn [from the team], aside from the friendship, that's going to be one of the best things I'm going to get," Nasturel said. "For me, getting [U.S. Air Forces in Europe] cargo into the base was, I think, one of the most interesting and I'd say challenging things we've ever had to do."

Despite this, though, it's evident the two service members aren't just coworkers, simply acting civilly to get a job done; they embrace and personify the NATO alliance, but they also said it extends beyond a single mission.

"We just built that relationship, talking every day," Webster said. "We laugh, we joke, and just get to know each other on a personal level instead of just an official level. We always talk about host nation relations, but it'll be more than that; we made some lifelong friends, for sure."

It's been more than two and a half months since their first meeting, but now the 480th EFS is handing over the reins of the U.S. Air Force's presence in Romania to the 510th Expeditionary Fighter Squadron from Aviano Air Base. The 510th EFS' six F-16 Fighting Falcons arrived April 29, and the 480th EFS' own six jets returned to Spangdahlem Air Base the following day.

It's a bittersweet transition for the two lieutenants, but just as the Alliance persists, so will their friendship.

THE GOVERNMENT APPROVED THE LAW ON THE PROCUREMENT OF 32 F-16 AIRCRAFT FROM NORWAY

The Romanian Government approved the law on the achievement of the transitional air operational capability stipulated in the Conception for the gradual achievement of the air defence capability, as part of the "Air Force Multirole Aircraft".

According to the law, Romania's Government awards the Government of the Kingdom of Norway the contract for the acquisition 32 F-16 aircraft, with adjacent initial logistic support and a complementary package of goods and services (provided by the United States' Government).

The aircraft will be delivered fully operational, their available resource ensuring their functionality for a minimum 10-year transition period towards the fifth-generation aircraft, which means that the aircraft acquisition from the Norwegian Government represents, in fact, a capability transfer between the two NATO allied states.

The aircraft will provide for the accomplishment of the new requirements issued by NATO, and will later on be included in the modernization program of the same M6.X configuration existing onboard of the first F-16 aircraft squadron which had already entered the service of the Romanian Air Force. This solution ensures the involvement of the national defence industry in the execution of the maintenance and modernization works of the F-16 aircraft through

the economic agent assigned by the maintenance center for the F-16 aircraft by the Romanian Government (Aerostar Bacău), which will contribute to the consolidation and preservation of the air operational capability.

The acquisition of the 32 F-16 aircraft from the Government of the Kingdom of Norway also stipulates the training of a minimum number of specialists (Romanian Air Force aviation technical and engineering staff) required to man the key-positions in the maintenance planning and execution structures and logistic planning structures created at the level of the Air Base and Air Force Staff for the two F-16 squadrons. This solution provides, in a very short period of time, for the minimum operating, maintenance, planning and command capability required to safely operate the F-16 aircraft that are to be procured.

The estimated funds for the acquisition amount to 454 million Euros, without VAT. Considering the complexity of the program, the necessary financial resources will be accurately established after the initiation of the acquisition contract awarding procedures and the initiation of the talks with the representatives with the Government of Norway and the Government of the United States of America.

Source: Ministry of National Defence Press Office



SOFIC SEMINAR (SPECIAL OPERATIONS FORCES INTEGRATION SEMINAR FOR SENIOR KEY LEADERS)

On 8-10 June, 2022, at the National Defense University "Carol I", the SOFIC seminar (Special Operations Forces Integration Seminar for Senior Key Leaders) took place for the first time in Romania. The seminar was organized by the Air Force Staff in cooperation with the Command of the Special Operations Forces and with the support of the Joint Special Operations University in Romania.

The event was attended by a large number of key leadership personnel in the central structures, as well as in the Department of Homeland Security/Presidential Administration. The seminar was designed to better show the place and role of the Special Operations Forces to the management staff of the Romanian Military, how to integrate special operations into conventional operations, and the importance of interoperability at joint and / or combined level. The seminar combined theoretical sessions with practical exercises and case studies, which allowed a very good interaction between the instructors and the participating staff.

The seminar was coordinated by Colonel (Retired) Brett A. BOURNE, Lieutenant Colonel (Retired) Adrian JARVIS, as a lecturer, based on a curriculum developed and approved by the Joint Special Operations University (JSOU) of the United States/Florida/Tampa, and had as a special guest Major General (Retired) Michael REPASS, former SOCEUR



(Special Operations Command Europe) commander, JSOU collaborator.

Information briefings were also held on the topic "History, role and missions of the FOS in the Romanian Military" by Brigadier General Claudiu DOBOCAN, Deputy CFOS Commander, and "The Role of SOATG, Structure, Missions and Capabilities", a presentation held by aviation colonel Nicolae CREȚU, Head of SSA FOS, among the organizers.

During the closing ceremony, participation diplomas issued by the Joint Special Operations University / MacDILL AFB, Florida, under the signature of the President and Dean of the University, were awarded.

Lieutenant-colonel Grigore UNGUREANU



SUCCESSFUL HUMANITARIAN MISSIONS PERFORMED!

On March 27, two C-27 J Spartan aircraft of the Romanian Air Force, ready for fire-rescue missions, acted in the area of Breaza, Buzău County, in support of the ground forces.

The C-27 J Spartan aircraft were sent at the request of the Emergency Department and can carry 6,000 liters of water (in six containers) on each pass by. They performed 4 missions, in which they used about 20 containers of water.

Since 2017, the Romanian Air Force helped extinguish three forest fires in our country - one in the area of Șvinița, Mehedinți County, the second in Buceș, Vulcan Mountains, on the border between Alba and Hunedoara counties, and the third in the area of Oituz commune, Bacău county. Also, in the past years, the Romanian military has carried out three international missions of this type, the first of which took place in July 2018, in Greece.

On May 4, a C-27 J Spartan aircraft of the Romanian Air Force, ready for medical missions, took off from the 90th Airlift Base in Otopeni, to carry out a humanitarian transport mission on the route Iași-Saarbrücken (Germany), of a patient in serious condition. The aircraft took off from the 90th Airlift Base to reach Iași at 8:10 a.m., and continued the flight from Iași Airport to Saarbrücken, at 9:50 a.m..

On Tuesday, May 31, a C-27 J Spartan aircraft of the Romanian Air Force took off from 90th Airlift Base in Otopeni on the route Iași-Milan (Italy), in order to carry out a humanitarian mission, having on board a newborn with congenital heart defects.

The aircraft took off from the 90th Airlift Base to Iași around 10:00, took the patient and continued the flight from Iași Airport to Milan, around 11:00.

Another humanitarian mission took place on Wednesday, June 8, when

a C-27 J Spartan aircraft of the Romanian Air Force, ready for medical missions, transported on the route Otopeni-Venice (Italy) another newborn with a serious health condition.

On Thursday, June 9th, around 9:15 a.m., a C-27 J Spartan aircraft of the Romanian Air Force took off on the route Otopeni-Iași-Vienna, in order to transport a burned patient.

The medical teams that monitored the patients during the flight were made up of SMURD specialists and military medical personnel of the 90th Airlift Base. The transport of the patient from the hospital to the airport was done by a SMURD ambulance.

On Sunday, June 12, a C-27 J Spartan aircraft of the Romanian Air Force, equipped for medical missions, carried out a humanitarian transport mission on the route Otopeni - Rzeszów - Jasionka (Poland) - Copenhagen (Denmark) - Otopeni.

Three Ukrainian patients, aged 18, 49 and 50, respectively, were picked up from Rzeszów-Jasionka International Airport and transported to Copenhagen for treatment in medical facilities in Denmark.

The medical team that monitored the patients during the flight was made up of specialists from the Bucharest Emergency Clinical Hospital and the 90th Airlift Base.

The military aircraft took off from the 90th Airlift Base around 9:00 a.m..

The request for air transport was made by the Department for Emergency Situations, following a request from Ukraine, based on the European Union Civil Protection Mechanism, through the Early Warning and Response System (EWRS) platform - a mechanism created by the European Commission to facilitate the transfer of patients from Ukraine to member countries.

Source: Romanian Air Force Public Relations Office



"You can also be like them! The Romanian Military: Strength - Professionalism - Respect". These words convinced soldier Aura-Iulia PĂLIMARIU to start a military career. The representatives of the Information-Recruitment Bureau were present at a career fair when she read the slogan.

"From the very beginning, the road was strewn with challenges, but I managed to face them, overcoming every situation and being

RESCUER WOMAN AT THE 71ST AIR BASE



able to fulfill my dream of becoming a search and rescue operator. The challenges have multiplied from this point on: helicopter flights, missions with trollers, trollers with stretcher, rappelling and more. I would not have been able to overcome these challenges so easily if I had not had the support of my colleagues in the search and rescue detachment, and of the instructors who took care of my training. Being a woman rescuer entitles strength, determination, hard work and the desire to give your best.

I will always seek to improve myself, to accumulate as much knowledge as possible, and to become the best version of myself".

A graduate of the "Aurel Vlaicu" Air Force Training School, soldier Aura-Iulia Pălimariu continues her training, being a student at the Faculty of Sports and Health Sciences at the "Vasile Alecsandri" University of Bacău. Congratulations on everything you've accomplished so far and good luck in your career!

Source: Public Relations Office 71st Air Base



FIRST TIME FIRINGS WITH HIMARS OF ROMANIAN ARMY

The Ministry of National Defense informs that, between June 8th and 10th, firings took place for the first time with the HIMARS system that entered into the endowment of the 8th Tactical Operational Missiles Brigade "Alexandru Ioan Cuza" in 2021, at the National Training Center for Anti-Aircraft Defense "General Ion Bungescu" from southeastern Capu Midia.

The firings took place in the margins of the exercises Unirea 22 and Viforul 22, carried out by structures within the 8th Tactical Operative Missiles Brigade "Alexandru Ioan Cuza" based on a fictitious scenario, which aimed to practice techniques, tactics and procedures to ensure the support by fire of a force group that carries out the operation of defending the coast.

The acquisition of the HIMARS (High Mobility Artillery Rocket System) was established by the Law number 46/2018 assuring the Indirect Fire Support Capability related to the endowment programme Multiple Launcher System of Rockets with High Range - HIMARS, recalls the Ministry of National Defense.

The document provides for the purchase of three systems with 18 launch installations each, including, but not limited to, ammunition, control command elements, sensors, logistical support, maintenance, cryptographic and special equipment, as well as personnel training service at all necessary levels.

"For Romania, achieving the capability of indirect fire support is of essential security interest and contributes significantly both to the consolidation of the Strategic Partnership with the United States of America and to the fulfillment of the commitments assumed by our country within NATO. Multiple rocket launcher systems, an important part of the land artillery system, act independently or integrated with the other systems to carry out their missions. Due to the interoperability character, multiple rocket launcher systems can be made available to NATO, in order to fulfill the commitments assumed by Romania within the Alliance and the regional initiatives. The HIMARS system has proven its operational maturity in real conflicts, being tested during military operations," said the Ministry of National Defense.

Source: Ministry of National Defence Press office

BRIEF HISTORY OF 71ST AIR FORCE BASE

The tradition of the Romanian Air Force present in the Transylvanian lands is based on the tumultuous history of the Romanian wings. Under the sign of its reshaping from war to peace, the Câmpia Turzii military airfield was built between 1952-1953, by equipping it with airplanes intended to attack ground targets, like IL-10, manufactured in the former USSR.

By Government Order no. 14 of 17th March 1982 and by the Order of the General Staff no. PR 003259 of 11.06.1982, starting with 30th June 1982, the 48th Fighter Aviation Squadron acquires the status of military base, deployed on Deveselu airfield until it was able to carry out missions on Câmpia Turzii airfield. The heart of the future 71st Air Base "started beating" at Câmpia Turzii from June 30, 1982.

Source: 71st AFB Câmpia Turzii





BSDA

22

BLACK SEA
DEFENCE
AND
AEROSPACE

Between 18-20 May, the S.A. Exhibition Complex in Baneasa (Bucharest) held the eight edition of the Black Sea Defense, Aerospace and Security International Exhibition (BSDA).

BSDA-22 brought together more than 400 prestigious exhibitors from 33 countries and five continents that exhibited currently military equipment and capabilities, also showing the latest trends and technical solutions in the field of security and defence.

The public saw flight demonstrations of the IAR-99 Șoim, C-27J Spartan and IAR-330 aircraft. Flight management and coordination were provided by an Air Force Staff team, and ground-to-air communications were provided by the team of the 85th Communications and Information Center.

As part of the static exhibition, the Romanian Air Force presented an IAR-99 Șoim aircraft, an IAR-330 LRM helicopter, a C-27J Spartan aircraft, and elements from the HAWK missile system; a team from the Air Force's EOD module was also present.

The public had the opportunity to experience the flight simulators of the IAK-52 and IAR-316B aircraft. With the help of VR glasses, visitors had the opportunity to follow the flight through the eyes of the pilot. Delegations of the Air Force Academy "Henri Coandă", and the Air Force Military School for Warrant Officers and Non-Commissioned Officers "Traian Vuia", presented the educational offer. The students from Brașov and Boboc enthusiastically provided information to the interested visitors.

Laura MĂCĂRESCU





Trojan Footprint 22 EXERCISE



Teamwork is the ability to direct individual achievements to accomplish a common goal!

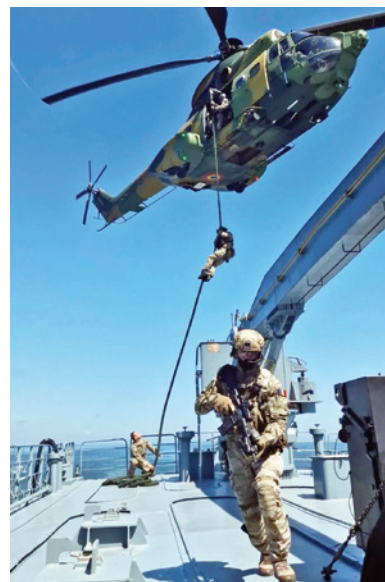
On May 9, operators from the Romanian Special Operations Naval Forces, together with their colleagues from the United States of America and Great Britain, trained at sea and in the air in the multinational exercise Trojan Footprint. It was one of the most complex training activities for the Romanian Special Operations Forces.

An IAR-330 LRM helicopter from the Mihail Kogălniceanu 57th Air Base participated in this exercise, providing support to the military personnel of the Special Operations Naval Forces.

The Trojan Footprint 22 exercise was planned and coordinated by the United States Special Operations Command Europe (SOCEUR) and provided the involved units the opportunity to test and demonstrate multi-domain tactics, techniques, and procedures which involve sets of specific skills of the military personnel of the Land, Air and Naval Special Operations Forces. Trojan Footprint 22 took place simultaneously in Bulgaria, Croatia, Estonia, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Latvia, Lithuania, Montenegro, Poland, Slovakia, Slovenia, Hungary and Romania.

We are a strong team that can accomplish any type of mission.

Source: Naval Forces Public Relations Office



The 71st Air Base "General Emanoil Ionescu" participated in the joint multinational exercise, "Adriatic Strike 2022", planned by the Slovenian Armed Forces and carried out between May 23 and June 5. Three IAR 330 SOCAT helicopters with maintenance crew were deployed at Cerklje Air Base, Slovenia.

The exercise was conducted in an engaging, challenging and realistic environment for the participating crews, and represented a great training opportunity in a multinational environment in order to increase the level of interoperability. The exercise was a great opportunity for training and experience gained and also an important achievement for the pilots and the entire personnel who took part in the exercise.

The scenarios included close air support, air-to-ground shootings with real ammunition in the Pocek firerange, with the cannon on-board the helicopters.

Text: Andreea ONIȚA

Foto: Adela MUREȘAN

Adriatic Strike 22

EXERCISE



JOINT EXERCISE

Mădălina BURLACU, Lucien COVALCIUC

In mid-April, at the 95th Air Base, the airman of the 954th Anti-Aircraft Artillery Battalion began their specialized training, from simple to complex. The joint training was carried out with the support of aircraft belonging to the 951st Advanced Instruction Aviation Squadron and the 952nd SOCAT Helicopters Squadron. The training continued with a theoretical and practical examination.

In order to improve cooperation and increase cohesion in joint training missions, two IAR-330 SOCAT helicopters belonging to the 95th Air Base were involved in a real combat exercise (LFX) with the "Marshal Józef Piłsudski" 634th Infantry Battalion.

The exercise was focused on the joint training between the Air Force and the Land Forces military personnel. All military personnel involved in the exercise confirmed good and very good results during the training program, while planning and carrying out effective cooperation and coordination.

Source: 95th Air Base Public Relations Office



ROMANIAN AIR FORCE IN APROC 22

Between June 6-17, a detachment of 30 airman and two IAR-330 SOCAT helicopters from the "Hero Captain Aviator Alexandru Șerbănescu" 95th Air Base in Bacău attended the Air Centric Personnel Recovery Operatives' Course (APROC) 2022, in Albacete Air Base, Spain.

During the internship, joint training exercises were performed according to NATO procedures. The purpose of APROC is to qualify the personnel selected to be the Rescue Mission Commander (RMC), to train aircrews and extractive forces in the implementation of internationally agreed tactics, techniques and procedures as a member of the Rescue Mission, a combined contingent of joint forces, using the so-called "4T" methodology (Task, Target, Threats and Tactics).

Source: 95th Air Base Public Relations Office





INTERNATIONAL STUDENT WEEK



Between March 21-25, at the "Henri Coandă" Air Force Academy took place the International Students Week. This event was attended by delegates from 12 military higher education institutions in Europe and in the United States of America.

The goal of the event was to improve and intensify international collaboration with partner institutions, to exchange ideas and good practices, as well as to increase student mobility.

The 5th "Horea" Ground-to-Air Missile Battalion attended the activity on behalf of "General Nicolae Dăscălescu" 1st Ground-to-Air Missile Brigade, and presented to the audience the purpose and the way of employing a Hawk subunit.

Source: Air Force Academy Public Relations Office

CADET EXCHANGE



On Wednesday, March 23, 2022, a delegation of cadets and trainers from the United States Air Force Academy in Colorado Springs visited the "Henri Coandă" Air Force Academy.

The main objective of the visit was the exchange of experience in the field of training the future officers of the air forces of the two states.

The US cadets visited for a week also the "Nicolae Bălcescu" Land Forces Academy in Sibiu.

Source: Air Force Academy Public Relations Office

BLENDED MOBILITY EVENT

Between May 9-13, 2022 the Air Force Academy hosted "Blended Mobility" which is part of the "International Air Force Semester" project, being attended by students from three partner countries: Romania, Greece and Portugal.

During the event, courses in Air Navigation, English Language and Aeronautical Meteorology were taught, which were evaluated, according to the established criteria, by the present students.

The event enabled not only informal discussions on the assigned topics, but also other academic exchanges between the students, cultural and sports activities as well.



10TH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE REDEFINING COMMUNITY IN INTERCULTURAL CONTEXT RCIC'22



The tenth edition of the International Conference "Redefining the Community in Intercultural Context" (RCIC'22) took place during May 5-7, 2022, at the "Henri Coandă" Air Force Academy in Braşov.

The conference was organized by the host institution in partnership with the "Mihai Viteazul" National Academy of Intelligence from Bucharest.

The opening of the conference was made by the commander/rector of the academy, associate professor Marius ȘERBESZKI, Ph. D., followed by the public lectures of the keynote speakers Roxana G. REICHMAN from Gordon College in Haifa, Israel and Adrian G. CORPĂDEAN, dean of the Faculty of European Studies, and a presentation of the works in sections.

The present edition of Redefining Community in Intercultural Context Conference focused mainly on the need for inclusive security education in order to develop societal resilience, under special circumstances, such as the COVID-19 pandemic. Societal resilience refers not only to society's ability to withstand external shocks or various threats,

but also to maintain a high level of social connectivity and to develop mutual trust among citizens, citizens and institutions, respectively. This level of resilience can only be achieved through inclusive education, both intercultural and security education.

Six editions of Redefining Community in Intercultural Context Conference Proceedings have already been included in Clarivate Analytics (former ISI - Thompson Reuters) databases, Conference Proceeding Citation Index, Social Science & Humanities.

The main goal of the conference was an exchange of experience between professors, researchers and practitioners in the field of community dynamics, especially in the area of intercultural pedagogy. Moreover, we look forward to putting into practice the new ideas that will result from the cross-fertilization of teaching activities and scientific research. Our end-goal is to improve the quality of education and, consequently, of personal and intellectual development. Last but not least, we are eager to disseminate the results of our multicultural dialogue within the academic community and beyond it.

Source: Air Force Academy Public Relations Office

ANNIVERSARY EVENTS

Bogdan PANTILIMON

On March 18, 2022, several aeronautical events took place in Focșani, to mark the 110th anniversary of the first flight on an aerodrome in a city, as well as the 110th anniversary of military aeronautical education in Romania.

Focșani is one of the fundamental landmarks of aeronautical education in our country, but also a pioneer in the history of Romanian Aeronautics, because 110 years ago here took place the first flight on an aerodrome in a city.

To mark the event, a functional replica of the "Vlaicu II" Airplane was exhibited by the "Aurel Vlaicu" Air Force Training Base in Unirii Square in Focșani, as well as a flight simulator exhibited by the "Henri

Coandă" Air Force Academy, and a stand with the educational offer of the "Traian Vuia" Air Force Military School for Warrant Officers and Non-Commissioned Officers.

A show with music and poetry was also organized by the students of the "Henri Coandă" Air Force Academy and the students of the "Traian Vuia" Air Force Military School for Warrant Officers and Non-Commissioned Officers.

The central area of Focșani municipality was flown over by aircraft of the "Aurel Vlaicu" Air Force Training Base.

Source: Romanian Air Force Public Relations Office.



110 YEARS OF AERONAUTICAL EDUCATION

Adrian SULTĂNOIU, Gabriela ȘERBAN

Laurențiu TUROI, Bogdan PANTILIMON

On 1st of April, the Minister of National Defense Vasile DÎNCU, decorated the Battle Flag of the "Aurel Vlaicu" Air Force Training Base during a ceremony.

In 1912, by the high Decree no. 1953 of 27 March, the Military Pilot School was established in Bucharest, on Cotroceni airfield, under the command of Major Ion Macri.

The first documentary attestation of the "Aurel Vlaicu" Military Aviation School appears on September 4, 1953, based on the Decree of the Presidium of the Grand National Assembly no. 156, when the School of Navigating Officers no. 1 located on Tecuci airfield was united with the School of Navigating Officers no. 2, located on Focsani airfield.

On August 28, 1956, the Military School of Aviation Officers "Aurel Vlaicu", together with the Classic Aircraft School Regiment was deployed from Tecuci airfield to Ziliștea-Boboc airfield. The new "Aurel Vlaicu" Military School of Aviation Officers had an Education Section, student squadrons (School Aviation Squadron, Fighter School Aviation Squadron, Fighter School Aviation Squadron (training of Senior Officers), Courses (School for Superior Commissioned Officers). Starting with June 1st, 1997, the "Aurel Vlaicu" Military Aviation Institute was abolished and the "Aurel Vlaicu" Aviation Application School was established, which carried out training, specialized training, and advanced training in weapons. The school



kept the same structure having School Groups on 3 locations, for flight training.

By Presidential Decree, the military institution of the Air Force from Boboc was awarded the Order "Aeronautical Virtue" Knight rank with the sign of peace, on the occasion of the 110th anniversary of the establishment of the first military piloting school.

The decoration of The Battle Flag of the "Aurel Vlaicu" Military Aviation School with the Order "Aeronautical Virtue", Knight rank with the sign for peace, for the military personnel



The Minister of National Defense Vasile DÎNCU and Air Fleet General Ovidiu BĂLAN unveil the anniversary plaque of the 110th anniversary of aeronautical education.



The parade of the Battle Flag of the "Aurel Vlaicu" Military Aviation School after the decoration with the Order "Aeronautical Virtue", Knight rank with the sign for peace, for the military personnel



FOLLOWING SMARANDA'S FOOTSTEPS...

Laura MĂCĂRESCU

2022 is declared the year of Smaranda BRĂESCU. May 19 marked the 90th anniversary of the world record in parachuting. Back then Smaranda Brăescu became a world parachuting champion, after a jump from a height of 24,000 feet or 7,315 meters. Nevertheless, we would like to address a particular topic about Smaranda.



As we were recalling the times when Mândița (Manditza) (the nickname Smaranda Brăescu was called by her relatives), managed to become a pioneer, fearless adventurer and hero of the national and international flight, thanks to the presence of our distinguished guests, thanks to the impeccable organization of this event and the very documented presentations, we felt that somewhere, in the majestic hall of the National Military Circle, on May 12, 2022, the parachutist and aviator pilot herself was present next to us. We had the opportunity to get into the spirit of those times and to feel the presence of such a legendary character.

Somewhere in the atmosphere, the warmth, the modesty, the desire to fly, the smile of a woman who had the courage to reach the sky, who opened the gates to the heights of many aviators inspired by her example, felt strong, even overwhelming. I felt that Smaranda is here and enjoys her recognition and praises; but she is not alone, she is with her friends, and even with her family. We know that Mândița inspired and contributed to the flight legacy, to the fulfillment of the dreams of other aviators who followed in her footsteps. And to prove this, we were given the opportunity to meet a special guest, another "Mândița".

Alina-Ruxandra DUMITRU was with us, a 23-year-old student, a parachutist at the Romanian Aero Club, who, in a hurry to get to an exam, squeezed a few minutes of her time to give us an interview. Member of the County Sports Parachuting Team in Bucharest, Alina told us how she spent the whole summer on the airfield, listening to the noise of aircraft engine, smelling the kerosene, and feeling the summer heat, in the airfield atmosphere which is so well-known to the lovers of heights, from

morning to evening, together with other colleagues passionate about this very beautiful and demanding sport, having in mind a single goal: to pass the final exam to become a parachutist.

She also told us that, at the age of 21, in 2020, before reaching the age of 22, she went to the Romanian Aero Club and she chose parachuting out of the three specialties: motor flight, gliding and parachuting. There was something that made her choose parachuting.

When she got home, she hesitated to tell her mother and grandmother about the choice, thinking that they would object, because motor flying or gliding seemed less dangerous choices. She was amazed when her mother and grandmother were not surprised at all and did not object to her choice. The two women smiled and said, "We've had another paratrooper in our family." "Who?", asked Alina. "Smaranda Brăescu. Her mother had a sister, Catinca, who was the mother of your great-grandmother", the two women replied. Mom and Grandma were really proud of her choice. What is even more special is the fact that May 21 marked the 125th anniversary of Smaranda's birth, and on May 22, immediately after midnight, the family continued the series of anniversaries with Alina-Ruxandra's birthday. On this occasion, reminding us of Smaranda's fulfilled dream of becoming an elite parachutist and pilot, we wished Alina Happy Birthday! Success in her life and in the sport she eagerly chose!

PS: Although she knew before she got her parachute license that destiny binds her more than she imagined to Smaranda, being as ambitious as Mandita, who was even more motivated by the obstacles she was facing and determined to achieve the impossible, the very

year she signed up, Alina did not want to reveal this secret to her colleagues and instructors, so that she would not be positively discriminated in obtaining the license. So the post-exam celebration of her success as a parachutist coincided with revealing to everyone that she is Smaranda's family descendant, as Smaranda did not have kids. It can be said that silently, Smaranda and Alina had a pact, to respect and support each other, to enjoy each other and to celebrate each other at Alina's license, on anniversaries, but also on the occasion of this special event that commemorated the hero of flight.

Alina-Ruxandra DUMITRU, blood relative to Smaranda Brăescu of maternal line





AEROMEDEVAC



THE DUTCH WAY "WE CARE ANYTIME, ANYWHERE"

By Carlo KUIT & Paul KIEVIT/ Bronco Aviation



While the CH-47D Chinook crew flies patients towards a hospital as quickly as possible, the Aeromedical Evacuation Physician (AEP) and Aeromedical Evacuation Nurse (AEN) do everything they can to keep them alive. The helicopter acts as a flying ambulance in these cases. This is a typical scenario which can occur in a real-life situation during a deployment or as part of an evacuation of military servicemen. The annual held ORAC (Operational Readiness Aeromedevac Course) is preparing participants to train for these urgent situations.

During July 2021 this two and a half weeks training was organized in The Netherlands. ORAC is the Initial Rotary Wing Aeromedevac course of the Royal Netherlands Air Force (RNLAF) that is conducted by the Operational Health Department (Operationele Gezondheidszorg/OGZ). The OGZ is a part of the Center for Men and Aviation (CML). The OGZ consist of soldiers with a (specialist) medical background. One of the main tasks of the OGZ consist primarily of providing Aeromedical Evacuation (AE) capacity (Air Transport for casualties). With AE, wounded soldiers and civilians are taken by helicopter to a hospital in the mission area (Forward AE) or flown

back to the Netherlands by Airlift (Strategic AE). If many patients have to return to the Netherlands, they can be accommodated before the flight in a so-called Casualty Staging Unit (CSU). Supporting the ORAC course is 298 Squadron, stationed at Gilze-Rijen Airbase, of the Royal Netherlands Air Force/ Defense Helicopter Command (Koninklijke Luchtmacht/Defensie Helicopter Commando - DHC) operating the Chinook CH-47Ds and lately the new CH-47F MY CAAS version since 2021. Rotary Aeromedical Evacuation, participants start their training on the C-130 Hercules fixed wing platform explains Lt Col Johan Oele, Chief Aeromedical Evacuation Medical Director of the RNLAF.

"We start the AE training with the support of Austria, United States and Canada. We buy training courses from these countries this because we have limited availability of our own C-130 Hercules fleet".
The ORAC course is a preparation for obtaining the Rotary Wing Aeromedevac Evacuation (AE) status by the participants. Like in the year 2020 the course of 2021 was also held in The Netherlands as travelling to the US brought big challenges due to COVID-19 situation. Normally the course takes place under the supervision of the RNLAF 302 Squadron stationed at Fort Hood (US Army Airbase), Texas. The training integrates knowledge on Aero-Medical Training,

Trauma and other Emergency Medicine, into a good working concept supported by a Helicopter Platform. The ORAC course is supported by a highly experienced AE Instruction Group consisting of Aeromedical Evacuation Physicians (AEP), Aeromedical Evacuation Nurses (AEN) and medical specialists with both military operational (mission deployments to e.g., Bosnia, Iraq, Afghanistan, Mali) and civilian experience.
Since 2009 the Royal Netherlands Air Force organized the ORAC courses in three different countries; The Netherlands (2017,2020-21), The United States (Fort Hood, Texas 2018, 2019, 2022), Utah, Salt Lake





City (2015), Wisconsin, Fort McCoy/ Volk Field (2009 t/m 2014, 2016) and Canada: Ontario, Petawawa (2018).

The 2021 edition was attended by 18 participants. The training consisted of both theory and practical lessons/exercises. Key attention areas are Physiology, Stress of flight and Crew Resource Management principles. The goal for the ORAC participants is to become more familiar with the equipment and materials used in the Aeromedical Evacuation role which are a vital component to be able to work in this environment.

Captain Gracia van Wieren was one of the participants of the ORAC 2021 course. It was her first experience flying a helicopter. *"It gave some moments of stress and also I had to adapt to the flying circumstances like noise, vibration and tiredness"* she explained. The personal goal for Gracia was to participate together with the military Flight Doctor during the helicopter flights and learning and adapting to the specific procedures during medevac flights. *"You have to be sure that all is secured, and of course the safety of the patient during the transportation is priority number one. Also, the communication onboard of the Chinook with both the Loadmaster as the Pilot was a big challenge to me"* Captain van Wieren continues. *"Priority here is to get to the helicopter with the patient in safe conditions as soon as possible. The ORAC course gave us a great inside look and experience what to expect during a deployment, next steps will be training, training (including the FAMET - Forward Aero Medical Evacuation Training Course) and be ready to be deployed in the near future"*.

Sergeant Major Chris Halmans was one of the Instructors and Course Managers of the ORAC 2021 course. (The Course Manager coordinates all substantive matters during the course). *"My personal satisfaction is to witness the personal growth of the participants during the course. Their emotions go from 100% concentration and tension with a big relief at the end of the flight. ORAC is a short and intense period of intensive cooperation. Participants often meet their personal boundaries; it is our job to lead them in the right direction"*.

"My main goal is to convey my experience and the lessons learned to the participants. This should result in having everyone participating during the course prepared for the complex tasks, unfortunately this is not achievable for all" Sergeant Major Halmans adds. *"ORAC course is split in three basic parts; lectures, practical lessons and scenario Training"* he underlines. *"This course was my eleventh edition, having participated in both ORAC and FAMET"*.

"The ORAC course is one of the last parts of our operational readiness for the forward Aeromedical Evacuation" Sergeant Major Halmans explains.

As a nurse or Physician one must first undergo general military and medical training.

After placement at the OGZ, the following education and training courses must be completed; for example, OSEG KLU (Emergency Medical Royal Netherlands Air Force training) where participants learn how to take care of trauma patients as a team in an Air Force composition with Air Force equipment. BLS/ILS/ALS: B is Basic Life Support, I Immediate Life Support, A Advanced Life Support: Courses that provides a Standardized approach to Cardiopulmonary resuscitation



in adults (among this are also CPR courses). Other trainings amongst others are in the field of survival, safety and equipment" Sergeant Major Halmans adds.

"A follow-up training to the ORAC is the FAMET (Forward Aeromedical Evacuation Training). This is a training in which elements are added to the final objectives of the ORAC. All this is simulated in order to offer a training that is as realistic as possible in which as many facets of the forward AE as possible are discussed". "We are currently overhauling the ORAC. This is to ensure that the course connects even better with the other courses and training in the future". Sergeant Major Halmans concludes.

"We try to fly as stable as we can during the training to allow participants to get used to conduct their training tasks during flight. We try to keep the communication to a minimum to allow the participants to work on the helicopters intercom during their evacuation training" according to Michiel, one of pilots of the RNLAF 298 Squadron involved in the course.

"In general, the learning curve is clearly visible. Although we only get a superficial understanding of their actions, it is important that the participants provide updates to the Aircrew during these flights. For example, the destination where they want us to go with the patient, any flight restrictions that the injury entails for the patient and all what is needed at the drop-off location (specialist teams and resources) has to be communicated. In the beginning of the course this is often forgotten, but after a few flights we notice the improvement in communication with us as flight crew" adds Michiel.

"The most important part of the training is how to approach and work safely in an operational flying Helicopter. Participants learn how to be secure during the flight, they also have to move the patient, all equipment and the medical backpacks in the helicopter. Secondly they have to learn how to communicate on board" according to Major Sven Jägers, A3 current OPS of Operational Health Department (Operationele Gezondheidszorg/OGZ).

Major Jägers continues *"Flying is done with open windows and tail lift, so that you also have to deal with drafts and noise during the flight. In addition, tactical flying is regularly performed (depending on the type of "mission"). All this is done to mimic reality as much as possible".* There is also a static night exercise in which you have to examine and stabilize a patient with very limited light options (Light Discipline). First of all, there is an introductory flight where you can get used to the helicopter and the behavior of the various equipment during flight movements (Tactical Flying). Subsequently, various "missions" flights take place in which you land at a point of injury (incident location), you briefly map the patients there and if necessary and possible, whether or not under threat, stabilize and prepare for Air Transport'. In the event of a "hot" landing zone, the medical team, including an Air Mobile Protection Team (AMPT) loaded immediately the patient. The participants should make a clear plan where the patient should be transported to (nearest Medical Treatment Facility, Role 2 or Role 3) and answer questions such as how to fly towards the pilot (low and loud gives a lot of vibration and will be painful for a patient with fractures) and whether there is a height restriction (in a patient with, for example, a collapsed lung).





Since 2018 Gracia is employed with Ministry of Defense (MOD) and from 2020 with the Operational Health Department (Operationele Gezondheidszorg/OGZ). Working with the Operational Health Department gives her the also the opportunity to work both as a civilian at the Emergency Department of a hospital, this to gain experience with all kind of medical cases. Each year 12 weeks have to be attended as a kind of internship. After studying Medicine at the University of Leiden (The Netherlands) Gracia attended a number of specific courses, amongst; Flight Surgeon course in Germany, Aeromedical Evacuation Course in Canada and a Sea Survival Course.

When the Helicopter returns, a sign from the loadmaster must be clearly observed to see if the Helicopter can be approached, after which the patient is transported to the helicopter. The patient is then secured on the stretcher and connected to the monitor, after which he is taken to a Medical Treatment Facility (MTF). Because of the potential threat, it is often impracticable to stabilize the patient before transport and the first assessment and treatment of the patient often takes place in a flying helicopter with all conceivable stresses of flight' concludes Major Jägers.

Each "mission" is assessed by two instructors (always a combination of a medical specialist, Physician and a flight nurse instructor). This duo is cooperating first on the AE skills (safety, communication, situational awareness, collaboration as a team) and secondly, on medical content. At the end of each course day, the results of all participants are discussed and if necessary, areas for improvement identified by the instruction team explains Lt Col. Oele. The training course also concludes with a theory exam and at least five "missions performed" where the candidate is in the "lead" during multiple times. All missions flown are assessed and reviewed using a standard checklist and evaluation form. The missions become more complex as time goes by and the participant must show the corresponding increasing achievement.

Lt Col. Oele continues "ORAC training has been around for more than 10 years and is performed at least once a year. Belgian colleagues also participated in the ORAC. In 2018, at the request of Canadian Armed Forces, an ORAC was even provided (by a Dutch AE instruction team) towards Canadian Physician, nurses and medical technicians, to support them in their Operational Readiness, preparation for the Canadian Aeromedevac (UN) mission (2019) in Mali. During this joint collaboration, communication was in (medical) English. The AE instructors assessed and supervised the Canadian colleagues. The Canadian colleagues were very satisfied with this intensive way of cooperation, guidance and feedback. The ORAC is an excellent course in the field of aeromedical evacuation and is assessed as very valuable and evaluated very well in collaboration with the instruction team. However, additional, short, type-specific training (depending on which airframe is available) in the context of mission-oriented training remains necessary. Clinical experience should remain the guiding principle and annual internships are desirable. Making many flying hours and multidisciplinary cooperation increase the operational character. The ORAC course is seen by the participants as a good preparation for an actual deployment".

Next step in the training syllabus is the FAMET (Forward Aero Medical Evacuation Training) which is an additional training to full operational status of the flight Physician and nurses. The scenarios are more complex and include simulated hostile scenarios. Participants will continue with the FAMET course a year after finalizing ORAC.

The following FAMET course will be held in the United States again during the first half year of 2022 at Fort Hood, Texas.



