

The Swedish Liaison Teams – An Evaluation of the Swedish Liaison teams in Kosovo and Bosnia-Herzegovina

EMMA SVENSSON



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Sammanfattning

De svenska samverkansteamerna har i huvudsak följt de koncept som finns utarbetade inom NATO respektive EUFOR. Man skulle dock kunna bli något bättre på dessa. Teamens verksamhet skiljer sig åt mellan bidragande nationer vilket innebär att typen av och kvalitén på inhämtad information varierar. Detta gör materialet svårhanterbart. De nationella intressena har också i vissa fall fått komma före insatsens. Detta gäller även för Sverige och Försvarsdepartementet bör därför tydliggöra för Försvarsmakten vilka intressen som ska styra en svensk insats. Sverige bör också överväga att införa en längre och överlappande rotation då detta skulle öka kvalitén och kontinuiteten på teamens arbete. Längre utbildning i muntlig och skriftlig kommunikation behövs också. Vad gäller NATO verkar det finnas ett behov av att se över användandet av samverkansteam då det inte finns en enhetlig organisation, ett syfte eller en metod för denna typ av verksamhet. En annan brist är att teamen inte har en egen analysfunktion trots att de torde vara mest lämpade att avgöra sanningshalten i det inhämtade materialet. Inom samverkansteamerna gör man en tydlig åtskillnad mellan sin egen verksamhet och underrättelse samt CIMIC. Detta är dock inte helt självklart då samverkansteamens verksamhet kan ses som en kombination av de andra två. En ökad kunskap kring begreppen behövs därför. Ett långsiktigt engagemang i KFOR kan på sikt innebära att ett deltagande i samverkansteam blir nödvändig varför Sverige bör överväga att återigen delta. I Bosnien-Hercegovina däremot är det civil snarare än militär personal som behövs.

Nyckelord: Samverkansteam, LMT, LOT, Bosnien-Hercegovina, Kosovo

Summary

The Swedish Liaison Teams have generally adhered to the concepts devised within NATO and EUFOR respectively. There is, however, room for improvement. The Liaison Teams come from various contributing nations, and their work varies, which means that the type of collected information and the quality vary. This makes the material difficult to process. In certain cases, national interests have taken priority over the mission. This is also the case for Sweden, and the Swedish Ministry of Defence should therefore make it clear to the Swedish Armed Forces what interests will determine a Swedish operation. Sweden should also consider introducing a longer and overlapping rotation since this would enhance the quality and continuity of the work of the Liaison Teams. There is also a need for lengthening the training of verbal and written communication. With regard to NATO, there seems to be a need to review the use of Liaison Teams since there is no unified organisation, aim or method for this kind of work. Another shortcoming is that the Liaison Teams do not have their own analysis function, even though they probably are the ones most suitable to determine the degree of veracity of the collected material. In the Liaison Teams a clear distinction is made between their own work, intelligence and CIMIC. This is, however, not entirely self-evident as the work of the Liaison Teams can be seen as a combination of the other two. Therefore, an increased knowledge of what the concepts mean is needed. Long-term involvement in KFOR may in the future mean that participation in Liaison Teams will be necessary, and that is why Sweden should consider participating once again. In Bosnia-Herzegovina, on the other hand, it is civilians who are needed rather than military personnel.

Key words: Liaison and Monitoring Teams, Liaison and Observation Teams, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Kosovo

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Preface

The development in the Western Balkans has been, and still is, of utmost importance to Sweden. Since the beginning of the 1990s, Sweden has contributed with peacekeepers as well as development cooperation. Sweden has contributed with Liaison Teams as a part of the peacekeeping work in Bosnia-Herzegovina and Kosovo, which is work that, as far as Sweden is concerned, has recently ceased.

Within the framework of the project 'International Operations', the Division of Defence Analysis at the Swedish Defence Research Agency (FOI) has been tasked by the Swedish Ministry of Defence's Department for Security and International Affairs (FÖ/SI) to evaluate the work of the Swedish Liaison Teams. The report is, above all, aimed at officials at the Government Offices of Sweden and those at the Swedish Armed Forces responsible for planning, but it may also appeal to others who are interested in this subject.

The report has been quality checked by Claes Nilsson and discussed with the authors on 9th May 2008. I wish to thank him very much for the work he has put into the text. Also, I profoundly thank my project leader Karin Bogland for many fruitful discussions and for her support as the project progressed. I also wish to thank Maria Lagerström and Madeleine Lindström for their comments on the text.

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Stockholm, 8 July 2008

Emma Svensson

Abbreviations

CIMIC	Civil-Military Co-operation
EU	European Union
EUFOR	European Union Forces
FOI	Swedish Defence Research Agency
FÖ/SI	Department for International and Security Affairs at the Swedish Ministry of Defence
G2	Intelligence Unit in the Multi-National Task Force
G9	CIMIC in the Multi-National Task Force
IAD	Information and Analysis Division
J2	Intelligence Unit at HQ Level
J3	Operations Unit at HQ Level
J9	CIMIC at HQ Level
KFOR	Kosovo Force
LMT	Liaison and Monitoring Team
LMT CC	Liaison and Monitoring Team Coordination Cell
LOT	Liaison and Observation Team
MNTF	Multi-National Task Force
MNTF C	Multi-National Task Force Centre
MOT	Military Observation Teams
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
OSCE	Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe
PIR	Priority Information Requests
PRT	Provincial Reconstruction Teams
RCC	Regional Co-ordination Centre
RFI	Request for Information
RLMT	Regional Liaison and Monitoring Team
UNMIK	United Nations Mission in Kosovo

Summary of the Report

The aim of this report is to evaluate the Swedish participation in the *Liaison and Monitoring Teams* (LMTs) in Kosovo and the *Liaison and Observation Teams* (LOTs) in Bosnia-Herzegovina. The secondary aim is to describe the internal organisation and the forms of work in the Liaison Teams. The basis of this report is a number of interviews carried out in Kosovo and Bosnia-Herzegovina with the parties concerned.

The Liaison Teams are small military units whose main mission is to collect information by liaising with the local population and institutions, as well as international organisations. The information helps to give an up-to-date picture of the security situation. The concept was used for the first time by NATO in Bosnia-Herzegovina.

In Kosovo, the liaison work is assigned under the Operations Unit at HQ level (J3) and the Liaison and Monitoring Team Coordination Cell (LMT CC). The LMT CC has, however, a strictly coordinating role and instead the work is carried out by the individual Multi-National Task Forces (MNTFs) and their Regional Liaison and Monitoring Teams (RLMTs). The RLMTs are responsible for the individual teams. The Liaison and Monitoring Teams report daily to their RLMT, which then passes on the reports to the intelligence and Civil-Military Cooperation (CIMIC) units at the Multi-National Task Force as well as to the LMT CC at HQ. The LMT CC is responsible for distributing the reports within HQ. There is no report template, which makes it difficult to compare the different reports. Nor is there an analysis function within the liaison work, but the analysis is carried out by the Intelligence Unit at the Multi-National Task Force and at HQ respectively. The teams from the contributing countries differ from each other. Almost all cooperation partners think that they are working well with the Swedish teams.

In Bosnia-Herzegovina, the work of the Liaison and Observation Team (LOT) at HQ level is assigned under the Information and Analysis Division (IAD) where the LOT Desk that is responsible for and runs the teams as well as the five Regional Co-ordination Centres (RCCs) and the analysis section are assigned. The teams live in the various communities and are attached to one of the LMT CCs. Also in Bosnia-Herzegovina the teams differ depending on which nation they come from. The basis for the work of the Liaison and Observation Teams is the so-called collection plan that consists of a number of Priority Information Requests that are to be used at the meetings. The reports are sent to the regional LMT CC that, besides sending on the reports to the LOT Desk, also is to follow up the work of the Liaison and Observation Teams and hold regional meetings. This does not, however, work at the LMT CC to which the Swedish teams belong. The cooperation partners felt that cooperation with the Swedish teams worked well and they believed that the teams still had a role to play.

The Liaison Teams in both Kosovo and Bosnia-Herzegovina have contributed with information to their respective organisations and thus have contributed to a better picture of the security situation. The Swedish Liaison Teams have generally adhered to the concepts devised within NATO and EUFOR respectively. This can, however, be improved since the differences that can arise between the various Liaison Teams lead to the type and quality of the collected information varying. That the work differs may complicate the analysis work at HQ level since the information material will be difficult to process. The differences in Kosovo may be due to the fact that the teams are organised under the Multi-National Task Forces. Most of all, it seems, however, to be due to the interests that the respective contributing country has and that influence the Liaison Teams, which applies to both Kosovo and Bosnia-Herzegovina. In certain cases, these national interests have had higher priority over the mission. This is also the case for Sweden, and the Swedish Ministry of Defence needs therefore to make it clear to the Swedish Armed Forces what interests they want to determine a Swedish operation.

As far as NATO is concerned, there seems to be a need to review the use of Liaison Teams since there is no unified organisation, aim or method for this kind of work, even though it is used in many places. This risks causing excess work for the organisation since the wheel must be reinvented every time a similar concept is to be used.

Another problem is the short and non-overlapping rotation that Sweden uses. Very often the Liaison Teams are only on the ground long enough to begin to understand what problems there are, without time to take measures, which reduces the quality of the work. No overlap means that there is a risk that every new rotation becomes isolated from the previous since the risk of some contacts becoming person-dependent increases. A longer and overlapping rotation would, therefore, improve the continuity and quality. Sweden should, therefore, introduce this.

The Swedish teams are given a ten-day training course in meeting and conversational techniques. This is a short amount of time to improve your knowledge of the techniques that are your main tools. Not having sufficient command of these can have consequences for intelligence gathering and reporting. Verbal and written communication is also becoming more and more important in international operations, in that the focus is on multifunctional operations and civil-military cooperation, which means increased non-military contacts. Verbal and written communication should therefore be more distinct parts of the training of high-ranking officers.

In the Liaison Teams a clear distinction is made between their own work, intelligence and CIMIC. Since the local population does not seem to be able to make any distinction between these activities, but still supplies information, the difference between these activities is, above all, for internal use. It is, however,

not totally self-evident to make a distinction between the Liaison Teams, CIMIC and the intelligence work. Rather, the Liaison Teams can be seen as a combination of the other two. The confusion of concepts risks being partly responsible for the work being less efficiently done, since it is not clear who does what. Therefore, an increased knowledge of what the different concepts mean is needed.

Another obstacle is that the Liaison Teams do not have an analysis function. The people who collect the information know their informants and move about in the environments that the report is about, and they are in the best position to assess how much truth in what they hear. The Liaison Teams' analysis would, therefore, probably contribute to an even more nuanced picture of the security situation and could be an addition to the analysis done at the intelligence and the analysis unit respectively.

In the long run, the main part of the work of KFOR in Kosovo is likely to be the Liaison Teams. If Sweden wishes to participate long term in KFOR, it must, therefore, consider to once again contribute with Liaison Teams. In Bosnia-Herzegovina, however, there is much to suggest that the Liaison Teams have had their day, and that, if anything, it is civilians rather than military personnel who are needed. Civilian personnel are therefore something that the international community may consider as a long-term strategy for the Liaison Teams.

1 Introduction

The development in the Western Balkans is of great importance to Sweden. It is important not just for the countries of the region, but also in a wider European security perspective that the region enjoys security and democracy. Because of this, Sweden has since the beginning of the 1990s contributed with peacekeepers in the region.

Sweden has participated in Kosovo Force (KFOR) since 1999. An important reason for Swedish participation was the possibility that the peacekeeping force could help with the return of refugees as well as creating preconditions for democratic development.¹ In Kosovo, Sweden has, among other things, contributed with so-called Liaison and Monitoring Teams (LMTs).

In Bosnia-Herzegovina, Sweden has had a military peacekeeping presence since 1993. Since the end of 2004 it has been the European Union (EU) that has been in command of the operation through European Union Forces (EUFOR) and Operation Althea. In the Government Bill that led to the operation contribution, the Government felt that the operation could be a complement to the EU's other commitments in the country, and that it might bring Bosnia-Herzegovina closer to the EU.² Since 2007 the main Swedish contribution has been two Liaison and Observation Teams (LOTs). The Swedish contribution to the Liaison Teams in both Bosnia-Herzegovina and Kosovo ended in April 2008.

The Liaison Teams are generally a small contribution to an operation, and each team usually consists of around ten people. The work of the Liaison Teams differs from the traditional operational work, in that their clear focus is on liaising with local representatives and organisations. The concept is relatively new, and it is the first time that Sweden has contributed to this kind of work. This, in combination with the fact that the work is like it is for the Military Observation Teams (MOTs) in Afghanistan, makes it interesting to closer examine the work of the Liaison Teams.

1.1 Aim

The aim of this report is to evaluate the Swedish participation in the Liaison Teams in Kosovo and Bosnia-Herzegovina. The secondary aim is to describe the internal organisation of the Liaison Teams and how they work. How well has it worked, and what can be done to make it better in the future? The evaluation is

¹ Government bill to the Swedish Parliament, 1991/99: 112.

² Government bill to the Swedish Parliament, 2004/05: 14.

made at the behest of the Department for International and Security Affairs at the Swedish Ministry of Defence (FÖ/SI) within the framework of the project 'International Operations' at the Division of Defence Analysis at the Swedish Defence Research Agency.

1.2 Method and Material

In general, there is very little written material available on the concepts for the Liaison Teams. This is also true for the Swedish contribution. To the extent that there has been any written material, it has principally been from the organisations that are responsible or have been responsible for the operations where the Liaison Teams are or have been a part. This report is therefore chiefly based on field studies in Kosovo (17–22 January 2008) and in Bosnia-Herzegovina (10–13 March 2008). Twenty-two semi-structured interviews of one to two hours were carried out on the ground. The interview structure (see Appendix) that was devised beforehand has in general been the same for all interviews, with minor differences depending on if the respondent worked for KFOR/EUFOR or was an outsider. Then, follow-up questions were adapted to the answers the respondents had given. Unfortunately, for practical reasons, not all of the interviews could be conducted in private. Also, some of the interviews were carried out using an interpreter. This may, to some extent, have influenced the results, as some respondents may not have been as outspoken as they may have been if the interview had been conducted in private. The interview material is so large however that this should not be too much of a problem.

The choice of respondents is based on who in KFOR and EUFOR were the most familiar with the work of the Liaison Teams and the organisation(s) that have had a long-term presence in Kosovo and Bosnia-Herzegovina respectively and therefore should have experienced the liaison the teams are responsible for. In Kosovo, the interviews were conducted with people, above all Swedes, who in some way or other work with the Liaison Teams in KFOR. Talks have also been held with representatives of the CIMIC unit, i.e. the *Civil and Military Cooperation* or J9, and the intelligence work. Further, interviews have been conducted with people in the OSCE, UNMIK and local representatives. In Bosnia-Herzegovina, interviews have been conducted with Swedish people who have been involved in the work of the Liaison Teams in EUFOR. Here too interviews have been held with people in the OSCE and local representatives. Unfortunately there was no opportunity to talk to any representative from any other nation involved in EUFOR. Interviews have been held with people at the Swedish Armed Forces Headquarters and at the Swedish Ministry of Defence in Stockholm. Since the interviews were, first and foremost, with Swedish representatives, the written material is principally based on the Swedish Teams. This means that when general conclusions are reached concerning the liaison work, they are drawn from a Swedish perspective.

As the work of the Liaison Teams is constantly developing and changing, it must be emphasized that the numbers and conditions that are described and referred to are the ones that applied at the time of the interviews.

1.3 Chapter Layout

Chapter Two gives a background to the creation of the Liaison Teams and how they are meant to operate. Chapters Three and Four present the Liaison Teams in Kosovo and Bosnia-Herzegovina respectively. This is done based on the internal organisation, the work method, the Swedish contribution and liaison. These chapters are the basis for the analysis later done. Chapter Five highlights the obstacles and the lessons that have been able to be identified with regard to the liaison work. These apply specifically to the Swedish contribution, but also to the concept as a whole. There is a discussion about these, which results in the report's conclusions. In the cases that it is possible from the Swedish side to directly influence any change, recommendations will be given; the other conclusions must be seen as lessons learned.

2 The Background to the Liaison Teams

The Liaison Teams are small military units whose main mission is to act as a link between the operation and the civilian society. They work in direct contact with the local population and institutions as well as the international community in order to thus help with an up-to-date picture of, above all, the security situation which is available to the staff. This updating is done by overt intelligence gathering. In order to get this picture of the situation, the Liaison Teams in Kosovo have three areas that must be monitored: the political, the social and the economic situation.³ In Bosnia-Herzegovina, the following areas are monitored: the political and inter-ethnic situation, the attitude to EUFOR, extremism/terrorism, organised crime and corruption, parallel power structures as well as smuggling.⁴ The Liaison Teams also provide information, when needed, about the local/national institutions that the citizens may need.

Liaison Teams were originally a British idea, which then has been developed within NATO. These teams were first used in Bosnia-Herzegovina in 2003.⁵ The Liaison Teams were a means of gradually reducing a large military presence without, at the same time, losing the means to get an idea of the situation throughout the country. The military presence was reduced and decentralized, and so-called *LOT houses* were established in the municipalities and communities where the liaison officers were living and working.⁶

When the EU, through EUFOR, took over the responsibility for Bosnia-Herzegovina at the end of 2004, it also inherited the Liaison Teams. In 2007, the EU took a decision to sharply reduce the military presence in Bosnia-Herzegovina, and then it was the Liaison Teams which were to be responsible for the only presence in the country.⁷ A multinational maneuver battalion was put on stand-by outside Sarajevo in case of a deteriorating security situation.

The Liaison Teams in Kosovo were in turn created as a response to the riots in 2004 when Kosovo-Albanians attacked the various minority groups, above all

³ PowerPoint presentation MNTF C.

⁴ Representative of the Army Tactical Staff in Sweden, interview.

⁵ SFOR Informer #170 (April 2004), *Making a 'LOT' of SFOR*, <http://www.nato.int/sfor/indexinf/170/p13a/t02p13a.htm>

⁶ Packett II, Virgil L., Smith, James F., Woods, Edwin P. and Guilford, Edward C. (2005), 'Bosnia and Herzegovina: Coalition Doctrine and LOT Houses', *Military Review*, March-April.

⁷ EU Council Secretariat Fact Sheet (December 2007), *EU Military Operation in Bosnia and Herzegovina (Operation EUFOR – Althea)*, <http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cmsUpload/071203-Althea-update9.pdf>

the Serbs. Approximately, over 50,000 people participated in protests and demonstrations.⁸ The riots of 2004 resulted in 19 dead, 954 injured and 4,100 refugees. 550 houses and 37 orthodox churches and monasteries were also burnt down.⁹ Failure to anticipate what was about to happen made KFOR realise that a new kind of contact with the local population was necessary so that the same situation would not arise again. The solution to this was the establishment of Liaison Teams. The *Multi-National Task Force Centre* (MNTF C),¹⁰ in which Sweden is a member, was, according to one of the respondents, the first to embrace the new concept of Liaison Teams, and they started work at the end of 2004.

⁸ Höglund, Kristine (2007), 'Managing Violent Crisis: Swedish Peacekeeping and the 2004 Ethnic Violence in Kosovo', *International Peacekeeping*, Vol. 14 No. 3: 405.

⁹ OSCE (2004), *Human Rights Challenges Following the March Riots*, http://www.osce.org/documents/mik/2004/05/2939_en.pdf.

¹⁰ At the time of the riots, KFOR was divided into *Multi-National Brigades*. Today KFOR consists of five Multi-National Task Forces: North, East, South, West and Centre. The troop-contributing nations are active in one of these forces.

3 The Liaison and Monitoring Teams in Kosovo

In January 2008 there were 36 Liaison and Monitoring Teams in Kosovo, but the idea is that the numbers will increase at the same time as another troop presence is reduced. Twenty countries contribute to this work and presently 319 people are working in the Liaison and Monitoring Teams.¹² The largest contributor is the USA with 115 people. Below there is a review of the internal organisation of the Liaison and Monitoring Teams and their work methods in KFOR, the Swedish contribution and its liaison with local and international actors.

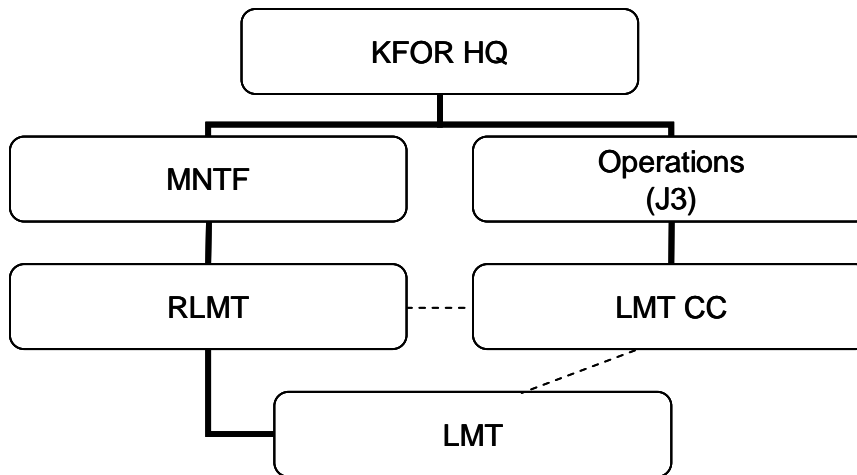


Map showing the geographical spread of the Liaison and Monitoring Teams and their nationality at the time of the visit.

¹² Interviewed representative of the LMT CC at NATO HQ.

3.1 The Internal Organisation of the LMTs and Their Position in KFOR

The work of the LMTs is assigned under *Operations* at the operational level, i.e. under the Operations Unit (J3) at KFOR HQ. Much of the work is, however, decided and carried out in the Multi-National Task Forces (see the map above). The internal organisation of the Liaison and Monitoring Teams is divided into three levels: the central level is represented at KFOR HQ by the *Liaison and Monitoring Team Coordination Cell* (LMT CC), the regional level is represented by the five Multi-National Task Forces (MNTFs) through the *Regional Liaison and Monitoring Teams* (RLMTs), and the local level is represented by the individual Liaison and Monitoring Teams (LMTs) (see the organisational chart).



Organisational chart of the LMTs' work in Kosovo

3.1.1 The Liaison and Monitoring Teams (LMTs)

As mentioned above, the Liaison and Monitoring Teams are responsible for liaising at the local level. The teams are at present living at the camps of their respective nations of the Multi-National Task Forces. The long-term plan is for the teams to move out and live in the various villages in order to thus create greater trust among the local population.¹³ At present they go every day out into the region for meetings with various representatives.

¹³ In Afghanistan, this is the method used, inter alia, by the Swedish Military Observation Teams (MOTs).

The number of soldiers in the Liaison and Monitoring Teams varies depending on what contributing country they come from. Most Liaison and Monitoring Teams are made up of members of the same nationality. The composition of the Teams as regards age spread and gender distribution varies for the different countries' Teams. The level of equipment, like how heavily armed the teams are, can also vary. Above all, it appears, however, to be the national culture and language which separate the teams.¹⁴

Even the way the Liaison and Monitoring Teams work differs. Most teams are responsible for a geographic area. Instead, the Swedish teams are divided according to organisations, institutions and minority groups,¹⁵ which may be explained by the fact that the Swedish teams operate in the more densely populated area in and around Pristina. The teams go to visit people, and are also available to be contacted at the teams' field offices that are located in the various communities. The idea is for all the Liaison and Monitoring Teams to have this kind of office, but reality is different. The Swedish teams do not, for instance, have this function, which means that they are less accessible to the local population.

Every individual team writes daily reports on its work, which are given to the Regional Liaison and Monitoring Team. When giving a report, the Liaison and Monitoring Teams have the opportunity to use a number of different subjects to give a clear signal of what the report is about, which is, however, the only thing that standardizes the reports. This is seen as a problem by the units that analyse and use the reports, as this makes it difficult to compare them.¹⁶ The teams do not have any analysis function and, according to the coordination cell at KFOR HQ, the reports must be strictly informative and not contain any form of assessed or analysed information.

3.1.2 Regional Liaison and Monitoring Teams (RLMTs)

There is a Regional Liaison and Monitoring Team for every Multi-National Task Force, which must be responsible for the coordination of the Liaison and Monitoring Teams detached to the respective force. Besides coordinating their own teams, the regional team is also responsible for regional contacts with, for example, the OSCE and UNMIK. Usually the Regional Liaison and Monitoring Team is assigned to the HQ of the respective Multi-National Task Force. This is not the case for Multi-National Task Force Centre to which Sweden belongs; there the regional team is assigned to the Swedish camp, Camp Victoria.

Even organisationally, the Regional Liaison and Monitoring Teams are assigned differently. In the west, the regional team is assigned directly under the force

¹⁴ Interviewed representatives of CIMIC at NATO HQ and the Intelligence Unit at MNTF C respectively.

commander, whereas in the south it is under the CIMIC unit (G9). At Multi-National Task Force Centre, the office is under the chief of staff. It is thus up to each Multi-National Task Force to decide where the liaison work ends up in the organisation.

The regional teams compile a daily report based on the material that the Liaison and Monitoring Teams send in. This is then disseminated to relevant parts of the Multi-National Task Force, such as CIMIC (G9) and the Intelligence Unit (G2), where then further processing and analysis are carried out. Consequently, the regional teams, except the one in the south, do not have any analysis function of their own. One of the respondents thought, however, that KFOR would be helped by having an analysis function at even the other Regional Liaison and Monitoring Teams and at the coordination cell in order to make the reports more useful.¹⁷ The regional team also sends a compilation of the reports to the coordination cell at KFOR HQ. According to one of the respondents, the reporting is, however, mostly done within the own Multi-National Task Force.¹⁸

3.1.3 The Liaison and Monitoring Team Coordination Cell (LMT CC)

As the name implies, the Liaison and Monitoring Team Coordination Cell is responsible for coordinating the work of all the Liaison and Monitoring Teams in Kosovo. The coordination cell does not function as an HQ for the teams but has a strictly coordinating function, which, among other things, means it cannot give any orders to the individual Liaison and Monitoring Teams. If an order is issued from KFOR HQ, this has to come from the KFOR commander, and then the order will be given directly to the commanders of the individual Multi-National Task Force. This rarely happens, and instead the cooperation between the coordination cell and the teams is based on trust and dialogue. Besides the responsibility of coordinating the work, the coordination cell must also train the newly arrived teams, so-called *in-theatre training*. Because of the rotations, the personnel are regularly replaced, which means that in 2007 about 600 people have done the internal training for the teams.¹⁹

The LMT CC distributes the received reports within HQ. The LMT CC does not, however, have any actual responsibility to notify other units about what is in the reports; this is up to each individual person. Nor does the coordination cell have any analysis function, but the reports are also here, for example, passed on to the intelligence and CIMIC units at HQ for further analysis. The coordination cell also puts the reports on KFOR's intranet portal and the LMT website to increase

¹⁵ Interviewed representative of CIMIC at NATO HQ.

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ Ibid.

the dissemination of the reports. In 2007, about 30,000 reports were loaded onto the system.²⁰ The function can, however, only be used by the HQ staff; consequently, the individual teams and the Multi-National Task Forces have no access to it.

3.1.4 Liaising with Other Parts of KFOR

Liaising with other parts of KFOR takes place, above all, with the intelligence and CIMIC units. The coordination cell has meetings every week at KFOR HQ with these units. At the regional level, there are daily contacts between the Regional Liaison and Monitoring Team and the Intelligence Unit. In addition to that, there are more formal meetings every week.

The Intelligence Unit at the Multi-National Task Force can ask the Liaison and Monitoring Teams for specific information. It is, however, up to every regional team to decide how the teams should react to this inquiry. Both sides perceive this liaison as working well. From an intelligence perspective, however, this information may at times seem to be far too general. Despite this, it is stressed that the information that the teams give the Intelligence Unit is very valuable material for the intelligence reports.²¹ According to the liaison officers interviewed, they contribute with between 70 and 80% of the material that the Intelligence Unit at the Multi-National Task Force uses.²²

The assessments of the socio-economic situation by the CIMIC unit at HQ are based on the Liaison and Monitoring Teams' reports. Without the teams, the CIMIC unit would itself have had to be responsible for collecting the information, which there are not the resources for.²³ One respondent thought that the teams were thus indirectly the eyes and ears of CIMIC.²² The teams are to pass on what the local population want regarding financing and completion of, for example, building projects to the CIMIC unit. At the same time, any CIMIC projects might open doors for the teams, since the local population then got something in return, one of the respondents thought.²⁵

Separating the work of the Liaison and Monitoring Teams from intelligence work or CIMIC was not seen as a problem by the respondents. A number of respondents stressed that working with open and non-processed information means that it is different from intelligence work.²⁶ Nor was there any risk of

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ Interviewed representative of the Intelligence Unit at MNTF C.

²⁰ Interviewed representative of the LMT.

²¹ Interviewed representative of CIMIC at NATO HQ.

²² Interviewed representative of the LMT.

²³ Interviewed representative of CIMIC at NATO HQ.

²⁴ Interviewed representatives of LMT CC and CIMIC at NATO HQ and the LMT.

²⁵ Ibid.

confusing it with the CIMIC work, since the teams must not be involved with project work.²⁷ On the other hand, it became clear in several interviews that this distinction can only be made by those who are really in the know or work closely with the teams. For the local population, all soldiers are seen as part of KFOR and no distinction is made between what part of the force they belong to or what country they come from. Nor did one of the teams' close cooperation partners make any distinction between the Liaison and Monitoring Teams and CIMIC.²⁸

3.2 The Swedish Contribution

The Swedish contribution to Multi-National Task Force Centre is two out of the eight Liaison and Monitoring Teams, comprising a total of eleven people. The teams are each led by a team leader who also has hand-picked the people for the respective team. The members are chosen based on their personality, age, sex, competence and soldier skills. At the time of my visit, almost all members were professional soldiers. The teams are supported by seven local interpreters, who are also used by the Regional Liaison and Monitoring Team at the Swedish camp. This is often seen as being too little and something that can have a negative impact on the work.²⁹ The Swedish teams had a six-month rotation that did not overlap, which is felt to be too short. There is always the risk that information and knowledge are lost during the rotations, and one of the respondents, for example, thought that therefore the Liaison and Monitoring Teams unfortunately suffered from a 'goldfish syndrome'.³⁰

As mentioned earlier, the Swedish teams are organised according to the cooperation partner they are working with. These partners can, among other things, be different minority groups, the University of Pristina, the police and other security organisations, the hospital, the media, international organisations and other Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) and youth organisations. There is also the liaison with key people in the municipal and government structures that is working well.

Before the teams went to Kosovo, they had a ten-day training course in Finland together with participants from the other Nordic countries that contribute to the Liaison and Monitoring Teams. This training course focused, among other things, on conversational and meeting techniques. In addition to that, there was a handover on the ground, which took just over a week. The team leaders had a further week for the handover. One officer felt during the interview that the training at home could be shortened in favour of a longer handover, since that

²⁶ Interviewed representative of the Municipal Office in Pristina.

²⁷ Interviewed representative of the LMT.

²⁸ Interviewed representative of the Intelligence Unit at MNTF C.

²⁹ Interviewed representative of the LMT.

which needs to be taught is best done on the ground.³¹ Others felt, however, that the teams, including the Swedish ones, needed better training in conversational techniques and the ability to work with interpreters. One of the respondents thought that you could achieve much more with the liaison concept if the personnel were trained in conversational technique.³² The same respondent felt a level of training that was too low meant the teams did not delve deeper, and therefore this could result in that in a long report only a few sentences were actually of value.

Besides the two Liaison and Monitoring Teams, the commander and some staff at the regional team, as well as the deputy chief and planning officer at the coordination cell are Swedish. Many of the interviewees expressed concern that Sweden might lose these central positions with the Swedish withdrawal, and thus lose important information.³³ These same respondents felt this would be particularly serious for Sweden, which was also working in Pristina where many of the important institutions and organisations were located.

3.3 External Liaison

The work of the Liaison and Monitoring Teams is based on creating trust with all parties in order to thus improve the exchange of information and, in a second stage, improve the security situation. By participating in meetings and talking with key people in the community the teams gain access to much of the information that they later pass on into the KFOR system. There is also liaison with the other international organisations on the ground. UNMIK, the OSCE and others are, for example, always invited to the weekly meetings with the Regional Liaison and Monitoring team. Even locally, there are regular, often weekly meetings with organisations. Besides these meetings, there are also more informal talks because the Liaison and Monitoring Teams move around in the local communities. Below there is a review of how the OSCE, the UNMIK Police and local representatives perceive the contact with the teams.

3.3.1 OSCE

The OSCE staff thought that the liaison with the Liaison and Monitoring Teams worked well at both local and regional level. The information they receive from the teams is seen as important, since it comes from the field, where the OSCE does not itself have enough resources to collect information. In addition to that, it sees the teams as a good complement to its own work, since the OSCE is focusing on institutions and the Liaison and Monitoring Teams on individuals.

³⁰ Interviewed representative of the Intelligence Unit at MNTF C.

³¹ Interviewed representatives for LMT CC and CIMIC at NATO HQ, and Regional Liaison Teams at MNTF C.

The information is perceived as reliable and neutral in that the views of both sides are usually included.³⁴ The information that the teams give the OSCE is also important in order to be able to do a risk assessment and choose the right strategy for further work.

The OSCE missed, however, not regularly receiving the information from the teams in writing. An OSCE employee said that he along with a Czech team did joint report drafts since you usually went to the same meetings, and this could be a better way to share information.³⁵

Besides simply exchanging information, the Liaison and Monitoring Teams and the OSCE have also cooperated on more concrete projects. An example is when the OSCE participated in the training of the new teams at Camp Victoria. Another example is a campaign for election training that was held by both the OSCE and the teams, aimed at the youth and focusing on giving information about the election and the importance of going and casting your vote. This cooperation came about very much due to the personal relations that the Swedish chief of the OSCE regional office in Pristina had with the Swedish teams.³⁶

3.3.2 UNMIK Police

The representative of the UNMIK Police who was interviewed did not think that the liaison with the Liaison and Monitoring Teams was working very well at that moment. There had, according to the respondent, indeed been contact, but at an earlier rotation it ceased, which shows that cooperation is largely based on personal relations, rather than formal methods. The same person thought that another reason for this was perhaps that the security situation had calmed down in Kosovo and that liaising had thus not been as essential.³⁷ The concept as such is, however, seen as something positive, and the information, when shared, is useful for getting a general picture of how people see their everyday situation. The respondent felt that the information should somehow be evaluated, since the liaison officers were the ones who knew the informants and therefore knew best what information was reliable and what was not.³⁸

3.3.3 Local Representatives

Local representatives at the municipal offices in Pristina and Fushë-Kosovës/ Kosovo Polje said that they and the Liaison and Monitoring Teams had a well-

³² Interviewed representative of the OSCE in Pristina.

³³ Ibid.

³⁴ Ibid.

³⁵ Interviewed representative of the UNMIK Police.

³⁶ Ibid.

developed cooperation, and that the teams were always very professional. The teams participated in their meetings, and all material, such as agendas and notes from the meetings, were always sent to the teams.³⁹ There are also meetings with the municipal offices, village leaders and the teams to discuss the security situation in the respective village. An example of what is discussed on that occasion is where patrols are needed in order to protect the various minorities. Another field of cooperation is when internal refugees return. The teams may then be responsible for an assessment of the security situation in the receiving community, and may also accompany the internal refugees on the first return visits to their new-old village.

The liaison is perceived to be institutionalized and working well. The criticism expressed was that the time from when information was given to the Liaison and Monitoring Teams about things that could be a CIMIC project to when a project was carried out was often too long. They further felt that the liaison was hindered by the constant rotations that took place, since every six months you had to start explaining things from the beginning again.

³⁹ Interviewed representative of the Municipal Office in Pristina.

4 The Liaison and Observation Teams in Bosnia-Herzegovina

The Liaison and Observation Teams are the main international military presence in Bosnia-Herzegovina. Besides the teams, there is a multinational maneuver battalion of just over 500 people that will be able to be deployed at the request of the local authorities.⁴¹ At present, there are 45 Liaison and Observation Teams in Bosnia-Herzegovina, but the number is declining at the same time as some countries are disbanding their teams. Today 17 countries have teams and a total of about 450 people are involved.⁴⁰ Below there is a review of the internal organisation and the way the EUFOR Liaison and Observation Teams work, the Swedish contribution and the liaison with local and international actors.



*Map showing the geographical spread of the Liaison and Observation Teams and their nationality at the time of the visit.*⁴¹

³⁸ EUFOR.

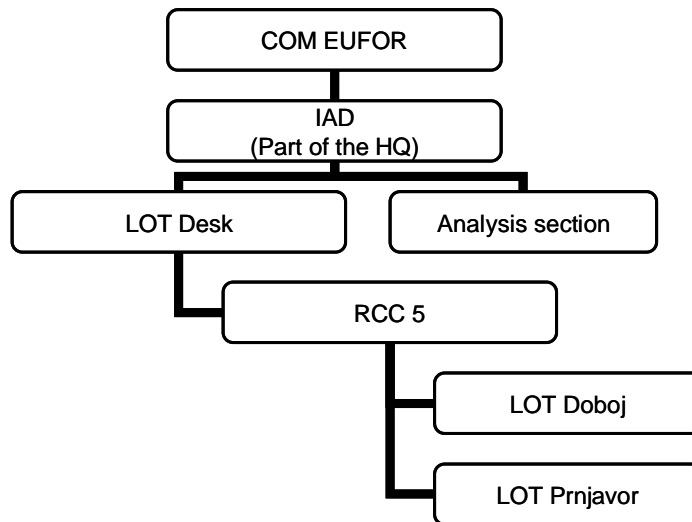
http://www.euforbih.org/eufor/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=17&Itemid=34

⁴⁰ Interviewed representative of the Liaison Desk at EUFOR HQ.

⁴¹ The map is a modified version of the one used by LOT Doboj at the time of my visit.

4.1 The Internal Organisation of the LOTs and Their Position in EUFOR

At the EUFOR HQ, the Liaison and Observation Teams are assigned under the *Information and Analysis Division* (IAD). At the IAD there is a Liaison Desk (LOT Desk) that is responsible for the teams at a national level. The regional level is represented by five *Regional Co-ordination Centres* (RCCs), while the local level is represented by their respective Liaison and Observation Team (LOT) (see organisational chart).



Organisational chart of the LOTs' work in Bosnia-Herzegovina

4.1.1 The Liaison and Observation Teams (LOTs)

The Liaison and Observation Teams in Bosnia-Herzegovina are responsible, as already mentioned, for the liaison at the local level and the teams are geographically spread across the country. The teams live in houses among the people in their area of responsibility. The organisation of the teams and their competence and experience differ depending on from which country they come, but the operational command, the Liaison Desk, is the same for all the teams. For example, the French team consists of conscripts. Switzerland, on the other hand, has university-educated team leaders.⁴⁴ Many teams have divided the work geographically between the members of the team, whereas other teams, such as

⁴⁴ Interviewed representative of the LOT Desk at EUFOR HQ.

the Swedish ones, have chosen a more thematic division. One of the major differences between the teams seems, however, to be the knowledge of languages.⁴³

The basis of the work of the Liaison and Observation Teams is the *Situational Awareness Collection Plan*. The Collection Plan consists of a number of stipulated *Priority Information Requests* (PIR) that are determined at HQ. It is based on these Information Requests that the teams will collect information at their meetings. One of the respondents claimed, however, that the most important thing was to be present and that the collection of intelligence was of secondary importance.⁴⁶

The work of the Liaison and Observation Teams consists of visiting relevant people for the exchange of information as well as being available at their respective LOT houses in case somebody wants to contact them. The teams or other parts of EUFOR are, however, not to carry out or finance any requests that the local population may conceivably have, but rather assist by arranging contacts and trying to help to find the right place within the internal system. The teams report their activities daily to their respective coordination centre where any follow-up of the received information is carried out. In order to facilitate the further processing of the information, a report template is used which has had an impact and is used by all teams. The teams themselves have no analysis function; it is to be found at HQ.

4.1.2 Regional Coordination Centres (RCCs)

The task of the Regional Coordination Centres is, as their name implies, to coordinate the liaison work in the different regions. The centres follow up the work carried out by the various Liaison and Observation Teams, who the teams have contact with and how often, that there are meetings with all parties, and give feedback on the quality of the reports. The centres are to also function as a knowledge-base at the regional level, and are as such at hand when the teams need guidance, and as a partner when meeting regional representatives. The reports that are sent in from the various teams are collated at the Regional Coordination Centre and sent on to the LOT Desk at HQ. The Regional Coordination Centre has no analysis function as, at the time of the reorganisation from Multi-National Task Forces to mostly teams, it was regarded as possibly becoming too independent in relation to HQ.⁴⁷ In order to avoid information not reaching HQ, they were given a coordination role.

⁴³ Interviewed representatives of the LOT and the LOT Desk at EUFOR HQ.

⁴⁴ Interviewed representative of the LOT Desk at EUFOR HQ.

⁴⁵ Ibid.

The Regional Coordination Centre, to which Sweden has belonged and which is under Turkish command, has, however, not functioned in the above way. The feedback has, for example, consisted of pure formalities and nothing of the subject matter.⁴⁸ Also the centre does not hold any meetings of its own.⁴⁹ This has meant that the Swedish staff officer had, on his own authority, created his own tasks.⁵⁰ He supports the Swedish teams in various ways and relieves some of the pressure on the Swedish contingent commander who is also the head of the LOT Desk.

4.1.3 The Liaison and Observation Team Desk (LOT Desk)

The Liaison and Observation Team Desk is a part of the IAD and is responsible for the Regional Coordination Centres and the Liaison and Observation Teams. The desk must ensure that the teams and the regional centres are working properly, and that they report all the information that has been collected. An important part of this is to make Priority Information Requests, so that the teams know what information they should focus on during the collection. A follow-up is also made to make sure the teams have meetings with all necessary parties.⁴⁹ The LOT Desk has on its own initiative produced a manual aimed at the countries that supply teams, which is meant to make clear what they think the Liaison and Observation Teams should look like and how they should operate.⁵² One of the respondents thought that even if there was this kind of manual, HQ had no way of ordering the individual contributing countries to follow it.⁵³ This means that even though there is a manual, the structure of the teams differs between the contributing countries.

The LOT Desk reads daily the reports that are sent in. An analysis is then made at the analysis section which is also part of the IAD. The analysis section, which consists of civilian analysts, in turn hands over material to the command. The desk and the analysis section may, if required, then ask specific follow-up questions on the information that has come in. HQ may also send out a *Request for Information* (RFI), or request a special report when a question not covered by the Priority Information Requests needs to be examined. All types of directives from HQ to the Liaison Teams go via the Regional Coordination Centre.

⁴⁶ Interviewed representative of the LOT.

⁴⁷ Interviewed representative of a regional coordination centre.

⁴⁸ Ibid.

⁴⁹ Interviewed representative of the LOT Desk at EUFOR HQ.

⁵⁰ This manual is classified and therefore cannot be presented here.

⁵¹ Interviewed representative of the LOT Desk at EUFOR HQ.

4.1.4 Information and Analysis Division (IAD)

The Information and Analysis Division is a staff section under the Chief of Staff. The division can be compared to what is normally called J2, i.e. the Intelligence Unit. The difference is that Intelligence Units normally do not have any responsibility for managing the work, which is the case here.⁵² The Information and Analysis Division consists of several different parts. Besides the LOT Desk and the analysis unit, there is also airborne ground surveillance, seven field teams that work with intelligence, the special reaction force for the international police force that is involved in the search for war criminals, and a planning function.

4.2 The Swedish Contribution

The Swedish work with LOT has been operational since April 2007. Sweden supplies two teams, one based in Doboj and the other in Prnjavor, both in Republika Srpska in northern Bosnia-Herzegovina. The teams consist of eight people each, and these have been hand-picked by the respective team leaders. The people are selected based on their experience, competence, age, and sex with the aim to create a homogenous group. All have some kind of military background, but they come from both the military and the civilian sector in Sweden. The teams live together in a house in their respective city, and in it, or near it, they have their office where the local population can go to. The teams have locally hired interpreters to help them.

The teams are organised according to the different types of cooperation partners in the local community. There are some areas in which both teams must have insight, such as the military, the police and the local representatives. The skills of the team members can be allowed to dictate what cooperation partners the team has.⁵³ For example, the team member who works as a police officer in Sweden is precisely responsible for the police and other judicial institutions. Other areas are, for example, various NGOs, ethnicities, education, politics, etc.

The Liaison and Observation Teams are rotated every six months. All respondents felt that the time allotted was too brief in relation to the type of job that must be done.⁵⁴ The view is that it takes a while to get an idea of what is going on, and by the time you become familiar with the job, it is time to return home. Also, time is needed to create trust and to establish fruitful talks. All the respondents therefore advocated an overlap and/or longer rotations. Also, more time could, the respondents thought, be spent on the handover to avoid some of the duplication of work. This was particularly important when another country was taking over the work of the team.

⁵² Interviewed representative of the LOT Desk at EUFOR HQ.

⁵³ Interviewed representative of the LOT.

⁵⁴ All people interviewed in Bosnia-Herzegovina.

Before the teams left for Bosnia-Herzegovina, they were trained at the Life Guards Regiment. Some members of the teams also went on a training course in Finland, with the focus on conversational and meeting techniques. There was also the handover from the previous team. The opinion was that the training was not properly suited to the work that has to be done. One of the respondents felt that there was too much weapons training, and that it instead should have focused more on information about the country, the people and the various cultures.⁵⁷ Another respondent felt that the conversational technique focused on situations that hardly ever would occur in today's Bosnia-Herzegovina,⁵⁸ whereas a third respondent would have been helped by the inclusion of Swedish civilian organisations, such as the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida), in the training.⁵⁹

Besides the two Liaison and Observation Teams, Sweden has a staff officer assigned to the Regional Coordination Centre 5 in Zenica. The head of the LOT Desk and a couple other people at the Information and Analysis Division are also Swedish. The head of the LOT Desk also used to be the commander of the Swedish contingent, which, as pointed out, was not a successful combination because of the heavy workload.

4.3 Liaison

The work of the Liaison and Observation Teams is based on creating trust and in this way making people and organisations want to talk and exchange information. The liaison is achieved by participating in arranged meetings or by finding certain key people in the communities and in this way gaining access to the information that should be passed on. Many of the meetings are not on a regular basis, since it is felt that there is no need for that, but visits take place when there is something specific to discuss.⁶¹ The teams felt that the liaison worked well and that the information needed was produced by talking with their cooperation partners. Below there is a summary of how the OSCE and local representatives perceive the Liaison and Observation Teams.

4.3.1 OSCE

The interviewed representative at the OSCE thought that the liaison with the Swedish teams worked well. The meetings between the teams and the OSCE take place regularly once a month to coordinate the work and to exchange

⁵⁵ Interviewed representative of a LOT.

⁵⁶ Ibid.

⁵⁷ Ibid.

⁵⁸ Interviewed representative of a LOT Desk.

⁵⁹ Interviewed representatives of the LOT and the Mayor's Cabinet in Doboj.

information. The information is exchanged verbally, but it also happens that reports that come from other organisations are given in writing. Besides regular meetings there are also talks in connection with, for example, local council meetings and different types of protest meetings. If somebody did not have the chance to participate in a specific meeting, they can always call and get the information afterwards. The OSCE is happy to do this, as the information from the teams is thought to be reliable.⁶²

The OSCE saw the concept of liaison as it works in Bosnia-Herzegovina as positive since it is more user-friendly than a force that is living in a military camp. As one respondent put it: 'A house is better than a fortress'.⁶³ This person felt that the teams still had a role to play in their contacts with the community. The cooperation could, however, be improved by way of the contacts between the OSCE and the teams being between more people than just the head of the respective party. Further, the short rotation was seen as problematic since it was an obstacle to being able to be deeply involved in the community. The handover to another country that now will take place is also a problem, since there is a risk the contacts are lost and all work has to start over from the beginning again.

4.3.2 Local Representatives

According to the interviewed local representative of the mayor's cabinet, the liaison with the Swedish teams worked well. The liaison concerns the exchange of information, and both parties have been able to help the other to forge new contacts. As an example, the Liaison and Observation Team has been able to contact a number of NGOs, whereas municipal representatives have been able to contact the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida). The cooperation is often on an ad hoc basis, since the questions that might need to be discussed seldom require a follow-up. How often one meets totally depends on what is going on in the community at the time. The teams are seen as a part of the communities, and the respondent emphasized that it was easier to cooperate with Swedish teams compared with those of other nations they had had contact with, since it was considered easier to relate to 'the Swedish mentality'.⁶⁴

The respondent felt that a certain international presence was still needed around the country, since it contributed to a kind of security. However, it is not a military kind of security that is important, but rather the presence of the EU's view of things that helps. The presence also contributes to the security of those who return, since the teams are seen as a neutral force in a society where most of the others are seen as being biased.

⁶⁰ Interviewed representative of the OSCE in Doboj.

⁶¹ Ibid.

⁶² Interviewed representatives of the LOT and the Mayor's Cabinet.

5 Identified Obstacles and Conclusions

The interviews carried out within the framework of this study indicate that the Liaison Teams seem to have been successful NATO and EUFOR concepts for contributing to a better picture of the security situation. KFOR and EUFOR respectively have established contacts with both the local and the international community and had access to information that previously was difficult to obtain. The teams and their cooperation partners both have a positive picture of how the cooperation has worked. There are, however, a number of obstacles concerning the work of the teams. It is perhaps not necessarily possible for the Swedish side to change everything, but they are nonetheless important lessons to remember prior to any similar participation in future operations. These obstacles and lessons learned are presented below. In the event Sweden has a possibility of bringing about any change, recommendations will be made.

5.1 The Swedish Contributions – in Accordance with the Concepts?

The aim of this report is to evaluate the Swedish participation in the Liaison Teams in Kosovo and Bosnia-Herzegovina. The secondary aim of describing the internal organisation of the Liaison Teams and how they work has been highlighted in previous chapters. Thus, the focus here will be on the evaluation. A first step in the evaluation of the Liaison Teams is to compare their work with the concepts and the manual regarding the work of the LMT and the LOT.⁶³

It has to be said that the Liaison Teams carry out the set tasks well. There are, however, a number of points that could be improved when following the concepts. In Kosovo, this concerns the number of team members and the way the teams are made up. One should also look at how easily accessible the teams are to the local population and how many vehicles the teams have at their disposal. In Bosnia-Herzegovina, thought should be given to the length and the type of rotation one should have.⁶⁴ There should also be a review of the regional work. Consequently, there are some areas where the Swedish teams have not followed the devised concepts for the work of the LMT and the LOT. Since it probably is not possible to explain these deviations with the fact that they improve the job, rather the opposite, nor is there any reason to deviate from the devised concepts. Not following the concepts is partly responsible for the teams not working in the

⁶³ Since the concepts are classified, it is not possible here to do a detailed comparison of them.

⁶⁴ For a longer discussion concerning rotations see Section 5.4.

same way, which may have a negative influence on the work, something that is discussed in more detail in the next section.

Consequently, **a recommendation** is that the Swedish Armed Forces should adapt its work according to the devised concepts.

5.2 Difference in Organisation and Way of Working – Influence from Contributing Countries

In Kosovo, there is, as mentioned, a difference between the Multi-National Task Forces regarding how the Liaison and Monitoring Teams are organised. One reason for these differences may be that the teams are not directly under the command of HQ but, as mentioned previously, are, in many respects, directed by the respective Multi-National Task Force. Instead of orders to all teams coming from one place, there are five different commanders. That there is no clear picture of how the teams shall be organised and work risks influencing the work in general, since it may lead to the work of the LMT in the respective Multi-National Task Force having a life of its own. There is, for example, no standard report template. The fact that the work differs may complicate the analysis work at HQ level since the information material becomes difficult to process. This means that it is more difficult for HQ to get an overall picture of the security situation for the whole of Kosovo. At HQ there is admittedly the LMT CC, but since it has a strict coordination role and is unable to give orders, the prospect of it influencing and creating the work should be limited.

In Bosnia-Herzegovina, where there are no longer any Multi-National Task Forces, the work of the LOT is directly under the command of HQ, with the Regional Coordination Centres as intermediaries. A clearer uniform control from HQ has resulted in a collection plan, stipulated information requests and the manual that has been compiled by the LOT Desk. Despite this there are both local and regional differences in Bosnia-Herzegovina as well. The composition of the Liaison and Observation Teams as well as knowledge of languages and working methods are things that set the teams apart, like in Kosovo. This makes the means and procedure of the teams for collecting the information required different. This is problematic because the quality and the type of information collected vary, which may lead to the material pointing in various directions or having such low quality as to be unusable for analysis.

The differences between the teams can thus not only be traced back to how it was decided to develop the organisation, but also depends on the individual countries that contribute the teams. This also applies to Sweden. As previously mentioned, the Swedish contributions differ, to a certain extent, from the devised concepts that exist. Another example where nationality has influenced the work is how parts of the liaison with the OSCE in Pristina, above all, seem to have been realised thanks to its regional commander coming from Sweden, rather than it was what was best for KFOR that determined the work. In Bosnia-Herzegovina, Swedish staff at the Regional Coordination Centre has created work that has been beneficial to the Swedish operation rather than the Regional Coordination Centre generally. This means that national interests have left their mark on the teams' work despite the fact that the operational command is formally with the Multi-National Task Forces and the LOT Desk respectively. Sometimes, the interests of NATO and EUFOR have quite simply come second.

Consequently, a **recommendation** is that the Swedish Ministry of Defence should make it clear to the Swedish Armed Forces which interests they think are to determine the Swedish contributions in an operation.

5.3 A Non-Uniform Liaison Concept

As previously mentioned, the Liaison and Monitoring Teams in Kosovo were created as a result of the riots of 2004 when KFOR needed to make contact with the local population in order to not misjudge the security situation yet again. In Bosnia-Herzegovina, the Liaison and Observation Teams were a means for NATO to reduce the troop presence without at the same time losing the opportunity to get an idea of the security situation in the country.⁶⁵ NATO has used a kind of liaison team even in Afghanistan, where so-called *Military Observation Teams* (MOTs) are the core of the operational work of several *Provincial Reconstruction Teams* (PRTs), one of which is Swedish. Seeing that the PRTs were a solution for covering all of Afghanistan with a smaller number of military personnel,⁶⁶ a strong reason for using MOTs is, thus, a way of covering a lack of resources. NATO has consequently chosen to use a similar concept in three different places, but the background to why they are used differs, and they have been given different names, which suggests that there is not a well thought-out strategy for how and why they want to use the Liaison Teams. There simply does not seem to be any uniform organisation, aim or

⁶⁵ The discussion will here focus on NATO since the EU inherited the LOT concept from NATO.

⁶⁶ Bogland, Karin and Bedford, Sofie (2005), *Sveriges bidrag till PRT i Afghanistan- En utvärdering inför övertagandet av ledningen för PRT Mazar-e-Sharif* [The Swedish Contribution to PRTs in Afghanistan – An Evaluation before Taking Over the Command of the PRT in Mazar-e-Sharif], FOI report (FOI-R—1692—SE) Stockholm.

method applicable to this kind of work. Using ad hoc solutions in this way may cause additional work for the organisation, since there is a risk of reinventing the wheel every time someone wants to use the liaison teams. It therefore seems as if NATO needs to revise its use of liaison teams.

5.4 The Rotations

The rotations are something that has been held up as problematic. Almost all respondents thought that six months was too short a time in relation to the kind of work that had to be carried out. The short and non-overlapping rotation influences the work of the Liaison Teams. Very often the Liaison Teams are only on the ground long enough to begin to understand what problems there are, without time to take measures, which reduces the quality of the work. No overlap means that there is a risk that every rotation becomes isolated from the previous, since the risk of some contacts becoming person-dependent increases. This in turn may entail the loss of many contacts, which is unfortunate if one is aiming for continuity. A longer rotation with an overlap would improve the continuity and reduce the risk of losing some contacts. The possibility of developing trust and establishing fruitful talks would also increase, which means a better quality of the collected material. A longer rotation could also mean that the handover would be longer, since there is more time at hand. This would, above all, be able to make the handover to/from another country easier.

There are some problems with a longer rotation, however. It could be more difficult to recruit personnel, in that they have to be away from home for a longer period of time. This need not be too much of a problem, in that all of the interviewed liaison officers would have preferred this themselves. Another argument could be that the cohesion of the group is worse when those who have to work together arrive at different times. The advantages of a longer and overlapping rotation are, however, so many that the conclusion is that a longer and overlapping rotation is to be preferred.

Therefore, a **recommendation** is that Sweden should introduce longer and overlapping rotations during its overseas operations.

5.5 Training

Training is a subject which is also worth discussing. The Swedish teams have, besides the training at the Swedish Life Guards, a ten-day training course in conversation and meeting techniques before they go to Kosovo. Only some of the liaison officers in Bosnia-Herzegovina had gone on the training course in conversation and meeting techniques. Several respondents had expressed, as mentioned earlier, that they had not been entirely satisfied with the training they

received before their mission. A ten-day training course in conversation and meeting techniques is a short period of time to improve your knowledge of the techniques that are your main tools. Not having a command of these techniques can have consequences for the collection of information, since it becomes harder to get people to talk, which, in turn, leads to a worse picture of the security situation. Therefore, the training of the team members needs, to an even greater extent, to be adapted to the working methods used by the Liaison Teams. Included in this is not only focusing on verbal communication, but also the written communication, since written reporting is the method used for the dissemination of the collected information. These skills are, however, becoming increasingly important not just specifically for the Liaison Teams, but also for international operations generally, since multifunctional operations and civil-military cooperation have come to be increasingly important concepts in the context of international operations. This means increased contacts with non-military people, and thus leads to increased demands for communication skills. If one is serious about multifunctional operations and civil-military cooperation, then communication should get to take up more of the training, not only for the liaison officers, but also, generally speaking, for all officers.

Consequently, a **recommendation** is that verbal and written communication should be more distinct parts of the training of high-ranking officers.

5.6 Liaison Teams, CIMIC or Intelligence Work?

It is possible to see a problem area regarding the definition of the work of the Liaison Teams. It concerns the distinction between the Liaison Teams, CIMIC and intelligence work. None of the respondents in Kosovo and Bosnia-Herzegovina saw any problems with separating the work of the Liaison Teams from intelligence work or CIMIC. It emerged, however, during many of the interviews that the differentiation can only be made by those who are really knowledgeable or working closely with the teams. Since the local population does not seem to be able to make any distinction between the different work, and nevertheless still supplies information, the difference is, above all, probably only for internal use. It is, however, not totally obvious to make a distinction between the Liaison Teams, CIMIC and intelligence work.

The work of the Liaison Teams may be seen as a combination of intelligence work and CIMIC. Admittedly, the teams work with open information, but this does not mean that they are totally detached from intelligence gathering. A lot of the information the Liaison Teams collect is used by the Intelligence Unit in its analyses and in this way becomes intelligence. This is really obvious in Bosnia-Herzegovina since the Liaison Teams are under the Information and Analysis Division that handles all sorts of collected information and may be equated with

an intelligence unit (J2). The Liaison Teams can also be said to be a part of CIMIC. The Liaison Teams do not have any funds for financing and carrying out any projects, even if one respondent claims that liaison officers had spent their own money to help finance a project.⁶⁷ On the other hand, a part of the CIMIC work consists of 'creating good relations with civilian parties at different levels to facilitate the military work'.⁶⁸ What the Liaison Teams do is, by liaising with the civilian society, to collect information that is of use to the military work, in that it helps to provide a better picture of the security situation. As a consequence, there seems to be a certain confusion of concepts, which can be partly responsible for the work being less efficiently done, since it is not clear who does what. There seems to be, therefore, a need for increased knowledge of, above all, what CIMIC really entails.

Consequently, **a recommendation** is that the Swedish Armed Forces should contribute to an increased knowledge among its staff of CIMIC and other similar concepts.

5.7 The Lack of an Analysis Function

The Liaison Teams in Kosovo and Bosnia-Herzegovina do not have any analysis function. There is no such function at the regional level either, with the exception of Multi-National Task Force South in Kosovo, or in the coordination cell in Kosovo. As previously mentioned, several respondents feel that the Liaison Teams should not carry out any analysis; this in order, above all, to not end up being too much like intelligence work. It has already been noted that the Liaison Teams can actually be seen as a part of the work. There are also advantages to having an analysis function outside in the teams. Those who collect the information know their informants and move around in the environments that the report is about, and they are in the best position to assess how much truth in what they hear. The Liaison Teams' analysis should, therefore, contribute to an even more nuanced picture of the security situation and could be an addition to the analysis that is made at the intelligence and the analysis unit respectively. Also, the number of reports going to the respective HQ today is quite large. Often, only a small part of these are useful for further analysis work. This means that there is a large amount of unnecessary information coming into HQ. By giving the Liaison Teams the opportunity to analyse the information they write down, there might be a reduction in the amount of unusable information. Thus, it might be preferable to have an analysis function in the Liaison Teams.

⁶⁷ Interviewed representative of the OSCE in Kosovo.

⁶⁸ Nilsson, Claes and Lagerström, Maria (2006), *Civil-militär samverkan i princip och praktik* [Civil-Military Co-operation in Principle and Practice], FOI report (FOI-R—2104—SE).

5.8 Liaison Teams – to Be or Not to Be?

All respondents in Kosovo questioned the Swedish decision to withdraw its contribution to the work of the Liaison Teams. This applies to both the people working for KFOR as well as the various cooperation partners. Generally, the respondents had a very positive view of both the work, in the main, as well as the ability of the Swedish Liaison Teams. The Swedes are considered very skilled at liaising in particular, and many respondents said that Sweden should focus on this kind of work in Kosovo. A natural development in a country recovering from war should be the reduction of the military presence. As previously mentioned, it is the intention to increase the number of Liaison Teams at the same time as another troop presence is reduced, and to have them move out into the communities. A plausible future development is, therefore, one that is similar to the one in Bosnia-Herzegovina, where the Liaison Teams are the main presence. So it makes you wonder if a withdrawal of the Liaison Teams is in accordance with the Swedish interests in Kosovo. In the 2008 Statement of Government Policy in the Parliamentary Debate on Foreign Affairs, the Minister for Foreign Affairs said that Sweden would continue to contribute to the international community's involvement in Kosovo, not least by participation in KFOR.⁶⁹ A long-term involvement in KFOR could in the long run mean that participation in the liaison work will be necessary.

Consequently, a **recommendation** is that, if Sweden wishes to participate long term in KFOR, it must consider to once again contribute with Liaison Teams.

In Bosnia-Herzegovina, opinion was divided about the Swedish withdrawal of the Liaison Teams. There are several things that indicate that the teams have had their day. Admittedly, the cooperation partners who were interviewed claim that the Liaison Teams still had a role to play, but this appeared, if anything, to be about the Liaison Teams being of use to the respondents, with their positions, than to the community in general. Furthermore, if it is, as previously mentioned, the case that the collection of information has begun to be seen as being less important, and that it is only the actual presence of troops that counts, then maybe the Liaison Teams have had their day. Further, many of the questions that the Liaison Teams have to deal with nowadays are neither military nor directly related to security, but rather questions regarding building the local administration and democracy. This means that it is perhaps, above all, no longer the military personnel who are needed, but rather civilians with knowledge of local administration, the education system, ethnic conflicts, etc. A gradual reduction of the Liaison Teams' presence could, therefore, be achieved by replacing some of the military personnel with civilian experts. This is not without problems however, since it would mean that the civil-military cooperation both

⁶⁹ Utrikesdeklarationen 2008 [The 2008 Statement of Government Policy in the Parliamentary Debate on Foreign Affairs] <http://www.regeringen.se/content/1/c6/09/80/13/74f83843.pdf>

in the field and at home needs to be developed in that a military structure would be gradually replaced by a civilian one. Notwithstanding, civilian personnel in the teams are something that the international community may consider as a long-term strategy for the Liaison Teams.

5.9 Summary of the Recommendations

Below is a summary of the recommendations arrived at:

- The Swedish Armed Forces should adapt its work according to the devised concepts.
- The Swedish Ministry of Defence should make it clear to the Swedish Armed Forces which interests they think are to determine the Swedish contributions in an operation.
- The Swedish Armed Forces should contribute to an increased knowledge among its staff of CIMIC and other similar concepts.
- Sweden should introduce longer and overlapping rotations.
- Verbal and written communication should be more distinct parts of the training of the high-ranking officers.
- If Sweden wishes to participate long term in KFOR, it must consider to once again contribute with Liaison Teams.

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Interviews

Stockholm

Operational Commander of the Operational Staff

Officer at the Army Tactical Staff

Officer at the Army Tactical Staff, previously Head of the Regional Liaison Office

Military expert at the Swedish Ministry of Defence

Kosovo

Assistant Head of the Municipal Office at Fushë-Kosovës/Kosovo Polje

Head of CIMIC (J9)

Head of the Municipal Office at Fushë-Kosovës/Kosovo Polje

Head of the Regional Liaison and Monitoring Team

Team Leader of a Liaison and Monitoring Team

Human Dimensions Officer in the OSCE Pristina Team

Human Rights Officer in the OSCE Kosovo Polje Team

Coordinating Officer in the Liaison and Monitoring Team Coordination Cell

Member of the OSCE Pristina Team

Nordic Coordinator at the Central Intelligence Unit, UNMIK Police

Representative of Pristina Municipality's Office of Returns

Senior Human Rights/Legal Adviser at the OSCE

Deputy Chief of the Liaison and Monitoring Team Coordination Cell

Deputy Team Leader of a Liaison and Monitoring Team

Deputy Chief of G2 Current

Bosnia-Herzegovina

Official in the Mayor's Cabinet (Doboj Municipality) responsible for contacts with the international community

Head of the OSCE in Doboj

Head of the Liaison and Observation Team Desk

Team Leader of a Liaison and Observation Team

Liaison Officer in a Liaison and Observation Team

Staff Officer at a Regional Coordination Centre

Deputy Team Leader of a Liaison and Observation Team

Appendix – Interview Structure

The following questions have been the basis for the interviews. Additionally, follow-up questions, adapted to the respondents' answers, have been used. The interviews started with a short presentation of the project.

- What is your background?
- What responsibility/role do you have in your organisation, and how long have you had this role?
- Please describe the work of the Liaison Teams – role, function, and result?
- Please describe the liaison in the field.
- How does liaising work in your organisation?
- Please describe the difference between liaison, intelligence and civil-military cooperation.
- In which way does your work contribute to a picture of the situation and a safe and stable environment?
- Do all Liaison Teams work in the same way, or is there any difference between the countries?
- Are there any problem areas?
- What development possibilities do you see for the Liaison Teams in the future?
- Is there anything you feel that we have not touched on, or that you want to talk about?

The following two questions were used for the cooperation partners:

- In which way have you had contact with the Liaison Teams in your present work?
- Please describe the cooperation of your organisation with the Liaison Teams – above all the Swedish team.