Comparison of Operational Concepts of the Armed Forces  
At Selected Countries

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Abstract: The article deals with the creation of operational concepts, it describes methods or proposals plan for the use of well-defined of military capabilities in order to achieve the goal or intent. The central idea of the concept is basically what the armed forces can perform in the future to cope with security challenges. The concepts are expressed in future operations, describing how a military commander uses military science and art to use capabilities to achieve desired effects and objectives. The concept of individual states is problematic in terms of content to compare. Contribution to the conference presents one of the scientific outputs of the OPERKON defence research project. As the conclusion, possible variant of the Capstone Operational Concept of Czech Armed Forces is presented.

Key-words: Operational Concepts; Military Capabilities; Armed Forces.

1 Introduction

Operational concepts represent the ideas how something can be performed. They are written so that adequate solution is found for certain problem. Future operations are expressed in these concepts that describe how the commander utilizes the military science and military art, and how he/she can utilize the capabilities to achieve requires effects and goals.

The key idea of the concept expresses what tasks armed forces can perform in the future to handle the security challenges. They also describe the future operations and ways how the commanders allies the military science and military art to achieve the required goals and effects. However, it is necessary to distinguish between the top and key operational concept. Capstone operational concepts are understood as the concept between the military strategy and operational employment of the armed forces (ARF). Its name does not necessarily need to include the word “capstone” itself but they can be called according to the particular purpose and mission, as e.g. “The Joint High Level Operational Concept”(HLOC) of the UK or “Concept d’emploi des forces”of France. Another lower-level but not of lower importance documents, the keystone operational concepts have to be mentioned. This is to be understood as the concept for a specific type of operations or operational employment of the given service, e.g. the US „Major Combat Operations - USA“ or the UK „Future Land Operational Concept“ (FLOC) and others. From the view of utilization for our operational concepts document named „Concept Development and Experimentation Method Description“ can be taken as a model. This document was elaborated by a team of Swedish and Norwegian experts and in fact, it is close to the approaches recognized in the USA.

It rather includes the general recommendation to the structure of concepts, and we can say that the proposed content of the operational concept (OC) rather corresponds to key concepts.

2 General approach and hierarchy of concepts in selected countries

2.1 France

Capstone concept in the French armed forces is called the „Concept of employment of forces
(Concept d’emploi des forces). This Concept, published in 2010, thus two years after the White Book. It has been published both in French and English languages. Concept of employment of armed forces the lower levels concepts result from; a hierarchy of documents is kept here:

(Concepts – doctrines - publications) that are created by the “All-Services Centre of Concepts, Doctrines and experimentations” (Le Centre interarmées de concepts, de doctrines et d’expérimentations - CICDE). The CICDE was established in 2005 as an organ directly subordinated to the French Armed Forces Chief of Staffs. The CICDE provides for the generation of concepts and doctrine and it is responsible for these documents at joint services level. The entire complex structure of concepts, where the “Concept of employment of armed forces”, implementing the “White book” stipulations is pictured on Fig. 1. Keystone concepts are ordered to nine areas:

- Organization,
- Intelligence,
- Operations,
- Logistics,
- Planning process,
- Communications and Information Systems,
- Exercise,
- Budget,
- Civil-military Co-operation.

Hierarchy of keystone concepts is pictured on Fig. 2, e.g. 3rd. area – operations. Reason of the colour differentiation is to keep the overview on concepts:

- issued already,
- translated to English,
- under development,
- processed or preparation.

Fig. 1: Hierarchy of concepts in the French ARF (own)

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Fig. 2: Structuring of keystone concepts in the French ARF (own)

2.2 Great Britain

The capstone operational concepts called “The UK Joint High Level Operational Concept”. Key operational concepts that come out from the above mentioned are pictured on Fig. 3 these are: FLOC - Future Land Operational Concept, FASOC - Future Air Space Operational Concept, FMOC – Future Maritime Operational Concept. Coordination and generation of concepts in the UK armed forces is the responsibility of the Development, Concepts and Doctrine Centre – DCDC. Director of the DCDC is one from the deputies of the Defence Staff (Major General), who is directly responsible to the Director for Strategy.

Fig. 3: Division of keystone concepts in the UK (own)
2.3 USA
U.S. Armed Forces and their concepts result from the capstone operational concepts that are called Capstone Concept for Joint Operations (CCJO). Then, keystone operational concepts result from this one and they are called the Joint Operating Concepts - JOC), e.g., Homeland Defence/Civil Support, Major Operations, Irregular Warfare and others. This concept provides for a universal description of how the joint forces will be operating in the future. Its purpose is to lead the development and employment of forces so that it provides the general description of how the future joint forces will operate. Concept of services and subordinated joint concepts solve and develop these ideas further on.

A hierarchy of the operational concepts of the US ARF is pictured on Fig. 4, with outlines of the contents of the Joint Operational, Functional and Integrating Concepts. The Joint Operating Concepts – (JOCs) describe how the joint commanders perform the strategic mission by conducting the military operation at the operational level within the campaign. These documents represent the operational “requirement”, on the contrary to the Joint Functional Concepts (JFCs) that represents a functional “stock”. JFCs support the JOCs and describe how the future joint forces will perform the specific military functions across the entire spectrum. They influence the development of the defence planning scenarios and provide the framework for the Joint Integrating Concepts (JIC). They are aimed to two levels lower than is the area of the joint capabilities. They have the narrowest focus from all the future joint concepts, describe the capabilities and divide them to the single tasks. Joint Integrating Concepts (JIC) includes the explanatory aim (CONOPS) for the specific scenario and the set of important principles applicable in a number of scenarios.

Responsibility for the generation and development of capstone concepts for joint operations and their integration with subordinated concepts lies on the J7 - Joint Force Development and Integration Division (JFDID).
3 Comparison of contents

It is quite problematic to compare the concepts mutually from the perspective of their contents. Some misunderstandings could occur when elaborating translations, and, therefore it is necessary to do the translations in the respective context. It needs to be emphasized that we have to proceed in a logical procedure from the capstone to keystone concepts. To achieve this goal it is necessary to develop a hierarchic structure of possible and required concepts. Generation of concepts in the largest and the most important armies of NATO states come out from the same principles. A capstone concept is normally developed in the armies of UK, France, Australia or USA as first, and the other – lower by hierarchy – are generated subsequently. Some differences might be possibly found in the approach of France that consists in defining the concept as a document saying “what to do”. A UK, US approach, on the contrary, is a guide of “how to do”.

4 Conclusion

The methodology of the French approach for generating and application of concepts and doctrines and hierarchic system is complex and seems to be applicable to the conditions of the Czech Republic. If we accept the French–based approach documents, certain selection of the French solutions will have to be implemented in each individual case and irrelevant areas must be removed, in the sense of omitting e.g. the area of nuclear power, naval operations, etc. Effective, constructive and conceptual approach of France to generation and development of operational concepts appears to be applicable to the conditions of armed forces to smaller countries. Moreover, the French approach also declares that it comes out from the respective Alliance documents in the sense of their “hierarchic value and weight”. It is also suitable to consider the possible variants of solution (principal ways of deployment) for possible “crisis situation” in a form of attachments what could be utilised for solutions in the Czech Republic scenarios as well. One of the options is to assign an official responsible for this area, who will be awarded by pertinent authorities for decision to be taken, and who will be provided by all support needed for his/her work (financial, human- as well as material resources framework). When generating the concept we should be committed to copy, to certain extent, some system that had already been applied by an Alliance member state, adjust it to the conditions of the Czech Republic and start with coordination of generating of lower-level concepts. To enable to meet this task, however, a working team composed from experts from different branches needs to be composed. Such team has necessarily to be fully supported by the top Ministry of Defence Officials. Principal new findings from analysis of the generation of strategic documents focused to operational concepts that could be applied when developing the “Operational Concepts of the Armed Forces of the Czech Republic for future operations”.

Fully long-term applicable methodology must be elaborated and duly endorsed by the top Ministry of Defence officials and that will determine the hierarchy, purpose and basic form of these documents.

Operational concepts have to be an integral part of strategic documents (like the Capstone concept) and be of a general character. The basic structure (content) of the OC should include the following elements:

a) Introduction Possible time horizon, purpose, links to strategic documents
b) Future security environment developing the threats from the Security strategy of the CR
c) Prediction of the operational environment where and at what conditions the CR AF will operate
d) Employment of the CR AF in future operations in future operations mission of the CR AF, capabilities needed to eliminate threats, way they (CR AF) will be deployed and how the C2 chain of command will be implemented.

The last chapter is to be the key one that will represent the reaction of the CR AF to security threats (Chapter 2) at conditions (Chapter 3). Possible scenarios for development of security environment can be used when elaborating this chapter not for modelling of capabilities and deployment of CR AF but also for testing through experimentation, and the CD&E method should be utilised for experimentation. Operation concepts have to be revised regularly. If any attributes prove to have been changed then it is necessary to revise the respective concept to maintain it as much up-to-date, realistic and fully applicable in a given time horizon. In the process of endorsement,
the consensus must be achieved across the entire national political spectrum.

References:


[5] Selected analyses made for the OPERKON defence research project.


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