



POINTS OF CONTACT AS BASIC STRUCTURES RESPONSIBLE FOR DATA TRANSFERS AND CONDUCT OF LOGISTIC TASKS WITHIN THE SCOPE OF THE HNS

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Abstract

The aim of the article is to present Polish structures of NHS Points of Contact as an example of national Point of Contact structures which carry out HNS tasks under the obligations resulting from NATO membership. Successful conduct of logistical tasks demands transfers of information between Points of Contact, which can be temporary or permanent and belong to the armed forces or non-military organisations. They determine the type, direction, time, and size of physical and personnel flows performed within the scope of the Host Nation tasks. Their correct functioning and cooperation, especially in the formal and legal areas, plays a key role in the accomplishment of tasks and set goals.

The article is based on analysis of formal and legal documents and normative acts dedicated to the military and civilian spheres, and of data gathered in research carried out in the national HNS structures.

Keywords: Host Nation Support (HNS), military logistics, Points of Contact

1. INTRODUCTION

Logistics management, is the means whereby the needs of customers are satisfied through the co-ordination of the materials and information flows that extend from the marketplace, through the firm and its operations and beyond that to suppliers [1]. Logistics in military doctrine refers to the art and science of designing, planning, acquiring and carrying out the movement of the forces including their combat equipment and supplies in the battle field [2]. A basic precondition of effective functioning of NATO security policy and of its credibility is the capability to provide support for the Allied forces on the territories of its member states during operations. Logistic Support commonly known as Combat Service Support (CSS) holds key to the success and victory in any military operation [3]. This characteristic type of support offered by the host nation (host nation support - HNS) has been defined in NATO normative documents as civil and military assistance provided by the host nation in peace time, crisis or war to allied military forces and organisations which are deployed, carry out their tasks or move through the territory of the host nation. The basis for providing such support is formed by the relevant authorities in the host nation (HN) and the sending nation(s) (SN) and/or NATO [7]. The basis for the HNS operation is the implementation of tasks in the sphere of logistics. It has its reflection in major logistics activities, that are involved in the flow of product, information, finance and persons, from point-of-origin to point-of-consumption. The following activities include: customer service, demand forecasting, inventory management, logistics communications, materials handling, order processing, packaging, parts and service support, plant and warehouse site selection, procurement reverse logistics, traffic and transportation, warehousing and storage [4]. The main goal of the HNS is providing multidimensional, and above all, effective support based on the resources at the host nation's disposal, which will enable the achievement and maintenance of the desired level of economic effectiveness of the HNS. It is possible thanks to coordination of the process of flows of personnel, materiel, and information necessary for accomplishing the designated goal. From the point of view of the logistics system, these objectives are the basis for the implementation of logistic operations strategy. It is a functional strategy that indicates how structural and infrastructural elements within the operations areas will be acquired and developed to support the overall strategy [5]. In order to

properly implement logistical processes, it is essential to identify the organizational structure forming the framework for management of a logistical system. This knowledge will enable identifying and locating particular cells related to given processes within the structure. Defining their tasks in the context of their respective areas of competence and responsibility will enable determining their influence on quality and effectiveness of undertaken actions. The architecture of the organizational structure for logistics includes, inter alia, such issues as defining the decision-makers for implemented processes and identifying the communication channels between the subordinates and their superiors. Therefore a network of permanent and temporary HNS structures responsible for planning and providing support plays a key role in this process. Points of Contact form a network generating relations which determine the type, direction, time and size of flows of materiel, information and personnel in fulfilling the host nation role. Their proper functioning and cooperation, especially in the formal and legal areas, are of key significance for the accomplishment of goals and tasks. The article is the final product of the first stage of research as part of the "research grant" research program implemented for the Ministry of National Defense. The main goal of the article is to present Polish structures of NHS Points of Contact as an example of national Point of Contact structures which carry out HNS tasks under the obligations resulting from NATO membership. The identified Polish system will serve as a reference point for implementation of further actions. The identification of the structure of the NHS logistical system is the basic element of research which will eventually enable suggesting methods for improving the present solutions and even creating a new, highly improved model possessing traits of a universal model.

Based on the analysis of the implemented tasks and information flows between HNS system cells, the article presents the structure of Points of Contact of HNS Poland. Because each NATO member state has its own structures in this area and has worked out solutions compatible with these structures, its identification in relation to Polish conditions is the first stage of the research process within the project "MOND Research Grant." Points of Contact have a significant impact on the logistics of international military operations, especially in the sphere of flow coordination. The article is based on an critical analysis of formal and legal documents and normative acts dedicated to military and civilian spheres and data gathered during research conducted in national HNS structures.

2. THE NATURE OF POINTS OF CONTACT

Effective accomplishment of HNS tasks by a host nation is the most important purpose of functioning of the network of the host nation Points of Contact. A HNS Point of Contact is the basic and one of most important elements of the HNS system structure. Its task is to provide the entities participating in an operation with effective coordination of enterprises which the host nation is obliged to organise. Regardless of whether the Alliance executes operation deployments or exercises, the full coordination and effective planning of action enables the fulfilment of the set goal. Support generated for the SN(s) by the HN can substantially lower the scale and scope of support which has to be provided by the SN in the initial phase of the deployment. Proper coordination and information transfers necessary for effective support will enable adequate and coherent coordination of effort with available HN's resources. In order to achieve the set goal and enable the implementation of the groundwork for effective support, legal and functional framework has been created in the form of normative documents which contain the main guidelines for creating HNS structures, including Points of Contact on international and national levels. The NHS Point of Contact can be defined as the basic cell in the structure of HNS, tasked to provide effective coordination of actions and transparent access to and uninterrupted flow of information necessary for conduct of host nation support in the indicated areas of key importance. In practice, two types of Points of Contact are identified in the national HNS system: permanent points of contact, which are continually engaged in implementation of the HNS planning process; and temporary Points of Contact, which perform tasks and roles depending on the type of operation supported within the HNS system and on particular assignments. Permanent Points of Contact have highly specialised standing personnel — both military and civilian — who continually exchange information with the Central Point of Contact for the Ministry of National Defence. Personnel of the temporary Points of Contact, on the other

hand, are usually detached to them from other sections of a given unit or institution for short-term augmentation of the host nation support system.

3. LEGAL DETERMINANTS OF CREATING POINTS OF CONTACT AND THEIR FUNCTIONING

Among the basic logistical documents on NATO level generally dealing with the HNS, there are NATO Logistics Handbook and AJP-4(A) — Allied Joint Logistic Doctrine. Main logistical documents which specify HNS rules and policies, including questions related to HNS structures, are MC 334/1 - NATO Principles and Policies for Host Nation Support, PO (2011) 0020, NATO Command Structure - Host Nation Support — Policy and Standards, and AJP-4.5(A) — Allied Joint Doctrine for Host Nation Support. Thanks to experience gathered in the course of conducted enterprises, these documents contain also general guidelines concerning the Points of Contact created in order to facilitate providing the HNS. Experience has highlighted the importance of the HN, SNs and NATO-led Forces respectively minimizing the number of points of contact (POCs) for HNS matters, particularly during the planning and early implementation stages. As a matter of principle, each SN and the HN should have a primary logistic POC for all HNS matters. The POC should have sufficient authority to mediate between all concerned and speak on behalf of their nation [7]. The AJP-4.5 doctrine specifies the responsibility of entities taking part in the HNS, namely of NATO Commander, SN(s) and HN, to keep each other informed of the appropriate POC for HNSA development at the earliest opportunity, to the extent necessary for providing support for the conducted operation. NATO Command level documents concerning planning and providing HNS contain general requirements related to the creation of Points of Contact, leaving detailed questions at the discretion of national authorities, which results in taking into account unique circumstances resulting from the national level regulations. The organization of a national HNS system is based on military and non-military subsystems, which combine to build an extended national defence system. The activities the host nation is obliged to undertake are coordinated mainly within the complex system for directing national security. For HNS support to be efficient on both national and international levels and consequently bring reductions in costs and time necessary to provide support on the part of the sending and host nations, it is necessary to include Points of Contact into the planning process. This applies to both permanent and temporary Points of Contact, on all levels of command necessary for conducting an operation, including also Points of Contact of non-military structures.

4. FORMAL FACTORS INFLUENCING POINTS OF CONTACT IN POLAND AS AN EXAMPLE OF SUCH FACTORS ON NATIONAL LEVELS

On a national level, apart from NATO Command level documents dedicated to host nation support and especially to its structures, which are binding for Poland as a member state, there are several documents dealing with the national HNS system, together with its structures. In a national legal system, the basic documents regulating the area of host nation support are:

- 1) laws;
- 2) international agreements;
- 3) ordinances;
- 4) directives, decisions, orders;
- 5) national doctrinal documents.

The main principle of this system is achieving full coherence of relations between international and national legal systems. For this purpose, within the national system of HNS and other solutions, the legislator has provided for the introduction of documents regulating the national HNS system. The basic documents concerning the national host nation support, including regulation of creating national HNS structures are the following:

- *Doktryna wsparcia przez państwo-gospodarza DD-4.5(B)* (Doctrine for Host Nation Support) which is directly subordinated to the main national level logistic document — *Doktryna logistyczna SZ RP D-4(B)* (Logistic Doctrine of the Polish Armed Forces), which indicates the tight interconnection of the host nation support with the Armed Forces’ logistic system. Doctrine DD-4.5(B), like most national level documents, reflects regulations of the allied HNS doctrine (AJP 4.5(B)) and determines main principles of functioning of the created national system for conduct of tasks within the HNS.
- *Decyzja Nr 447/MON Ministra Obrony Narodowej z dnia 31.12.2013 r. w sprawie funkcjonowania w resorcie obrony narodowej systemu wsparcia przez państwo-gospodarza (HNS)* (Decision No 447/MON of the Minister of National Defence of December 31, 2013 on functioning of the HNS system within the department of national defence). This document describes and defines tasks of national Points of Contact on the highest level of the department of national defence for the purpose of implementation of the system of host nation support.

5. THE STRUCTURE OF POINTS OF CONTACT IN POLAND AS AN EXAMPLE OF NATIONAL POINTS OF CONTACT

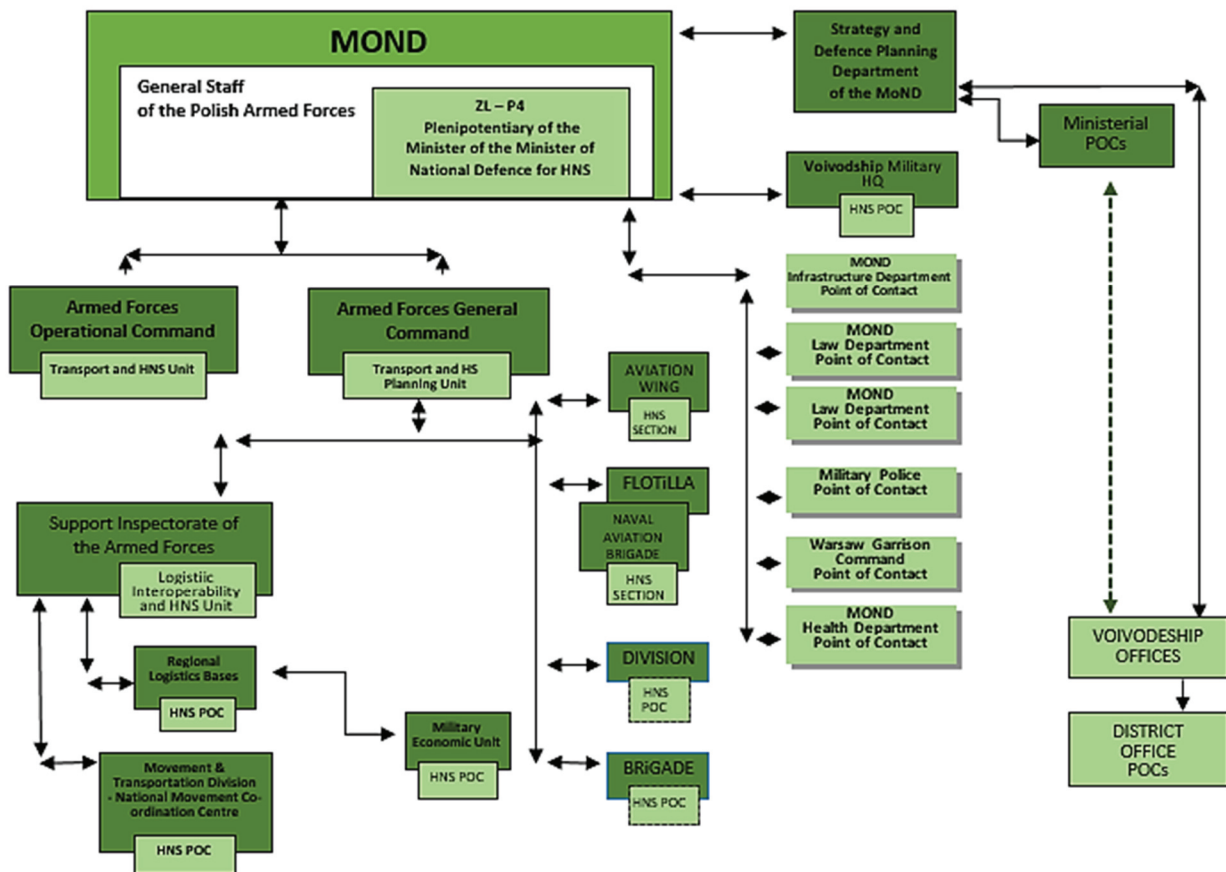


Figure 1 National HNS structure responsible for transfers of data and fulfilment of logistical tasks within HNS [own study]

On the national level, the system for fulfilling host nation support tasks and national structures of host nation support system — both military and public administration bodies — are supervised and coordinated by the Minister of National Defence. The national point of contact on the level of Ministry of National Defence is located at the Logistics Directorate — J4 of the General Staff of the Polish Armed Forces, together with the Chief of the Logistics Directorate (J4), who is also the plenipotentiary of the Minister of National Defence for

HNS and acts as the Central Point of Contact HNS (CPK NHS). The Central Point of Contact HNS is defined as an organizational cell functioning on the political-military level and responsible for coordination of tasks of host nation support for SNs' armed forces and NATO commands. On the strategic and operational levels, it achieves its tasks through cooperation with NATO and SNs' commands. Its competences include also coordination of functioning of HNS structures within RON structures and cooperation with non-military part of the national defence system in order to effectively utilize the nation's resources to provide support. In the area of information transfers, it is responsible for organizing and maintaining the system of gathering and for updating data on the nation's defence resources slated for use within host nation support, and runs the Central Data Base for the HNS system (CBD HNS), which assists in the receiving and processing of the gathered data [8]. The performance of HNS tasks by non-military structures is coordinated and supervised by the Strategy and Defence Planning Department. It should be emphasized that most HNS tasks are performed by permanent and temporary POCs existing mainly in logistics sections within structures of military units subordinate to the General Command of the Armed Forces, which is primarily responsible for conducting tasks aimed at supporting the allied forces. These tasks are carried out by the Department for Transport and HNS Planning, and its subordinate structures of the Support Inspectorate of the Armed Forces, and Aviation Bases, Commands of Naval Ports, and military units by way of the temporary POC (**Figure 1**). Other organizational units of the department of defence and public administration bodies included in the sphere of host nation support create HNS POCs on an ad hoc basis, assigning them with specific tasks related to preparing and providing support for a particular Allied operation [8].

When Polish Armed Forces receive support abroad as a SN, fulfilling HNS tasks is the responsibility of the Department for Transport and HNS in the Armed Forces Operational Command. Its mission is obtaining logistic support and contracting services within the scope of SN's tasks, and making financial settlements for support received by Polish military contingents abroad [9].

CONCLUSION

As a result of the research stage presented in the article, the organizational structure of the current system of Polish Points of Contact has been identified. The national structures of Points of Contact presented in the article, which carry out HNS tasks resulting from NATO membership, illustrate the role of information transfers and of conducting logistical tasks of providing host nation support. Elements of the HNS system present on all levels of its military and non-military subsystems reveal the complexity of processes taking place in this field. The presented structure of 8 Points of Contact and their role can help practitioners in a comprehensive analysis of factors affecting the distribution structure of resources, including mainly information, and help them organize faster and more efficient flows, and consequently, the implementation of HNS at the appropriate level. Transfers of information are among the most important elements of the processes of NHS planning and conduct, enabling clear coordination and appropriate supervision, without which achievement of goals set in this area would be impossible. It should also be noted that the obtained results will be the basis for further research including, inter alia, the system of comparing Points of Contact HNS structures within NATO, and in the future for the creation of universal system solutions in the NATO HNS System.

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