

NATO ENERGY SECURITY CENTRE OF EXCELLENCE

Colonel Gintaras Bagdonas¹

Patricia Orglerova²

Introduction

NATO Energy Security Centre of Excellence (ENSEC COE) is located in Vilnius, Lithuania. It was established on July 10, 2012 and later accredited by the North Atlantic Council on October 12, 2012. The NATO ENSEC COE was established by Lithuania as a Framework Nation and by five other sponsoring NATO Nations: Estonia, France, Italy, Latvia and Turkey. Later followed by NATO partner-nation Georgia (2014), UK (2014) as sponsoring nations and Czech Republic as a voluntary contributing nation, which recently declared its intention to join the Centre. Currently USA is in the process of joining procedure, and Germany is about to start the joining procedures.

The main mission of ENSEC COE is to assist Strategic Commands, other NATO bodies, nations, partners, and other civil and military bodies by supporting NATO's capability development process, mission effectiveness, and interoperability in the near, mid and long terms by providing comprehensive and timely subject matter expertise on all aspects of energy security.

What is Energy Security?

To understand NATO's interest in energy security it is vital to define the concept of energy security. Unfortunately, there is

¹ Director of NATO Energy Security Centre of Excellence

² Intern of NATO Energy Security Centre of Excellence

no coherent definition of energy security within the NATO nations. The Alliance does not have either. Therefore energy security means different things to different countries based on their geographical location, their natural resources, their international relations, their political system and their economic disposition. For ENSECOCOE the working definition of Energy security refers to “the uninterrupted availability and resiliency of energy sources to support ALLIANCE SECURITY INTERESTS”.

NATO’s Role in Energy Security

The reason for NATO’s engagement in Energy security is threefold – energy affects broader scope of international relations; energy infrastructure remains an easy target for aggression; and energy is crucial for a whole range of military activities as it enables the successful execution of military missions and operations world-wide. To enhance energy security NATO seeks to enhance its strategic awareness of energy developments with security implications; develop its competence in supporting the protection of critical energy infrastructure; and work towards improving the energy efficiency of the military forces.

Currently, in NATO there are six institutions³ that deal with different aspects of energy security. The Energy Security Section in the Emerging Security Challenges Division at NATO HQ is responsible for monitoring and anticipating international developments in the area of energy security. Allied Command Transformation addresses energy security via education, training and exercises, as well as by conducting experiments to assess new concepts, and promoting the interoperability throughout the Alliance.

Concept of NATO Centre of Excellence

Centers of Excellence (COE) are a nationally or multi-nationally funded institutions that train and educate leaders and specialists from NATO member and partner countries, assist in doctrine development, identify lessons learned, improve interoperability, and capabilities, test and validate

³ NATO International Staff’s Emerging Security Challenges Division, Allied Command Transformation, Allied Command Operations, NATO Support Procurement Agency, Science and Technology Organization and NATO Energy Security Centre of Excellence

concepts through experimentation. Presently there are 24 COEs supporting NATO and its transformation and act as subject matter experts in their field of expertise, for example Defence Against Terrorism or Strategic Communication COE. Being not part of the chain of NATO Command Structure, the Centres have big flexibility to act in agile way contributing NATO and nations with their expertise and knowledge. Therefore, working alongside the Alliance the COEs are owned and funded by NATO nations and partners which join the COE's according to MOU.

NATO Energy Security Centre of Excellence: Main Projects

NATO ENSEC COE is divided into 3 Divisions that provide Subject matter expertise in the field of energy security – the Strategic Analysis and Research Division; the Education, Training and Exercise Division; the Doctrine & Concept Development Division.

The Main projects developed within the COE on education and training focus on courses and exercises – ADL Energy Security Awareness e-learning course, the Energy Security Strategic course with the focus on Caucasus organized in Tbilisi in April this year (in cooperation with Georgian State Military Scientific Technical Centre Delta and US Naval Postgraduate School), or the NATO Table Top Exercise on the Protection of Critical Energy Infrastructure organized in Vilnius, 17-20 May this year, with the aim of bringing military, private operators and academia together to contribute to the development of NATO's competence in supporting the protection of critical energy infrastructure.

Secondly, the Strategic Analysis and Research Division is responsible for conducting analysis and research on energy security issues – Study on how closures of European refineries could threaten the production of specific military fuels, Report on Energy Security and Security of Supply Situation in the Baltic States or the Analytical Study on Hybrid Conflict & Critical Energy Infrastructure: Ukrainian Case.

Thirdly, the Doctrine & Concept & Experimentation Division contributes to NATO's capability development, initiation of NATO Energy Efficiency doctrine and the Experiment Proposal "Energy Management in the Military Expeditionary Environment" with the aim of applying ISO: 50001. The flagship event organized is IESMA - Innovative Energy Solutions for Military Applications Conference and Exhibition

organized bi-annually in Vilnius on bringing the energy solution experience from private sector to the military. In 2014 the participation reached 223 people including 31 private companies such as Honeywell, BAE, THALES and many more. Another large scale event organized was the Capable Logistician 2015 focusing on smart energy goals – identifying opportunities for reducing energy consumption and demonstrating possible solutions.

Conclusion

NATO ENSEC COE is a recognized hub of knowledge and expertise within the Alliance that offers framework of cooperation on Energy Security subjects. It supports NATO by firstly enhancing the strategic awareness on energy developments with the security implications; secondly by supporting the protection of critical energy infrastructure; and thirdly by enhancing the energy efficiency in the military. Also it is a platform for cooperation and partnership with other centers, national military bodies, think-tanks, academia and private industry. Therefore, with increased awareness, enhanced competence to support infrastructure protection, and enhanced energy efficiency, NATO will be in a better position to respond to the emerging security challenges of the 21st century.