



DRAFT – Comments Welcomed

INFORMATION PAPER

on

PfPC ADL WG Cooperation and Engagement with the MCDC Project on Sustaining Military Training

TO: This info paper will be distributed through the Partnership for Peace Consortium (PfPC) to national representatives and organizations of interest.

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SUBJECT: Train while you fight: Cooperation with Multinational Capability Development Campaign (MCDC) Project on Sustaining Military Training (SMT)

PURPOSE

The purpose of this info paper is to provide a Multinational Capability Development Campaign (MCDC) background, and to address and recommend efficient opportunities for cooperation between the MCDC project on “Sustaining Military Training” and the PfP Consortium, particularly the PfPC ADL WG. It will also serve as outreach to Allies and Partners to contribute to the MCDC activities as a participant or observer.

This information paper is one of the outcome actions from the PfPC ADL Work Group meeting conducted on 18-20 February 2025 in Tbilisi, Georgia and hosted by the Deputy Rector of the National Defence Academy, Colonel Zurab Zerekidze.

The theme of the Sustaining Military Training MCDC project initiative aligns with the whole-of-government interests of NATO and participating nations in improving force readiness, enabling successful joint and multidomain operations with Allies and Partners, and leveraging emerging methods and technologies for enhanced decision-making and operational efficiency. By participating, nations can contribute to the advancement of interoperable training capabilities while also showcasing their commitment to innovation, interoperability, and the responsible use of developed methods and new technologies.

The PfPC ADL WG assembles exceptional knowledge and experience, with a series of recent deliverables on sustaining military training while you fight.¹ These products are built on lessons and experience from Ukraine and other nations involved in crises and conflicts.

PROBLEM STATEMENT

Critical infrastructure, vital for military functions, is highly vulnerable to physical and cyber-attacks, which can cripple military capabilities. Forces of today need to be prepared for the loss of critical infrastructure and resources. Training establishments need to be prepared for the impact of hostile action on infrastructure and capabilities.

Experienced personnel are crucial for operations, but are time consuming to train and prepare for combat. Maintaining effective training through crisis, conflict, and war increases operational effectiveness. The balance between operational capability and training needs to be maintained, so that nations can train their current and future force.

Training predominantly remains a national responsibility due to the diversity of equipment, national policy and culture. There is a need for continuous, resilient military training to maintain ready forces. Training establishments/facilities (i.e. process, delivery, infrastructure, material, personnel) are vulnerable due to their dependencies on resources. The main characteristic of the military problem and risks are defined as:

- Time sensitivity in delivery of training during crisis, conflict, and war.
- Limited multinational collaboration for responsive training and standardization.
- Insufficient planning for resilient training provision. (e.g. hybrid attack, relocation).

BACKGROUND

Military training across all operational domains will be affected by adverse effects, even during times of peace. Even though the military applies civilian processes, often we are not conducting training that includes military, civilian and multinational aspects. Resilience for training establishments needs to be considered not only from a military perspective, but in close cooperation with all Defence stake holders.

The Multinational Capability Development Campaign (MCDC) series is an initiative led by the United States Joint Staff J7 and heavily supported by NATO HQ ACT Joint Force Development, and Allies & Partners, designed to collaboratively develop and assess concepts and capabilities to address the challenges associated with conducting joint, multinational and coalition operations. Developmental projects are selected and executed through collaborative multinational efforts to address current and future operational needs associated with joint multinational and coalition operations. It contributes to multinational interoperability by identifying and evaluating potential solution options on joint multinational and coalition capability gaps.

¹ “Training while we fight: Lessons from Ukraine’s use of distributed learning in war” (*PfPC Info Paper*, April 2023); “Training and Education in War: Ukraine MilMed Requirements” (*PfPC Info Paper*, December 2023); and Presnall A., S Banks, and M. Nickolaus, “Sustaining Resilient Military Training in the Multi Domain Era,” *Connections: The Quarterly Journal*, v24, no. 1 (2025): 59-71.

One of the eleven 2025-2026 MCDC campaign cycle projects is dedicated to “Sustaining Military Training”. Existing approaches are insufficient to meet the problem:

Doctrine: Current doctrine lacks guidance and directives on resilient provisions of training.

Organization: Existing organizational structures require formal coordinating efforts for developing and implementing resilient standardized training capabilities.

Training: Military training capabilities are streamlined, centralized and impacted by civilian requirements and outsourced where possible.

Materiel: Increased reliance on modern commercial infrastructure (e.g. electricity distribution), technologies and networks, which are vulnerable to attacks.

Leadership: No existing over-all guidance for interoperability of military training among NATO, Nations, Allies and Partners.

Personnel: Need of supporting content creation by experienced war fighters with relevant expertise.

Facilities: Centralized training facilities are vulnerable and cannot quickly be rebuilt. Need of adaptable contingencies.

The aim of the MCDC is focused on developing non-materiel solutions to capability gaps for Joint, Multinational and Coalition operations to meet the present and future needs of coalition and mission partners. The MCDC partner-centric approach enables the teaming of a broad scope of multinational subject matter experts focused on multinational force development solution options. Contributing members can invite representatives from their national networks of public, private, and academic institutions as well as functional expertise from other centres of excellence and communities of interest.

WHAT AND WHY THE MCDC SMT PROJECT

To mitigate the identified problem(s), the objectives of the MCDC SMT project are to:

- Foster guidance on solutions to better secure resilient military training and a content sharing culture.
- Support national and internal identification of risk to training outputs while developing mitigations to enhance resilience.
- Support the sharing of training capabilities among Allies and Partners.

The potential of this project, within the Campaign, is enhanced National, Allied, and Partner training efforts; shared and responsive operational analysis and decision-making on training capabilities; and agreed rapid information on shareable training capabilities. The main end users would be National, NATO, and Partner training establishments.

The main outcomes of the project are:

- Briefing Note for Commanders of Training Establishments
- Defence Capability Maturity Model for Training Resilience
- Catalog of shareable training capabilities
- Recommendations/Guidelines/Limits (e.g. Commanders’ guidebook, and eventual STANRECs)

Measures of success for these tools and guidance will be:

- Improved awareness and planning for sustainable training with Optimize PACE (Primary, Alternate, Contingency and Emergency) management
- Improved integrated joint combined operations effectiveness with coalition partners
- Enhanced individual and collective training effectiveness by developing interoperable infrastructures
- Accelerated development of national training infrastructures via collaboration and sharing

The expected participation in the project is as follows:

- Germany as Lead, NATO ACT and UK as Co-Leads
- Nations' Military HQs with agencies
- NATO agencies/offices/working groups
- PfPC/Multinational Working Groups
- National experts in training, learning and resilience

The tentative project timeline as follows:

Month	Activity	Location	Note
March 2025	Project meeting	Virtual, Teams	10/3
April	Capability Planning Workshop #2	Munich Germany	22-24/4
May	Project meeting	Virtual, Teams	12/5
July	Project meeting	Shrivenham UK	26-27/7
August	Project meeting	Virtual, Teams	TBD
September	NATO Training Technology Conf	Istanbul Türkiye	16-18/9, TBD
October	Project meeting	Virtual, Teams	TBD
November	Project meeting	Virtual, Teams	TBD
December	I/ITSEC	Orlando FL	1-4/12
January 2026	Project meeting	Virtual, Teams	TBD
March	Project meeting	Virtual, Teams	TBD
April	Project meeting	TBD	TBD
June	Project meeting	Virtual, Teams	TBD
July	Project meeting	Virtual, Teams	TBD
August	Project meeting	TBD	TBD
September	NATO Training Technology Conf	TBD	TBD
October	Project meeting	Virtual, Teams	TBD

PfPC ROLE

The MCDC SMT project is mainly a transition into doctrine for the “Train While We Fight” concept, originating in the PfPC ADL WG Info Paper on “Training While We Fight: Lessons from Ukraine’s use of distributed learning in war” released by the PfPC on 20 April 2023. The PfPC will aim to support the voice and experience of allies and partners in the SMT project, building the foundation together for a new approach to military standards of Education Training Exercises and Evaluation (ETEE). The PfPC would engage and support expertise from its communities covering related areas such as:

- Lessons Identified/Learned
- Resource allocation

- Products and Solutions
- Data sharing, delivery and collection
- Learning Technology
- Digital Content
- Analysis and Quality Assurance
- Standards
- Identified Deliverables and Events
- Leveraging Experiments
- Updates to the NATO ADL Handbook
- National and Organisational related gaps
- National and Organisational Point of Contacts
- The transition to End Users

RECOMMENDATIONS:

PfPC:

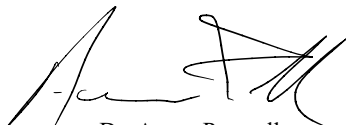
- PfPC Senior Advisory Council members should reach back to executives among Allies and Partners through the regular chain of communications, recommending participation in the MCDC SMT Working Group initiative.
- PfPC should allocate resources to Partner nation SME participation in the MCDC SMT project.
- PfPC should support national input and end user implementation of the Capability Maturity Model for Sustainable Military Training across the Allies and Partner nations.

NATO LTIG:

- The NATO Learning Technology and Interoperability Group should endorse eLearning metadata standards (e.g. IEEE P2881) and update accordingly the NATO ADL Handbook and STANAG 2591 (ADL) accordingly, along with any modifications specific to Defense requirements.
- The NATO Learning Technology and Interoperability Group should amend the NATO ADL Handbook to include best practices identified in the MCDC for Sustainable Military Training.

NATIONS:

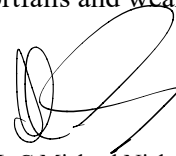
- Nations should support the transition and end user implementation of SMT project deliverables, in particular multiple redundant instances of the “Directory of shareable training capabilities”.
- Nations should identify shareable learning content to fill the directory.
- Nations should identify training establishments to support the development and evaluation of the capability maturity model and collection of best practice to address shortfalls and weaknesses.



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