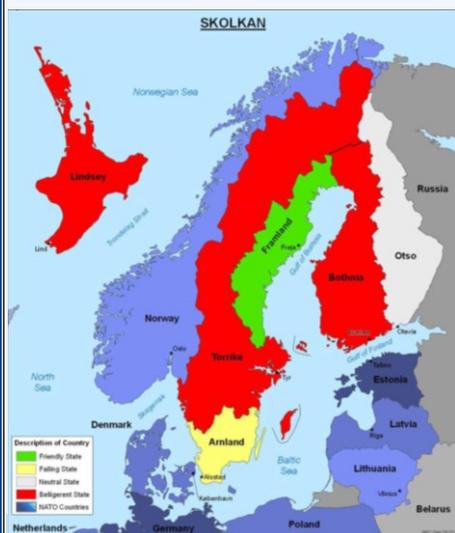


THE SKOLKAN SETTING COMPREHENSIVENESS AND COMPLEXITY

Report Published on 17 February 2014

PROJECT OVERVIEW



The SKOLKAN Setting is based on the real world geography of the Baltic region, with fictional countries added for exercise play.

From 2008 until 2012, CERASIA was the only major, joint, crisis response exercise setting used for NATO collective training. Despite the CERASIA success and practical applicability, it was recognized that NATO's training and response preparation needed to evolve to keep pace with emerging threats, redefined NATO missions, and the evolution of the NATO Command Structure.

In 2009, SHAPE issued Direction and Guidance to develop a new, semi-fictional setting, geographically superimposed on the Scandinavian/Baltic region of northern Europe ("high north")—SKOLKAN—and emphasized that, among other things, both Article 5 Collective Defence and Non-Article 5 Crisis Response Operations (NA5CRO) were important training contexts it must be able to present.

The JALLC was tasked with the following Analysis Requirement: Conduct an analysis of the SKOLKAN Setting in order to determine whether it is comprehensive and complex enough to prepare NATO Forces for future threats.

The agreed Analysis Objectives focused on first developing an analysis tool—the so-called Architecture—and then benchmarking the SKOLKAN Setting (iteration 1) against the Architecture in order to describe the applicability of the SKOLKAN Setting within the contexts of the Continuum of Conflict, including "Future Threats" and NATO Responses.

MAIN FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

SKOLKAN is a robust and comprehensive training vehicle and the combination of all SKOLKAN settings will prepare NATO forces to respond to a very broad range of potential future threats.

The thinking required of Training Audiences for the Article 5 version of SKOLKAN (iteration 1) is different to what NATO forces have become accustomed to in operations and exercises over the last two decades—it demands a different mindset from that required to conduct out-of-area, Non-Article 5 Crisis Response operations such as those of the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) or CERASIA training setting.

One limitation of SKOLKAN is that does not include all of the conditions present in ISAF or CERASIA: operations area-wide diversity of ethnic and religious groups and ideologies; significant cultural differences that are present between African or Middle-Eastern populations and the NATO forces; or Strategic Distance. As such, one challenge facing NATO will be to prepare its forces to operate successfully in both the North Atlantic area and at distance. Although increasing the overall number of exercises may not be feasible, rotating NATO exercises between Collective Defence and Crisis Response scenarios would keep both venues available for training and increased participation by the staff of the "off year" joint HQ would help ensure each Joint Force Command had personnel familiar with the unique challenges of both.



SKOLKAN includes elements of a Comprehensive Approach by giving the Target Audiences opportunities to interact with representatives of National government agencies.





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MAIN FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS (CONT.)

An observation beyond the scope of the project was that aspects of the SACEUR direction and guidance for creating SKOLKAN imposed constraints on its development that made full compliance with all of the mandates nearly impossible. It is important that those involved in the development of political/strategic direction and guidance for creating exercise settings, understand that decisions may result in trade-offs, and ensure that compromises are made deliberately—with a full understanding of their consequences.

PROJECT EXECUTION

This project was divided in two stages. The first was focused on the development of the Architecture and ended with the production of an Incremental Report to describe and explain a draft of that Architecture along with the methodology used to create it.

The second stage focused on the analysis of the SKOLKAN Setting (iteration 1) materials for Exercise STEADFAST JAZZ 13 available in the JWC's Training Audience Web Page as well as on interviews made during the Crisis Response Planning and Execution phases of STEADFAST JAZZ 13. Additionally, although more limited in scope, all materials available at the time of the analysis concerning the 2nd iteration of SKOLKAN (an out-of-area failed state and a NA5CRO) were considered in the analysis as well.

PROJECT TEAM

LT. COLONEL JOÃO BRANCO, PORTUGUESE ARMY

LTC João Branco is an infantry officer who graduated from military academy in 1992. He also has a master's degree in communication sciences, organization and new technologies from the Portuguese Catholic University. He has had multiple command and staff positions, including platoon and company commander, and land forces command G7 branch head. He has deployed to several missions abroad, the last two in Afghanistan (OMLT).

LT. COLONEL BJARNE KORSGARD, NORWEGIAN ARMY

LTC Korsgard is an infantry officer who has served in the Norwegian Army since 1982. He has had multiple NATO and Norwegian command and staff positions, including as platoon and company commander, serving in the national operational HQ, NATO Maritime HQ, NATO Joint Warfare Centre and NATO JFC Lisbon. He has served in ISAF, Afghanistan, and been a liaison between NATO and the African Union in Ethiopia.

LT. COLONEL ZSOLT HORNYAK, HUNGARIAN ARMY

LTC Hornyak has been a military analyst since July 2010. He is trained in Signals Intelligence and has filled various posts at intelligence units and, later on, at the Defence Staff of the Hungarian Defence Forces. Prior to his posting to the JALLC, he worked for the Force Planning Department as a Staff Officer. LTC Hornyak also served with the United Nations mission in Angola in 1994 and the Allied Joint Force Command Headquarters Brunssum from 2004 to 2007.

MR. MARVIN THORSDEN, CIVILIAN ANALYST, USA.

Mr. Thordsen is a career Applied Behavioural Analyst who has worked with NATO for the last 10 years. His specializations include real-world decision making, organizational dynamics and training development. He contributed to the development of the architecture and the SKOLKAN analysis.

NATO LL PORTAL TRACKING AREA ITEMS

Item 2009 – Article 5 and non-Article 5 Exercise
Item 2010 – Impact of Direction and Guidance on SKOLKAN Setting Development



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PROJECT FACTSHEET