

NATO Allied Command Transformation

Operational Experimentation



Fact Sheet - Protection of Civilians

Background:

The NATO policy on the Protection of Civilians was agreed by NATO nations at the Warsaw Summit in 2016. NATO's approach to Protection of Civilians is based on legal, moral, and political imperatives and recognizes NATO's responsibilities to conduct operations within applicable international law, which may include international human rights law and international humanitarian law as applicable. This policy now needs to be implemented into NATO core business.

Mission:

Acknowledging that this will be a key component with all NATO and NATO-led operations, the mission is to ensure that there is a common understanding of what Protection of Civilians means to NATO. To accomplish this mission, we must ensure that operational staff, planners, and forces are trained individually and collectively to better understand, and to be able to recognise and interact with obligations, related to the Protection of Civilians.

Categories:

Protection of Civilians is a cross-functional subject that is being integrated into the planning processes for operations. At its heart is the need to understand the operating environment, acknowledging that NATO will need to work with other non-military actors in the achievement of mutual goals. Categories for such interaction and for the implementation of this important and highly relevant topic include:



- Understanding the Human Environment and Knowledge Development;
- Humanitarian Assistance, Access and Facilitating Access to Basic Needs;
- Defence capacity building and Contributing to the establishment of a Safe and Secure Environment; and
- Operationalisation of Protection of Civilians into NATO thinking through Doctrine, Individual Training, Exercises, engagement and outreach, working with partners

Year Founded

This project was initiated through collaboration with Norway and several lead NATO nations in 2015. Dedicated efforts to develop the policy started in the autumn of 2015. These efforts led to the launch of the NATO policy on Protection of Civilians at the Warsaw Summit in July 2016.

Headquarters:

This is a fully collaborative project that encompasses NATO Headquarters in Brussels, Allied Command Operations, and Allied Command Transformation.

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Milestone Events: *Protect the People Round Table*, NY/DC (7-8 September 2017)
PoC Experiment – Sofia, Bulgaria (post event) (18 -22 September 2017)
Wilton Park (UK) seminar (links to UK FCO) – United Kingdom (October 2017)
Approval of NATO PoC Concept (conditional) (December 2017)
VIKING Exercise 18 (April 2018)
Brussels Summit “From policy to capability”(July 2018)
Exercise TRJE 18 (September-October 2018)

Publications: NATO Transnet, PoC Work floor (read ahead/event series publications); and
“Overcoming Protection of Civilian Failures – The Case for an Evolutionary Approach within NATO,” OPEN Publications, www.openpublications.org.

Websites: *TRANSNET*. <https://portal.transnet.act.nato.int/>
NATO ACT. www.act.nato.int/what-we-do
OPEN Publications. www.openpublications.org

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