

## Commodore Michel Hijmans delivers Counter-Piracy presentation at ACT - ACT

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Commodore Michel Hijmans visited Allied Command Transformation (ACT) on Thursday to brief staff on NATO's counter-piracy operations over the last year. Between June 2010 and June 2011 Commodore Hijmans served as the Commanding Officer of the NATO Standing Maritime Group 2 which conducts Counter Piracy operations under Operation Ocean Shield.

"We have tried to bring the fight to the pirates, not be reactive but to be more proactive, the pirates were changing their tactics and we did the same" Hijmans said.

"Our first line of operation was to deter and disrupt. We also sought to protect commercial shipping. We worked closely with the merchant community to help them better protect themselves and interacted with all counter-piracy actors in the area".

The Commodore stressed the sheer scale of the operating area and the challenges that brings.

"The joint operating area is twice the size of mainland Europe, it's enormous. It's like if you have an incident in Oslo, Norway and call the police in Madrid and they'll come and help you, but it will take a few days. The limited assets that you have you have to put them where you expect interactions with the pirates".

