

Annex A – TECHNICAL ACTIVITY PROPOSAL (TAP)

ACTIVITY	RTO Task Group	Stress and Psychological Support in Modern Military Operations											TBA	
Activity REF. Number	HFM – XXX/YYY												Begin 2003	
PRINCIPAL MILITARY REQUIREMENTS		1	2	3									NATO Unclassified	Fall 2005
MILITARY FUNCTIONS		4	5	6	10	11	12	13	14					
PANEL AND COORDINATION		Human Factors and Medicine – HFM												
LOCATION AND DATES		28-30 April 03 PARIS; 17-19 September 03 MUNICH; Spring 04 ?; Fall 04 ?; Spring 05 ? Fall 05 ?											PI	
PUBLICATION DATA		TR + EN + Book					Fall 2005			TBC	NU			
KEYWORDS	Psychological support	Stress				Military leaders				Family care				
	Mental health	Military Operations				Readiness				Screening				

A.1 BACKGROUND

Participation in military operations is potentially harmful to mental health. Historically, this has been recognised and documented using different terminology (shell shock, combat fatigue, combat stress, PTSD, ...). Effective military leadership is directed towards operational readiness and maintaining high morale. Therefore managing the effects of stress is one of the command tools of modern military leaders. Psychological stress is not just limited to high intensity conflicts in which killing and life threatening situations occur frequently. Modern military operations such as peace enforcing, peace supporting and humanitarian operations have also proven to be stressful. Forced neutrality and non-intervention, witnessing atrocities, culture shock, separation from one's family, existential questions induced by the situation are all elements that can disrupt the normal psychological functioning of the individual. This not only affects the operational effectiveness and mental well being of the individual during the operation: it also affects family, social and work reintegration and attitudes towards the organisation following the operation. Adverse stress reactions may have long term detrimental effects on an individual's functioning and well being.

A.2 JUSTIFICATION

Governments and military leaders are responsible for the personnel they send on military operations. This encompasses not only the provision of applicable mandates, adequate training, equipment and support, but also accepting responsibility for the impact of operations on personnel. Under the influence of factors such as public opinion, legislation, the increased number of operational commitments and issues surrounding attrition and retention, many nations are developing or modifying ways of organising and providing psychological support. The Armed Forces have to provide adequate psychological preparation and support during and after the operations for both military personnel and their families.

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A.3 OBJECTIVE(S)

To provide military leaders with information and practical guidelines on stress and psychological support to enhance effectiveness in modern military operations based on international collaboration.

A.4 TOPICS TO BE COVERED

- 1) Assessing the risks for psychological stress;
- 2) Psychological preparation of military personnel;
- 3) Screening of personnel;
- 4) Psychological support during deployment;
- 5) Psychological support after deployment;
- 6) Psychological support for families (before, during and after deployment); and
- 7) Organisation of psychological support (structure, procedures, role of professionals, ...).

A.5 DELIVERABLES

- 1) Inventory of national concepts of psychological support in modern military operations;
- 2) Facilitating the organisation of a forum for psychologists working with Special Forces;
- 3a) A book for military leaders containing information and practical guidelines on stress and psychological support in modern military operations;
- 3b) A decision support tool on CD-ROM; and
- 3c) RTO Lecture series.

A.6 TECHNICAL TEAM LEADER AND LEAD NATION

LtCol. Psy Yves CUVELIER (BEL) – BELGIUM.

A.7 NATIONS WILLING TO PARTICIPATE

AUSTRIA, BELGIUM, CANADA, CROATIA, CZECH REPUBLIC, FRANCE, GERMANY, LUXEMBURG, SWEDEN, THE NETHERLANDS, UNITED KINGDOM, UNITED STATES.

Other Nations have shown interest without formally stating yet to participate.

A.8 NATIONAL AND/OR NATO RESOURCES NEEDED

Manpower, travel funding, national data, editorial support, document translation (to be further specified).

A.9 RTA RESOURCES NEEDED

Funding to support Partner participation in the Team (to be further specified).