
Annex F – REPORT ON THE PRELIMINARY RESULTS FROM ORGANIZATIONAL STUDY WITHIN KFOR HEADQUARTERS, 11-15 OCTOBER 2010

F.1 BACKGROUND AND OBJECTIVE

In October 11 – 15, 2010, a team of researchers from NATO Human Factors and Medicine Panel Research Task Group “Improving the Organisational Effectiveness of Coalition Operations” (HFM RTG-163) conducted a scientific organizational study within the Headquarters (HQ) at KFOR.

The objectives of this study were:

- 1) To examine organizational effectiveness factors within a multi-national context;
- 2) Provide feedback to the KFOR Commander regarding different facets of his organization; and
- 3) To test a theoretical model developed by researchers within HFM RTG-163 regarding antecedents of organizational effectiveness within a NATO HQ.

The primary purpose of the current brief report is to provide feedback to the KFOR Commander Major General Erhard BÜHLER on the preliminary results of the study and to offer a few recommendations for continued success.

The final report for the larger HFM RTG-163 group will be presented to NATO Research and Technology Agency in September 2011.

The methods employed during the study in KFOR HQ included a combination of organizational surveys and interviews.

F.2 SURVEY RESULTS

Data were collected from 103 military members and civilian HQ personnel, including local contractors. This brief preliminary report focuses only on the results from the sub-sample of the military personnel. Their socio-demographic composition was as follows (see Table F-1).

Table F-1: Socio-Demographics of Respondents.

Sex:	Male = 95 Female = 7 NA = 1
Age:	Average = 40.3 years
Nationality:	24 NATO and PfP nationalities (USA = 19, DEU = 15, TUR = 14, ITA = 11, HUN = 6, UK = 5, IRE = 5, AUS = 5, ROU = 5, SLV = 5, FRA = 4, SWE = 4, GRC = 3, POL = 3, BGR, BEL, = 2, POR, SPA, UKR, CZE, EST, FIN, NOR = 1)
Military service:	Army = 76 Air force = 14 Navy = 10 Marines = 1 NA = 2
Number of multi-national deployments:	First deployment = 53; of the remaining 50 who had been deployed before, the majority (= 36) had been deployed once or twice.
Length of current deployment so far:	Average = 5.91 months
Supervisory role:	Supervisory role = 55, supervising on average 8.92 subordinates

A variety of organizational dimensions (see Figure F-1) were assessed, including:

- *Decentralization* – The degree to which the organizational structure and processes are flat and decentralized;
- *Flexibility* – The degree to which the organization is adaptable to changing demands;
- *Differentiation* – The degree to which skills are dispersed throughout the organization;
- *Rotation Practices* – The rotation cycle;
- *Pre-deployment Training Perceptions* (Note these were for research purposes and will not be discussed in the current report);
- *Leadership* – The degree to which leadership is transformational;
- *Trust* – The degree to which personnel feel trusting of others;
- *Diversity* – The degree to which personnel are open to diversity; and
- *Improvement Orientation* – The degree to which the organization values improvement.

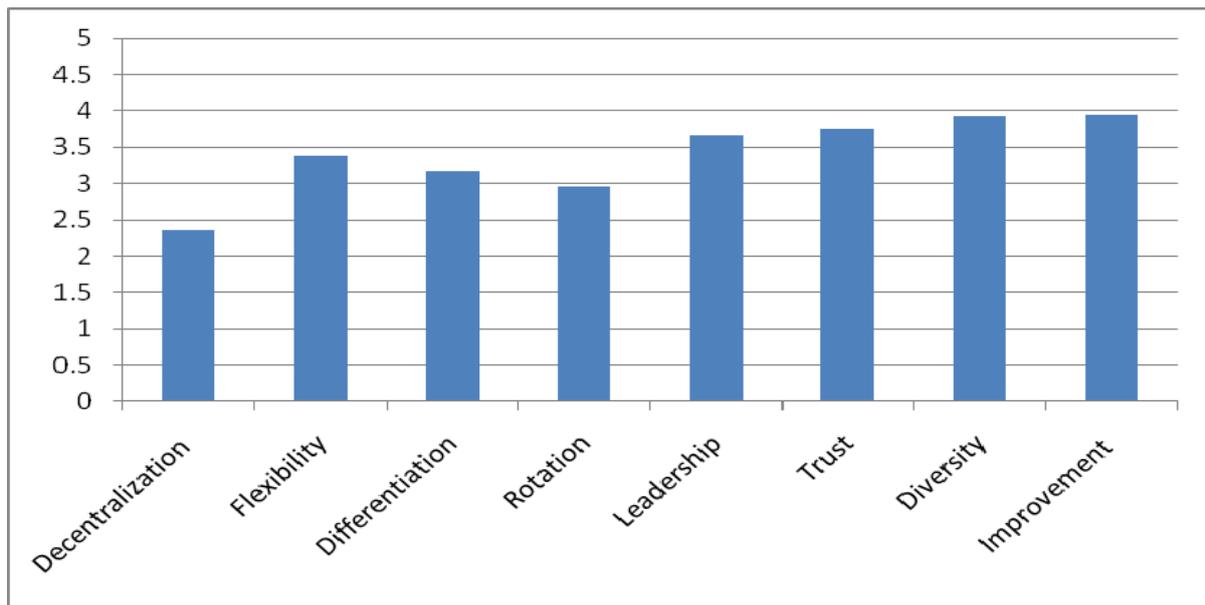


Figure F-1: Summary of Organizational Factors within KFOR HQ 2010
(Assessment Scale 1 “Strongly Disagree” – 5 “Strongly Agree”).

As shown in Figure F-1, personnel rated the structure of the organization as more centralized than decentralized, as having average flexibility and differentiation, slightly below average rotation practices, and slightly above average on leadership, trust, openness to diversity, and improvement orientation (*For items assessing these dimensions please see “Appendix F-1: Items per Dimension”*).

Additionally, several organizational outcomes were assessed, including:

- **Information Sharing** – The degree to which personnel feel that information is shared within the HQ;
- **Decision Making** – The degree to which personnel feel that decisions are made in a timely manner;
- **Shared Awareness** – The degree to which personnel feel that there is shared awareness within the HQ; and
- **Perceived Effectiveness** – Overall perceptions of organizational effectiveness.

As shown in Figure F-2, the KFOR HQ was perceived as an organization operating with slightly higher than average information sharing, decision making, shared awareness, and perceived effectiveness (*For items assessing these dimensions please see “Appendix F-1: Items per Dimension”*).

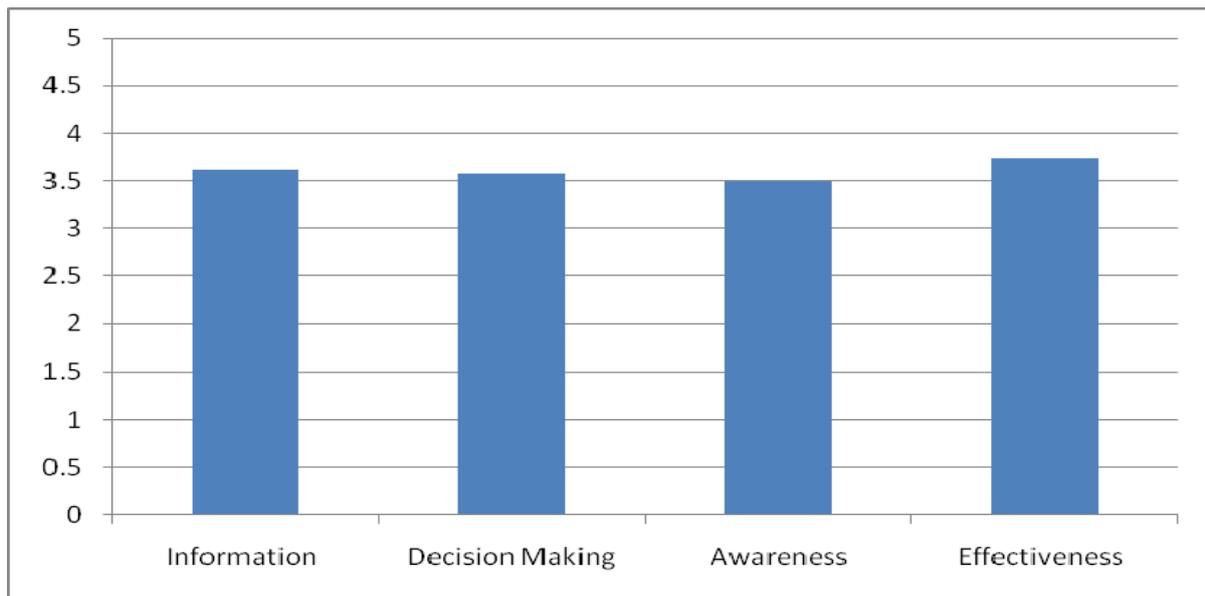


Figure F-2: Summary of Organizational Outcomes within KFOR HQ 2010
(Assessment Scale 1 “Strongly Disagree” – 5 “Strongly Agree”).

Further, the research group examined the relationships between the organizational factors and the outcomes to explore which of the factors was most predictive of the outcomes. We found that greater levels of flexibility, leadership, and trust were unique predictors of more effective and timely decision making and sharing of information in the HQ. Additionally, greater levels of flexibility, trust, and improvement orientation predicted more shared awareness of tasks and responsibilities in HQ.

The results of these analyses suggest that the organizational factors that are most influential to the outcomes measured in this study are:

- Flexibility;
- Trust;
- Leadership; and
- Improvement Orientation.

F.3 INTERVIEW RESULTS

Interviews were conducted mainly at the Assistant Chief of Staff (ACOS)-level, covering J1 through J5, J8, Headquarters Support Group (HSG), Military Civil Advisory (MCA) division and Joint Intelligence Cell (JIC). All interviewees except for two were military officers (Colonel and Lt Colonel Level).

In general, there were varied opinions in response to the questions asked, which could pose problems in terms of internal coordination. However, the differences in opinions can also reflect flexibility within the HQ, for example, in terms of using different ways to organise given different contexts, the number of employees to use, and the tasks to be performed.

With regard to the question of how the headquarter is organised, specifically whether or not it is a traditional J-structure, the opinions varied. Some thought it was a traditional J-structure, while others saw it as either a J-structure undergoing change or a structure other than J-structure. With this said, the general view from the interviews was that the HQ had become flatter in its organizational structure while still

maintaining its hierarchical character. Interviewees perceived that the flatter the organization, the better information sharing was.

Most of the respondents evaluated the work environment within this organisation as sufficiently flexible and more flexible at lower levels (within own unit) than at higher levels. Similar answers were given on the topic of improvement orientation. Some thoughts were made on what impacted improvement orientation in KFOR HQ specifically: Rotations were regarded as having a negative impact on the HQ ability to be improvement oriented due to loss in institutional memory when personnel are exchanged frequently. Effective information sharing and high level of shared awareness of tasks and responsibilities was considered as having a positive effect on improvement orientation.

Although, most of the interviewees viewed the specialisation in roles as positive, a lack of information sharing and shared awareness were seen as negative outcomes of the specialisation of roles, which was viewed as leading to a stove-piping of the HQ. No conclusions can be drawn at this moment regarding the relationship between specialisation and decision-making per se, although, a “too narrow focus” was thought of as detrimental to achieving goals.

The survey results show that the HQ was considered to be as more centralised than decentralised. However, the interview respondents had different opinions of the effects of the degree of centralisation. Some of the interviewees thought that the command processes were too decentralised (more synchronisation between branches needed), while others viewed it as too centralised (creating bottlenecks in information sharing). Centralisation is thought to be characteristic of how higher echelons of the headquarter make decisions. In day-to-day business, the command processes were thought of as more decentralised.

The leadership was by interviewees characterised as comfortable, inclusive, open, friendly, respectful, supportive, professional, and effective. Interviewees saw information sharing as a critical aspect of good leadership. They mentioned the weekly commander’s briefings as an example of the good leadership in the current HQ in that it lead to shared awareness. Regarding the decision making, they appreciated the formal structure and the ability to participate in the decisions through discussions. The participants indicated that effective information sharing was a central aspect in decision making.

Although shared awareness was rated quite high by survey respondents, interviewees perception of whether there is a shared awareness differed. Too much role specialisation and the rotation practices were mentioned aspects that might affect shared awareness negatively. *Features that were thought of as positive for shared awareness were a flat hierarchy, effective information sharing, decentralisation as well as joint multi-national training.*

Pre-deployment training was among interviewees associated with increased shared awareness. In this regard, the interviewees mentioned understanding of the procedures and structures of the HQ, as well as, the on-site key leader training as very valuable. Moreover, the analysis of the interviewees’ statements revealed that pre-deployment training is connected to improvement of shared awareness in a broader sense, including an awareness of the KFOR mission as a whole, and an understanding of the culture and political situation of Kosovo.

Handover/takeover was strongly associated with reduced effectiveness, mainly due to the loss of institutional memory. The interviewees specifically mentioned the newcomers’ lack of shared awareness of who does what in the HQ as an impediment to this reduced effectiveness. As information sharing between the predecessor and the successor is a vital part of the handover/takeover process, this must also be seen as associated to this factor.

The interview results indicate that trust can be viewed as both a prerequisite for a well-functioning organisation, but also a result. Shared awareness and information sharing were mentioned as aspects that establish trust. Some of the interviewees separated organisational/official trust and individual trust.

One possible explanation for this separation could be that organisational/official trust affects the operative goals of the HQ, while individual trust is merely a result of shared awareness, information sharing, and decision making, at a person-to-person level.

There was a variety of opinions about the effectiveness of multi-national coalition HQs. A spontaneous first opinion among interviewees was that a multi-national coalition HQ is less effective than a national HQ because of the frequent rotations (impaired shared awareness) and communication problems due to differences in language skills (impaired information sharing). However, most interviewees also believed that the multi-national context facilitates decision-making since decision makers are presented with different perspectives and mindsets. Furthermore, interviewees believed that the decisions of a multi-national HQ have greater impact than those of a national HQ. On the other hand, it can be difficult to reach a decision because of national caveats. Nevertheless, information sharing is also improved in a multi-national HQ compared to a national HQ due to the fact that the frequent rotations demands a more structured and frequent information sharing. Finally, the participants indicated that team building and the establishment of trust does take longer and is more difficult within a multi-national context. Please, keep in mind that the data above show that the participants perceive decision-making, information sharing, and even effectiveness as “above average” in this HQ.

In conclusion, KFOR HQ seems to be undergoing a change at the moment, necessitating greater flexibility due to the same amount of tasks being managed by fewer people. *The overall impression reflected in the interviews is of a well-functioning and rather flexible HQ.* Some of the challenges of the HQ include information sharing, shared awareness of tasks and responsibilities, specialisation, dealing with multi-nationality, the rotation process, and how to adjust to novel tasks for *KFOR* (supporting Kosovo Security Forces [KSF], while reducing the KFOR footprint in Kosovo). These areas could be investigated further in order to enhance the effectiveness of the HQ.

F.4 RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the results of this brief organizational study the following recommendations were provided to the KFOR Commander:

- 1) *Continue to foster trust among your personnel.* Trust was a robust predictor of the organisational outcomes in this study. Given the multi-national context and extensive diversity of NATO HQs, developing trust can be challenging. Some ways to foster trust include opening clear communication channels with personnel, focusing on unifying concepts, such as the mission to generate a common organizational identity, establishing consistent processes to ensure predictability and awareness, sharing information about each other’s competencies and job skills, and to the extent possible, try to minimize miscommunications and misunderstandings due to cultural differences.
- 2) *Continue to promote effective leaders within your organisation.* Encourage leaders to communicate often with their subordinates to help clarify tasks, roles, responsibilities, and expectations. Encourage leaders to motivate and develop their subordinates.
- 3) *Continue to emphasise improvement within your organization.* As a senior leader, develop a shared awareness that improvement is valued and encourage ideas to be shared regarding improvement options.
- 4) *The researchers noted that personnel feel that the organizational structure is more centralised rather than decentralised.* It should be noted that given the multi-national context of KFOR, this may actually be a positive organisational attribute. Further, the findings from this brief study suggest that the organisational outcomes improve with added structure. Efforts should be made to continue in clarifying roles and responsibilities within the HQ and to establish clear and structured processes as well as structured decision hierarchies.

- 5) *Obstacles to information sharing.* In some cases specialisation could hamper information sharing if shared information needs are not given priority. An explicit Responsibility to Share codex, if not already in place, could alleviate this obstacle.
- 6) *Multi-nationality and rotation practices:* These factors are positive in some sense, for example, multi-nationality brings diversity to the decision process and rotation makes individuals feel less strain. However, this can lead to a fragmentation of an organisation and its processes. Key leader training could be given to more people to alleviate this problem.
- 7) *Downsizing of the footprint of KFOR while building new competence in military assistance.* How to transform the HQ into one employing more military assistance and less of its own capabilities to perform security should be considered a strategic challenge of the HQ. Probably, due to less manning in HQ, more personnel need to be engaged in supporting the military assistance part than at the moment, and receive explicit training in this novel task. This, of course, depends on the overall direction and tasks of the HQ in the future.

F.5 CONTACT INFORMATION

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Appendix F.1: Items per Dimension

Response categories: 1 = strongly disagree; 2 = disagree; 3 = neither agree nor disagree; 4 = agree; 5 = strongly agree

Decentralization

- The processes in this HQ are... (1 = very centralized; 2 = centralized; 3 = neither centralized nor decentralized; 4 = decentralized; 5 = very decentralized).
- Senior leaders delegate decision-making.
- The work processes are decided at higher levels within the chain of command.

Flexibility

- This HQ can adapt to unplanned events.
- In response to unplanned events, this HQ can quickly change the way work gets done.
- Coordination among functions is the responsibility of someone higher up in the chain of command.
- When facing unforeseen events, coordination among functions is difficult.

Differentiation

- Everyone has specific specialization for the assigned tasks.
- Everyone has specific specialization for the occupied position.
- Everyone has broad specialization to implement as many tasks as possible.
- Everyone has broad specialization to occupy different positions.
- Tasks are carried out by specialized teams.

Rotation

- The different rotation cycles of the Nations reduces our performance.
- The rotation cycles of the different Nations needs to be aligned.
- The handover between personnel during the transition period is effective.

Leadership

- My superior meets the goals and expectations placed on him/her.
- My superior consistently drives for better outcomes.
- My superior excels in selecting and developing good people.
- My superior consistently helps subordinates produce high quality work.
- My superior is able to establish and communicate common goals.
- My superior uses cross-cultural networks to produce better outcomes.
- My superior uses cultural differences to produce better outcomes.
- My superior is effective at managing important external relationships to meet goals and expectations.

- My superior is a good judge of character, even across cultures.
- My superior is able to motivate subordinates with different cultural backgrounds.

Trust

- We trust each other.
- Coalition partners are capable at their job.
- Coalition partners keep their word.
- Coalition partners know what to expect from each other.

Diversity

- Cultural differences are valued.
- Diverse opinions are valued.
- Cultural similarities are beneficial to our organization.

Improvement Orientation

- The effectiveness of work processes is monitored.
- We actively look for better ways of working.
- We are open to changes that will improve our organization.
- We often take the initiative to improve our work processes.

Information

- We seek information as needed.
- We provide information in a timely manner.
- We receive information in a timely manner.
- The information we receive is both accurate and up to date.
- We share information with each other regardless of rank.

Decision making

- Organizational decisions are made in a timely manner.
- Organizational decisions are implemented quickly to achieve desirable results.
- A variety of options are explored before decisions are made.
- We have agreed methods for decision making.

Awareness

- We frequently experience misunderstandings.
- We are aware of each other's responsibilities.
- We are unsure about how to accomplish joint tasks.
- We do not know what each other's roles are in relation to accomplishing joint tasks.
- We understand how our objectives/actions contribute to the mission.

- Personnel understand their objectives/tasks.
- The mission is clear.

Effectiveness

- The quality of our coalition team's output is very high.
- When high priority work arises, my coalition team does an outstanding job in handling these situations.
- The coalition team's performance in comparison to similar coalition teams is very high.