

МЕЃУНАРОДНА НАУЧНА КОНФЕРЕНЦИЈА

МАКЕДОНИЈА И БАЛКАНОТ

**100 ГОДИНИ ОД ПРВАТА СВЕТСКА ВОЈНА –
БЕЗБЕДНОСТ И ЕВРОАТЛАНСКИ ИНТЕГРАЦИИ**

INTERNATIONAL SCIENTIFIC CONFERENCE

**MACEDONIA AND THE BALKANS, A HUNDRED YEARS
AFTER THE WORLD WAR I – SECURITY AND EURO-
ATLANTIC INTEGRATIONS**

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CONTENTS

SALUTATION LETTER OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA	XI
WELCOME SPEECH OF THE DEAN OF THE FACULTY OF SECURITY Oliver Bachanovic, Dr.Sc	XIII
100 YEARS AFTER THE FIRST WORLD WAR: EUROPE, THE BALKANS, MACEDONIA AND MACEDONIANS – BACK TO THE VICIOUS CIRCLE OR A STEP FORWARD Tome Batkoski, Dr.Sc.....	1
THE INSTITUTIONALIZATION OF COOPERATION IN SECURITY IN THE BALKANS IN CRISIS MANAGEMENT AND OTHER SECURITY PROBLEMS Mladen Bajagic, Dr.Sc	10
THE BALKANS AND MACEDONIA IN THE GEOSTRATEGIC CONCEPTS OF THE EUROPEAN COUNTRIES AND INTERESTS	
1995 INTERIM ACCORD AND THE NAME ISSUE Vladimir Ortakovski, Dr.Sc	17
REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA IN THE SECOND HALF OF 21 ST CENTURY - SECURITY ASPECTS Tome Batkovski, Dr.Sc.....	37
GLOBALIZATION AND (OR) INTERNATIONAL POLICY Miodrag Labovic, Dr.Sc.	49
THE BALKANS: “A POWER KEG”, AN OPEN WOUND OR THE THERMOMETER OF EUROPE? Mitko Kotovcevski, Dr. Sc	83
THE MACEDONIAN QUESTION AT THE PARIS PEACE CONFERENCE Ivanka Dodovska, Dr.Sc.	97

LATENT IMPACT OF THE CONCEPT OF EXCLUSIVE SLAVIC ETHNO GENESIS OF MODERN MACEDONIAN NATIONAL IDENTITY ON INTEGRITY Slavejko Sasajkovski, Dr.Sc, Ljubica Micanovska	107
MACEDONIA IN THE NEW INTERNATIONAL SECURITY SURROUNDINGS: LESSONS LEARNED FROM THE CONFLICT IN 2001 Marina Mitrevska, Dr.Sc.....	119
CONSEQUENCES OF WORLD WAR I REGARDING THE STATUS OF MACEDONIA AND MACEDONIAN PEOPLE Sinisha Daskalovski, Dr.Sc.....	135
MACEDONIA TROUGH THE PRISM OF PRACTICAL AND FORMAL BULGARIAN GEOPOLITICS Toni Mileski, Dr.Sc.....	145
THE CHALLENGES OF TERRORISM IN XXI CENTURY Mina Zirojević, Dr.Sc., Dragan Đukanović, Dr.Sc.....	157
THE INTERGOVERNMENTAL ORGANISATIONS' CONTRIBUTION TO HUMAN SECURITY POLICY EMERGENCE AND DEVELOPMENT Marija Popovic, MA, Saša Mijalkovic, Dr.Sc.	169
TERMINATION OF THE CONFLICT OR LONG-TERM STRATEGY FOR BETTER FUTURE: THE EXPERIENCE OF THE OHRID FRAMEWORK AGREEMENT AND THE NORTHERN IRELAND PEACE AGREEMENT Katerina Veljanovska, Dr.Sc, Goran Shibakovski, MA	183
MACEDONIA IN THE INTERESTS OF THE GREAT POWERS BEFORE AND DURING THE FIRST WORLD WAR AND THE FUTURE SECURITY IMPLICATIONS Andrej Iliev, Dr.Sc., Anita Ilieva Nikolovska,MA, Aleksandar Petrovski, MA	195

THE PARADOX OF DEMOCRACY IN MODERN GLOBALIZED SOCIETIES AND ITS IMPACT ON INTERNATIONAL POLITICAL RELATIONS, INTERNATIONAL AND NATIONAL SECURITY

INTEGRATION INTO THE EUROPEAN UNION AND REALIZATION OF THE RIGHT OF PEOPLES TO UNIQUE ETHNIC SPACE IN THE FUNCTION OF PEACE AND STABILITY OF THE BALKANS Temelko Risteski, Dr.Sc, Ilina Jovanoska, MA, Tanja Popova, MA	213
IMPLICATIONS OF THE PROCESS OF FRAGMENTATION ON WESTERN BALKAN COUNTRIES Goran Zendelovski, Dr.Sc, Sergej Cvetkovski, Dr.Sc	228
CONTEMPORARY CHALLENGES AND KEY SECURITY THREATS IN THE ERA OF GLOBALIZATION Tatjana Gerginova, Dr.Sc.	239
SEVERAL OPTIONS FOR THE USE OF OUR NAME IN THE UNITED NATIONS Janko Bachev, Dr.Sc.	253
THE WESTERN BALKAN YOUTH’S PERCEPTION OF THE PROCESS OF EUROPEAN INTTEGRATION Eva Teqja	262
TURKISH STRATEGIC INTEREST IN THE BALKANS: THE REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA – A CASE STUDY Ivan Ristov, MA, Kostadina Klechkaroska,MA , Ivona Shushak, MA,	278
CRIMINAL JUSTICE, CRIMINAL POLICY AND VICTIMIZATION	
CITIZENS PERCEPTION OF CORRUPTION AS A SECURITY RISK AND CHALLENGE Cane T. Mojanoski, Dr.Sc.....	291
WARTIME AND POSTWAR TRENDS IN JUVENILE CRIME: THE CROATIAN AND THE SERBIAN PERSPECTIVE Irena Cajner Mraović, Dr.Sc, Ksenija Butorac, Dr.Sc., Želimir Kešetović, Dr.sc.	309
VICTIMS OF SEXUAL VIOLENCE IN CONDITIONS OF WAR Oliver Bachanovic, Dr.sc.....	323

THE ROLE OF THE EXPERT ADVISOR IN CRIMINAL PROCEEDINGS Milan Žarković, Dr.Sc, Ivana Bjelovuk, MA, Tanja Kesić, Dr.Sc	339
PRELIMINARY INVESTIGATION ACCORDING TO CROATIAN CRIMINAL PROCEDURE ACT Mr. Josip Pavliček, Dr.Sc, Mr. Stjepan Gluščić, Dr.Sc	349
ECONOMIC CONTRIBUTION IN CRIMINOLOGY ECONOMICS OF CRIME Snezana Mojsoska, Dr.Sc, Nikola Dujovski, Dr.Sc.....	361
CRIMINAL PROFILING BASED ON THE STATE OF THE CRIME SCENE Zlate Dimovski, Dr.Sc., Ice Ilijevski, MA, Kire Babanoski, MA	371
CORRUPTION AND ANTHROPOLOGICAL FOUNDATIONS OF HUMAN NATURE	384
Marjan Nikolovski. Dr.Sc, Cane T. Mojanoski, Dr.Sc.	384
CORRUPTION AND PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION IN THE REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA Marina Malis Sazdovska, Dr.Sc., Katerina Krstevska, Dr.Sc., Aleksandra Ljustina, Dr.Sc.	395
CONSTITUTIVE CRIMINOLOGY: PRODUCT OF THE POSTMODERN SOCIETY Vesna Stefanovska, Dr.Sc.....	403
INTEGRATION OF ORGANIZED CRIME AND TERRORISM.....	416
Goran Amidzic, Dr.Sc., Milan Salamadija	416
THE ROLE OF INFORMATION SHARING IN THE PREVENTION AND IMPEDIMENT OF ORGANIZED CRIME Tatjana Velkova, Dr.Sc., Vladimir Pivovarov, Dr.Sc.....	428
COVERT SURVEILLANCE AS COMPULSORY PART OF CONTROLLED DELIVERY Veljko Popara, Dr.Sc., Ivan Žarković, MA., Goran Nešić	438

COMPUTER CRIMES AGAINST PROPERTY IN THE REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA Daniela Trajcevska, MA	450
EUROPEAN PUBLIC PROSECUTOR: REFORM <i>DE NOVO</i> Ivica Josifovic, Dr.Sc.	461
FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLES OF THE PROTECTION OF HUMAN RIGHTS IN A MINOR OFFENCE PROCEEDING Nikolina Grbić-Pavlović, Dr.Sc., Ljubinko Mitrović, Dr.Sc., Gojko Pavlović, MA	470
STRATEGIC CRIMINAL ANALYSIS Gran Boskovic, Dr.Sc Nenad Radovic, Dr.Sc.	485
JUDICIAL REFORM IN SERBIA AND NEGOTIATING CHAPTER 23 – A CRITICAL OUTLOOK Mario Reljanović, Dr.Sc., Ana Knežević Bojović	496
INTEROPERABILITY OF THE OPERATIONAL PLANNING PROCESS AT OPERATIONAL LEVEL IN ARM WITH OPERATIONAL LEVEL PLANNING WITH NATO Nikola Kletnikov, MA, Aleksandar Glavunov, Dr.Sc, Metodija Dojcinovski, Dr.Sc.	509
THE PERSPECTIVES OF UNIVERSAL AND REGIONAL SYSTEMS FOR PROTECTION OF HUMAN RIGHTS Elena Temelkovska-Anevska, Dr.Sc.	522

INTEROPERABILITY OF THE OPERATIONAL PLANNING PROCESS AT OPERATIONAL LEVEL IN ARM WITH OPERATIONAL LEVEL PLANNING WITH NATO

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Abstract

Considering that modern threats and challenges are highly dynamic, occurring in a short period of time and often surprising, the response to such threats and challenges is one of the most important factors. In order to shorten timeframe and to successfully deal with contemporary threats and challenges the entities responsible for national security, need to be trained for fast and high-quality implementation of the planning and decision making procedures for managing such challenges and threats as a state and on international level. Republic of Macedonia in the past period of eleven year continuously contributing to international operations led by the UN, NATO and the EU, and has a strategic commitment in the future to continue with that contribution and thus promotes peace and protection of its security interests. For efficient and effective realization of these goals is important ability of ARM to work in a multinational environment, especially in the area of operations planning. Canvassing, comparative methods and results used during the study are presented in the paper. During canvassing is seen the level of implementation of planning processes at the operational level in the Army. With this research process are perceived ability of staff of commands and units of the ARM at the operational level for crisis response operation planning, which provides interoperability with the Crisis Response Operations Planning in NATO. Trained staff for crisis response operations planning at the operational level provides better interoperability of the Army in frameworks of NATO and thus more successful promotion of peace and protection of the security interests of the Republic of Macedonia.

Keywords: *planning, operational level, security, operations, crises.*

INTRODUCTION

Today when the world situation is more complex, peace, security and development are mutually more connected than ever, this situation highlights the need for close cooperation and coordination between the elements of national security in a country, but also with international organizations in the performance of their complementary and interconnected roles in the prevention and management of modern crises. Given that crises are very dynamic, occurring in a short period of time and often suddenly, the response to such crises becomes one of the most important factors for their effectively solving. To be in the shortest period of time and to successfully deal with contemporary crises, the entities responsible for it (at the national and international level), should be able for quickly and quality implementation of the planning process and decision making for successfully managing such crises.

The planning of crisis response operations is perhaps the most complex and most critical activity to be undertaken by any organization. Interoperability of crisis response operational planning in ARM at all levels and especially at the operational level with NATO crisis response operational provides quick inclusion of ARM staff who works in NATO commands at operational level. Such interoperability of the planning process at the operational level ensures rapid decision -making and quality of response and avoids unnecessary loss of force and resources and thus put into question the outcome of operation. Planning system at the operational level facilitates the overall process of planning, preparation and approval of plans, which need to respond to any unforeseen situations timely. The system should be based on clear and precisely defined responsibilities for each institution separately, as well as temporary bodies that form in keys of crisis. With fulfillment of its mission and objectives, the Army of the Republic of Macedonian gives great contribution to improvement of national and global security. In purpose of more easily integration in coalition's and joint forces and effectively dealing with current and future threats, in the Army of Republic of Macedonia at the operational level, is pay great attention of crises response operation planning.

INTEROPERABILITY

Interoperability is a very broad and complex subject. It is far more difficult than the binary attribute of single system operation. Interoperability is a key enabler for the conduct of effective, collaborative, and multi-service military operations across a wide spectrum of scenarios, and successful conduct of operations is the ultimate test of whether an adequate degree of interoperability is being achieved. Because of these various levels and multiple dimensions, we examine interoperability from the broadest available definition:

The ability of systems, units, or forces to provide services to and accept services from other systems, units, or forces, and to use the services so exchanged to enable them to operate effectively together (Joint Staff 1999 229). The ability of systems, units, or forces to provide services to or access services from other

systems, units, or forces, and use the services to operate effectively together (Defense Acquisition 2000). The ability of the forces of two or more nations to train, exercise and operate effectively together in the execution of assigned missions and tasks. The ability to act together coherently, effectively and efficiently to achieve Allied tactical, operational and strategic objectives. The ability of military forces to train, exercise and operate effectively together in the execution of assigned missions and tasks (North Atlantic Treaty Organization 2013 2-F-5, 2-I-8, 2-M-6). The ability to operate in synergy in the execution of assigned tasks. The degree of interoperability should be defined when referring to specific cases (U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff 200 276).

Operational interoperability addresses support to military operations and, as such, goes beyond systems to include people and procedures. It addresses interacting on an end-to-end basis. Implementation of operational interoperability implies not only the traditional approach of using standards, but also enabling and assuring activities such as testing and certification, configuration and version management, and training. These definitions of operational interoperability encompass the full spectrum of military operations, including intra-service/agency, joint (inter-service/agency), and ad hoc and formal multinational alliances (U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff 200 276).

In the remainder of this part of the paper we will elaborate on these definition by examining interoperability in greater detail in the context of operational level.

Interoperability at the operational level is where strategic/political interoperability and technological interoperability come together to help to shape the environment, manage crises, and win wars. This is the real-world realm of the war fighter. Interoperability's purpose and focus is to satisfy the political leadership's strategic objectives, within the given constraints and with the maximum possible efficiency and economy of force.

The benefits of interoperability at the operational level generally derive from the fungibility or interchangeability of force elements and units. Planning for and conducting NATO-led operations or operations by ad hoc "coalitions of the willing" in out-of-area of military operations other than war (MOOTWs) involves a process of force "rationalization," i.e., assessing how best to accomplish the mission with the resources available from the coalition members.

The result can vary from a tightly integrated operation (e.g., mixed coalition strike packages) to a coordinated partitioning of the mission or battle space into separate country-specific chunks. Integration can be achieved through a variety of means, including "interoperable" command centers with standardized communications and computerized data networks, intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance (ISR) systems, and force elements, or through ad hoc techniques, procedures, and linkages that include extensive use of liaison officers.

Interoperability-associated costs at the operational level tend to result from inefficiencies caused by a number of possible factors outside the immediate control of the warfighters, such as the strategic objectives, strategy and doctrine, role, and systems capabilities of the coalition partners. Coalition-related reductions in operational tempo can result in longer conflicts, with resultant increases in material and human costs and possible loss of resolve at the political level.

PLANNING OF OPERATIONS AT THE OPERATIONAL LEVEL

In military planning, decisions are made by authorized officers, commanders and commanders of units. The decision must fit the task and the conditions under which it should be implemented. Skill in planning operations is skilful deployment of military forces to achieve strategic and operational objectives through the design, organization, integration and conduct of operations. Because operations are dynamic and the planning process is cyclic, during planning of operations, there must be a continuous process of review which would provide updates to the design, plan and execution of the operation.

Operational planning requires, commanders at the operational level and their staffs truly to think at the operational level. This means that they need to think much further to identify possible changes in the situation and then determine which decisions need to be made when need to be made and how could positively influence events before they occur. It mentally prepares commanders at operational level to identify potential decisive points.

The operational planning at the operational level, establishes common procedures how to initiate, develop, coordinate, approve, execute, review, revise and complete all categories of operations plans. Most military operations are taken in order to prevent the enemy operational initiative. Good operational planning at the operational level increases the likelihood of better results in comparison with unscheduled activities, but perfectionism and excessive detail can lead to a plan that cannot be executed by subordinate levels. Therefore it is better to have and implement a reasonable plan than to wait on making the best possible plan.

To do that commanders at the operational level should think in the manner in which the desired goal can be achieved. Good knowledge of planning significantly improves the ability of the operational level commanders and their staffs in the preparation and execution of plans. It also greatly reduces the time between decisions and actions during the execution of operations.

Traditional operational level planning and control refers to the management processes that focus on two fundamental activities: (1) implementation of the strategic plan to get short-term results and (2) comparing the performance in terms of the plan and taking action to ensure the achievement of strategic and operational results (Contrada, 2009).

Operational-Level Planning Process (OLPP) was developed to support the joint force commanders and their staffs in the implementation of the planning at operational level. In order to comply with requirements such as complexity or time constraints, strategic level commanders can rearrange or individual steps of planning at the operational level to eliminate. The steps should be arranged in such a way as to ensure compliance of the planning process at the operational level with process planning operations at other levels. This task can be fulfilled through a comprehensive directive for planning operations.

Like any other similar planning activity, planning at the operational level is cyclical activity consists of making the concept of operations, making a plan, execute the plan, assessment and analysis (Figure 1).

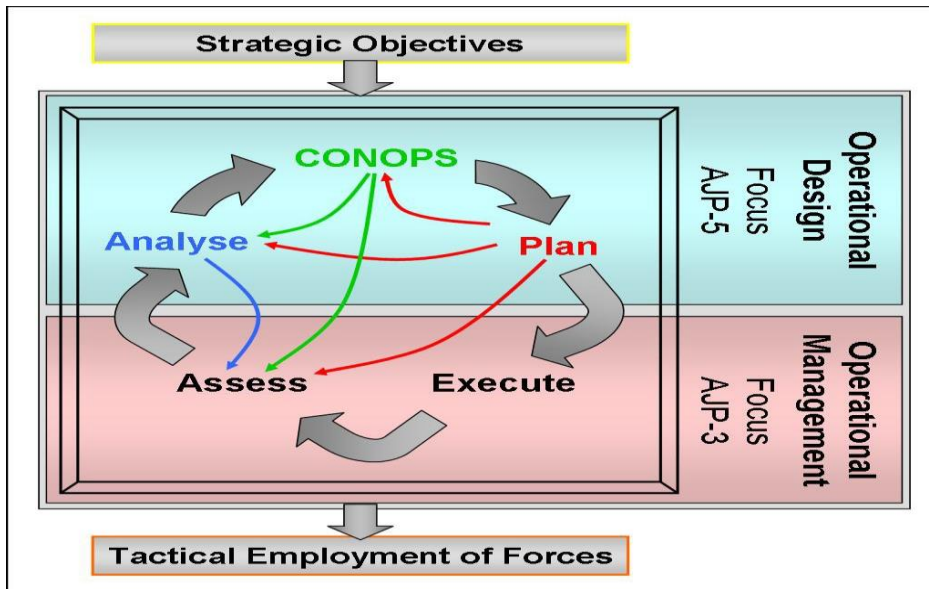


Figure 1 - Cyclic Character of Operational-Level Planning

Planning at operational level is oriented towards achieving of political and state and strategic goals set by political authorities and executed within the political constraints and resource constraints set by those authorities. Planning at operational level required to implement the strategic directions and guidelines integrated into a series of military actions conducted by joint forces to achieve strategic goals efficiently and with acceptable risks. Planning at operational level begins with an analysis of the situation and mission, developing a clear picture of **WHAT** must be done, under what **CONDITIONS** and within which framework of **CONSTRAINTS**. Based on this is setting up **HAW** operations should be organized within the overall operational design that provides the basis for further development of the operational concept and detailed plan. Operational level planning is determining and applying best way of performing operations (**METHOD**) using the available forces and capabilities (**MEANS**) to effectively achieve objectives (**ENDS**) and with acceptable risks. Key to the application of operational art is the ability to predict the use of forces and their effects in time and space, to evaluate the area of possibilities, and to predict possible outcomes.

During the preparation of the plans at the operational level should highlight military procedures and obligations governing the preparation, approval, evaluation, implementation and review of operational plans in order to enable a common approach in the operational planning. This includes supporting documents that are required to perform the mission. They also include details of the preparation, approval, manufacture, distribution, implementation, review and management of documents of the operational plans necessary to perform the tasks. Designing, planning and execution are human issues that commanders manage and provide staff support. Intuition, experience and military assessment remain of particular importance in the processes and tools for support commanders in making military

decisions. Planning at operational level to be effective, it is important planners to have a common understanding of the situation in which need to conduct operations, to have a common approach to developing the necessary plans, but also an understanding of how is working higher level, thus be able to contribute and influence the process.

CRISIS RESPONSE OPERATIONAL PLANNING PROCESS IN ARM AT OPERATIONAL LEVEL

Taking into account that according to the Defense Strategy, the Republic of Macedonia will continuously contribute to international operations led by the United Nations (UN), North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and the European Union (EU) as a way of promotion of peace and its security interests, Army of the Republic of Macedonia (ARM) should be prepared to work in a multinational environment, especially in the area of operational planning, together with its partners from the armies of other countries, especially the members of the armed forces of NATO and EU member states. For these reasons in the ARM is paid great attention to the planning of operations at the operational level. Operational planning in the ARM is realized by Commanders and their staffs through a cycle of processes and procedures.

With Planning is conducting analyze of situation, is extracting all needs for a successful realization of the mission and determined the best way for realization set objectives and achieving the desired military end state. Common procedures and formats of documents are one of the key elements for successful implementation of the plan of operations and achieving of interoperability. This includes: standardized format of orders and reports, procedures and forms for communicating, as well as similarities in the headquarters' structures, working and planning documents.

On the basis of recognition of the theoretical part which regulates the operational planning process and decision making process was concluded the following: The doctrinal part of the Army, at operational planning domain, the pyramid of documents that would support this process is in progress. ARMD Doctrine 3.0 (Operations) is in the final stage and it should fit the needs of ARM and also to complies with existing NATO doctrine, doctrine ARMD 5.0 (Planning) was prepared in 2008 but because of the changes that have occurred in structure in the Ministry of Defense and formational organizational structure in the ARM from its preparation to the present, part of it requires updating, separation and specifying of strategic and operational level of planning and alignment with the new situation. For updating of the Planning doctrine ARMD 5.0 (Planning), a working group has been formed and is working on her progress. Given that military planning and decision-making is of particular importance for the efficient functioning of the Army and not approved planning doctrine, General Staff (GS) of the ARM in 2008 has developed and approved guidelines for military decision making process on a tactical level (GS of the ARM 2008). Approved guidelines for military decision making process in the ARM processing tactical level and essentially do not differ among them, causing one to question the existence of two directions rather than one. With promulgation of the guidelines are standardized procedures of military

decision making process at the tactical level, but they need to be updated because the guidelines for military decision making process on Brigade/Battalion level" are given twelve (12) annexes to operational command, but not given Appendix to the annexes.

As a fact that the size of the armed forces (numerical) in the country is small, the largest tactical unit is brigade and for this level are approved guidelines for military decision making process. But although Macedonia has a small army still like every other country must be ready to plan on operational and strategic level, because the "operational level is not defined by the number and size of forces " and " strategic level is the level at which a nation or group of allied nations defined national security objectives, by development and use of national resources for the realization of those goals".

RESULTS OF THE RESEARCH PROCESS FOR CRISIS RESPONSE OPERATIONS PLANNING IN ARM AT THE OPERATIONAL LEVEL

For better understanding of the operational planning process at the operational level in the ARM had been conducted a study by completing a questionnaire by members of the commands and units of the Army at the operational level (units at operational level are: JOC, SOF and CT and D). The objectives of the study were to see whether officers in the commands and units of the ARM at the operational level in the description of their duties is scheduled to work on the planning of operations at the operational level, whether they are qualified to conduct such tasks, whether those tasks they performed and on the basis of which documents they conduct it. The research was conducted in March. The group consisted of 61 members of the commands and units at the operational level. During the research on the question "Does the in the description of your duties is scheduled to work on the planning of operations at the operational level?" from 61 respondent majority of respondents 32 or 52 % in the description of their duties have responsibilities in the area of operational planning, and the same number of respondents are working on operational planning at the operational level, while a smaller number of respondents 29 or 48 % neither in the description of their duties have responsibilities in the area of planning operations, nor working on operational planning at operational level (Figure No. 2 and 3)

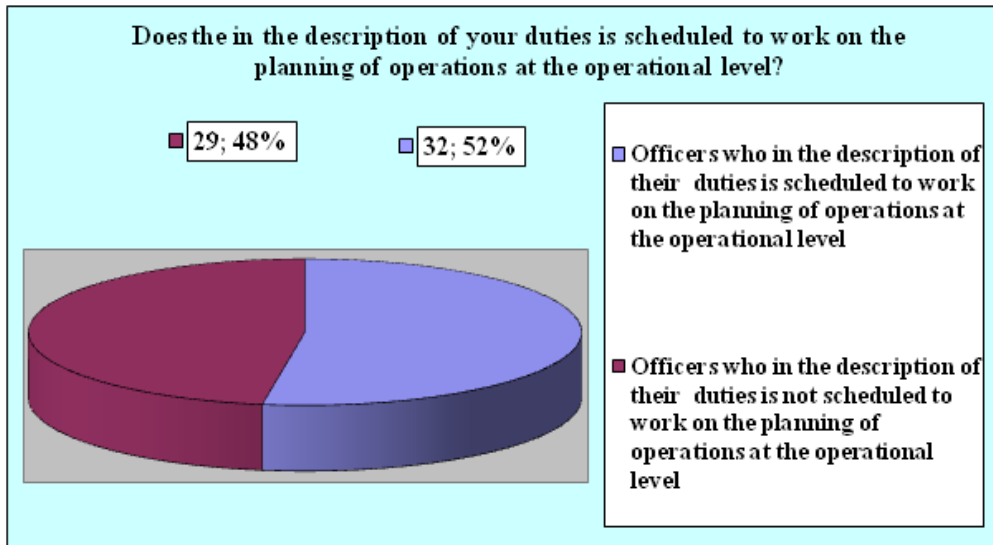


Figure 2 Number of officers who in the description of their duties have included work on the planning of operations at the operational level

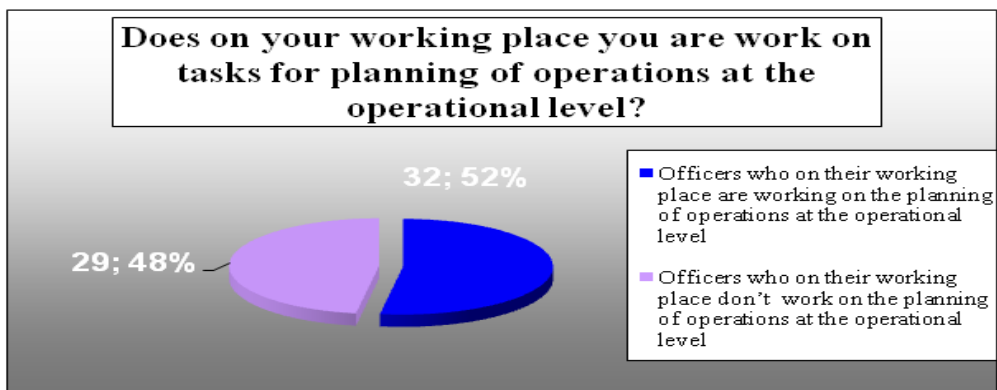


Figure 3 Number of officers who on their working places work on the planning of operations at the operational level

Also, with the research find that all 32 respondents that in their jobs are working on operational planning at the operational level have completed operational planning training at the operational level , which is one of the basic prerequisites for successful planning of operations at the operational level. But also a respectable number of 45 respondents (forty -five) or 74 % expressed the need for attending additional operational level operational planning training, and a smaller number of respondents 16 or only 26 % expressed that they do not need to attend the operational level operational planning training (Figure no. 4 and 5).

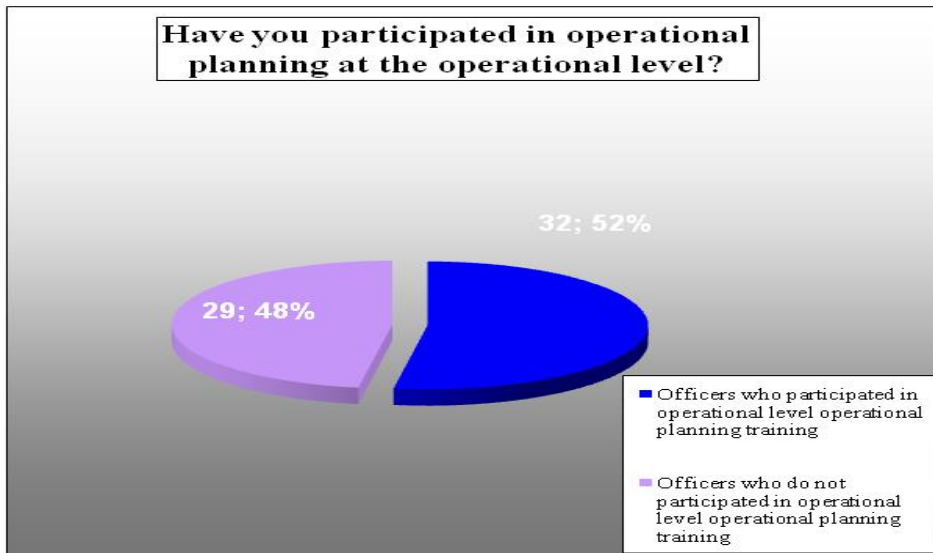


Figure 4 Number of officers who participated/not participated in operational level operational planning training

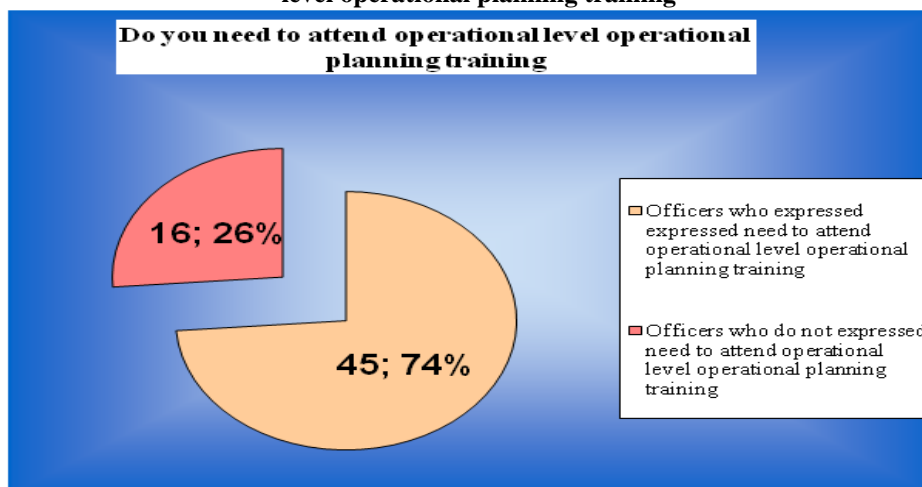


Figure 5 Officers who expressed / did not express need to attend operational level operational planning training

These results indicate that the personnel in the commands and units of operational level (ho in his description of the duties has planning of operations) has completed operational planning training and suggest organization and implementation of courses, seminars and workshops or other operational planning training at the operational level for the staff located in the commands and units in the ARM at the operational level.

In the further part of the research on question "If in your unit are documents governing the planning of operations at the operational level in the ARM , specify them." have stated documents that governing the planning of operations at the operational level ARM which they use are: NATO comprehensive operational

planning directive issued in 2010, NATO operational planning guidelines issued in 2005, Planning Doctrine ARMD 5.0 and standard operating procedures , or they are not familiar that exist documents that governing the planning of operations at the operational level (Figure 6).

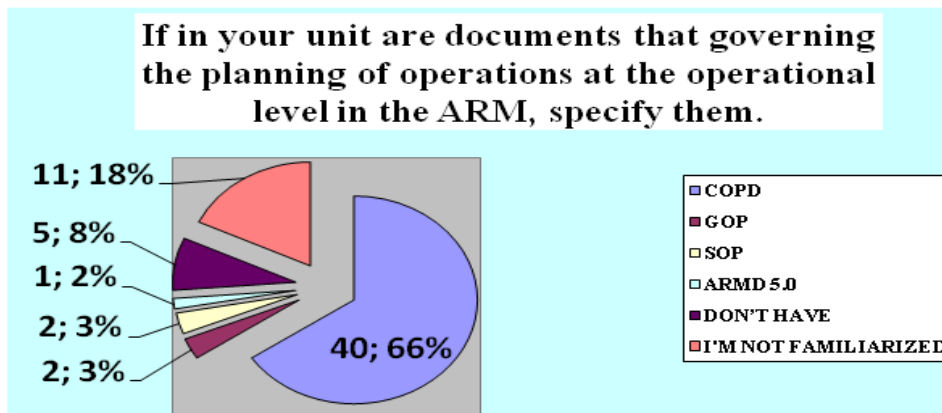


Figure. 6 Review of the familiarity of the operational level staff in ARM with documents that regulates operational level planning process in the ARM.

These results show that ARM depending on the command or unit, are cited various documents governing operational planning at the operational level. If we take in consider that 32 respondents or 48 % in the description of their duties are not obliged to plan operations at the operational level and 39 respondents or 52 % have such obligations then it is understandable that the respondents who do not have responsibilities for operational planning at the operational level and are not familiar with the documents governing this process. Also in the table we can see that the majority of respondents 40 or 66 % refer to NATO comprehensive operational planning directive as a document that is used during the planning of operations at the operational level. This number is greater than the number of respondents that in the description of their jobs have responsibility for operational planning at the operational level and they do it (32 or 52 %) which means that some of the respondents in the commands and units of the ARM at operational level that in the description of their duties are not obliged to work on operational planning at the operational level have found that NATO comprehensive operational planning directive is in use. Considering that the NATO comprehensive operational planning directive and the need for adoption of a national document that would regulate the process of planning of operations at the operational and strategic level GS is working on a new doctrine for operational planning ARMD 5.0 ARM. The results also show that the small number of respondents 5 and 8 % reported that such procedures and related documents do not exist, and 11 or 18 % that are not aware that such documents exist.

If we look at the documents that are cited as the basis for operational planning at the operational level, we can conclude that the Guidelines for Operational Planning GOP in NATO issued in 2005 is out of use and were replaced by Comprehensive Operational Planning Directive. Doctrine for Operational

Planning ARMD 5.0 as stated in the previous chapter is in the process of upgrading and preparing for approval. Standard operating procedures are mentioned only from a small part of the respondents. Considering the complexity of modern crisis response operations and the need for involvement of units from various branches and many other subjects, standard operating procedures can not entirely replace Planning Doctrine. In the end the only document that is in use in NATO and covering strategic and operational planning processes and is used by members of the commands and units of the ARM at the operational level is NATO's Comprehensive Operations Planning Directive (COPD) issued in 2010. In this directive in Chapter 4 is very well processed complete planning process at the operational level and in the same document are provided annexes and appendices to annexes that are made at strategic and operational level. By using this Directive ensures interoperability of operational planning process at the operational level in commands and units of the ARM with the operational planning at the operational level used in NATO.

In the further part of the research objective was to determine to what extent the officers commands and units of the Army at the operational level, are familiar with the operational planning process at the operational level, which is processed in the NATO COPD. On this question the huge number of respondents or 45 respondents answered that in different extent are familiar with the process. From total number of respondents 14 of them or 23 % are sufficiently familiar, 19 or 31 % are familiar in good measure, 10 or 17 % are familiar to many good measure 2 or 3 % are familiar with the great extent , while a small number, 16 or 26 % were not familiar with the process (Figure 7). These results answer to this question is understandable because the number of those that neither in the description of their duties have responsibilities in the area of planning operations , nor working on operational planning at operational level (as you can see from the answers previous issues) is 29 which is greater than those who do not know the process.

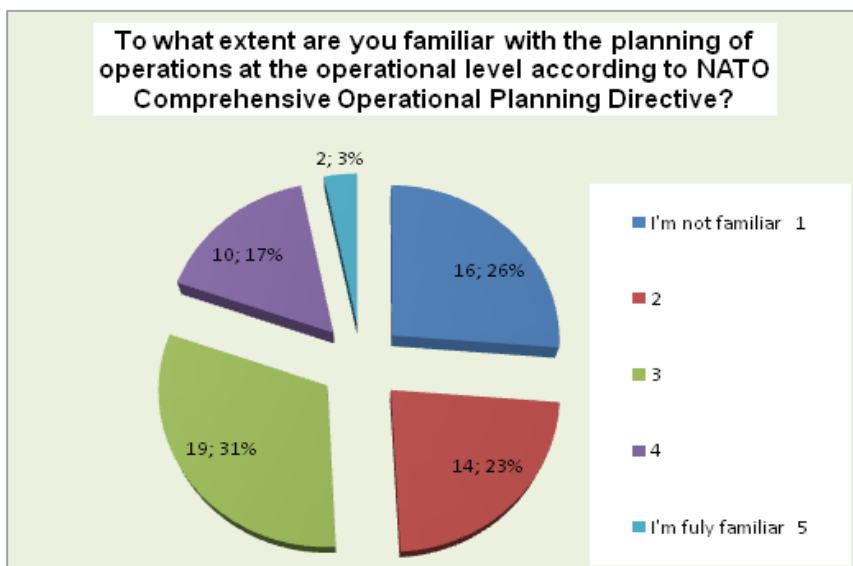


Figure.7 Degree of familiarity of the officers in the commands and units of the APM at the operational level in the planning of operations at the operational level, which is processed in the Allied Command Operations COPD.

CONCLUSION

At the end of this study we can conclude that all participants in the commands and units of the ARM at the operational level that in their description of their duties have responsibilities for planning of operations at the operational level, they work on planning of operations at the operational level and are capable for that matter. Also we can conclude that all of them are familiar with the operational planning process at operational level that is covered in the NATO comprehensive operational planning directive. That means that operational level personnel in the ARM are interoperable with NATO in using operational planning process. But although operational level personnel is familiar with the NATO comprehensive operational planning directive ARM need to adapt our Planning Doctrine ARM (ARMD - 5) that would provide regulation of the operational planning process in the ARM which will be compatible with NATO comprehensive operational planning directive and to organize additional training in planning of operations at the operational level.

On this way will be strength ARM interoperability capability and support to our national security. Also can reduce the costs of participation in crises responses operations and increase an opportunity to enhance future coalition operations. This benefit confers additional advantages and will improve the prospects of Republic of Macedonia to join the NATO.

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