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## EDA and OCCAR – Strong Partners for Europe’s Armed Forces

Efficient and reliable equipping with defence materiel with respective technological capacities is indispensable for the operability of the armed forces in Europe. Especially the missions of the armed forces abroad have shown how important it is to have qualitatively and quantitatively appropriate time-optimal equipment for the accomplishment of the tasks. An effective execution of these missions and operations is also a “sine qua non” for Europe’s future and for the successful commitment in security policy affairs, i.e. to be attributed great significance as a global player with its Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) and the European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP) in particular. As a constituent of the sensible field of national security provision the cooperation between military and the armaments sector is thus inseparably linked with the military capability to act.

As for international armament cooperation, two agencies– the European Defence Agency (EDA) and the Organisation Conjointe de Coopération en matière d’Armement (OCCAR) – play a key role here in Europe. Only by virtue of the resultant political, economic and – especially for the armed forces – operational advantages of the cooperation alone, both agency are thus not only partners of the armed forces, but also their service providers.

**“Those who want to achieve something need above all one thing: allies”**

### OCCAR

Originally it was Germany, France, Great Britain, and Italy, which have joined together in a multinational management organization for cooperative armament programs. After the ratification of the international agreement on the association it has started the operational business with its own legal entity in 2001. Eventually, Belgium and Spain joined the agency, too. In the field of armaments OCCAR represents an agency of special, pragmatism-driven characteristics. Although the agency is so far composed of EU member states and NATO countries only it is organizationally neither integrated into the EU nor into NATO.

OCCAR’s task is to attain maximum efficiency for its customers by effective and competent program management on international level. Aside from an optimum use of the scarce resources the time-optimal and specification-compliant delivery of the armed forces equipment is to the fore. By its activities OCCAR



BOXER Multirole Armoured Vehicle.

Picture: KMW

concurrently fosters also the emergence of a single European armament market.

At present, seven programs are being realized by OCCAR in order to provide the armed forces of the participating states new capabilities and materiel:

- The A400M transport aircraft project, which is presently undergoing a critical phase, is to provide the air forces of Germany, France, Spain, Great Britain, Belgium, and Turkey

an efficient transport aircraft. In Germany it will replace the C-160 TRANSALL. The deadline for the maiden flight was not met by the industry, the continuation and progress of the project is being intensively discussed at the moment.

- The TIGER helicopter program will provide the air forces an advanced and powerful attack and support helicopter. Apart from Germany, France and Spain participate in the



TIGER Helicopter.

Picture: Eurocopter



The Military Transport Aircraft A400M in the Manufacturing Hall.

Picture. Airbus Military

program, too; Australia as one of the export customers has already placed an order for the TIGER. The project will be supported by OCCAR for the three states participating in the project during the in-service phase as well.

- The BOXER armored transport vehicle (ATV) is currently in the certification phase; the batch production is underway. This sophisticated armored transport vehicle has an extremely flexible structure with a basic driving module and interchangeable mission modules and will be delivered to the Bundeswehr both as a modern infantry group vehicle, command vehicle, and ambulance. The BOXER is a cooperation between Germany and The Netherlands.
- The COBRA (Counter Battery Radar) project is an artillery reconnaissance/target acquisition system, which is already in the in-service phase. This radar, which was developed by Germany, Great Britain, and France in trilateral cooperation, is an effective system on the battlefield. OCCAR will also support it during the in-service phase – this goes for Turkey, too, which has received two systems from Germany.
- The naval forces of France and Italy will be provided multirole-capable frigates through the FREMM (Frégate Multi-Mission and/or Fregata Multi-Mission) project as from 2010.
- A ground-to-air antimissile system for medium and long ranges is being managed for France and Italy in the FSAF (Famille des systèmes Surface-Air Futurs/Famiglia die sistemi Superficie Aria Futuri) program. To this end, the ammunition for the PAAMS (Principal Anti-Air Missile System) is also to be pro-

cured by OCCAR, a missile that is also used by FSAF. This acquisition is also effected for Great Britain. Last year, OCCAR was also commissioned with the management of the “In-Service Support Phase” for FSAF/PAAMS.

- The most recent OCCAR project is the ES-SOR (European Secure Software Defined Radio) project. Apart from France, Italy, and Spain the countries of Finland, Poland, and Sweden participate for the first time in an OCCAR program. The so-called “Software Defined Radio (SDR)” serves to improve the capability of the armed forces to conduct network-enabled operations (NEO) by means



A Graphic of a FREMM Frigate.

Graphic: DCN

of a mobile subsystem in the communications system. The specific goal here is to increase the interoperability and employment flexibility of the armed forces. This project, which was launched by EDA member states with the aim to develop a military SDR demonstrator, was recently handed over to OCCAR for implementation.

As it can be gathered from the programs described above it is already common practice that, apart from the OCCAR member states, third countries or international organizations, too, participate and/or can participate in individual OCCAR programs by recognizing the OCCAR procedural rules – e.g. Turkey, The Netherlands, Sweden, Finland, and Poland will take part in another OCCAR program within the scope of a project for space-based reconnaissance, which is currently in the preparatory phase. This flexibility offers the agency and the states that take advantage of it the benefit of incorporating the best possible partners, since the cooperation in a project does not require full OCCAR membership. In other cooperation forums, especially in those which are integrated into more complex system structures, this is often more difficult due to higher-ranking politics and constellations, although the differences in the field of armament cooperation would perhaps be possible to be bridged.

Based on the progress of some OCCAR projects and for the purpose of extending its offer for the armed forces, OCCAR has recently realized its strategic target to set up a domain for the so-called “Through Life Management” by having established a new “In-Service Support Section”. Specialists are to maximize the advantages of the cooperation in this field, too, and to ensure the armed forces an optimal employability of their materiel by improving the effectiveness and efficiency.

OCCAR is modularly structured so that taking up new programs is organizationally possible without any problems. This lays the foundation for a potentially rapid provision of the materiel for the armed forces; the implementation of a program section can happen rather quickly. This is supported by the already established OCCAR regulations. These ISO- (International Standard Organization) certified rules of procedure – specifically the OCCAR Management Procedures – provide clear parameters for the cooperation in and with OCCAR, which contributes to transparency, flexible scheduling, and reliability of OCCAR actions in addition to time saving. Using the well-proven and consistently advanced management procedures of OCCAR is of particular significance for an effective multinational program management. These well-tried coherent cooperation mechanisms and

pragmatic approaches of OCCAR linked with the practical experiences in project realization are all points clearly in favor of an integration of international, especially European projects into the agency.

The importance of OCCAR can also be seen in the fact that the agency has now concluded a security agreement with NATO to make an exchange of classified documents possible. This means recognition of OCCAR and its role in the European and transatlantic defence scene.

## The Most Comprehensive European Dimension of the Cooperation

### EDA

In contrast to OCCAR the arc spectrum of the European Defence Agency (EDA) is much broader when seen from its sphere of activity and its defence-political dimension: Pursuant to the basic documents upon which it is based on, the so-called "Joint Action" of 12 July 2004, its activities encompass

- The development of defence capabilities and the furtherance of the harmonization of the military requirements in particular
- The improvement of the effectiveness of European defence research and technology (R&T)
- The furtherance and improvement of European armament cooperation
- Measures to strengthen the industrial and technical defence basis and to create a competitive European market for defence materiel.

This catalog of tasks of the agency in which 26 member states of the European Union (EU) collaborate as so-called "involved member states" clearly shows for the first time the interlinkage of the areas of customer/user and materiel developer/procurement activity on European level. This does not only facilitate a high substance-related coherence, but also high process speeds with widest possible acceptance.

In the EDA the fields of capability analysis, research and technology, and armament relevant for the initiation and initial coordination of cooperative armament programs are integrated in a multinational organization for the first time. With the preparation of the EDA Capability Development Plan (CDP), and the European Research & Technology Strategy (EDRT Strategy), and the Strategy for Strengthening the European Industrial and Technical Defence Basis (EDTIB Strategy) as well as the armaments cooperation strategy all conceptual basic documents for the work of all EDA directorates were finalized in even 2008.

In order to strengthen the capabilities of the armed forces in the best possible way, the EDA proceeds here from a capability-related approach. Among other things, the underlying

CDP is to also create high transparency and thus to make the identification of international cooperation options easier. Aside from balancing the capability gaps it is possible to harmonize respective capability requirements within the EDA scope, to create the necessary technical basis by concomitant R&T work, and to also coordinate the plannings for their realization. Hence, the agency is particularly well set up to successfully prepare future cooperative armament programs by a common capability analysis already and to attend to them in the phase of implementation. With that the EDA marks out a gap of the multinational organization scene, especially in the initial phase of armament programs.

depend to a great extent on the ambitions of the member states. The conclusion that the agency was only an outside "Europe-Consultant" for the member states comes far too short of the facts. The EDA contributes with energy and own ideas to the foundations of Europe. In its endeavors it has the grit to also think unconventionally, to partly challenge the opposition of the states and, in addition, to reconsider the national approaches and processes. In doing so, the EDA demonstrates its added value as an intergovernmental "motor" by kicking off initiatives and merging national into common European positions. It provides a holistic European view, creates a multilateral way of thinking, and can surmount nationally marked



Helicopter Mi 117; a model took part in the Exercise "GAP 2009" of EDA.

Picture: ES-Archiv

The EDA is closely integrated into the institutional framework of the EU. It is subordinate to the EU Council and works under its political supervision. Its political impetus becomes evident in the staffing of its highest decision panel: in the so-called steering committee the defence ministers of the involved member states meet in person at least twice a year and, in addition, also their representatives in different compositions (armament directors, research directors, capability planners). In contrast to the decisions of the Council and in other areas of ESDP the principle of unanimity is not mandatory in the EDA steering committee. In the vote of the 26 national interests of the member states in the steering committee a 2/3 majority is mostly sufficient. Moreover, the Joint Action makes it possible that EDA projects can also be carried out by some initiating states only. This allows variable geometries of cooperation, which means a considerable gain in flexibility, especially because projects are also open for third states.

It should be clearly stated, however, that the EDA's possibilities for development and action

domestic perspectives. Every European plan drawn up in "small print" only would solely multiply the complexity and thus be doomed to failure.

Here it is important that the EDA finds the balance between visions and pragmatism. In some of its spheres of activity the ideas of EDA must be characterized by basic ideas and future projections of political nature which have to be communicated to the member states and which need to be conjointly realized. In other areas of responsibility, especially in the material realization of the capability requirements, one has to proceed from purely factual approaches, as only pragmatic, goal-oriented projects will bring Europe's armed forces the rapid improvement in their equipment and a gain in capabilities.

But EDA is on the right track here, too. In this year it will carry out approximately 100 cooperation projects with a financial volume of about 300 million euros; among them the joint investment program "Force Protection" which was initiated in 2007 already. In this program a total of 19 participating member states and



A Helicopter PUMA.

Picture: EUFOR

Norway are doing research in technologies for the protection of forces on mission in five subject areas with an expenditure of more than 55 million euros. Such a comprehensive cooperation, which makes the technological know-how equally available to all states contributing to the project, is unique in Europe's defence scene.

Furthermore, the MUSIS (Multinational Space-based Imaging System) project was recently established with the EDA. This project is about realizing a military overall system of imaging space-based reconnaissance on the basis of different satellites. The EDA is to lead the project for the participating countries Belgium, Germany, France, Greece, Italy, and Spain to an expanded cooperation and generate synergy potentials through links to other European space activities, including civilian ones. The participating nations plan to entrust OCCAR with the project realization of the joint portion of the ground segment of the system.

The FTH (Future Transport Helicopter) project is presently being introduced into EDA as a bilateral Franco-German project. It is intended that the analysis phase be continued jointly. The aim is to equip the armies of the countries involved with a new heavy transport helicopter as of 2020. The EDA is here to also acquire additional cooperation partners.

In order to achieve coherence in European and international acting the agency is to explicitly collaborate with the council panels responsible for the ESDP such as the Political and Security Committee and the EU Military Committee and other international institutions as, for instance, NATO and OCCAR. Working relations with NATO in the EU/NATO Capability Group and pertinent industrial associations were established. Also, the EDA offers the defence ministries better access to other European institutions where synergies can be found. Through EDA's collaboration with the EU Commission (e.g. within the scope of the 7th Research Program) it is possible to profit from the activities going on there (and vice versa)

and to thus avoid potentially expensive, purely department/ministry-focused special paths.

### EDA & OCCAR – Two Agencies Better than One?

As already explained before, according to its Joint Action the EDA is to establish a close working relationship with the OCCAR project management agency. To provide for clear and optimum regulations here, the EU Council has authorized the EDA last year to negotiate with OCCAR about an administrative agreement on this. Due to the partly overlapping tasks of the two agencies in the field of armament cooperation there arises the question regarding an impending assignment of roles.

Based on its more extensive activities in the field of capability analysis the EDA should concentrate primarily on the project initiation and program preparation phases. Here, the national armed forces, especially the military staffs, are closely involved in the activities of the EDA. After establishing initial military requirements in form of a "Common Staff Target" (CST), the agency is to combine the potential member states interested in cooperation in an EDA project in the preparation phase with the aim to develop a jointly realizable approach. This may also include the development of technical demonstrators. At the end of the phase there should be an approved "Common Staff Requirement" (CSR) to serve as a military requirement as well as planning documents for the subsequent phase.

The implementation of programs prepared by the EDA in a cooperative effort should be effected outside of the agency, however. Here, the preference ought to be with the well-proven OCCAR management organization, even though without a formalized automatism. By virtue of its high transparency and the equal treatment of all participating nations including non-OCCAR member states OCCAR has

already been able to continuously convince the parties concerned of its ability and efficiency.

In this way it is ensured that both organizations collaborate complementarily as a homogeneous combine of two equal partners, work out synergies and optimally employ the individual strengths of both agencies for the armed forces in Europe. In this context, an asymmetric "agency and information policy" should be avoided by especially those states, which are members of both agencies.

Such a work-sharing is also of benefit to the EDA, particularly in its function as an institution for the formulation of political demands and objectives. It can concentrate on its visionary role as coordinator and also initiator within the scope of the capability development of the EU and procurement. To that end it should continue to be a flexible, lean organization with political weight and not be exposed to a potential "paralysis" resulting from complex project management tasks and thus to a purely national program pragmatism introduced into the agency by that.

### International Armament Cooperation is no End in Itself

In order to bring the significance of recent developments within the scope of ESDP – which undoubtedly include the establishment of the EDA and, outside of the EU framework, the foundation of the OCCAR – into an overarching context, it is conclusively appropriate to briefly also mention the history of the ESDP. In the past years, the nations of Europe have partially been taking first steps that were already intended to be realized with a big hit at the beginning of the 1950s of the last century, the establishment of a European Defence Community. The basic idea was a real, full-blooded collective defence with a permanent European army under central command, financed from a common budget. Most fascinating was that even the Americans were in favor of such a European army. This retrospect on the history should encourage the European states to optimally use and vigorously support EDA and OCCAR in future, too. A great many things are still in a state of flux – a challenging future lies ahead.

A perpetuated European armament cooperation culture is more than desirable; it is necessary for the optimal equipping of the armed forces. In OCCAR and EDA the internationally optimized coordination on the side of the materiel developer/procurement activity is already generating a first dividend in terms of security policy. EDA and OCCAR will hence continue to contribute to the establishment of an improved European security structure in future, too. ■

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