



NATO Tiger Association
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Story and Pictures by
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Big Cats over the Netherlands



Between 4th and 15th October more than 50 Jets and 10 Helicopters stopped by at Volkel Air Base, home of 313 Squadron / Royal Netherlands Air Force (RNLAf), to fly combined air missions during NATO Tiger Meet 2010.



Ops briefing in the morning during Tiger Meet.

[Source: Metternich / Luftwaffe]

„30 SECONDS... THREE, TWO, ONE, HACK, IT IS SIX O’CLOCK ZULU TIME.”

With a time hack the Operations Officer starts his daily briefing during the NATO Tiger Meet (NTM) 2010. Over 70 aircrews are listening every morning thoroughly to the ops and weather briefing, before they start their mission planning. For the Two-Week-Exercise the morning missions, in the so called “shadow wave”, were mainly smaller formations with tasks related to Close Air Support (CAS) and air-to-air training over the North Sea, that gave the aircrews the benefit to learn more about the aerodynamic capabilities of other aircraft types. The afternoons of the 8 exercise days were reserved for the complex COMAOs (Composite Air Operations) with extensive planning and more than 50 aircraft involved.

INTERNATIONAL TEAM

Almost 500 technicians and aircrews from 13 Tiger Squadrons were hosted with their jets and helicopters during the exercise at Volkel AB. A number of units from the Dutch armed forces (Army, Air Force, Navy) plus a Dassault Falcon DA-20 from Cobham Aviation and a Lear Jet from Skyline Aviation (each Electronic Warfare /Jamming) were also integrated into the exercise play. Additionally an E-3A AWACS of 1 Squadron NATO and a Boeing KC-135 from the Ohio Air National Guard flew from Geilenkirchen / Germany and Eindhoven / Netherlands respectively. The exercise also saw a Dutch KDC-10 and another KC-135 from 100th Air Refueling Wing (ARW) at Mildenhall / UK.



Dutch and Belgian F-16 in Formation with Austrian Saab 105OE

[Source: Metternich / Luftwaffe]

REAL SCENARIOS

The specialty of NATO Tiger Meets is that these exercises are not like other big exercises that are organized by Headquarters. Every year the full effort comes out of the hosting squadrons themselves that prepare the exercise from flying operations to logistics and administration. The respective planning teams orientate themselves in recent years with latest operational experiences as close to real world operations as possible, in order to give the aircrews the best possible training opportunities. With the conflicts over former Yugoslavia and in Afghanistan it has been proven that classic scenarios have changed a lot. Among common roles, such as Close Air Support (CAS) of own ground troops, Offensive Counter Air (OCA) and Air Interdiction (AI), new forms of employment have developed. More and more flexibility of the aircrews, coordination and time management is required for dynamic situations.

RECONNAISSANCE AND COORDINATION

The abbreviation SCAR stands for Strike Coordination and Reconnaissance. It deals with the coordination and employment of large numbers of aircraft at a time over hostile territory by own formation leaders. Recce results are processed in the air into suitable target info and transmitted in real time to the rest of the mass formation. This is particularly important for mobile targets, so that they can be attacked without time delay (Dynamic Targeting – DT). This could mean that target info is not yet available at takeoff time and is distributed in the air from



Aircrews from 10 nations.
[Source: Metternich / Luftwaffe]



Mirage 2000D after Takeoff
[Source: Metternich / Luftwaffe]



COMAO Briefing
[Source: Metternich / Luftwaffe]

aircraft to aircraft. With this system hostile forces that can become a high threat for own forces in a short timeframe can be attacked immediately (TST – Time Sensitive Targeting).

ESSENTIAL HOSTILE FORCES

That have a high value, are prioritized by targeting them through the role High Value Asset Attack (HVA A). The counterpart to this category is High Value Asset Protect (HVA P) for own forces with protecting own vital assets on the ground and in the air, like UN-Observers. This was planned in this years in the exercise play for a COMAO of the second week. A group of UN-Observers got captured on the “hostile” airbase of Leeuwarden at the North Sea coast after some negotiations with the government of the hostile nation. A COMAO task force consisting of Special Operation troops, Helicopters, transport aircraft and fighters was tasked to free and evacuate the UN-Personnel safely. The mission commander of the COMAO,



Special Forces before boarding a Mi-24 HIND from 221 Squadron CzAF at Namest. [Source: Metternich / Luftwaffe]

a RECCE guy from TRW 51”Immelmann”, had to analyze the situation and coordinate the employment of the task force time and position wise. Two ECR-Tornados, accompanied by two F-16 as fighter escort, had to fly in front of the mass forces in order to neutralize eventual mobile Surface-to-Air Missiles (SAM) along the route for the following bomber formation consisting of JAS-39 Gripen. Two RECCE Tornados from TRW 51”I”, normally tasked in the reconnaissance role, worked together with the ECR Tornados from 321 Squadron as “HARM Shooter” (High Speed Anti Radiation Missile) in the SEAD role (Suppression of Enemy Air Defenses). At the same time a Mi-24 Hind helicopter from 221 Squadron / CzAF with Special Forces aboard and a transport aircraft with fighter escort had to fly to Leeuwarden Air Base to free the hostages and bring them home during moments of surprise on the enemy side.



ECR Tornado from FBW 32 at Lechfeld with special colors. [Source: Metternich / Luftwaffe]



F-16 of 192. Filo Balikesir / Turkey painted in Tiger Look.
[Source: Metternich / Luftwaffe]

LEARNING CURVE POINTS UPWARDS

It is the first time that 1st Lieutenant Kevin Kummer from 321 Tiger Squadron is participating as an aircrew on a NATO Tiger Meet. The 25-year old WSO (Weapon System Officer) on ECR Tornados is with 650 total flying hours one of the younger aircrews. His first contact with the NATO Tigers was in 1998 at the NTM at Lechfeld, when a friend invited him as student to visit the base. *“My first impression was the large number of beautiful painted jets on the ramp, that were the attraction for all visitors. A few years later, in 2004, when I already was an Air Force Cadet, I got a closer view of the whole exercise, when I supported the Swiss Fliegerstaffel 11 as a liason officer on the ground. Now I am flying in the exercise myself and I must admit that I am impressed of the complex missions and the debriefings afterwards. In every mission you learn more things than during a standard mission at home.”* In two weeks he has flown five COMAOs. A program for which he would need a lot more time in his Wing. *“Step by step the*

Big Picture forms and someone understands the whole mission. I hope, that young aircrews like me, will have the opportunity in the future to participate in high quality exercises like the NTM, even under budget cuts. It is vital for training.”

COMBAT SEARCH AND RESCUE (CSAR)

One of the points of focus of an exercise are always the CSAR missions. With Special Forces of the Dutch Army, Mi-24 Hind from CzAF and AB-212 from ITAF integrated into the exercise play, several rescue operations with simulated downed aircrews were flown during this years NTM. SEAD missions to hold down enemy air defenses, pre- and post strike reconnaissance sorties and mission over sea (Above Surface Warfare – ASUW) completed the variety of roles flown.

POSITIVE RÉSUMÉ

Lieutenant Colonel Marten “Jimi” Hendriksma, Commanding Officer of 313 Squadron / RNLAf draws a positive picture. *“Some luck with the weather and few technical problems made it possible to fly a total of*



LtCol Marten „Jimi“ Hendriksma, Commanding Officer 313 SQN
[Source: Metternich / Luftwaffe]



Flightline at Volkel
[Source: Metternich / Luftwaffe]

644 sorties during NTM 2010.” The exceptional experiences from the two-week-exercise of last years Tiger Meet at Kleine Brogel / Belgium had convinced the planning staff of 313 Squadron to prepare again a two week period for the NTM. *“Eight instead of four exercise days give all the participants a much higher training value and a better cost effectiveness. Outstanding teamwork on all levels made the exercise a full success. It was impressive to see how all the bits and pieces came together after more than one year of preparation and “Tiger Spirit” was in the air everywhere”* adds Hendriksma, who also is disappointed in some ways that one squadron from the UK and two squadrons from Spain could not attend this



Italian Helicopter pilot with Tiger Helmet
[Source: Metternich / Luftwaffe]

year's exercise at Volkel Air Base due to budget reasons. *"For the future it will be important to convince our headquarters that NATO Tiger Meets have a tremendous training value for both, ground and aircrews. It is one of the most important, if not the most important Air Force Exercise, that is left in Europe. It strengthens the NATO community and paves the way for future coalitions between old and new NATO members. Countries like Hungary and Czech Republic have taken advantage of this development in the past years. Complex exercises like the NATO Tiger Meet are indispensable for interoperability of all units."*



JAS-39C Gripen of 211 SQN CzAF in Caslav with Tiger eyes on Canards. [Source: Metternich / Luftwaffe]

NEW NTA MEMBER

211 squadron was probationary member in the NTA since 2008 when, they first showed up with their JAS-39 Gripen on the NTM at Landivisiau / France. They were enthusiastic to become full members after the minimum time of two years being under probationary status. In order to underline their wish for full membership and not to be forgotten, they created a patch particularly for NTM 2010 at Volkel. After only one day of exercise the Tiger Assembly, comprising all DetCOs, the Senior NTA Advisors and the dutch host, voted them to full member of the NTA, honoring to their excellent Tiger Spirit. As a result of this decision 211 Squadron also was qualified to participate in the Tiger competition that has been a special tradition for many years. At the end the Czech fighter squadron from Caslav won the Silver Tiger Trophy for outstanding overall performance. Their helicopter comrades from 221 Squadron / CzAF at Prerov (now Namest) had achieved that already in 2002 at Beja / Portugal. (Further awards see inset box).



LtCol. Sebastien "Dodi" Vallette
Commanding Officer EC 01/12
[Source: Metternich / Luftwaffe]

OUTLOOK

Date and location for the next Tiger Meet are already fixed. Coming May will see the "Tigers" with Escadron de Chasse (EC) 01/12 at Cambrai in northern France. Commanding Officer of EC 01/12, Lieutenant Colonel Sebastien "Dodi" Vallette, is optimistic and sees two main priorities for the next Tiger Meet exercise: *"First of all we will try to keep or improve the high standards of training of the last years and secondly we like to honor the 50th anniversary of the NATO Tiger Association in an appropriate style and try to reinforce the contact between former and active members of Tiger-Squadrons according to the motto ONCE A TIGER ALWAYS A TIGER."*



TIGER AWARDS

Tiger Games	221 Sqn	Czech Republic
Flying	338 Skv	Norway
Dress	21° Gruppo	Italy
Aircraft Paint	192 Filo	Turkey
Skit	JTS	Austria
Silver Tiger	211 Sqn	Czech Republic

