

OPERATIONAL DESIGN ON THE EXAMPLE OF NAVAL OPERATION EU ATALANTA – SOMALIA

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Abstract: *The constant search for the most rational solution to achieve the goal of armed conflict with minimal losses of forces and assets, and the defeat of the enemy's forces in the shortest possible time, necessarily throughout the history of warfare imposed the need to create the most expedient design that would identify all influential actors and use the most suitable tools for shaping operations. This work explains the operational design of the EU ATALANTA-Somalia naval operation based on the personal experiences of the author, but with the previous connection of the operational design with the operational skill (operatics, in domestic military theory) which, by considering it within military theory and introducing it into military practice, has changed doctrinal approach to operations, connecting concrete tactical and abstract strategic levels of war, all through a comparison of approach to the problem in domestic and foreign military literature.*

Although the operational design is related to the operational and strategic level of operations planning, it is very important to see its order to have a clearer idea on the basis of which and how the operations design is developed, as well as the processes that initiate the planning and execution of operations at the tactical level.

Key words: *navigation, sailing, electronic nautical charts*

1. INTRODUCTION

Operational art is in practice determined as a factor in the success of war, because it represents an essential link between strategic goals and tactical capabilities. The transition of the Western consideration of military operations from a two-component view of strategy - tactics to a three-dimensional dimension of strategy, operatics and tactics, is necessarily consequentially expressed in the need to increase combat power through the level of operational skill. The doctrinal concept of long-term enemy attrition and massive strikes against a static enemy has

been replaced by the concept of focusing on force maneuver which basically considers the assessment of effects.

In parallel with obtaining the appropriate place and role of operational skill in the framework of Western considerations of the doctrine of operations, there was also a need for adequate tools that would enable the continuous connection of tactics and strategy, which are often distant from each other. Therefore, the operational design together with the identified centers of gravity of own and enemy forces, the ultimate desired state, defined lines of operation, estimated decisive points as a kind of modeling tools, tends to present a way of overcoming the gap after understanding all influential factors between tactics and strategies.

2. THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE OPERATIONAL MODEL FROM THE ASPECT OF DOMESTIC AND FOREIGN MILITARY THEORY

Russian military theoreticians (Trandafilov, Svecin and others) at the end of the 19th century made a significant contribution by expanding the meaning of the original concept of operation, because in addition to the previous movement of forces, the operation began to include the battle itself, that is, combat action. Then, the Polish military theoretician Mosor is very significant due to the fact that he considered the operation for the first time through the time dimension of the duration of several mutually coordinated battles on several directions, thus laying a kind of foundation for the modern understanding of operations. However, in his theoretical considerations of operations, the first beginnings of the creation of an operational design can also be recognized, because he states that "the combination of action in several directions towards one goal by means of several groups of various strength and composition represents the basic feature of the operation". In the contextual sense of the above, discrete outlines of the operational design can be observed, primarily due to the consideration of a systemically organized process in which there are elements of different characteristics placed in certain mutual relationships in order to achieve a common goal. The correspondence of the above can be seen through comparison with the model, which can be defined as the presentation of a certain system or process through the understanding of all individual elements and their mutual relationship, with the undeniable possibility of changing structural parts and managing the whole.

In the Western military literature, operational skill is defined as the thought process of commanders and staffs, supported by their skills, knowledge, experience, creativity and judgment in the development of strategies, campaigns and operations, as well as the engagement of military forces in accordance with integrated objectives, the most likely variants of use and available resources. The operational design expands the vision of the operational skill with a creative methodology helping commanders and planners to define the objective, the adequate way of use, the rational use of resources and the recognition and management of risks (Planner's Handbook for Operational Design Vers.1, 2011). For the purpose of the above, two types of thinking are emphasized: critical thinking as a constant analysis and evaluation during the modeling process for its extension and improvement, and creative thinking as a process of constant innovation and definition of newer ideas that lead to problem solving (UOPiRK, 2017).

The definition of the operational model has also found a place in domestic doctrinal documents, and in the Doctrine of Operations it represents "The visualization of the commander's basic ideas for the execution of operations", in the Doctrine of Planning it represents "the elaboration of the commander's basic ideas for the execution of operations", and in the Instruction for operational planning and the work of commands The Serbian Army is presented as "a presentation of the commander's basic idea (ideal idea) for the preparation and execution of the operation-campaign". If we ignore certain minor conceptual

inconsistencies, it can be stated that the operational model and the very process of modeling the operation found its place and role in domestic military documents based on Western sources that consider the process of planning operations. However, one gets the impression that in our doctrinal documents and instructions for operational planning, not enough attention is paid to the importance and role of operational skill, as well as its relationship with the operational model and all its elements, that is, together with the operational structure (operational process, operational framework and elements of combat power) represents organized efforts within the framework of understanding the constructive part of a specific operation (ADP 3.0, 2016).

3. PRESENTATION OF THE OPERATIONAL DESIGN WITHIN THE CONCEPT OF NAVAL OPERATION ATALANT - SOMALIA

The creation of an operational model in the process of planning the naval operation ATALANTA - Somalia is initiated by the conceptual idea of the commander of the operational command that fully supports graphic visualization and is processed in the point "Execution" of the main text of the operational plan, with further upgrading through the concept of the operation.

The beginning of the planning is based on the understanding of the basic goal of the mission that the ultimate desired state of the EU naval forces (EUNAVFOR) must be unequivocally reached, which implies the implementation of military activities in order to achieve a maritime effect focused on the protection of ships within the framework of the UN World Food Program and other endangered ships, as well as deterring and ending Somali piracy at sea. The commander's vision was: "My intention is to maintain pressure on the pirate model of operation by deterring and disrupting pirate activities and preserving what has been achieved to date." I will apply intelligence-led operations to understand potential piracy activities, and where possible I will disrupt any active piracy group in the area of operation. The legal end remains my highest priority. I seriously intend to shake the confidence of the piracy model of operation during the next period as a preventive measure aimed at reducing the possibility of earning from piracy activities. In the sense of the above, I intend to create trust between humanitarian and international civil navigation through conditions that ensure the re-establishment of navigation safety. I will achieve the above in cooperation with the UN World Food Program and civil navigation."

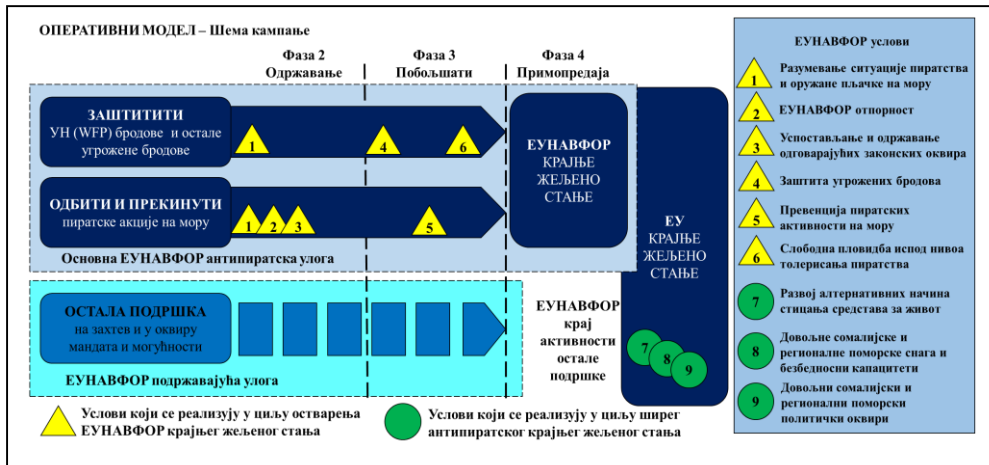
In addition to the mission's main role, EUNAVFOR is also part of a "comprehensive approach" to managing the crisis and causes of Somali piracy. The ultimate desired state of the EUNAVFOR mission is precisely the function of this broader approach in solving the Somali problem. With that, the second part of the commander's idea contained the following: "I will provide support in an acceptable environment with other EU missions and other entities that carry out operations in Somalia under other mandates in order to support the realization of a wider anti-piracy end desired state." Other supporting tasks will not affect or reduce the effectiveness of the primary mission. Other tasks include the coastal part of the territory which was approved by the Political and Security Committee through the Chairmanship of the EU Military Committee, and approved by the Somali authorities. Support must be provided until the end of the mission's mandate."

In the framework of the operation concept, the commander's idea is upgraded with decisive conditions which are grouped along the lines of operation divided by phases in order to reach the final desired state. The essence is that the concept of the operation is to search for the enemy's center of gravity while simultaneously protecting EUNAVFOR's own center of gravity.

Before the start of the modeling, the ultimate desired conditions were clearly defined as the basis for planning operations, i.e. the political and military situation that will end the mission. The EU's ultimate desired state is presented as part of European policy efforts, which will look in detail at coastal regions, maritime crime and piracy, Somali land and sea based on capabilities, governance and economy. The ultimate desired state of EUNAVFOR is a tolerant level of piracy and armed robbery that allows freedom of navigation for humanitarian and other international ships in the zone. The mentioned implies reducing the pirate threat without including the ATALANTA mission.

Progress towards EUNAVFOR's ultimate desired state was realized through a series of deciding conditions, which are updated with each revision of the operational plan (OPLAN), so that certain ones remain the same while others change partially or completely. The decisive conditions within EUNAVFOR's basic anti-piracy role are developed on two lines of operation, the first with the task of protecting the ships of the UN World Food Program and other endangered ships and the second with the task of rejecting and interrupting piracy activities at sea. According to the doctrine of the Western countries, in terms of the types of operations in the operation zone, the above can be seen as a decisive and shaping operation, while the supporting operation can be considered the EUNAVFOR support role for which no decisive conditions have been developed.

At the time of the development of the operational model in question (revision of OPLAN No. 4), the mission realized the 1st phase - establishment and the 2nd phase - maintenance, in which the focus was on the development of an appropriate tactical military response by encouraging civil navigation activities in order to apply of maximum pressure at sea against the model of action of Somali pirates. The evident activity of Somali pirates at sea, but with a decrease in success, necessarily imposed the need to maintain pressure through intelligence-led operations aimed at adjusting the activities of pirates to new security-threatening phenomena (organized crime, smuggling of people, narcotics and weapons), as well as pressure through insistence on to the legal conclusion which implied persistence in bringing the pirates to final justice. During the 3rd phase - improvement, the development of the capabilities of the regional police and maritime forces to assume responsibility in the fight against Somali pirates in accordance with the comprehensive framework of the EU anti-piracy policy was presented, in terms of enabling the operability of local forces at sea while other support tasks would be carried out on request local authorities within the available forces and capabilities of EUNAVFOR. For the 4th phase - handover, it is envisaged to break the Somali pirates' model of action and the acceptable level of piracy and robbery that enable the free navigation of World Food Program ships and other vessels in the zone. In this phase, EUNAVFOR withdraws in accordance with the mission's mandate after handing over responsibilities to local authorities (Picture 1).

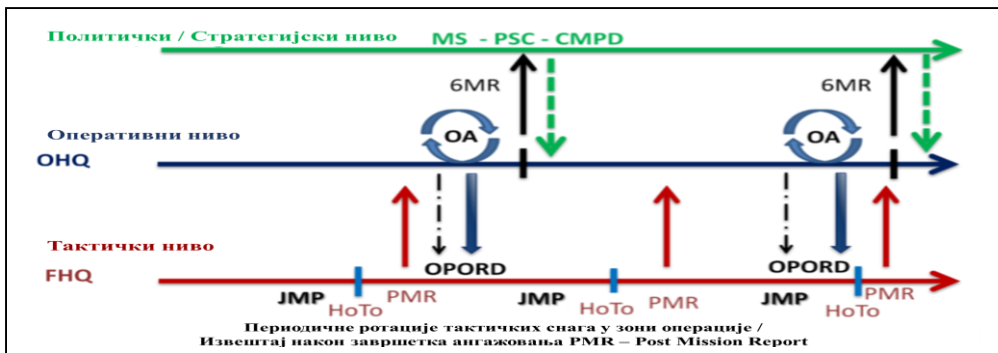


Picture 1. Operational model with developed lines of operation and decisive conditions
Source: (Radic, G. 2019.)

Centers of power are presented as the primary strength for participants that must be reached as a goal. The own strategic center of power represents the member states participating in the anti-piracy EU mission, while at the operational level it is reflected in the member states' ability to provide the necessary ability, credibility and forces of appropriate training and adequate strength to carry out the anti-piracy operation. The enemy's strategic power center represents the situation and perception in Somali society that piracy is a sustainable and legitimate way of life, and at the operational level represents the ability of pirate leaders to carry out acts of piracy and control the perception of risk versus gain and recklessness.

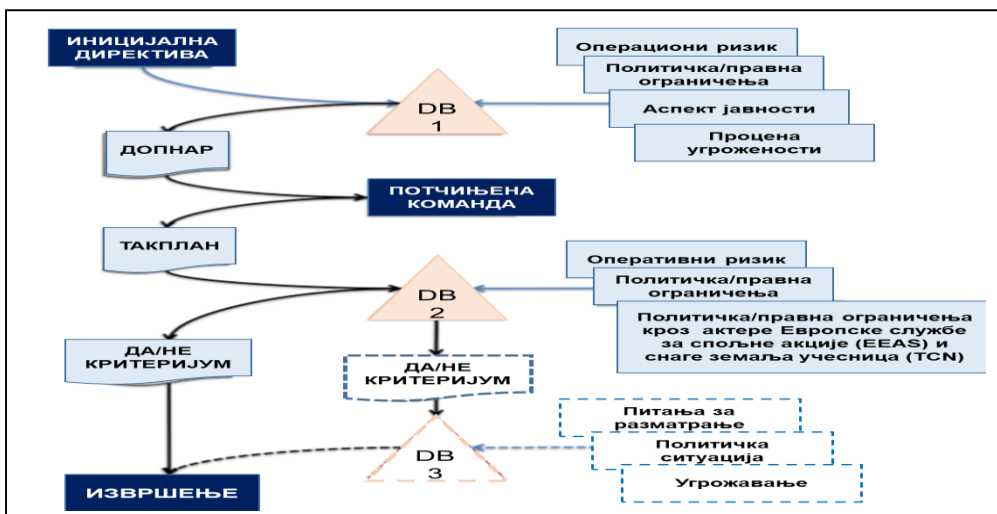
5. MONITORING THE PROGRESS OF THE MODELED CAMPAIGN AND INITIATING THE TACTICAL COMMAND IN THE PLANNING AND EXECUTION OF THE NAVAL OPERATION ATALANTA - SOMALIA

The progress of the campaign (Picture 2) is constantly monitored and evaluated, so that the degree of progress towards the final desired state is regularly reported to the Political and Security Committee of the EU (PSC) and the Military Committee of the EU (EUMC). The campaign assessment methodology (Campaign Assessment-CEA) implies the establishment of control measures to monitor the progress of the mission. Campaign progress and evaluation are regularly evaluated in the operational command using the Operational Analysis (Operational Analysis-OA) cycle, which is designed to evaluate mission progress and identify mission risks in order to timely inform the commander of the Operational Headquarters-OHQ. Progress towards the final desired state and mission exit strategy is thus subjected to constant evaluation in accordance with the control measures for each decisive condition, and is reported to the Military Staff (Military Staff-MS) on a six-month periodical cycle (June and December, Six Month Report-6MR). At the same time, the operational order (OPORD) directs the Commander of the Tactical Maritime Command (Force Headquarters-FHQ) with the assignment of new tasks and operational priorities for the next six months. Operational analysis (OA) consists of campaign effects assessment (CEA) with risk management (Risk Management-RM) and risk assessment (Risk Assessment-RA). The goal of operational analysis is to improve the quality and efficiency of operational planning and operation execution. The above is achieved through quantitative and qualitative assessments of key statistical and other data.



Picture 2. System for monitoring and evaluating the progress of the campaign
 Source: (Radic, G., 2019.)

The Decision Board (DB) process plays a key role in focusing command for planning and executing military operations (Picture 3). The decision process board is formed before designing the model, as an initial direction through two or three phases depending on the nature of the planned operation. The above is working in cooperation with European External Action Service (EEAS) and the forces of the participating countries (Troop Contributing Nations-TCN) as part of the approval process. The output of the Decision Board Process, after the second and third stages, should be an authorization to perform the operation.



Picture 3. Process decision board
 Source: (Radic, G., 2019.)

The sequence of the mentioned process implies that in the 1st phase, planning is initiated with an initial directive, where the main focus is on the analysis of the mission, namely the first level of situational awareness, which practically implies the consideration of political implications, risks, public influence, legal aspects, the possibility of engaging forces and others key factors. The phase ends with the delivery of the Supplementary Order (Fragmentary Order-FRAGO) to the tactical command, which contains all relevant data in terms of criteria and guidelines for the purpose of initiating tactical planning. Immediately before the planned start of a certain operation, the 2nd phase is realized, in which the planning is approved. The commander of the tactical command submits for approval the prepared Tactical Plan

(TACPLAN) based on the Supplementary Order, which meaningfully considers the operational risk in terms of political and strategic influences on the operation, because the main implications should be considered at this level. If the situation is favorable and the assessments indicate the progressive support of the operation in all fields, the command determines the execution of the operation (yes/no criteria), that is, the commander of the Tactical Command is approved for the final preparations and/or execution of the operation. The last 3rd phase is the initiation of the operation, which in principle can include logistical support, updating data on the security or political situation, and a final threat assessment. It is performed immediately before the start of the operation, approximately 24 hours after the yes/no criteria.

6. CONCLUSION

The operational model as a combination of understanding tactics and consolidation of operations represents the comprehensive operational level of conducting and directing modern warfare. It expresses its essence through operational skill, in which military theory and practice of planning, organizing and executing campaigns and major operations to achieve strategic goals are considered.

In domestic doctrinal documents and planning instructions, not enough attention is paid to the orientation of the operational model towards operational skills, which together form a kind of bridge between strategic plans and tactical engagement in a specific environment, and with their elements contribute to planning and directing the operation through established control mechanisms, through constant analysis of the achieved effects. The identified deficiency along with the example shown points to the need to develop special instructions that would improve this area and bring it closer to staff officers in our army during their participation in planning operations.

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