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## WASTE MANAGEMENT COMPLIANCE IN THE ARMY OF THE CZECH REPUBLIC

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### Introduction

The key area in providing environmental safety is the issue of effective management of waste being created during the daily life and training of troops. Law No 125/1987 concerning wastes, which came into existence last year, is the fundamental regulation in the Czech Republic. The law determines the liabilities in wastes disposal and prevention of their origin and it modifies supervision by state authorities and their decision-making process. It fully applies to the military sector with only one specific enactment - records of wastes produced by the Ministry of Defence are processed and kept by this Ministry in cooperation with the Ministry of Environment. [1]

### Waste Management Act

This edition of the new Waste Management Act changes the present system of waste management in military properties and training areas. A number of new regulations result both from the membership of the Czech Republic in OECD and from the Basle Convention. Our adaptation to the EU law in the field of waste management has been basically completed. [2-6]

When defining unit commander basic responsibilities it is necessary to respect the elementary goals of the law, mainly:

- a) To make an effort to prevent creating the waste and to reduce the current amount of waste being produced,
- b) If the waste has already been produced, then it is necessary to provide maximal reduction of hazardous waste proportion,
- c) To increase the proportion of exploitable wastes, for example by designating the liability for sorting the waste and offer it constantly for exploitation, etc.,
- d) The liability to abide by the provisions of generally valid waste management legal regulations and Administrative Law.

### **Commander's liabilities**

Explicit definition of military unit commander's responsibilities is one of the significant prerequisites to ensure fulfilment of requirements arising from the law and waste management optimization within the ACR. At present the general liabilities determined by legislative amendment are being solved partially by internal normative acts of the Ministry of Defence. [7,8] Abiding the act's provisions under military conditions, the commander's general liabilities may be defined in relation to the waste management in the following way:

1. Commander is responsible for waste management operations in his unit or facility,
2. Within his area of responsibility, the commander assigns an employee, who is directly responsible to him for the implementation of tasks in the area of waste management. This employee keeps the records of waste, and according to service rules, he sends reports on waste production to the Chief Ecologist of the Army. This employee also supervises and represents the organisation at the appropriate meetings,
3. In his work, he abides by the internal normative acts by which the generally valid legal amendment is complemented or expanded with military specifications. He is obligated to follow expert instructions of the Ecological Group at the Ministry of Defence and cooperate with its Territorial Ecologist,
4. He abides by the decisions of state authorities (Ministry of Environment Territorial Department, District Department, Community Department) and cooperates with expert ecological institutions, organisations and civil initiatives,
5. He is obligated to provide waste management in a maximum effective way by first exploiting local possibilities and only secondarily by exploitation of external possibilities,
6. He must provide security for classified information regarding waste management activities.

### **The Army organisational and operational measures**

According to the Act [1] and implementary decrees [2-5] the Army, as a waste originator is obligated to do the following:

- A. To accept the elementary goals of the Act mentioned above and support them in practice;
- B. To categorise and catalogue the waste in compliance with decree [2], which is fully compatible with the decision of the European Union Commission No 3/94, by which a new European catalogue of wastes has been introduced. Categorisation is understood as an assignment of the category "hazardous" or "other" according to the current waste properties. Cataloguing is an assignment of a name to the particular waste together with a six-digit numerical code. Expert help is provided by an appropriate Territorial Ecologist of the Ministry of Defence;
- C. To provide waste disposal. This liability is provided by a commander and his designated employee responsible for the waste management. Maximum effort has to be made at every military unit to recycle each kind of waste first internally and only then externally. Waste which cannot be exploited is to be offered to another legal or natural person (firm) for disposal. The waste is offered to the firms for exploitation either directly at regular monthly intervals or within the framework of

centrally offered possibilities, the commander may use collective depots in selected units, respectively designated collection points at Logistics Headquarters storage facilities [9];

- D. To operate military landfills in the military training areas, if they are established. Only wastes specified in the dump operational instructions can be put in the landfill. Emergency instructions, operational instructions and operational records are worked out for the landfills, as well as for Logistics Headquarters and collective depot installations. The army has to provide collection of all municipal waste with classes of hazardous components at the military training areas which are under the responsibility of Military Authorities of the Local Communities with a status of a municipality;
- E. To collect specified types of waste in the Logistics Headquarters central installations (collection points at storage facilities), which are specialised according to material groupings. This process is based on regulations issued by the General Staff of the Czech Army. Scraped material has to be transported to the mentioned installations and it becomes waste only here after it is removed from the record [9];
- F. To store separated hazardous waste in the collective depots special containers (Dutch system, Ecotainer and Ecar). Depots are located in chosen army units. Their operation is controlled by a competent unit commander in cooperation with the assigned employee. Waste disposal and all administrative work is provided by a firm chosen in a competition. Additionally this firm is an accredited body for the Army of the Czech Republic;
- G. To check hazardous properties of wastes and to handle them according to the actual properties. The list of hazardous properties is introduced in the annex of the Act and it is evaluated according to the limits stated in the decree. [4] The evaluation of hazardous properties can be carried out exclusively by the assigned person, who is kept in the record of the Ministry of Environment or the Ministry of Health of the Czech Republic;
- H. To collect the sorted waste in compliance with type and categories. Waste can be stored only at the places designated for that purpose. In the case of hazardous waste, every sort must be provided with the hazardous waste identification sheet [3] and a symbol in the agreement with special regulations [6];
- I. To secure the waste against depreciation, theft or leakage into the environment at locations where the waste is stored and sorted, then at hazardous waste collection depots, Czech Army landfills and at the collection points of the Logistics Headquarters central installations. Logistic storage facilities with discarded equipment and ammunition, where disassembling and dismantling take place, are liable to a special regime and supervision;
- J. To keep the records. Military waste records are no longer completed by state authorities. To keep the records for every type of waste on a separate form continually at each waste origin, its receipt, transfer to another army element or another firm, etc. The forms are recorded for every collection point and are archived for a minimum of 3 years. An annual report on waste origin is produced by an army element for every calendar year and is delivered by official procedures via the Territorial Ecologist to the Chief Ecologist of the Ministry of Defence by the 15<sup>th</sup> February of the following year [7,8] A summary report is sent from the Ministry of Defence to the Ministry of Environment by the end of May of the following year;
- K. To allow control authorities access to buildings, sites and installations and upon request to produce documentation and provide truthful and complete information related to waste management. The control authorities are as follows: Ministry of the Environment of the Czech Republic, Czech Inspection of the Environment and district authorities;

- L. To secure the transfer of waste in compliance with the requirements of the waste management acts to include the Basle agreement. Continuous legal amendment is provided by the European Agreement on International Shipment of Hazardous Items (ADR). [6]

## **Conclusion**

The new legal amendment creates a challenging environment for more efficient waste management. Enhanced technologies for waste collection according to its type and category are implemented into practice of the military sector.

Commanders of military units and installations have to realise new liabilities and duties resulting from the waste management law and prepare organisational, administrative, operational and economic measures. To prevent financial penalties for not meeting the legal requirements it is recommended to involve the Military Units Environmental Commissions and appropriate MoD Territorial Environmental Bodies in the region.

New principles of waste management in the military environment are a subject of the armed forces members professional training and education. The main areas of concern include the following: Commander's obligations regarding waste management law and administrative law, duties of the Military Unit Commander while handling the waste, waste disposal systems, registration both in military units and collection sites at the Logistics Headquarters, etc. [9]

Environmental Management System implementation is the systematic measure of the ACR being taken to ensure environmental safety and permanent harmony with environmental law within the military sector. At the same time the mentioned initiative is a reflection of NATO Environmental Committee pilot projects. [10,11]

## **LITERATURE**

1. The Waste Management Act No. 125/1997 Collection of Laws of the Czech Republic
2. Decree of the Czech Ministry of Environment No 337/1997, Coll. by which the catalogue of wastes is issued and list of other wastes is assigned.
3. Decree of the Czech Ministry of Environment No 338/1997, Coll. on details about waste management.
4. Decree of the Czech Ministry of Environment No 339/1997 Coll. on the assessment of wastes hazardous properties
5. Decree of the Czech Ministry of Environment No 340/1997 Coll. by which the financial reserve is determined for landfill reclamation, aftercare and clearing following the termination of landfill operation and details concerning its establishing and use are assigned.
6. Decree No 64/1987 Coll., European Convention on International Road Shipment of Dangerous Objects - ADR (Geneva 1957) and Notification of the Czech Ministry of Foreign Affairs No 100/1994 Coll. concerning the Basle Convention on the control of transfrontier movement of hazardous wastes and their disposal.
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