

VSESTRANSKI PRISTOP K POMORSKI VARNOSTI REPUBLIKE SLOVENIJE

COMPREHENSIVE APPROACH TO MARITIME SECURITY OF THE REPUBLIC OF SLOVENIA

Professional article

Povzetek Različni dejavniki in grožnje sodobnega časa neposredno vplivajo na spremembe v globalnem varnostnem okolju. Oborožene sile se bodo morale takim spremembam prilagoditi in tako sprejeto novo vlogo. Znano je, da asimetrične grožnje lahko prihajajo s kopnega, iz zraka in z morja. Posebno ranljivo je morje s svojo široko prostornostjo. Gre za področje vedno večje medsebojne odvisnosti, ki omogoča prosto gibanje ljudi, idej, blaga, tehnologij in virov. Hkrati je to okolje, v katerem se ugotavljajo grožnje in izzivi za varnost, kot so: terorizem, imigracija in trgovina z ljudmi, nezakonito trgovanje z mamili in konvencionalnim orožjem ter širjenje orožja za množično uničevanje (WMD). Tako izzivi na globalni ravni zahtevajo iskanje novih načrtnih oblik pomorske zaščite in varnosti. V tem članku poskušamo predstaviti vsestranski nacionalni pristop k zagotavljanju varnosti in vse izzive, povezane z morjem, ki bi nam lahko pomagali teoretično razumeti potrebo po nadaljnjih prilagoditvah v smislu integracije vseh naših nacionalnih in v pomorstvo usmerjenih zmogljivosti v skupno interdisciplinarno službo.

Ključne besede *Pomorska varnost, operativno pomorsko usklajevanje, vsestranski pristop.*

Abstract *Various factors and threats of modern times are directly affecting the changing global security environment. The armed forces should be adjusted to such changes, resulting in the redefinition of its role. It is known that asymmetric threats may come from land, air and the sea. Especially vulnerable is the sea due to its wide spaciousness. It is an area of increasing interdependence that allows free movement of people, ideas, goods, technologies and resources. At the same time, this is also the environment in which threats and challenges to security are identified, for example terrorism, immigration and human trafficking, illicit trafficking in drugs and conventional weapons, as well as the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMD). Challenges at the global level require the search for new systematic forms of maritime security and*

safety. This paper intends to present a national comprehensive approach to ensuring security and all the challenges associated at sea, and may help us to theoretically understand a need for further adjustments towards integration of all our national maritime-oriented capabilities into a common interdisciplinary service.

Key words *Maritime security, operational maritime coordination, comprehensive approach.*

**A Global
Maritime
Security
Environment**

In the modern world, the sea and its spaciousness is one of the most important resources for the economy and welfare of the country that has access to it. The sea as a natural and legal entity is wide open to impacts of interactions in all aspects of life, and so is the sense of security (Urlič, 2009).

The maritime domain and, in particular, the maritime security environment is of paramount importance to global economy. The volume of shipping is expected to increase during the coming decades, therefore, by definition, its importance will grow, as well (Twrdy, 2003). As the way of living for the modern industrialized world remains largely dependent on an uninterrupted supply of commercial goods and energy, this results in a critical vulnerability. Therefore, one of the greatest threats to our way of living and thereby maritime security as a whole would be the possible disruption of energy supplies and trade flow through sea lines of communication, port facilities, as well as maritime and associated industrial infrastructure (Zuiderwijk, 2009).

We are entering a period of greater uncertainty than has been experienced for several decades. The 21st century promises to present a plethora of various security challenges, which will come from state and non-state players and develop in an increasingly complex environment, where interdependence and unintended consequences are immutable characteristics restricting our freedom of action (Band, 2009).

There are numerous real and potential threats. The rise of piracy and terrorism is a genuine threat to the freedom of the seas. Piracy is at first a local problem. Most of its factors are enduring and can persist for centuries. Although it can be very destructive to the local economy, for a long time, it has remained a limited and circumscribed risk for maritime shipping. The latest developments, however, have shown a new determination, a sophisticated organization, while frequency and violence have reached a new level, which requires a global response to what has become a significant threat (Forissier, 2009). Piracy itself should not be considered or overstated as a maritime threat facing our nation. But it has thrust into the limelight a danger posed to the maritime trade in a particular strategic region. Actually, piracy is more a symptom that must be assessed within a wider array of the emerging challenges combining both security matters and geopolitical issues. Piracy and maritime terrorism should not be confused. Objectives, geographical areas and tactics are not the same, and no links have yet been established, even though vigilance is required. But they are the two principal aspects of maritime security challenges.

1 MARITIME SECURITY THREATS AND CHALLENGES

Various factors and threats of modern times are directly affecting the changing global security environment. Particularly vulnerable is the sea with its wide spaciousness (Androjna, 2008). It is the environment in which threats and challenges to security are identified, for example terrorism, immigration and human trafficking, illicit trafficking in drugs and conventional weapons, as well as the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMD).

1.1 Europe

The security seascape, nowadays, is broader in scope and more unpredictable in nature than ever before in modern times and continues to evolve in ways that, even a few years ago, were largely impossible to foresee. The most fundamental change concerns the identity and characteristics of a potential enemy. It is highly improbable that the threat to maritime security will come from conventional naval forces of a particular country. Instead, we are now faced with largely unknown, almost random threats. Small terrorist cells, unofficial militia, even loosely-grouped individuals now have the potential to cause immense damage (Mitropoulos, 2006).

Traditionally, navies are focused on and well prepared to counter military security threats. To counter the new types of threats, navies need not only special means and training, but also information, partners, networks and legal authorization that differs fundamentally from those that are required in full-scale wars between nation-state navies (Nolting, 2009).

Europe has a 70,000 km coastline along two oceans and four seas: the Atlantic and Arctic Oceans as well as the Baltic, the North, the Mediterranean and the Black Sea. The EU's maritime regions account for some 40% of its GDP and population. Europe's well-being is therefore inextricably linked with the sea. The growing vulnerability of coastal areas to increasingly crowded coastal waters, the key role of the oceans in the climate system and the continuous deterioration of the marine environment call for a stronger focus on our oceans and seas. Ocean sustainability is today widely recognized as a major global challenge, closely connected to climatic changes (Commission of the European Communities, 2007).

1.2 South East Europe

Many of the maritime challenges in South East Europe arise from the nature of the security environment in the Mediterranean. The first challenge is geography. The Mediterranean Sea (including the Adriatic, Ionian and Black Sea) has twenty-eight thousand miles of coastline. Any effort to try to control or regulate it has to take into account the situation of hundreds of points from which vessels can get to sea.

The second challenge concerns the type of threats that must be combated. Basically, there are two types of threats, threats to vessels on the sea and threats from the sea. Although they are related, they require different responses. A challenge also arises

from the issue of how to ensure that vessels, vital to the global economy, can transit the maritime commons without being harmed and how to prevent terrorists and other hostile players from using the sea to do harm ashore or to fund their operations. In both cases, the maritime paths and means employed by criminals and illegal immigrants are likely to be the same as those used by terrorists and WMD proliferators, all these among the tens of thousands of ships navigating the waters of the Mediterranean every year. Sorting through thousands of contacts to identify the few individuals engaged in harmful or illicit activities can be very problematic.

The third challenge arises from the interoperability of countries bordering the Mediterranean Sea. Interoperability is largely a political problem that manifests itself in rules of engagement, legal structures and resource allocations, but it also has an important technical component. The main challenge is how to use current and future technologies to raise situational awareness, which in this context is the ability to identify, process, and comprehend critical elements of information in and around the maritime domain.

The last challenge is resources. Defence spending is limited, therefore, it is necessary to find a way to use current assets more effectively and apply future resources to the capabilities needed to support the operational concepts that are developed (Boyer, 2007).

1.3 Slovenia

According to the Annual Reports on the Work of the Police (2009) and Customs Administration of the RS (2009) we could identify challenges that are affecting Slovenian maritime security. They fall into the following areas: organised crime, illegal border crossing, illicit trafficking in drugs and contraband of undeclared goods.

In the sphere of organized crime, policing was aimed at detecting criminal associations engaged in smuggling people, illicit drugs, weapons, explosives and highly taxable goods¹ along the Balkan route. A total of 359 criminal offences were related to organized crime activities during the investigation in 2008, representing a 22.5 % increase compared to the year before.

There were a total of 171 criminal offences related to illegal crossing of the state border or territory, representing a 12.3 % decrease on the previous year. A better record is attributed to implementation of Schengen standards relating to state border surveillance and good cooperation between foreign law enforcement in detecting smuggling activities along the Balkan route.

Illicit drug abuse rates increased by 4.3 %, from 1,612 in 2007 to 1,681 in 2008. An investigation focusing on a particular international criminal association resulted in confiscations of 98 tons of anhydride acetic acid (precursor substance for heroin

¹ In 2008, 25,086,080 cigarettes were seized. The majority of the cigarettes were discovered in the Port of Koper.

manufacturing) which was smuggled from the Czech Republic to Turkey. This quantity represented the largest amount of precursor substances ever confiscated worldwide.

In addition, 160 (or 24.0 % more) criminal offences of illegal production of and traffic in weapons and explosives were investigated, 25 criminal offences of smuggling, 17 cases of abuse of prostitution and trafficking in human beings as well as 1 criminal offence of terrorism against an unknown perpetrator who threatened to attack certain buildings and infrastructure.

2 COMPREHENSIVE APPROACH²

Faced with these challenges, the Republic of Slovenia has analyzed its capabilities and defined the capacities to build and integrate them to successfully respond to future challenges with an acceptable risk level. It is quite evident that such threats can neither be dealt with by a single agency nor a single nation. Therefore, we adopted a two-way approach: on the one hand, we are to intensify combined, regional and multinational cooperation with our international partners. On the other, we need to find proper solutions for better coordination at the national level between respective Slovenian ministries and agencies. The rapidly changing strategic environment influenced by globalization requires the restructuring and integration of all security institutions. The cornerstone for maritime security within our national area of responsibility is coherent civil-military cooperation. In response to this demand, the Resolution on Maritime Policy of the Republic of Slovenia (UL RS, 1991) was adopted, which imposes on Slovenia the concern for maritime regulation in line with international rules and the development of national services that ensure adequate protection and security of the territorial sea.

The European Union (EU) demands (Commission of the European Communities, 2006, 2007), from all of its members, a more holistic approach to marine management at all appropriate levels and more comprehensive management mechanisms, including improved cooperation and coordination, as well as consistency between agencies that are responsible for maritime domain awareness and for the interoperability of their supervisory systems at the European level.

Therefore, the need was advocated to recognize and to initiate all the necessary procedures for unifying certain entities with the aim to establish an effective authority capable of adapting to and countering the threats that could potentially jeopardize Slovenia's national security.

² *In conceptual terms, comprehensive approach refers to the wide scope of actions undertaken in a coordinated and collaborative manner by national and multinational civilian government agencies, military forces, international and intergovernmental organizations, non-governmental organizations, and the private sector to achieve greater harmonization in the planning, management, and evaluation of coalition interventions in complex contingencies and emergencies (USJFCOM, 2008).*

A series of initiatives were formulated referring to the manner of establishing a state interdisciplinary structure (e.g. the Coast Guard) that would be responsible for a relatively small area of the sea, taking over all the tasks that are currently assigned to our four ministries: Ministry of Defence (Slovenian Armed Forces / Naval Detachment), Ministry of the Interior (Maritime Police), Ministry of Transport (Harbour Master Office) and Ministry of the Environment and Spatial Planning (Department of Waters). In this context, some of the activities were launched in 1991. Additionally, serious discussions took place in 2004, when the Governmental Interdisciplinary Working Group for examining the establishment of a new common interdisciplinary service was renewed. Despite some public doubts about the rational and effective use of allocated resources (Pavliha, 2005), these initiatives, due to a variety of interests and lack of political will, unfortunately, did not succeed and all these respective security institutions continue to perform their duties in a fully autonomous manner (Geršak, 2008). However, ideas of an integrated security structure at sea have been re-launched recently through the announcement, made by the Ministry of Defence, to purchase a new multipurpose vessel for the Slovenian Armed Forces in 2010/2011 that will have an option to perform a series of tasks from a wide range of coast guard activities.

2.1 Coordination of Services at Sea

In order to effectively and efficiently implement the common tasks that are associated with the sea and to insure information sharing at inter-ministerial level in the pursuit of national maritime security, the Government of the Republic of Slovenia established in 2006 the so-called Coordination of Services at Sea, which integrates all Slovenian national resources related to maritime safety and is not an alternative to the Coast Guard (Pavliha, 2005). Coordination is carried out at two levels (ULRS, 2006):

- a. at the higher level, which is the Coordination of Services at Sea,
 - b. at the operational level, which is the Operational Maritime Coordination.
- a. Coordination of Services at Sea is comprised of authorities from different ministries such as:
 - Ministry of Transport, Slovenian Maritime Administration
 - Ministry of the Interior, Police Directorate Koper
 - Ministry of the Environment and Spatial Planning, The Environmental Agency of the Republic of Slovenia
 - Ministry of Finance, The Customs Administration of the Republic of Slovenia, Customs Directorate Koper
 - Ministry of Defence, Slovenian Armed Forces, Force Command
 - Ministry of Defence, Administration of the Republic of Slovenia for Civil Protection and Disaster Relief
 - Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Directorate for European Affairs and Bilateral Political Relations
 - The Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Food, the Inspectorate of the Republic of Slovenia for Agriculture, Forestry and Food

- b. The Operational Maritime Coordination is organized at a lower level, comprising the following authorities:
- Slovenian Maritime Administration, Harbour Master Office
 - Police Directorate Koper, Maritime Police
 - Customs Directorate Koper, Custom Office Piran and Port of Koper
 - The Environmental Agency of the Republic of Slovenia; Department of Waters
 - The Inspectorate of the Republic of Slovenia for Agriculture, Forestry and Food, The Hunting and Fisheries Inspection Service
 - Slovenian Armed Forces, Force Command, 430th Naval Detachment
 - Administration of the Republic of Slovenia for Civil Protection and Disaster Relief, Branch Office Koper

Responsibilities of the Coordination of services at sea and the Operational maritime coordination are:

- To solve common problems that are associated to the issues of maritime security and environmental protection at sea.
- To exam and analyze the situation on the sea.
- To propose measures related to the improvements of the situation at sea.
- To work out proposed plans and security measures for the eventual execution.
- To effectively implement tasks and rationally use all the available resources.
- To cooperate with other institutions that are dealing with the activities at sea.
- To inform and advise the authorities about maritime security and environmental protection at sea.
- To develop and promote all the activities that are aimed to provide greater maritime security, environmental protection at sea and effective search and rescue etc.

The Coordination of Services at Sea normally assembles once a year and, if necessary, while the Operational Maritime Coordination assembles every week or, if required, on a daily basis.

Authorities participating in the Coordination of Services at Sea work close together to implement the tasks laid down by the governmental resolution. They have to put into practice all necessary efforts to perform tasks professionally and in a timely manner. The rules of engagement (ROE) of the Coordination of Services at Sea are an integral part of the proceedings for the participation of authorities of different ministries and provide guidance for the organizational management, functions, working methods as well as for the Operational maritime coordination and cooperation of authorities involved.

The establishment of the Coordination of Services at Sea as such does not apply to any additional financial costs. In other words, it is a cost-effective element in our offshore security. Is this organizational form appropriate to successfully act in response to all future maritime threats and challenges that occur in reality?

2.2 Uniform Maritime Information System

The international security environment nowadays requires all states to build multi-functional structures within their national security systems. Maritime surveillance is of paramount importance in ensuring the safe use of the sea and in securing national maritime borders.

National and regional sharing of Automated Information System (AIS) data is developing fast, and Europe-wide sharing of vessel traffic data is progressing under SafeSeaNet³ based on the Community vessel traffic monitoring and information system directive EU Directive 2002/59/EC. Concerning the integration and cooperation between surveillance systems and authorities in the Southern EU countries in the framework of border security, the picture varies widely between almost non-existent cooperation in some countries, via different authorities using the same surveillance system, to relatively advanced integrated systems, to which several authorities contribute. All countries have plans to start or further develop integration (Commission of the European Communities, Slovenia is integrated into the EU Maritime Information and Exchange System (EU SafeSeaNet) and achieves rationality and efficiency in solving common problems associated with the sea by employing the Uniform Maritime Information System (Enotni Pomorski Informacijski Sistem – EPIS). It is a platform for Maritime Data Exchange e.g. National SafeSeaNet, between the operational maritime coordination authorities. It supports their tasks and improves maritime situational awareness by means of feasible technical solutions and common procedures. It combines border control data from the Maritime Police, data from the Department of Waters of the Environmental Agency of the Republic of Slovenia, data from the control of fishing vessels (Vessel Monitoring System – VMS) and data from the Maritime Rescue Coordination Centre (MRCC) that are operationally available 24 hours a day and consist of information gathered by the Automatic Information System (AIS) and the Vessel Traffic System (VTS). It's a network/Internet solution based on the concept of a distributed database and provides a simple, reliable and uniform access to data, known as "One-Shop-Concept".⁴ It is made in accordance with the EU regulations and is Slovenia's step towards a more interoperable surveillance system that combines together existing monitoring and tracking systems used for maritime safety and security, protection of the marine environment, fisheries control, control of external borders and other law enforcement activities.

It should be emphasized that surveillance is of crucial importance. It may be considered as the practical or physical manifestation of vigilance, which is the state of mind that we all should develop (Mitropoulos, 2006), and the exchange of information, which adds to its value many times over.

³ *Community maritime information and exchange system. SafeSeaNet enables the receipt, storage, retrieval and exchange of information for the purpose of maritime safety, port and maritime security, marine environment protection and the efficiency of maritime traffic and maritime transport.*

⁴ *EU requires easing the administrative burdens imposed by many different regulations through better use of (electronic) data exchange and information sharing.*

The challenge that still remains opened is to find the appropriate technical means or to improve the existing ones, in order to enhance surveillance in terms of the quality and timeliness of the information gleaned.

2.3 Maritime Operational Centre – MOC

European Union and NATO have addressed Maritime Situational Awareness (MSA) aimed at further improving the Maritime Commander's situational awareness at sea. MSA is a tool to enhance the understanding of the maritime environment and to achieve a clear understanding of relevant information necessary to support maritime operational decision making. It capitalizes on existing systems and on new technology as well as responds to new areas of operational urgency.

NATO has been enhancing its recognized maritime picture, drawing on contributions on both NATO and national assets and capabilities, in order to get a more comprehensive understanding of activities in the wider maritime domain. Furthermore, NATO's Maritime Safety and Security Information System (MSSIS) has been established based around AIS data provided by NATO member states and a number of non-NATO states, tracking the location and movement of about 10,000 ships each day. This data is then analyzed by using a range of software analysis tools, some of which make use of commercial and open source databases, to identify potential anomalies. The analyzed data is then fed into the NATO's Maritime Command and Control Information System which also includes intelligence data, classified data and the real-time location of NATO vessels.

Regarding the maritime situational awareness in Slovenia, a new Maritime Operations Centre is going to be established by the end of February 2010, which will collate information from both civilian and military sources and combine it in order to distinguish normal maritime activities from possible threats and will be integrated in the exchange of data from NATO's Maritime Command and Control Information System.

Slovenian MOC has already been integrated through the information exchange with the Virtual-Regional Maritime Traffic Centre (V-RMTC), an Internet-based network employed by 29 navies to monitor merchant traffic, and today spawning trans-regional applications in a Global Maritime Trusted Information Network.

Conclusion The main issues in this article address the problem of whether Slovenia's comprehensive approach to ensuring security and all the identified challenges associated at sea are adequate or if Slovenia has to initiate all the necessary procedures for unifying its entities into a common interdisciplinary service with the aim of establishing an effective authority capable of adapting to and countering the threats that could potentially jeopardize our national security?

Meeting today's security challenges requires a wide spectrum of civil and military instruments. The rapidly changing strategic environment influenced by globalization and characterized by an unprecedented element of inter-connectivity and inter-dependability (La Rosa, 2008) calls for regular coordination, consultation and interaction among all actors involved, and it requires all states to build multifunctional structures (e.g. Coordination of services at sea / Operational maritime coordination). We must work together; we must build up trust between each other and utilize the positive energy to create a maritime coalition in order to ensure security and safety in the maritime domain.

Given the fact of limited financial, personnel and material potentials and despite having only 46 km of coast, this calls for a detailed analysis and for a concept, in which we have to overcome any narrow interests of individuals, groups or inter-agency rivalry, on a possible unification of our entities into a common interdisciplinary service to achieve increasing levels of efficiency and consistency in the field of maritime safety, maritime security and protection of the sea. Moreover, a concept could point out some guidelines for developing consistent national maritime policy where flexibility (ability to adapt and adjust budgets and other resources) could be the key to success. There are certain preconditions without which a common interdisciplinary service can be difficult or even impossible to achieve. Firstly, there must be a political will for unification of our entities into a common interdisciplinary service. Secondly, everyone has to accept being coordinated or coordinating with others. Finally, it must be understood that the shift to something resembling a common interdisciplinary service happens between the ears before it can happen in reality.

To summarize, the cornerstone for maritime security within our national area of responsibility is coherent civil-military cooperation. Although the resulting beneficial interdependencies require further adjustments of our organizational and legal framework. Once realized, they will have an impact on our traditional competencies and therefore force us to considerably change our operational and procedural way of acting for which we need to be prepared well in advance.

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