

NATO UNCLASSIFIED

NORTH ATLANTIC TREATY ORGANISATION

**NATO MARITIME INTERDICTION
OPERATIONAL
TRAINING CENTRE**

NMIOTC

SOUDA BAY 73200 CHANIA

GREECE

+302821085707

nmiotcreg@nmiohc.nato.int



QUALITY ASSURANCE POLICY

July 2021



NMIOTC Quality Assurance Policy

REFERENCES

- A. MC 0458/3 (Final), NATO Education, Training, Exercise and Evaluation (ETEE) Policy, dated 03 September 2014.
- B. Bi-SC Directive 75-7 Education and Individual Training Directive, dated 10 September 2015.
- C. NMIOTC Functional Relationship (FR MoU), dated 15 November 2005
- D. Manning, Activities and the provision of Training (MAT MoU), dated 18 December 2007

1. PURPOSE

The purpose of this SOP is to set the Quality Policy, the system, the objectives, the organizational structure, the responsibilities, the functions and the procedures which support the implementation and review of the Centre's Quality Management System (QMS).

Furthermore, the aim of this document is to affirm NMIOTC's commitment to maintain a high standard of quality and to ensure continuous improvement in the procedures applied, in the services and products delivered and in relations with external partners and stakeholders.

2. APPLICABILITY

This Policy establishes the NMIOTC's QMS. It applies to all of its Directorates and independent offices including permanent and temporary staff at NMIOTC who is involved in the design, delivery and support of education and training. The online version published on the NMIOTC official web site is the only approved version.

This Quality Assurance Policy is applicable to all NMIOTC resident courses, including the modules of each of them, Mobile Education and Training Teams (METTs) and Advanced Distributed Learning (ADL) activities.

3. NMIOTC OVERVIEW

NMIOTC is a multi-nationally manned NATO Operational Training Centre, commanded by a flag officer of the Hellenic Navy and comprises a Command Group and three Directorates. The Staff Personnel Establishment (PE) is multinational with 40% of the 128 posts open to allied personnel and partners.

NMIOTC is financed by the Framework Nation (FN) through the Hellenic Navy General Staff (HNGS) annual budget.

NMIOTC's **aim** is to develop a diverse and talented Maritime Interdiction Operations (MIO) workforce via training, education, mentoring and opportunities

for teams and individuals to gain experience and explore their full potential into the broader Maritime Security. The Centre embraces NATO standards, undertakes and introduces initiatives, and develops concepts. Experimentation, as well as simulation and modelling, are also carried out. NMIOTC thereby contributes actively to the improvement of integration and interoperability between Allies and Partners.

The establishment of the NMIOTC was granted by the NATO Defence Ministers on 12th of June 2003. The Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) regarding the relationship between NATO (the Strategic Commanders) and the NMIOTC was signed by the Greek Chief of Defence (CHOD), SACT and SACEUR in the margins of the NATO Military Committee (MC) during the CHODs Session in Brussels on 15th of November 2005.

The NMIOTC Operational Concept was endorsed by SACT and SACEUR in July 2006. ACT forwarded the Concept to the MC for notation. The NMIOTC Accreditation Criteria Package was approved from SACT on July 2006.

On 7 November 2013 the Centre was awarded with the Quality Assurance Unconditional Accreditation by ACT. NMIOTC was re-accredited and awarded on 31 May 2019 by "Quality Assurance Unconditional Accreditation", which will be in force for six (6) years. NMIOTC coordinates closely with HQ SACT and supports ACO with "Just-In-Time" Operational Training and ACT in its transformational goals. Although it is not part of the NATO Command Structure (NCS), NMIOTC is associated with ACT in similar way as the other NATO Education and Training Facilities (NETFs).

The Centre, as part of the Alliance's transformational network, not only trains personnel belonging to naval units, operational teams, individuals from Armed Forces, Law Enforcement Agencies and Governmental officers involved in Maritime Security through MIO, but also provides SACT with proposals for new doctrines, tactics, methods and equipment in the field of Maritime Interdiction, including interdiction at range, considering that MIO is the enabler for all MSO tasks.

Mission. NMIOTC's mission is: "To conduct the combined training necessary for NATO forces to better execute surface, sub-surface, aerial surveillance, and special operations activities in support of Maritime Interdiction Operations".

Vision. The NMIOTC Commandant's vision is to further develop the concept of NMIOTC as a hub for the maritime dimension of projecting stability. To this end, we are undertaking a series of mid and long-term initiatives, such as establishing new individual and collective training products that meet the emerging challenges in a proactive manner, promote innovation and excellence contributing to transformational efforts, while building an agile network of maritime understanding and cooperation.

Goals. NMIOTC has a long-term plan based on the Mission and Vision described in the Introduction chapter. The main NMIOTC goals, based on the Statement of Functions (SoF), are:

a. To improve Allied and Partner Units' MIO Expertise. Nations are providing fully operational units to NATO; NMIOTC is dedicated to promote skills, interoperability and co-operation among these naval units and specialized teams

through sea training and simulation.

b. To support MARCOM in the comprehensive effort to prepare the Allied Maritime Forces and HQs.

c. To support ACT in MIO tactical doctrines, training directives, experimentation, research, modeling and simulation in support of MIO for the Alliance.

d. To assist the military cooperation policy through Partnership Cooperation Menu (PCM) outreach programs.

e. To promote cooperation and mutual support with Academia.

f. To contribute to the ACT lessons learned process in cooperation with JALLC.

4. QUALITY MANAGEMENT

The NMIO TC Quality Management verifies that educational and training processes contribute to its primary mission. Internal system checks take place repeatedly, providing opportunities for intervention in order to address and cope with short term and long term challenges.

a. Quality Management System

A Quality Management System (QMS) is a complete set of quality standards, procedures and responsibilities. The QMS within an ETF defines and covers all facets of the operation, from identifying and meeting the needs of the stakeholders to planning, implementing, monitoring and reviewing the Education and Individual Training (E&IT), together with all the relevant activities regarding these functions. The QMS regulates the organizational structure, the responsibilities, the processes, the procedures and the resources of the institution. An established QMS within an ETF provides confidence in the definition and delivery of quality E&IT solutions.

As per reference “B”, a QMS has four dimensions, as shown in Figure 1. The two innermost ones, Inspection and Quality Control, have a reactive nature and are present and past oriented, according to the principle of “We act on the scene”. The two outer dimensions, Quality Assurance and Quality Management, have a proactive nature and are future oriented, according to the principle of “We act preventively”.



Figure 1: Quality Management System (QMS)

Each of the above dimensions has its own purpose, depth and scope derived from quality related practice, as it is described below:

(1) Inspection

It is the process of measuring some particular characteristics of a product or service and the comparison of these with specified requirements to determine conformity. Inspection is implemented mainly for identifying and correcting errors before they may cause problems.

(2) Quality Control (QC)

QC is the operational techniques and activities used to **ensure** conformity to requirements and to **prevent** defects. In other words, QC is a systematic approach to prevent defects and produce only acceptable quality products.

(3) Quality Assurance (QA)

QA is all the planned and systematic activities implemented within the quality system that can be demonstrated to provide confidence that a product or service will fulfill requirements for quality. QA widens the responsibility for quality to include other functions beyond the main/direct activities (e.g., the impact of support functions).

(4) Quality Management (QM)

QM is all organizational processes that ensure quality. QM is a way of thinking and working with emphasis on:

- Meeting the needs and expectations of customers.
- Covering all parts of an organization.
- Involving every person in the organization.

- Examining all aspects related to quality.
- Aiming at “right the first time” by designing-in quality, rather than inspecting for it afterwards.
- Developing systems and procedures which support quality and continuous improvement.

b. Continuous Improvement Process

A Continuous Improvement Process (CIP) is an essential element of QM and is embedded within the QMS. It is an ongoing effort to improve products, services, or processes. Delivery processes are constantly evaluated and improved in the light of their efficiency, effectiveness and flexibility. It consists of internal and external loops, as illustrated in the figure 2.

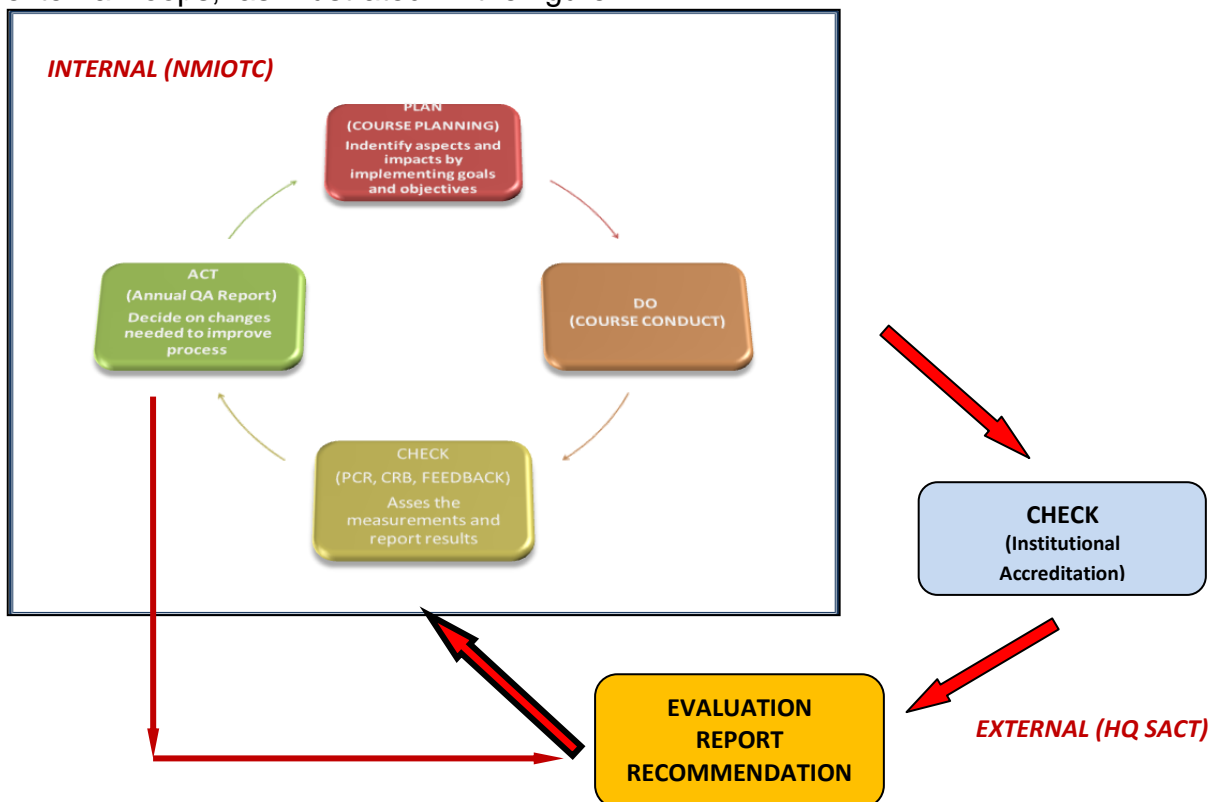


Figure 2: CIP cyclic model

The internal loop relies on the Plan-Do-Check-Act (PDCA) cycle. This stands for:

Plan: Identify an opportunity for change.

Do: Implement the change on a small scale to test.

Check: Review results by analyzing data to determine if the change was successful.

Act: If the change proves successful based on the data, then it's time to implement it on a broader scale. If it wasn't as effective as hoped for, try again!

The external Continuous Improvement (CI) loop includes both NMIOTC institutional accreditation by ACT and annual QA reports. The institutional accreditation is a process which ensures that NMIOTC delivers training products,

which are aligned with the NATO Quality Standards for training. In May 2019, NMIOTC was re-accredited and awarded with the Quality Assurance Unconditional Accreditation. Its next re-accreditation process will take place in 2025. Meanwhile, NMIOTC will issue annual QA reports, by the end of January of each year, so as to demonstrate its adherence to the required standards, as per reference “B”.

In brief, CIP does not only mean that an organization should make changes along the way when things do not work smoothly. Instead, CIP is an actual type of work style that is designed to continuously review results and rapidly adopt new measures when deemed necessary. The keyword here is “continuous” because ultimately broad-scale change and progress stem from small steps along the way, that are all geared towards optimization. The following picture encapsulates the general philosophy of CIP.

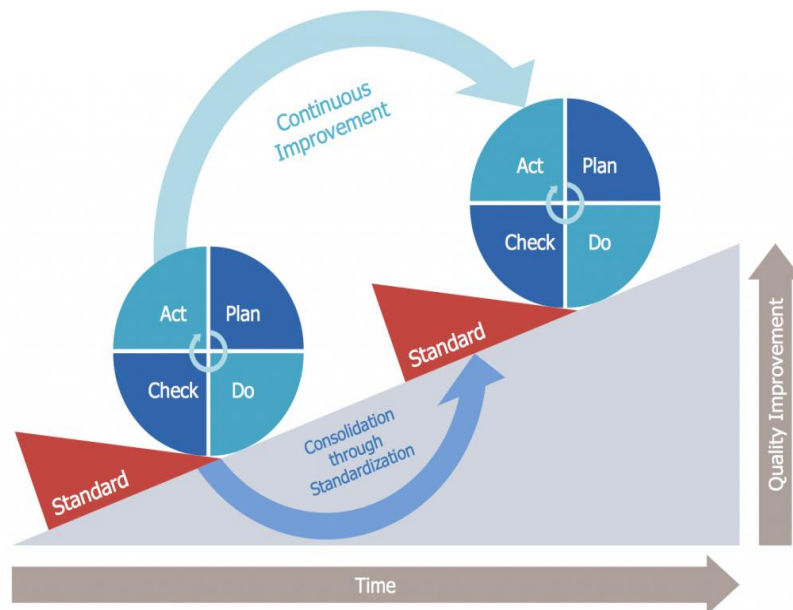


Figure 3: Quality Improvement through CIP

In pursuance of CI, NMIOTC has developed a set of Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) and has adopted a Quality Strategic Management Plan (QSMP), as it is analytically described in the next section.

5. QUALITY STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT PLAN

NMIOTC’s strategy about institutional quality is incarnated in the Centre’s QSMP. It is a plan which encompasses principles, mechanisms, structures and core processes, with a view to:

- Ensure that all working methods, procedures, relevant regulations are systematically reviewed to reflect NATO quality standards.
- Regularly monitor and measure the Centre’s performance and evaluate the quality of its work methods, outputs and outcomes.
- Set short and long-term targets, conducive to Centre’s mission and objectives, in accordance with NMIOTC QMS and NATO quality standards as they are described in reference “B”, Annexes D and E.

a. Principles

The following principles underpin the NMIOTC QA Program:

(1) Systems Approach. The policy, core processes and resources are interconnected components leveraging feedback from ongoing activities to ensure that education and training solutions are aligned with the requirements and are delivered with optimal efficiency.

(2) Compliance. Curriculum development will be based on current NATO doctrine, policies and directives as applicable. Course content that fall outside of NATO requirements or NATO doctrinal training levels (operational and above), will satisfy similar quality and professional standards as well.

(3) Accountability. All stakeholders responsible for the implementation of the NMIOTC QA Policy are clearly identified and are responsible to report, explain and are accountable for programmes and course delivery.

(4) Transparency. QA procedures and processes are developed using a collaborative open approach. QA policy and annual reports will be readily accessible on the NMIOTC Shared File Server and made available to external stakeholders, when requested, and as appropriate. Best practices and Lessons Learned will also be shared with external stakeholders and communities of interest.

b. Processes and Mechanisms

(1) Inspection

Inspection is implemented before and during the execution of a course in order to identify and correct errors before they become deficiencies. **The Course Director (CD) is responsible** for performing the inspection which starts from the preparation of the course (making sure the logistical aspects are addressed) and is carried on during the course (monitoring the effectiveness of the instructors and the behavior of students). Details about the actions which constitute the inspection are given in SOP-303. The decision to proceed with potential rectifications is made by the Director of Education & Training (Dir E&T).

(2) Quality Control (QC)

QC is implemented after the iteration of a course with the purpose of rectifying the deficiencies or amending the course based on the feedback received (trainees, instructors, monitoring reports, etc.). **Dir E&T is accountable¹** for QC, however the **CD is responsible** for gathering and analyzing the pertinent information. QC is part of the **Post Course Review** (PCR) process, as it is described in detail in SOP-302.

(3) Quality Assurance (QA)

A cross-directorate QA Team (QAT) **is responsible** for QA within NMIOTC. The QAT oversees aspects of the QMS that affect the overall performance for all courses by using the internal evaluation process. This includes the quality of personnel, procedures and the communication system. The QAT

¹ **Responsibility** is task-oriented. Responsibility focuses on defined roles, job descriptions, and processes that must be in place to achieve a goal. **Accountability** is what happens after a situation has occurred. It is how you respond and take ownership over the results. In ethics and governance, accountability is answerability, blameworthiness, liability, and the expectation of account-giving. Responsibility may refer to: being in charge, being the owner of a task or event.

proposes changes through the revision of the Standard Operating Procedures which are part of the QMS.

QA is implemented by means of the following management tools:

- Internal audits
- Staff motivating tools, as described in SOP-201
- Staff development plan, as described in SOP-201
- Staff satisfaction surveys, as described in SOP-201
- Post Course Review Reports, as described in SOP-302
- Evaluation of the Curriculum Review Board (CRB) results, as described in Annex “C”
- Evaluation of the Key Performance Indicators, as described in Annex “D”.
- Evaluation of the annual Target and Action Plan progress, as described in Annex “D”.

The QAT meets every trimester in order to analyze the results of the employment of the previous tools and based on them to identify defects and to recommend remedial actions. In November, the QAT accomplish an overall self-assessment based on the outcomes of the previous analyses and examine the compliance to the standards which are described in Annex “E”. A self-assessment report is to be issued according to annex “E” evaluation matrix and to be submitted to the Commandant during the QAB meeting.

(4) Quality Management (QM)

QM is supervised by the QA Board (QAB). The QAB **is accountable** for matching the overall performance of NMIOTC to current NATO standards regarding E&IT. The QAB consists of:

- Commandant (COM): Chairperson
- Deputy Commandant (DCOM)
- Chief of Staff (COS)
- Director of Education & Training (D/E&T), Director of Training Support (D/TS) and Director of Support (D/S)
- QA Manager: Coordinates the meeting
- QAT

The QAB meets once per year, in January, to evaluate the Quality Assurance Policy and associated core processes. In particular, based on the QAT recommendations and on the self-assessment report, the QAB:

- Evaluates the Quality Assurance Policy for relevance and effectiveness.
- Evaluate the results of the self-assessment report.
- Evaluate the Key Performance Indicators (KPI).
- Evaluate the results of the Staff satisfaction surveys.
- Review the CRB reports.
- Review the progress on the previous year Target and Action Plan.

Taking into account the outcomes of the previous actions, the QAB identifies the weaknesses and the strengths of the Centre and seeks to reveal

opportunities and threats in order to make the most of this fact-based analysis, to the Centre's best advantage. Finally, the QAB decides for a **Target and Action Plan**, which covers all the aspects off the Center's function, in order to rectify weaknesses, to maintain strengths, to exploit opportunities and to counter threats. Details about the Target and Action Plan are specified in Annex "D".

No later than one month after the QAB meeting, the QA Manager ought to prepare a QAB report including the record of decisions, as well as the annual QA report to ACT, as per reference "B".

c. Organizational Structure

The NMIOTC COM holds overall accountability for the Centre's QMS and he is supported by the NMIOTC QAB. Responsible for the operation of the QMS is an organic quality unit, namely QAT. The QAT is appointed by the COM and consists of appropriate personnel from each Directorate as well as of the NMIOTC Lessons Learned Staff Officer (LLSO). NMIOTC COM appoints the Centre's QA Manager (QAM) as well, who is accountable to the COM for the operation of the QMS and who leads the QAT. The NMIOTC QMS organization is illustrated in Figure 4.

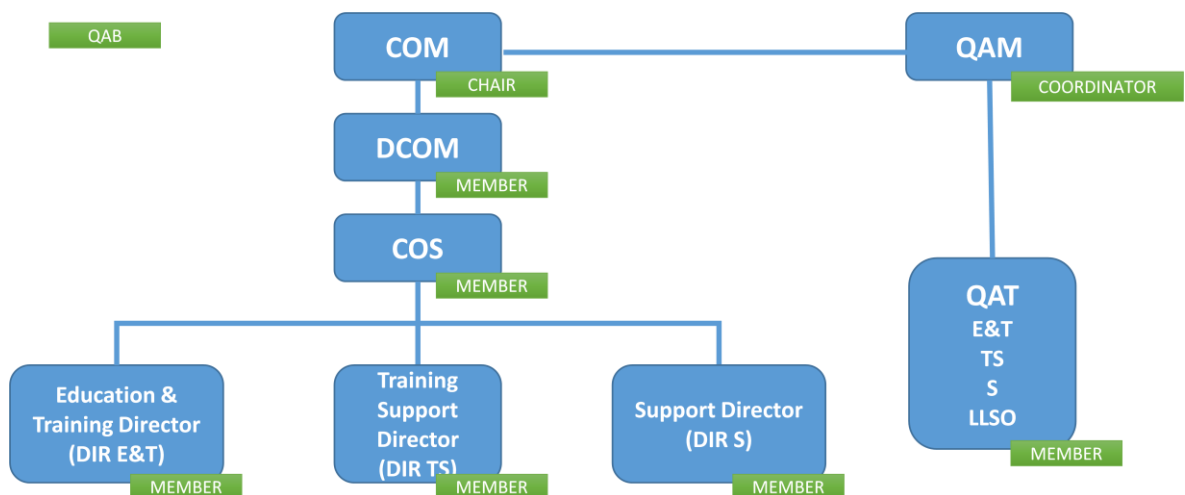


Figure 4: QMS organogram

Further information regarding QA responsibilities as well as the Responsible, Accountable, Consulted, Informed (RACI) Matrix may be found in Annex A.

(1) **Communication Plan**

Communication is an important part of the QSMP to ensure the efficient and timely information flow among the stakeholders, who are interested in E&T activities but also in other activities such as concept and doctrine development, operational experimentations, publications, etc. The Center's Communication Plan (CP) acts as the pathway by which communication is conducted and is divided into two parts: the Internal Communication Plan (ICP)

and the External Communication Plan (ECP). The first aims to establish the awareness of all the involved personnel on the Centre's activities and obligations and to coordinate the stakeholders' efforts. The second is addressed to the public and external stakeholders with the aim of promoting NMIOTC products and augmenting its reputation. It includes, inter alia, the Center's official website, the NMIOTC Journal, social media, as well as conferences, seminars and workshops. Annex B details the NMIOTC CP.

NMIOTC website targets mainly the Community of Interest (Col) but it is also addressed to the broad public. The content is selected by the Center's staff in collaboration with the Public and Information Officer (PIO), approved by the COM and then published. General information includes the history of the Center and its mission, its vision, collaborators, active link, Center news, courses catalogue, advertising flyer and journals issued by the Center. It also includes the application form and the invitation/calling letters for NMIOTC courses/conferences/events to the Col.

(2) Staff Selection Criteria

The NMIOTC's organizational structure describes specifically each staff position, rank, nationality etc. For each position there is a specific Job Description (JD) in which duties, as well as qualifications, both essential and desirable, are thoroughly described. Although NMIOTC, as a military entity, relies on periodical personnel recruitment managed by SNs and CNs for the multinational personnel and from the HNGS for the Greek personnel.

The JDs are reviewed regularly and updated if necessary by the Manpower Office in order to align with NMIOTC's main objectives/core tasks. They provide clear and realistic selection criteria and individual training requirements. NMIOTC Advisory Board (NAB) and NMIOTC Coordination Board (NCB) are the bodies responsible for approving potential updates and changes of the JDs.

A percentage of staff is renewed annually and the selection of new personnel is made on the basis of requirements dictated by the JDs. This results in annual personnel flow and creates the need to train new personnel to meet the specific requirements of their posts.

(3) Academic Staff Development

NMIOTC Academic staff requires specific orientation and training in order to be prepared to perform their assigned duties, in accordance with NMIOTC policy, directives and SOPs. Continuous monitoring of staff effectiveness, efficiency and development is essential.

Therefore, the Centre has established an Academic Staff Development Program (SDP). It consists of an orientation course and an academic short/mid-term training program, with preliminary training requirements and objectives during the first year of the assignment and follow-on training for the following years.

In addition to formal staff orientation and training, the Directors under the coordination of COS must ensure that the progress of the staff development is reinforced through adequate coaching, mentoring and professional development opportunities. All Academic staff should be provided with opportunities to maintain and enhance their Subject Matter Expertise by attending, whenever is possible, related courses, conferences, symposiums and meetings organized by or within

the broader community of interest, for example, participation in the Annual Disciplinary Conferences (ADC) of Maritime and other Disciplines, Training Requirements Analysis (TRA) workshops, organizing conferences with NATO objects and participating in NATO projects (experimentation, doctrine development). The Centre uses external trainers which are selected with appropriate criteria and invited to support specific courses. The instructors/lecturers come from the partner universities and other institutions or entities and are selected on the basis of criteria arising from the Course Control Documents (CCDs), with knowledge and experience in their subject.

More information and details regarding Academic Staff Development Program are provided in NMIOTC's SOP 202.

(4) Personnel Satisfaction

The satisfaction of all employees of the NMIOTC is the most desirable priority. On the grounds that satisfied employees contribute to high quality outcomes, it is COM's goal to ensure the best possible working conditions for all personnel of the Centre.

The level of staff satisfaction is monitored by the COM, through open communication with all staff. Furthermore, in order to have a quantitative feedback on personnel satisfaction, NMIOTC has established a specific procedure (described in SOP 201 "NMIOTC Staff Orientation & Development Programme") which includes an anonymous Staff Questionnaire and motivating tools that can be implemented as corrective measures.

The working environment of the Center itself is an incentive for the staff, as it gives to everyone the opportunity to work in a multinational environment, contact with other trainers and lecturers, various academic institutions and to improve their personal education and professional progress.

(5) Information Management System

NMIOTC has an Information System (IS) based on a network of computers using windows office. NMIOTC personnel can communicate among each other with e-mail through computer network (eg. using Outlook). For the use of the students there are also stand-alone PCs in order to have access to the Internet. There is access to NATO education information through the NATO web Platform-Transnet, the e-ITEP/ETOC Portal and the online trainings via JADL. Each staff officer has his/her own e-mail account to communicate with external partners.

There is a computer-based Data Management System in both networks in use (NS-LAN, NU-LAN) in order to allow NMIOTC personnel to create, share, organize and store documents efficiently and appropriately. The File Server contains all the data archived in folders/files where all the NMIOTC personnel depending on their credentials, have access. For this purpose there are common folders and Directorate reserved ones.

NMIOTC directorates collect and utilize information for planning and reporting purposes to measure the performance of the Center in meeting service delivery challenges. The Information Management System (IMS) is used to monitor results, control activities and plan new services. The electronic IMS consists of hardware (PC-Laptops), software, databases and other tools that NMIOTC personnel use to collect, create, store and process internal and external information. These tools - training capabilities are:

- NMIOTC Database (DB)
- NMIOTC Website
- NMIOTC Simulator
- NMIOTC Video Recording System (CCTV) in training platform ARIS and in Coastal Urban Training Area (CUTA)
- Video Teleconference System (VTC)
- Interactive Student Response System (ISRS)

More information on the structure and operation of the IMS is available in SOP 504. SOP 504 outlines the procedures and responsibilities that Information & Technology (IT) office follows for the support of NMIOTC IMS. It also defines the tools-training capabilities that contribute in gathering and handling of the internal and external information.

(6) Definition and Delivery of Instruction

NMIOTC provides resident approved and listed courses, which are included in NATO Education and Training Opportunities Catalogue (ETOC). NMIOTC Courses provide theoretical and practical training to military or civilian personnel from other agencies and organizations (EU, UN, AU, etc) tasked to participate in support of Maritime Interdiction Operations.

Participants coming from Partner Nations belonging to Interoperability Platform are eligible to receive training considering the security/classification restrictions in NATO.

NMIOTC has developed and adopted SOPs, instructions and controls for the analysis, design, development, implementation and evaluation of its Education and Individual Training (E&IT) products. This includes details on how the institution plans and schedules courses, monitors course quality and conducts periodic reviews ensuring the continued relevance of the E&IT deliverables. The evaluation of all the SOPs in force is accomplished by the QAT during the self-assessment. If QAT judges that there is a need for SOPs revision or new SOP development, they make respective recommendations to QAB.

Furthermore, the modular structure of NMIOTC courses, which has been identified as “best practice”, ensures the delivery of tailored training products that are up to the NATO Quality Standards. These trainings are often tailored to specific mission requirements or operational constraints for each naval unit or group of trainees. Therefore, a tailored training package, which consists of modules from accredited resident courses, is accredited as well.

In order to provide MIO training to nations/organizations/units unable to bring their personnel to NMIOTC, Mobile Education Training Teams (METTs) can also be deployed to any “customer’s” facilities. These teams consist of NMIOTC’s Sea Trainer Instructors (STIs) and/or other SMEs (upon certain module request) and they are deployable worldwide. Their mission is to provide on the spot training, addressing the specific host-country training requirements. The full spectrum of the theoretical training modules can be delivered; while modules related to practical training will be modified, taking into consideration host nation capabilities.

NMIOTC fully supports Alliance’s capability is experiencing an increased demand for online “Anywhere, Anytime” training and will continue to strive to provide the best quality products delivered to our widely dispersed audience. NMIOTC offers Advanced Distributed Learning (ADL) courses/modules

based on a two level approach:

- To support the delivery of NMIOTC resident courses. The core aim is to bring participants to a common knowledge level before starting the residential part of the training (blended course)
- To enhance learners' knowledge relevant to broader NATO topics of interest as well as professional development subjects.

The resident courses that are posted in ETOC follow NATO requirements, in accordance with the Global Programming principles and the NATO System Approach to Training (SAT), i.e. Course Control Documents (CCDs) I, II and III are in accordance with reference "B". NATO Approved courses follow the TRA results, while assessing that the training is tested to meet the most recent requirements as recorded in the annual Discipline Alignment Plans (DAPs).

In SOP 301 the internal process for the approval and development of new courses is analyzed in order to be aligned with the NATO System Approach to Training (SAT) model. Step by step directions are given from the Approval and Course Development process to the conduct of the Pilot Course.

In SOP 302, the Post Course Review (PCR) process is described and analyzed, as well as the course monitoring and evaluation procedures as elements of the NMIOTC's CIP.

In SOP 303 the Course Director's (CD) responsibilities are described so that appropriate planning and coordination instructions exist to support the preparation, execution and conclusion of a course serial/iteration.

In Annex "C", Curriculum Review Board (CRB) procedures are analyzed. The CRB seeks to optimize the integrated use of academic resources based on demand, as well as to ensure that emerging concepts and doctrines are incorporated into NMIOTC curriculum when desirable and feasible. The CRB is a periodic review tool for ensuring the continued relevance of the NMIOTC E&IT delivered.

Additionally, NMIOTC's Program of Work (NPOW) and Course Catalogue, which are both accessible through the Centre's official web page, provide information regarding timetables and course content.

(7) Student Conduct, Assessment and Support

The satisfaction of students is taken into account for improving education. On the completion of each course, CDs gather the students' feedback (observations, recommendations, complaints) via online application or hard copy questionnaire, and report the findings in the PCR, which are taken into account during the review of each resident course, including its modules, at the CRB. This qualitative review is based on the following baselines:

- Achievement of learning objectives.
- Difficulty level of the material.
- Value of course in the trainee's current or future post.
- Appropriateness of time allocated to the course.
- Whether or not trainee would recommend this course to others.

Student assessment is an essential component of the QA as it provides vital information on both the achievement of learning objectives and critical feedback on the course design and conduct. Student assessment can be executed in a variety of forms, both formative and summative. The CDs, in close

cooperation with the Course Instructors, have a relative degree of freedom in the decision on how the student academic assessment is carried out; however, this freedom must be within the limitations dictated by the existing framework documentation of the course itself (CCDs, ref. "B", ref. "C").

Additional information on Student Conduct, Assessment and Support is available in SOP 304 and in the relevant CCDs.

(8) Contribution to NATO

In the field of Maritime Security and related to Maritime Interdiction, NMIOTC responds to the requirements of doctrine development and leads the effort throughout the Alliance and beyond, aiming to improve the capabilities of allied and partner naval units in conducting interdiction operations to enable them to cope with a wide range of maritime security challenges at "further out" distances.

The Centre, as part of the Alliance's transformational network, trains naval units, specialized teams and individuals and provides Supreme Allied Command Transformation (SACT) with proposals for new doctrine, tactics, methods, experiments and equipment. NMIOTC aims at developing a diverse and highly effective Maritime Interdiction workforce via education and training, mentoring and providing opportunities to operational teams and individuals to gain experience and increase their capacity to full potential in Maritime Security.

NMIOTC provides approved and selected courses which are included in the ETOC. The approved courses fulfill specific NATO training requirements on the following disciplines: Maritime Operations, Counter Improvised Explosive Devices and Weapons of Mass Destruction/CBRN Defence, Cyber Operations, Education & Training.

Furthermore, the Centre participates actively in various activities aimed at supporting with listed and under development courses the above mentioned disciplines and also others, such as: Cyber space Operations (COP), Medical Support (MED), Energy Security (ENSEC) and Education, Training, Exercises and Evaluation (ETEE).

NMIOTC participates regularly to the ADCs and to the discipline related events (TRA, TNA, etc) of the trainings provided. By embracing NATO standards and promoting innovation and experimentation as well as simulation and modeling, NMIOTC contributes directly to force integration and standardization and the improvement of interoperability across the Alliance. Inclusion of partner nations at every opportunity enables them as security contributors. A law enforcement culture is forged through pertinent training in international maritime law. In addition to practical training, NMIOTC also reaches out to academia. Opportunities for cooperation with the Academic Community have been examined aiming at providing mutual benefits.

Finally, with respect to NATO-EU cooperation, NMIOTC is part of the related Maritime Security Community of Interest and collaborates with European External Action Service (EEAS) Security Policy Division and the European Security and Defence College (ESDC).

More information and details regarding the Transformation Function are provided in SOP 305.

(9) Budget Resources Management

NMIOTC has established a Special Financial Administration (SFA) to administer revenues coming from Centre's activities. Currently, the SFA funds almost 80% of the training costs.

NMIOTC's Budget & Finance Department ensures that the financial operations comply with the Host Nation Financial Regulations, Rules and Procedures and the HNGS Financial Manual and public law with respect to budgeting, purchasing and contracting, accounting, treasury and auditing. The Department supervises the preparation of the NMIOTC Annual Financial Plan (AFP).

NMIOTC has a sustainable budget. The Budget & Finance Department prepares the NMIOTC impact statement and forwards the budgets to HNGS for endorsement. It is responsible for the maintenance of the accounting information system.

Additional information on Budget Resources Management is provided in SOP 1100.

6. Final remarks

NMIOTC is committed to upholding the highest NATO Quality Standards for its training products. For this purpose, the Quality Assurance Policy is the governing document that guarantees, through the employment of the processes and mechanisms described within it, a systematic approach to creating, maintaining and refining NMIOTC's training products in line with the NATO Quality Standards.

Charalampos Thymis
Commodore GRC(N)
Commandant NMIOTC