

NATO Federated Mission Networking @ BEL Defence

Major Jeff VANDROMME, ACOS Strat C4IS & Cyber Security
jeff.vandromme@mil.be

I. INTRODUCTION

Federated Mission Networking (FMN) is a key contribution to the NATO Connected Forces Initiative, helping Allied and partner forces better communicate, train and operate together. FMN enables the rapid instantiation of mission networks by federating NATO, NATO Nations and Mission Partner capabilities, thereby enhancing interoperability and information sharing. FMN will provide standards in the way how to conduct operations in future, replacing the former C2 arrangements.

II. FMN @ BELGIAN DEFENCE

Belgian Defence is currently using its own specific platforms and networks treating information for planning and continuous support to operations. Since the majority of current and future operations are/will be coalition operations, it is crucial that Belgium adapts his capabilities in order to be capable of sharing operational data and services with coalition and other partners. An extension to (EU) *Common Security and Defence Policy* (CSDP) missions is possible as well. In March 2015, Belgium expressed its intention to affiliate to this initiative, requesting a minimum of commitments.

A. *Approach*

Since December 2012, Belgium's Defence Staff follow up FMN developments by participating in meetings and contributing in the documentation. NATO FMN governance and management structure has been approved by NAC early in January 2015. As the FMN affiliation requirements are not approved yet, it is still difficult to express at this stage the Belgium's capability level – three options are offered:

- A. Mission Network Element (MNE) (Service Provider)
- B. Mission Network eXtension (MNX) (bring you MN and connect to MNE)
- C. Hosted user (everything is provided by option A or B instantiation)

B. *Intentional long term level of ambition*

At long term, Belgian Defence should be capable to :

- Timely communicate human-to-human and share information in a consistent, secure, accurate and reliable NATO Federated Mission Data Environment at all levels;
- Contribute to the NATO Federated view of the battle space across the Mission Network and have access to it;
- Timely integrate Belgian Defence's capabilities into a NATO Federated Operational Environment;
- Have a well-trained staff that can support an effective decision cycle and take full advantage of the systems provided.

III. CONCLUSION

Interoperability is fundamental for contributing to mission success and safety. Being interoperable with mission partners will enhance our own command and control and mission readiness and effectiveness.