



COMMITTEE OF THE CHIEFS OF MILITARY
MEDICAL SERVICES IN NATO

COMITE DES CHEFS DES SERVICES DE SANTE
MILITAIRES AU SEIN DE L'OTAN



10 November 2015

COMEDS(CHAIR)L(2015)0022

To All COMEDS members

COMEDS Vision and Strategic Goals

References

- MC 0335 – COMEDS Terms of Reference, 27 May 2015
- COMEDS(CHAIR)L(2015)0021-COMEDS Vision and Strategic goals, 28 Oct 2015

On 10 November 2015, under the silence procedure, the COMEDS approved the COMEDS Vision and Strategic Goals (in annex).

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COMEDS VISION AND STRATEGIC GOALS 2015 - 2020

References:

- A. Strategic Concept for the Defence and Security of the Members of NATO, adopted by the Heads of State and Government at the NATO Summit in Lisbon 19-20 November 2010.
- B. MC 0335 – COMEDS Terms of Reference, 27 May 2015.

STRATEGIC CONTEXT

1. The Strategic Concept adopted by the Heads of State and Government at the 2010 Lisbon Summit articulated a vision for the North Atlantic Alliance and set objectives for the following 10 years. This included the commitment to ensure that NATO has the full range of capabilities necessary to undertake its three essential core tasks: collective defence, crisis management and cooperative security. The Strategic Concept further committed Allies to engage in a continuous process of reform, modernization and transformation.
2. At the 2012 Chicago Summit, Heads of State and Government looked towards 2020 to ensure that the Alliance will have all the requisite capabilities to implement the Strategic Concept and a coherent set of deployable, interoperable and sustainable forces, equipped, trained, exercised and commanded so as to meet NATO's Level of Ambition.

THE ROLE OF MILITARY MEDICINE AND THE COMEDS

3. Despite national variations in the delivery of healthcare, the identification and implementation of advancements in civilian healthcare is a global scientific activity. Military medicine however not only requires the monitoring and employment of advances in medical civilian and military technologies, research and evidence-based medicine, but also the ability to deliver these skills and capabilities in the context of military operations.
4. Although there are other organisations and committees focused on military medicine, the COMEDS can be considered singular in not only regularly bringing together the currently serving Chiefs of Military Medical Services, of the 28 NATO nations, Partner nations, nations from the Mediterranean Dialogue, Istanbul Cooperation Initiative and Partners across the Globe but most importantly in

providing a common vision for military healthcare through the formal setting and endorsement of doctrine and standards. This uniqueness in turn requires a robust internal mechanism to continually challenge them to maintain the quality and excellence of their outputs. This excellence will lead to the COMEDS becoming the reference, not only for other military medical organizations, but also International Organizations and Non-Governmental Organizations who require or request enhanced understanding of the medical component of military operations world-wide.

VISION

5. The new COMEDS vision reflects a top-down approach by the Surgeon Generals of NATO Nations focused on the delivery of operational requirements balanced with the need to be resource aware. It reads:

To be the most relevant military medical organization guiding the provision of excellent, effective and ethical full spectrum health services at best value to the Allies.

MISSION

6. In considering its Vision and Strategic Goals, COMEDS felt that an amendment to its Mission would provide greater coherence. The following COMEDS Mission is offered.

To enhance the overall military health capability of the Alliance by:

- 6.1. Advising the MC on healthcare matters affecting NATO.
- 6.2. Acting as a coordinating body for the MC regarding all military health related policies, doctrines, concepts, procedures, techniques, programmes and initiatives.
- 6.3. Developing military health related policy recommendations and coordinated advice on:
 - 6.3.1. Strategic aspects of operational military health service support;
 - 6.3.2. Interoperability, Multinationality and Standardization;
 - 6.3.3. Research, Education, Training, Exercises and Evaluation;
 - 6.3.4. Cooperation between NATO, Partners and appropriate organisations;
 - 6.3.5. Serving as an expert reference for NATO and nations.
- 6.4. Guiding the health related components within the NATO Defence Planning Process.

STRATEGIC GOALS

7. To implement this Vision and Mission, the COMEDS has established the following Strategic Goals:

7.1. Excellence. To become the reference group for other military and civilian medical organization based on our ability to deliver high-quality, timely and proven medical advice and to provide the leadership necessary to enhance relationships and collaboration with relevant medical organizations through an environment of full and open engagement with Nations.

7.2. Ethical Practice. To be respected within the military and civilian medical communities and to protect the reputation of NATO by ensuring that all military health services are underpinned by a common and formalised ethical framework.

7.3. Effectiveness. To provide an efficient framework for NATO, Partner Nations and national medical services to deliver improved or enhanced medical capability, availability and interoperability, leading to improved deployability of NATO forces. The framework will be underpinned by the COMEDS' leadership to identify the right priorities for NATO, accountability to assure member nations that collective resources and national inputs are used responsibly and transparency to demonstrate that the confidence that the military medical services understand and can meet their task.

CORE VALUES

8. Core Values are those values the COMEDS believe in and which form the foundation on which the COMEDS perform work and conduct themselves. They enable commonality of expectations and behaviours and in doing so must permeate across and through all elements of the COMEDS structure.

9. As a multinational military body, each member of the COMEDS will have their own national and military core values. Many of these are likely to be similar, and not just related to the military medical professional, such as integrity, loyalty, impartiality, courage, and accountability. These values will continue to underpin the COMEDS through the approach and actions of each of the individual members, however in developing the strategic goals of the COMEDS a number of additional core value statements were identified as being of particular relevance to the organization and worth underlining.

9.1. The COMEDS will maintain a military focus to all activities, whilst balancing the necessary ethical needs of a medical organization and ensuring a non-discriminatory respect for life.

9.2. The COMEDS will be a professional body, prepared to embrace change, learn from experience and having the resilience and flexibility to adapt to changing situations.

9.3. The COMEDS will be passionate in cooperating in a collaborative manner to ensure that the highest quality of honest and appropriate medical advice is delivered to NATO at the right time.

GOVERNANCE

10. The vision, strategic goals and core values of the COMEDS will guide the approach we take in providing military medical advice to NATO, be that directly to the Military Committee, or through the delivery of doctrine or standardization agreements. As such they are equally applicable to all working groups and panels within the COMEDS Structure. The COMEDS Steering Group will be responsible for ensuring that this document is understood throughout the COMEDS structure and is to be prepared to conduct an initial review of this document not less than 24 months following approval.