

OBSEG IN KARAKTER SLOVENSKE VOJSKE

SLOVENIAN ARMED FORCES SIZE AND CHARACTER

Povzetek Besedilo obravnava vprašnji o obsegu in karakterju Slovenske vojske (SV). Že nekaj časa se namreč pojavljajo zamisli o nadaljnjem zmanjševanju stalne sestave SV, ki zaradi omejenih finančnih sredstev dobivajo še dodaten zagon. V članku je kratek zgodovinski pregled obsega oboroženih formacij slovenskega naroda v luči izpolnjevanja nalog SV, kot so zapisane v Zakonu o obrambi (ZoObr). Obravnavam tudi karakter SV in osrednjega vira njene bojne moči, in sicer pehote. Vojske v zavezništvu in širše poznajo več tipov pehote, kar je treba upoštevati, ko razmišljamo o tem, kakšno pehoto bomo v SV imeli. Seveda se zavedamo finančnih omejitev, ki jim je SV izpostavljena, zato v sklepnem delu predstavljamo nekaj predlogov, kako uresničiti predlagana obseg in značaj SV, ki so namenjeni dodatni razpravi in bi bili potrebni bolj poglobljene analize.

Ključne besede *Obseg oboroženih sil, Slovenska vojska, Nato, pehota, stalna sestava, vojaška strateška rezerva.*

Abstract The text deals with the questions of the size and character of the Slovenian Armed Forces (SAF). Ideas of downsizing the SAF's active component have been present for quite a while, and have additionally gained momentum due to the limited defence resources. The article looks at the size of Slovenian armed structures from a historic perspective in the light of the tasks set before the SAF by the Defence Act. The article also deals with the SAF's character and the source of its combat power – the infantry. Allied and other armies list several types of infantry, the fact which should be taken into consideration when deliberating on the type of infantry in the SAF. Of course, we are aware of the financial restrictions imposed on the SAF; therefore the conclusion includes some suggestions on how to achieve the proposed size and character of the SAF. The suggestions, however, are intended more as a base for a discussion and would have to be further analysed.

Key words *Size of armed forces, Slovenian Armed Forces, NATO, infantry, active component, military strategic reserve.*

Introduction At the top of its power, the wartime strength of the Territorial Defence of the Republic of Slovenia (TD) comprised over 80,000 members. Such a number was never actually mobilised, but its capabilities still enabled this strength. After the War for Independence and later, when the conflicts on the territory of the former Yugoslavia ended, the size of the TD and later the Slovenian Armed Forces gradually changed. It ranged from a wartime strength of 54,000 members in 1994 through the maximum of 73,000 in 2001; 39,000 in 2002 and 2003, and 16,000 in 2004 (Grizold, 2005, pp. 125, 127) and the currently authorised 10,000. The SAF and the TD have throughout the process preserved the character of a light infantry force with a smaller manoeuvre structure and larger territorial structure¹. For quite some time, there have been more or less formal ideas that the size and structure of the SAF should be reduced even further. In this respect, a number around 5,000 servicemembers is most often mentioned. Simultaneously, informal discussions have taken place both in the SAF and in the interested public concerning the nature of the SAF's character.

The size and character of the SAF are determined on the basis of missions entrusted to the SAF, the threats posed to the Republic of Slovenia, and its NATO membership. However, we must also consider the historical experience of the size and character of the armed forces of the Slovenian nation since the beginning of the 19th century on. The SAF is and will remain largely a land force with infantry as its core branch and the centre of its combat power. Other branches and services provide infantry support or combat service support to a limited extent and can also function as independent units. Within the infantry as the SAF's central branch and source of its combat and non-combat power, a question arises what kind of infantry we actually need, since not every type of infantry is suitable for the missions and resources of the SAF.

1 MISSIONS OF THE SLOVENIAN ARMED FORCES AND NATO

Missions of the SAF as stated in the Defence Act (Article 37):

- Implement military education and training in armed combat and other forms of military defence.
- Ensure the necessary and required readiness.
- Organize military defence in the event of attack on the state.
- Participate in protection and rescue activities in the event of natural and other disasters in line with its organization and equipment.

¹ *In the 1990s, forces were divided into manoeuvre and territorial forces. In 2001, this division changed to include reaction forces, main striking forces and augmentation forces in order to finally become unified with the Alliance in 2004. Currently, the SAF forces are divided according to their role in the combat system and include combat forces, combat support forces, combat service support forces and command support forces, depending on their ability to deploy (deployable and non-deployable forces) and their level of readiness (high-readiness forces, low-readiness forces and long-term build-up forces) (Grizold, 2005, pp. 134, 135, 136).*

- Execute obligations assumed by the state in international organizations and through treaties.

The missions stated in the Defence Act are clear. The SAF must provide military defence in the event of an attack, participate in protection and rescue activities in the event of major emergencies and meet international obligations, which the armed forces can meet. It must therefore conduct training and provide adequate readiness. The mission of the SAF, however, is defined differently in various strategic documents.

The Resolution on General Long-Term Development and Equipping Programme of the Slovenian Armed Forces up to 2025 (ReSDPRO SV 2025) defines that the mission of the SAF is "to contribute to the implementation of interests and national security objectives of the Republic of Slovenia through military capabilities" (National Assembly of the RS, p. 10). As for the missions of the SAF, the ReSDPRO SV 2025 summarizes the missions set in the Defence Act.

The Defence Strategy of the Republic of Slovenia stipulates that the mission of the SAF is "to ensure military power of the Republic of Slovenia through military capabilities, which represents the most powerful and the outmost instrument of the state for promoting and implementing its national interests, and national security objectives" (Government of the RS, 2012, p. 9).

The 2006 Military Doctrine states that "the mission of the SAF is to deter military aggression against the Republic of Slovenia in cooperation with the Alliance and to contribute to international peace and stability within and outside the borders of the Alliance. In the event of military aggression, the SAF carries out, independently or in cooperation with its allies, the military defence of the Republic of Slovenia with the objective to resist and deter the enemy and to re-establish the national sovereignty on the entire territory of Slovenia." (Furlan, 2006, p. 24).

Based on the above, we can see that the mission of the SAF is not defined uniformly by all the strategic documents, which may have negative consequences. The mission as defined by the ReSDPRO SV 2025 and Defence Strategy refers to what is called the grand strategy² of the state and discusses its role in relation to national security interests and objectives. The mission, summarized from the Military Doctrine, however, provides a more concrete definition of the SAF's modus operandi as it follows the defined objectives, and as such provides a better framework for the discussion about the size and character of the SAF.

On the basis of the strategic documents it can therefore be concluded that the defence strategy of the Republic of Slovenia is deterrent and that, in order to ensure its own security, it mainly relies on the Alliance. Doing this, it may quickly find itself trapped by the excessive devolution of the responsibility for its own safety on other members

² The term is used by Barry Posen in his book and refers to national security strategies of different countries.

of the Alliance. It should therefore be clearly understood what and how much security the Alliance provides. In this respect, it is crucial to know and understand articles 3 and 5 of the North Atlantic Treaty.

Article 5 of the Treaty reads: "*The Parties agree that an armed attack against one or more of them in Europe or North America shall be considered an attack against them all and consequently they agree that, if such an armed attack occurs, each of them, in exercise of the right of individual or collective self-defence recognized by Article 51 of the Charter of the United Nations, will assist the Party or Parties so attacked by taking forthwith, individually and in concert with the other Parties, such action as it deems necessary including the use of armed force, to restore and maintain the security of the North Atlantic area.*"³ Article 5 does talk about the fact that an attack against one member of the Alliance is an attack against them all, but at the same time, it allows each country to respond to this attack in its own way. Armed force is just one of the ways in which they can respond, which means that an attack against the Republic of Slovenia would not necessarily imply assistance of the Alliance such as one would expect. The Alliance does not have its own armed forces, but it includes forces that are contributed to joint commands by individual states. The Alliance makes us safer only in conjunction with the global threats that threaten both Slovenia as well as the majority of other allies, or at least the most powerful ones. In the event of a local threat, however, the reliance on the Alliance is tenuous.

Article 3 of the North Atlantic Treaty reads: "*In order more effectively to achieve the objectives of this Treaty, the Parties, separately and jointly, by means of continuous and effective self-help and mutual aid, will maintain and develop their individual and collective capacity to resist armed attack.*"⁴

Article 3 of the Treaty clearly imposes the requirement that each member state develop its own capabilities for defence against an armed attack. Therefore, we cannot agree with Grizold, who states that "the division of military capabilities into those for the needs of national defence and those that are available to NATO almost no longer exists." (Grizold, 2005, p. 187). Member states, including the Republic of Slovenia, must develop their own ability to defend themselves against an attack.⁵ If a member state does not meet the requirements of this Article, it cannot expect that other member states would fill in the shortcomings in its defence capabilities.

The Alliance has its price, and no member should allow itself to ignore its own defence capabilities and in doing so rely that the security will be provided by

³ (http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/official_texts_17120.htm)

⁴ (http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/official_texts_17120.htm)

⁵ *At the recent wave of terrorist threats, the attack on French satirical newspaper, France and Belgium sent their soldiers to the streets to ensure safety independently of the Alliance. These capabilities can be the same capabilities that are available to the Alliance, but the fact is that the national-security needs are separate from the Alliance, as demonstrated in Afghanistan, where, despite the activation of Article 5, it took almost two years before the rest of the Alliance was actively involved in the conflict.*

Article 5 of the Treaty. The Alliance can be effective only if all the allies fulfil their commitments. The reality is of course different and shows that the politicians often put the responsibility for the security of their own countries into the hands of other Allies, thus neglecting their own capabilities. Membership can be extremely useful for shared capabilities and cost reduction in joint projects. If, therefore, the Republic of Slovenia gives up, for example, its armoured (tank) capabilities, air defence, military aviation and so on, it must have a clear plan on how it will compensate this shortage within the Alliance: whether it will invest in better anti-tank capabilities, a joint air-defence system, regional air forces etc. Slovenia has already found solutions within the Alliance to make up for the shortages of certain capabilities; however, all cannot be solved through the Alliance, certainly not with the defence expenditure of 1.1% of GDP, where only 0.74% of GDP is allocated for the needs of the SAF. The rest of it is intended for other capabilities in the defence system of the Republic of Slovenia, namely the Civil Protection Service, fire-fighters and others. (Lecture of Slovenian CHOD at <http://youtu.be/tEHYGFWO7pQ>, from 12.30 to 12.45).

Although allied countries share the risks, costs and benefits of the war, the provision of security within the Alliance also brings about great hazards. Countries within the alliances leave the responsibility for their own safety to others, which leads to unrealistic reduction of their own security resources. Another trap of the Alliance, on the other hand, is following a military doctrine of the leading nation, although it may not be appropriate for a small country (Posen, 1984, p. 73). We believe that NATO is an example of such an alliance with the United States that have a highly offensive military doctrine more or less openly leading all other allies into a similar doctrine. In this respect, the SAF is despite the fact that it is declaratively committed to a deterrent doctrine, structurally more similar to an army, which develops an offensive doctrine.⁶

Slovenian politics and the public must be clearly aware that the safety of our country is primarily our own responsibility and that extreme saving measures in defence capabilities will leave serious consequences.

2 SECURITY THREATS AND CHALLENGES OF THE REPUBLIC OF SLOVENIA

The society in the postmodern era faces a number of more or less credible threats. According to Moskos "for a long time yet, different revolutionary / terrorist movements will be the most likely threat to a country in the postmodern era." (Moskos in Bebler, 2005, p. 316). However, we cannot write off the threats to which the

⁶ *Offensive doctrine at the strategic level should not be confused with offensive actions at the tactical level. Even the armed forces, which develop defensive or deterrent doctrine at the strategic level, can and even need to develop an offensive doctrine at the tactical level, to assume the initiative in combat and interfere with the enemy's decision-making cycle. This is advocated by the function of command and control on the basis of the mission statement, also known in the SAF doctrine, which I discussed in more detail in the Contemporary Military Challenges of June 2014-16, No.2*

country was exposed in the traditional and the modern eras.⁷ According to Dandeker, post-modern armed forces have an extremely wide range of defence-related tasks and roles and must therefore have an appropriate structure and reserve component to perform them all (Dandeker in Moskos, 2000, p. 45). In addition to other features, Moskos in relation to postmodern armed forces also highlights the change in the purpose of the military from winning a war to the tasks that are not military in the traditional sense of the word, and the involvement of the military in missions with international legitimacy (Moskos, 2000, p. 2).

It is not about which threat is more likely or more significant. In a world that is as interconnected and volatile as today's it is impossible to prioritize threats in the long run. Grizold notes that post-Cold War threats around the world have a few common elements (Grizold, 2005, pp. 22, 23):

1. Integration, interlacing and interaction between military and non-military threats to security
2. Turning of national security to international security, and vice versa. Security today has global dimensions in spatial and thematic terms. In this respect, the security of individual countries is increasingly becoming the domain of the global international system.
3. Coherence and accountability among operators ensuring safety, such as national, international and transnational organizations, non-governmental organizations, multinational corporations, pressure groups, etc. have increased significantly.
4. The instruments and mechanisms for ensuring security are more complex and are integrated into the system at the level of both the state and the international community.

It is necessary to have a system which is designed so that it can adequately respond to any threat and is financially sustainable.

Strategic defence and security documents of the Republic of Slovenia come to similar conclusions and do not prioritise threats. They establish that in the short and medium terms the likelihood of direct military threats to the Republic of Slovenia is little, but not to be excluded. At the same time, however, the asymmetric nature of threats and their hybrid forms require both a non-military response to military threats as well as a military response to non-military threats (Def. Strat. RS, 2012, p. 3). If we could draw a lesson from contemporary crises and conflicts, it would be that they are unpredictable. But most unpredictable is the direction of development, which they will take – will they retain a local character or will they develop a regional one or become even broader, ultimately global. International security system is simply too unpredictable and interests which will prevail cannot be identified in advance so that

⁷ *Allegedly, traditional societies existed until the end of World War II. They were characterized by massive national armies. Modern societies, on the other hand, existed from the end of World War II until the end of the Cold War. They were distinguished by the armies with professional officer corps, reduced size and advanced education. Postmodern societies in the post-Cold War period have armies, where boundaries between civil and military spheres are blurred. (Moskos in Bebler, 2005, p. 313)*

one could reliably estimate the developments. This has been confirmed by the recent two events of crisis in Ukraine, which shook and continue to shake the entire Europe, as well as by the achievements of Islamic State (ISIL) forces in Iraq and Syria.

Grizold states that »in addition to conventional threats (e.g. war, arms race, nuclear proliferation, etc.) modern security threats include non-military threats, which are becoming increasingly topical, such as mass violations of fundamental human rights and freedoms, pollution and consequently global warming, hunger, infectious diseases, drug trafficking and human trafficking, sudden migrations and others. These security threats, along with international terrorism, weapons of mass destruction, and what is referred to as non-functional states that are not only endangering their own population, but are also destabilizing the entire region, have become essential sources of threats to modern security. Such complex security threats require equally complex solutions. "(Grizold, 2005, p. 24).

Defence and security system of the Republic of Slovenia and in particular the SAF must therefore strive to maximize the flexibility of its structure and the individuals who make it up. The SAF must be prepared both for military threats to the national territory, as well as for natural and other disasters, cyber threats and operations in crisis zones around the world. There is no organization, which would be capable of responding to all these threats at once, and the armed forces will not take on the leading role in all of the events. However, there are threats where more significant initiative is required. These include traditional military threats to the national territory and participation in international operations and missions. Nevertheless, the Slovenian Armed Forces will also be involved elsewhere; in some places mostly with personnel and technical means (protection and rescue activities), and in others with some specialized elements, such as cyber defence, or specialists (e.g. in counter-terrorist activities).

The key feature here is flexibility, which must be built into the system and constitute a part of each individual in the system.

3 SIZE OF THE SLOVENIAN ARMED FORCES

The choice of military doctrine of each country within what is referred to as national grand strategy defines the character, size and structure of its armed forces. Posen distinguishes between offensive, defensive and deterrent military doctrines. Offensive doctrines aim to disarm an enemy – to destroy his armed forces. Defensive doctrines aim to deny an enemy the objective he seeks. Deterrent doctrines aim to punish an aggressor – to raise his costs (material, human and financial), without reducing one's own (Posen, 1984, p. 14).

Considering the strategic documents and the military doctrine in force, the military doctrine of the SAF is deterrent. According to the Military doctrine "*the mission of the SAF is to deter military aggression...*" (Furlan, 2006, p. 24) The SAF should

therefore, by its nature, structure and scope serve above all to deter potential threats. Of course, the SAF and the military security of the Republic of Slovenia cannot be considered separately from the Alliance. The fact is that NATO membership has a deterrent effect at least for conventional aggressors. However, the Alliance still shows identity crisis (Grizold, 2005, pp. 92, 93), which occurred not only after the end of the Cold War, but was above all caused by changes in the perception of what the concept of security in the post-9/11 period really means. After the Wales summit, the Alliance has become more aware that it must decisively deal with new forms of threats⁸, and has committed to further enhance its capabilities to address those threats (Declaration, 2014, no. 64). Among its fundamental tasks, the Alliance lists deterrence and defence against the threat of aggression against any member state, but at the same time notes that large-scale conventional aggression against the Alliance is unlikely, but should not be written off over the longer term. (NATO AJP-01 (D), pp. 2-2 and 2-3). Doctrinal documents state that response operations to crises and transnational and hybrid adversaries are more probable. The Alliance's structure corresponds to this fact and so will its further transformation (Declaration, 2014, no. 64), and also its expectations toward all member states. In accordance with Posen's definitions of military doctrine, the doctrine of the Alliance is in my opinion offensive as it provides for short and rapid conflicts on foreign territories and places great emphasis on highly responsive and strategically deployable forces.

The SAF complies with the Alliance's guidelines with its current peacetime size and structure, but not with its military strategic reserve⁹. By no means, however, does this suffice for the deterrence of potential adversaries with its own armed forces so that the potential enemy would suffer so much loss for such a long period of time that it would no longer consider an armed aggression sensible. Even the Doctrine of Military Strategic Reserve of the Republic of Slovenia stipulates that "the possible benefits of the potential aggressor should be significantly lesser than the damage... we as a potential victim of the attack can inflict on him" (MOD 2012, p. 6). The Alliance is currently the only deterrent of the defence doctrine of the Republic of Slovenia and the SAF's current structure is not appropriate for a deterrent doctrine. For the Republic of Slovenia and the SAF, a deterrent doctrine is the only sensible one, as small countries with very limited resources do not have the conditions to develop an offensive or defensive doctrine. At the same time, the Republic of Slovenia has no other option but to ensure its security within the Alliance. Another option is neutrality, but for this adequate security assurances within the international community would have to be obtained, which is, in the long-term, unpredictable and anarchistic. Slovenia does not have realistic options for anything like this and the hazard it would be exposed to in this respect is unacceptable.

⁸ *The Alliance refers to transnational and multi-dimensional threats, hybrid threats, terrorism and ballistic missile threat (Declaration, 2014, no. 13, no. 32, no. 55). What these threats have in common is that they do not target only military objectives, but rather political. Thus, hybrid threats comprise a mixture of explicit and implicit military, paramilitary and civilian threats, according to the current situation.*

⁹ *The concept of military strategic reserve is only formal, written on paper, and is not precisely elaborated nor tested, so it cannot and will not be realised.*

The current concept of the SAF's strategic reserve foresees to increase its volume to 25,000 members in one year (Doctrine of Military Strategic Reserve of RS, 2012, p. 10, 24). I find this unrealistic, because the SAF no longer has any reserve except the contract reserve, which is not intended to increase the military strategic reserve, but to complement the SAF's active component. Regional Defence Administrations do keep a military service record, however the registered citizens do not receive notices on military training, nor is their competence for military service monitored. The SAF also has no plans on how to use these records and what to do in case of need. Considering the pace of modern warfare and the development of crisis situations, the SAF will not have one year to prepare for the potential threat. Furthermore, it is not clear how the politicians would make a radical decision such as the mobilization of military strategic reserve a year in advance, when there is no guarantee that a crisis or war would grow into a conflict of such proportions that it would threaten Slovenia. The SAF also lacks leaders who could train 25,000 members. Where would the personnel to train strategic reserve leaders come from? It should be noted that a large part of the SAF, in particular its most qualified part, has to perform operational tasks, which should certainly be many during a crisis (including the fulfilment of commitments to the Alliance). The second-class personnel, however, cannot train other than the third-class strategic reserve leaders. Additionally, any training under the conditions of military occupation would be extremely difficult, and, above all, slow.

Plans to increase the size of the SAF, which are only in the form of a concept, will not work. If we are seriously considering increasing the size of the SAF with the strategic reserve, we must have a system in place which will live and will be at least partially periodically tested.

The Slovenian Armed Forces currently includes 7,963 members, 7,049 of which constitute the active component, and the remaining 914 are members of the contract reserve. The figures apply to December 2015 ([http:// www.slovenskavojska.si/0-slovenski-vojski/](http://www.slovenskavojska.si/0-slovenski-vojski/)). The total authorised size of the SAF includes 10,000 members, but the SAF cannot reach it because of human resource constraints imposed by the Government and due to the situation on the labour market and its own lack of competitiveness. The maximum acceptable number for active component thus amounts to 7,600 members and 1,500 members of the contract reserve, a total of 9,100 members.

The manoeuvre part of the SAF, i.e. the part which is intended to face the enemy on the battlefield and defeat it in an armed conflict, comprises four infantry regiments with 700 members according to non-official sources; therefore a total of about 2,800 members¹⁰. Other SAF members provide combat support, combat service support

¹⁰ *On-line sources have been used, which make no reference to official sources and are therefore not separately mentioned. Unfortunately, all the official sources known to me, which are associated with the numerical size of the SAF are classified as confidential and, therefore, cannot be referred to here. For the purposes of the article, I assume that sources available online are at least roughly correct.*

and command and control (C2) as well as military education and training. In a 1956 interview, U.S. General George C. Marshall said that "it is a completely mistaken illusion that infantry is easy to train" (Bolger, 1999, p. 29). For an infantryman, close combat with an enemy is an extremely personal and stressful experience. The fewer such soldiers there are in a society, the better they have to be. Good infantry is specially selected, well trained, and above all capable of making quick decisions and good judgment in combat (Bolger, 1999, p. 31).

This should be the most important qualitative difference between conscript and professional infantry. Conscripts perform their duties because they have to, while professional soldiers in principle want to do it. Conscript armed forces closely follow the programme where the content is prescribed by the number of hours, while the professional armed forces have to follow the achievement of standards. Their training is and should be harder, more realistic and better.

One of the advantages of conscript armed forces is their number. However, the quality cannot always compensate for the size. Therefore, we wonder what this number is for the SAF.

According to the Doctrine of the Strategic Reserve of the Republic of Slovenia, at least from the times of Turkish invasions to Slovenia's independence, the self-defence skill of people on Slovenian territory was repeatedly recognized as useful. A brief historical overview of Slovenian armed forces over the past 100 years shows the following:

1. General Maister's army in 1918, approximately 12,000 members (<http://www.slovenskavojska.si/o-slovenski-vojski/zgodovina/>).
2. Slovenian National Liberation Army and Partisan detachments in August 1944, about 21,700 members (<http://www.slovenskavojska.si/o-slovenski-vojski/zgodovina/>), by the end of the war, the number grew to about 35,000 (Guštin in Bebler, 2005, pp. 59–95).
3. Slovenian Home Guard around 13,500 members (ibid).
4. Mobilized into the German Armed Forces, 1941-1945, around 50,000 people¹¹.
5. Territorial Defence of the Republic of Slovenia, June 1991, approximately 35,000 members (<http://www.slovenskavojska.si/o-slovenski-vojski/zgodovina/>).

Here, it should be noted that the army of General Maister worked almost exclusively in the northern and north-eastern part of Slovenia, therefore on a little less than half of today's Slovenian territory.

¹¹ *Information about how many people were mobilized into the German army varies widely depending on the source. Seničar in his thesis gives a number 28,000 in 1943 only for Styria, but indicates 150,000 as the final number, which includes all who had been mobilized into military and paramilitary formations of the occupying forces. My assessment is therefore approximate and relates only to those mobilized into the German army.*

Slovenian Home Guard¹² was limited to what was referred to as the region of Ljubljana and the operating zone of the Adriatic Coast, so again to a little less than half of Slovenian territory. Only Slovenian National Liberation Army and Partisan detachments were active in practically the entire territory of Slovenia, while it should be understood in their case that they constituted a guerrilla army¹³. They were organized into two corps and one operational zone, but the size and combat power of the Partisan corps would more resemble an Allied infantry division. This can be seen by comparing the size and structure of the 7th Corps of the Slovenian National Liberation Army and the U.S. 2nd Infantry Division¹⁴. At the same time, it should be noted that both the Slovenian Home Guard and the Slovenian National Liberation Army recruited their members from the same human resource pool of the Slovenian nation between 1941 and 1945, which was in a very efficient and organised manner also used by the German army.

In 1991, the Territorial Defence with its territorial structure effectively covered the entire Slovenian territory and successfully denied the enemy with a manoeuvre-oriented doctrine. However, it was not intended for manoeuvre warfare aimed at defending the territory. In June 1991, its final size was about 35,000 members, which included about 10,000 police officers.

From the historic perspective, we can therefore refer to the 35,000 members of armed formations as to a force which can effectively deny the enemy's forces on the territory as large as the Republic of Slovenia. Also, the ability to deny or disrupt is what makes a military doctrine of a country deterrent, as this denies the enemy the objective it seeks and raises its costs (material, human and financial) (Posen, 1984, p. 14). This confirms the assumption from the ReSDPRO SV 2025 (up to 10,000) and the Doctrine of Military Strategic Reserve (up to 25,000), which together make up an armed force with 35,000 members.

The ratio between the active component and the anticipated size of the wartime component or what is referred to as the strategic reserve is crucial. For illustrative purposes, we can look at the German Armed Forces, After the First World War, it was limited to 100,000 members, which did not meet the defence needs of Germany, should the war in Europe reoccur. For this purpose, German General Staff sought to increase its size as quickly as possible. Consequently, they created an army of leaders with the concept of mission command, where almost all members of the armed forces were expected to be able to assume commanding duties up to two levels higher than they actually performed them in the structure of 100,000 members. When conditions were suitable, this enabled them to grow rapidly without deteriorating the quality. As

¹² In this paper, we use the phrase Slovenian Home Guard as a generic name for the units, which collaborated with the occupier, because their names and organization during the years of war changed frequently.

¹³ Brigades of the Slovenian National Liberation Army included units were intended for manoeuvre combat. The rest of the Slovenian National Liberation Army comprised what was referred to as district forces.

¹⁴ Partisan companies included from 30 to 80 fighters; battalions 100 to 250, and brigades 300 to 800 fighters (Guštin in Bebler, 2005, pp. 59-95). Units of the Slovenian National Liberation Army could nevertheless be compared to a-level-lower allied units, but only numerically, certainly not regarding their firepower, which made the units of the Slovenian National Liberation Army even weaker.

a result, by 1935, the number quickly increased at first from 100,000 to 300,000 and then to 1,000,000 in 1938. The problem was that the industry was not able to keep pace and that the political leadership required even faster growth, namely 4,000,000 by 1939. This eventually led to deterioration in the quality of the armed forces (Craig, 1964). The historical experience shows that rapid increase in the armed forces is possible, but requires the fulfilment of certain conditions, such as a built-in surplus of qualified leaders, ready-to-use infrastructure and guaranteed material base. On the other hand, however, even if all conditions are met, rapid growth has its limitations, which would particularly be evident if the growth was larger than triple.

If the SAF would have to establish a wartime size of around 35,000 members, which is evident from the historical experience and strategic documents, its active component should not be smaller than 10,000 members, while all the aforementioned conditions would have to be met. The most important in all this, however, is that it has a sufficient number of skilled leaders to assume duties within the military strategic reserve.

4 CHARACTER OF THE SLOVENIAN ARMED FORCES

With the latest transformation, the Slovenian Armed Forces obtained a new structure, which shows that this is mainly an infantry organization. The combat power of the SAF is based on four infantry regiments, which within the brigades include several combat "multipliers"¹⁵. With their help, each of the infantry brigades is, at least in theory, capable of forming a battalion battle group for the needs of the Alliance. Whatever the current or future structure of the SAF, the fact is that its combat power is based on infantry units of a battalion- or brigade-level. The question, however, is what type of infantry these units should have.

In the Alliance, there are several different types of infantry ranging from mechanized, motorized, naval, airborne, airmobile to mountain infantry. However, the concept of light infantry is not included in allied doctrines. Nevertheless, certain member states have other specialized types of infantry, such as U.S. Army Rangers, which can be regarded as light infantry.

If we acknowledge the infantry as the cornerstone of the SAF's combat power, we must also ask ourselves what type of infantry would meet the defence needs of the Republic of Slovenia. In the past, various ideas have occurred ranging from airborne infantry to airmobile infantry and ranger battalions. These ideas were interesting and very attractive to many people, but I believe that we should first ask ourselves what is the purpose of each specific type of infantry, what are its strengths and weaknesses, and how the SAF intends to fight its enemy¹⁶.

¹⁵ These include combat support units, which are in theory indeed intended for regiments, but it is solely in their commander's domain what, if anything, the regiments would get.

¹⁶ In my opinion, I have already shown in the article that the normative military doctrine of the Republic of Slovenia is deterrent and that it is the only one possible for a country such as Slovenia.

The SAF's tasks are very broad, ranging from the protection and rescue missions to the defence against external aggressors. There is no type of infantry, which would ideally correspond to all these tasks; therefore, I believe that we must derive from the most demanding task, which is the implementation of military defence, and then determine how to use this infantry for other tasks.

Airborne infantry has a very specific role to strategically project military force¹⁷ over distances which are beyond the reach of conventional means of transport (cf. Granada). As such, it is at its best, when it jumps directly onto the enemy. Its greatest advantage is the element of surprise. Once it copes with the enemy on the objective, it becomes very vulnerable (cf. Arnhem during World War II). It lacks mobility (except strategic), and, what is more, the maintaining of adequate readiness of these units is very expensive.

Airmobile infantry is the most mobile of all types of infantry (CC&CS, 2011, p. A-104). Just like airborne infantry, airmobile infantry also requires specialized training, because it is not only about boarding any infantry unit on the helicopter and dropping it on a target. Its strength lies in the cooperation of the infantry with the aviation, but this can also be its greatest vulnerability. Helicopters are not armoured vehicles and it does not take much to shoot them down.¹⁸ The fall of the helicopter is usually fatal for both crew and the passengers. Airmobile infantry is thus strong only when and if infantry, artillery and aviation (combat rotary-wing and fixed-wing aircraft) cooperate. Helicopters, in particular combat ones, are rather costly, not only their purchase, but also the maintenance of their capabilities.

Mechanized infantry enables the progression of tanks, where this is not possible due to the terrain or the enemy. Mechanized infantry is disembarked only if necessary; otherwise the tactical tasks are performed with the infantry fighting vehicles which suppress the enemy's infantry and enable the manoeuvre of tanks. Therefore, it is presumed that the mechanized infantry in the Alliance is equipped with vehicles carrying at least 20-millimeter guns¹⁹. Only these weapons are capable of fighting together with a tank gun. From that, it can be established that the mechanized infantry is sensible, if there are tank capabilities present as well. The advantages of the mechanized infantry can only be fully exploited in joint warfare where tanks play the leading role. In this respect, it should not be forgotten that disembarkation elements of the mechanized infantry are usually very small, smaller than the light, airborne or airmobile infantry and can therefore burn out quickly. Armoured units are most efficient and fastest during manoeuvre, but they can only fight as part of a unit within the combined arms fight. Consequently, whoever builds mechanized infantry must also build all other elements – appropriate armoured units, the supporting artillery,

¹⁷ CC & CS, 2011, p. A-104, no. 1.1.

¹⁸ Its main limitation is own force protection (CC & CS, 2011, p. A-104, no. 2.9).

¹⁹ NATO Bi-SC Agreed Codes Capability and Capability Statements from 2011 does not define the explicit request for at least a 20-mm gun in mechanized infantry, but this fact arises from the requirement that mechanized infantry is "capable of providing support for armoured units" (p. A-103, paragraph 2.10). Other relevant sources of the Alliance are classified as confidential and, as such, cannot be used in this paper.

and air support. Mechanized infantry is also capable of fighting independently without tanks, and can be very effective, but this is not its main purpose. All in all, tanks as infantry combat vehicles are also rather costly, not only their purchase, but also their maintenance.

Motorized infantry: its main feature is flexibility (Bolger, 1999, p. 259). It performs superbly in difficult terrain (mountains, forests, wetlands, urban areas), at night and in poor weather conditions. Its main disadvantage is that during the movement or manoeuvre it depends on the feet or motorized means of transport²⁰. It has no armoured protection, except if it is equipped with armoured carriers. It should, however, be understood that armoured carriers are nothing but transport vehicles. Motorized infantry fights without combat vehicles with limitations in firepower, mobility and protection (CC & CS, 2011, p. A-103). The burden of such warfare on the soldiers is enormous in both physical and psychological terms.

Naval infantry: Similarly to airborne infantry, its purpose is to provide for the strategic projection of force. Since it depends on sealift, it is much slower, but has much more firepower and longer self-sufficiency (15 days on land, and 6 months at sea in the region— these are the data for the U.S. Marine Corps). In addition, naval infantry has its own naval and air support (CC & CS, 2011, p. A-91, A-92).

Mountain infantry: The infantry, whose competence and equipment are specifically adapted for operations in mountainous and Arctic terrains (CC & CS, 2011, p. A-103, A-104). Compared to the motorized infantry mountain infantry's movement relies more on the rotary-wing than motorised capabilities. In addition to the warfare as such, mountain and arctic warfare also involves great physical strain; therefore appropriate selection for mountain infantry is of utmost importance.

Ranger infantry: It forms a part of the U.S. Army, but this type of highly trained infantry can also be found in other armed forces. Rangers are infantry. They are very well trained, led and equipped, however still only infantry. In the U.S. Armed Forces, ranger battalions are specialized to occupy airports and there is no one who could do this better than them. Within the U.S. Special Operation Task Forces, with whom they mostly collaborate, they have two primary functions: to provide a quick reaction force (QRF) and to raid (Bolger, 1999, p. 191). The Rangers, until very recently, fielded no scouts or mortars at battalion level, because these capabilities relate to sustained combat operations, not lightning direct action strikes.²¹ Rangers are elite infantry units which expect the best from their men and accordingly have an appropriate selection system. Standards of basic skills are excellent and they have the appropriate conditions for this - enough ammunition for training and enough time (no burden of guard and garrison duties).

²⁰ These can include trucks, armoured carriers (4 x 4, 6 x 6, 8 x 8), or in the extreme case any other vehicle.

²¹ Nowadays, due to the experiences with sustained combat in Afganistan and Iraq, Ranger regiments do have mortars and scouts in their structure.

Regardless of its type, modern, professional and small infantry must possess three core competencies: physical fitness, marksmanship and small-unit tactics (Bolger, 1999, p. 234).

At a declarative level, Military Doctrine of the SAF is deterrent. As we have already noted in the introduction, the SAF is a land force with infantry as the central element of its combat power. What infantry then corresponds to this doctrine? Airborne and naval infantries can immediately be excluded, since their main purposes are strategic force projection and offensive doctrine. Nevertheless, this is not the reason why certain SAF capabilities should not possess these competencies. This refers mainly to special operations forces, which due to the nature of their work certainly require airborne capabilities. In addition, various naval infantry formations would indeed merit consideration in terms of good practices in size, weapons and firepower.

Ranger infantry can also be excluded, as it is highly specialized and not intended for lengthy combat operations, envisaged by the deterrence doctrine. However, it would be well worth examining their selection procedures in terms of raising the "esprit de corps".

Airmobile infantry is very mobile, but it is also very expensive. Combat and transport helicopters are complex and very expensive weapons systems, but there is no true airmobile infantry without them. In addition, these systems are highly offensive and are designed for deep penetration or jumping over the opponent rather than for the exercise of control over the territory.

The Slovenian Armed Forces is gradually withdrawing tank capabilities from operational use. It only intends to keep the capability of one tank company (+), while other tanks and infantry combat vehicles will be moved to the strategic reserve pool (Medium-Term Defence Programme, 2012, p. 39). It is therefore hard to understand the argument that the SAF needs a mechanized battalion battle group for its own development. Without the tank capability, the capability of mechanized infantry in the SAF does not seem sensible, except in the light of the fulfilment of commitments to the Alliance. The Alliance has tank capabilities and needs mechanized capabilities to support them. The SAF can therefore develop a mechanized capability in order to achieve greater interoperability within the Alliance, but I think this could also be achieved in other, less financially burdensome ways –the capabilities of motorized infantry must also be interoperable within the Alliance through information technology, procedures, weapon capabilities and C2 system. The biggest problem of any coalition operation is always the issue of C2 (Posen, 1984, p. 81).

At first glance, mountain infantry seems ideal for the needs of the Republic of Slovenia and the SAF. However, the fact is that mountains cover only a bit less than a quarter of Slovenian territory. The rest are the highlands, hills and plains. Additionally, the SAF has clearly expressed its ambitions by having founded a

NATO Mountain Warfare Centre of Excellence. Nevertheless, mountain infantry is not flexible enough to form the basis of the SAF's combat power.

Finally, there is the motorized infantry. Its main feature is flexibility. At first glance, it would seem that the motorized infantry is also the most reasonably priced one. Perhaps it really costs less than most of other types of infantry, but it is far from being inexpensive. Motorised vehicles, be they trucks or armoured carriers, are not inexpensive systems. In addition, motorized infantry has to in some way compensate for its limited mobility, firepower and protection. It therefore needs more anti-tank weapons, more light mortars and other supporting weapons, and it must also be interoperable with allied C2 systems. Nevertheless, motorized infantry is, due to its numerosity and means of transport, still the most suitable one to participate in the protection-and-rescue system, which was also evident during recent major natural disasters in the Republic of Slovenia, glaze ice damage and floods.

Conclusion A brief historical overview and strategic documents suggest that the SAF should be able to increase its size to around 35,000 members. At the same time, the proposed maximum size of the SAF, the deterrent military doctrine, a wide range of statutory duties and limited financial resources suggest that the core of the SAF's combat power should be comprised of motorized and light infantry.

Of course, it would be unreasonable to maintain the active component of 35,000 personnel, but the SAF must have the system ready to upgrade it to such size without any major effort. The Doctrine of Military Strategic Reserve of the Republic of Slovenia provides only for system bases without prepared plans, and few generally voluntarily trained personnel. At the same time, it gives the SAF one year to increase its volume by up to 25,000 members. Meanwhile, there are demands issued to additionally reduce the current size of the SAF. In our opinion, these demands cannot withstand sound professional judgment unless the SAF's legally defined tasks are changed in the sense of conscious renouncement of an effective armed resistance in the event of threats to national sovereignty. At the same time, we believe that the conceptual solutions provided by the Doctrine of Military Strategic Reserve will not sustain serious examination. Neither the SAF nor the rest of the defence system of the Republic of Slovenia in their current state is able to establish a system within one year that would ultimately result in 35,000 personnel trained for combat and positioned within appropriate formations. It is also impossible to expect that the SAF in its current financial and political situation would in any way increase its peacetime size.

Accordingly, solutions should be found somewhere in-between. The SAF should have pre-prepared plans for the use of the military strategic reserve as well as the formation of its units.²² This would enable the SAF and the rest of the defence system to arrange material and human resource planning. The SAF would practically have

²² According to the Defence Act, this would be the war formation of the SAF.

no expenses in this respect, except for working hours of staff officers and MoD officials who have to prepare these plans and formations.²³

In this context, it is also necessary to think about the structure and purpose of the contract reserve. The contract reserve could provide a part of the most important commanding personnel for the military strategic reserve.

Major importance lies on the military education system, which should enable a three-fold increase in the SAF's peacetime structure. This does not refer to its size, but the fact that education and training should prepare the commanding personnel of the peacetime structure to assume senior duties within the military strategic reserve.²⁴

Consideration should also be given on how to provide an appropriate number of trained individuals for the military strategic reserve. Growth from 10,000 to 35,000 without a clearly defined pre-prepared and tested plans and formations is unrealistic. It is unrealistic that it be achieved in 365 days, if there were ever so many people available, but considering the pace of the development of modern crises, I strongly doubt it. It is clear that relying on those who have volunteered to do military service will not be enough. It would be easiest, of course, to reintroduce some form of civic obligation, which would provide citizens with the basic military knowledge needed to quickly establish the military strategic reserve, maybe in a shorter form than we used to know (up to 3 months), and which would be supplemented by the protection-and-rescue topics²⁵. However, since this is rather unlikely, we should consider other options, such as the introduction of defence and military topics into the mandatory programme of secondary schools, perhaps even faculties.

At the same time, the SAF must retain at least the current peacetime size of up to 10,000 members, authorised with the ReSDPRO SV 2025. Any reduction below this number will impede the realisation of the idea of the military strategic reserve's growth to up to 25,000 members. This will simply be physically impossible to achieve within the available time frame. Additionally, recruitment measures will have to be taken to fill the posts in the active component, which will necessarily lead to adverse financial consequences. Security costs money and, despite the slogan that more can be done with less, there are simply limits, beyond which less is merely less.

²³ *The military strategic reserve should exist as a war formation, without status and financial benefits of peacetime formations. It should not be possible to man it beforehand with members of the active component, at least not until decision is made to activate the military strategic reserve. Plans for the manning of war formations with members of the active component should be pre-prepared. If not, the concept will degenerate, as has happened before and the strategic military reserve would be used to solve career problems of individuals. This would be counterproductive.*

²⁴ *Platoon commanders should have the skills to lead the military strategic reserve company and activities in its most important staff duties. Company commanders should be able to lead military strategic reserve battalions, regiments, etc.*

²⁵ *This form of conscription would not produce useful combat units. However, it would provide individuals trained to use weapons and with basic tactical skills at squad level, perhaps even platoon level. Additionally, it would allow citizens to be more actively involved in protection and rescue activities.*

The core of the SAF's peacetime combat power structure should therefore consist of motorized infantry, while the core of the war combat power structure (35,000 personnel) would be a combination of motorized and light infantry (motorized infantry to perform manoeuvre warfare activities²⁶, and light infantry to cover the territory²⁷).

Motorized infantry is flexible enough to be able to fulfil all the tasks set by the law and be at the same time financially sustainable. Slovenia's contribution to the Alliance is always a matter of negotiation and should primarily reflect its deterrent military doctrine. The fulfilment of commitments to the Alliance is important and affects the credibility of the country in the international environment. Slovenia must also make a contribution proportionate to the overall security provided by the Alliance. Too often, only negative aspects of NATO membership appear in the public, while we keep forgetting that, for example, the Republic of Slovenia uses the Alliance's instruments to protect its airspace, to use the type of training and firing ranges Slovenia does not have, and so on, all without significant costs.

Modern motorized infantry is not an inexpensive system. Maybe someone might have in mind a poorly equipped and trained military force, but this could not be further from the truth. Modern motorized infantry is well-equipped and well-trained military force which does, however, have its limitations when it comes to mobility, firepower and protection, but also has the systems, training and commanding personnel, which can neutralise these deficiencies. The biggest advantage of the motorized, but also light infantry is its flexibility.

Fiscal reality is fierce and with the anticipated trends in resources for the needs of the SAF, we have to ask ourselves how to proceed. Insisting on figures, which the finances do not permit, can only be counterproductive. The minimum, below which the SAF should not go, is the pursuit of capability goals agreed with the Alliance. Maybe some of the capability goals could also be changed through the Alliance's defence planning process. The fulfilment of capability goals along with the fulfilment of its commitments to the Alliance also brings the retention of minimum expertise and at least the skeleton of the SAF's structure. However, it does not enable the performance of statutory tasks of the SAF and even severely limits its activities in the protection and rescue system. Capability goals represent approximately 4,100²⁸ members of the active component, but even these cannot exist on their own. Even they need external combat service support elements (maintenance, supply, transportation, etc.), infrastructure, education

²⁶ *Deployable and non-deployable forces of high and low levels of readiness. Their generation must be enabled by the peacetime formation. The active component generates deployable forces for operations within the Alliance (battalion battle groups and other NATO capability goals for the SAF), while the combination of active component and contract reserve enables the generation of forces for operations at home (two brigade battle groups).*

²⁷ *Non-deployable long-term build up forces according to the SAF Military Doctrine. These forces would represent the military strategic reserve.*

²⁸ *On-line sources have been used, which make no reference to official sources and are therefore not separately mentioned. Unfortunately, all the official sources known to me, which are associated with the numerical size of the SAF are classified as confidential and, therefore, cannot be referred to here. For the purposes of the article, I assume that sources available online are at least roughly correct.*

and training and C2 (also C2 with the Alliance). After we add what is necessary for the establishment of the capability goals, we would probably come up with about 6,500 members of the active component. But this can only be a temporary solution that bridges the poor financial situation and in fact probably does not bring much financial benefits, as well as it causes damage to national security. However, it would allow for the transfer of a part of financial resources from the personnel remuneration account to the account for modernization and thus start the development of capability goals.

At the same time it is also important to recognize what are the recommendations of the Alliance related to the deployability, high readiness and sustainability. According to the recommendation of the Alliance, armed forces are to have 50 per cent of deployable forces, 10 per cent of high-readiness forces at home and 0.8 per cent of sustainable forces. Given the fact that capabilities comprised in the capability goals are all deployable forces, the size of the SAF should, in view of the recommendations of the Alliance, not be smaller than about 8,200 members.

The SAF should in any case have pre-prepared plans and formations for the structure of 10,000 members of the active component, as well as political guarantees for the growth and manning of formations as soon as the fiscal position allows it.

Along with this, clear priorities should be established regarding the manning of units which follow the capability goals and fulfil the commitments to the Alliance. The remainder of the active component is first dedicated to the establishment of two manoeuvre brigades of light infantry with all the necessary combat multipliers, and then to the establishment of the military strategic reserve should it be activated.

The SAF must therefore take a firm and reasoned position against any attempt of reducing its current size, while at the same time actively promote public debate on its purpose, size, character and structure. For the purposes of this discussion, it must also achieve internal unity and prepare professionally substantiated arguments, which it will defend. The end result may still turn out negative for the SAF and in this case, we, SAF members will have to accept such final decisions and take the maximum out of them. Nevertheless, we must not allow any decision on the reduction the size of the SAF to be taken before the arguments of the SAF are clearly heard and acknowledged.

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