

There is perhaps no more powerful symbol of the brutality of the four-year war in Bosnia and Herzegovina than the image of Sarajevo under siege. For much of the war, Serb artillery ringed the capital, firing indiscriminately day and night into the heart of the city and laying waste to what had been one of the showcases of old Yugoslavia and the site of the 1984 Winter Olympics. As a result of this artillery bombardment, not a single building in the city was left undamaged, families were torn apart and civilian casualties numbered in the tens of thousands. The Army of Bosnia and Herzegovina (ABiH) charged with the defense of the city simply had no capacity to protect Sarajevo from the Serb artillery. The artillery weapons of the ABiH and HVO

(Croatian Defense Council) were largely employed in the direct fire mode, and the artillery had no target acquisition (TA) capability.

Today, the guns are silent—a by-product of the sometimes maligned General Framework Agreement for Peace (the Dayton Accords)—and the reconstruction of Sarajevo has begun in earnest. But the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina made up of the Croats and the Bosnian Muslims (the latter called Bosniacs) recognizes that peace in that part of the world is fragile and must be carefully nurtured with a credible deterrence and a capable defense.

Critical to the maintenance of peace in Bosnia is establishing an Army of the Federation that can accomplish these critical missions. American advisors

acting under the aegis of the US Train and Equip Program have been helping to shape and train the Army of the Federation since July 1996.

During the first year of the program, much has been accomplished: the Federation's Ministry of Defense and Joint Command have been established; the structure of the Army of the Federation has been adopted; the Federation's Military Strategy has been approved; and training of Federation soldiers, units and leaders at all levels is moving forward in earnest.

A vital dimension to the Federation Army's requirement to deter and defend is a trained and equipped Field Artillery, not only for the tactical firepower the artillery brings to brigade commanders, but also for its irreplaceable capability to defend critical targets. In this regard, Field Artillery becomes a strategic asset of incalculable value to the Federation and for deterrence in this crucial part of the world.

Bosnian Artillery American Style

by Colonel (Retired) Christopher C. Shoemaker

Tactical Organization

To accomplish its tactical missions of deterrence and defense, the Federation Artillery is being organized into battalions and brigades. The highest tactical maneuver organizations in the Army of the Federation are the four corps, each of which consists of three maneuver brigades (see Figure 1).



Photo by MAJ Robert G. Black, Jr.

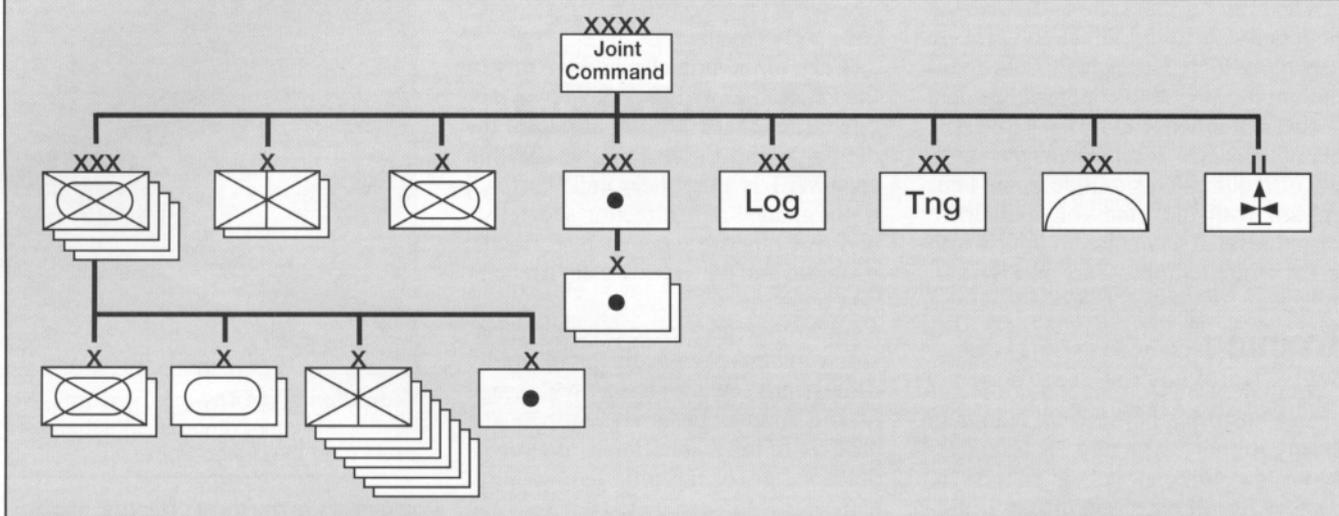


Figure 1: Organization of the Army of the Federation. The organization of the artillery brigade in each division is outlined in Figure 2.

When fully operational, each corps will have one organic artillery brigade with three direct support (DS) cannon battalions, one or two general support (GS) cannon battalions and one rocket battalion (Figure 2). These battalions are being designed under the 3x6 configuration and will adhere to standard US/NATO tactical missions, including DS, reinforcing (R) and GS. Each artillery brigade also will have a TA battery.

The artillery battalions will be equipped with a variety of weapons systems,

including L118 (M119) howitzers donated by the United Arab Emirates, M114 155-mm howitzers from the United States and M46 field guns and D30 howitzers from Egypt. The Federation also has other weapons captured during the war.

The exception to the design described is the artillery battalion in the Federation Reaction Force. The force is the cutting edge of the Army of the Federation and, when fully trained, will be equipped with US M60A3 tanks and M113A2 armored personnel carriers.

The artillery in the Federation Reaction Force is being organized into a 24-gun, 3x8 battalion of D30 122-mm howitzers. The battalion will be larger and more flexible than the standard DS artillery battalions because of the mission of the Federation Reaction Force and its Federation-wide area of operations.

For the most part, however, the tactical artillery within the Army of the Federation will conform to basic US design, reflecting the Federation objectives

to ensure its army is compatible with NATO standards and has a high degree of interoperability.

Strategic Organization

Because of the relatively small size and geographic isolation of the Federation and the current lack of attack aircraft in its force structure, the sole defense of strategic urban targets from enemy artillery is counterfire. This requires a unique approach to artillery organization: the Federation Artillery Division (see Figure 3). The Artillery Division's primary mission is to provide strategic counterfire in the defense of critical urban targets such as Mostar, Tuzla and, of course, Sarajevo itself.

The Artillery Division is being organized into two identical brigades, each with two rocket and three extended-range cannon battalions. Target acquisition is provided by the division's TA battalion with two batteries that can be used separately to support each brigade or together to provide blanket coverage of one major target area.

Along with the Federation Reaction Force, the Artillery Division enjoys the highest priority in the army. The Federation has recently contracted with Romania to buy 36 *Apra* 122-mm rocket launchers that fire extended-range rockets out to 32 kilometers. This provides a sufficient overmatch for any system that could be reasonably massed against strategic targets in the Federation. The cannon battalions will be equipped with M59 and M46 field guns currently in the Federation's inventory and be augmented with long-range systems to be acquired in the future.

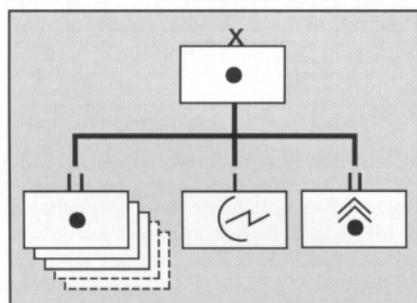


Figure 2: Organization of the Artillery Brigade Organic to Each of the Corps

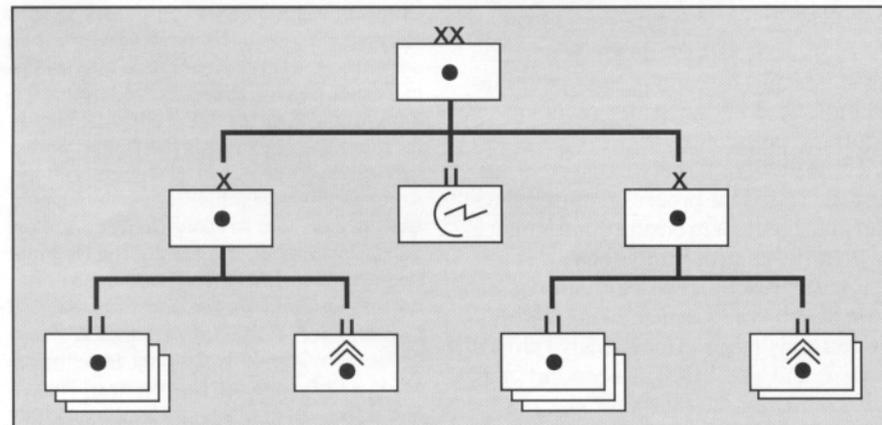


Figure 3: Organization of the Federation Artillery Division

When fully trained and equipped, the Federation Artillery Division will be a capable artillery force and form the foundation for a credible deterrence and successful defense in this volatile corner of the world. It represents the melding of requirements unique to the Federation with the kinds of counterfire structures that have proven their worth in the United States Army and NATO.

Training

Equipment and organization are, of course, insufficient to ensure readiness of any military structure. Training remains the cornerstone for success in combat. In the Federation, artillery training is being conducted at many levels—from “cannoneers’ hop” to battalion fire direction centers (FDCs). Federation artillerymen are learning the art and the science of US artillery tactics, techniques and procedures (TTP) in several programs.

- In January 1998, the first rounds were fired from Federation Artillery batteries at the Federation’s Army Combat Training Center at Livno, Herzegovina. This signaled the advent of combined arms training in the Army of the Federation.

- As the Train and Equip Program for Bosnia entered its second year, counterfire tactics have assumed center stage, and the Federation is growing in its ability to defend its critical assets from the threat of enemy artillery.

- At the Federation’s Center for Leader Development at Pasaric, brigade, battalion and company officers and ser-

geants are schooled in the integration of fires and maneuver.

- Each of the brigades in the Army of the Federation will be trained by a mobile training team (MTT) as part of the Train and Equip Program. Within each MTT is an artillery cell. This cell trains gunners, fire direction specialists and fire support teams at the brigade, battalion and battery levels in fire support techniques.

Taken together, these programs constitute a comprehensive effort to rapidly achieve proficiency across a wide range of fire support tasks and prepare the artillery of the Federation to assume its place as one of the pillars of stability and defense in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The Challenges

To be sure, the Federation faces many challenges as it creates the capability to deliver effective fires. The challenges are caused by the realities the Federation confronts—for example, the fact that the Army of the Federation is new and growing out of cooperation between two former adversaries: the Bosniacs and Croats. In addition, much of the equipment in the Army of the Federation was captured from the Bosnian Serbs and the old Yugoslav National Army (JNA) during the war. Quite naturally, this creates enormous problems in standardization and maintenance. While this is being offset by the arrival of US systems and new weapons from other sources, it will remain a challenge for the foreseeable future.

Second, the arms control limitations imposed by the Florence and Vienna Accords set the ceilings for Federation Artillery at 1,000 total weapons, including mortars over 75-mm. The Army of the Federation entered into the agreement with nearly 3,000 weapons, the overwhelming preponderance of which were mortars. So, while the Federation is increasing its cannon and rocket inventories, it is drastically reducing its mortars, particularly those whose service lives were largely exhausted during the war. This process requires careful management to ensure conformance with arms control limitations.

Finally, resources to build and maintain the army is a real challenge. Building an army is not an inexpensive proposition, and the Bosnian economy was bled white by the four-year war.

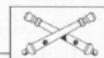
The Federation is carefully aligning its priorities to ensure it uses its limited



Federation M114 155-mm howitzers that have a maximum range of 14,600 meters came from the United States.

resources in the most effective manner. And this means that not every system and weapon required by the force structure can be acquired at once. Risks have to be taken in some capabilities to protect the systems fundamental to near-term deterrence and defense.

The Army of the Federation—with its artillery—is a courageous attempt to build a security framework in an explosive corner of the world, a framework that will help undergird peace and stability far into the future. There are many challenges to overcome and pitfalls to avoid in the months and years ahead, and success is by no means certain. But substantial progress has been made, and the Federation has a realistic road map that, with patience and good will, can be achieved.



Colonel (Retired) Christopher C. Shoemaker of MPRI, with its headquarters in Alexandria, Virginia, is under contract with the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina under the auspices of the US Train and Equip Program. He is the Director of Senior Leader Development of the Military Stabilization Program in the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina. For the past year, he has served as the Director of Force Integration in Bosnia, helping to create the Army of the Federation. Prior to joining MPRI, he served for more than 20 years in the United States Army and was selected for General Officer. Among other assignments, he was Chief of Staff of the Field Artillery Center and Fort Sill, Oklahoma; on the staff of the National Security Council at the White House under both Presidents Carter and Reagan; and Commander of the 1st Armored Division Artillery in Germany. Colonel Shoemaker holds a PhD from the University of Florida and is the author of several books on international relations and a member of the Council on Foreign Relations.



Federation M119 105-mm howitzers that have a maximum range of 17,200 meters were donated by the United Arab Emirates.