

**Marcel de Haas**

At the Netherlands Defence Staff, Lieutenant-Colonel (RNLAf) Dr M de Haas was responsible for the NDD as Editor and as Chairman of the Working Group. Currently, he is assigned to the Netherlands Institute of International Relations Clingendael in The Hague, as Senior Research Fellow on military doctrine, strategy, and security policy of NATO, EU, Russia and CIS.



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Left: Royal Netherlands Air Force F-16s flying over the West Frisian Islands.

Source: All images from collection of the Netherlands Institute of Military History/RNLA.

Dutch Defence Doctrine

The Royal Marines have worked with the Dutch Royal Marines in the Anglo-Dutch Amphibious Force. Dutch soldiers have served under British command in Bosnia, they have also served with British troops in Iraq and are about to do so in Afghanistan. Marcel de Haas asks - what makes the Dutch tick?

'The NDD includes the newest doctrinal developments, for instance with regard to national security and complexities of current operations'

The recently published Netherlands Defence Doctrine (NDD) represents current Western thinking on the use of military power as part of security policy. Marcel de Haas describes the development of the NDD, as well as the central points of its content.

NATO defines military doctrine as 'fundamental principles by which the military forces guide their actions in support of objectives'. The function of military doctrine is not to draw up a series of specific rules, but to guide the thinking on the use of military capability, thus promoting a better understanding or unity of opinion. Military doctrine provides a framework for operational activities and contributes to the interoperability of a joint/combined operation. Furthermore, it provides information for a wider audience in respect of the armed forces' tasks and deployment options.

Until now the Netherlands MoD

did not have an overall defence doctrine, but the individual Services had developed their own doctrines.

- In the 1990s, the Royal Netherlands Navy (RNLN) concentrated mainly on tactics and procedures developed within the context of NATO. In December 2005 it has published its own Service doctrine, the Guideline for Maritime Operations (GMO). It relies particularly on NATO's perspective on naval operations and the views of main Allies.
- The Royal Netherlands Army (RNLA) started publishing Army Doctrine Publications (ADPs) in 1996. In the development of this series, the RNLA also drew on the latest NATO doctrine and that of main Allies, and also opted for a Service-specific translation into Dutch.
- The Royal Netherlands Air Force

(RNLAf) also published the first version of its Air Power Doctrine (APD) in 1996. The RNLAf relied mainly on the NATO view of the role of air power and the other elements of air forces as well as on the opinions of the main Allies.

- The Royal Netherlands Marechaussee (RNLM, constabulary force) does not have its own Service doctrine. For its operations abroad, during exercises and on missions, the RNLM refers to the doctrine of the RNLA, the RNLAf and the RNLN.

Over the past few years, the need for an integrated defence doctrine for the Netherlands armed forces had increased. In its final report in April 2002, the advisory committee on the introduction of a joint high commander (known as the Franssen Committee) stated that joint operations were fast becoming the norm and that close,

internal cooperation in such operations was so vital that an overarching doctrine was required.

In order to meet this recognised need, it was proposed that the doctrine be developed for all the main tasks of the Defence Ministry, using NATO's doctrine as a basis. The recommendation of the Franssen Committee confirmed that a doctrine was one of the instruments available to the CDS to fulfil his role as Corporate Operator. The role of the director in respect of doctrine development by and within the Dutch armed forces should, therefore, be given to the Defence Staff. The RNLA and RNLAf doctrine publications also need to be revised and the RNLN has recently published the GMO which is the first Service doctrine in line with the NDD.

With the disappearance of the commanders-in-chief of the Services and their staffs, in September 2005, the increased responsibility and authority of the CDS and the fact that operations are increasingly shaped by the joint deployment of the RNLN, the RNLA, the RNLAf and the RNLN, it was no longer possible to do without an overall defence doctrine. For this reason, the introduction of the NDD was highly expedient.

In many countries the usual procedure is that Service doctrines are drawn from the national defence doctrine. However, the situation in the Netherlands has until now been different. Because of this, a significant part of the contents of the NDD has been taken from the existing doctrine publications of the various Services, underpinned by a strategic foundation from current policy documents from the Ministry of Defence, such as the



'Nowadays, as a partner of other departments, the Defence organisation fulfils a structural role in national security'

Left: Royal Netherlands Army combat vehicle of SFOR on patrol in Bosnia.

Defence White Paper.

The distinction between the policy documents and the various doctrine publications lies particularly in the fact that the policy documents determine the ambitions and the capabilities of the armed forces and the doctrine publications provide guidance for the conduct of military operations. The structure of the NDD is largely derived from the British Defence Doctrine. The British Armed Forces can pride themselves on extensive experience of military operations and on meticulously written doctrine publications. It is for that reason that a similar structure has been adopted in the NDD.

Main tasks and their operational execution

The main tasks of the Dutch armed forces are:

- protecting the integrity of national and Allied territory, including the Netherlands Antilles and Aruba
- promoting stability and the international rule of law
- supporting civil authorities in upholding the law, providing disaster relief and humanitarian relief, both nationally and internationally.

Partly because of the increasing intertwining of internal and external security, the distinction between the main tasks of the armed forces has become blurred over the past few years. The 2000 Defence White Paper had already established that the resources that were necessary for the first and second main tasks were virtually identical, given that defending Alliance territory in practice amounts to regional crisis management at the borders of the Alliance.

Levels of operation	Doctrine publications and policy documents
Grand strategy	• Policy documents – Minister of Defence
Military – strategic	• Policy documents – Chief of Defence • Netherlands Defence Doctrine (NDD)
Operational	• GMO • ADPs • APD

Table 1: Hierarchy of Dutch doctrine publications and policy documents

‘Cooperation between the Services in joint operations became so vital that an overarching doctrine was required’

Right: Royal Netherlands Marechaussee

The importance of the third main task has increased and the link with the first two has become stronger because of the threat of terrorism. The three main tasks of the Defence organisation can be extrapolated in a list of more specific Defence tasks. The level of ambition – the qualitative and quantitative level at which the Defence organisation wants to be able to conduct military activities – deals in general terms with the nature of the tasks. In order to bridge the gap between ambition and means, the nature of the tasks that Defence needs to be able to perform has to be specified.

We refer to ‘Defence tasks’ and not exclusively ‘military tasks’ in order to indicate that the Defence organisation also performs non-military tasks, often at the request and under the control of civil authorities (Table 2). For instance, many activities performed by the Royal Netherlands Marechaussee stem from laws that place the authority for them with Ministers other than the Minister of Defence.

First main task and combat operations

The protection of the integrity of national and allied territory involves operations in the context of collective defence, as defined in Article 5 of the NATO treaty. Examples of this are the Allied defence in the Cold War, and also

NATO’s invocation of this article immediately after the terrorist attacks on the USA on 11 September 2001 and the subsequent participation of Dutch military units in Operation Enduring Freedom in Afghanistan and the Persian Gulf.

In the context of the first main task, operations can also be conducted on the borders of the NATO treaty area, if an unstable situation there could have implications for the territorial integrity of the treaty area. One such example was the deployment of Patriot air defence units during Operation Display Deterrence in Turkey in 2003.

Second main task and crisis management operations

The aim of the second main task of the Dutch armed forces is to manage or resolve conflicts by contributing to crisis management operations. An important aspect in this regard is to minimise the risk of escalation by intervening at an early stage.

The past few decades have seen a great many conflicts that have spread or threatened to spread to neighbouring countries (for example, in the former Yugoslavia and Africa). Conflict prevention, in which military and civil organisations join forces to try to nip a conflict in the bud, has

become more high profile. It is crucial to have military units on hand whose level of readiness and mobility is such that they can be deployed quickly virtually anywhere in the world as soon as the political decision-making about the operation has been completed. These units also need to be sufficiently robust to be able to operate effectively in military operations, even in the event of escalation.

Depending on the desired political and military end state, crisis management operations can be limited in terms of objective, assets, area of operations or duration. It might be a question of a specific and limited operation, such as the evacuation of non-combatants, for example from Côte d’Ivoire in November 2004, or it could be more general and longer-term in nature, such as the Dutch contribution to the IFOR/SFOR/EUFOR operation in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Crisis management operations could be intended to prevent an armed conflict (for example, the UN operation UNPREDEP in Macedonia from 1995 to 1999), or to help with the reconstruction of a country after an armed conflict (for instance, ISAF in Afghanistan).

At different times and in different places, a crisis management operation can be just



Netherlands Defence Doctrine

In October 2005 the Dutch Chief of Defence (CDS) presented the first Netherlands Defence Doctrine (NDD) to the Minister of Defence.

The publication marks a move to the next phase in the development of Dutch military doctrine, which until then was characterised by the Service-specific doctrines.

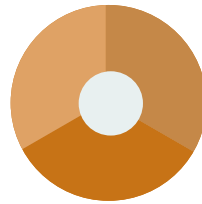
The NDD was distributed widely. All flag, general and field officers, as well as civilians working at the Ministry of Defence in similar functions have received copies. Together with the original in Dutch, an English version of the NDD was published. It is also published on the Netherlands MoD’s website (<http://www.mindef.nl/organisatie/beleid/doctrine/index.aspx>).



Cover of the Netherlands Defence Doctrine.



Table 2: Deployment of the armed forces versus Defence tasks



Military operations		Military Assistance	
		Aid to Civil Authorities	
		Upholding the law	Support
Command of land, sea and airspace territory	Engaging sea, land and air forces	Separating parties Stabilisation Military support Coastguard Marechaussee tasks Verification	Personal security Ceremonial duties Explosives clearance Host-nation support Coastguard Military support Emergency assistance Training foreign units Disaster response (Hydrography) (Geography)
Securing land, sea and airspace territory	Protection on land, at sea and in the air		
Command and control	Evacuation		
Prevention, forward deployment	Special operations		
Engaging strategic targets	Strategic transport		
Hydrography	Geography		
Strategic military intelligence gathering			

as intense as the collective defence of (parts of) the NATO treaty area. The greater the likelihood that the parties in the conflict will use force against each other or against the foreign force, the more robustly the crisis management operation should be conducted. The international military force must also have a certain level of escalation dominance. The basis for this lies in the operation's mandate and the rules of engagement and can be expressed in the operation plan, the composition, the size and/or equipment of the military force.

Third main task and national security

In conducting all its main tasks (protection of territory, international crisis management, support for civil authorities), the Ministry of Defence contributes to national security. Society also expects the presence of the armed forces in the Netherlands if that becomes necessary. It is no longer simply a question of the Defence organisation acting as a safety net in the event of shortfalls in civil capabilities, but more a matter of fulfilling a structural role as a security partner.

The fact that the new role of the Defence organisation in the Netherlands comprises more than that of a safety net is demonstrated by the organisation's own, usually legally supported tasks that it performs in respect of national security. This refers to the structural tasks carried out by Defence on a permanent basis, as well as to the incidental deployment of high-quality niche capabilities.

The tasks of the Royal Netherlands Marechaussee and the Coastguard for the Netherlands Antilles and Aruba are examples of the national tasks performed by the Defence organisation on a structural basis. These are performed under civil authority and under their own operational command. Niche capabilities are specialist capabilities, such as the explosive ordnance disposal service and the special assistance units, which can support the civil authorities on a more ad hoc basis to counter specific or more violent threats (for example, bomb threats or terrorism).

Importance of NDD for Dutch security policy

A defence doctrine was the missing link in the hierarchy of Dutch defence policy papers and Service-specific doctrine publications; the NDD fills this gap. The NDD is as a 'doctrinal basis' from which various doctrine publications, for instance for the individual Services, will be drawn and developed. Furthermore, the NDD includes the newest national and international doctrinal developments, for instance with regard to national security and the complexity of current operations. Moreover, the NDD serves as a guide for operations by the armed forces as a whole and by the individual Services. It is expected that the NDD will be an important foundation for the training for and the planning and execution of joint military operations by the Netherlands Armed Forces in a national or international context. As a connection between defence policy and the conduct of military operations, the NDD highlights how the Defence organisation contributes to Dutch security policy.

'A defence doctrine was the missing link in the hierarchy of Dutch defence policy papers and Service-specific doctrine publications'

Left: Ratings of the Royal Netherlands Navy on board a frigate.