

MAINTENANCE SUPPORT TO OPERATION UNIFIER ROTATION 4

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In the face of Russian aggression against Ukraine in 2014, Canada took a number of measures to offer international assistance. A large component of this is Op UNIFIER, Canada's military contribution to training the Armed Forces of Ukraine (AFU). Now on its fourth rotation, Op UNIFIER is evolving from a centralized mission – primarily focussed on training based out of the International Peacekeeping and Security Centre (IPSC) in Yavoriv – to a “Hub and Spoke” mission with operations occurring at multiple centres throughout Ukraine. These changes have created a challenging and exciting mission for our maintainers in their quest to support.



Figure 1.1 – Cross training occurs as US JMTG-U Technicians successfully suspend tow a CAF LUVW G Wagon.

L'entraînement croisé se produit lorsque les techniciens américains JMTG-U arrime et suspendent avec succès un VULR G wagon.



Figure 1.2 – CAF Vehicle Technicians discuss how to properly secure and hook up an HLWV Wrecker to a US HUMVEE.

Les techniciens des véhicules des FAC discutent des moyens de sécuriser et de raccorder correctement une dépanneuse VLLR à un HUMVEE américain.

1st and 2nd line Combat Service Support (CSS) to Joint Task Force – Ukraine's (JTF-U's) approximately 200 troops is provided by the J4 Branch. Composed of 22 personnel from Garrison Petawawa, the branch is responsible for maintenance, supply, transport, movements, contracts, ammo and food services. 3rd line support is provided by 3 CSU and the Operational Support Hub in Germany. Sustainment flights occur on average once every two months, creating the need to both lengthen the sustainment planning horizon and rely heavily on local resources for support.



Figure 2.1 –AFU Ukrainian Technicians demonstrate the method for self-recovery.

Les techniciens ukrainiens démontrent la méthode d'auto-récupération.

Roto 4 Maintenance is made of several different trades: a Weapons Tech Sgt (Sgt Blanchard), a Vehicle Tech MCpl (MCpl Kruger), 3 Vehicle Tech Cpls (Cpl Jenkins, Cpl Gow and Cpl Jenkins), an Ammo Tech MCpl (MCpl Poole) and a Supply Tech Cpl (Cpl Tartaglia) as our SPSS. Maintenance is providing support for 58 Standard Military Pattern Vehicles (SMP), primarily focused on the LUVW G Wagon fleet. Vehicles have been used heavily, and mostly off-road. LUVWs are used in a follow and assume formation behind the AFU (Armed Forces of Ukraine) travelling cross-country, in support of armored vehicles and for mounted recce.

Maintenance takes place on Op UNIFIER in a Weatherhaven augmented with insulation, lighting, reinforced concrete flooring pads and a tooling/computer security cage bolted to the floor. On the floor there are two large work benches, a moveable welding table, several welders and a plasma cutter. We have storage space for 1000L of water for hand/pressure washing. Heat is provided by two 100k BTU FSH and power by one or two 30kw TQGs. The current maintenance facility is well-equipped with a great deal of specialty tooling and supplies, but is limited in space. With our 4 veh techs, we the capacity to work on 4 vehicles at once. Currently we are often limited to only one or two concurrent tasks, especially in inclement weather.



Figure 3.1 – Testing proper fitting of GP25 Grenade launcher to AKM with insight provided by AFU Technicians.

Vérification de l'assemblage adéquat du lanceur de grenades GP25 à l'AKM avec les recommandations fourni par les techniciens de l'AFU.



Figure 3.2 – Investigation results on a ruptured casing (round #5) from a TAC 50 sniper rifle.

Les résultats de l'enquête sur un douille brisé (cartouche # 5) à partir d'un fusil de précision TAC 50.

During our visit to the Ukrainian Logistics School, all trades learned what it is like to be a technician in the AFU, seeing Host Nation (HN) vehicle and weapons technicians being tested on their knowledge of their equipment. These HN techs took great pride in their jobs, which could be seen when trying to talk to them through a language assistant.



Figure 4.1 – JTF-U instructing alongside with JMTG-U on proper recovery techniques using a custom build roll over casualty build by CAF mechanics.

FOI-U instruit aux côtés de JMTG-U sur les techniques de récupération appropriées en utilisant le véhicule de renversement construit par les mécaniciens des FAC.

As the Rotational Training Units (RTUs) cycle through the CTC establishment within IPSC the J4 Maintenance cell has taken it upon themselves to mentor and enable reform within the maintenance realm. Our techs have assisted the last two RTUs in the form of instructing a 2 day familiarization course. This course is comprised of recovery operations specializing in direct pull, indirect pull and hasty recovery as well as righting a rolled vehicle. This has been a great learning experience for all the vehicle technicians with not just teaching the AFU our techniques and standard operating procedures (SOPs), but also learning from our US and AFU counter parts. Maintenance has also conducted a few cross training days with the US and AFU, with each country's wrecker crews talking about their vehicles' capabilities in a controlled environment.



Figure 4.1 (Left) – CAF mechanics replacing trailing arm bushings to be put on the new front axle assembly after a differential lock up due to loss of fluid

(À gauche) - Les mécaniciens des FAC remplacent les bagues des bras oscillants à installer sur le nouvel essieu avant après un blocage du différentiel dû à la perte de liquide

Figure 4.2 (Below) – CAF mechanics visit a local tank factory.

(Ci-dessous) - Les mécaniciens des FAC visitent une usine de chars d'assaut locale.



The weapons technician on Roto 4 is here to support Line of Effort 1 (LOE1) with all of their weapons maintenance needs, mainly foreign weapons and sniper rifles. The bulk of the work is the annual CAF weapons inspections and the bi-annual foreign weapons certification to fire. With the weapons tech being a Sgt, he has the responsibility as IC Maint ensuring the rest of maintenance is operating and working to a high standard throughout the rotation, acting as the control office/ETQMS.



Figure 5.1 – A 72 hr-long recovery operation was conducted as 2 LUVW G Wagons became bogged down in the training area. This recovery was conducted in conjunction with US assets.

Une opération de récupération de 72 heures menée alors que 2 wagons VULR ont resté pris dans la zone d'entraînement. Cette récupération a été réalisée conjointement avec des effectifs américains.

The J4 Branch on Op UNIFIER has the unique challenge of not only sustaining a mission, but also enabling reform within Ukraine. Working alongside the AFU while providing world-class maintenance support to our own mission gives Ukrainian soldiers the opportunity to pick up on our methods of sustainment, making them a more effective force on the battlefield.

Arte et Marte

JTF-U R4 Maintenance:

- Capt M.D. Hazledine – RCEME
- Sgt P.D. Blanchard – Wpns Tech
- MCpl H.R. Kruger – Veh Tech
- MCpl G.H Poole – Ammo Tech
- Cpl L.W. Jenkins – Veh Tech
- Cpl S.M. Gow – Veh Tech
- Cpl J.A. Dawe – Veh Tech
- Cpl J.M. Tartaglia – Sup Tech