



# MINUTES OF THE 15<sup>th</sup> ETAP/ETAC STEERING BOARD (SB)

## Madrid, ESP, 20-21 NOV 24 organised by ETAC

**Participants:** The participating representatives are listed in Annex 1.

**Chairman:** Col Carlos Herráiz Linares (ETAC COM)

**Secretary:** LtCol Antonio Arráez González (ETAP Chief OPS/C.Director)

LtCol Jens Gjolme Bolstad (ETAP Chief Plans and Policy)

- Annexes:**
1. List of Participants
  2. Action Item (AI) list
  3. Agenda
  4. Briefing (available only at [www.etac-mil.eu](http://www.etac-mil.eu))
  5. PE vacancies & JD

**Start:** 20/1400L

**End:** 21/1100L

These SB-meeting minutes were created based on handwritten notes. The minutes follow the sequence of the adopted agenda numbered.

<b>1</b>	<b>Verification of attendance</b>
	All Nations and EATC attended the meeting, except NLD and LUX. BEL rep took the position of LUX during the meeting.
<b>2</b>	<b>Welcome by the Chairman/ETACCOM</b>
	<p>ETAC COM thanked the participants for their presence at this face-to-face meeting, which would undoubtedly contribute to a greater involvement and participation of the representatives and to a better mutual understanding, given the importance of the issues to be discussed.</p> <p>The need to improve communication between the representatives and the ETAC was mentioned, as well as the need for mutual trust in order to prevail and follow the CoA of improving the projects, and also progressively adapting them to the real scenario and threats. It was noted that this evolved training is now conditioned by shortfalls in the Peace Establishment, which humpers the level of ambition.</p> <p>It was also stated that the actual training provided is yet a good tactical product considering hot wash up and lesson learnt feedback gathered after the projects.</p> <p>Finally, it has to be considered that the level of ambition in actual conditions, as manning is getting worse, <b>may limit the possibility for immediate evolution in training</b> or even may limit some projects as the situation may not be solved in the short term if nations don't provide the referred manning.</p>

3	<b>Validation of the 14<sup>th</sup> SB minutes / Action items review</b>
	<p>The list of action items from previous SB meetings was reviewed and it was concluded that all had been completed, except for a few recurring issues that remained unresolved because no clear solution had been found:</p> <p>ACTION ITEMS:</p> <p>10/02 (2021) &amp; 13/02 (2023) - LEGAL SERVICE support to SB &amp; request to EDA → pending.</p> <p>11/08 (2022) - <b>request for PE personnel</b> to ETAC → NATION'S DECISION pending.</p> <p>14/02 (2024) - qualification requirements for Tac IP status → task for STD BOARD.</p>
4	<b>ETAC/ETAP Extension of TA</b>
	<p>Of the three countries still to sign the extension of the project, the representative of Bulgaria brought the signed document in hand.</p> <p>The actual situation about two nations remaining to hand in the extension doc is as follows:</p> <p>The representative of Portugal explained that, due to a loss of internal information during the handover with his predecessor, he had not been properly informed about the need for his country to sign the document in order to agree to the extension of the TA, and undertook to resolve this issue shortly. Clearance is assured but the document has to be handed in to ETAC.</p> <p>The Romanian representative explained that the approval document had already been approved and signed and would be available as soon as possible.</p> <p>On this issue, the German representative agreed to consider these minutes as an official document, which would stop the process of withdrawing the German TacIP from the ETAC if no agreement on the extension of the TA was reached by April 2025.</p> <p><b>The unanimous decision to extend the project for another nine years was therefore clear.</b> The original copies will be kept by the ETAC when collected as stated in the TA, which states that every nation keeps a signed original document for the extension and ETAC must have an original copy from all the members.</p>
5	<b>PoW 2024 - review</b>
	<p>With the Pow 24 finished and executed, it is worth noting that the number of real tactical events during the night and day courses in Zaragoza has increased this year. There have been airdrops of all types, parachute drops (with an emphasis on cross parachuting between nations), ERO with tactical vehicles and the participation of AMPT teams from the nations, among others.</p> <p>In addition, the available airspace and the number of airfields have been increased.</p> <p>It has also facilitated the parallel running of cross-maintenance projects such as the <i>lighthouse project</i>, always on the premise that they do not have a direct impact on the courses.</p> <p>In order not to limit tactical activities, nations are always invited to bring their own paratroopers, jump masters, vehicles and loads in case of incompatibilities.</p> <p>It was also pointed out that there are gaps in course participation due to last minute cancellations. Bearing in mind that there are sometimes other participating nations or third parties interested in filling these possible gaps, there is talk of <b>creating an agile procedure for rapid approval of third party participation in these cases. ETAC will provide the procedure for obtaining CLR from nations.</b></p>

6	<p><b>PoW 2025</b></p>
	<p>Concerning POW 25, Bulgaria said it could not participate as pre planned, but at the same time, <b>Romania agreed to take its vacant position.</b></p> <p>On the other hand, the audience was informed that the number of "I" courses had been reduced from 5 in 2024 to 4 because <b>we only had two TacIPs in the centre.</b> This issue is a clear <b>example of the lack of coverage of the Peace Establishment.</b> This is seen as an <b>urgent issue that needs to be addressed by countries</b> in order not to affect the level of ambition for 2025 and the next POWs.</p> <p>It was also requested to meet the Admin and RFI milestones, ETAC will strive to meet them: Anticipating withdrawals, participation intentions (augmentees/additional) in LoACC, application forms, capability matrix.</p>
7	<p><b>Overview</b></p>
	<p>There has been a growing interest from nations to attend the NVG evening course, which is the only course held during the year. The <b>maximum number of participants has therefore been increased to meet the demand.</b> This was possible in the double course in Zaragoza in March-25, as there were only four participants in the day course.</p> <p>Participants were asked if they had used the certificates to gain additional qualifications for their crews. Most replied that they did not do so in a formal way, but that it served in some way to consider the graduated crew as having a plus level.</p> <p><b>Interest was expressed in a "T" project, but no nation has offered to host it in the short term.</b></p> <p>There was also a discussion on the India courses and the <b>importance of creating this TacIP team to support the courses.</b> Taking advantage of this topic, <b>the need to fill one of the TacIP positions at the Centre was raised. Belgium expressed interest, but this is still awaiting official confirmation. Any action by Belgium to offer TacIP will be welcomed by ETAC as it will fill a critical gap.</b></p> <p>Returning to the issue of the lack of staff at the Centre and the impact of this situation on maintaining performance levels, the <b>need for an Intel Officer</b> was also discussed. This person will not only be responsible for the Intel scenario during the courses, but will also ensure that the threats and scenario are aligned with training and operational planning through the <i>"Playbook tool"</i>.</p> <p>In order to minimise the impact caused by the return of the ETAC Intel Officer at the end of 2024, a meeting was organised on 18 December at the EATC to train the Intel Officers who will support us in the following projects: ETAP-C 25-2 March in Evreux-France, ETAP-C 25-3 September in Zaragoza and ETAP-C 25-4 October in Beja-Portugal. This option of <b>EATC support to INTEL ETAC cell is temporary</b> and will only serve as a bridge to near future HO-TO of INTEL tools and KNOW HOW.</p> <p>This intel present problem is considered critical as enriches and synchronizes tactical scenarios and needs to be solved by any nation providing replacement and a <b>new INTEL OFFICER.</b></p> <p>Also at this meeting in the EATC Dec 18th, host participants for 2025 projects are invited to send their Intel officers, especially if a nation is interested in covering this JD in ETAC, or host a 2025 project.</p>

	<p>Perhaps the Intel and TacIP positions could be considered the most critical, but no less so the <b>CIS</b> as VNC from Spain is working not only in national CIS issues but also for projects due to the lack of this CIS JD coverage. It happens that VNC will not be available for 6 months due to newborn coming, and a CIS gap may arise.</p> <p>Also Comm Assistant position needs to be filled.</p> <p><b>Nations are invited to send personnel to continue the task for which this Centre was created. Any initiative or proposal to fill this gap is the responsibility of the nations.</b></p> <p>If the PE gaps are not filled, a rotation formula may be proposed to the SB, taking into account the historical level of participation in the programme and their past and present contribution.</p> <p>Concerning the reduction of PE in the Centre, it is expressed that this is not the sole responsibility of the ETAC Comm, but of the member countries.</p>
8	<p><b>Symposium</b></p>
	<p><b>The annual symposium will be resumed</b> to allow us to share experiences and lessons learned from a tactical point of view.</p> <p>A provisional date has been set for June and various locations are being considered, such as the Canary Islands, Palma de Mallorca or Brussels.</p> <p><b>Subjects to be dealt with at this event, in order to promote multinational KNOW-HOW on TAC AIRLIFT, should be proposed by the nations of the programme, and contributions also.</b></p> <p>The possibility of holding the Standardisation Board or the Steering Board in person, taking advantage of this event, is also being considered.</p>
9	<p><b>Any other business</b></p>
	<p>Throughout the presentation, the participants were shown various self-explanatory graphs relating to the Centre's activity over the last few years, the evolution/involution of the PE and the vacancies to be filled, together with the possible consequences for the development of projects if this were not the case. The <b>approved MB-25</b> was also referred, as well as aspects related to third parties, stating that the <b>low-cost strategy</b> is still to be kept.</p> <p>The <b>EATC representatives stressed the need for a T-project</b> and training with real-life elements, with a detailed explanation of the possible real scenarios planned by NATO, to which ETAC should try to adapt the training.</p> <p>It was pointed out that the <b>main reason for not having a T-project in 2024-25 is that no nation has offered to host it.</b> To reassure the EATC, it was also made clear that despite the lack of a T, the C courses provide comprehensive advanced tactical training for the European transport fleet. A T-project equals two C-projects and a conservative posture may be kept in the near future until any member would host, that is the position of the Center nowadays.</p> <p>Regarding the performance of <b>real-life actions during the courses</b>, such as dropping loads, parachuting, unloading vehicles, etc., it is reported that this is done in a high percentage of the missions in the Zaragoza courses. Participating nations are offered a wide variety of airdrops and airlifts, as well as take-offs and landings on unpaved runways.</p> <p>Moreover, in case of incompatibility with national equipment, PPs are also invited to bring their loads, parachutes or whatever they consider necessary, after coordination, to be dropped or used during the course.</p>

	<p><b>For the rest of the courses in other nations, this point is always emphasized</b> in order to increase the value and reality of the courses with real events.</p> <p>It is reported that the unpaved RWY of Ablitas suffers degradation due to the landings during the courses and an extra maintenance is taking place daily to restore operational conditions, which may cause some possible additional costs to be determined and shared with the nations prior to be charged. This point is <b>under study by ESP HOST PARTICIPANT</b> and may impact an contained extra charge especially for HEAVY LIFTERS.</p> <p>A possible official ceremony to gather historical actors and to commemorate the extension of the TA will be considered, upon Bulgarian proposal, the <b>farewell</b> would consider the nine past´ years of executing ETAPs and <b>the creation of ETAC</b> gathering creators, and also to look forward for next nine extended. This farewell would be planned initially next spring → TBC asap.</p> <p>EATC highlights the importance of evolving the projects, and consider Art. 5 scenarios and also the importance of having some nation to host a T-PROJECT. Chairman referred to this last point of <b>hosting T´s, opening the possibility of limiting the menu of this possible initiative and focusing in interest training but not “a la carte”</b> (X-para focused, X-maint, NVGs, AAR, as possible examples two máx.objectives to be trained during the T-project, sequenced during the two weeks).</p>
<p><b>10</b></p>	<p><b>Wrap up/new Item Action review</b></p>
	<p>A fast-track procedure is being considered to fill vacancies caused by last minute cancellations.</p> <p>The unanimity on the extension of the TA for another 9 years was confirmed.</p> <p>Bulgaria will not be able to participate in the Zaragoza-25 course and Romania will take the place.</p> <p>The following positions need to be filled:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>PE06 Chief TI</b> as of 08/24 Belgium to be considered/Italy?</li> <li><b>PE12 CIS</b> as of 07/23 Czech Republic to consider</li> <li><b>PE02 Cmdr's Asst</b> as of 12/23</li> <li><b>PE10 Intel</b> as of 01/25</li> </ul> <p>Failure to do so may result in the cancellation of some of the planned projects.</p> <p>A symposium will be held around June 2025.</p> <p>The need for a “T” is discussed and the possibility of nations hosting it in 2026 is opened up without apparent success. It is also pointed out that a possible T- project could have a limited level of ambition and limit the menu for the "a la carte" formula, focusing on X-para, X-maintenance, X-cold WX ops, as an example.</p> <p>It is agreed to look for a fair formula to distribute the costs associated with the extra maintenance of the Ablitas track during the courses. This issue is under study and may impact heavy lifters.</p> <p>Farewell ceremony due to EXT TA, will be considered.</p>

11	Farewell
	GRACIAS FOR ATTENDING

**Zaragoza, 5<sup>th</sup> November 2024**

**Approved by Chairman:**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Signature**  
**Col C.E.Herráiz**

**Zaragoza, 5<sup>th</sup> November 2024**

**Conference content compiled  
by Secretary:**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Signature**  
**LtCol J. G. Bolstad**