



NATO MILMED COE STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION PLAN 2023

BACKGROUND:

The overall recognition of the NATO MILMED COE among the key stakeholders is mixed: the COE has satisfactory recognition in the NATO Medical Community and limited recognition among its Steering Nations. Additional organizations or individuals that may be interested in the COE's products are targeted via direct communication and social media campaigns, both of which can be continuously improved.

The NATO MILMED COE is committed to the health of the uniformed forces and is designated by the Chiefs of Military Medical Services in NATO (COMEDS) to be the information knowledge management centre in the field of military medicine. This Strategic Communication Plan is tightly linked to the NATO MILMED COE's overarching Strategic Plan and aims to engage key stakeholders within, and outside, the MILMED COE and the Alliance.

INTENT:

- Increase pride and cooperation among the staff members of the NATO MILMED COE
- Increase support and collaborative relationships from key organizations and stakeholders within the medical support discipline of NATO and partner nations
- Increase support for current and future NATO MILMED COE endeavours
- Attract high-quality multinational staff to the NATO MILMED COE
- Strengthen multinational partnerships

ENABLING OBJECTIVES:

- Highlight the NATO MILMED COE reputation for excellence by emphasizing the unique aspects of our joint and multinational services.
- Highlight the NATO MILMED COE crucial role in NATO's transformation strategy.
- Highlight the future of the NATO MILMED COE and its requirements.

STRATEGY:

- Formally brand the NATO MILMED COE as the centre for medical support information and knowledge management
- Highlight the unique projects and services the NATO MILMED COE offers
- Use new/emerging media resources to engage key audiences



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KEY AUDIENCES/PRIORITY TARGETS:

INTERNAL

1. NATO MILMED COE staff
2. Steering Committee Members

EXTERNAL

- Professional partners and stakeholders: interested in the COE's products due to their professional affiliation (medical or defence).

1. COMEDS
2. ACT/ACO
3. IMS
4. NATO COEs
5. NATO and partner Nations
6. Students/Invited Instructors of MILMED COE courses
7. Other organizations (i.e. GOs, NGOs, UN/EU/ICRC, Academia, Industry)

- Non-professional partners: not being directly interested in the COE's products for their professional merit.

8. Other organizations (i.e. GOs, NGOs, UN/EU, Academia, Industry)
9. General public, media

IMPLEMENTATION AND WAY AHEAD:

This strategy will be reviewed annually / or by the request of the DIR/DDIR. The officer in charge of the development and facilitation of the Communications Plan is the Senior Communications Officer. Any deviation from this strategy must be sanctioned by the DIR/DDIR.



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STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION

The objective of strategic communication activities is to ensure that the NATO MILMED COE key messages reach relevant stakeholders and organizations to foster their commitment to a given project. Every COE member participating in external events should be aware of the most important messages of the COE. Official external communication is the sole responsibility of the DIR/DDIR.

Specific objectives of strategic communication activities are the following:

1. Ensure that key messages are consistent with strategic goals and reach relevant individuals and groups. (see Annex A and Annex B)
2. Include the project's objectives, required input, participation, or commitment from external parties.
3. Ensure that each project is listed on the MILMED COE website/Social media account. This website should be updated weekly with major updates every month.
4. Send a professional press release to relevant newspaper/social media regarding each project.

Annexes:

A, NATO MILITARY MEDICAL VISION AND OBJECTIVES 2017-2026

B, MILMED COE VISION AND STRATEGIC GUIDANCE 2023-2027



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**STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION
 TOOLS AND TACTICS**

Tools	Tactics	Key Audience	Key Performance Indicator
Email/Phone	<p>When a personal relationship exists, this communication is preferred.</p> <p>Can be used to communicate to key audience where no personal relationship exists, but participation is necessary for the success of the project.</p>	Internal-external, Professional and non-professional stakeholders	Direct feedback
Personal Visits	<p>When a personal relationship exists, this communication is preferred.</p> <p>Can be used to communicate to key audience where no personal relationship exists, but participation is necessary for the success of the project.</p> <p>Personal visits may also be made for the purpose of project marketing to non-involved stakeholders outside typical communication channels, like GOs, NGOs, IOs, Universities, etc.</p>	Internal-external, Professional and non-professional stakeholders	Direct feedback



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<p>Conferences/ workshops</p>	<p>Depending on the purpose of the seminar/workshop different target audiences are invited.</p> <p>Mixes of participants from all target audiences are of course preferred to encourage networking.</p>	<p>Internal-external, Professional and non-professional stakeholders</p>	<p>Direct audience feedback and post-conference review</p>
<p>Website</p>	<p>Intranet (Knowledge Management/Communities of Interests) will contain useful information for organization members.</p> <p>Extranet (Knowledge Management/Communities of Interests) will also provide outreach opportunities, as well as a central location for project participants to share information behind a password-protected portal.</p> <p>Internet (The project website is a good way to spread the word about a project, but research within the area says that most people use websites to get an overview of a topic. Project results and success stories will be displayed.)</p>	<p>Internal-external, Professional and non-professional stakeholders</p>	<p>User count and activity, user feedback, visit's statistics, search engine ranking, user feedback</p>



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Brochures/Roll-ups	<p>A brochure/roll-up with an overview of each branch or a major MILMED COE project will be developed, describing the activities and results of the branch/project.</p> <p>These may be handed out/installed at conferences, workshops, working group meetings and personal visits to members of all target audiences.</p>	Professional and non-professional stakeholders	Direct feedback from audience, if the outreach activity generated a media appearance, then as below
Press releases	Information regarding MILMED COE projects and performed events will be sent out to appropriate newspapers. These press releases should either tell a story related to the media audience or present information about a performed /upcoming event which is relevant for people in the region.	Media	References and citations, hits and search engine ranking (if online and measurable)
Newsletters	<p>Newsletters may be sent by e-mail to relevant target audiences on a regular basis.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It should contain information about what has been done within the project with an emphasis on "good practice" or success stories. • Additionally it should contain a calendar with important activities to come within the following 2-4 months. 	Internal-external, Professional and non-professional stakeholders	References and citations



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TV/radio coverage	TV/radio coverage should be held in conjunction to major public project events, such as the Vigorous Warrior Exercise series.	Media	References and citations, hits and search engine ranking (if online and measurable).
Articles	<p>Success stories and best practice examples could be interesting for a wider audience and therefore be published in newsletters, magazines or on news-containing websites.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Best practice examples and interesting project results having a certain scientific level could be published as articles in professional press or on professional websites. 	Media	Citations, scientific feedback, hits and search engine ranking (if online and measurable)
Social Media	Information regarding MILMED COE projects and performed events will be posted on a weekly basis. These posts should either tell or present information about a performed /upcoming event which is relevant for people within NATO or a key audience.	Internal-external, Professional and non-professional stakeholders, Facebook audience	Visits' statistics, user count and activity, user feedback (based on the built-in statistics tools)
Outreach activities	Type and degree of outreach depends on an effort's purpose, goals and target population. In addition to delivering messages, outreach has an educational role, raising the awareness of the organization. (School visits, NATO Run)	Internal-external, Professional and non-professional stakeholders	Direct feedback from audience, if the outreach activity generated a media appearance, then as above.



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Communication trainings/Staff trainings	Enhance the efficiency of the personnel's communication and skills to build good relationships with colleagues and partners, team building	Internal	Direct feedback
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The personal advocacy of the COE has proven to be one of the most effective ways to deliver messages to key stakeholders. This means that each and every COE member participating in external events should be aware of the most important messages the COE is aiming to convey at that time and keeping those in mind during conversation, with the caveat of official external communication being the sole responsibility of the DIR/DDIR.

Social media campaigns are becoming more important and impactful in disseminating the COE's messages and raising awareness about the products and services of the COE. The most impactful campaigns so far have been built upon main events (such as the Vigorous Warrior Exercise Series) and brought unprecedented levels of recognition for the COE. Therefore, this tactic will be refined and utilized in a similar fashion going forward.

This Strategic Communication Plan will be executed in accordance with the current NATO Centre's of Excellence, Strategic Communication Framework and ACT's communication procedures in line with NATO StratCom Policy. All relevant information and communication capabilities use the agreed framework as the basis for detailed implementation plans appropriate to the COE's level and function. This requires continued coordination both within information disciplines, and with other bodies whose actions are essential to achieve StratCom objectives.