



## THE LATVIAN NATIONAL ARMED FORCES

**Founding Date.** The National Armed Forces (NAF) was established on November 24, 1994, by uniting the Defence Forces and the *Zemessardze* (National Guard).

**Status.** The composition, duties, financing, command and control of the NAF are governed by the Republic of Latvia Law on National Armed Forces; unified military service is regulated by the Republic of Latvia Law on Military Service.

**Mission.** To defend the Republic of Latvia's sovereignty and territorial integrity, and to protect its residents from aggression.

**Main Tasks.** The NAF ensure the inviolability of Latvia's territory, territorial waters and airspace, participate in international military operations, ensure NAF and reserve personnel training and participate in operations averting national threat situations.

The NAF can be assigned additional unspecified tasks only with a decision by the Cabinet of Ministers.

**Personnel.** Only Latvian citizens aged 18 years and over can be recruited in the NAF. Its peacetime personnel consist of professional service soldiers, guardsmen, military and civilian employees as well as reserve soldiers called in for routine or review military training.

**Structure.** The NAF is a militarily organized and trained segment of the nation which brings together all services. The NAF consist of the regular forces, the *Zemessardze* and the NAF Reserve. The regular forces consist of the Land Forces, Naval Forces, Air Force, Training and Doctrine Command, Logistics Command, Military Police, the *Saeima* (Parliament) and Presidential Security Service and other units. The *Zemessardze* is subordinate to the NAF Commander. The NAF Reserve consists of Latvian citizens subject to military service and registered in the reserve.

**Command Structure.** The NAF is headed by the NAF Commander who is subordinate to the Minister of Defence. The NAF Joint Headquarters (JHQ) is an institution enabling the NAF Commander to exercise continuous control; the NAF JHQ provides necessary information, documentation and proposals for decision making, ensures the NAF Commander's orders, instructions and regulations are implemented, as well as provides liaison functions in combat conditions. The President of Latvia is the NAF Commander-in-Chief.

**Cooperation.** The NAF cooperates with state, municipal and private institutions. The Cabinet of Ministers establishes procedures for NAF participation in emergencies, fire prevention and rescue operations, as well as in operations dealing with the consequences of emergencies.

The Minister of Defence decides on NAF participation in operations supporting the national civil defence system.

**Financing.** The NAF is financed from the state budgetary programme *National Defence, Security and Integration into NATO*; the funding allocated to this programme since 2003 is being gradually increased to 2% of national gross domestic product.

**Control.** The Minister of Defence, the State Audit Office, the Cabinet of Ministers, the President of Latvia and the *Saeima* (Parliament) exercise civilian control over the NAF, each within their respective competency. Internal NAF control is exercised by the NAF Commander.



## FACTS AND FIGURES

**Personnel.** As of July 1, 2008 NAF personnel consisted of 5,052 soldiers, 10,642 guardsmen as well as 1,380 civilian and military employees. By rank the NAF had 1,295 officers, 1,940 non-commissioned officers, 1,817 privates first class and privates. By gender the NAF had 17% women and 83% men, by ethnic composition there were 4,559 Latvians, 358 Russians, 41 Lithuanians, 35 Poles, 31 Byelorussians, 21 Ukrainians and 7 soldiers of other nationalities.

**Budget (Millions of Lats (LVL)):** 180,33 planned for 2008; in 2007 – 152.49; in 2006 – 117.34; in 2005 – 80.78; in 2004 – 69.84; in 2003 – 63.03.

**International Operations.** Since 1996 NAF units have participated in the following operations: Bosnia and Herzegovina – *IFOR, SFOR, EU Althea*; Albania – *AFOR*; Kosovo – *KFOR, OSCE*; Afghanistan – *ISAF*; Iraq – *OIF*; Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia – *OSCE*; Georgia – *OSCE*. The following number of NAF personnel have been deployed on operations: 1996 – 85 soldiers, 1997 – 80, 1998 – 79, 1999 – 177, 2000 – 26, 2001 – 120, 2002 – 131, 2003 – 199, 2004 – 529, 2005 – 431, 2006 – 310, 2007 – 343. The deployment projection for 2008 is 394 soldiers and for 2009 – 445 soldiers.

### Participation in NATO and EU forces:

- ◆ Since 1996 NAF units have participated in the **NATO Reaction Force (NRF)**. The NAF provided an Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD) platoon for *NRF-7*, a Military Police (MP) platoon for *NRF-8*, an EOD and MP platoon for *NRF-11*. 310 soldiers are planned for *NRF-14*.
- ◆ Since 2007 the NAF have participated in the **Standing NATO Mine Countermeasures Group 1 (SNMCMG1)**. The Latvian Navy deployed the mine hunter *Namejs* in 2007 and minesweeper *Imanta* in 2008. In 2009 Latvian Navy plans to deploy the minesweeper *Viesturs*.
- ◆ It is planned that 71 NAF soldiers will be deployed in the **EU Task Force (EU BG 2010)** in 2010.

### Land Forces

Personnel – 952 soldiers.

Armament: *Spike* anti-tank guided missile system, 120 mm and 82 mm mortars, *Carl Gustav AT-4* grenade launchers, 40 mm *GMG* grenade machine guns, *Hecate II* large calibre sniper rifles, *Minimi* light machine guns, *G36KV* assault rifles, *Glock 17* pistols, and others.

### Naval Forces

Personnel – 552 soldiers.

Fleet: two staff and logistics vessels, three minesweepers and mine hunters, four high speed patrol boats and six coast guard ships.

### Air Force

Personnel – 291 soldiers.

Armament: three airspace observation radars, *RBS-70* short range air defence system. Aircraft: *L-410*, four *An-2*, four *Mi-17* and three *Mi-2* helicopters.

### The *Zemessardze* (National Guard)

Personnel – 550 soldiers and 10,642 guardsmen.

Armament: 100 mm *K-53* howitzers, 90 mm *M-1110* antitank guns, 120 mm mortars, 40 mm *L70* antiaircraft guns, *Hecate II* large calibre sniper rifles, *KSP-58* machine guns, *AK-4* assault rifles, and others.