

CCW Protocol V Meeting of Experts, 3-4 April 2014, Geneva

Statement by Bulgaria on Generic Preventive Measures

Overall, the responsibility for the management of munitions sites lies with the commanding officers of the Bulgarian Armed Forces depending on their specific duties. The munition sites are under the Joint Forces Command, the Land Forces Command, the Air Forces Command and the Navy Command. To execute the full management of those sites the commanding units receive assistance by a special Headquarter staffed with respective experts.

The Chief of Defence is in charge of the organization and is fully responsible for the logistical supplies of the Bulgarian Armed Forces, including the munitions supplies. The Chief of Defence is assisted by the “Logistics” Directorate within the Defence Headquarter.

This responsibility remains unchanged during an armed conflict.

The main documents under which the Bulgarian Armed Forces munitions sites are managed not only comply with but in some aspects exceed the requirements set in the International Ammunition Technical Guidelines.

1. *Law on Defence and Armed Forces of the Republic of Bulgaria;*
2. *Regulation for the Implementation of the Law on Defence and Armed Forces of the Republic of Bulgaria;*
3. *Regulation on the structure of the Ministry of Defence of the Republic of Bulgaria;*
4. *Statute for military service in the Armed Forces of the Republic of Bulgaria;*
5. *Ordinance on the conditions and procedures for carrying out activities related to weapons, ammunitions, explosives and pyrotechnic devices and their control by the Armed Forces of the Republic of Bulgaria;*
6. *Regulations for warehouse and storage sites, manufacturing, repair and destruction of munitions, explosives and gun powders in the Bulgarian Armed Forces.*

The Joint Forces Command, the Land Forces, the Air Forces and the Navy are directly funded by the state budget and they are in charge of planning and undertaking the respective measures for the security and the maintenance of the munition sites and their infrastructure.

The munition sites undergo regular inspections on compliance with the relevant storage and safety regulations. Those inspections are provided for in the annual plans of the Defence Staff, the Joint Forces Command, the Land Forces, the Air Forces and the Navy and if considered necessary, unplanned inspections can be conducted as well. The legal regulations set no strict timeframes for the regularity of those inspections.

All inspections, carried out at the munitions sites, are reflected in the “Inspection results Logbook”, which is kept in the respective munitions site. It bears the date, the reason and the results of the inspections performed, the recommendations and the timeframes for eliminating the detected irregularities, the orders of the commanding officer to follow-up and to comply with the recommendations and the measures undertaken in the above respect.

In a special protocol the Inspection team provides information on the inspection results and on the inspection findings. A copy of this protocol, after being sanctioned by the Inspection team supervisor, is kept in the respective munitions site.

The accounts of the munitions in possession of the Bulgarian Armed Forces are kept in accordance with the rules of the Ministry of Defence, the Bulgarian Armed Forces and the structures directly subordinated to the Minister of Defence. According to them every military unit conducts a separate reporting procedure, comprising of:

- Accounting Report – a specialized software licensed by the Ministry of Finance is used;
- Documentary Report – the procedure depends on the accounting documents rules, which differ according to the level of the logistics structure in which they are kept.

Currently, the Bulgarian Armed Forces use munitions reporting system "НИКЕ" which processes data on the quantity, quality and additional manufacturing data of the munitions and can provide a full report on the munitions by type and quantity as they are stored in the Bulgarian Armed Forces facilities.

Another information system, named "Logistics", which is scheduled to be a web based resource for a real-time munitions tracking record, is in the final stage before being commissioned.

The Ministry of Defence and the Bulgarian Armed Forces constantly undertake measures to ensure the reliability of the munitions for their storage or combat use. The systematic monitoring provides information on their technical condition, their state of degradation and ensures detection of the unsafe for further handling and storage munitions, explosives and pyrotechnical devices.

The control over the technical condition of the munitions includes:

- Scheduled and non-scheduled technical inspections;
- Works, performed according to the military regulations;
- Laboratory and military range tests;
- Maintenance and repair.

The technical inspections, the maintenance, the laboratory and the field tests schedule are defined by the Regulations for warehouse and storage sites, manufacturing, repair and destruction of munitions, explosives and gunpowders in the Bulgarian Armed Forces. Their frequency depends on the munition type or the results of the laboratory and field test. The usual timeframes are:

- Scheduled technical inspections: from 6 months to 5 years;
- Maintenance: from 6 months to 12 years;
- Laboratory tests to check the chemical stability of the gun powders: initially from 8 to 12 years, then the term is determined according to the laboratory results;
- Field test: initially from 4 to 20 years, then the term is determined by the test results, but not more than 60% of the initial period.

Munitions classified as unfit for use and storage are reclassified to the appropriate category and are designated for further destruction. The munitions that show incompliance with the

technical requirements are taken off duty with a respective order of the Defence Minister and are prohibited for further use.

Bulgarian Armed Forces have cooperation and assistance programmes with partner countries. For example, in 2011 and 2012 experts from US Defense Threat Reduction Agency made evaluation visits at munitions sites under Joint Forces Command, Air Forces Command and the Navy. The evaluation has shown that:

- The munition sites meet or exceed most of the international standards in this field, according to the Physical security and stockpile management procedures;
- The accountability of the weapons and munitions fully complies with the national and international standards and their requirements;
- The sites location and their internal structure are selected and designed to mitigate possible effects of explosions in case of an accident caused by munition detonation;
- The physical security of the weapon and munition storage facilities complies with the requirements, yet some of the physical security measures may need further improvement.