



# Headquarters Allied Air Command Ramstein

PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICE  
Ramstein Air Base, Germany

**NEWS RELEASE**  
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## Joint Effort NATO Trains Baltic Forward Air Controllers

Ramstein, 23 July. In a joint and mutual effort NATO and USAFE Air-Ground Operations School staff trained Forward Air Controllers (FACs) at Adazi Training Area (TA), Latvia, on 21 and 22 July. The Latvian armed forces made available the training range and facilities, while NATO allies provided air assets and ground stations for the training.

During the two-day event, Poland participated with two F-16 Fighting Falcons from Krzesiny Air Force Base and Lithuania supported the event with one L-39 Albatros from Siauliai Air Base. En route to Latvia, the Polish fighter pilots performed air-to-air-refuelling with an American KC-135 Stratotanker from RAF Mildenhall, United Kingdom. Once in the Adazi TA, the fighters flew Close Air Support (CAS) missions for troops on the ground. It was the FACs task to coordinate with NATO air command and control units and civilian air traffic control authorities in Latvia and Lithuania on how to best get the aircraft to where they were needed. Combined Air Operations Centre Uedem, Germany, controlled the whole event.

“It was a very successful event for us as we got our Baltic FACs and JTACs qualified and ready to deploy during BRTE VI, greatly supported by the Polish and Lithuanian air forces,” said Major Edmunds “Snake” Svencs, responsible for the training, “that’s the Alliance at its best: train as you operate.”

On 22 July, Latvian armed forces and NATO public affairs staff conducted a media event attended by 19 media representatives at Adazi TA. After receiving an overall introduction to BRTE VI, all journalists had the opportunity to watch first-hand the ongoing air-to-ground activities and then move to a static display of the FAC-related technical equipment involved and individual interviews where conducted. The Latvian Minister of Defence, Mr. Imants Lieģis, and the Commander of the National Armed Forces, Major General Raimonds Graube, joined up with Subject Matter Experts from NATO, the US Air Force and participating FAC teams from Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania to discuss details with the media.

“It is a fantastic feeling today”, Latvian Minister of Defence Imants Lieģis stated at the end of the event, “first of all this has been an incredible sign of interoperability and solidarity, which we know is absolutely vital for the Alliance. I would like to express my sincere thanks to all our Allies for the training support we received. Our soldiers are very successful in becoming professional JTAC. I feel very proud of our Latvian soldiers, because I know this capability is extremely important during operations and we have been able to commit that to our allies within ISAF. We are extremely pleased that this successful training event was conducted on Latvian territory,” Minister Lieģis added.

Baltic Region Training Event VI (BRTE VI) was the latest event in a series that HQ AC Ramstein has scheduled since late 2008 to reaffirm NATO’s commitment to the Baltic States and increase NATO’s visibility in the region. BRTE VI demonstrated mutual support among Allies and helped to further improve Air-Land Integration capabilities. Once fully trained, FACs

from the Baltic countries will deploy to Afghanistan, where Air-Land integration is essential to air operations.

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Note to editors:

For further information please check the HQ AC Ramstein website at [www.airn.nato.int](http://www.airn.nato.int), and on the Latvian Armed Forces website at [www.mil.lv](http://www.mil.lv) or contact the PAO staff at [airn.pao@airn.nato.int](mailto:airn.pao@airn.nato.int).

Pictures:

1. Troops in contact
2. Lithuanian L-39 Albatros arriving at Adazi Training Area
3. Forward Air Controller (FAC) is giving coordinates for a “Show of Force” manoeuvre
4. Lithuanian L-39 Albatros during a “Show of Force” manoeuvre
5. High media interest in the FAC-related static display
6. Major General Raimonds Graube, Chief Armed Forces Latvia, MSgt Jay Lemley, USAFE Air to Ground Operations School, and Mr. Imants Lieģis, Latvian Minister of Defence during the static display (from left to right)

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