



Headquarters Allied Air Command Ramstein

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RAMSTEIN ROVER 2012 - International Military Air Exercise in the Czech Republic

Ramstein, 16 August 2012 – The Czech Republic will host a major international exercise for NATO Forward Air Controllers (FACs) from 5 to 21 September 2012. The training is organised by NATO's Headquarters Allied Air Command Ramstein (HQ AC Ramstein), Germany.

Exercise Ramstein Rover 2012 (RARO12) is an advanced training opportunity to exercise Close Air Support (CAS) and FAC capabilities. RARO12 provides realistic pre-deployment training for FACs to be deployed to NATO's ISAF operation in Afghanistan.

In coordination with the Czech Air Force, HQ AC Ramstein has organized the exercise for participants from a total of 16 NATO member nations based at Namest Air Base and involving training areas in the Czech Republic at Libava, Boletice, and Písek. During RARO12 the Czech Air Force will fly missions out of Čáslav.

Flying assets, FAC teams and observers will be provided by the Czech Republic, Belgium, Estonia, France, Germany, Greece, Italy, Latvia, the Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Slovakia, Slovenia, Turkey the United Kingdom, and the United States.

The aim of RARO12 is to provide a measurable increase in proficiency, standardization and interoperability for FACs from NATO, Partnership for Peace (PfP) and ISAF troop contributing nations. RARO12 is a live-fly exercise during which NATO aircraft will provide the full-spectrum of day, night, medium and low altitude training for aircrews in realistic and complex scenarios.

In a classroom academic training followed by live-fly practical CAS training RARO12 exercise participants will be taught how to effectively employ airpower in support of own forces while mitigating risks to civilians and their property.

"I am confident that RARO12 makes a difference," underlines Colonel (GS) MSc Harry H. Schnell, German Air Force, the HQ AC Ramstein Exercise Director for RARO12 and a former pilot on F-104 Alpha Jet and Tornado – aircraft also used for CAS missions, "we have done everything to provide realistic and challenging training to further develop the capabilities of FACs and the Air Land Integration in support of ISAF operations."

"For the Czech Air Force RARO12 is an outstanding opportunity to showcase our contribution to NATO," says Brigadier General Jiri Verner, Deputy Commander of the Joint Forces and Air Force Commander, the senior representative of the Czech Host Nation for RARO12, "we have offered ideal facilities for conducting CAS training. NATO nations come here to train and prepare for the important Allied mission in Afghanistan. To us it is paramount to explain the purpose of the exercise to the population especially in the vicinity of the exercise locations."



“We currently plan with the participation of some 30 FAC teams and an additional 15 FAC instructors in RARO12,” says Colonel (GS) MSc Schnell, “during the exercise’s ten fly days from 10 to 21 September, aircraft like the Turkish F-16, US Air Force A-10, Czech L-159, L-39, Mi-24, Mi-171, Mi-17, Slovak L-39, Mi-17, German Learjet and PC-9 as well as a US KC-135 tanker aircraft will prominently portray the air dimension.”

The FAC Capability Section (FCS) of HQ AC Ramstein is responsible for the FAC training during the exercise. The team headed by Lieutenant Colonel Steve “Cajun” Behmer, a US Air Force A-10 pilot, have been working the standardization of NATO’s FACs and, using this process, have accredited several FAC training facilities. “RARO12 provides a great venue for ‘collective’ training,” says LtCol Behmer, “an aircraft mission in support of ground forces – what we call CAS – is typically a combined and joint event. It involves several nations and branches of the military within those nations. A CAS mission provides our men on the ground – the FACs who direct and control the supporting aircraft to the target – with a very beneficial opportunity to exercise with these entities.”

The 20-strong HQ AC Ramstein team led by Col (GS) MSc Schnell will start deploying to Namest Air Base from 4 September 2012 on.

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Note to editors:

At the end of August, local communities at the exercise locations will be informed about exercise details.

During aircraft deployment to Namest Air Base a photo opportunity and possible interviews with detachment commanders/pilots are planned.

For 18 September a RARO12 Media Day is planned; separate Media Advisory to follow in due course.

For further information please check also the HQ AC Ramstein website at www.airn.nato.int or contact the PAO staff at airn.pao@airn.nato.int. More information in Czech are provided at www.lznamest.army.cz or can be obtained from ramsteinover12@gmail.com.