

USAWC STRATEGY RESEARCH PROJECT

THE ROLE OF PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT IN SLOVAK DEFENSE REFORM

by

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The views expressed in this academic research paper are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the official policy or position of the U.S. Government, the Department of Defense, or any of its agencies.

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Report Documentation Page

*Form Approved
OMB No. 0704-0188*

Public reporting burden for the collection of information is estimated to average 1 hour per response, including the time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. Send comments regarding this burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden, to Washington Headquarters Services, Directorate for Information Operations and Reports, 1215 Jefferson Davis Highway, Suite 1204, Arlington VA 22202-4302. Respondents should be aware that notwithstanding any other provision of law, no person shall be subject to a penalty for failing to comply with a collection of information if it does not display a currently valid OMB control number.

1. REPORT DATE 03 MAY 2004	2. REPORT TYPE	3. DATES COVERED -			
4. TITLE AND SUBTITLE The Role of Personnel Management in Slovak Defense Reform		5a. CONTRACT NUMBER			
		5b. GRANT NUMBER			
		5c. PROGRAM ELEMENT NUMBER			
6. AUTHOR(S) Stanislav Petrevec		5d. PROJECT NUMBER			
		5e. TASK NUMBER			
		5f. WORK UNIT NUMBER			
7. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES) U.S. Army War College, Carlisle Barracks, Carlisle, PA, 17013-5050		8. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION REPORT NUMBER			
9. SPONSORING/MONITORING AGENCY NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES)		10. SPONSOR/MONITOR'S ACRONYM(S)			
		11. SPONSOR/MONITOR'S REPORT NUMBER(S)			
12. DISTRIBUTION/AVAILABILITY STATEMENT Approved for public release; distribution unlimited					
13. SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES					
14. ABSTRACT See attached file.					
15. SUBJECT TERMS					
16. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF:			17. LIMITATION OF ABSTRACT	18. NUMBER OF PAGES 37	19a. NAME OF RESPONSIBLE PERSON
a. REPORT unclassified	b. ABSTRACT unclassified	c. THIS PAGE unclassified			

ABSTRACT

AUTHOR: Col Stanislav Petrenec

TITLE: The role of personnel management in Slovak defense reform

FORMAT: Strategy Research Project

DATE: 19 March 2004 PAGES: 37 CLASSIFICATION: Unclassified

The aim of the research project is to review the role of the Personnel Management System (PMS) during the transformation of the Ministry of Defense (MOD) and the General Staff (GS) of the Slovak Republic since 2000, assess the progress so far, and point out current and future challenges. The relationship between the MOD and the GS, and the structure and performance of a personnel management system, which promotes the right people to the right position at the right time, always plays a significant role in the success of the whole organization. The ability to elaborate appropriate planning documents for transformation of the Slovak Armed Forces, including policies for the transition of the personnel management system, was the starting point of cultural and progressive changes. The intent of this project is to produce some key recommendations that can be considered in the short and long term to continue to improve the management of personnel and decision-making performance of the MOD and GS. Theories of leading change and building a learning organization will be considered at the strategic level. This analysis will facilitate the understanding of an effective management and interface of MOD/GS while continuing to meet the reform objectives of Armed Forces of the Slovak Republic SR Force 2010. Research will also outline the future characteristics of the MOD and GS organization, which will provide and develop an integral personnel management system (IPMS) to meet the requirements of the Military Strategy of the Slovak Republic and other strategic documents.

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

In producing this paper, I am grateful for the excellent advice and guidance provided by the academic staff of the USAWC, its supporting staff, and my seminar colleagues. Particularly, my thanks go to all my faculty instructors, who have been teaching me to understand an ambiguous strategic environment.

I am especially grateful to my project advisor, Marybeth P. Ulrich, who has taken care for improving my personal skills to accomplish this strategic research. I appreciate her special effort to focus on the transformation of the Armed Forces of the Slovak Republic and to make the experiences from the reform of my country well known to military experts. My special thanks go also to my American colleague Charles W. Vanbebber, who constantly provides me with an actual bibliography on Slovakia's reform.

The Computer Education Center provided outstanding support, helping me to produce an original manuscript and saving a lot of my time.

To all, my sincere thanks.

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THE ROLE OF PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT IN SLOVAK DEFENSE REFORM

While managing and organizing are challenging in the best of times, the difficulties are compounding in today's environment of rapid change. If you want to be the type of leader or professional who helps your organizations adopt to the multiple demands of an increasingly turbulent world, you need to become aware of the images and assumptions that are shaping your current thinking and develop the capacity to use new ones. You need to develop competencies that allow you to see, understand, and shape situations in new ways.

— Gareth Morgan, *Images of Organization*

The Slovak Republic (SR) is a new sovereign state formed in Central Europe after a peaceful separation from the former Czechoslovakia in 1993. Since that time great change has occurred in all aspects of government – to include the military. The Slovak military assumed responsibility for an unbalanced sizable force following the separation in 1993. The Armed Forces included a large number of bases and equipment throughout the country. Also inherited were former Warsaw Pact legacy organizations, doctrine, and management systems.

Slovakia's national security interests are to maintain national independence, sovereignty, and territorial integrity and ensure economic prosperity, social stability, and international recognition. Slovak leaders seek to protect these national interests through integration into Trans-Atlantic and West European political, economic, and security structures. In this regard Slovakia also faces the challenge of reforming its armed forces and whole defense sector.¹ The Slovak Republic was invited to join NATO at the Prague Summit in November 2002. Today, the Slovak Republic is a country standing on the doorstep of accession to the EU and NATO. Defense reform is now on track based on the so called "*Armed Forces of the Slovak Republic SR Force 2010*" (*SR Force 2010*). This review was completed in 2001 and was followed by an implementation scheme, the "*Long-Term Plan*". It also includes programs on modernizing aging military equipment, reducing the size of the military, ending conscription and becoming a professional military force.

Since 2001, clear objectives have been established to westernize the Armed Forces and ultimately join the NATO Alliance. Downsizing has occurred and several steps at systemic reform were accomplished. Chief of the General Staff of the Slovak Armed Forces General Milan Cerovsky pointed out in the summer 2002 that the *SR Force 2010* was a significant and ambitious review, which addressed almost all of the difficult political and practical issues. Assistance from other countries was used, but a Slovakian outcome was assured by the commitment and involvement of the MOD and GS. However, there are some areas that continue to need attention. This work was extremely demanding and its related legislation

touched on all areas of military life. He did not claim that everything was errorless or that no amendments would be needed over time.²

The aim of the research project is to review the role of the Personnel Management System (PMS) during the transformation of the Ministry of Defense (MOD) and the General Staff (GS) of the Slovak Republic since 2000, assess the progress so far, and point out current and future challenges. The relationship between the MOD and the GS, and the structure and performance of a personnel management system, which promotes the right people to the right position at the right time, always plays a significant role in the success of the whole organization. The ability to elaborate appropriate planning documents for transformation of the Slovak Armed Forces, including policies for the transition of the personnel management system, was the starting point of cultural and progressive changes. The intent of this project is to produce some key recommendations that can be considered in the short and long term to continue to improve the management of personnel and decision-making performance of the MOD and GS. Theories of leading change and building a learning organization will be considered at the strategic level. This analysis will facilitate the understanding of an effective management and interface of MOD/GS while continuing to meet the reform objectives of Armed Forces of the Slovak Republic SR Force 2010. Research will also outline the future characteristics of the MOD and GS organization, which will provide and develop an integral personnel management system (IPMS) to meet the requirements of the Military Strategy of the Slovak Republic and other strategic documents.

OVERALL REFORM AIMS

After the 1998 election the Mikulas Dzurinda Government demanded that the structure, organization and number of management bodies of the defense sector be changed to meet the new security requirements. A high priority objective of the reform program was to integrate the structure of the Ministry of Defense and the General Staff, downsize and reform the personnel structure, shorten the length of military conscription, and increase the number of professionals in the force structure. By 2002, the end state of the personnel policies reform was focused on down-sizing the armed forces to a level of 30,000, decreasing the conscript service to nine months, and building morale through enhancing the quality of life. There was also the goal to reduce the number of senior officers and increase the size of the NCO Corps.³ Moving most of the personnel assigned to the GS from their headquarters in Trencin into the MOD in Bratislava was an implementation step accomplished based on this concept. However the Dzurinda government's "*Concept of Reform*" lacked comprehensive, government-wide standards for

resource planning, which made its recommendations unrealistic. The “*Concept of Reform*” also failed to consider personnel management reform as a specific pillar of success the reform plan.

Referred to as *SR Force 2010*, the concept and plan that has resulted is a radical change from previous attempts at reform. Of particular importance is the emphasis on quality personnel and equipment, as well as recognition of a well-funded and robust training program.

The goals for achieving the end state of *SR Force 2010*, which were elaborated in 2001, involve serious consideration of personnel management. It is also the result of the influence and presence western experts. Also important was the personnel policy of the top management who looked for motivated and western educated military and civilian personnel and put them in key positions within the MOD and GS. Implementing the goals of *SR Force 2010* is in progress and a lot of achievements have been accomplished, but still many tasks must be done to reach the overall goals of reform. The relationship between the structure and work culture of the MOD /GS and reform of the personnel management system plays significant role in the performance and efficiency of Slovakia’s whole military organization.

STARTING POINT OF REFORMS

In order to avoid repeating the failure of the previous government to gain an invitation to join NATO in 1997 in Madrid, and to earn an invitation at the 2002 Prague Summit, the government began the process of fundamental military reform. A key task toward this end was the rearrangement of relationships and competencies between the Ministry of Defense and the General Staff of the Armed Forces. Since 1993, the challenge of constructing a new defense ministry in Bratislava, and an army command in Trencin (about 130 kilometers NE from Bratislava) was daunting. When the army command was transformed into the GS, based on the approved amendments of the Law on the Army by the Slovak National Council in September 1994, it was also an attempt to reduce friction between both decision-making bodies. But, as became evident later the period of reform will be long and it will challenge all subsequent governments. To achieve reform it was necessary to clarify the differing political and military responsibilities between MOD and GS early on.

Based on the “*Concept of Reform*”, the integration of the GS with the MOD was accomplished by eliminating duplication and reducing it from roughly 1,200 to 1,000.⁴ The integration was supposed to rationalize numerous functions of the two staffs with the objective of decreasing duplication and increasing efficiency. Also the Personnel & Social Policy Department of MOD and Personnel Management Staff of GS was established.

The British study “*Review of the Management Structure and Administration of the Ministry of Defence and General Staff of the Slovak Republic*” (*Clarke Study*), elaborated by the Directorate of Management & Consultancy Services led by Cdr. David Clarke’s team in August 2000, discovered some obstacles to the realization of the integration concept. The move of the GS to Bratislava was a major step forward, and difficulties faced as a result were not underestimated. The challenges were summarized as follows: Manpower planning was non-existent in any structured and effective format, delegation of responsibility and accountability was not part of standard working practice, duplication existed at various levels. The position of the GS within the unified MOD was neither properly defined nor instinctively understood.⁵

The U.S government study “*The Slovak Republic Defense Reform Study*” (*Garrett Study*), which was conducted simultaneously, also analyzed the relationship between the MOD and the GS and recommended improving the unity of effort of both organizations. The MOD and General Staff had to find common ground and a common purpose; integration had been completed rapidly and the division of functions and responsibilities had been agreed and institutionalized.⁶

At that time the majority of personnel of the MOD and GS were frustrated with the frequency and tempo of changes in the organizational structure of the MOD and GS. The first redesign of the MOD was provided in April 1999, the second was followed in January 2000, which also involved the reassignment of some leaders. By March 2000, the Personnel & Social Policy Department, led by Mr. Libor Lubelec, accomplished a personnel audit of the organizational structure of the MOD. The considerations of the Garret and Clarke studies came true. Numerous charges had accumulated to bring an end to Pavol Kanis’ stewardship of the defense ministry. Perhaps the most important was hampering Slovakia’s’ NATO integration efforts. He was criticized for the personnel shortcomings in the filling of key army posts, and, as a result, the slow and incomplete drafting of strategic documents.

In sum, the Dzurinda-Kanis era of reform (1998-2000) was characterized by efforts to integrate the MOD and GS. Significant facts were the move of the GS to Bratislava and reducing the MOD/GS personnel from roughly 1,200 to 1,000. A series of defensive reviews and studies were elaborated by Kanis’ decision. In that situation, it was a good starting point to take an opportunity for essential assistance and support offered from a number of western advisors as well as the NATO neighbors of the Slovak Republic. But on 16 December 2000, Kanis resigned and new managers came in under the new Defense Minister Josef Stank.

ENHANCING REFORM EFFORT

Strategic leadership is the process used by a leader to affect the achievement of desirable and clearly understood vision by influencing the organizational culture, allocating resources, directing through policy and directive, and building consensus within a volatile uncertain, complex, and ambiguous global environment which, is marked by opportunities and threats.

— USAWC, Strategic Leadership Primer

In the beginning of 2001, after his first 100 days in office Defense Minister Stank reflected on his accomplishments that include initiating the “*Armed Forces of the Slovak Republic SR Force 2010*”. He also initiated a plan to reorganize the defense ministry to only four directorates and eliminate overlap with the GS.⁷ The urgency to achieve results became most apparent following the NATO Planning and Review Process (PARP) Assessment delivered in February 2001. It became clear at that time that an extraordinary effort had to be initiated.⁸ This extraordinary effort must create the conditions for successful reform and changes in strategy, doctrine, organizational designs, and operational concepts for the MOD and GS organization. Meanwhile, since January 2000 the MOD and GS were not fully able to carry out their missions as they were integrating. In accordance with the decision of the Minister of Defense, a Steering Committee and five Working Groups were established as a special organization. The special organization began developing the document, *The Organizational Structure of the Ministry of Defense of the Slovak Republic*. One of the objectives of the reform process was to ensure that the MOD and GS were further streamlined and stabilized in accordance with many of the recommendations discussed earlier in the paper.

Implementation of *SR Force 2010* began on 1 October 2001 with a major reorganization of the defense ministry. As a result the combined MOD/GS declined from 1,268 positions to only 850. Minister Stank argued that at the present time the staff comprised 455 professional soldiers and 395 civilians, but the goal was to ensure that the MOD staff would be 75 percent civilian and only 25 percent military in the future.⁹ The new MOD/GS structure was developed with the intent of meeting current and future requirements for a strategic decision-making body. There were four principal departments of the MOD (Human Resources, Modernization and Infrastructure, Defense Planning and Resource Management, Defense Policy and International Relations) under the supervision of the Head of State Office, and four staffs with joint perspective of the GS (Personnel Management J-1, Logistic J-4, Requirements J-5, Deputy Commander for Operation Staff which included J-2, J-3, J-6) under the command of the Chief of the General Staff. The Head of State Office represented the senior advisor on state administration issues of defense, the Chief of GS senior military advisor, and commander of the

Armed Forces. Both the Head of State Office and the Chief of GS were directly subordinated to the Minister of Defense. Establishing this kind of structure with equal position of defense administrative and military part within the integrating MOD was intended to balance relations between the civilian and military components. The MOD-GS balance will only work if the advisory and decision-making processes are inclusive.

In sum, the Dzurinda–Stank era of reform (2001-2002) of the MOD and GS evinced significant and rapid change. Defense Minister Stank changed all the personnel directing the defense ministry departments, restructuring and reducing them from five to four departments and eliminating by more than 400 people in the combined MOD/GS organization. Establishing the Steering Committee and the five Working Group gradually led to the stable structure of the MOD/GS needed to develop the basic strategic documents including *SR Force 2010*, which played significant a role in the invitation of the Slovak Republic to NATO.

IMPLEMENTING REFORM STRUCTURE

Ivan Simko, who replaced Stank as a Defense Minister after the Parliamentary election in September 2002, wanted to continue implementing reforms. He noted: “What has now been formed so far as a blueprint needs to be implemented.”¹⁰The goal for the MOD/GS stayed unchanged: streamlined structures where the number of departments was reduced to create a more effective organization that eliminated duplication. Personnel of MOD/GS are working in close daily cooperation with the US Cubic Application Inc. team of experts. Moreover, In February 2004, Defense Minister Juraj Liska, who replaced in the post Minister Simko in October 2003, announced his decision to accomplish an audit of the MOD/GS organization.

Much of reorganization changes of MOD/GS were implemented beginning in October 2001. Departments and positions have been redesigned, eliminated, or created. However, creating a culture where the GS and MOD effectively carry out their shared tasks in an integrated fashion requires a transformation of attitudes and ethos.¹¹

The MOD/GS structures have been developed, and operational and management principles have been established, but there are some areas that continue to need attention. First, MOD/GS organization will be more effective based on balancing both of its elements. The MOD/GS balance will only work if the advisory and decision–making processes are comprehensive. Second, there is an increasing culture of “civilian” control rather than civil, or democratic control. Democratic control implies that the Armed Forces are subject to Parliament and the Government in terms of controls exercised through such mechanisms as national

strategy, funding, structure, deployment and rules of engagement. So policy based on the assumption that 75 percent civilian position within MOD structure will principally ensure and support civilian control of the Armed Forces is not appropriate and should be changed. Democratic control was achieved through Parliament and government.

Since the last radical reorganization of the MOD and GS in October 2001 the organization had been working without fundamental changes through the end of 2002. The first improvement was realized in January and May 2003 when the Staff of Commanding Operation was divided on the almost pre-reform status in October 2001 into three staffs (J-2, J-3, J-6), and an Operations Center. The Department of Education of the MOD was established in May 2003. The reason for further changes was the difficulty in managing J-2, J-3, and J-6 as sub staffs with other staffs within GS, as well as, the long absence in duty of chief of the staff, Col Peter Svec, due to healthy problems. Implementing reform of the military education system requires separating the Education Department from the Human Resource Department.

The stack of tasks on the shoulders of the MOD and GS is growing increasingly with the coming integration to the NATO and EU in May 2004. A "shadow supporting staff" of Cubic Application Inc. team and group of western military experts still operates in the MOD/GS. The goal is to increase the decision-making performance of the organization with a focus on leading reform of the Armed Forces as well as meeting commitments to NATO and the EU. The co-location of the MOD and GS, and manning them with the right personnel is beginning to develop the intended centers of professional responsibility, and this should be continued. The partnership between the Government and defense depends on the MOD and GS providing coherent professional advice as well as implementing national defense policy, and it is recommended that the GS play a more responsible and active part in the consultative and decision-making processes of the MOD.

In February 2004, Defense Minister Juraj Liska, who replaced Defense Minister Simko after friction within coalition parties, announced his decision to accomplish an audit of MOD/GS organization as well as some selective subordinate units. The main goal is developing a new quality of integration of the MOD. The audit will focus on developing organizational and processing models of the current organizations, proposing a processing model of future organizations, drafting new organizational structure and status, drafting of responsibilities of organizational elements and systemizing work positions of organizations, proposal procedures of implementation and recommended changes of organization. Supporting legislation will be considered as well as the individual training of personnel. It is being proposed as an organizational, functional, process oriented, and informational type of audit.

Implementing a whole range of reforms with the goal of streamlining structure of the MOD and GS, reducing the number of departments, and creating a more effective organization will require great effort of the top management of the MOD and GS. Defense Minister Liska's recent decisions indicate that, there is neither satisfaction with the developed plans for reforming MOD/GS nor with the current performance of this organization. Besides assistance the outside experts from Cubic Implications Inc., Slovakia's defense top-management are looking for an independent audit of the MOD/GS organization that can be an attempt for seeking a way to create it as a second loop of learning organization. These changes will modify the existing and the future personnel management system, which must be ready to support not only the overall transformation process of the Armed Forces but also the MOD/GS organization.

TRANSFORMING THE PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

The most significant resource of the Slovak Armed Forces is its highly motivated, well trained, and disciplined personnel. The transition to a more professional, western-style personnel structure is the most critical component in the modernization plan for the Slovak Armed Forces. Such reforms will provide a significant increase in the capability of the Armed Forces to successfully accomplish the full range of its missions.¹²

The fundamental objective of personnel reform is an integrated personnel management system (IPMS) that incorporates all aspects of force sustainment-accession, development, assignment, compensation, and separation programs or systems. This system of systems is essential to create and sustain a professional, modern force. The system must be able to provide for the assignment of quality personnel with correct skills to the right unit at the required time.¹³

But in 2000, the personnel management system represented only a mix of new policies and policies inherited from the previous regime. There were indications of serious problems in personnel accountability and skills inventory. The working groups for personnel and leader development confirmed in 2001 that the current personnel management system did not adequately address several key aspects of modern management. Based on this, the Clarke Study was recommended solving the personnel management problem by developing a manpower action plan.

The action plan was designed as a flexible document that could be adjusted as the situation evolved. This was the start of a long-term program, probably taking 10-12 years to approach stability on personnel issues, but the development of the desired Scheme of Complement and the introduction of the reporting system was a good starting point. The

personnel plan was an integral part of the new defense planning, programming, and budgeting system.¹⁴ However, this action plan was not fully accepted and therefore was not implemented. But, it was considered later as one approach for elaborating subsequent planning documents, especially *SR Force 2010*.

At the beginning of 2001 Minister Jozef Stank initiated a robust planning process with the clear aim of developing basic strategic documents, and plans for the total reform of the ASR. Responsibilities for planning personnel issues were assigned to a "*Personnel and Leader Development Team*". The Chief of Personnel Management Staff (J1) of the General Staff led the team. Among the main tasks of the team were to develop proposals for personnel reform objectives, and the support programs necessary to achieve objectives of Slovakia's overall military reform: Reduction of senior officers, Acquisition of officers, NCO and enlisted, Recruiting, Compensation, Competitive selection, and Quality of Life.

The ongoing reform of the Armed forces of the Slovak Republic is being supported with an evolving personnel management system, which is gradually improving its capabilities as *SR Force 2010* is implemented. The main challenges that face the current personnel management system is the program of further reducing senior officers, recruiting and sustaining enlisted personnel and NCOs, and accomplishing its legislative and doctrinal support.

NEW REFORM WITH OLD PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

An objective of the reform program based on document "*Concept of Reform*", which was approved by the Dzurinda government in October 1999 was to reduce combat equipment and personnel to cut costs. This January 2000 document called for by the end of 2002, shrinking the Slovak army of 38,500 (including 22,800 conscripts) to 30,000, with an overall loss of 1,500 career soldiers and 7,000 conscripts.¹⁵ Slovak planners, however, did not adequately consider the personnel management transformation needed to support this ambitious plan so, it was not implemented. The existing personnel management system was not able to achieve either the reductions of military personnel or accomplish officer structured changes. Western studies always include serious reflection on personnel management issue.

The first concern on obstacles and difficulties to accomplish radical changes were described by a British team in a review study on management and structure of the MOD and GS in 2000. At the time, the personnel management system represented a mix of new policies and policies inherited from previous regime. There were indications of serious problems in personnel accountability and skills inventory. The system did not provide predictability and transparency for career progression, professional development, performance evaluation, and retirement.¹⁶

The 2000 British study also pointed out that military personnel within the MOD were managed outside the ASR, without any influence of the Chief of the GS and Staff of personal management (J-1) of the GS. During a period of change and intense international cooperation this was understandable. But, it was not sustainable unless proper manpower planning and career management policies were put in place to meet the future demands of these posts. There was consideration in the study about civilian personnel. The use of retired officers to fill many civilian posts in the MOD demands that military and civilian manpower strategies are closely linked during the development of the State Administration Service in the defense sector.¹⁷ The British study suggested adopting a manpower action plan.

Unfortunately top management at the middle of year 2000 viewed these first urgent recommendations as a kind of criticism of ongoing reform based on the document “*Concept of Reform*”. But, in fact these recommendations were supplementary measures, which could support the concept and narrow the gap between the plan and its feasibility. The personnel management systems tended to decentralize promotion to the lowest possible level. For example, in 2000, the director generals of departments within the MOD had the authority to promote to the rank colonel, and a Brigade Commander could promote some junior officer without any board. Continuing to run that kind of system could have disastrous consequences.

Almost simultaneously in the summer 2000 a U.S. government study (Garrett Study) on Slovak’s defense concluded that there were with serious concerns personnel policy as one of its major findings. The study found indications of serious problems in personnel accountability and skills inventory. It concluded that the Slovak system did not provide predictability and transparency for career progression, professional development (education and training), performance evaluation, and retirement planning.¹⁸ One immediate effect of the Garrett Study was that the defense ministry began to prepare a new career system in order to prepare the Slovak army for NATO.

By the beginning of 2001 the necessity to reform the whole personnel management system appeared to be urgent. During the development of *SR Force 2010*, the working group for personnel and leader development confirmed that the personnel management system did not adequately address several key aspects of modern management. For example, procedures used for assignments, promotions and school selection were not based on a rigorous evaluation process. The NCO system was not suitable for the needs of the ASR and was incompatible with those in NATO armies. In the Slovak Army, many NCOs were young conscripts who assumed their rank and position without adequate experience or preparation.¹⁹

In sum, the objectives of the *Concept of Reform* elaborated in 1999 were difficult to implement without fundamental reform of the personnel management system. By the end of 2000 were not enough willing to consider the personnel challenges. Even though that Slovakia received outside defense assistance the implementing of recommendations in personnel reform were slowly with low intensity effect to stop unwilling tendency. It was not only insufficiency of financial resources, but also a lack of clear policies to support the reform.

DEVELOPMENT PLANS FOR PERSONNEL REFORM

In 2001 the *Military Strategy of the Slovak Republic* and *SR Force 2010* outlined the basic requirements of a modern personnel management system to develop and implement within the Armed Forces of the Slovak Republic. It was also a reaction to the previous critiques in the Clarke and Garrett studies. The *Military Strategy of the Slovak Republic* stated that for the near term, priority initiatives were those issues directly related to NATO compatibility and interoperability: personnel related issues such as creating a more professional force with greater reliance upon junior officers and noncommissioned officers; introducing new training management systems to ensure intensive, combat-focused unit training; and providing greater funding for quality of life issues in order to attract and maintain the best soldiers and airmen for more professional Armed Forces.²⁰

A major feature of *SR Force 2010* was developed the plan to professionalize the ASR. By the end of 2006 conscription will end, as the gradual transition to a professional force is completed. This is the most critical and difficult aspect of modernization reform.²¹ The end state personnel summary (Table 1.) shows the new structure of personnel reform and demands for adequate personnel system to be able to provide future requirements.

Personnel Summary - SR Force							
	MOD	GS	Sep Orgs	LF	AF	T & S	Totals
Officers	206	215	667	847	1031	608	3574
Warrant Officers	1	5	116	59	78	111	370
NCOs	0	30	421	3303	2224	1119	7097
Junior Enlisted	0	0	128	4930	2575	644	8277
Civilians	330	69	1004	365	518	2133	4419
Totals	537	319	2336	9504	6426	4615	23737

TABLE 1. PERSONNEL SUMMARY SR FORCE 2010

The fundamental objective of personnel reform, stated in document, is an integrated personnel management system that incorporates all aspects of force sustainment-accession, development, assignment, compensation, and separation programs or systems. Based on personnel reform objectives defined in document *SR Force 2010* personnel management consist of the following major programs: separations programs; professionalization; compensation; recruiting program; leader development.²²

The objective of the separation programs is to ensure compassionate treatment of soldiers and civilian personnel as a result of unanticipated separation from the military due to downsizing. Conducting the necessary reduction with compassion will not only ensure that soldiers and civilians are treated fairly, but will create better a future recruiting environment.

Increasing the number of professionals in the ASR will result in a higher quality military force, with increased readiness. Reduction of personnel (including conscripts) and phase in of professionals is reflected in Figure 1.

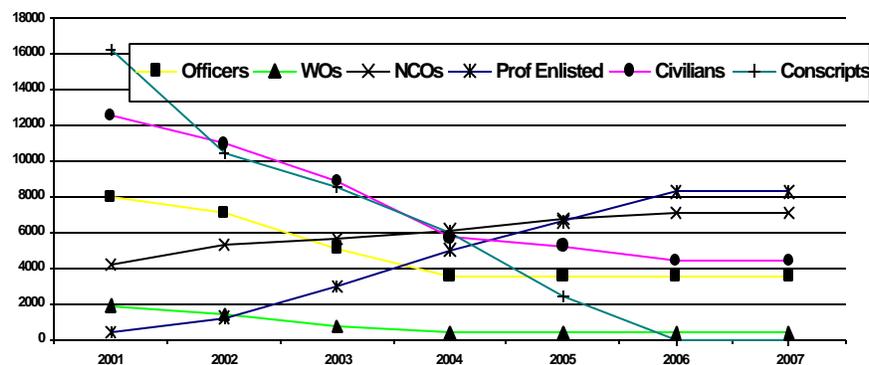


FIGURE 1. PERSONNEL TRANSITION PLAN

An objective personnel evaluation system is needed to provide systematic performance reporting. A fair, unbiased, competitive promotion system will be implemented to identify individuals for advancement in grade who hold the potential for increased responsibility and continued service. Conversely, an objective evaluation system will support forthcoming additional personnel reductions.

A major initiative associated with SR Force 2010 is the compensation system. The objective is to implement a compensation system based on grade, modeled on most western militaries. At the same time, salaries will be increased to better reflect the requirements for a professional force that must rely on recruiting volunteers. This will require salary structures that are competitive with the civil sector.

An effective and dynamic recruiting system is an absolute requirement to develop and sustain a professional force. Establishing such a system has a high priority in the plan for SR Force 2010. The proposed recruiting organization will consist of a Personnel Marketing Center with eight regional Recruiting and Registration Centers and a Center for Personnel Selection.

Development programs will be gradual and progressive and will include education, training, and developmental assignments. Management and monitoring of individual careers will be intensified; systems will be implemented to track performance and evaluate individual potential for advancement. This initiative is consistent with NATO practices placing greater responsibility on small unit leaders.

Barracks, family housing and recreation programs are key elements of an effective quality of life program. SR Force 2010 will require assignment rotation of personnel. Reassignment or rotation of personnel promotes professional development, enhances military experience, and improves unit effectiveness.

The product that planners developed and is being implemented indicates an understanding of the broad aspects of reform and of the particular programs, timing, legislative support, and cost analysis required to activate the whole military establishment within the transition period.

A radical change in the way to think about and how to develop modern personnel management was achieved during the planning phase of *SR Force 2010*. The presence of the U.S. private company Cubic Applications as well allied military experts from Germany, France, and UK was vital for defense planners, who had access to this expertise. With such support Slovakia's strategic planners determined shortfalls of the legacy personnel management system.

Defining the fundamental objective of personnel reform, the integrated personnel management system in document *SR Force 2010* was the fundamental basis for further planning on personnel reform. This system of systems is essential to create and sustain a professional, modern force and also to shape future responsibilities of the MOD/GS organizational structures. The system must be able to provide for the assignment of quality personnel with correct skills to the right unit at the required time. Human Resource Management in the MOD and Personnel Management Staff of the GS are the most important bodies to maintain this system.

Finally, elaborating the six main programs of new personnel management became the backbone of the system. When it is implemented it will ensure the successful reform of the

armed forces. It is food for thought for developing policies and concepts to put life in the whole system.

IMPLEMENTING PERSONNEL REFORM

The *SR Force 2010* implementation timeline for personnel programs gives an overall view and defines implementation phases. The following timeline is being used to implement the *SR Force 2010* document: the new personnel rank system and programs for retiring professional soldiers from 2002; career system, the new NCO education system, and the new promotion system (committees) from 2003; the pay-by-rank system from 2004; and suspension of conscription and maintain mobilization registration from 2006.

The structure of the new system was built based on creating the MOD/GS reorganization in October 2001 after *SR Force 2010* was adopted. The key players in the area of personnel management are the Human Resource Department (HRD), and Personal Office of the Management State Service within the MOD and the Staff of Personnel Management and the Personnel Office within the GS of the Armed Forces of the Slovak Republic. In May 2003 the Department of Military Education was established that was separate from the Human Resource Department. It is hard to imagine that the implementation to date could have occurred without the firm support of the Cubic team. At the same time, Slovakia's strategic leadership should be considering how to conduct reform in case Cubic's mission is mitigated or finished.

The mission of the HRD is to determine policies related to the human dimension and behavior of the Armed Forces as well as determining conditions and standards for the professional, and leader development of officers, warrants, and NCO. The Director General of the HRD is responsible for supervising military personnel management and provides the Staff (J-1) implements policies and principles elaborate by HRD according to the appropriate legislation.

The Chief of the Staff of the Personnel Management (J-1) is responsible for implementing policies and principles of the military personnel management system. In the current system he is also responsible for civilian personnel within the Armed Forces. A concept in progress, which is based on an assumption that the Head of MOD office will take care of civilian personnel management across the entire establishment. His function is supposed to be similar to the function of the Chief of GS with regard to military personnel. These concepts must be supported with adequate legislative changes in the current system of laws.

The basic function and relation of the new established personnel management system (PMS) is shown in Figure 2.

PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

SCHEME MODEL

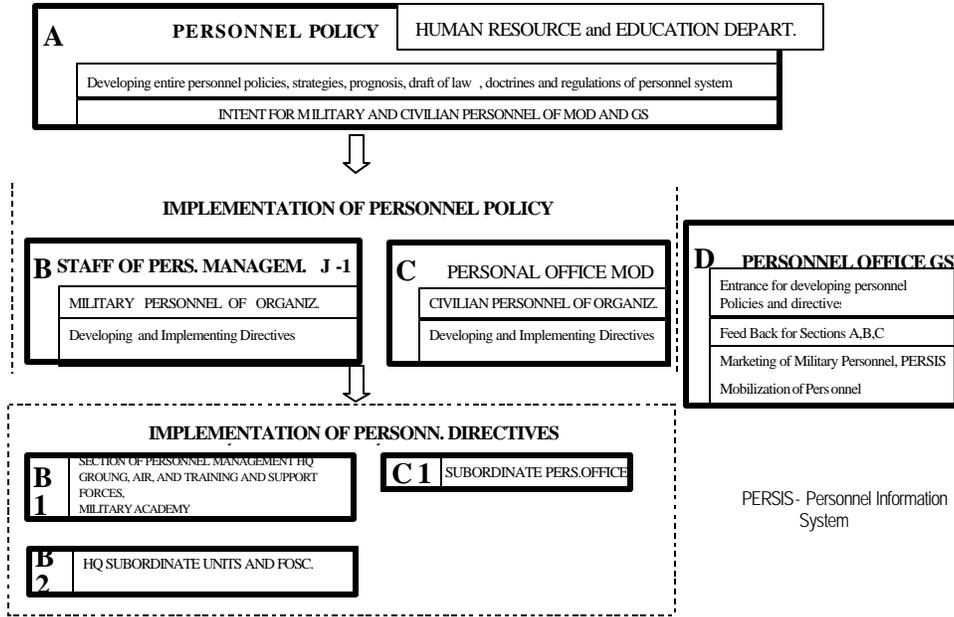


FIGURE 2. SCHEME OF PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

Within the integrated personnel management system two principal management subsystems are operating. There are civilian and military personnel management systems. Enhancing the military personnel system, the goal is to establish single system of military personnel as a whole, which shall be managed and executed by the Chief of General Staff through the Chief of Personnel Management Staff (J-1) of the GS. He is also responsible for the implementation of this new system. All activities connected with military personnel would be centralized with the support of appropriate information systems. Nowadays, both the HRD and the J-1 staff are in process of detailing a doctrine for the military personnel management system of the Slovak Armed Forces.

In the area of setting up the PMS significant progress was made with the establishment of the Personnel Office, which is under the Chief of Personnel Management Staff J-1 of the GS. Its main responsibilities are to provide administrative support to operate military personnel management. Based on directives, guidance, and plans elaborated by the J-1 Staff it executes personnel administration, recruitment, information technology support, and other function of

personnel management. The office is also the main body to support central execution of military PMS for all military personnel.

Creating the new PMS within new organizational structure of the MOD and GS involved accomplishing a series of planning steps. This system is the premier tool for top management to handle personnel reform. The tasks for implementation according to the timeline for 2002 were fulfilled. Legislation adopted the new personnel rank system and improving programs for retiring professional soldiers was passed. Instituting the new career system, the new NCO education system, and the new centralized promotion system is still in progress and involves drafting doctrine on Military Personnel Management. The first draft of the law, which will implement a pay-by-rank system, is being evaluated. At the same time the system is providing the personnel requirements for contributing to NATO.

General Cerovsky, the Chief of GS, mentioned in a press conference in January 2004 that personnel reform is in progress and that he is satisfied with progress made to rearrange the rank structure, reduce personnel and recruit enlisted soldiers and NCOs. For example, in 2003 the personnel management system recruited 1571 of the planned 1820. Also, 2729 officers and warrant officers were retired. There are also more than 100 officers, and warrant officers that are ready to accept a decrease in their rank according to the TO&E and prolonging the contract.

In 2001 Slovakia's strategic planners considered that the fundamental objective of personnel reform is an integrated personnel management system, which incorporates all aspects of force sustainment, development, assignment, compensation, and separation. This system is essential to create and sustain a professional, modern force. Therefore the effort to build up this system has had the highest priority since 2002 and is properly supported by the allocation of appropriate resources.

IMPROVING FUTURE ORGANIZATIONS

The security environment at the beginning of 21st century is characterized by new risks and threats related to the growing imbalance in the development of the world's regions. As a consequence of the limited ability of certain countries to deal with the challenges and to make use of the opportunities brought by the information era, new technologies, and the extensive exploitation of outer space and revolutions in military affairs. The Slovak Republic must develop its future in cooperation with EU and NATO countries.²³ *SR Force 2010* in the case of personnel presents a vision through 2010. Waging the war on terrorism also will determine the future requirements on personnel. Beyond the horizon of 2006 Slovak's Armed Forces will be full professional based on voluntary military services. The major sources of changes will be the

requirements for quality personnel and for operational needs and force management. These assumptions will shape the vision of the future organization of the MOD and GS, and the requirements on its personnel management system that will effectively support the organization in the future.

THE ORGANIZATION OF FUTURE

A vision that responds to the military threats at the beginning 21st century is declared in the Doctrine of the Armed Forces of the Slovak Republic. Based on this the MOD and GS must be constantly ready to operate within national and international environments. The challenge is to recognize in the current structure the essential requirements for the future and to intensively improve them.

The MOD-GS balance will only work if the advisory and decision-making processes are inclusive. Based on current status, there are some observers that point to several key areas that may prove to be the most problematic. Modernizing and rationalizing the management of defense in Slovakia by forcing the MOD and GS to work together is difficult. "Talking the talk" of integration is much more difficult than "walking the walk." The introduction of a mature Planning, Programming, and Budgeting System (PPBS) that facilitates the process of long term defense planning is another significant challenge. Slovakia is only now working through this system for the first time.²⁴

In this case Slovakia's strategic leaders and their collaborators should ask themselves what is the long-term vision for the future MOD/GS organization beyond 2010, and what are the essential tools, means and ways to get there? Secondly, what kind of personnel will be required for this and what kind of personnel system will produce this kind of personnel? Seeking to solve actual difficulties does not guarantee the success or improved performance of this organization in the future. A minimum level of performance is required in order to think about a future vision. Until now transforming the MOD/GS has been focused on adapting the organization for particular challenging tasks. If we compare the first reform plan in 1999 with the second in 2001 we can easily identify the reforming MOD/GS as a model learning organization. Experts abroad supporting Slovakia's transformation enhanced and in many cases functioned as a second loop for the learning organization. The learning organization is characterized by: systemic thinking, mental models, personal mastery, shared vision, and team learning and dialogue.²⁵ But, some may object that the MOD and GS are deeply bureaucratic organizations with specific goals, so there is no space for the second loop of the learning organization.

In the future, a main task for the organization will be to become a strategic decision-making body. The GS will also provide joint command and control over the armed forces. To win a war in the future other requirements for making good strategic decision will be need. This is where new information technologies, systems, and procedures will come into play. The same detailed level of information will be available at all levels of the chain command. Leaders must understand the implication for decision-making processes, the training of decision makers at all levels, and organizational patterns and procedures.²⁶ Learning organization principle, such as consciously inserting the second learning loop into the learning processes of the organization, could help build required future parameters of MOD and GS.

Building the learning organization, even in traditional hierarchical organizations, makes sense today in the short and long term. The theory of learning organizations helps to understand and analyze some of difficulties in integration MOD and GS because it predicts that the changes required go beyond radical organization redesign, to include redesigning how personnel think and interact.

Developing a vision of the MOD and GS with an understanding of the requirements for achieving the characteristics of a learning organization will shape today's and the future system of military personnel management as well as the civilian personnel management of the MOD and GS organization. The organization will be challenged to adapt to an environment of new informational technologies to achieve decision superiority for responding to national requirements as well alliance commitments.

The recipe for how to solve current difficulties and to gain the future capabilities of MOD and GS should be considered as processes to redesign mental models of the organization, to enhance an ability to provide the second loop of learning, and to keep a system producing leaders and new kinds of personnel.

MAIN CHALLENGES OF THE FUTURE PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

Current progress in implementing personnel reform in Slovakia's Armed Forces has proved the theory of leading change. This theory states that countries seeking democratic ways of developing Armed Forces should be based on the transformation personnel management system as a first step to modernize the military establishment. *SR Force 2010* was a great vision appropriate for the 2000-2001, however, since that time some changes in the operating environment of Slovakia's Armed Forces have happened.

The vision and requirements of future missions, and understanding the environment in which the organization will operate influences the features of the personnel management

system of this organization. To achieve decision-making superiority in the information age will also play a critical role in waging and winning any war, especially, the global war on terrorism. It will require domination of leaders to managers on each level of management of the organization.

From my point of view, the vision of the future personnel management system is a system with enough capacity to produce or support the production a lot of leaders on each level of management. All administration and management power should be centralized. Creating an integrated system of personnel management (IPMS) within the MOD and GS establishment with a single military personnel management system and a similar civilian personnel management system will require expanding personnel managers' responsibilities and powers for the manning and individual training of all personnel. A reliable and secure computer network information system with allied access will support this system to meet all personnel aspects for waging the war on terrorism and an informational war. Producing highly motivated, educated, physically and mentally mature personnel with capabilities to overwhelm potential adversaries in the fight is goal.

The first step is to determine vision of future organization. It is one of the responsibilities of current leaders. Based on vision of the whole organization the MOD, GS, and subordinate units, the vision for the future IPMS should be developed. Leading change of the organization without vision is a fundamental error. Vision plays a key role in producing useful change by helping to direct, align, and inspire actions on the part of large numbers of people.²⁷ Sometimes the bureaucratic and particularly military organizations are preoccupied and overwhelmed with plans and programs. But, as is stated in the book *Leading Change*, the differences between vision and plan or program must be considered by leaders. In many failed transformations, you can find plans, and programs trying to play the role of vision.²⁸

Several measures will be needed to implement the vision. The future personnel management system will need to enlarge its capacity to produce or support the production of significant more leaders on each level of management than the current system. It will call for building up a sufficient number of training institutions as well as improving the career, and evaluation system of personnel. Network computer systems that will support this system will be necessary for operating from the lowest possible lever of management to the top. The whole complex of the IPMS system that takes care of personnel should be under one umbrella with centralized personnel management powers and decentralized performance of function. The highest personnel leaders should possess sufficient authority to influence personnel needs and requirements at each level of the military organization. It will call for creating a central system of

personnel management that is fully responsible for manning and for the individual training. Using terms of culture it will need to empower authority of personnel management leaders or managers within whole organizations as well as the position of senior leader or officer of the human resources or personnel management system. Logically, the evaluation, promotion, and career system must be improved appropriate to this concept as well. Personnel management and payment should be integrated into one system of dates and executive. Combatant commanders, service leaders and managers should be mainly involved in the process of evaluating subordinate personnel and determining requirements for personnel in their organizations. This will require focusing on providing objective and fair standardization data about personnel into the net-system. That information should be sent and gathered by net information system to the central personnel executive element. There the long term plan, programs, and ongoing operations will be monitored, analyzed, proved, and compared with vision. Subsequently, policies, strategies, and directives to achieve the willing goals of quality personnel in the whole organization will be developed.

At this point it is important to understand differences between leadership and management. Management means that people are taught how to plan, budget, organize, staff, control, and problem solve. Leadership means people who can create and communicate visions and strategies. Because management deals mostly with status quo and leadership deals mostly with change, in the next century we will have to become much more skilled at creating leaders. Without enough leaders, the vision, communication, and empowerment that are at the heart of transformation will simply not happen well enough or fast enough to satisfy our needs and expectations.²⁹ The leaders will be the “pot of gold” in the future. The personnel management system must, in addition to its traditional tasks, develop and supply leaders to the whole organization. That is the main reason why it should be more centralized than it is today with the major critical personnel activity managed and coordinated at the highest levels of the organization.

Western observers report that while Czech planners understand that personnel reform is an important aspect of the overall reform effort, personnel management reform does not have the “center of gravity status” that it holds in Slovakia. It is considered one of many competing priorities, instead of the single most important reform factor upon which all other dimensions of the plan depend.³⁰ It is an excellent point, especially from the perspective of the war on terrorism. Is the personnel management system the “center of gravity” only in the transition period of the military organization or because of the recognized capability for the future

organization to produce more leaders? To answer this question is not simple and so it should be carefully reviewed.

This paper has attempted to put on the table personnel issues in a new environment that is mainly characterized by a structure organized with the expectation that management will lead and lower level employee will manage; system that will depend on many performance information systems; and culture of quick making decision.

Radical change of an organization, or reform is sometimes the only possible chance to avoid collapse or deep crises of the system. Usually, it is a signal that something was conducted in the wrong way. Creating whole MOD and GS, and particularly IPMS as learning organization probably will require implanting within a stable organizational structure this aim. The organizational structure created as a center for leading change and doctrine development within IPMS, should enlarge opportunities to build the future systems while running the current IPMS. This kind of prognostic and doctrinal structure would review current organization, assist to develop a vision, develop strategies, policies, and guidance for leading change over a short or long period. The preoccupation of current leaders and managers with everyday business is not an excuse for stopping to build up the future capabilities of organization. Constantly improving the system of personnel management in continuously improving military organization is one way to achieve superiority. It would prevent the need for painful radical changes. However, the best protection for radical environmental changes is well-trained leaders with adaptable personnel.

To be successful the MOD/GS in the twenty first century will have to become more like incubators of leadership. Wasting talent will become increasingly costly in a word of rapid change. Slovakia's intent to build IPMS will play a significant role toward this end. Such an organization will develop leaders in advance for the time that the military organization will need more leaders than managers. In other words creating such system that will guarantee to gain, and maintain highly motivated personnel should be considered as one of the first principles for executing change and keeping the organization healthy.

CONCLUSION

The considerable progress in reform of the personnel management system achieved during recent years in the Armed Forces of the Slovak Republic is clear. As stated in *The Military Strategy*, Slovakia's goal is to build a relatively small, high-quality force appropriately armed and trained for integration in NATO collective defense arrangements. This force must be capable of participating with NATO forces across a spectrum of military operations. One of the funding priorities is personnel and training readiness. The near term emphasizes actions

necessary to professionalize the force and while simultaneously reducing overall manpower. The concept is to eliminate conscripts, reduce the number of civilian employees and excessive senior officers, and implement personnel reform. In the draft doctrine *Military Personnel Management*, which was published in 2003, is stated that the reform of the military personnel management is the most important problem that faces the Armed Forces of the Slovak Republic. Without this reform the objectives and the intent of transformation of the Armed Forces will not be accomplished.

This paper is an attempt to focus on some specific aspects of preparing a plan for ongoing transformation and the relation between organizational changes of the MOD and GS, as a principal decision-making and command and control body. At the beginning of reform the presence of western experts was essential. However, the ability of Slovakia's strategic planners to establish a foundation of its own experts to continue successful reform as well as meet NATO requirements on personnel, should be considered.

This project also considered the outline of future organizations and the main tasks of personnel management in the future organization. The major conclusion is that in the information age an organization will require more leaders than to managers to achieve decision-making superiority. This will shape the structure and performance of the personnel management system.

In spite of the fact that modern organizations require decentralized responsibilities at lower levels of leaders or managers, in the case of the future personnel management system it is recommended that senior personnel management officials, centralize the gathering of information on personnel, and lessen local power commanders and supervisors on careers. Commanders, instead will play a main role in the fair evaluation of personnel and in elaborating personal requirements.

Implementing a military personnel management system within a partially transformed system is a challenge. Fair methods of reducing civilians and military personnel are critical. Also the supporting programs must be sufficiently founded.

Cohesion of the MOD and GS is very important for the whole military establishment and a reformed personnel management system would support to improve this relationship. Relationships between the Human Resource Department, the Military Education Department of the MOD and the General Staff's office of Military Personnel Management could be an example for other directorates and staffs. Military-Civilian divides must continue to be eroded and subsequently removed by pressure and example from senior leaders. Management of all

military personnel under the GS and management of all civilian personnel under the MOD could enforce the cohesion of the MOD and GS.

WORD COUNT=8886

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¹¹ Marybeth P. Ulrich, "Achieving *Military Capabilities in Europe's Transitional States: Assessing the Progress of Military Reform in the Czech Republic and Slovakia*," in *Foreign and Security Policy in the "New Europe" and Eurasia* (Aldershot, Hampshire UK: Ashgate, forthcoming 2004).

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