



EUROPE

THE ARTS
CHILD POLICY
CIVIL JUSTICE
EDUCATION
ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENT
HEALTH AND HEALTH CARE
INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS
NATIONAL SECURITY
POPULATION AND AGING
PUBLIC SAFETY
SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY
SUBSTANCE ABUSE
TERRORISM AND
HOMELAND SECURITY
TRANSPORTATION AND
INFRASTRUCTURE
WORKFORCE AND WORKPLACE

This PDF document was made available from www.rand.org as a public service of the RAND Corporation.

[Jump down to document](#) ▼

The RAND Corporation is a nonprofit research organization providing objective analysis and effective solutions that address the challenges facing the public and private sectors around the world.

Support RAND

[Browse Books & Publications](#)

[Make a charitable contribution](#)

For More Information

Visit RAND at www.rand.org

Explore [RAND Europe](#)

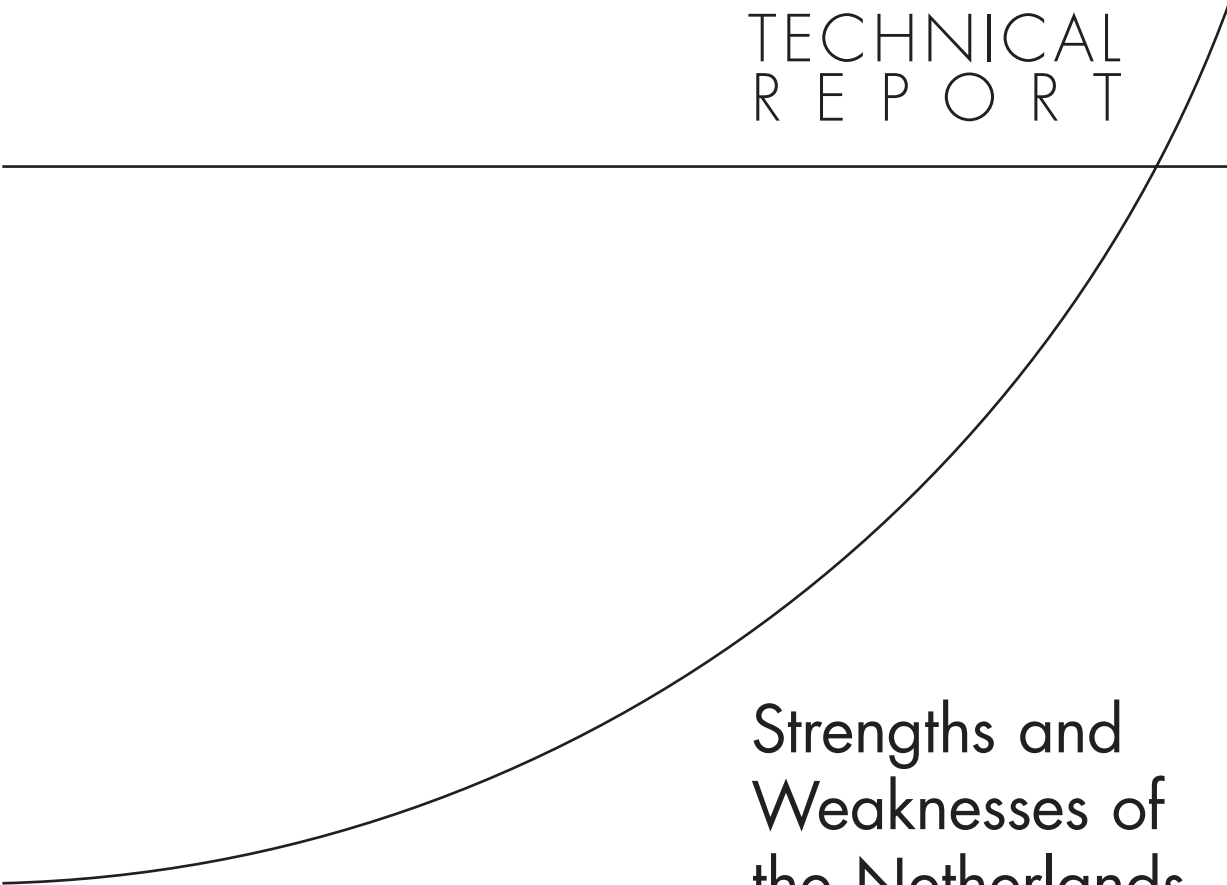
View [document details](#)

Limited Electronic Distribution Rights

This document and trademark(s) contained herein are protected by law as indicated in a notice appearing later in this work. This electronic representation of RAND intellectual property is provided for non-commercial use only. Unauthorized posting of RAND PDFs to a non-RAND Web site is prohibited. RAND PDFs are protected under copyright law. Permission is required from RAND to reproduce, or reuse in another form, any of our research documents for commercial use. For information on reprint and linking permissions, please see [RAND Permissions](#).

This product is part of the RAND Corporation technical report series. Reports may include research findings on a specific topic that is limited in scope; present discussions of the methodology employed in research; provide literature reviews, survey instruments, modeling exercises, guidelines for practitioners and research professionals, and supporting documentation; or deliver preliminary findings. All RAND reports undergo rigorous peer review to ensure that they meet high standards for research quality and objectivity.

TECHNICAL
REPORT



Strengths and Weaknesses of the Netherlands Armed Forces

A Strategic Survey

Matt Bassford, Kristin Weed, Samir Puri,
Gregory Falconer, Anaïs Reding

Sponsored by the Netherlands Ministry of Defence

The research described in this report was prepared for the Netherlands Ministry of Defence.

The RAND Corporation is a nonprofit research organization providing objective analysis and effective solutions that address the challenges facing the public and private sectors around the world. RAND's publications do not necessarily reflect the opinions of its research clients and sponsors.

RAND® is a registered trademark.

© Copyright 2010 RAND Corporation

Permission is given to duplicate this document for personal use only, as long as it is unaltered and complete. Copies may not be duplicated for commercial purposes. Unauthorized posting of RAND documents to a non-RAND website is prohibited. RAND documents are protected under copyright law. For information on reprint and linking permissions, please visit the RAND permissions page (<http://www.rand.org/publications/permissions.html>).

Published 2010 by the RAND Corporation
1776 Main Street, P.O. Box 2138, Santa Monica, CA 90407-2138
1200 South Hayes Street, Arlington, VA 22202-5050
4570 Fifth Avenue, Suite 600, Pittsburgh, PA 15213-2665
Westbrook Centre, Milton Road, Cambridge CB4 1YG, United Kingdom
RAND URL: <http://www.rand.org>
RAND Europe URL: <http://www.rand.org/randeurope>
To order RAND documents or to obtain additional information, contact
Distribution Services: Telephone: (310) 451-7002;
Fax: (310) 451-6915; Email: order@rand.org

Preface

The Netherlands Ministry of Defence is currently conducting a Future Policy Survey, the results of which are due to be delivered in early 2010. The overarching aim of the Future Policy Survey is to provide greater understanding of how to exploit and enhance the potential contribution of the Netherlands armed forces.

RAND Europe was asked to provide insights into the strengths and weaknesses of the Netherlands armed forces deployments compared with the deployments of other nations. The Future Policy Survey team were particularly interested in perceptions among coalition partners of the strengths and weaknesses of the Netherlands' deployments.

This document presents a summary of key findings from the RAND Europe study. RAND Europe anticipates that this report will be available to the wider Netherlands Government, alongside the final conclusions submitted to the Netherlands Ministry of Defence. This report will be of interest to NATO and EU defence policy-makers, especially those with forces deployed alongside those of the Netherlands. It may also be of interest to NATO and EU serving military personnel, particularly those in the Netherlands. Finally, it may be also of interest to other defence professionals, those involved in evaluating public policy and those with an interest in the Netherlands Future Policy Survey.

RAND Europe is an independent not-for-profit policy research organisation that serves the public interest by improving policy-making and informing public debate. Its clients are European governments, institutions and firms with a need for rigorous, impartial, multi-disciplinary analysis. This report has been peer reviewed in accordance with RAND's quality assurance standards (for further details see <http://www.rand.org/about/standards/>) and therefore may be represented as a RAND Europe product.

For more information about RAND Europe or this document, please contact:

Dr Matt Bassford
Tel: +44 1223 353329
E-mail: bassford@rand.org

RAND Europe
Westbrook Centre
Milton Road
Cambridge CB4 1YG

Contents

| | |
|--|----------|
| Preface..... | ii |
| Table of Figures..... | vi |
| Table of Tables..... | vii |
| Summary..... | ix |
| Study context and scope..... | ix |
| Study approach..... | ix |
| Summary of study findings: implications for the Netherlands..... | x |
| Summary of study findings: relative strengths and weaknesses of the Netherlands..... | x |
| Acknowledgments..... | xii |
| CHAPTER 1 Introduction..... | 1 |
| 1.1 Study context and scope..... | 1 |
| 1.2 About benchmarking..... | 1 |
| 1.3 Conceptual framework..... | 1 |
| 1.3.1 Selecting comparators..... | 2 |
| 1.3.2 The benchmarking exercise..... | 2 |
| 1.4 Methodology..... | 2 |
| 1.4.1 Literature review..... | 3 |
| 1.4.2 Internal RAND workshop..... | 4 |
| 1.4.3 Interviews..... | 4 |
| 1.4.4 Media analysis..... | 4 |
| 1.4.5 Limitations of the methodology..... | 4 |
| 1.5 The use of this study..... | 5 |
| 1.6 Structure of the report..... | 5 |
| CHAPTER 2 Setting the context: the Netherlands..... | 6 |
| 2.1 Introduction..... | 6 |
| 2.2 Socio-economic indicators..... | 6 |
| 2.3 Defence policy..... | 8 |
| 2.3.1 Defence ambition..... | 8 |
| 2.3.2 Personnel..... | 9 |
| 2.3.3 Defence spending..... | 10 |

| | | |
|------------------|---|-----------|
| CHAPTER 3 | Resources and deployments | 11 |
| 3.1 | Introduction..... | 11 |
| 3.2 | Defence spending..... | 11 |
| 3.2.1 | Overall defence spending..... | 11 |
| 3.2.2 | Defence investment spending | 14 |
| 3.2.3 | Defence spending on personnel | 15 |
| 3.3 | Recent deployments by operation..... | 16 |
| 3.4 | Example operation: Uruzgan deployment in Afghanistan | 21 |
| 3.4.1 | The Netherlands' approach to operations in Uruzgan..... | 22 |
| 3.4.2 | Coalition perceptions: Netherlands forces receive recognition for ISAF mission | 24 |
| 3.4.3 | Coalition perceptions: Netherlands ISAF approach receives mixed reviews | 25 |
| 3.4.4 | Coalition perceptions: force protection is mentioned as a high priority | 25 |
| 3.4.5 | Coalition perceptions: strategic direction is not well articulated or communicated..... | 26 |
| 3.5 | Summary..... | 27 |
| CHAPTER 4 | Strategic posture: the role of defence..... | 28 |
| 4.1 | Benchmarking strategic posture..... | 28 |
| 4.2 | Methodology..... | 28 |
| 4.3 | Country analysis..... | 29 |
| 4.3.1 | Netherlands..... | 29 |
| 4.3.2 | Germany | 30 |
| 4.3.3 | Australia | 31 |
| 4.3.4 | Canada | 32 |
| 4.3.5 | Denmark..... | 33 |
| 4.3.6 | UK..... | 34 |
| 4.4 | Summary..... | 35 |
| CHAPTER 5 | Deployability..... | 36 |
| 5.1 | Benchmarking deployability | 36 |
| 5.1.1 | Stated policy for deployments..... | 36 |
| 5.1.2 | Scale of deployment..... | 37 |
| 5.1.3 | Forces available to deploy | 38 |
| 5.1.4 | Strategic lift | 38 |
| 5.1.5 | Coalition perceptions: interoperability..... | 39 |
| 5.2 | Summary..... | 40 |
| CHAPTER 6 | Sustainability..... | 41 |
| 6.1 | Introduction..... | 41 |
| 6.2 | Sustaining personnel on operations: quantitative assessment..... | 41 |
| 6.2.1 | Comparing variance in deployments over time | 43 |

| | | |
|--|--|-----------|
| 6.2.2 | Implications for the Netherlands | 44 |
| 6.3 | Sustaining deployments: perceptions and pinch points | 44 |
| 6.4 | Summary..... | 47 |
| CHAPTER 7 | Equipment platforms | 49 |
| 7.1 | Introduction..... | 49 |
| 7.2 | Summary of the Netherlands' equipment platforms..... | 49 |
| 7.3 | Benchmarking selected equipment platforms..... | 50 |
| 7.4 | Implications for Netherlands – niche capabilities versus full spectrum | 51 |
| 7.4.1 | Coalition perspectives: operational reductions | 52 |
| 7.5 | Summary..... | 53 |
| CHAPTER 8 | Conclusions | 54 |
| Summary of study findings: implications for the Netherlands..... | | 54 |
| Summary of study findings: relative strengths and weaknesses of the Netherlands..... | | 55 |
| References | | 57 |
| Bibliography | | 58 |
| National defence review..... | | 58 |
| Literature review | | 58 |
| Media analysis | | 60 |
| Appendix A: Media analysis methodology..... | | 62 |
| Media themes | | 62 |
| Media selection | | 63 |
| Media search | | 63 |
| Definition of topic categories..... | | 63 |
| Attribution of tones..... | | 65 |
| Appendix B: Equipment platforms data | | 67 |

Table of Figures

| | |
|--|----|
| Figure 2.1 – Real GDP growth in the Netherlands | 8 |
| Figure 2.2 – Netherlands level of ambition | 9 |
| Figure 2.3 – Netherlands defence expenditure 2005–2008..... | 10 |
| Figure 3.1 – Defence spending as a percentage of GDP | 12 |
| Figure 3.2 – Per capita GDP versus defence spending as a percentage of GDP..... | 13 |
| Figure 3.3 – Distribution of the Netherlands’ defence expenditure 2003–2008 | 14 |
| Figure 3.4 – Percentage of total expenditure taken up by defence investment at current local currency | 15 |
| Figure 3.5 – Personnel expenditure as a percentage of total defence expenditure | 16 |
| Figure 3.6 – The Netherlands operational picture (2001–2008) | 17 |
| Figure 3.7 – Canada operational picture (2001–2008)..... | 18 |
| Figure 3.8 – Australia operational picture (2001–2008) | 18 |
| Figure 3.9 – Denmark operational picture (2001–2008)..... | 19 |
| Figure 3.10 – Germany operational picture (2001–2008) | 20 |
| Figure 3.11 – Total military personnel deployed by country of origin..... | 21 |
| Figure 3.12 – Selected countries’ troop contribution to ISAF..... | 22 |
| Figure 4.1 – Presentation of relative strategic posture..... | 34 |
| Figure 6.1 – Percentage of total active forces deployed 2001–2008 | 42 |
| Figure 6.2 – Annual percentage of armed forces deployed (upper and lower bounds, and averages) | 44 |
| Figure 7.1 – Example: Denmark capability reorganisation towards more ‘usable’ capabilities | 52 |

Table of Tables

| | |
|---|----|
| Table 1.1 – Research approach..... | 3 |
| Table 2.1 – The Netherlands at a glance | 7 |
| Table 2.2 – Netherlands personnel figures 2008 | 10 |
| Table 3.1 – Selected countries’ troop missions, locations and level of autonomy in Afghanistan..... | 24 |
| Table 5.1 – Stated policy for deployment..... | 37 |
| Table 5.2 – Percentage of active land forces deployable for selected countries (where known)..... | 38 |
| Table 6.1 – Average percentage of armed forces personnel deployed on operations 2001–2008 (excluding reserves and civilians)..... | 43 |
| Table 6.2 – Average percentage of armed forces personnel deployed on operations 2001–2008 (including reserves and civilians) | 43 |
| Table 7.1 – Comparison of platform numbers | 50 |

Summary

Study context and scope

The Netherlands Ministry of Defence (NL MOD) commissioned RAND Europe to identify the strengths and weaknesses of the Netherlands armed forces, asking RAND Europe to focus on recent deployments of Netherlands armed forces relative to the deployments of other countries' armed forces. This study is therefore not a root-and-branch consideration of the Netherlands armed forces, but a comparative study of several different armed forces to illustrate contrasts and similarities with those of the Netherlands.

The study was conducted within the context of the NL MOD's Future Policy Survey, which is a review of the Netherlands' future defence ambition, required capabilities and associated levels of defence expenditure. The overarching aim of the Dutch Future Policy Survey is to provide greater insight into how to exploit and enhance the potential contribution of the Netherlands armed forces.

Study approach

The principal methodology employed in the study to meet this objective was the use of international benchmarking. The RAND Study team used qualitative and quantitative methodologies to benchmark the Netherlands air, land and maritime forces against those of selected NATO countries and Australia.

As the Future Policy Survey team were particularly interested in coalition partners' perceptions of strengths and weaknesses of the Netherlands deployments, interviews with representatives of coalition partners and an analysis of media reports were included in our approach.

The RAND Study team structured its research along five key dimensions:

- resources and deployments
- strategic posture: the role of defence
- deployability
- sustainability
- equipment platforms.

For each dimension, we considered quantitative and qualitative data, gathered through a literature review, and perception-based data, gathered through interviews and a media analysis. Our key findings are presented below.

Summary of study findings: implications for the Netherlands

- **The Netherlands armed forces have deployed significant force elements in a stressing operational environment:** The Netherlands' operations in Afghanistan are widely respected by NATO and EU partners, and the Netherlands has demonstrated its ability to deploy and support forces on an ongoing expeditionary operation.
- **Following Afghanistan, the Netherlands will require a 'rest' period:** It is likely that the Netherlands will need to plan for, and more importantly invest in, a period of rehabilitation, recapitalisation and refurbishment for key elements of its armed forces following withdrawal from Afghanistan in 2010. This is particularly true for the 'pinch points' in terms of people, equipment and materiel that have been stretched in recent years. The Netherlands may also need to revise its personnel strategy to meet operational and social realities, including harmony guidelines, the role of reservists, and the armed forces' recruitment and retention strategy.
- **The Netherlands must ensure that its defence ambitions are aligned with resourcing:** With this in mind it will be essential for the Netherlands to critically evaluate current defence spending, understand the cost of maintaining and operating existing force structures and the capabilities it will require to deliver its policy objectives in the long term.
- **There is a need for better communication regarding the role of the Netherlands' defence activities:** Many of the interviews we conducted and the media articles we consulted suggested that the NL MOD faces particular challenges in communicating the role of defence to the public, both in terms of operations in Afghanistan and more widely over the longer term. In terms of Afghanistan, this miscommunication is most likely a result of the changing mission requirements on the ground.
- **The Netherlands faces a strategic challenge regarding its capability mix:** In common with many other countries, the Netherlands needs to develop a coherent set of force elements to meet the requirements of both territorial defence and contingent expeditionary operations. Ultimately, this presents a trade-off between maintaining limited capabilities across all/most capability areas and focusing on particular strengths.

Summary of study findings: relative strengths and weaknesses of the Netherlands

- **Relatively low defence spending; relatively high GDP per capita:** Analysis of the data available suggests that, when compared with its peers, the Netherlands has a relatively low defence budget, committing less than 2 per cent to defence, and only 15 and 17 per cent of its overall defence budget on investment spending in the period 2001-2006, but a relatively a high GDP per capita at US\$ 40,431 in 2009. Comparatively,

Australia has a GDP per capita at US\$ 37,299 in 2009 and defence spending at over 2 per cent.¹

- **Relatively strong on quantity and quality of recent operations:** Interviewees indicated a high degree of respect for the Netherlands' contribution to recent missions, in particular the ISAF mission in Afghanistan. Interviewees commented on the increased wear and tear on equipment and personnel as a result of operating in highly volatile areas such as Afghanistan's Uruzgan province; and the financial implications concerning the recapitalisation of equipment and the replenishment of stocks and materiel expended during operations.
- **Relatively strong focus on expeditionary operations:** The Netherlands has a relatively strong focus on expeditionary operations compared with the selected countries (Germany, Australia, Canada, etc). At the same time, the Netherlands has a lower requirement for territorial defence (such as maritime patrols and defence of airspace) due to its geographical size and location in Europe, and therefore may have more scope to enhance operational deployability, for example, by dedicating capabilities, including personnel and materiel, to contributing to expeditionary activities.
- **Relatively strong on technical interoperability:** The majority of interviewees indicated that the Netherlands was strong on technical interoperability, including areas such as English language skills, personal communication, etc. We were unable to obtain sufficient data to indicate any strengths or weaknesses in strategic interoperability.
- **Similar to all high-operational-tempo countries in the area of sustaining troops in theatre:** When interviewees commented on personnel pinch points affecting the Netherlands, two themes stood out in particular: operations tended to soak up the same crews repeatedly, and the rate of recruitment of new personnel was low. However, these issues are no different to those facing other countries operating in high-operational-tempo environments. For instance, in 2008, the United Kingdom reported significant operational pinch points across a number of military trades.

¹ GDP per capita estimates for the Netherlands and Australia are derived from purchasing power parity (PPP) calculations. World Economic Outlook Database – April 2009, *International Monetary Fund*. Accessed April 20, 2009

Acknowledgments

Many individuals in the Netherlands Ministry of Defence provided their time and support to help us perform the analysis presented in this report. This work could not have been undertaken without the help of the MOD's Future Policy Survey Project Team, particularly Dr Sebastian Reyn, for overall study guidance, and Dr Eimert Hornstra, for ongoing support and assistance.

We are indebted to everyone, both policy-makers and serving military personnel, who provided coalition perspectives on the Netherlands. Many organised a response to our questionnaire, and hosted us on visits to their facilities. Their valuable insight provided interesting anecdotes which helped to contextualize our data.

We particularly would like to thank our two reviewers, RAND colleagues Hans Pung and Greg Hannah. Their careful and constructive comments substantially improved this report.

1.1 **Study context and scope**

The study was conducted within the context of the Netherlands Ministry of Defence (NL MOD) Future Policy Survey, whose overarching aim is to provide greater insight into how to exploit and enhance the potential contribution of the Netherlands armed forces. RAND Europe was asked to identify the strengths and weaknesses of the Netherlands armed forces' deployments compared with the deployments of other nations. Given that Afghanistan has dominated the operational picture in recent years, much of our research was necessarily focused on that country. The Future Policy Survey team was particularly interested in perceptions among coalition partners of the strengths and weaknesses of the Netherlands' deployments.

1.2 **About benchmarking**

Benchmarking is a standard methodology used to examine the strengths and weaknesses of a given subject by comparing its performance and attributes against appropriate comparators.

However, benchmarking national armed forces is not a straightforward peer-to-peer comparison due to the unique nature of national armed forces. This uniqueness is manifested through a range of factors to do with nations themselves, such as population size, GDP, national culture and history, and external factors such as the geopolitical environment and wider global trends.

This chapter will present both the conceptual framework and the methodology developed by RAND Europe in consultation with the NL MOD.

1.3 **Conceptual framework**

The first stage in our study was to select which countries' armed forces to benchmark the Netherlands armed forces against, and establishing an intellectual framework within which to conduct the benchmarking. Our approach to these tasks is presented below.

1.3.1 Selecting comparators

As the baseline for this study was the Netherlands forces which have been deployed on operations, the RAND Europe study team, in consultation with the NL MOD, selected other armed forces that Netherlands forces have trained with, operated jointly with or been deployed alongside. For example:

- The Royal Netherlands Army is currently deployed in Southern Afghanistan with Canadian, Danish and Australian forces, and operates a standing joint brigade with Germany.
- The Royal Netherlands Air Force trains with the United States Air Force.
- The Royal Netherlands Marines operate a joint amphibious force with the United Kingdom.

Other comparator countries are presented as a baseline against research themes when appropriate (for example, a greater subset of European countries is considered when examining defence investment over time).

1.3.2 The benchmarking exercise

It is important to emphasise what benchmarking *is* and what it *is not*. In this study, we did not seek to benchmark the overall effectiveness of national armed forces. Rather, we used benchmarking to conduct a relative assessment of the Netherlands armed forces' deployments across a number of dimensions, namely:

- resources and deployments – benchmarking defence spending and recent expeditionary operations deployments by key countries
- strategic posture – benchmarking the balance between territorial defence and expeditionary operations
- deployability – benchmarking the ambition, and the historical record, of deploying force on operations
- sustainability – benchmarking the ambition, and the historical record, of sustaining force on operations
- equipment platforms – benchmarking equipment against that of comparable countries.

The chapters within this document are organised according to these themes.

1.4 Methodology

The RAND Study team had a two-stage approach for conducting the benchmarking study, namely data-driven research and perception-driven research. The data-driven stage was conducted through a literature review and organising an internal RAND workshop; the perception-driven stage was conducted through interviews and carrying out an analysis of media reports. Some of the research themes identified in 1.3.2 were addressed through analysis of quantitative data from published sources, while others were primarily explored

through interviews and media analysis. The research approach is summarised below and presented in full in Table 1.1.

Stage 1: Literature review and internal RAND workshop:

- What does the data indicate?
- Where are there gaps in the data?

Stage 2: Interviews and media analysis, striving to answer remaining questions:

- Why do similarities/differences in the data arise?
- And, broadly, what perceptions do other countries hold of the Netherlands’ strengths and weaknesses in these areas?

Table 1.1 – Research approach

| | Literature Review | Internal RAND Workshop | Interviews | Media Analysis |
|---------------------------|-----------------------|------------------------|-----------------------------|----------------|
| Research Theme | Data-Driven (Stage 1) | | Perception-Driven (Stage 2) | |
| Resources and Deployments | X | | | |
| Strategic Posture | X | X | X | |
| Deployability | X | | | |
| Sustainability | X | | X | |
| Equipment | X | | X | |
| Coalition Perspectives | | | X | X |

SOURCE: RAND EUROPE

1.4.1 Literature review

The research included a wide-ranging review and analysis of policy statements using sources such as:

- national defence white papers
- international institutions, such as NATO, the EU and the European Defence Agency (EDA)
- publications from research institutes such as the International Institute of Strategic Studies (IISS) and Jane’s Information Group; and
- a variety of media

Qualitative assessments were made with reference to numerous sources. However, we sought to restrict the number of sources used for comparing quantitative data as different agencies might use different methodologies for calculation. We also tried to keep the source of each individual country’s data consistent.

1.4.2 Internal RAND workshop

In order to benchmark strategic posture, the RAND study team held a half-day workshop at our headquarters in Cambridge, UK. Assessments of strategic posture were made by the RAND Europe study team, as well as one RAND Europe external reviewer. Our assessment for each country was based on a consideration of defence policy, defence planning assumptions and the number of forces deployed on current expeditionary operations.

1.4.3 Interviews

A set of primary source interviews were conducted in the UK and the Netherlands during early 2009. These included conversations with representatives from the governments of comparator countries included in this study (primarily defence attachés): Australia, Canada, Denmark, France, Germany, the Netherlands, the UK and the US. In addition, we conducted a series of interviews with service and civilian personnel from the UK and US who had an informed perspective on the Netherlands Armed Forces from having trained or being involved in operations with them.

1.4.4 Media analysis

The media analysis examined reports from the international, trade and national media from 2007-2009. The articles were identified through four search terms and relevant excerpts were then entered into a database, assigned to a topic category and a tone of reporting. It was thus possible to identify the perceptions that the media expressed on the NL MOD, structured according to the topic the citations referred to and the tone in which they were written. More details of these media, the search terms, the topic categories and the manner in which the tone was assessed can be found in Appendix A.

1.4.5 Limitations of the methodology

We acknowledge that there are certain limitations to our methodology.

- *The only operator perspectives included in the interviews are from the UK and US²:* While the research team has included policy-level perspectives from all countries, operator perceptions included are from the UK and US only. This was due to the challenges of obtaining perspectives from other nations; both the NL MOD and the RAND research team approached other countries for their perspectives, but requests were declined.
- *Policy-makers are inclined to emphasise strengths over weaknesses:* Militaries are risk-averse when speaking about other militaries. Therefore, there is an inherent risk that interviewees would stress ‘strengths’ of the Netherlands forces over the ‘weaknesses’. For this reason, interviewees’ comments are unattributed in this report.
- *Information is aggregated at a high level:* Because the research team attempted to benchmark the Netherlands against a number of different countries, the quantitative data is aggregated at a high level in order to make valid comparisons.

² ‘Operator’ meaning serving military personnel.

Where it was necessary to make assumptions, we have attempted to make these explicit at the beginning of each chapter.

- *The research team only had access to open source data:* Much of the analysis has had to be based on data which is available publicly. For instance, the chapter on deployability would have been much enhanced by an analysis of each country's readiness levels, which were not available to the research team.

1.5 **The use of this study**

This research design offers a useful means for assessing the Netherlands' deployments because it examines at a high level what is working, what is not, and why, from both qualitative and quantitative perspectives. We envisage that this study will provide a useful basis for discussion of this subject in the final report produced by the NL MOD Future Policy Survey Group, as well as a starting point for investigating future options in respect to the requirements and capabilities of the Netherlands armed forces.

1.6 **Structure of the report**

The report proper begins in Chapter 2 with a socio-economic and defence overview of the Netherlands. The main body of this document, Chapters 3–7, systematically presents the information gathered during the study, covering each of the research themes. Chapter 8 synthesizes the implications for the Netherlands of the previous sections into the study's conclusions.

2.1 Introduction

This chapter presents an overview of the socio-economic indicators and defence issues for the Netherlands. The goals of the chapter are threefold:

- to present a brief background to the Netherlands
- to describe recent trends as they pertain to socio-economic and defence issues
- to provide a context for understanding the remainder of the study.

The purpose of doing so is to present the baseline for the benchmarking exercise which is the Netherlands Armed Forces.

2.2 Socio-economic indicators

The Netherlands is a densely populated, relatively wealthy country that is heavily dependent on foreign trade. At US\$ 40,431 in 2009 per capita, the Netherlands has the second highest GDP per capita of any country in this study (after the United States), and the third highest in the eurozone after Ireland and Luxembourg.³ The high average income of the Dutch is partially a result of a high rate of labour participation; in 2002, the Netherlands had a labour force participation rate of 75.6 percent, as compared to the average of 60.4 percent in the EU and developed economies.⁴ Furthermore, the unemployment rate in the Netherlands is one of the lowest in Europe. From 2002 to 2007, an average of 4 percent of the potential working population was unemployed, while the corresponding rate in the eurozone countries was 8 percent.⁵ Table 2.1 presents this data at a glance.

³ CIA World Factbook, 'The Netherlands', <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/rankorder/2004rank.html>, accessed 2 March 2009

⁴ International Labour Organization, 'The Netherlands Labour Force Participation Rate', <http://www.ilo.org/public/english/employment/gems/eo/download/netherlands.pdf>, accessed 2 March 2009

⁵ Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), 'Statistical Profile of the Netherlands', 2007

Table 2.1 – The Netherlands at a glance

| | |
|---|------------------------|
| Population (2009) | 16,645,313 |
| Area | 41,526 sq km |
| GDP Per Capita (2009) | US\$40,431 |
| Size of the Economy (2007) | US\$792 billion |
| Labour Force Participation Rate (2002) | 75.6 percent |
| Average Unemployment (2002–2007) | 4 percent |

SOURCE: RAND EUROPE

Despite high rates of productivity, employers in the Netherlands have faced challenges hiring workers.⁶ This is primarily due to the fact that the working-age population has stopped increasing and baby-boomers are retiring. In addition, migration flows have reversed, as fewer foreign migrants are entering the Netherlands and more natives are leaving. While this study does not take into account these changes in the labour force, the military, as an employer in the Netherlands, is not exempt from these challenges and is likely to face a contracting labour pool in the years ahead.

The Netherlands is not a particularly large country, though with 16,645,313 million inhabitants in an area of 41,526 sq km, it does have one of the highest population densities in the world.⁷ The size of the economy was more than US\$792 billion in 2007, putting the Netherlands in sixteenth place in the world and sixth in the EU.⁸ For years, the Netherlands' real GDP growth rate has closely reflected that of the G7.⁹ This is indicative of the fact that the Dutch economy is heavily dependent on trade and therefore significantly affected by economic activity in the rest of the world.¹⁰

⁶ Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), 'Economic Survey of the Netherlands', Chapter 1: Challenges Facing the Dutch Economy, 2008.

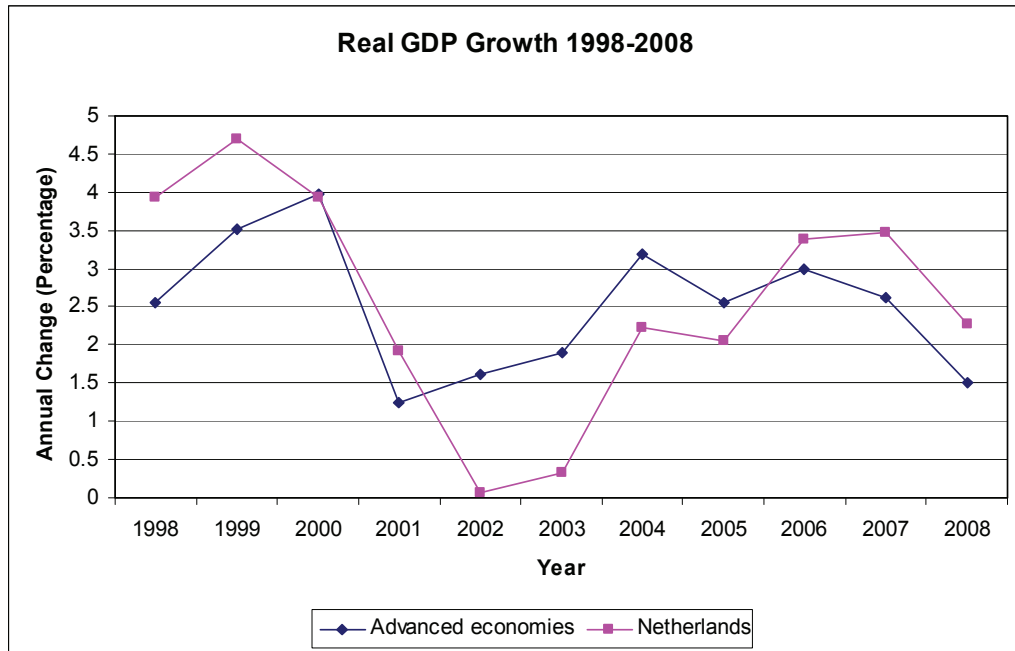
⁷ CIA World Factbook, 'The Netherlands', <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/nl.html>, 2009, accessed 2 March 2009

⁸ US Department of State, 'The Netherlands', <http://www.state.gov/t/pa/ei/bgn/3204.htm>, accessed 2 March 2009

⁹ International Monetary Fund, IMF Country Report No. 08/172: 'Kingdom of the Netherlands: Selected Issues', June 2008

¹⁰ The Netherlands has the busiest port in the world (when measured by throughput), and is home to such multinational corporations as Philips, Royal Ahold, Aegon, and three of the world's 30 biggest banks.

Figure 2.1 – Real GDP growth in the Netherlands



SOURCE: IMF, 2009

2.3 Defence policy

The Netherlands armed forces have been engaged in an extended period of transformation following the end of the Cold War, aimed at making them more able to deploy abroad in response to international crises and in support of the national interest.¹¹ According to the 2000 defence white paper, the Dutch armed forces have three main tasks – territorial defence, contributing to international crisis-management missions and supporting civil authorities in case of disasters and emergencies.¹² In recent years the Netherlands has deployed forces to a number of operational theatres including Afghanistan, Bosnia, Chad, Iraq and Lebanon, a discussion of which is included in the following chapter.

2.3.1 Defence ambition

Defence ambition refers to a state’s expression of the *maximum* military contribution it intends to make to international crisis-management missions.¹³ As described in the most recent Netherlands defence white paper and illustrated in Figure 2.3, the Netherlands intends to be able to function in land operations as a lead nation at brigade level and, in conjunction with other countries, at corps level.

¹¹ ‘Globally Engaged’ defence vision white paper, Eimert van Middelkoop, Minister of Defence of the Netherlands, 2007.

¹² Netherlands Ministry of Defence, ‘Summary of the Defence White Paper’, <http://merln.ndu.edu/whitepapers/Netherlands-2000.pdf>, 2000, accessed 2 March 2009

¹³ Giegerich, Bastian, *European Military Crisis Management: Connecting Ambition and Reality*, London: Routledge/The International Institute for Strategic Studies, 2008.

Figure 2.2 – Netherlands level of ambition

| |
|--|
| <p>Protection of national and Allied territory and airspace, including the Netherlands Antilles and Aruba, with all available resources, and using all means, if required;</p> <p>An active contribution to the integrated Dutch foreign policy. This concerns the following.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – making a high-quality, technologically advanced contribution to international operations across the spectrum of conflict, including during the initial phases of an operation. This concerns: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – a contribution to the NATO level of ambition. In this regard, the armed forces as a whole must also be able to make a contribution of varying size to the NATO Response Force; – a contribution to the EU level of ambition. In this context, the armed forces will also make periodic contributions to the EU rapid reaction capacity, the EU Battle Groups; – a contribution to the Stand-by High Readiness Brigade (SHIRBRIG) of the United Nations; – participation for the maximum duration of one year in an operation at the high end of the spectrum of conflict with a brigade consisting of land forces, two squadrons of fighter aircraft or a maritime task force; – simultaneous participation over a prolonged period in a maximum of three operations at the low end of the spectrum of conflict with task forces of battalion size or, in the case of naval and air operations, the equivalent; – in land operations, operating as lead nation at brigade level and, in conjunction with other countries, at army corps level, in maritime operations, operating as lead nation at task group level, and in air operations, operating with contributions at a level comparable to brigade level; – conducting special operations, including evacuations and counter-terrorism operations. – participation in police missions, including in European Gendarmerie Force operations, with officers and units of the Royal Netherlands Marechaussee Command, and in small-scale missions of a civil-military nature; – allocation of military experts for the purposes of training and advising security organisations in other countries; – provision of international emergency assistance at the request of civil authorities; <p>Contributing to the security and safety of our society within the borders of the Kingdom of the Netherlands, under civil authority. Specifically, that means:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – the performance of national tasks, such as border control, by the Royal Netherlands Marechaussee Command and the Coast Guard; – the provision of military assistance to upholding law and order under criminal law and maintaining |
|--|

SOURCE: Globally Engaged defence white paper, Eimert van Middelkoop, Minister of Defence of the Netherlands, 2007

2.3.2 Personnel

The NL MOD employs approximately 68,000 personnel, of whom over 40,000 are military. The Netherlands also maintains a 3,000-strong all-volunteer reserve force. Conscription in the Netherlands was suspended in 1996.

The military of the Netherlands is composed of four branches:

- Koninklijke Landmacht (KL), the Royal Netherlands Army
- Koninklijke Marine (KM), the Royal Netherlands Navy; and Korps Mariniers, the Marine Corps
- Koninklijke Luchtmacht (KLu), the Royal Netherlands Air Force; and

- Koninklijke Marechaussee (KMar), the Royal Military Police.¹⁴

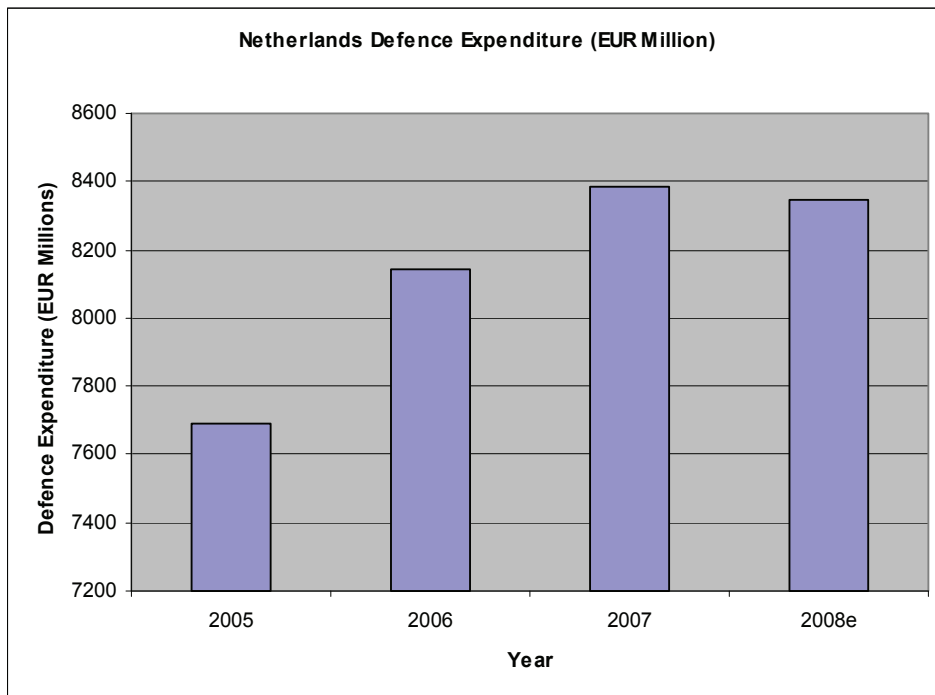
Table 2.2 – Netherlands personnel figures 2008

| | |
|---|---------------|
| Navy | 7,999 |
| Army | 19,509 |
| Air Force | 7,902 |
| Gendarmerie | 5,483 |
| Joint staff | 1,063 |
| Support services | 3,204 |
| Equipment department | 1,387 |
| Total | 46,547 |
| SOURCE: Netherlands Ministry of Defence | |

2.3.3 Defence spending

In recent years, defence spending by the Netherlands has been consistently around 1.5 percent of GDP. In 2008, spending on defence totalled €8.35 billion; yearly figures are detailed in Figure 2.3. Chapter 3 will explore defence spending in detail.

Figure 2.3 – Netherlands defence expenditure 2005–2008



¹⁴ The Royal Military Police are not included in this report as our focus is on deployed forces.

CHAPTER 3 **Resources and deployments**

3.1 **Introduction**

In the early 1990s, following the end of the Cold War, many nations reduced the size of their armed forces (both in terms of personnel and equipment) and also reduced spending on defence, resulting what is often termed the ‘peace dividend’. Since then, the military role of NATO members has shifted towards a more expeditionary footing. For EU members, the European Security and Defence Policy also prioritised expeditionary operations, as summarised in the Petersberg tasks.¹⁵

Recent years have seen significant increases in the number of personnel deployed on expeditionary operations for many NATO and EU members. The forces of a majority of member states have – to a greater or lesser extent – undergone major transformation or reconfiguration towards capabilities that enable out-of-area operations, with a sharper focus on deployable force elements. This presents challenges in terms of striking a balance between political-military ambition, sustaining a high level of deployment and resource allocation.

The purpose of this chapter is to contrast the different extents to which the comparator countries in this study have responded to these trends by looking at the different extent to which they have undertaken budgetary and deployment burdens. It will do so by comparing:

- the overall defence spending of the Netherlands and comparator countries
- the numbers of military personnel deployed on expeditionary operations by the comparator countries.

3.2 **Defence spending**

3.2.1 **Overall defence spending**

In comments made in September 2008, NATO Secretary General Jaap de Hoop Scheffer indicated his concerns about defence spending:

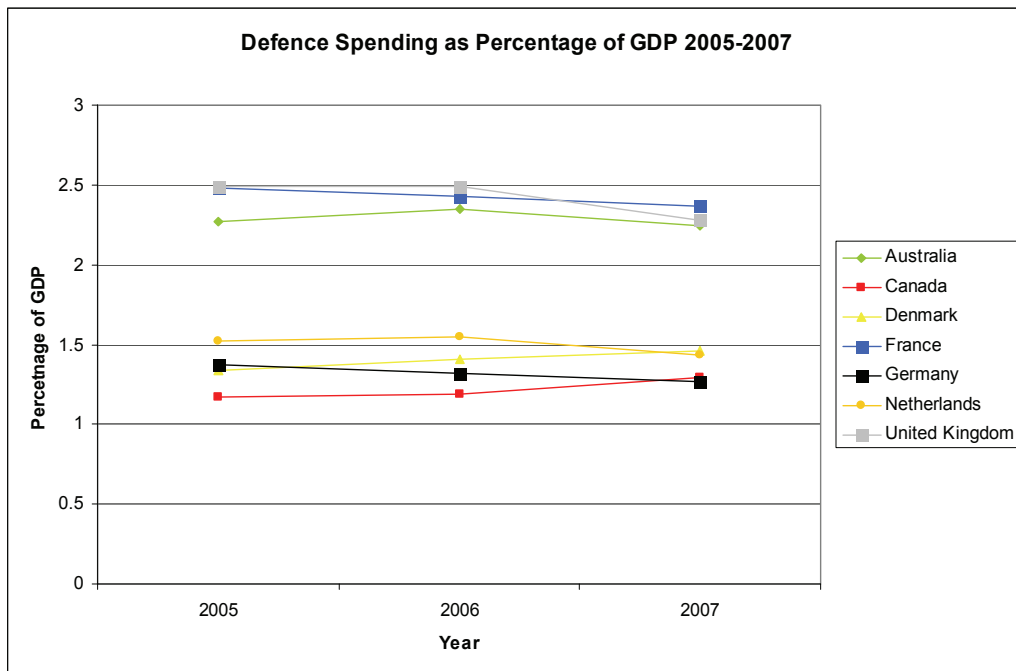
¹⁵NATO Handbook, ‘Implementation of the Petersburg Tasks’, <http://www.nato.int/docu/handbook/2001/hb150401.htm>, accessed 22 March 2009

I'm permanently worried about the level of defence budgets... it is very important that nations step up their defence budget... if you look at our informal target of the two percent GDP, there are very few allies who reach that target.¹⁶

NATO has set an informal target that new alliance members should spend above two percent of GDP on defence. States like the Netherlands, whose proportion of GDP devoted to defence is below this level, should halt any decline in defence expenditure and aim to increase it in real terms.¹⁷ Figure 3.1 illustrates that the Netherlands' defence spending has been around 1.5 percent of GDP in recent years and that there is a slight decrease from 2006 to 2007.¹⁸

In terms of defence spending as percentage of GDP, countries fall into two distinct clusters. The first cluster includes the UK, France and Australia, each consistently spending over 2 percent of GDP on defence. In the second cluster, the Netherlands is the most significant spender on defence as a percentage of GDP, consistently exceeding Germany and Canada, although in 2007 its gap with Denmark narrowed.

Figure 3.1 – Defence spending as a percentage of GDP



SOURCE: International Institute for Strategic Studies (IISS)

It is also instructive to compare national defence spending as a percentage of GDP (as proxy for national priority given to defence) with national GDP per capita (which can be considered as indicative of the ability of national governments to spend on areas such as defence). This is shown in Figure 3.2 which indicates that the Netherlands, as a relatively

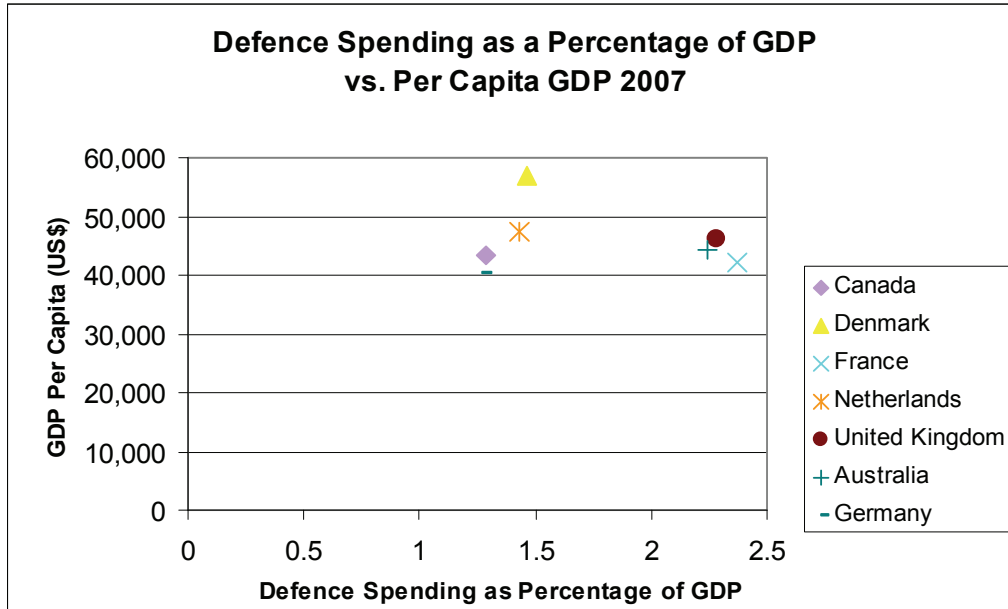
¹⁶ Press conference given by NATO Secretary General Jaap de Hoop Scheffer, 19 September 2008

¹⁷ NATO PA 168, <http://www.nato-pa.int/default.asp?SHORTCUT=1169>

¹⁸ The 2007 budget was €7.7 billion; 2008 added a budget increase of around €500 million. With the agreement to remain in Afghanistan another €850 million will be added over the following years.

rich country by population size, arguably has greater means to increase its defence spending compared with Canada or Germany.

Figure 3.2 – Per capita GDP versus defence spending as a percentage of GDP

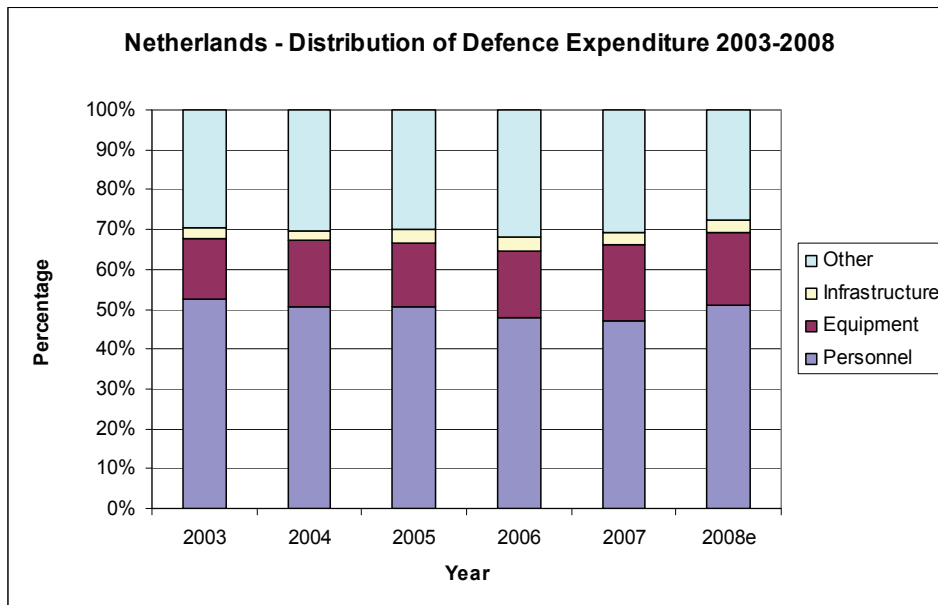


SOURCE: International Institute for Strategic Studies (IISS)

In addition to considering overall defence spending as a percentage of GDP, it is useful to consider the apportionment of defence expenditure.

Figure 3.3 illustrates the allocation of defence spending to major cost centres.

Figure 3.3 – Distribution of the Netherlands’ defence expenditure 2003–2008



SOURCE: NATO, 2009

3.2.2 Defence investment spending

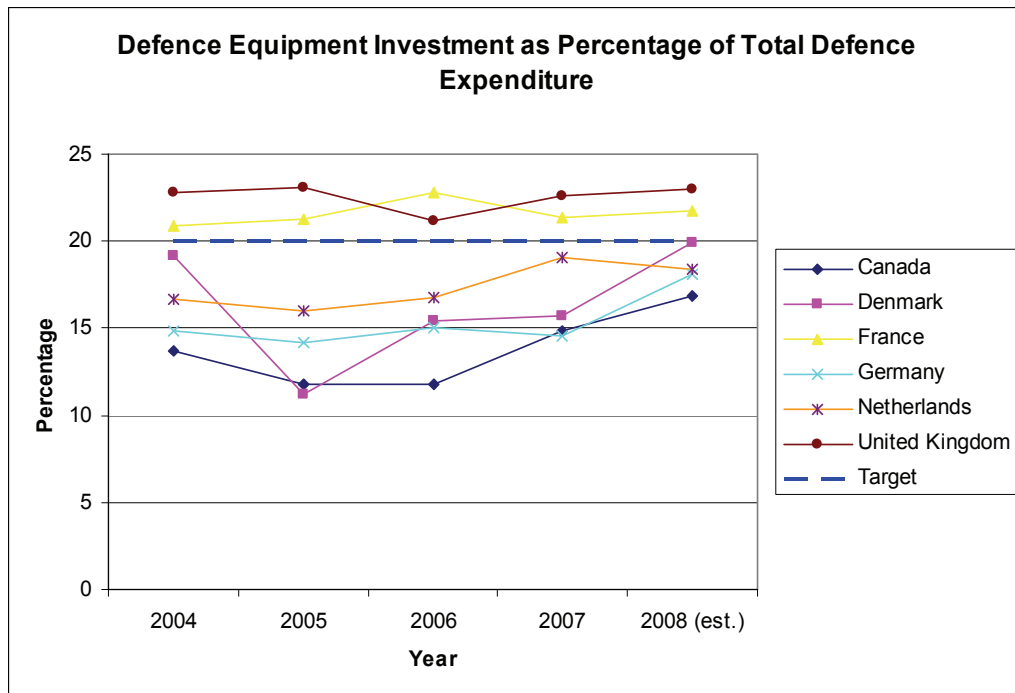
Of particular interest is investment spending, specifically spending on equipment procurement and research and development. Investment spending provides an indication of how governments prioritise enhancing military capability. To emphasise the importance of this area, the EU and NATO have set an informal target of 20 percent of alliance members’ overall defence spending being channelled into investment:

Investing in the right technology is critical for the future of European defence and the Strategy is exactly in line with the absolute requirement for us to spend more, spend better and spend more together.¹⁹

As Figure 3.4 illustrates, the Netherlands has not met this informal target, consistently committing between 15 and 17 percent of its overall defence budget towards investment spending in the period 2001–2006. Many other European countries also fell short of the informal target during this period; only nine European countries – France, Finland, Norway, Romania, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey and the United Kingdom – committed more than 20 percent of their defence budget towards investment.

¹⁹ European Defence Agency, *EU Ministers adopt framework for joint European strategy in Defence R&T*, 19 November 2007.

Figure 3.4 – Percentage of total expenditure taken up by defence investment at current local currency



SOURCE: NATO, 2007

3.2.3 Defence spending on personnel

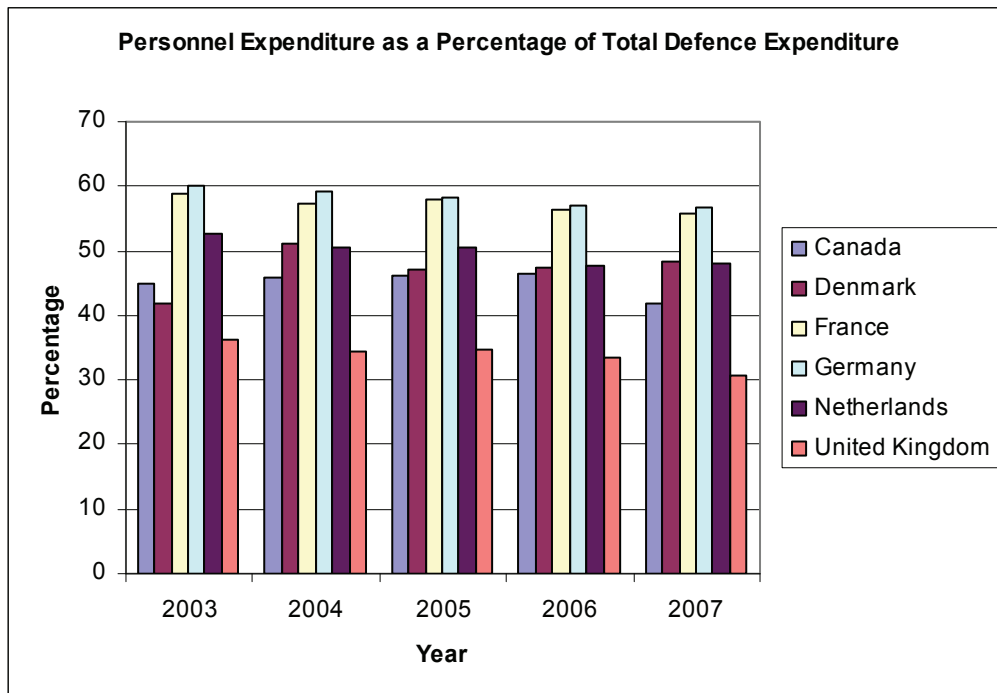
In 2008, the NATO Parliamentary Assembly identified that disproportionate spending on personnel was one signal of the ‘capabilities gap’ between Europe and the US – an expression used to denote the relative lack of capabilities enabling sustained deployments abroad. The average percentage of the defence budget spent on personnel by European Allies was 54 percent, with some members spending 70 percent or more, leaving little room for increases in R&D or procurement.²⁰ Among the countries in this study, the UK’s spending on personnel averaged around 40 percent, while Germany’s averaged approximately 60 percent over the same period.²¹

The Netherlands compares relatively well on this metric, with an average allocation of around 49 percent of spending on personnel from 2003–2008. Moreover, this figure decreased from a high of 52.6 percent in 2003.

²⁰ NATO Parliamentary Assembly, ‘Current and Future Capability Priorities for the Atlantic Alliance’, <http://www.nato-pa.int/default.asp?SHORTCUT=1474>

²¹ Langton, Christopher, ed. *The Military Balance 2009*, London: The International Institute for Strategic Studies, 2009.

Figure 3.5 – Personnel expenditure as a percentage of total defence expenditure



Source: NATO, 2007

3.3 Recent deployments by operation

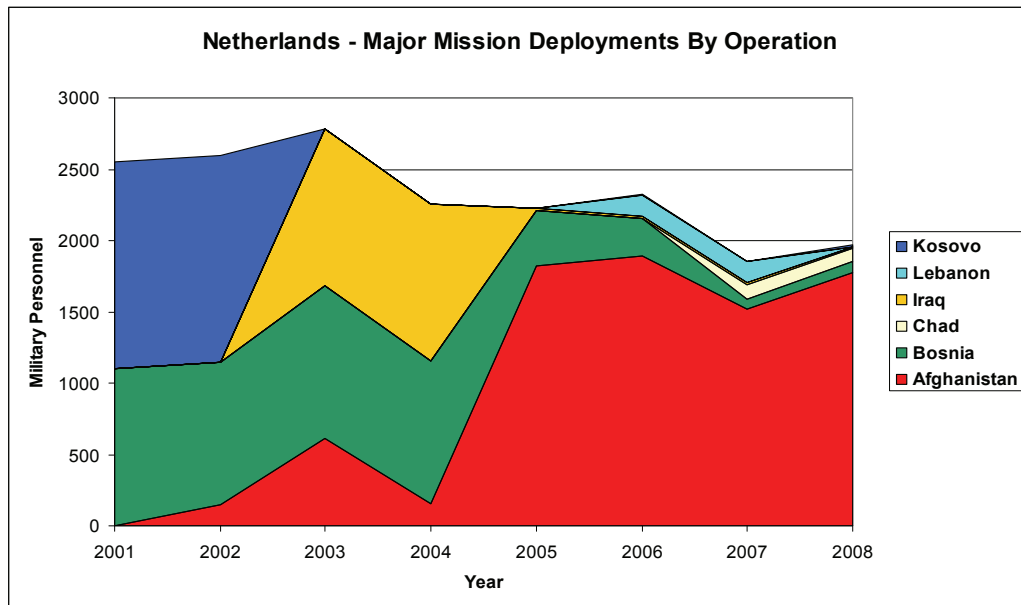
In recent years, the Netherlands has had an ongoing commitment to out-of-area expeditionary operations. As illustrated in Figure 3.5 the Netherlands has deployed and sustained around 2,000 troops through the period 2001–2008, reaching a peak of over 2,500 during concurrent deployments in Iraq and Afghanistan.²² Over the period, the armed forces carried out missions in Afghanistan, Iraq, Bosnia, Sudan, Congo, Liberia, the Arabian Sea, the Persian Gulf, the Mediterranean and in Indonesia (Aceh).²³ This corresponds to deployments of 4.1 percent (in 2007) and 4.9 percent (in 2008) of its total active forces to several operational theatres concurrently.²⁴

²² The data source for all the deployment data (including personnel deployed) is IISS, *Military Balance*, years 2006, 2007, 2008 and 2009.

²³ ‘Globally Engaged’ defence vision white paper, Eimert van Middelkoop, Minister of Defence of the Netherlands, 2007.

²⁴ Langton, Christopher, ed. *The Military Balance 2009*, London: The International Institute for Strategic Studies, 2009

Figure 3.6 – The Netherlands operational picture (2001–2008)



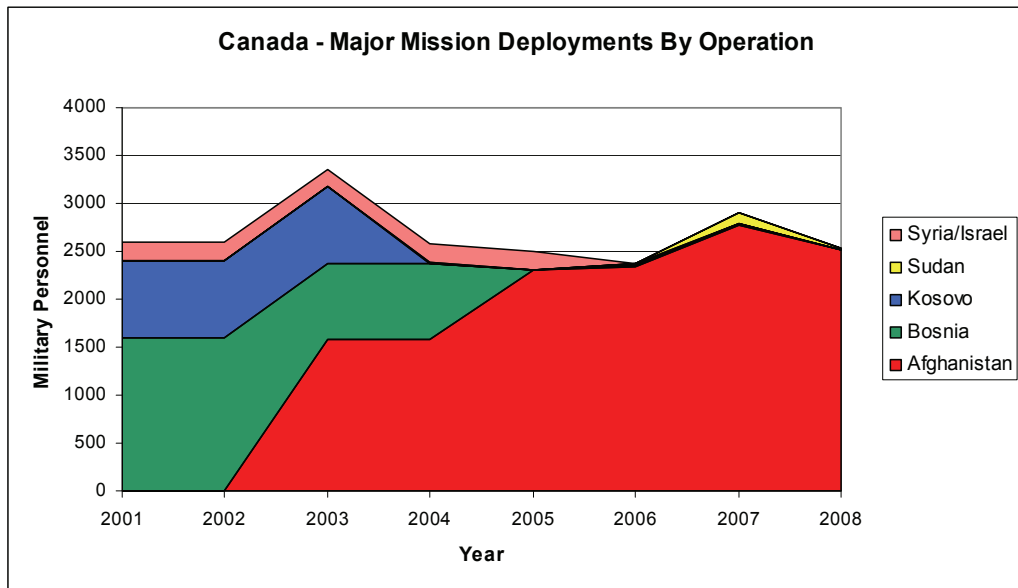
The bulk of the Netherlands’ deployment over the past four years has been in Afghanistan. Within the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) mission, the Netherlands has taken responsibility as a lead nation for Regional Command South RC(S), together with Canada and the UK. In the province of Uruzgan, the Netherlands deployed a Task Force (TF-U) consisting of a battalion-sized battle group (BG) in which both mechanized and airmobile infantry are available besides a battalion-sized Provincial Reconstruction Team (PRT).²⁵ Because of the substantial troop commitment, this operation is profiled at the end of this chapter.

The operational plot for the Netherlands is similar to that of **Canada**, which has also committed significant ground forces to southern Afghanistan over the past few years, as shown in Figure 3.7. In Afghanistan, Canadian and Dutch forces are both operating in RC(S), and both countries have the same 3D (Development, Diplomacy and Defence) integrated approach to missions. This approach has been most clearly discernable in Afghanistan and Iraq. The most recent Netherlands white paper describes this approach:

This... integrated, comprehensive approach whereby various departments, international organizations, NGOs, trade and industry, and the military play complementary roles... The overall objective is the creation of a stable situation, enabling the local and central authorities to take control again, without international assistance.

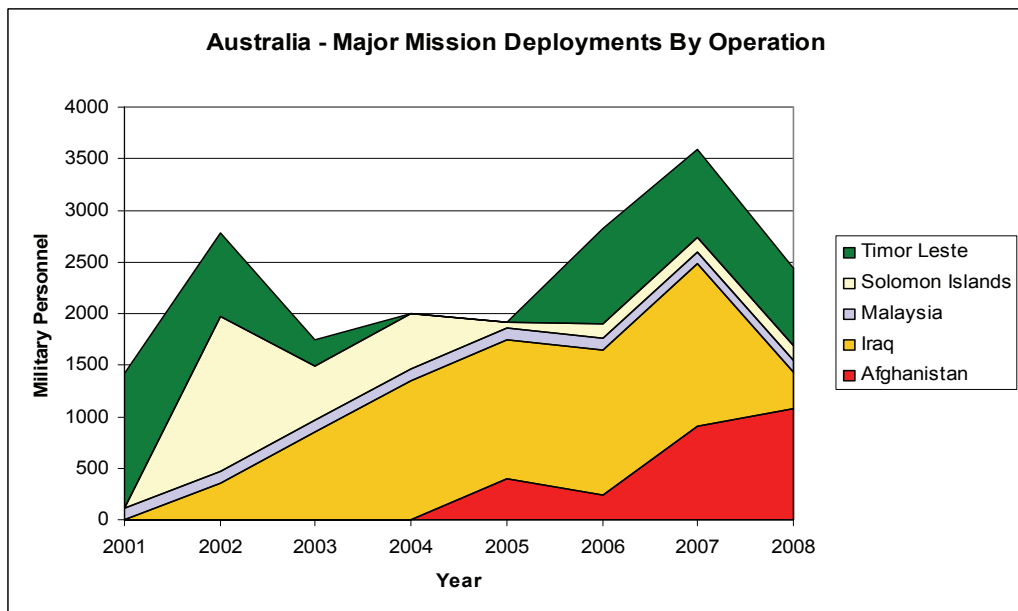
²⁵ United States Central Command, ‘The Netherlands’, <http://www.centcom.mil/en/countries/coalition/netherlands/>, Accessed March 6, 2009

Figure 3.7 – Canada operational picture (2001–2008)



Australia has a comparable total aggregate deployment in Afghanistan to the Netherlands, and has also had significant deployments in Iraq in addition to regional commitments which are reflected in its deployments to Timor Leste and the Solomon Islands. This is shown in Figure 3.8.

Figure 3.8 – Australia operational picture (2001–2008)

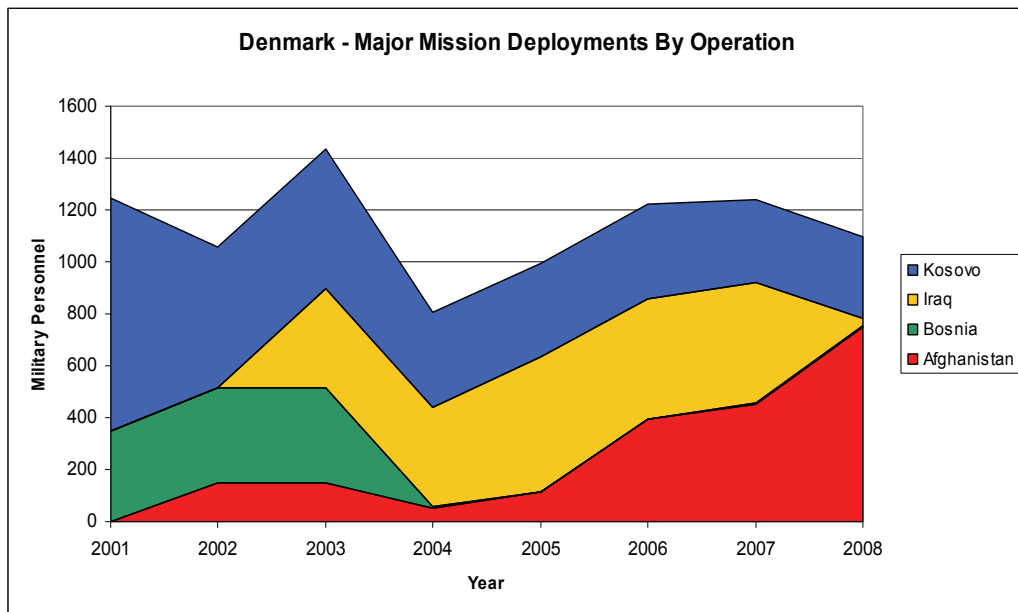


In absolute terms, **Denmark** has not deployed as many forces as the Netherlands over this period, although the percentage of forces deployed is comparable, as is discussed in Chapter 6. Denmark maintains a presence in Kosovo and has increased its deployment to southern Afghanistan, where it has committed its troops until 2012, to 700 service members.²⁶ The overall objective of the Danish engagement in RC(S) is to:

*Contribute to stable and sustainable development through a comprehensible and fully integrated civil and military approach.*²⁷

The operational picture for Denmark is shown in Figure 3.9.

Figure 3.9 – Denmark operational picture (2001–2008)

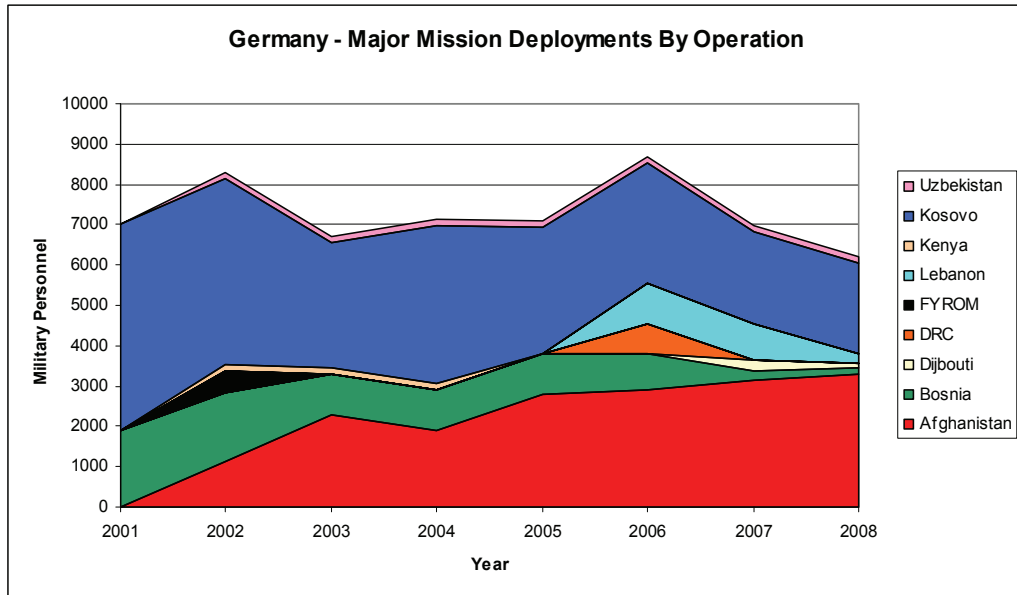


²⁶ Afghanistan ISAF and PRT Locations, http://www.nato.int/isaf/docu/epub/maps/graphics/afghanistan_prt_rc.pdf

²⁷ Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark, www.ambottawa.um.dk/en/menu/InfoDenmark/Denmark+in+Afghanistan/, accessed 20 March 2009

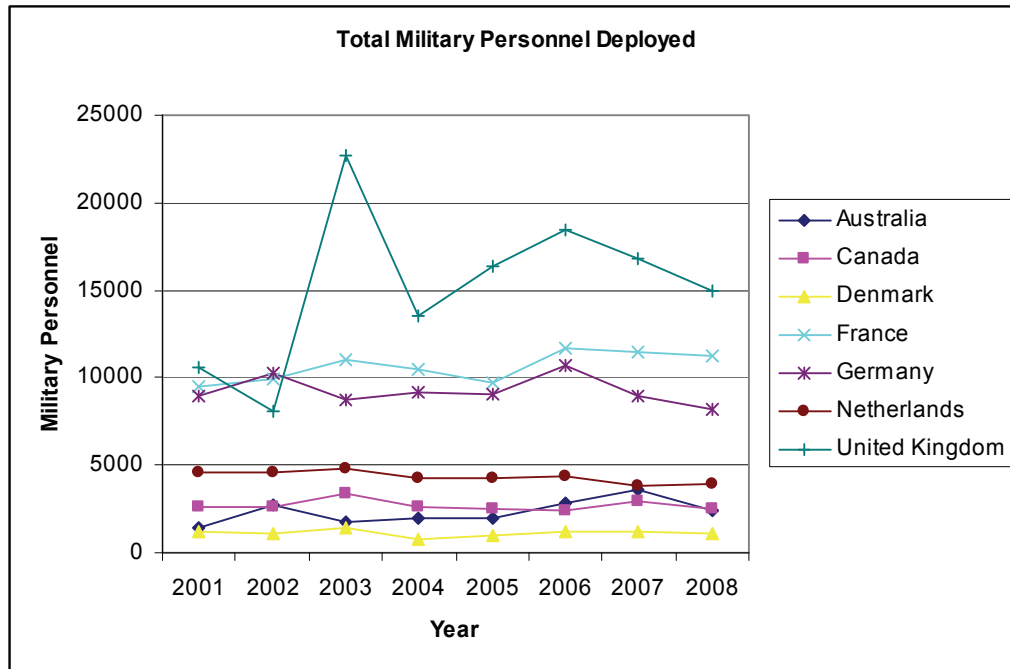
Germany has deployed forces to a number of operational theatres during the period, and in 2008 had approximately 6,000 service personnel (around 2.5 percent of total active forces) deployed on out-of-area operations, primarily in the relatively low-stress environments of northern Afghanistan and the Balkans. The operational picture for Germany is shown in Figure 3.10.

Figure 3.10 – Germany operational picture (2001–2008)



Finally, Figure 3.11 presents an overall summary of total service personnel deployed between 2001 and 2008 for each country in this study.

Figure 3.11 – Total military personnel deployed by country of origin



3.4 Example operation: Uruzgan deployment in Afghanistan

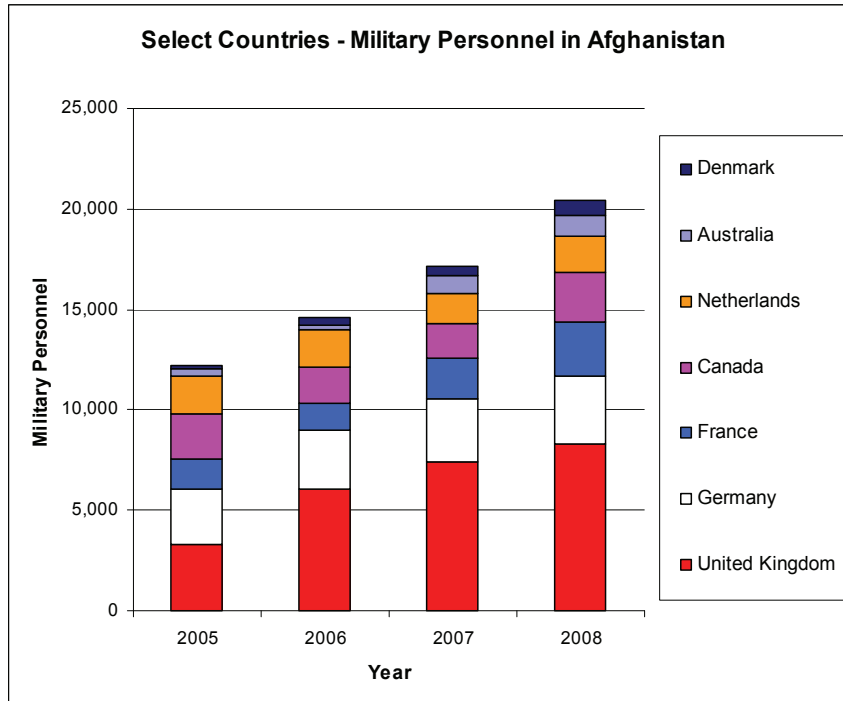
The Netherlands' deployment in Uruzgan province, Afghanistan, is by no means the only expeditionary operation undertaken by the Netherlands armed forces. It is, however, the most numerically significant deployment currently undertaken by the country (see Figure 3.5) and occupies a high profile among its allies. Although the purpose of this study is not to examine a particular mission, we have selected the Uruzgan deployment as a lens through which to examine allied perceptions of the Netherlands armed forces. However, aside from contrasting the troop numbers deployed by each country, we have resisted a more rigorous benchmarking approach due to the inherent difficulty and inappropriateness of contrasting mission effectiveness using publicly available information, and based on what is a fluid picture of security on the ground.

As the combination of Figure 3.12 (which illustrates the total number of dedicated troops) and Table 3.1 (which illustrates the location of the troops) demonstrate, the Netherlands, Canada, the United States and the United Kingdom currently provide the bulk of the ISAF forces in southern and eastern Afghanistan, the most volatile areas of Afghanistan.²⁸ Most of the other countries contributing to ISAF have so far been unwilling to make

²⁸ 'International Security Assistance Force and Afghan National Army Strength & Laydown', http://www.nato.int/isaf/docu/epub/pdf/isaf_placemat.pdf, accessed 13 February 2009.

significant contributions that might involve engaging in high-intensity combat operations – including counter-insurgency operations – in southern and eastern Afghanistan.

Figure 3.12 – Selected countries’ troop contribution to ISAF



Some countries which have a major footprint on the ground have imposed caveats on the use of force, in part to ensure that troops do not take part in activities for which they are not trained or equipped. In practice, however, caveats are also used to ensure that forces do not participate in activities that might be controversial at home.²⁹ In Afghanistan, a number of caveats relating to ISAF were removed following NATO’s Riga Summit in 2006. Before the summit only six member countries had no caveats in place in relation to the ISAF mission. At Riga, France and Germany agreed to remove some of their restrictions. Other countries, including the Netherlands, agreed to remove all or almost all of their caveats.³⁰

3.4.1 The Netherlands’ approach to operations in Uruzgan

As indicated earlier, Canada’s and the Netherlands’ operations in Afghanistan have an integrated approach. Official Netherlands policy in Afghanistan states:

Security and stability are essential conditions for development. That is why the Netherlands believes that in conflict-prone regions, development programmes are not enough. They need to be combined with action on the political, military and economic

²⁹ Giegerich, Bastian, *European Military Crisis Management: Connecting Ambition and Reality*, London: Routledge/The International Institute for Strategic Studies, 2008.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 50

*fronts. This integrated approach (Defence, Development and Diplomacy) is crucial to achieving lasting peace, security and development.*³¹

Dutch army commanders have pursued an ‘ink-spot’ approach, in which they focus on controlling the three central districts where 70 percent of the population of 627,000 are concentrated.³²

Media opinion is somewhat divided on the role the Dutch play in Uruzgan, though there is a general consensus that the Dutch are good at being a ‘best friend’ to local people, but are less convincing as a ‘worst enemy’ to the Taliban. A recent article referred to the Dutch armed forces, rather pejoratively, as ‘flower-strewers’.³³

Coalition impressions of the Netherlands deployment and approach are explored through interviews later in this Chapter. One aspect that is open to contrast between countries is the range of missions undertaken in Afghanistan.

Table 3.1 below presents a range of missions that we have broadly defined as reconstruction (contributing to or leading a PRT), security (using ground forces to actively engage in counterinsurgency operations), tactical air support, counterterrorism (which includes contributing to the US-led Operation Enduring Freedom), and providing a more general military presence (which refers to tasks such as static guarding or being based in less hazardous areas). This range of missions is certainly not exhaustive, but does provide an indication of the variety of roles played by the Netherlands armed forces in Afghanistan, much of which is taking place within the high-stress environment of RC(S).

³¹ Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs, ‘The Netherlands in Afghanistan’, Newsletter No. 10, 1 September 2007.

³² Ibid.

³³ ‘Afghanistan’s Uruzgan Province: The Dutch Model’, *The Economist*, 19 March 2009.

Table 3.1 – Selected countries’ troop missions, locations and level of autonomy in Afghanistan

| Country | ISAF Mission | | | | | ISAF Location | Mission Autonomy | |
|-------------|----------------|----------|----------------------|-------------------|-----------------|---------------|---------------------------------|-----|
| | Reconstruction | Security | Tactical Air Support | Counter-Terrorism | Static Guarding | | | |
| Netherlands | √ | √ | √ | √ | | RC(S) | Senior partner | PRT |
| Australia | √ | √ | | √ | | RC(S) | Junior partner with Netherlands | PRT |
| Belgium | √ | | √ | | √ | RC(E) | Junior partner with Germany | PRT |
| Canada | √ | √ | | √ | | RC(S) | Sole responsibility | PRT |
| Denmark | √ | √ | | | | RC(S) | Junior partner with UK | PRT |
| France | √ | √ | √ | √ | √ | RC(E) | Leads RCC | |
| Germany | √ | | | | √ | RC(E) | Senior partner | PRT |
| UK | √ | √ | √ | √ | | RC(S) | Senior partner | PRT |

SOURCE:
RAND
EUROPE

3.4.2 Coalition perceptions: Netherlands forces receive recognition for ISAF mission

All in all, interviewees indicated a great deal of respect for the Netherlands’ willingness to operate in a volatile area on what it is a relatively high-stress mission:

The perception is that they are cutting their teeth out there [in Afghanistan]³⁴

Their recent combat experience is huge. You can train all you want, but until you do it for real, you don’t know how good your service is. That’s huge, especially being able to operate with them.³⁵

Afghanistan has given the Dutch a seat at the top table whereas they were not given one prior to their deployment³⁶

³⁴ Anonymised Interview 1.

³⁵ Anonymised Interview 2.

³⁶ Anonymised interview 12.

*... our view is that we don't want the Netherlands to become like other smaller EU countries. They are doing a good job in a tough environment.*³⁷

*It's generally recognized that NATO members pulling their weight include Canada, the US, Britain, the Netherlands, Denmark and Romania.*³⁸

3.4.3 Coalition perceptions: Netherlands ISAF approach receives mixed reviews

The media analysis and the interviews presented an inconclusive result of perceptions of the Netherlands' 3D approach to missions in Afghanistan. Reconstruction efforts were rarely referred to positively in the media. However, there was a small sample size for this keyword identifier, so there may be a sampling bias. We have also presented input from interviewees; however, these should likewise be taken with a high degree of scepticism.

*Dutch troops avoid combat if possible and rarely patrol far from their fortified base.*³⁹

*The Dutch make a very big point on hearts and minds. They have the slogan 'as military as needed, but as civil as possible'. If you aren't careful, you can be too soft.*⁴⁰

*The myth is that Dutch forces have essentially shunned combat, emphasizing make-nice reconstruction and redevelopment projects in Uruzgan... concentrating their efforts in the less dangerous areas – earlier 'pacified' by Americans... In truth, Dutch troops have shown their mettle in Uruzgan... and, while generally not provoking or firing first, they have certainly fired back.*⁴¹

3.4.4 Coalition perceptions: force protection is mentioned as a high priority

Interviewees indicated that the Netherlands gives a high degree of priority to force protection in deployed environments. In practice, this is manifested in terms of a requirement for organic capabilities to support all elements of Dutch operations (including close air support, medical and logistic enablers, and intelligence) and a requirement for physical protection of Dutch forces (including armour). A number of our interviewees speculated that this was due – at least in part – to the Dutch experience in Srebrenica during the Balkans deployment.⁴² Interviewees also indicated that, in some circumstances, increased force protection can have a negative impact on operational effectiveness.

³⁷ Anonymised interview 12.

³⁸ 'Why Canada? Canadians who oppose the war feel betrayed by the Liberals', *The Gazette*, Canada, 9 April 2008.

³⁹ 'NATO ill-suited for battle with Taliban, Gates says; U.S. Defence Secretary sparks outrage with suggestions Canadian, Dutch and British troops incapable of fighting counterinsurgency', *The Globe and Mail*, Toronto, 17 January 2008.

⁴⁰ Anonymised interview 6.

⁴¹ 'Combat death rattles Holland; Rules, not courage, dictate Dutch role in war zone', *The Toronto Star*, 24 April 2007.

⁴² When 400 Dutch armed peacekeepers failed to prevent the killing of an estimated 8,000 Bosniak men and boys by Bosnian Serb forces in a UN-safe area.

*... they [the Netherlands] don't want to fail. They are very cautious on operational doctrine and they're very focused on force protection.*⁴³

*There is no doubt that the Srebrenica effect is there in Afghanistan. The Netherlands can never move unless they can cover their own liability; this leads to friction. They won't direct their forces into indirect fire. NL forces receive medical attention immediately. Is there too much emphasis on force protection? Are there trade-offs to be made?*⁴⁴

*More recently, Srebrenica has really coloured what the Dutch are doing now. They don't want to get into a situation where they don't have the organic assets to operate and support troops. Force protection is given a very high priority.*⁴⁵

3.4.5 Coalition perceptions: strategic direction is not well articulated or communicated

Interviewees indicated that strategic and tactical policy decisions are not well articulated. This could be as a result of mission requirements, the nature of the Dutch population, or the nature of the mission. In any event, interviewees indicated that this lack of vision has operational, tactical and procurement consequences for the Netherlands military.

*Little in terms of strategic vision ... is articulated at a service level. I cannot put my hands on any strategic document that says what the Netherlands will do in the next 20–25 years.*⁴⁶

*They don't have a great strategic direction from 'on high', perhaps because they don't have any direct threat. So most of their development of weapons or tactics are designed to defend their country objectives on the off chance that [a direct threat] happens or are designed to support NATO objectives.*⁴⁷

⁴³ Anonymised interview 4.

⁴⁴ Anonymised interview 11.

⁴⁵ Anonymised interview 12.

⁴⁶ Anonymised interview 5.

⁴⁷ Anonymised interview 1.

3.5 Summary

Analysis of the data available suggests that, compared with its peers, the Netherlands has a relatively low defence budget (Figure 2.2), a high GDP per capita (Table 2.1), and a relatively high level of ambition – as judged by the mission location, level of autonomy and duration. In Chapter 4, we present a comparison of the balance between territorial defence and expeditionary operations based on national policy statements.

The Netherlands compares favourably in terms of the quantity and quality of recent operational deployments. Operating in highly volatile areas such as the Uruzgan province increases the wear and tear on equipment and personnel. The high stress of the mission has further impacts on the Netherlands' ability to sustain operations in the near future, which we will discuss further in Chapter 6. There are also financial implications concerning the recapitalisation of equipment and replenishment of stocks and materiel expended during operations.

It is clearly important to ensure that ambition is aligned with resourcing. With this in mind, it will be essential for the Netherlands to critically evaluate current defence spending, understand the cost of maintaining and operating existing force structures and the capabilities it will require to deliver its policy objectives in the long term. Chapter 7 provides a high-level comparison of equipment capability.

However, it is also important to stress that the implications drawn from operations in Afghanistan should not be overplayed; there can be a danger in planning on the basis of how the previous war was fought. These implications are important for the Future Policy Survey team, and will be considered in the context of future scenarios for the Netherlands.

4.1 **Benchmarking strategic posture**

All the armed forces considered in this study have territorial defence tasks and expeditionary tasks and therefore must consider both as force drivers. However, there is a balance to strike between focusing on territorial defence and expeditionary operations. This strategic posture combines geography, geopolitical reality and political-military ambition to contribute to the course of international security affairs, and the suitability of available forces and support structures to deploy and sustain forces deployed abroad.

Expeditionary operations have been an important force driver for all countries in this study; the end of the Cold War, and the increasing demands placed on armed forces to respond to global contingencies such as humanitarian crises and failing states, have resulted in a reconfiguration of the notion of threat that is less enmeshed within notions of territoriality than before. That said, direct territorial defence remains the ‘default’ task for the armed force of any country, no matter how reduced the assessment of that threat might currently be.

This chapter benchmarks the strategic posture of the Netherlands Armed Forces. The intention of this benchmarking exercise is to compare the different extents to which expeditionary operations have been a force driver for the regular armed forces under consideration. The dichotomy between territorial defence and expeditionary operations is far from clear, and the two tasks are not necessarily mutually exclusive; expeditionary operations can be interpreted as directly relating to security at home. All the armed forces under consideration are transforming for greater deployability from a prior focus on territorial defence. This chapter will examine the differing extents to which this shift in strategic posture has been realised.

4.2 **Methodology**

Assessments of strategic posture were made by the RAND Europe study team, as well as one RAND Europe external reviewer, through deliberation during a half-day expert workshop. Our assessment for each country was based on a consideration of:

- stated defence policy as expressed in official publications such as White Papers on what constitutes territorial defence and associated standing duties

- defence planning assumptions for expeditionary operations (to the extent to which these are discussed in openly available literature)
- the number of forces deployed in recent and current expeditionary deployments (discussed in full in Chapter 6 of this report).

In addition to defence of the homeland, a number of states have an enduring obligation to maintain military deployments in overseas territories. The Netherlands has a small number of people and materiel deployed to protect territories in the Dutch Antilles; more significantly, the UK has 4,500 military personnel deployed to protect its overseas territories and influence.⁴⁸

France was omitted from this analysis due to the large number of French forces stationed abroad in support of the national interest (there were 36,350 French personnel stationed abroad in 2007, of which 11,550 were deployed on expeditionary operations). Such a large number of forces stationed abroad distorts the dichotomy between expeditionary operations and territorial defence, which is the line of enquiry for this analysis.

4.3 Country analysis

An overall assessment of all the countries under study is presented after a brief analysis of the strategic posture adopted by each country. A key source of data used was the number of troops deployed abroad on operations and missions undertaken. This was briefly covered in Chapter 4 and will be discussed further in Chapters 6 and 7.

4.3.1 Netherlands

There are three stated roles for the Netherlands Armed Forces, namely:

- defence of national and allied territory, including the Netherlands Antilles and Aruba
- promoting international rule of law and stability
- supporting and assisting civilian authorities in maintaining law and order, providing disaster relief and humanitarian aid, on a national as well as an international scale.⁴⁹

Historically, the Netherlands has emphasised the importance of homeland defence. However, there is today no recognized military threat to the Dutch mainland. In addition, defence of Dutch territories is relatively low-level, involving the stationing of a frigate, marines (who will rotate with the army from 2009), aircraft and a selection of other forces in those territories for territorial defence and coastguard duties.⁵⁰

⁴⁸UK Ministry of Defence Annual Report 2007–2008, Volume 1, p. 40, London.

⁴⁹ Netherlands Defence Doctrine 2005

⁵⁰ Langton, Christopher, ed., *The Military Balance 2009*, p. 140, London: The International Institute for Strategic Studies, 2009.

In contrast, the principal thrust of the transformation and modernization of the Netherlands armed forces has been to increase its ability to deploy abroad.⁵¹ This is borne out by the activities of the Netherlands armed forces in recent years involving a range of expeditionary operations, the prominence of which has been emphasised by the Dutch mission in Afghanistan. The average percentage of service personnel who have been deployed on operations at any one time between 2001 and 2008 has been 4.8 percent. Policy speeches by senior Dutch figures have consistently emphasised expeditionary operations as the primary force driver for the Netherlands armed forces. Speaking in late 2008 about the future of the Dutch armed forces, the Minister for Development Cooperation talked about the Netherlands' emphasis on deployments in fragile states, and the necessary means to sustain operations, investing in material, and relationship-building:

In 2020 we should have modern, affordable armed forces that can be deployed in crises and for peacekeeping, and can take part in operations for an extended period. Well-trained soldiers, equipped with the right materiel and, if necessary, able to act at the middle level of the spectrum. We should make the choices needed to achieve this. That means clearer choices within and between the armed forces themselves... That means taking account of extreme situations in which expenditure on materiel rises sharply. The danger of making large investments is that the organisation commits itself for years, and is unable to adapt to changing circumstances. We should try to avoid this by making smart purchases, building up good relations with the business community and contracting some services out to commercial organisations.⁵²

4.3.2 Germany

The Bundeswehr is undergoing a transformation programme to increase its ability to deploy abroad on multilateral EU or NATO missions (although not unilateral operations unless these are of a rescue or evacuation nature). It is doing so by restructuring into a more deployable and more appropriately equipped intervention force. This is based on a reconceptualisation of the threat to Germany no longer being a territorial one; its 2006 defence white paper recognizes:

new risks and threats that are not only having a destabilising effect on Germany's immediate surroundings but also impact on the security of the international community as a whole.⁵³

Germany has gone so far as to declare that the need for an adequate German contribution to international crisis-management operations dictate the posture and equipment of its armed forces:

The new Bundeswehr is duly adopting a strictly deployment-oriented posture.⁵⁴

⁵¹ 'Globally Engaged' defence vision white paper, Eimert van Middelkoop, Minister of Defence of the Netherlands, 2007.

⁵² Speech by Koenders, Future Policy Survey Dutch Armed Forces, Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs, December 16, 2008, http://www.minbuza.nl/en/news/speeches_and_articles,2008/12/R-defensieverkenningen-2.html, accessed April 5, 2009

⁵³ Federal Ministry of Defence, 'White paper 2006 on German Security Policy and the Future of the Bundeswehr', p. 5.

The white paper on Defence also stresses the need to rethink the internal role of the armed forces:

*The central task of the Bundeswehr continues to be national and collective defence in the classical sense. However, the need for protection of the population and the infrastructure has increased in importance as a result of the growing threat that terrorist attacks pose to German territory. For the foreseeable future, the most likely tasks will be the prevention of international conflicts and crisis management.*⁵⁵

Despite this transformation, international relations theorists have argued that Germany's political culture is one of continued restraint, and that this has significantly influenced contemporary German policy within a broader international environmental context.⁵⁶ Germany's culture is characterized by a 'deep scepticism about the appropriateness and the utility of military force', a preference for multilateral action, a drive to be viewed as a reliable partner, and a 'strong aversion to assuming a leadership role in international security affairs'.⁵⁷

Recent polls have provided evidence of this culture of restraint. The 2007 Transatlantic Trends survey reported that while a majority (64 percent) of Germans thought it acceptable for the EU to commit more troops to peacekeeping missions, just 16 percent approved of the EU committing more troops to actions involving combat.⁵⁸

In practice, Germany has a low percentage of forces deployed on operations (2.7 percent compared to the Netherlands' 4.7 percent between 2001 and 2008); and as stated in the white paper, the central task of the Bundeswehr continues to be national and collective defence in the classical sense. Conscriptio has not yet been abandoned, though the country's 56,000 conscripts cannot be deployed abroad. As indicated by the White Paper, recent polls, and deployment trends, the modern German military has expressed a strong willingness to transform into a deployment-forward military, but has a weaker track record in implementation.

4.3.3 Australia

Australia's significant coastline, its location close to Southeast Asia and its status as the strongest military power in its part of the world generate significant regional military responsibilities. As an Australian defence attaché put it:

⁵⁴ Ibid., p. 5.

⁵⁵ Ibid.

⁵⁶ Duffield, J., *World Power Forsaken*, p. 2. See also Duffield, "Political Culture and State Behavior: Why Germany Confounds Neorealism", *International Organization* Vol. 52 No. 4, 1999, pp. 765–803

⁵⁷ Ibid., p. 6.

⁵⁸ Transatlantic Trends Survey, 'Key Findings 2007', http://www.transatlantictrends.org/trends/doc/Transatlantic%20Trends_all_0920.pdf, accessed 27 March 2009

Geographically, Australia has problems that no one else has. We have a massive coastline. For instance, we have search and rescue responsibility for a quarter of the globe.⁵⁹

At the same time, Australia's close alignment with the US generates a requirement for expeditionary deployments across most of the globe. Consequently, its defence policy states that Australia should be capable of leading regional missions (broadly relating to territorial defence in and around Australia) and contributing to out-of-area missions (in most parts of world). The former encompasses a significant geographical area:

We must be able to limit the options of potential adversaries in our area of paramount defence interest... [This] includes the archipelago and the maritime approaches to Australia to our west, north and east, the islands of the South Pacific as far as New Zealand, our island territories and the southern waters down to Antarctica.⁶⁰

There are some examples of deployments directly supporting territorial defence, such as Operation Resolute which uses a number of maritime assets:

to deter unauthorised boat arrivals, support Australian sovereign rights and fisheries law enforcement in Australia's Economic Exclusion Zone and the Southern Ocean by contributing to Southern Ocean fisheries patrols.⁶¹

These geographical demands mean that territorial defence is a significant force driver for Australia compared with the Netherlands.

However, Australia has also deployed forces across a wide perceived sphere of responsibility, including Malaysia, Papua New Guinea and the Solomon Islands, as well as contributed to expeditionary undertakings in Iraq and Afghanistan. In fact, an average of 4.6 percent of members of Australian forces has been deployed on operations from 2001 to 2008.

4.3.4 Canada

The geopolitics of Canada's location and its coastline exert a significant impact on the demands of territorial defence. While some of this is mitigated by adjacency to the US and leads to the pooling of territorial defence activities (such as increased fighter patrols after 9/11, and under the auspices of NORAD), territorial defence duties continue to demand significant attention from the Canadian military. More significantly, homeland defence continues to be a force driver for Canada.

We need air transport from a force driver perspective. We need airlift for homeland defence [to reach the Arctic].⁶²

This is in addition to the force driver of expeditionary operations arising from Canada's ongoing mission in Afghanistan. Implicit in the title of the 2008 Canada First Defence

⁵⁹ Australian Defence Attaché

⁶⁰ Australian Government Department of Defence, 'Australia's National Security; A Defence Update 2007', p. 26.

⁶¹ Australian Government Department of Defence, 'Defence Annual Report 2007–2008' p. 48, 2008.

⁶² Canadian Defence Attaché

Strategy document is that territorial defence remains an enduring focus in Canada. Within this document, the Canadian Armed Forces' ambition is expressed through 'Six Core Missions in Canada, North America, and Abroad'. Four of these six missions can be considered as relating to territorial defence, namely to:

- conduct daily domestic and continental operations, including in the Arctic and through NORAD
- support a major international event in Canada, such as the 2010 winter Olympics
- respond to a major terrorist attack
- support civilian authorities during a crisis in Canada such as a natural disaster.

The remaining two missions relate to expeditionary operations, and are to:

- lead and/or conduct a major international operation for an extended period
- deploy forces in response to crises elsewhere in the world for shorter periods.⁶³

Canada's operational record in recent years bears out a strategic posture that must balance priorities. A significant number of its personnel have been deployed on operations (an average of 4.8 percent in 2001–2008), while at the same time significant proportions of personnel and assets have been retained for territorial defence duties.⁶⁴

The physical size of Canada, its location and the size of its coastline mean that Canada has a strategic posture with a stronger focus on homeland defence than the Netherlands.

4.3.5 Denmark

The threat assessment adopted within the Danish Defence Agreement 2005–2009 commits Denmark to increase its force-projection capabilities and capacity to deal with terrorist attacks. Territorial defence is no longer seen as the main purpose of the military and expeditionary operations is the only force driver for Denmark. The agreement states that:

*The threats [driving Danish defence policy] do not have to originate from Denmark's geographical proximity, but may constitute a risk to Denmark, our allies and our common values, even if they manifest themselves further away. Accordingly, the priority of security policy should be aimed at possessing the capability to counter the threats where they emerge, regardless of whether this is within or beyond Denmark's borders.'*⁶⁵

Moreover, the Defence Agreement stresses that geographic proximity is meaningless and the inherent unpredictability of current security threats.

⁶³ Canada Department of National Defence, 'Canada First Defence Strategy', p. 10, 2008.

⁶⁴ 'During the past 10 years, the Canadian Forces have conducted thousands of sovereignty and search and rescue missions.' For discussion of the forces reserved for these undertakings, see: Canada Department of National Defence, 'Canada's International Policy Statement: A Role of Pride and Influence in the World', 2005.

⁶⁵ Denmark Ministry Of Defence, 'Danish Armed Forces: International Perspectives', p. 6, 2004.

In practice, a relatively high percentage of Denmark’s armed forces have been deployed abroad (an average of 5.2 percent went on operations in 2001–2008). Our assessment is that the Netherlands retains more of a focus on territorial defence compared with Denmark.

4.3.6 UK

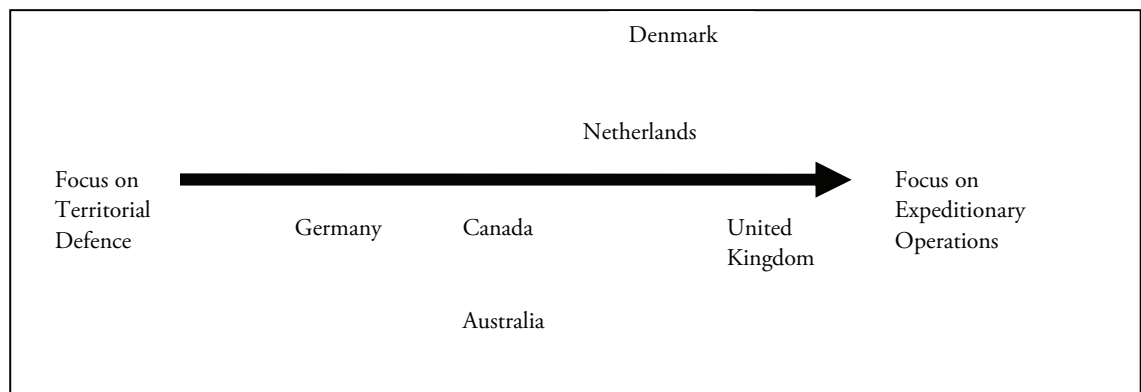
The UK’s 1998 Strategic Defence Review enshrined the principle of diminished territorial threat to the country and of the need to be responsive to crises as they might occur globally:

*The UK must be prepared to go to the crisis, rather than have the crisis come to us.*⁶⁶

A high percentage of UK forces are able to be sustained on operations, as evidenced by the average of 6.6 percent deployed on operations from 2001 to 2008. The deployment of 45,000 personnel, including 26,000 ground troops, for the invasion of Iraq in 2003, indicates the ability of the British military to deploy a large force for high-intensity expeditionary operations, albeit not to sustain such a figure. The relatively modest size of standing territorial defence obligations following the end of the Cold War and in the wake of the peace process in Northern Ireland means that expeditionary operations remain the principal force driver in UK defence policy, and this has been realized by the recorded use of UK forces in recent years.⁶⁷

It is our assessment that the Netherlands retains more of a focus on territorial defence compared with the UK.

Figure 4.1 – Presentation of relative strategic posture



SOURCE: RAND EUROPE

⁶⁶ UK Ministry of Defence white paper, ‘Modern Forces for the Modern World’, paragraph 6, 1998.

⁶⁷ As noted above, 4,500 UK military personnel continue to be stationed or deployed in the UK’s overseas territories including Cyprus, Gibraltar and the Falklands. See UK Ministry Of Defence Annual Report 2007–2008, p. 40.

4.4 **Summary**

This chapter aimed to examine the extent to which the shift in strategic posture from a Cold War focus on territorial defence towards expeditionary operations has been realised, both in theory and in practice. Although no state has a precisely comparable strategic posture to that of any other, it is possible in general terms to express the balance that a state must strike between apportioning military efforts to territorial defence, and committing to expeditionary operations.

The Netherlands Armed Forces are often compared to the Canadian and Australian armed Forces by virtue of similarities in the total numbers of personnel deployed. However, the Netherlands has a lower requirement for territorial defence (such as maritime patrol and defence of airspace) due to its geographical size and location in Europe. Enhancing operational deployability is no easy task; however, there may be still greater potential to dedicate capabilities, including personnel and materiel, to contributing to expeditionary activities.

5.1 **Benchmarking deployability**

The Netherlands, like other nations, has been engaged in a growing number of operations with a range of locations and tasks. In 2000, 89 percent of European troops on multinational crisis-management missions were deployed within Europe – primarily the Balkans.⁶⁸ Five years later, the situation had changed remarkably, such that deployments were, approximately, equally split between the Middle East, Europe, and Central and South Asia.⁶⁹ The movement away from the static Cold War posture towards global reach drives new requirements for force projection.

The demands of global force projection drive new capability requirements. In this section, we discuss how the Netherlands and other coalition countries are meeting these new requirements. We define *deployability* as having both:

- the force elements that can be deployed at readiness; and
- the means to transport them to out-of-area operational theatres.

5.1.1 **Stated policy for deployments**

Different countries commit and deploy forces through different political-military alliances and mechanisms. This has important implications in terms of force structures, mission planning, interoperability and readiness. The NATO Rapid Response Force and the EU Battle Groups have been created to enable rapid-response forces capable of undertaking a range of tasks from peacekeeping through to focused interventions against hostile forces. Table 5.1, below, summarises this information.

⁶⁸ Giegerich, Bastian and Alexander Nicoll, ed. *European Military Capabilities: Building Armed Forces for Modern Operations*, London: The International Institute for Strategic Studies, 2008.

⁶⁹ Ibid. European deployments still accounted for the largest share in 2005.

Table 5.1 – Stated policy for deployment

| | NATO | ESDP | Unilateral* |
|--------------------|------------|----------|-------------|
| Australia | X** | | X |
| Canada | X | | |
| Denmark | X | X | |
| France | X | X | X |
| Germany | X | X | |
| Netherlands | X | X | |
| UK | X | X | X |

SOURCE: RAND EUROPE

* The 'unilateral' column indicates the willingness, expectation and ability to mount an unsupported military intervention without any allies (excluding small-scale operations such as evacuations).

** Although not a member of NATO, Australia has extensive bilateral connections with the alliance, and is a participant in the NATO-run ISAF mission in Afghanistan; it is therefore included, having been judged able to deploy with (rather than necessarily through) NATO.⁷⁰

5.1.2 Scale of deployment

Comparing the scale of deployments is tricky, as the percentage of the total force which a military will aim to deploy at any one time depends on many factors, not least political. However, a snapshot reveals disparities in the quantities of troops deployed.

Looking at the record of recent deployments, the Netherlands, along with a handful of other European states, has been able to deploy a battalion-sized formation (500–1,500 troops) on a single mission. In 2007, only Austria, the Czech Republic, France, Germany Greece, Italy, the Netherlands, Poland, Romania, Spain and the UK deployed at least a battalion-sized formation to a mission. Within the EU, only the three largest members – France, Germany, and the UK – deployed at least one brigade-sized (3,000–5,000 troops) formation to a single mission.⁷¹ The UK contingent in Afghanistan, then around 7,400 strong, was the largest national contingent deployed on a crisis-management mission.⁷²

An indicator of the scale of the maximum force a military may deploy is its defence ambition. The Netherlands' white paper 'Globally Engage' indicates that for operations at the high end of the spectrum, the Netherlands will deploy:

*for the maximum duration of one year... a brigade consisting of land forces, two squadrons of fighter aircraft or a maritime task force.*⁷³

⁷⁰ See 'NATO Cooperation with Australia', http://www.nato.int/issues/nato_australia/index.html, accessed 13 March 2009.

⁷¹ Giegerich, Bastian, *European Military Crisis Management: Connecting Ambition and Reality*, p. 47, London: Routledge/The International Institute for Strategic Studies, 2008.

⁷² Giegerich, Bastian, *European Military Crisis Management: Connecting Ambition and Reality*, p. 47, London: Routledge/The International Institute for Strategic Studies, 2008.

⁷³ 'Globally Engaged' defence vision white paper, Eimert van Middelkoop, Minister of Defence of the Netherlands, 2007.

However, the white paper also states that the Netherlands does not plan to be involved in prolonged operations at the high-intensity end of the conflict spectrum. The Netherlands defines its current ISAF operations, where it contributes a battalion-size task force, as participation at the low end of the spectrum.

The segment of the level of ambition that has, for years, taken up most of the efforts of Defence concerns simultaneous participation over a prolonged period in a maximum of three operations at the low end of the conflict spectrum with task forces of battalion size or, in the case of naval and air operations, the equivalent. Our comments in this context concern the ‘low end of the spectrum of conflict’ and the number of three task forces of battalion size.⁷⁴

5.1.3 Forces available to deploy

NATO members declare a target percentage of their total active land forces that are able to be deployed on operations. This data, shown in Table 5.2, should be treated with a high degree of scepticism. It is hard to imagine a scenario where 76 percent of US land forces are deployed at any one time. In this respect, the Netherlands can theoretically deploy 59 percent – roughly the same proportion as its peers – of its land forces at short notice.

Table 5.2 – Percentage of active land forces deployable for selected countries (where known)

| Country | Deployable percentage of total land forces |
|----------------|--|
| Italy | 45 percent |
| France | 55 percent |
| Netherlands | 59 percent |
| Denmark | 67 percent |
| United Kingdom | 67 percent |
| United States | 76 percent |

SOURCE: NATO⁷⁵

5.1.4 Strategic lift

Having the means to transport forces to operational theatres is fundamental to force projection. However, few countries have the ability to project force organically. In lieu of organic capabilities, the Netherlands participates in two complementary initiatives:

- It is one of a multinational consortium of 16 countries, led by Germany, chartering Antonov An-124-100 transport aircraft as a Strategic Airlift Interim Solution (SALIS).

⁷⁴ ‘Globally Engaged’ defence vision white paper, Eimert van Middelkoop, Minister of Defence of the Netherlands, 2007.

⁷⁵ Various documents from NATO Member States, “Commitment to operations and missions,” <http://nids.hq.nato.int/issues/commitment/>, accessed April 10, 2009

- These 16 countries have also agreed to launch contract negotiations for the purchase of three or four C-17 transport aircraft in order to create a Strategic Airlift Capability (SAC).⁷⁶

The Netherlands also participates in a strategic sealift consortium which is financing the charter of up to ten special roll-on/roll-off ships. The consortium is led by Norway and includes Canada, Denmark, Hungary, Italy, the Netherlands, Portugal, Spain and the United Kingdom⁷⁷.

National programs for force projection capability exist. Seven NATO nations are acquiring A400M aircraft, while three (Canada, the United Kingdom and the United States) have purchased C-17s for national use.⁷⁸ The Netherlands is therefore in a similar position to other countries in having to pool and charter strategic lift capabilities.

5.1.5 Coalition perceptions: interoperability

Interoperability is an essential prerequisite for deploying forces on multinational expeditionary operations. Not only are operations conducted further away from home countries, but they are most commonly conducted within coalitions. Most recent examples include the NATO-led operations in Afghanistan and Kosovo, and the UN mission in the Congo. Given that almost all operations are multinational, interoperability, or the ability for troops to cooperate effectively, is paramount.

*The key word for interoperability is NATO. The standardization of equipment (technical standardization) is the basis for interoperability, and underlies everything.*⁷⁹

Military forces can be thought of as interoperable at two levels, tactical and strategic. Tactical operability is simply the ability to interact, without linguistic or procedural barriers. Strategic operability is the ability to operate in a fully joint manner.

Interviewees indicated that the Netherlands placed a high value on tactical operational ease:

*It was easy to operate with them – they use NATO procedures and attend the same courses. The Navy and Air Force are innovative and adaptive, and they use the same operational concepts [as we do].*⁸⁰

*The NL Marines' strengths lie in their similarity to the Royal Marines. Tactical training focus is based heavily on UK tactics.*⁸¹

⁷⁶ NATO, 'Improving NATO's air- and sealift capabilities', <http://www.nato.int/issues/strategic-lift/index.html>, accessed 6 March 2009

⁷⁷ NATO, 'Strategic Sealift', http://www.nato.int/cps/en/SID-7263FC66-D9869169/natolive/topics_50104.htm, accessed 17 April, 2009

⁷⁸ NATO, 'Strategic Airlift Capability', <http://www.nato.int/issues/strategic-lift-air-sac/index.html>, accessed 6 March 2009

⁷⁹ Anonymised interview 7.

⁸⁰ Anonymised interview 1.

⁸¹ Anonymised interview 5.

Everything I've done [with the NL] has been extremely easy [from a USAF perspective]. They are very likeable people. Their English is great; sense of humour is awesome.⁸²

The UK operates at a brigade level, the NL operates at a battalion level like the Australians, Canadians. They have to be able to operate within a bigger task force, so interoperability is vital.⁸³

However, we were unable to gather sufficient evidence to make an assessment on interoperability at a strategic level.

5.2 Summary

The demands of global force projection drive new capability requirements. In this chapter we have outlined how the Netherlands and other coalition countries are meeting these new requirements. We defined deployability as having both:

- the force elements that can be deployed at readiness, and
- the means to transport them to out-of-area operational theatres.

The Netherlands has a stated policy for deploying in multilateral environments, pooling transport lift, and has deployed a battalion size or larger contingent, although the national level of ambition is higher. Deploying in multilateral environments has implications for the way its forces are structured for deployments. It also has implications for interoperability.

Our interviews suggest that the Netherlands is strong in technical interoperability (language, personnel and procedures). However, we were unable to gather sufficient evidence to make an assessment of interoperability at a strategic level.

⁸² Anonymised interview 1.

⁸³ Anonymised interview 2.

CHAPTER 6 **Sustainability**

6.1 **Introduction**

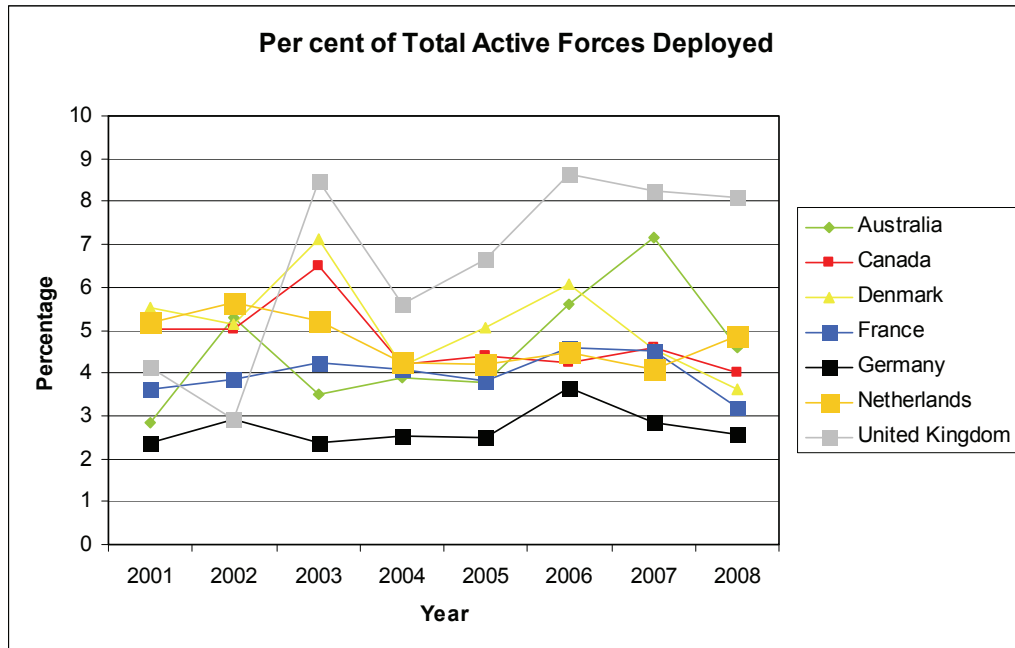
This chapter considers the ability to maintain force elements on deployed operations. We have defined this measure as sustainability – the total number of force elements that can be deployed in theatre on an enduring basis. The RAND study team has used data on national military deployments documenting the average percentage of total armed forces sustained on deployed operations in the period from 2001–08.⁸⁴

6.2 **Sustaining personnel on operations: quantitative assessment**

In order to make relative assessments of sustainability, we considered the average percentage of service personnel sustained in operational theatres. There are various constraints on sustaining personnel on enduring operations which include, *inter alia*, the provision of logistics; rotation of personnel within harmony guidelines; enabling functions such as medical support; political will; and shortfalls in specific capabilities. The section on ‘pinch points’ makes a qualitative assessment of capability shortfalls and specific issues relating to personnel shortfalls in theatre.

⁸⁴ Giegerich, Bastian, *European Military Crisis Management: Building Armed Forces for Modern Operations*, London: Routledge/The International Institute for Strategic Studies, 2008; *The Military Balance* (editions 2000–2009), London: International Institute for Strategic Studies.

Figure 6.1 – Percentage of total active forces deployed 2001–2008



This data, depicted in Figure 6.1, has been compiled at a high level of aggregation, charting the annual total number of military personnel each country has deployed on operations and dividing this number by the total stated size of its armed forces. There are two important caveats that must be attached to this chart:

- *Deployments are not equal.* These figures do not reflect the mission challenge of individual deployments, for example, the Netherlands deploying forces in Afghanistan.
- *We have provided calculations that do and that do not include reservists.* Because the Netherlands does not deploy reservists on a routine basis, we did not include reservists in Figure 6.1, above. However, it should be noted that some countries such as the UK do deploy reserve forces on operations. We have provided the average percentage of personnel deployed without reserves (Table 6.1) and with reserves (Table 6.2) below.

The average percentage of total active forces deployed on operations for the Netherlands is 4.7 percent, which places it closely clustered with Australia and Canada. The Netherlands ranks significantly higher than Germany, slightly lower than Denmark and significantly lower than the UK.

Table 6.1 – Average percentage of armed forces personnel deployed on operations 2001–2008 (excluding reserves and civilians)

| Country | Average percentage of Total Active Forces Deployed on Operations 2001–2008 |
|-------------|--|
| Germany | 2.7 |
| France | 4.0 |
| Australia | 4.6 |
| Netherlands | 4.7 |
| Canada | 4.6 |
| Denmark | 5.2 |
| UK | 7.0 |

SOURCE: International Institute for Strategic Studies (IISS)

Table 6.2 – Average percentage of armed forces personnel deployed on operations 2001–2008 (including reserves and civilians)

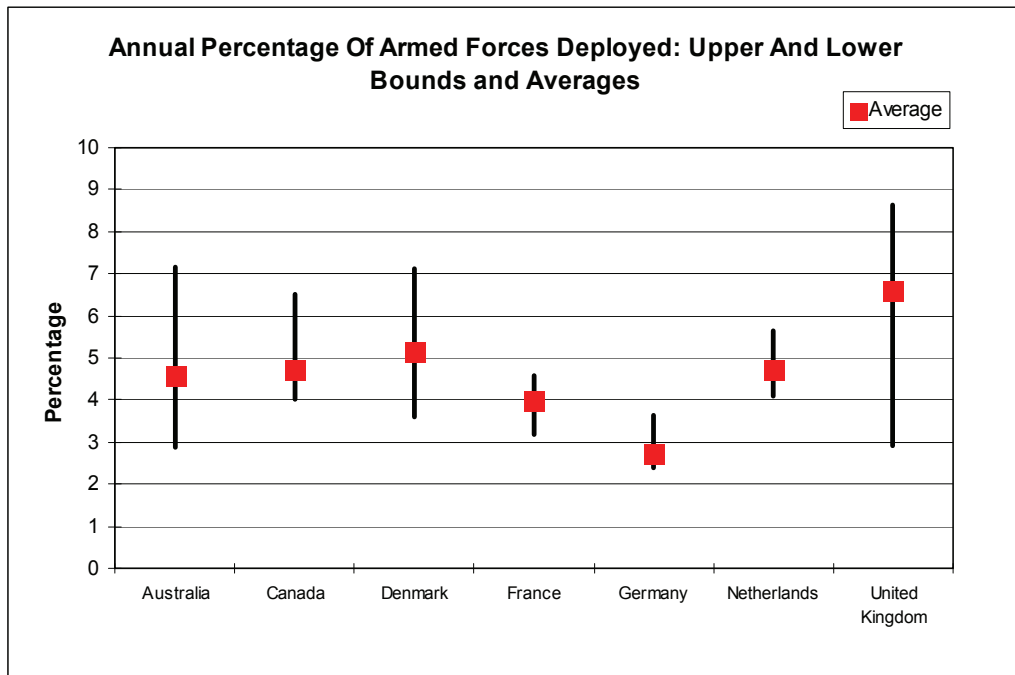
| Country | Average percentage of Total Active Forces Deployed on Operations 2001–2008 |
|-------------|--|
| Germany | 1.4 |
| France | 3.0 |
| Australia | 3.3 |
| Netherlands | 2.9 |
| Canada | 2.7 |
| Denmark | 1.3 |
| UK | 3 |

SOURCE: International Institute for Strategic Studies (IISS)

6.2.1 Comparing variance in deployments over time

Chapter 6 compares deployment variance over time as a percentage. The United Kingdom, with the longest bounds, has the widest deployment variation. Similarly, Germany, with the shortest bounds, has the smallest deployment variation. The Netherlands has been able to deploy an upper bound of 5.7 percent and a lower bound of 4.8 percent each year between 2001 and 2008.

Figure 6.2 – Annual percentage of armed forces deployed (upper and lower bounds, and averages)



6.2.2 Implications for the Netherlands

As illustrated by the red markers in Figure 6.2, the Netherlands has been able to sustain a relatively high level of operational deployments during 2001–2008. The Netherlands has also exhibited relatively little variance year on year in the percentage of deployed forces.

Although variance in operational theatre and associated operational demands are not illustrated here, as Figures 6.1 and 6.2 illustrate, the Netherlands has exhibited considerable consistency in overall numerical terms in its commitment to deploying troops on operations.

6.3 Sustaining deployments: perceptions and pinch points

Sustaining operational deployments of any size is a demanding task due to operational stress on military personnel and their families; depletion of stocks and consumables; wear and tear on equipment and other materiel; and related financial expenditure. There is also a challenge in reconfiguring equipment and units to conduct military tasks other than those for which they were originally intended. For many countries, sustaining a small-scale operation over a number of years is more challenging than a medium-scale operation over a period of a year or less.

Thus the ability to support deployed forces through pinch points of unavailable, insufficiently available, stressed, overused or inappropriate force components is an important aspect of sustaining deployments. Multinational operations in Afghanistan represent a case in point. The Netherlands’ operation has faced challenges in certain pinch points, some related to its deployment in particular and other arising from stresses to its

armed forces in general. As a result, interviewees indicated that a period of ‘rest’ will be required, particularly for the Netherlands army:

They will need a period of rehabilitation and refurbishment to put the Netherlands army on ready-to-go footing.⁸⁵

With approximately half of the Netherlands army units either deployed or preparing for deployment, the Netherlands has experienced a stress on its personnel that has resulted in some reduction of its forces in Afghanistan.⁸⁶ According to Lt. Gen. Freek Meulman:

... participating in an operation so far from home with so many people, and because we rotate them on a frequent basis, it's a good burden for the organization to maintain such a scheme... We intend to downsize a little bit, a couple of hundred.⁸⁷

A drawdown was deemed necessary from a peak of 1,700 Dutch troops in Uruzgan and another 250 Dutch troops in Kabul and in northern Afghanistan, to meet a perceived need for rest and retraining.⁸⁸ In August 2008 the Netherlands government agreed to extend its commitment to the ISAF mission to last until August 2010. In this period the average military deployment in Uruzgan is stated to be between 1,350–1,450 troops.⁸⁹

When interviewees commented on personnel pinch points affecting the Netherlands, two themes stood out in particular:

- operations tended to ‘soak up the same crews over and over again’
- recruitment, in general, was low.

It is likely that the stress on personnel is not equal across services and between personnel with different trades or cap badges.

Interviews and analysis of other sources suggest that particular pinch points within the army may include infantry personnel; engineers; communications and intelligence operators; and medical staff. Another example of a pinch point for the Netherlands was the ability to crew and maintain transport helicopter capability, with 11 crews manning 11 Chinook helicopters. Chinooks have constituted an important facilitator of the Netherlands deployments and have been used extensively, requiring the fleet to be maintained and supplemented with new platforms.⁹⁰

⁸⁵ Anonymised interview 11.

⁸⁶ ‘Transformation on a budget: Netherlands country briefing’, *Jane's Defence Weekly*, 6 February 2008.

⁸⁷ Quoted in Antoine Boessenkool, ‘Interview with Lt. Gen. Freek Meulman’, *Defence News Research*, 28 July 2008.

⁸⁸ Paul Gallis and Vincent Morelli, *NATO in Afghanistan: A Test of the Transatlantic Alliance*, CRS Report for Congress, 18 July 2008, p. 20.

⁸⁹ Netherlands statement to ISAF.

⁹⁰ ‘A number of upgrades to rotary-winged assets have now been initiated to combat the harsh conditions and operational strains of the Afghan theatre. The service’s 11 CH-47D Chinook helicopters, which have been extensively used in support of the ISAF mission, are to be upgraded to CH-47F standard from 2010 while another six new-build aircraft are to be purchased. A further order for an additional three platforms remains to

Investments have also been made to improve the sustainability of the AH-64 fleet.⁹¹ Interviewees commented on other capability pinch points affecting the Netherlands:

They are currently having problems regarding sustainability in some key areas, including armoured vehicles will need to be recapitalised, low ammunition, low numbers of Chinooks⁹²

[In Afghanistan] the Netherlands provides PRT, Apaches, Chinooks, Artillery. They have a 'rounded' deployment. But the ability to sustain all that becomes an issue.⁹³

Our interviewees suggested that recruitment and retention was perceived to be an issue for the Netherlands.

There are issues with recruitment and retention – particularly on retention.⁹⁴

They are very short on manpower – they are having to rob crews from one ship to crew others.⁹⁵

It is worth noting that the Netherlands is not alone in feeling these pinch points. For example, in 2008, the UK MOD reported significant operational pinch points across a number of trades including Harrier pilots; Merlin pilots, observers and crew; leading hands (warfare); infantry (Pte to LCpl); mechanical engineers (Pte to Cpl); intelligence operators and medical trades.⁹⁶ In March 2009, the Commander of British Forces in Afghanistan, Brig. Gordon Messenger, indicated that the UK, which provides security to 60 percent of Helmand province, was feeling the stretch:

We have been running a campaign of a similar size in Iraq, and one here, and the armed forces are stretched as a result. So of course there's a limit to what we can put in. I think every nation would say there's a limit to what military and other resources they can commit.⁹⁷

fill the requirement for 20 airframes.' From 'Transformation on a budget: Netherlands country briefing', *Jane's Defence Weekly*, 6 February 2008.

⁹¹ 'Globally Engaged' defence vision white paper, p. 27, Eimert van Middelkoop, Minister of Defence of the Netherlands, 2007.

⁹² Anonymised interview 12.

⁹³ Anonymised interview 10.

⁹⁴ Anonymised interview 12.

⁹⁵ Anonymised interview 12.

⁹⁶ United Kingdom Ministry of Defence, 'Annual Report 2007–2008', http://www.mod.uk/NR/rdonlyres/31D096E9-3F41-4633-BEA2-AE62CF97C3AE/0/annrptvol1_200708.pdf, accessed March 2009

⁹⁷ Pannell, Ian, 'UK Military Stretched – Commander', *BBC News*, <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/uk/7951037.stm>.

6.4 Summary

In benchmarking the sustainability of deployed forces, our empirical analysis shows that the Netherlands has been able to sustain a relatively high level of operational deployments on average during 2001–2008. The Netherlands has also exhibited relatively much less variance year on year in the percentage of deployed forces. This contrasts with other countries (for example Australia) that exhibit greater year-on-year variance in the percentage of their total armed forces deployed on operations. Although we do not have empirical data to provide supporting observations regarding the implications for recuperation of forces between deployments, our assessments indicate that the view is commonly held that Netherlands has been strained by maintaining a consistent level of deployment.

Due to the wear and tear on certain types of equipment, it is likely that the Netherlands will need to plan for, and more importantly invest in, a period of rehabilitation and refurbishment for key elements of its armed forces following withdrawal from Afghanistan in 2010. This is especially the case for elements of the army which have faced the operational realities of fighting on the ground in the desert. Key enabling capabilities have also been stretched through the ongoing operations in Afghanistan.

There is also a broader question for the Netherlands in terms of its service personnel. Assuming that the Netherlands will maintain an expeditionary focus in the future – and that expeditionary operations tend to utilize the same types of personnel – it is likely that the Netherlands will subsequently need to revise its personnel strategy to meet operational and social realities. This will include revisiting harmony guidelines, the role of reservists, and the recruitment and retention strategy.

7.1 Introduction

This chapter considers how the Netherlands compares with other nations in terms of platform numbers across selected equipment capability types. During this study it was not possible to conduct a holistic assessment of capabilities and benchmark the Netherlands in terms of its ability to deliver force elements at readiness. Assessing a capability requires assessment of a range of components including training, equipment, personnel, infrastructure and estate, logistics and doctrine. Such an assessment was outside the scope of this study. Rather, we conducted a simple, qualitative assessment of platform numbers across selected equipment capability types.

The results of our assessment should only be taken in the context of the planning assumptions for each of the countries – and the political will to deploy assets on military operations. Nevertheless, it provides the Future Policy Survey team with the background for a more nuanced and detailed evaluation of capability.

7.2 Summary of the Netherlands' equipment platforms

The Netherlands currently has a relatively rounded equipment capability. A brief summary of selected key categories of platform follows.

- The Netherlands has demonstrated its ability to lead a brigade headquarters for ground operations in Afghanistan.
- The Dutch Navy operates four destroyers and two frigates, of which one of each platform type has been deployed on various tasks in recent years. The Netherlands has four ocean patrol ships on order, the first due to arrive in 2011. A number of frigates have been sold to countries including Belgium and Chile. The Dutch also have littoral manoeuvre capabilities in the form of two amphibious landing platform docks (LPDs). Counter-mine capability is provided through ten minesweeper vessels. The Netherlands has four diesel-powered attack submarines.
- The Netherlands operates 29 Apache attack helicopters, 17 Cougar medium-utility helicopters and 11 Chinook helicopters for tactical lift purposes. It has purchased the NH-90 helicopter in support of maritime operations.

- The Netherlands has an F-16 fleet numbering 87 aircraft which are capable of a range of tasks including offensive air missions, air interdiction and close air support sorties. The F-16 fleet is expected to be replaced with the F-35 within the next decade.
- For tactical airlift, the Netherlands operates four C-130H Hercules. It is not planning to procure heavy airlift itself, but is a participant in the shared NATO C-17 pooling arrangement.
- Finally, the Netherlands has reduced its number of Leopard II main battle tanks (MBT) since the end of the Cold War, with 60 platforms remaining in service.⁹⁸

7.3 Benchmarking selected equipment platforms

In order to identify the relative strengths and weaknesses of the Netherlands in terms of equipment platforms, we compared platform numbers against those of selected comparator countries. Appendix B contains the numbers of platforms recorded for each country that form the basis of this comparison.⁹⁹

We used a simple taxonomy of major platform categories to conduct an assessment of relative platform numbers operated by the Netherlands. The purpose of our assessment was to determine whether the Netherlands possessed fewer, broadly the same number, or more platforms for each category. This was designed to provide an indication of capability areas for further investigation by the Netherlands Future Policy Survey team, rather than to derive any definitive conclusions.

The results in Table 7.1 indicate relative strengths (green) and weaknesses (red) of the Netherlands.

Table 7.1 – Comparison of platform numbers

| | Comparator Country | | | | | |
|-----------------------|--------------------|-----|-----|----|-----|----|
| | AUS | CAN | DEN | FR | GRN | UK |
| Combat jets | ○ | ○ | ● | ● | ● | ● |
| Transport air | ● | ● | ○ | ● | ● | ● |
| Helicopter transport | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● |
| Helicopter ASW/attack | ● | ○ | ○ | ● | ● | ● |
| Surface vessels | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● |
| Submarines | ● | ○ | ● | ● | ● | ● |
| Amphibious craft | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● |
| Mine warfare | ○ | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● |
| Main battle tanks | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● |

⁹⁸ International Institute for Strategic Studies, *Military Balance 2009*, (London: IISS, 2009), p. 138.

⁹⁹ All equipment platform numbers are from International Institute for Strategic Studies, *Military Balance 2009*, (London: IISS, 2009). Combat Jets refer to fighters and strike aircraft; Transport Air refers to fixed wing strategic and tactical airlift; Helicopters are broken down by category in the table between transport and attack/anti-submarine warfare roles; Surface vessels refers to destroyers, frigates and corvettes; Amphibious refer to major landing craft and excludes smaller assault vessels.

| Legend | |
|--------|--------------------------------|
| ● | Netherlands has fewer |
| ○ | Netherlands has similar number |
| ● | Netherlands has more |

Unsurprisingly, the Netherlands has fewer platforms across each category when compared with countries with substantially larger defence budgets, such as France and the UK.

However, a more relevant comparison can be made with Australia, Canada and Denmark. In general terms, the data does not suggest that the Netherlands has a surplus of equipment capability in any of these areas. For certain platform categories – for example surface vessels, air transport and main battle tanks – the Netherlands has a relatively limited number of assets. This is indicated by two or more red lights for these categories compared with Australia, Canada and Denmark.

7.4 Implications for Netherlands – niche capabilities versus full spectrum

All national armed forces face the challenge of prioritising investment in capabilities that best contribute to national defence objectives. In the complex security environment of the 21st century, with rapidly evolving threats and unpredictable commitments, this poses stark questions. For smaller nations such as the Netherlands, the challenge is arguably greater in developing a coherent set of force elements to meet the requirements of both territorial defence and contingent expeditionary operations.

Ultimately, this presents a trade-off between maintaining limited capabilities across all/most capability areas and focusing on particular capability strengths. In response to the new operational paradigm and its limited resources, the Netherlands has recently disposed of a number of assets. According to the latest Netherlands defence white paper, the following operational reductions were made:

- to disband two tank squadrons, involving a total of 28 Leopard 2 tanks
- to disband two gun batteries, involving a total of twelve mechanised howitzers
- the disposal of eighteen F-16 fighter aircraft.

According to the defence white paper, these decisions were made on the basis of enhancing deployability:

in order to reinforce the operational deployability of the armed forces, an assessment has taken place to establish where the added value of those enhancements would counterbalance a reduction of the number of main weapon systems.

Denmark, a country of smaller size and scope to the Netherlands, recently underwent a process to reprioritise capability acquisition.

This approach is what all small nations should take. Why maintain a capability if we can regenerate it within 10 years and we can predict the threat environment out to 10

years? It also gives us more influence/strength/critical mass in the areas we do have and enables Denmark to maximise the 'bang for the buck'.¹⁰⁰

This approach is summarised below in Figure 7.1.

Figure 7.1 – Example: Denmark capability reorganisation towards more 'usable' capabilities

The 2005–2009 Danish Defence Agreement attempted to calculate how much it costs to maintain a capability. The Danish MoD then cut entire capabilities, such as air defence missiles, and submarines, and moved those personnel to start training towards other career paths. At the time, 40 percent of the capabilities were used and 60 percent of the capabilities were unused prior to the reorganization. The main aim of the reorganization was to change the ratio to 60 percent used and 40 percent unused.

7.4.1 Coalition perspectives: operational reductions

Interviewees commented that the Dutch approach to procurement is both 'canny' and 'resourceful'. They also generally agreed that the equipment quality of the Netherlands was good; however, there was just not enough investment in equipment.

I would describe the NL as 'canny' not as 'short-termist'. If it suits them, for example pooling assets such as the NL-UK amphibious force, they will do it. They will also explore relationships on a periodic or episodic basis.¹⁰¹

What is not going to be used [the Dutch] sell it.¹⁰²

They have good equipment – there's just not very much of it.¹⁰³

Interviewees also commented more generally on the challenge the Netherlands faces of prioritising investment in capabilities that best contribute to national defence objectives:

They cannot maintain a full suite of capabilities across the board, when you consider the scale of the country, the resources they have and manpower required. They are currently doing all they can do. However, I would encourage them to resist developing niche capabilities and develop a balanced and usable force. It would be a significant drawback if the Netherlands only develops niche capabilities.¹⁰⁴

Realistically, the Netherlands are never going to deploy on expeditionary operations without a capable partner.¹⁰⁵

¹⁰⁰ Anonymised interview 13.

¹⁰¹ Anonymised interview 11.

¹⁰² Anonymised interview 9.

¹⁰³ Anonymised interview 4.

¹⁰⁴ Anonymised interview 11.

¹⁰⁵ Anonymised interview 12.

They [the Netherlands] are in a challenging situation... They can't develop capabilities on their own, but they also need international cooperation. Your voice is less heard within the alliance if you only develop niche capabilities.¹⁰⁶

7.5 **Summary**

There are risks and benefits to developing strengths in certain capabilities at the expense of other capabilities. In determining which capabilities are critical for the Netherlands to develop, it will be important for policy-makers to consider not only political-military ambition and future deployment scenarios, but the likely contribution of the Netherlands in the context of multinational operations.

The contributions of coalition partners, pooling or sharing of capabilities, and partnering will also be important considerations as the Netherlands develops a long-term strategy for its capability mix.

¹⁰⁶ Anonymised interview 7.

CHAPTER 8 **Conclusions**

Summary of study findings: implications for the Netherlands

Based on the data analysis, the interviews and media analysis, we have two sets of conclusions. The first set consists of broad-based implications for the Netherlands. The second set comprises comparative conclusions and involves relative strengths and weaknesses of the Netherlands.

- **The Netherlands armed forces have deployed significant force elements in a high-stress operational environment:** Operations in Afghanistan are widely respected by NATO and EU partners, and the Netherlands has demonstrated its ability to deploy and support forces on an enduring expeditionary operation.
- **The Netherlands' must ensure that defence ambition is aligned with resourcing:** It is important to ensure that ambition is aligned with resourcing. With this in mind it will be essential for the Netherlands to critically evaluate current defence spending, and understand the cost of maintaining and operating existing force structures and the capabilities it will require to deliver its policy objectives in the long term.
- **Following Afghanistan, the Netherlands will require a subsequent 'rest' period:** It is likely that Netherlands will need to plan for, and more importantly invest in, a period of rehabilitation, recapitalisation and refurbishment for key elements of its armed forces following withdrawal from Afghanistan in 2010. This is particularly true for the 'pinch points' in terms of people, equipment and materiel that have been stretched in recent years. The Netherlands may also need to revise its personnel strategy to meet operational and social realities including harmony guidelines, the role of reservists and the recruitment and retention strategy.
- **There is a need for better communication regarding the role of defence:** Many of the interviews we conducted and media articles consulted suggested that the Netherlands' MOD faces particular challenges in communicating the role of defence, both in terms of operations in Afghanistan and more widely over the longer term. The audience for this improved communication includes the Dutch Parliament, politicians and the public – as well as NATO and EU partners.
- **The Netherlands faces a strategic challenge regarding its capability mix:** In common with many other countries, the Netherlands needs to develop a coherent set of force elements to meet the requirements of both territorial defence and contingent

expeditionary operations. Ultimately, this presents a trade-off between maintaining limited capabilities across all/most capability areas and focusing on particular capability strengths.

Summary of study findings: relative strengths and weaknesses of the Netherlands

- **Relatively low defence spending; relatively high GDP per capita:** Analysis of the data available suggests that, when compared with its peers, the Netherlands has a relatively low defence budget, committing less than 2 per cent to defence, and only 15 and 17 per cent of its overall defence budget on investment spending in the period 2001-2006, but a relatively a high GDP per capita at US\$ 40,431 in 2009. Comparatively, Australia has a GDP per capita at US\$ 37,299 in 2009 and defence spending at over 2 per cent.¹⁰⁷
- **Relatively strong on quantity and quality of recent operations:** Interviewees indicated a high degree of respect for the Netherlands' contribution to recent missions, in particular the ISAF mission in Afghanistan. Interviewees commented on the increased wear and tear on equipment and personnel as a result of operating in highly volatile areas such as Afghanistan's Uruzgan province; and the financial implications concerning the recapitalisation of equipment and the replenishment of stocks and materiel expended during operations.
- **Relatively strong focus on expeditionary operations:** The Netherlands has a relatively strong focus on expeditionary operations compared with the selected countries (Germany, Australia, Canada, etc). At the same time, the Netherlands has a lower requirement for territorial defence (such as maritime patrols and defence of airspace) due to its geographical size and location in Europe, and therefore may have more scope to enhance operational deployability, for example, by dedicating capabilities, including personnel and materiel, to contributing to expeditionary activities.
- **Relatively strong on technical interoperability:** The majority of interviewees indicated that the Netherlands was strong on technical interoperability, including areas such as English language skills, personal communication, etc. We were unable to obtain sufficient data to indicate any strengths or weaknesses in strategic interoperability.
- **Similar to all high-operational-tempo countries in the area of sustaining troops in theatre:** When interviewees commented on personnel pinch points affecting the Netherlands, two themes stood out in particular: operations tended to soak up the same crews repeatedly, and the rate of recruitment of new personnel was low. However, these issues are no different to those facing other countries operating in high-operational-tempo environments. For instance, in 2008, the United Kingdom reported significant operational pinch points across a number of military trades.

¹⁰⁷ GDP per capita estimates for the Netherlands and Australia are derived from purchasing power parity (PPP) calculations. World Economic Outlook Database – April 2009, *International Monetary Fund*. Accessed April 20, 2009

REFERENCES

Bibliography

National defence review

Australian Government Department of Defence, 'Australia's National Security; A Defence Update 2007', 2007.

Australian Government Department of Defence, 'Defence Annual Report 2007–2008', 2008.

Canada Department of National Defence, 'Canada First Defence Strategy', 2008.

Canada Department of National Defence, 'Canada's International Policy Statement: A Role of Pride and Influence in the World', 2005.

Denmark Ministry Of Defence, 'Danish Armed Forces: International Perspectives', 2004.

Federal Ministry of Defence, 'White paper 2006 on German Security Policy and the Future of the Bundeswehr'. 2006

'Globally Engaged' defence vision white paper, Eimert van Middelkoop, Minister of Defence of the Netherlands, 2007.

Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark, www.ambottawa.um.dk/en/menu/InfoDenmark/Denmark+in+Afghanistan/, accessed 20 March 2009.

Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 'The Netherlands in Afghanistan,' Newsletter No. 10, 1 September 2007.

Netherlands Ministry of Defence, *Summary of the Defence White Paper*, <http://merln.ndu.edu/whitepapers/Netherlands-2000.pdf>, 2000, accessed 2 March 2009.

United Kingdom Ministry of Defence, 'White Paper: Modern Forces for the Modern World', 1998.

United Kingdom Ministry of Defence, Annual Report 2007, http://www.mod.uk/NR/rdonlyres/31D096E9-3F41-4633-BEA2-AE62CF97C3AE/0/annrptvol1_200708.pdf, accessed 4 March 2009.

Literature review

Boessenkool, Antoine, 'Interview with Lt. Gen. Freek Meulman', Defence News Research, 28 July 2008.

Chao, Wan-Jung, Gregory Sanders and Guy Ben-Ari, *Trends in European Defense Spending 2001–2006*, Washington DC: Center for Strategic and International Studies, April 2008.

- CIA World Factbook, 'The Netherlands', <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/nl.html>, 2009, accessed 2 March 2009.
- Defence Policy Planning Division, NATO International Staff, *NATO-Russia Compendium of Financial and Economic Data Relating to Defence, 1985-2007*, <http://www.nato.int/docu/pr/2005/p050609.pdf>, accessed 15 April 2009.
- European Defence Agency, 'Defence Data of EDA participating Member States in 2007', <http://www.eda.europa.eu/defencefacts/>, accessed 15 April 2009.
- European Defence Agency, *EU Ministers adopt framework for joint European strategy in Defence R&T*, 19 November 2007.
- Gallis, Paul and Vincent Morelli, 'NATO in Afghanistan: A Test of the Transatlantic Alliance', CRS Report for Congress, 18 July 2008.
- Giegerich, Bastian, *European Military Crisis Management: Connecting Ambition and Reality*, London: Routledge/The International Institute for Strategic Studies, 2008.
- Giegerich, Bastian and Alexander Nicoll, ed. *European Military Capabilities: Building Armed Forces for Modern Operations*, London: The International Institute for Strategic Studies, 2008.
- International Labour Organization, 'The Netherlands Labour Force Participation Rate', <http://www.ilo.org/public/english/employment/gems/eo/download/netherlands.pdf>, accessed 2 March 2009
- International Monetary Fund, IMF Country Report No. 08/172, 'Kingdom of the Netherlands: Selected Issues', June 2008
- 'Transformation on a budget: Netherlands country briefing', Jane's Defence Weekly, 6 February 2008.
- Langton, Christopher, ed. *The Military Balance 2006*, London: The International Institute for Strategic Studies, 2006.
- Langton, Christopher, ed. *The Military Balance 2007*, London: The International Institute for Strategic Studies, 2007.
- Langton, Christopher, ed. *The Military Balance 2008*, London: The International Institute for Strategic Studies, 2008.
- Langton, Christopher, ed. *The Military Balance 2009*, London: The International Institute for Strategic Studies, 2009.
- NATO, 'NATO Cooperation with Australia', http://www.nato.int/issues/nato_australia/index.html, accessed 13 March 2009.
- NATO Handbook, 'Implementation of the Petersburg Tasks', <http://www.nato.int/docu/handbook/2001/hb150401.htm>, accessed 22 March 2009.
- NATO Parliamentary Assembly, 'Current and Future Capability Priorities for the Atlantic Alliance', <http://www.nato-pa.int/default.asp?SHORTCUT=1474>, accessed 15 April 2009

NATO Parliamentary Assembly 168, 'Trends in Defence Resource Management in Europe and North America and the New Burden Sharing Debate: A Survey', <http://www.nato-pa.int/default.asp?SHORTCUT=1169>, accessed 15 April 2009.

NATO, 'Afghanistan ISAF and PRT Locations', http://www.nato.int/isaf/docu/epub/maps/graphics/afghanistan_prt_rc.pdf, accessed 15 April 2009.

NATO, 'Improving NATO's Air- and Sealift Capabilities', <http://www.nato.int/issues/strategic-lift/index.html>, accessed 6 March 2009.

NATO, 'International Security Assistance Force and Afghan National Army Strength and Laydown', http://www.nato.int/isaf/docu/epub/pdf/isaf_placemat.pdf, current as of 13 February 2009.

NATO, press conference by NATO Secretary General Jaap de Hoop Scheefer following the informal meeting of NATO Defence Ministers, 19 September 2008, http://www.nato.int/cps/en/SID-D2176C45-02626B0D/natolive/opinions_7903.htm, accessed March 1, 2009

NATO, 'Strategic Airlift Capability', <http://www.nato.int/issues/strategic-lift-air-sac/index.html>, accessed 6 March 2009.

NATO, 'Strategic Sealift', http://www.nato.int/cps/en/SID-7263FC66-D9869169/natolive/topics_50104.htm, accessed 17 April 2009.

Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), 'Economic Survey of the Netherlands, Chapter 1: Challenges Facing the Dutch Economy', 2008.

Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), *Statistical Profile of the Netherlands*, 2007.

United States Central Command, 'The Netherlands', <http://www.centcom.mil/en/countries/coalition/netherlands/>, accessed 6 March 2009.

Transatlantic Trends Survey, 'Key Findings 2007', http://www.transatlantictrends.org/trends/doc/Transatlantic%20Trends_all_0920.pdf, accessed 27 March 2009.

US Department of State, 'The Netherlands', <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/3204.htm>, accessed 2 March 2009.

Media analysis

Anonymous, 'Afghanistan "aan rand van de afgrond"', *De Standaard*, 6 February 2008.

Anonymous, 'Combat death rattles Holland; Rules, not courage, dictate Dutch role in war zone', *The Toronto Star*, 24 April 2007.

Anonymous, 'Kandahar bomb kills six Canadian soldiers', *Financial Times*, 4 July 2007.

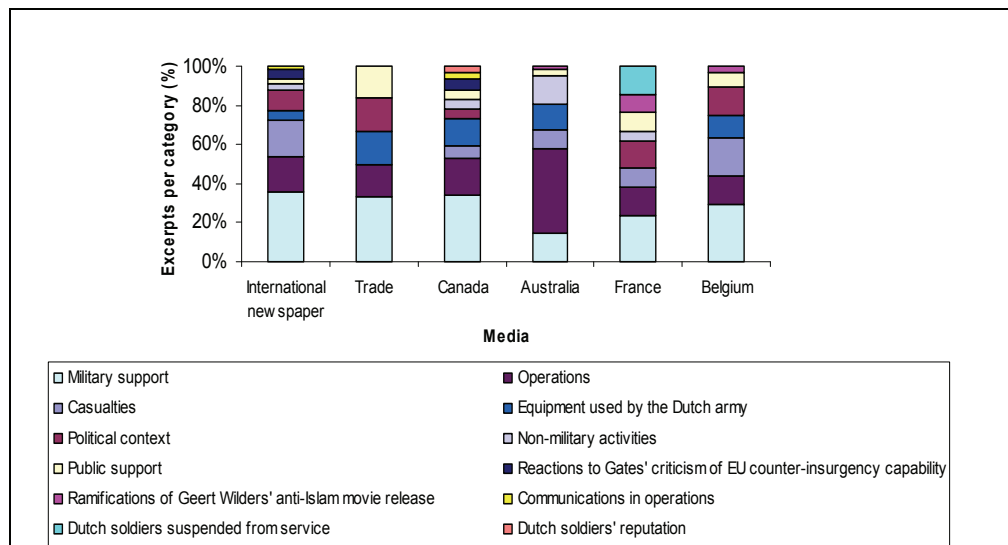
Anonymous, 'La fronde d'un bataillon néerlandais en Afghanistan' [*A Dutch battalion's revolt in Afghanistan*], *Le Figaro*, 1 October 2008.

- Anonymous, 'Sticks 'n' Stones and Allies', *International Herald Tribune*, January 20
- Anonymous, 'US commitment to Nato "at risk"', *BBC News*, 20 March 2008.
- Anonymous, 'Combat death rattles Holland; Rules, not courage, dictate Dutch role in war zone', *The Toronto Star*, 24 April 2007.
- Anonymous, 'Transformation on a budget: Netherlands country briefing', *Jane's Defence Weekly*, 6 February 2008.
- Byers, M., 'We are not alone in saying no', *The Globe and Mail*, 18 July 2007.
- Freeman, A., 'Rising toll prompts purchase of tanks', *The Globe and Mail*, 13 April 2007.
- Merchet, J.-D., and N. Raulin, 'Afghanistan, faux débats et vrais soldats' (*Afghanistan, fake debates and real soldiers*), *Libération*, 1 April 2008.
- Koring, P., 'Close call for top Canadian in Kandahar', *The Globe and Mail*, 27 July 2007.
- Koring, P., 'NATO ill-suited for battle with Taliban, Gates says; U.S. Defence Secretary sparks outrage with suggestions Canadian, Dutch and British troops incapable of fighting counterinsurgency', *The Globe and Mail*, 17 January 2008.
- Pannell, Ian, 'UK military stretched – commander', *BBC News*, 18 March 2009.
- Perrin, J.-P., «Dans le Sud, les Afghanes obligées de raser les murs» (*In the South, Afghans forced to hug the walls*), *Libération*, 30 April 2007.
- Sevastopulo, D., 'Gates warns of "two-tier" NATO', *The Financial Times*, 7 February 2008.
- Walters, P., 'SAS to spearhead Afghan troop boost', *The Australian*, 26 March 2007
- Yaffe, B., 'Why Canada?; Canadians who oppose the war feel betrayed by the Liberals', *The Gazette*, 9 April 2008.
- Zimonjic, P. 'When it's time to go', *The Toronto Sun*, 15 September 2008.

Appendix A: Media analysis methodology

The media analysis examined international, trade and national media over the past two years. The articles were identified through four search terms and the relevant excerpts were then entered into a database, assigned to a topic category and a tone of reporting. It was thus possible to identify the perceptions that the media expressed on the Dutch Ministry of Defence, structured according to the topic the citations referred to and the tone in which they were written. This section provides details of the media analysis methodology.

Media themes



Themes from Media Analysis

As illustrated, twelve themes emerged from the media analysis. An explanation of the themes can be found below. An analysis of both the tone of the document (see below for further clarification), the media type, and the subject of the media allows a bit more insight into the nature of the international and national commentary on the Netherlands' strengths and weaknesses .

Media selection

The following newspapers/news sources and trade journals were included in the media analysis:

- the *Financial Times*, *BBC News*, the *Economist*, and the *International Herald Tribune* (international media)
- *Jane's Information Group* (trade journal)
- the *Globe and Mail*, the *Gazette*, the *Toronto Star and Sun*, and the *National Post* (Canadian media)
- *The Herald Sun*, the *Australian*, and the *Age* (Australian media)
- *Le Figaro* and *Libération* (French media)
- *La Libre Belgique* and *De Standaard* (Belgian media)

Media search

With the exception of the Australian and Canadian media, the relevant articles were identified through each media's archival website using the following four search terms: Netherlands deployed armed forces, Netherlands Afghanistan, Netherlands Uruzgan and Netherlands Iraq. The Australian and Canadian articles were found through the LexisNexis database using only the first search term as it yielded a large number of hits.

Definition of topic categories

A total of eighteen categories were determined, falling under twelve broad topics. In order of popularity, the categories will now be defined and illustrated with relevant article citations where helpful.

'Military support' relates to articles which either considered the fact that the Dutch have a military deployment in the region considered, or the fact that the Dutch were asking for other countries to continue or offer military support of their own.

'Already, the US, the UK, Canada and the Netherlands account for the overwhelming share of the troops confronting the Taliban in the unruly south and east of the country.' (*Financial Times*, 4 July 2007)

'The committee urged other countries to share more of the burden in Afghanistan, with the UK, US, Canada and the Netherlands doing most of the fighting there.' (*BBC News*, 20 March 2008).

In 88 percent of cases, this category referred to the Dutch deployment in Afghanistan. However, military support in Iraq, Darfur, Kosovo, Chad and Central Africa was also considered.

'Operation' refers to the quality of the Dutch troops' work while deployed, their success in the target area, and the future of their deployment. The following excerpts illustrate the three different 'operation' topics respectively:

‘Australian commanders have been disappointed that Dutch special forces based in Oruzgan have been restricted in their ability to conduct long-range patrols when operating out of Tarin Kowt.’ (*The Australian*, 26 March 2007)

‘Depuis des mois, les pays les plus impliqués dans la guerre (Etats-Unis, Royaume-Uni, Canada et Pays-Bas) appellent leurs alliés au secours. Au vu de la dégradation de la situation sur le terrain (lire page 4), ils ont besoin de renforts.’ (*Libération*, 1 April 2008)

‘Of the 36 countries that are part of the coalition, the Netherlands has set an end date for leaving Helmand province in 2010.’ (*The Toronto Sun*, 15 September 2008)

‘*Casualties*’ relates to articles which discussed the deaths of Dutch troops.

‘*Equipment*’ refers to media citations which discussed the Dutch equipment in various operations, generally in Afghanistan but occasionally in Iraq as well, and the Dutch lending equipment to or borrowing equipment from allied countries.

‘... The government announced yesterday it would spend \$650 million to acquire up to 100 second-hand tanks from the Netherlands and lease 20 more from Germany.’ (*The Globe and Mail*, 13 April 2007)

‘[Canada] relies on British, Dutch and U.S. helicopters to evacuate its wounded, transport soldiers to remote outposts and, on rare occasions such as when Prime Minister Stephen Harper visits, transport high-value targets.’ (*The Globe and Mail*, 27 July 2007)

‘*Politics*’ concerns quotes which related to the national, bilateral or international environment underlining Dutch troop deployment.

‘*Extra-military*’ refers to excerpts which considered Dutch troop activity beyond fighting the Taleban in Afghanistan, such as the provision of a police force, the training of Afghan forces, as well as reconstruction and development efforts.

‘*Public support*’ applies to quotes concerning the support of the Dutch public, and on two occasions, the Afghan populations’ support for the deployment of Dutch troops in Afghanistan.

The ‘*Gates*’ category relates to articles which discussed US Defense Secretary Robert Gates’ criticism of the capacity of NATO troops to conduct counter-insurgency operations:

‘Gates added to months of rising U.S.-European tensions over the size of deployments when he told The Los Angeles Times that some NATO forces “don’t know how to do counterinsurgency operations.” He amended his remarks, but they struck a particular nerve with Britain, Canada, Australia and the Netherlands, whose troops are taking

casualties in southern Afghanistan, where insurgents are most active.’ (*International Herald Tribune*, 20 January 2008)

The ‘*Geert Wilders*’ category refers to citations discussing the implications for Dutch troops in Afghanistan of the screening in the Netherlands of Geert Wilders’ anti-Islam movie; Dutch troops subsequently received threats from the Taleban.

Highly varied, the ‘*information*’ cluster consists of excerpts which discussed the role of Skynet in operations, the financials of the Dutch aerospace/defence company EADS, and communication between brigades.

A ‘*soldiers rebel*’ category was identified in order to classify those French articles which discussed the fact that 24 Dutch soldiers refused to undertake a reconnaissance mission:

‘Les troupes de la coalition sont-elles suffisamment équipées pour affronter les talibans en Afghanistan? Le débat, évoqué après la mort dans une embuscade mi août de 10 soldats français, s’est emparé des Pays-Bas après la fronde d’un bataillon néerlandais, déployé dans la province de l’Uruzgan, au sud du pays. Les 24 hommes de cette unité ont refusé, la semaine dernière, d’accomplir une mission de reconnaissance. Sanction immédiate et rarissime, les militaires récalcitrants ont été placés en « service non actif.’ (*Le Figaro*, 1 October 2008)

‘*Reputation among armies*’ refers to the reputation that the Dutch have among those armies fighting in Afghanistan. For example, a *Toronto Star* article stated:

‘Soldiers... continue to grumble that their Dutch colleagues often prefer to withdraw from enemy range when things heat up.’ (24 April 2007)

Attribution of tones

The tone was assessed as positive, negative or neutral based on whether the media article put forward a judgement on the topic it discussed or expressed the judgement of a person or country on that topic.

A positive tone was recorded in excerpts such as this one, in which Robert Gates refers to the NL MOD’s role in Afghanistan positively:

‘Mr Gates praised the Canadians, the British, the Australians, the Dutch and the Danes who were “really over there on the line and fighting”. “But there are a number of others that are not,” he added, in an apparent reference to countries such as Germany.’ (*The Financial Times*, 7 February 2008).

A negative tone was documented in quotes such as the following, which makes clear that the majority of the Dutch public does not support the deployment of its troops in Afghanistan:

'In the Netherlands, 58 percent want the 2,000 Dutch troops brought home by next year' (*The Globe and Mail*, 18 July 2007).

The majority of media articles related information in a neutral and factual way, thus:

'In totaal houden vier landen zich bezig met de Taliban: de Verenigde Staten, Canada, Groot-Brittannië en Nederland.' (*De Standaard*, 6 February 2008).

Appendix B: Equipment platforms data

The following quantities and types of equipment platforms are taken from *The Military Balance 2009*.

| | Combat Jets (strike/fighter) | Transport Air | Helicopter (attack/ASW/transport) | Major surface vessels | Submarines | Amphibious | Mine Warfare | MBT |
|------------------|--|--|---|--|---------------------|----------------------------|-----------------|---|
| Australia | 15x F111C (24x F/A-18 from 2010) 71x F/A-18A/B | 4x C-17 12x C-130H 12x C-130J 14x DHC-4 | 14x AS-665 (attack) 6x CH-47D (transport) 37x S-70 (transport) 66x various (utility) 4x NH-90 (delivery of 40) 16x S-70B-2 (ASW) | 12x frigates | 6x SSK | 2x LPH 1x LST 6x LCH | 11x various | 59x M1A1 90x Leopard 1 (being replaced) |
| Canada | 79x CF-18AM/BM 14x CF-18 A/B (until 2009) | 4x CC-17 24x C-130E/H 6x CC-115 | 28x CH-124 (ASW) 85x CH-146 (utility) 9x CH-139 (utility) | 3x destroyers 12x frigates | 4x SSK | | | 66x Leopard 2 20x Leopard 2 (on lease) |
| Denmark | 48x F-16AM/F-16BM | 4x C130J 3x CL-604 | 12x AS-550C2/MD-500M OH-6 (attack) 8x Super Lynx (ASW) 7x Sea King (ASW – phasing out) 8-14x EH-101 Merlin (ASW) 12x AS-550 (utility) | 3x corvettes | | | 14x various | 51x Leopard 3 40x Leopard 2 |
| France | 50x Super Etendard 26x Rafale M F1/F1 (Naval) 35x Rafale F2-b/F2-C/F3 74x Mirage M-2000/M-2000C | 3x A-310-300 2x A-319 14x C-130H/C-130H-30 42x C-160 20x CN-235M | 8-16x AS-665 (attack) 272x SA-324M (attack) 16x AS-565SA (ASW) 31x Mk4 Lynx (ASW) 27x SA319B (ASW) 7x AS322 Super Puma (transport) | 2x aircraft carriers 12x destroyers 20x frigates | 4-5x SSBN 6x SSN | 8x various | 21x various | 400x Leclerc 237x AMX-31 |

| | | | | | | | | |
|--------------------|---|---|---|---|-------------------|------------|-------------|------------------------------------|
| | | | 135z SA-330 Puma (transport) 27x AS-532 Cougar (transport) | | | | | |
| Germany | 33x EF-2000 76x F-4F 189x Tornado (inc. recce, SEAD) | 7x A-310 6x CL-601 83x C-160 | 192x B-105 (attack) 22x Sea Lynx (ASW) 3x AS-532 Cougar II (transport) 93x CH-53G (transport) 198x UH-1 (utility) | 15x frigates 3x corvettes | 12x SSK | 5x various | 37x various | 1,472x Leppard 2 563x Leopard 1 |
| Netherlands | 87x F-16 MLU AM/F-16 MLU BM | 1x DC-10 4x C-130H/C-130H-30 2x Fokker 50 | 14x SH-14D Lynx (ASW) 20x NH-90 NFH/TNFH (replacing Lynx) 29x AH-64D (attack) 11x CH-47D (transport) 24x Griffin/Cougar II/Alouette III (utility) | 4x destroyers 2x frigates | 4x SSK | 2x LPD | 10x Alkmaar | 60x Leopard 2 |
| UK | 13x Harrier 57x Typhoon 71x Tornado F-3 114x Tornado GR4 62x Harrier GR7/GR7A/GR9 | 6x C-17 19x C-130K/C-130K-30 24x C-130J/C-130J-30 | 67x AH-64D (attack) 99x Lynx AH MK7/MK9 (light attack) 71x Lynx MK3/MK8 (ASW) 42x Merlin HM MK1 (ASW) 46x Lynx/Sea King (Royal Marines) 40x CH-47 HC2/2A (transport) 43x SA-330 Puma (transport) 28x HC-MK3 Merlin (multirole) | 2x aircraft Carriers 8x destroyers 17x frigates | 4x SSBN 8x SSN | 7x various | 16x various | 386x Challenger II |