

### 3. ARMED FORCES, MILITARY TECHNOLOGY

# TERRITORIAL DEFENSE FORCES IN THE STATE DEFENCE SYSTEM – ROLE AND TASKS

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#### Abstract

The establishment of territorial defence forces in Poland allowed the state defence system to act on various level. "Territorials", as they commonly referred to, perform many tasks to enable preventive actions during peace, crisis, as well as during war, including supporting regular operations of the army. This article aims to characterize the role and tasks of territorial defence forces in the state, including specific actions related to promoting and protecting the local community based on contemporary activities undertaken by them.

#### KEYWORDS

Army, territorial defence, system, defence, state.

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## Introduction

Territorial Defence Forces (TDF), as one of the types of armed forces, are part of the Polish defence system and conduct combat operations following applicable martial art rules. In cooperation with the Non - Military Agreement (UPM), they implement the tasks, as part of activities together with operational forces and squal backup team for achieving a common goal, the goal specified in operational planning or crisis management documents. In crises, TD troops independently remove sources or combat the effects of their occurrence

in the area of constant responsibility<sup>2</sup>. The motto of territorial is the slogan: Always ready, always close, which refers to the TDF mission, which is to support and protect local communities.

Relating to the history of the Polish military, especially after the World War II, there has always been a non - military to defend the country's territory<sup>3</sup>. Their activities were firmly related to the administrative units of the country, which was related to the fact that they have not part of the structure of operational troops. Formation varied in terms of purpose, tasks and construction, which made placing in the structures of the State Defence System and correlation of

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<sup>2</sup> Vide: Zasady użycia Wojsk Obrony Terytorialnej – DT-3.40.1.

<sup>3</sup> Before 1990, National Territorial Defense units (NTK) operated; in the years 1998-2008 according to the concept of R. Sheremetyev Territorial Defense Army; after 2008, the National Reserve Forces (NRF).

territorial tasks more difficult<sup>4</sup>.

The reflected in creating Territorial Defence Forces contained many new elements, which referred to the contemporary assessment of new threats to national security. The innovative approach to the undertaken actions, in its originality, is based on previous experience of other countries, especially in my opinion of the achievements, including those of the United States National Guard. After 2015, new solutions at the strategic and operational level to be met by territorial defence forces were to increase the sense of security and provide additional support for operational forces during and the occurrence of the threat<sup>5</sup>.

Territorial Defence Forces created based on the Act of November 16 2016<sup>6</sup> on January 1, 2017. The amending the act<sup>7</sup> on general compulsory military service to defend the Republic of Poland, which was signed by the President of the Republic of Poland Andrzej Duda on December 20, 2016. On March 29, 2017, Command of Territorial De-

fence Forces<sup>8</sup> acquired the capacity to act, thanks to which the first three TDF brigades formally established in Białystok, Lublin and Rzeszów<sup>9</sup>.

## Organizational structure of Territorial Defence Forces

In the structural dimension, TDF Command campuses of the following Brigades (Figure 2):

1. Podlasie Territorial Defence Brigade with headquarter in Białystok,
2. Lublin Territorial Defence Brigade with headquarter in Lublin,
3. Supcarpathian Territorial Defence Brigade with headquarter in Rzeszów,
4. Warmian Territorial Defence Brigade in Rzeszów headquarter in Olsztyn,
5. Mazovian Territorial Defence Brigade with headquarter in Ciechanów,
6. Mazovian Territorial Defence Brigade with headquarter in Warsaw - Rembertów,
7. Pomeranian Territorial Defence Brigade with headquarter in Gdańsk,
8. Kuyavian - Pomeranian Brigade Territorial Defence Brigade with headquarter in Bydgoszcz,
9. Łódź Territorial Defence Brigade with com headquarter mand in Łódź,
10. Holy Cross Territorial Defence Brigade with headquarter in Kielce,
11. Lesser Poland Territorial Defence Brigade with headquarter in Kraków,
12. Greater Poland Territorial Defence Brigade with the headquarter in Poznań,
13. Silesian Territorial Defence Brigade with the headquarter in Katowice,

<sup>4</sup> The issue of the location of territorial formations has broadly described in the literature on the subject and studies of the Department of Territorial Defense, then the Academy of Martial Arts.

<sup>5</sup> Wider: M. Husarski, Podstawy normatywne i koncepcyjne - funkcjonalne tworzenia wojsk obrony terytorialnej, Przegląd Nauk o Obronności, R. 2, nr 3, s. 67-82.

<sup>6</sup> Planning activities for the creation of the territorial defense system in Poland began on December 30, 2015 with the appointment of Grzegorz Kwaśniak as the representative for the creation of Territorial Defense by the then Minister of National Defense Antoni Macierewicz. Decyzja Nr 504/MON Ministra Obrony Narodowej z dnia 30 grudnia 2015 r. w sprawie powołania Pełnomocnika Ministra Obrony Narodowej do Spraw Utworzenia Obrony Terytorialnej.

<sup>7</sup> Changes have also occurred in some laws and ordinances, i.e. Ustawa z dnia 17 grudnia 1974 r. o uposażeniu żołnierzy niezawodowych, Rozporządzenie Ministra Obrony Narodowej z dnia 18 marca 2004 r. w sprawie wzywania osób podlegających powszechnemu obowiązkowi obrony przez organy wojskowe, Rozporządzenie Ministra Obrony Narodowej z dnia 10 lutego 2017 r. w sprawie kwalifikacji żołnierzy pełniących terytorialną służbę wojskową przydatnych w Siłach Zbrojnych Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej.

<sup>8</sup> Based on Decyzji nr 140/MON Ministra Obrony Narodowej z dnia 28 czerwca 2017 roku Dowództwo Wojsk Obrony Terytorialnej przejęło i kultywuje dziedzictwo tradycji Komendy Głównej Armii Krajowej 1942-1945 (Dz. Urz. MON 2018 poz. 110).

<sup>9</sup> Based on Decyzji nr 102/MON Ministra Obrony Narodowej z dnia 14 sierpnia 2018 roku the Day of Territorial Defense Forces was established on September 27 (Dz. Urz. MON 2017 poz. 148).

14. West Pomeranian Territorial Defence Brigade with the headquarter in Szczecin,

16. Lower Silesian Territorial Defence Brigade with the headquarter in Wrocław.

Fig. 1. Territorial Defence Wax Development Plans



Source: <https://terytorialsi.wp.mil.pl/wot>

The TD Military Forces Training Center located in Toruń and the Non-Commissioned Officer's School (NCO) for Territorial Defence Forces located in the Communications and Information Technology Training Center in Zegrze also formed. Ultimately, in every province,<sup>10</sup> TDF brigades are to operate in Poland, and in the case of the Mazo-

vian voivodship two (left and right bank of the Vistula river)<sup>11</sup>.

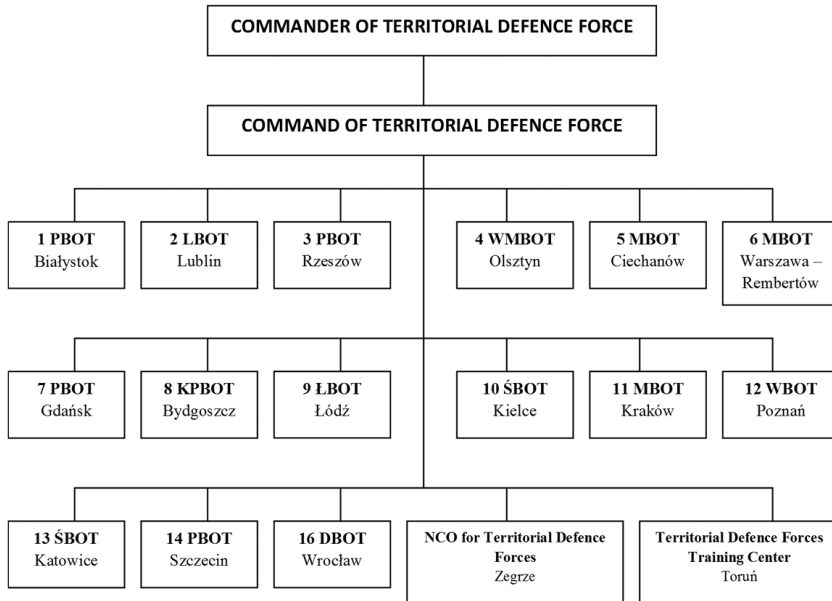
<sup>10</sup> Territorial Defense troops in the structure of the Polish Armed Forces function in correlation to the administrative division of the Republic of Poland, so-called permanent area of responsibility and includes:

- PAR Command of Territorial Defense - national territory,
- PAR Territorial Defense Brigade - the area of the province,
- PAR light infantry battalion - area from 3 to 5 points,
- PAR light infantry company - province area.

Compare: *Zasady użycia Wojsk Obrony Terytorialnej* – DT-3.40.1.

<sup>11</sup> <https://archiwum2019.mon.gov.pl/obrona-terytorialna/o-nas/plany-budowy-wot-q2016-12-27/> (access 23.03.2020).

Fig. 2. Diagram of the organizational structure of Territorial Defence Forces in 2020



Source: Own study.

## Basic concepts. Defence, state territory and state territory, territorial defence

Considering the current roles and tasks of territorial defence forces, one should recall the concepts associated with them, namely: defence, territory and state territory, as well as what is, according to the literature on the subject, territorial defence.

We can call defence all the essential activities<sup>12</sup> forced or intentional conducted when the opponent has the initiative to thwart or repel his attack. These activities are to prevent him from achieving his goals, in particular by controlling the enemy's territory, inflicting maximum losses on him and giving time for his forces to create conditions for the transition to offensive actions<sup>13</sup>. The necessary undertakings are

preparation based on field conditions or ad hoc fortifications aimed at counteracting the enemy's assault. There are manoeuvring and positional defence.

In the literature on the subject, we can find various definitions of territory and state territory. It should note that both concepts have different meanings. The state territory is a part of the Earth's surface limited by the border and belonging to a specific country. The province includes all-terrain conditions such as land with internal waters, coastal territorial waters together with the space below the surface and above the surface of the property and sea. Besides, the territory also includes islands and so-called

<sup>12</sup> Vide L. Elak, *Podstawy działań taktycznych*, Warszawa 2014, s. 77.

<sup>13</sup> *Regulamin działań Wojsk Lądowych*, DWLąd Wewn. 115/2008, s. 27.

land enclaves<sup>14</sup>. On the other hand, the state territory is the main area subject to the sovereign power of a given state, which defines its borders. It includes, among others: the territorial sea together with internal sea waters, land along with inland waters, air space above them and the underground located below them or a land enclave<sup>15</sup>

Moving on to the definition, territorial defence it should note that it is one of the elements of the state's defence potential<sup>16</sup>, and the implemented tasks carried out as part of the military case of the country. Territorial defence in Poland already has a long tradition, although its forms were determined by the political or geopolitical situation, as well as by society or the state's potential. Therefore, in a broad sense, the term territorial defence consists in the use by the state of part of its armed forces to carry out tasks in permanent areas of responsibility (PAR), i.e. in voivodships or counties. Territorial defence formations usually operated based on local recruitment, training and supplementation, thus cooperating closely with the local authorities of the state. Thanks to this, they were primarily used to strengthen the operations

of operational (regular) troops<sup>17</sup>.

According to the *regulations of tactical operations*, the concept of territorial defence is *fighting the state in the form of universal case. I cover operational, tactical, technical defence and training projects aimed at preparing specific forces and means for the implementation of support and security tasks of operational troops, conducting independent combat and rescue operations. It carried out throughout the country. It brings together and coordinates the activities of non-military defence links for the soldiers*<sup>18</sup>.

## The magnificent twelve, which is the fundamental element of the TDF organizational structure

Before characterizing the role and tasks, organizational structure functioning in Territorial Defence Forces should present. The main component of the training and operations of soldiers are light infantry companies, which offered below (Figure 3).

<sup>14</sup> The enclave, i.e. the territory of the state or part of it from all sides surrounded by the land territory of another state, Encyklopedia Popularna PWN, wyd. 18, Warszawa 1982, s. 194.

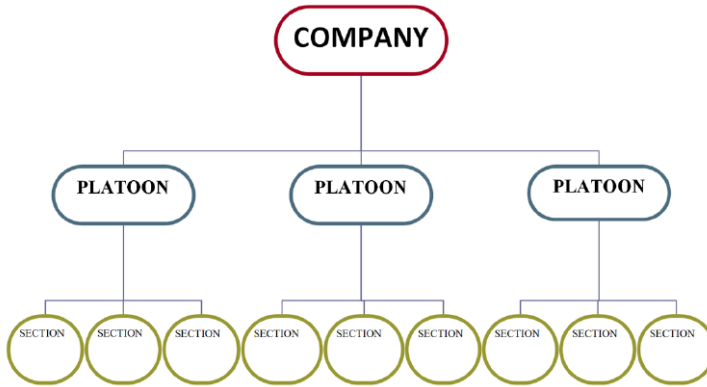
<sup>15</sup> International law recognizes the principle of the inviolability of the territory of the state and its integrity. The authority of the state over the territory of the state is sovereign and exclusive, all exceptions concerning persons or things (e.g. immunities) and should base on specific customary or contractual international law. Ustawa z dnia 12 listopada 1965 r. – Prawo prywatne międzynarodowe (Dz.U. nr 46, poz. 290 z późn. zm.).

<sup>16</sup> Equally essential components of this potential are, among others defence consists of the society, operational forces, organization of command bodies, defence infrastructure and functioning within the framework of alliances and political and military systems. R. Jakubczak, *Współczesne wojska obrony terytorialnej*, Warszawa 2016, s. 109-112.

<sup>17</sup> Forces of this kind, sometimes also referred to as the civic army, allowed to increase the number and possibilities of the Polish armed forces. Their existence meant that every opponent planning aggression on Polish lands had to reckon with a massive, long-lasting campaign, with significant losses and the risk of losing. See more widely: R. Jakubczak, *Współczesne wojska obrony terytorialnej*, Warszawa 2016, s. 109-122.

<sup>18</sup> *Regulamin działań taktycznych*, część I, Warszawa 1994, s. 65.

Fig. 3 Diagram of the organizational structure of a light infantry



Source: Own study.

The above scheme has to see that the essential elements of the TD structure is the light infantry section in a unique arrangement also used by special forces, the

so-called magnificent twelve. It consists of twelve soldiers in the following order (Table 1)<sup>19</sup>:

Table 1 „The magnificent twelve“

Squad Commander	Deputy commander
Senior Medic	Medic
Senior Sharpshooter	Sharpshooter
Senior Radioman	Radioman
Rifleman	Aimer
Senior Sapper	Sapper

Source: Own study.

The magnificent twelve are also flexible. Namely, the section, depending on the task, can be divided into two teams of six soldiers from each speciality. It is also a structure optimized from training. The section has in its ranks a person with more experience and thanks to this it can teach t „younger” in terms of service to a soldier in a particular speciality, thanks to which he can rip joint actions.

### The role and tasks of territorial defence forces

Turning to the character and functions that territorial defence troops should consider, in particular, support and protection of operational forces, i.e. in the field of

universal defence of the state. Also, they intend for conducting combat and rescue operations, especially in a permanent area of responsibility. Therefore, it should emphasize at this point that the activities carried out by the TD army are limited to the country, but knowledge of the area in which they conduct training, exercises or rotations contribute to their effectiveness. TDF, taking into account the broad spectrum of their operation and purpose, depending on the needs and development of the situation are capable of the following tasks<sup>20</sup>.

<sup>19</sup> <https://www.wojsko-polskie.pl/dwot/wspaniala-12/> (access 18.04.2020)

<sup>20</sup> See more widely: *Wojska Obrony Terytorialnej w operacji*, DD – 3.40.

- a. In a state of constant defence readiness of the country:
- combat maintaining combat readiness to defend the territory of Poland;
  - supporting local communities and elements of the non-military subsystem in the implementation of crisis management (response) tasks, i.e. achieving readiness and participation in immediate and universal response to a non-military threat situation to prevent or counteract, minimize and remove its effects, as well as restore its state before his speech<sup>21</sup>;
  - implementation of planning, organizational, mobilization and training projects, including preparation of own sub-units;
  - conducting activities in the field of military social communication aimed at shaping patriotic and civil attitudes and values.
- b. In the state of defence readiness of the country during the crisis:
- preparing the PAR for defence and achieving willingness to take actions as intended (including preparation and maintenance of shelters and temporary stay places for TDF as part of the operational development of the country);
  - supporting elements of the non-military subsystem in strengthening the protection and defence of the state border, critical infrastructure and facilities of particular importance for the security and defence of the state and local communities;
  - develop the TDF war command system;
  - conducting reconnaissance activities as well as demonstration and deterrence activities in the PAR;
- c. In the state of defence readiness of the wartime state:
- support for the mobilization and operational development of troops, as well as projects in the field of operational masking and engineering development of the area;
  - support of separate forces to prepare and secure the arrival of operational troops and allied (coalition) strengthening forces to the PAR.
- conducting operations at the tactical level in cooperation with other types of the armed forces and elements of the non-military subsystem;
- ensuring universal protection and defence of the PAR, including support for aspects of the non-military subsystem in the protection of state property, public facilities and cultural objects against plundering and destruction;
- assistance to secure the entry of allied (coalition) strengthening forces into the fight;
- support for ensuring the functioning and reconstruction of government and self-government administration structures and public security in liberated areas;
- support for projects in the field of operational masking and engineering development.

Taking into account the above necessary scope of tasks of territorial defence forces, which form the entire territory of the country, they implement<sup>22</sup>.

<sup>21</sup> Vide: *Wsparcie wojskowe działań humanitarnych* – DD – 3.4.3 (A).

<sup>22</sup> Vide: *Wojska Obrony Terytorialnej. Stan obecny. Pożądane kierunki zmian*, oprac. M. Różański, A. Duda, J. Rajchel, T. Drewniak, J. Strózek, Warszawa 2018, s. 31-32; A. Michalak, *Cele, zadania, struktura i funkcje wojsk obrony terytorialnej w XXI wieku*, „Bezpieczeństwo. Teoria i Praktyka” 2017, nr 3, s. 32–34.

1. Collecting information about the opponent, guiding hits and assessing their effects;
2. Elimination of the impact of the opponent's punches;
3. Creating resistance groups in areas occupied by the opponent and supporting local people;
4. Securing the mobilization and operational development of troops;
5. Supporting operational troops in conducting delaying activities;
6. Tying part of the opponent's forces;
7. Preparation for defence of sensitive areas;
8. Protection of essential facilities and installations of crucial state infrastructure (military facilities, airports, ports, naval bases, refineries, gas pipelines);
9. Protection of the logistics system implemented for operational troops and TD;
10. Ensuring the capacity of the main communication lines and securing communication nodes;
11. Conducting protective activities (expansion of the outskirts and areas of responsibility, construction of dams, defence of some outlands and facilities);
12. Implementation of projects under the strategic and operational masking of troops.

The tasks carried out by the territorial defence army include all emergency states contained in the 1997 Constitution of the Republic of Poland, which may introduce: martial law (art. 229), state of emergency (art. 230) and state of natural disaster (art. 232)<sup>23</sup>. The essence of this formation is a broad spectrum of non-military as well as military activities throughout the country ultimately related to the place of origin and resi-

dence. To this end, I present two groups of tasks carried out by the Territorial Defence Forces<sup>24</sup>.

The first group of tasks includes support for operational troops by creating conditions for them to develop and conduct regular activities. Through independent tasks carried out in the rear area, they focus on the preparation of crucial regions or the protection of strategic infrastructure, such as ports, naval bases, airports, state administration offices and military facilities, aimed at enabling operational forces to fight the enemy directly. The tasks undertaken by units of territorial defence forces in its concept aimed at combating and eliminating the effects of the enemy, i.e. conducting irregular operations deep inside the territory (landing, subversive groups or armed underground). The effectiveness of the actions taken intended to carry out in urban areas („black tactics”) and wooded and wooded areas („green tactics”), especially in the eastern part of the country which is currently a critical military threat, which is Russian aggression<sup>25</sup>.

The area of non-military tasks, which is the second group of functions undertaken by „territorials”, is aimed at supporting local authorities in the civil and social zone, as well as undertaking rescue, order or humanitarian actions. In particular, it is about supporting and protecting civilians in the event of crises related to natural disasters or failures of critical infrastructure. In their assumption, territorial defence units are to help in the evacuation of people and property, take preventive measures (e.g. prevention of theft of property left behind), building fortifications and dams, providing

<sup>24</sup> R. Jakubczak, *Współczesne wojska Obrony Terytorialnej*, Warszawa 2002-2014, s. 72.

<sup>25</sup> Wider: Z. Polcikiewicz, *Wojska Obrony Terytorialnej w systemie bezpieczeństwa narodowej Polski*, Acta Scientifica Academiae Ostroviensis. Sectio A, Nauki Humanistyczne, Społeczne i Techniczne, 7(1), 2016, s. 399-413.

<sup>23</sup> Konstytucja RP z 2 kwietnia 1997r. (Dz.U. 1997, nr 78 poz. 483).



first aid or providing resources necessary for survival. As part of their tasks, in addition to supporting operational troops, the formations are to cooperate closely with a non-military defence system, including voivode, local government bodies, security institutions, paramilitary organizations<sup>26</sup>.

Currently, the actions taken by the territorial defence forces is the fight against coronavirus (COVID-19). Formations undertake extensive preventive measures aimed at preventing and delaying the spread of the virus within the territory of the Republic of Poland<sup>27</sup>. After the announcement of the first case in Poland on March 6, 2020, the TD Command decided to suspend all training and implementation of a preventive program to limit the risk of further coronavirus transmission.

From March 12 from 9:00 am, the TDF model changed from training to crisis. Across the country, the entire formation went into twelve hours of readiness for action. In the case of selected soldiers with specific military specialities, they entered into six hours of availability to take action. This task implements through the selective activation of TDF soldiers with competences: medical rescuers, nurses, pharmacists, soldiers with first aid course (FAC) qualifications – this applies only to those soldiers who do not perform health care tasks daily. This task also apply to drivers, logistics, operation of lighting sets, psychologists and IT specialists.

Territorial defence forces were kept operational from 18 March 2020, taking part in actions to combat the coronavirus in

military operation codenamed „RESISTANT SPRING”<sup>28</sup>. Territorial soldiers carry out many aspects of preventive, sanitary and epidemiological activities, in many areas of actions such as<sup>29</sup>:

- supporting the Police in the implementation of tasks related to the supervision of persons quarantined and the application of joint preventive patrols;
- supporting the Border Guard, voivods and local authorities in preventing the spread of coronavirus;
- providing support for families of medical personnel, veterans and veterans, the elderly, as well as persons subjected to isolation and quarantine;
- strengthening the awareness and resilience of the community and its members;
- maintaining the sanitary safety of soldiers involved in the operation;
- supporting health care families and medical services;
- supporting airport services, hospitals and state institutions;
- Personnel education of personnel and the environment in the field of prevention and infection prevention;
- psychological help;
- ICT security for health services and other institutions.

## Summary

The geopolitical location of Poland, which is also the border between the North Atlantic Alliance and the European Union, influenced the correction of security policy and the development of new concepts of actions. The establishment of Territorial De-

<sup>26</sup> Marczak J., Jakubczak R., *Raport strategiczny: Siły Zbrojne RP w drugiej dekadzie XXI wieku. Koncepcja strategiczna Obrony Terytorialnej RP*, Warszawa 2014, s. 74.

<sup>27</sup> *Instrukcja o zabezpieczeniu sanitarnohigienicznym i przeciwepidemicznym wojska w czasie pokoju, kryzysu i wojny*, Zdr. 251/2013 z dnia 5 marca 2013 r. (poz. 62).

<sup>28</sup> Rozkaz nr 76/2020 Dowódcy Wojsk Obrony Terytorialnej z dnia 27 marca 2020 roku w sprawie operacji wsparcia przez SZ RP działań związanych z zapobieganiem rozprzestrzeniania się wirusa SARS – CoV-2 pk „ODPORNA WIOSNA”.

<sup>29</sup> Ustawa z dnia 2 marca 2020r. o szczególnych rozwiązaniach z zapobieganiem, przeciwdziałaniem i zwalczaniu SARS – CoV-2, innych chorób zakaźnych oraz wywołanych nimi sytuacji kryzysowych.

fence Forces was a response to the emergence of new threats (including the escalation of the conflict in Ukraine (2014) or the deterioration of political relations with Russia), including the strengthening of broadly understood state security, including in particular the territory of the country.

The emergence and functioning of territorial defence forces has its opponents and supporters. It should note that according to the creation of this formation was to be a response to emerging threats. Regional and relatively appropriate to the needs of the state defence system distribution of branches and subunits is a new tool for intervention in the event of a violation of the territory of the Polish state. Correlation between society and the armed forces, including the creation of a military formation with a regional basis to strengthen the sense of security of the local community, has long been included in the conceptual plans of the Armed Forces. Therefore, the role and tasks, particularly in the doctrinal document of the Territorial Defence Army in operation relate directly to these concepts.

It has to consider that the adopted assumptions are sufficient about the changing and emerging new threats to the security of the state in various spheres, whether the current shape, both structural and functional TDF, as well as the forces and means possessed in carrying out all the tasks set. In my opinion, it is not necessary to conduct a needs analysis to improve the possibilities of supporting internal security and society realistically. The implementation and dimension of territorial defence forces take on proper meaning.

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