**Current strategies, policies and processes underpinning training and testing in the light of English Language Capacity Development, the 16th initiative of Substantial**

**NATO-Georgia Package**

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**Background information on the 16 ELCD**

The Substantial NATO-Georgia Package was endorsed by NATO Heads of State and Government at the Wales Summit in September 2014. The SNGP is a set of measures and initiatives aimed at strengthening Georgia’s defense capabilities and helping prepare Georgia for NATO membership.

A key finding within a number of SNGP initiatives had been that there remained a general lack of English language skills. In 2017 an international team conducted the assessment of the situation. As a result of the assessment report, the 16th  Initiative ELCD (English Language Capacity Development) was added to the SNGP. In December 2021, Slovenia accepted the role of the ELCD Lead Nation. In 2023 to ensure the efficiency of the Georgian ELT system ELCD decision making body and English language advisory team were established.

**Overview of the Foreign Language Testing Division and recent Changes**

Foreign Language Testing division operates under the authority of the Training and Military Education Command (TMEC) and is independent from language training school. Testing division deals with a big number of candidates. The biggest segment is for rank promotion since MOD has specified STANAG 6001 language requirements for all positions and ranks. Testing division followes all the stages of the test development cycle. Members of the division participate in defferent projects withing the STANAG 6001 testing community.

The recent changes that have been introduced in the light of ELCD are as follows:

* English language capacity development policy and Strategy were written and approved by the minister in 2022.
* Instruction for Testing and Evaluation of English language according to STANAG 6001 was revised and signed by the Minister in 2022.
* Structural change took place - Testing Team was upgraded to foreign language testing division.
* Planned testing sessions have been introduced.
* Validity of results was extended from two to three 3 years
* STANAG 6001 testing guidebook for the candidates 2023 (uploaded on MOD website) was updated
* Testing Division is moving from paper-based testing to a computer assisted testing.
* Closer cooperation with Language training school has started.

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**Overview of the Language Training School**

The Language Training School, established in October 2001 as the Language Center within the National Defence Academy of Georgia, was reformed in 2011 and has been under TMEC since 2021. Its main functions include teaching foreign languages to military and civilian personnel, enhancing English skills for STANAG 6001, familiarizing students with job-related courses overseas, and developing transferrable skills such as communication, teamwork, and time management. The programs target military and civilian personnel of the Defence Forces of Georgia, IMET participants, and exchange program candidates.

**Organization of the School**

Based on reports by NATO in 2018 and Ms. Dubravka Zupanec, the school introduced an academic manager to improve governance, language programs, and quality assurance. A section for planning, development, and evaluation was created to implement policies and train teachers.

**Improving Learning Conditions**

To enhance learning, new textbooks, syllabi, and testing practices were adopted. Speaking and writing rubrics were created, and student course evaluations were conducted for feedback. General military English handouts were used for the basic course.

**Raising Quality of Teaching**

Policies for observation, continuing professional development (CPD), induction, and teacher appraisal were developed to maintain academic standards and support teacher growth. These policies ensure high teaching standards and meet the requirements of the Georgia Defence Forces/MOD.

**Future Plans**

The school aims to further develop management processes, create policies, and standard operating procedures. Teacher training will remain a priority with in-house sessions and additional training from BILC. Plans include refining teaching methods, updating the curriculum, and maintaining high academic standards to meet the evolving needs of the Georgia Defence Forces/MOD.