

« Parties to the conflict shall take the necessary steps, in so far as military considerations permit, to make the distinctive emblems... clearly visible to the enemy»

DEFENSIE  
LA DÉFENSE



VOORKANG AAN VREDE  
PRÉVIENT À LA PAIX

## The use of protective emblems in military operations

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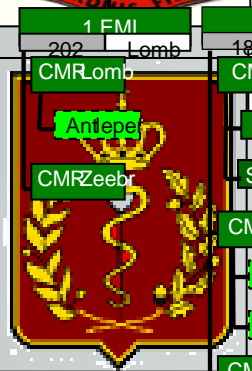
Q&A



# Ref



1. International publications: GC's and AP's
2. National publications: laws in execution of Par 1
3. STANAG 2060, ID Med Fd Mat (1984)
4. STANAG 2931, Ed 2 van 19 Jan 1998, « Orders for the camouflage of the Red Cross and the Red Crescent on land in tactical operations »
5. Allied publications on modern Medical Support (MC 326/2, AJP 4.10 (A)) since 2004
6. ACOS O& T 08-679688 van 25 Nov 2008, "Ajout d'un signe de protection pour les services de santé et le Pers religieux Mil »
7. ACOS O& T 07- 228165 van 25 Apr 2007, "Bijkomend onderscheidend embleem voor medische dienst en religieux Pers"
8. ICRC study on operational and Commercial and other Non-operational Issues involving the use of the emblems (2009)
9. (draft SPS « Gebruik van het gebruik van het Rode Kruis en het Rode Kristal in Tactische activiteiten »)



# 1. Introduction

Strategic Environment

Military  
Alliances

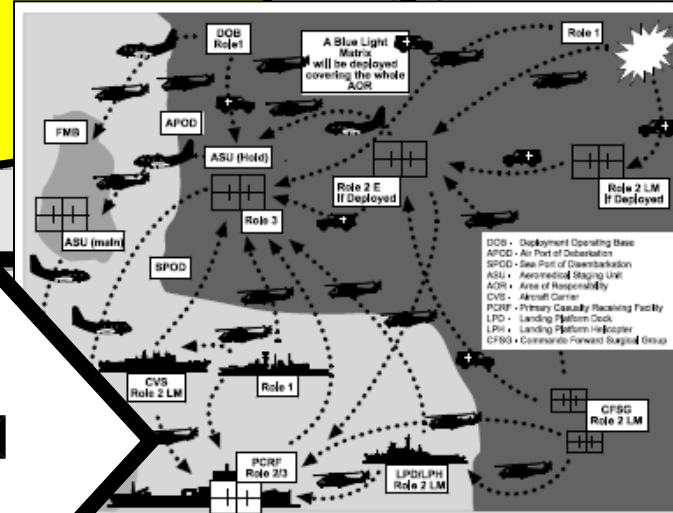
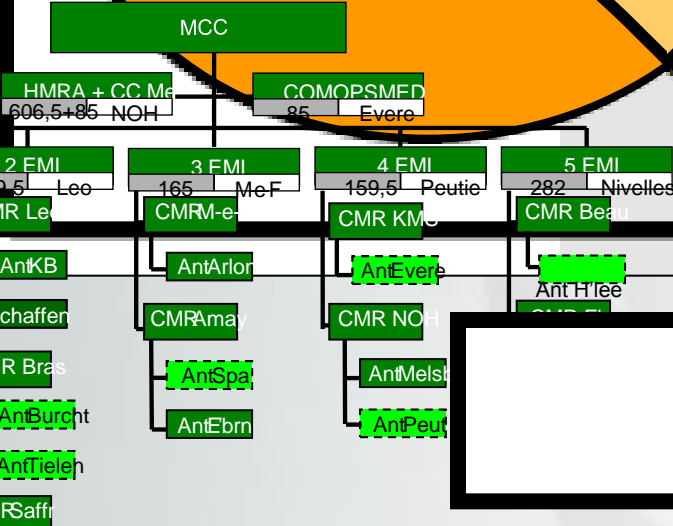
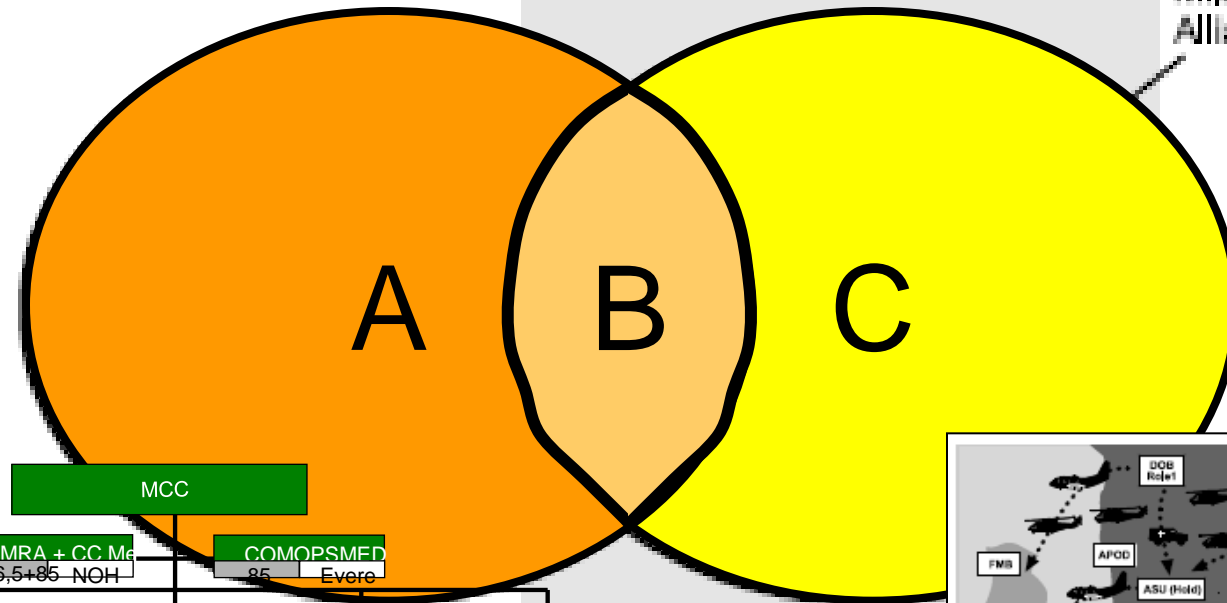
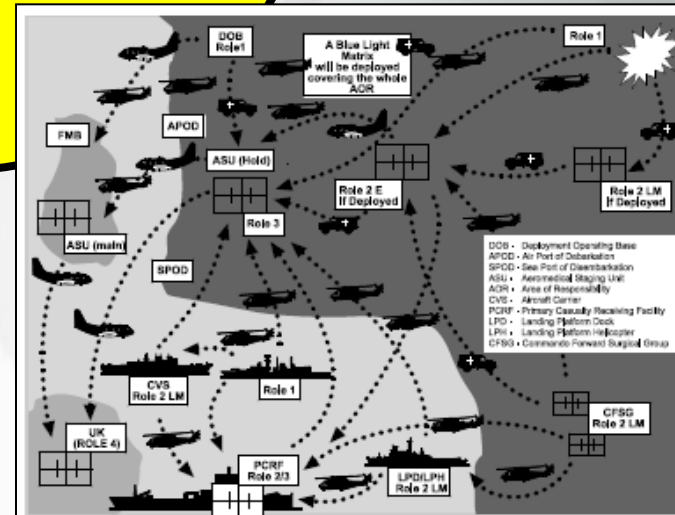


Figure 2.1 – Joint Medical Support to Operations, Showing Casualty Flows between Roles and the Contributions of the Components





# 1. Introduction

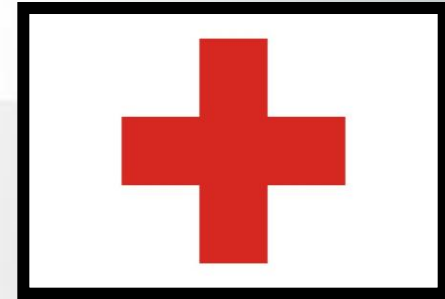


**Figure 2.1 – Joint Medical Support to Operations, Showing Casualty Flows between Roles and the Contributions of the Components**

## 2. How to use a red cross in the military

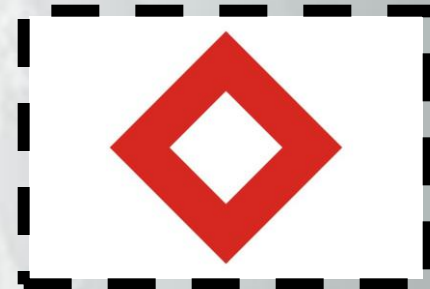
### a. Authorized emblems

- 1) RED CROSS
- 2) RED CRISTAL: when ratified and O/O
- 3) Competent mil authority (CHOD, his delegate)



### b. Protective use: to enhance protection

- 1) Relative obligation to use it; according to tech guidelines
- 2) Communicates the legal position of non combattant
  - a) Medical or religious; ID card of non combattant
  - b) BEL: there are no temporary assigned or auxiliaries
- 3) Use/ non use doesn't influence rights/ obligations of the non combattant
  - a) Allow inspections
  - b) Lt weaponry, don't resist capture
- 4) Exclusive use of/on transport, materiel, installation, ...
- 5) Permanent: peacetime and « war » time
- 6) Disadvantages vs advantages: « selective » use

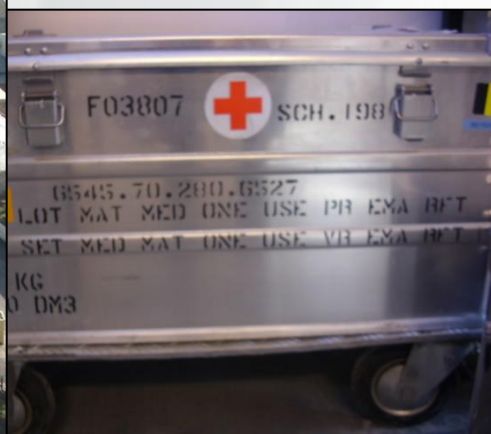


### c. Indicative use: not in the BEL military





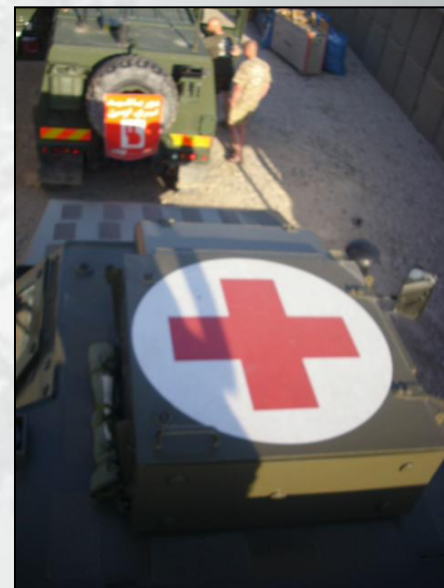
# Correct use







# Correct use



## 2. How to use a red cross in the military

### d. No use

- 1) Possible, O/O Bde Cdr or eqv (STANAG 2931)
- 2) « temporary, local, ASAP to be countermanded »
- 3) aim is highest protection not the promotion of the red cross
- 4) when suspicion of non combattant status: don't fire

### e. Misuse

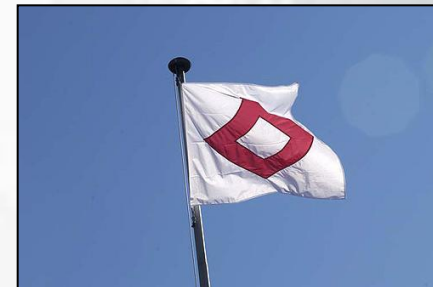
- 1) Imitation
- 2) Improper: INT collection
- 3) Double use: with other emblem/ sign
- 4) Abuse or perfidy: war crime

### f. Supplementary signs/ signals

- 1) Mandatory when sea and air transport
- 2) On land, today, to avoid friendly fire

### g. Trg and instruction in use/ recognition of red cross is mandatory

- 1) Sometimes inadvertance/ ignorance
- 2) Frag Gren, LAW, MINIMI







# Misuse?

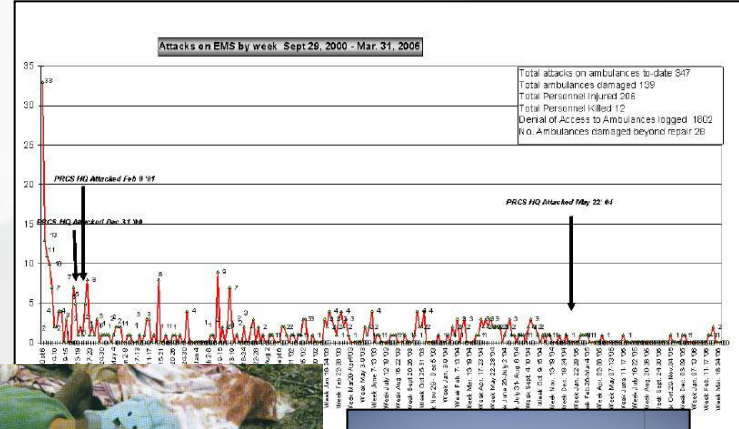
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MONDAY 14 FEB 00



1600 HR

AN AMBULANCE CAUGHT TRANSPORTING  
WEAPONRY



## Use of Ambulances by Palestinian Terrorists

**April 12, 2002:** New York Times: "The Israeli police said today that they had found a belt with explosives in a Palestinian ambulance during a check at a roadblock inside the West Bank. The ambulance was headed toward Israel with the body of a Palestinian man, the police said, and they found the device alongside him. It was the second time in two weeks that Israel has reported finding explosives in an ambulance."

**February 5, 2002:** Haaretz: Wafa Idris, the Ramallah woman killed when a bomb she carried into downtown Jerusalem exploded last month, reached the capital by a Red Crescent ambulance... One Israeli was killed and more than 100 wounded in the bombing.

**June 30, 2002:** Associated Press: "In Ramallah, Israeli troops stopped two Palestinian ambulances and found 27 people packed inside - ten of them suspected of involvement in shooting or bombing attacks."



Unloading an explosive belt from a Palestinian ambulance on 3-27-02

south of Ramallah. The explosive belt was found hidden underneath a stretcher on which a Palestinian sick child was lying. Also present during the incident were the sick child's relatives - a man, a woman and three children. The driver was Islam Jibril, a Fatah-Tanzim operative and wanted terrorist, who was employed as ambulance driver for the Palestinian Red Crescent. During his interrogation, Jibril admitted having received the bombing devices from Mahmud al-Titi, with the assignment to deliver them to other Fatah-Tanzim operatives in Ramallah.

**October 31, 2000:** IDF: "Shots were fired at Psagot from inside the Red Crescent building in Ramallah. In another instance, shots were fired at Psagot from a Red Crescent ambulance as it traveled towards Psagot. In both cases, the IDF did not return fire."

**April 25, 2002:** Jerusalem Post: "Reserve soldiers apprehended a wanted terrorist who was hiding in an ambulance that was stopped during a routine check near Kalkiya."

**January 30, 2002:** The IDF reports it captured a terrorist on the wanted list at a roadblock at Hat Bracha. "He was disguised



### Red Cross concerned over use of emblem in Colombian rescue

August 6, 2000 - Updated 17:34 GMT (13:34 HKT)

**STORY HIGHLIGHTS**

- ICRC Defense minister told
- International committee pro
- 12 hostages were rescued
- Misuse of emblem could be

Read Article in World »

ICRM - The International Committee of the Red Cross expressed its concern Wednesday over what may have been the improper use of its emblem in the daring rescue last month of 15 hostages in Colombia.

"We are in contact with the Colombian authorities to ask for further clarifications as to exactly what happened," ICRC Deputy Director of Operations Dominik Stihlhard said in a written statement.

Video and photographs originally shown to CNN appeared to show one of the hostage rescuers wearing a bib with a red cross on it, and Colombian President Álvaro Uribe admitted July 15 that Colombian military intelligence used a single Red Cross symbol in the rescue mission.

The ICRC statement said video aired on Colombian television earlier this week "reveals





# The Combat Life Saver is a combattant, NOT authorized to use the Red Cross



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## 3. Military considerations

- a. Medical and Tactical Mission
- b. Ennemi
- c. Terrain
- d. Troops
- e. Timing
- f. Civ considerations

# 3. Military considerations



**Medical mission of the BEL Medical component is the “Medical Mission in NATO Operations”:**

Ref: AJP 4.10(A), 1016. The mission of medical support in military operations is to support the mission, through conservation of manpower, preservation of life and minimisation of residual physical and mental disabilities. Appropriate medical support makes a major contribution to both force protection and morale by the prevention of disease, rapid evacuation and treatment of the sick, wounded and injured and the return to duty of as many individuals as possible.

The military medical mission is not a humanitarian mission

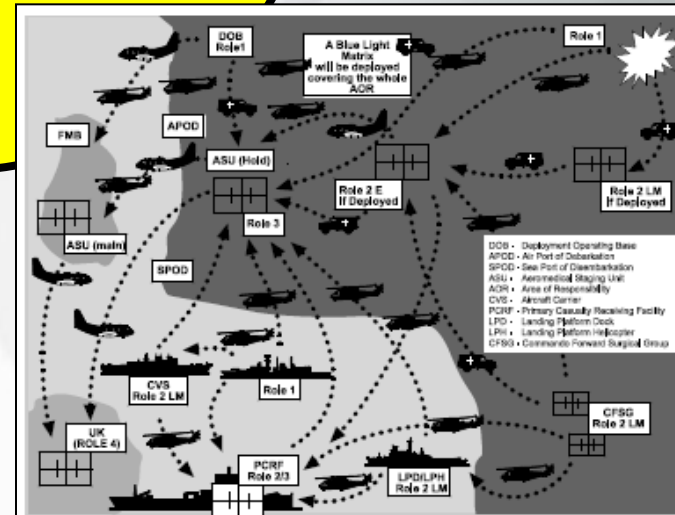


Figure 2.1 – Joint Medical Support to Operations, Showing Casualty Flows between Roles and the Contributions of the Components





# 3. Military considerations

## a. Medical and Tactical Mission

- 1) Military medical mission
- 2) Mission authorized PAR:
  - a) Save scarce medical resources
  - b) Avoid Humanitarian Assistance when not ordered
- 3) Meet the surgical timelines: 60 min to the Fd Hosp
  - a) Collection of the wounded: shared mission with the combattants
  - b) Extraction: the tactical mission is the medical mission
  - c) Med Troops inside Comb Troops iot the meet the timelines
- 4) Conform to the Tac plan of the supported component
  - a) support/ enable the fight
  - b) Don't mix a Red Cross with Combattants
  - c) Respect the collective defense and FP measures
  - d) Med Troops have same mobility, survivability as combattants
- 5) Consider the effect on the mission of targetted Med Troops

# « Collection of wounded »

## The tactical mission is the medical mission







# Avoid humanitarian swarming



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# 3. Military considerations

## a. Medical and Tactical Mission

## b. Ennemi

### 1) Modus operandi?

- a) Does he fire more often on something he sees better?
- b) Are emblems targetted (« san terrorism »)
- c) What is the local red cross score?

### 2) C<sup>2</sup> structure or isolated cells? Behaves like a combattant?

- a) LOAC known, understood, applied by actors in the battlespace
- b) Is there a reasonable (non)reciprocity

### 3) Which signs does he use?

### 4) Conduct a thorough « Threat Evaluation » as part of the Med Intelligence Preparation of the Battlespace



# Cellular- lacunar combat



DEFCOL- AMED



## 3. Military considerations

a. Medical and Tactical Mission

b. Ennemi

c. Terrain

- 1) Technical characteristics not make emblem visible: all round or selective visibility
- 2) Supplementary signs/ sounds/ active/ passive beacons, trackers, IT enabler
- 3) GROUND- AIR and SEA
- 4) Regional differences





# 3. Military considerations



274th Medical Detachment



DEFCOL- AMED



# 3. Military considerations

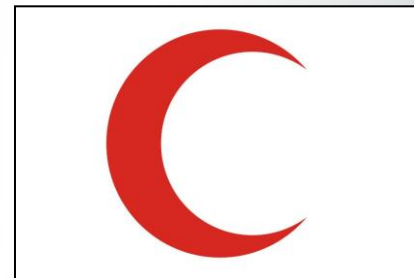
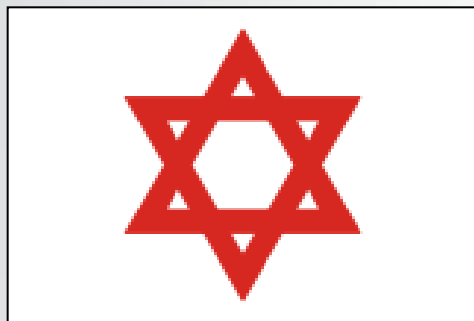
- a. Medical and Tactical Mission
- b. Ennemi
- c. Terrain
- d. Troops



- 1) Exclusive use assets? « dedicated or dual use »?
- 2) Attitude of coalition Troops? Joint combined use and SOP's?
- 3) Which signs are (not) used?
- 4) Host Nation Support- In Country  
Ressources: IO, NGO, PME
- 5) Is it feasible to separate combattants from non combattants?











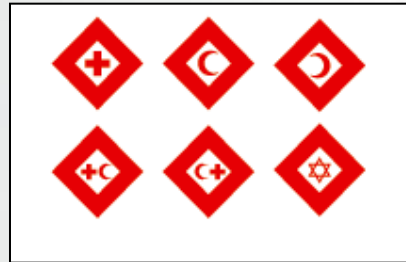
# 3. Military considerations

- a. Medical and Tactical Mission
- b. Ennemi
- c. Terrain
- d. Troops
- e. Timing
  - 1) Change is authorized
  - 2) Response assets: no time to change
- f. Civ considerations



# 3. Military considerations

- a. Medical and Tactical Mission
- b. Ennemi
- c. Terrain
- d. Troops
- e. Timing
- f. Civ considerations
  - a. Cultural connotations (« red crusaders »)
  - b. Avoid assimilation with IO/ NGO
  - c. Expectations of red cross





## 4. Conclusions

- a. There is a relative obligation to use the red cross
- b. A red cross should augment protection
- c. (Non) use of a red cross has potential consequences
- d. Carefull analysis of military considerations indicate the use of the red cross
- e. Modern medical support requires combattant and non combattant assets to execute the medical mission
- f. Variable use of the red cross, but invariable legal position of non combattant
- g. Modern tactical activities put pressure on the correct use of the red cross: INT, hearts and minds, eligibility for care,...
- h. Misuse in BEL military is rare, has no disciplinary character and is due to punctual ignorance or inadvertance



# Questions please



*"It's okay, Joe. I'm a noncombatant."*