The General Jonas Žemaitis
Military Academy of Lithuania –
Institution of Changes

Ms. Alina Zebrauskaite-Yepishkiniene

Historical review of officer training in Lithuania

In 1918, after the declaration of the Independence of Lithuania, the Armed Forces of the country experienced shortage of officers. On 25 January 1919, a Military School was established in Kaunas. Its first chief was Gen. J. Galvydis-Bykauskas. Initially, studies lasted half a year or a year because after a short training the majority of the trainees were immediately sent to the front. From 1921 to 1929 advanced courses for officers were conducted to which courses for military materiel officers were attached in 1926. Here qualified pioneers, railway, communications and transport officers were trained. By 1940, the School had trained 21 classes of officers. In the autumn of 1940, with the beginning of the Soviet occupation, the Military School was transferred to Vilnius and stopped operating.

In 1931 a Higher Military School was established in Kaunas. Its objective was to train officers with higher education eligible to work at the General Staff and command major military units. The chiefs of the School were Gen. P. Kubiliunas, Gen. V. Karvelis and Gen. St. Račtikis. By 1940, three officer classes had been trained. During the Soviet occupation a lot of graduates and instructors were deported to the Soviet Union or killed. This meant that the officer training in Lithuania, which at that time was sufficiently strengthened, was disrupted.

In 1990, after the restoration of the independence of Lithuania, the Armed Forces of the country were in need of officers. Therefore, the same year an officer course at the Department of National Defence was established in Kaunas. Junior reserve officers that had served in the
Soviet Army underwent re-qualification there.

The Gen. Zemaitis Military Academy of Lithuania started as a National Defence School, which was established in 1992 under the decision of the Government of the Republic of Lithuania. Young people were trained here in two specialties: mechanized riflemen and border guards. By the 18 January 1994 decision of the Seimas of the Republic of Lithuania, the Military Academy of Lithuania was established. In May of the same year the Seimas of the Republic of Lithuania approved the Statute of the Academy which stated that the Military Academy of Lithuania is a higher educational institution training commanders and specialists of top qualification for the Lithuanian Armed Forces. In 1998, the Academy became directly responsible to the Minister of National Defence.

The foresight of the Military Academy of Lithuania

By the 24 February 2000 Order of the Minister of National Defence Col. Algis Vaičeliūnas, who is a graduate from the Bundeswehr Commander Academy, Germany, was appointed the Commandant of the Military Academy of Lithuania and the period of changes started.

“I started heading the Military Academy of Lithuania in the year 2000 which is a significant historical point relating to the new social existence that embodies the era of changes, new information technologies and awareness”, says

Photo by K. Dijokas

The Commandant of the Military Academy of Lithuania Col. Algis Vaičeliūnas.
Col. A. Vaiceliunas. “The experience and skills accumulated by a number of developing countries are becoming a needless stuff in the 21st century, and consequently we face the necessity to essentially reform the professional training system. The year 2001 applicants to the Military Academy will find it completely changed. Changes will be reflected not only in the programs of studies but also in the possibility for the future cadets to choose one of the 3 Bachelor-degree programs - personnel management, transport and engineer management, and international relations. There are more novelties to come which, you will learn about after having read this article I consider the Military Academy as the institution of changes. Change is the only steady process in the world.

To change in this variable world is a must although many people have not been able to do that in the ten years of independence. I am deeply convinced that we will succeed in everything and the Military Academy will be one of the most modern and prestigious higher educational institutions in the nearest future. The first signs have already appeared – this is indicated by the constantly growing number of applicants.

The Academy, on competitive basis, will accept high school graduates not older than 23 years of age and 25-year-old conscripts. Both will have to pass a professional suitability test and meet medical standards.

This year, 540 candidates including 62 females expressed their wish to participate in the entrance competition. 281 school-leavers met physical test requirements. This year, for the first time in the history of the Academy, we have 8 female cadets, which testifies to the irreversible processes not only at the Military Academy of

Female cadet of the Military Academy of Lithuania.
Lithuania but also in the democratization of the country.

First of all, I felt the necessity to reconsider the mission of the organization, the corporate philosophy, as well as such concepts as perfection, quality of education, innovations, imparting of national identity, patriotism, humane qualities of the future leader and, what is most important, strategic aims, necessary to achieve and retain the competitive edge.

"It is inventiveness and not resources available that the future depends on. Inventiveness springs not from the elaborate strategic architect, but from a deeply perceived objective together with the vision of the tempting possibilities of the future."

Mission of the Military Academy of Lithuania

The Gen. Jonas Zemaitis Military Academy of Lithuania (MAL) is a higher state officer training and qualification improvement military institution of the Republic of Lithuania – a constituent part of the National Defence System responsible to the Minister of National Defence. The Academy is also an independent scientific and educational institution training scientists, and developing and popularizing fundamental and applied military sciences.

The main tasks of MAL, defined by the Law on the Organization of the National Defence System and Military Service as well as the Academy statute, are the following:

- to train qualified officers and military unit leaders for the National Defence System of the Republic of Lithuania, providing them with higher education;
- to improve the qualification of officers of the National Defence System;
- to train officers in accordance with the NATO requirements and methodology;
- to provide conditions and possibilities for studying personnel to achieve a high proficiency level in English language, which is necessary for the integration into NATO, and for cooperation with military structures of NATO countries, as well as participation in international exercises, peacekeeping and other operations on equal basis;

All graduates of the program are appointed to command a motorized infantry platoon or take a position analogous to that of the platoon commander. Qualification requirements determine the mandatory training level of the officer and they define the post of the platoon commander and the educational objectives as well as tasks. The platoon commander is responsible for the platoon, its training, discipline, administration, safeguarding and maintenance of weapons, equipment and other requisites.

The main task of the platoon commander is to command the assigned platoon at the barracks, during training and military activities. He must be able to organize and execute combat, peacekeeping, territorial defence, military assistance to civilians and evacuation actions, humanitarian assistance and other tasks under various physical, organizational and psychological conditions. While executing tasks, he has to effectively utilize his knowledge and skills acquired during his studies.

An officer graduate from the Academy will have the following merits dutiful,
independent, have high moral principles, strong will and leadership capabilities. He must not skip responsibilities, and he must tend to the welfare of his soldiers, serve his country faithfully, and follow the Oath and laws of Lithuania, the Statute requirements and the orders of his commanders. He must keep his professional confidentiality of the state and military and improve his military knowledge and skills. An officer graduate has to be able to organize education and training of military personnel, uphold combat readiness, discipline and order in accordance with combat documents and statute requirements. He must be physically fit and hardened, well versed in military training subjects, pass the required tests and examinations with not less than 7 points out of the ten-point national assessment scale and achieve not lower than Level 2 (STANAG 6001) of English language proficiency. An officer graduate must be able to use computers in his every day work, apply the knowledge gained in management, pedagogy, psychology, ethics, aesthetics, law, tactics and general military training, weaponry, military and specialized material, engineer training, protection from means of mass destruction, military topography, means of communication, medical training, military administration and methodology.

In case of war or crisis MAL will operate as a military unit. The Commander of the Armed Forces in this case assigns tasks to the Academy.

By the year 2000 MAL has prepared 1294 officers and 43 NCOs. 185 officers had completed the studies at the Correspondence Department. 499 young people with university education had completed a platoon commander course run in accordance with the military training and had undergone a military training course. English language teaching and computer skill training were granted special attention. 198 officers attended a course in English and 84 in computers.


Officer training perspectives in Lithuania

In Brussels at the end of October 2000, Lithuanian diplomats and defense officials submitted to NATO Political Committee on Senior Level an updated programme for the year 2001 on the preparation of Lithuania for membership in NATO. Thereby Lithuania has officially begun the second round of preparation for the membership in compliance with the Membership Action Plan confirmed last year in Washington. A long-term development plan of the Armed Forces of Lithuania was also submitted in Brussels. The Minister of National Defense and the former Head of the Lithuanian Mission of NATO, ambassador L. Linkevicius stated that the current NATO command positively assesses the progress made by the Armed Forces of Lithuania, especially in the military personnel training and educational system.

We will try to make a short survey of the officer career possibilities in present-
day Lithuania. While studying at the Military Academy of Lithuania cadets cover the overall infantry platoon commander programme, perform practice in military units, and participate in exercises. After having attained the program and passed the qualification requirements, they acquire qualifications as a motorized riflemen platoon commander and are commissioned as lieutenants.

A Bachelor graduate in military science is assigned to one of the units of the Armed Forces of Lithuania and starts his service as the platoon commander. The top of his career in this position might be the deputy company commander.

After 3–4 years of service in the Armed Forces, in the position of the platoon commander or deputy company commander, the officer might have a possibility to achieve higher qualification in 2 ways:
- Serve in the battalion staff or department (not in a commanding position) and attend a shorter Course for Captains afterwards.
- Complete a 6-month Course for Captains.

The Course for Captains is conducted in 2 stages: company tactics and company service, battalion tactics and battalion staff service. This course can also be associated with the Masters-degree program (stage 2). Officers that have most successfully completed stage 1 studies and achieved the best results in their service could be sent to study at stage 2. While studying at stage 2 the officer must achieve Level 3 of the English language proficiency. The Course for Captains is planned to start in 2002. The Minister of National Defence will determine the number of students.

After the Course for Captains, officers can continue their career in 2 directions:
- The most distinguished and best course officers who have already served in the battalion staff are assigned the position of the company commander.
- Those with no service in the battalion staff will be assigned for service and afterwards promoted to company commander.

After 3-4 years of service in the Armed Forces as company commander, battalion staff officer and officers, who are studying for battalion commander or brigade staff officer can be selected for a Senior Staff Course at the Baltic Defence College. At the Baltic Defence College the officers study for a year and this education will qualify them for a position as members of a battalion staff or a higher position. The officers can also go abroad to study at military academies of various NATO countries.

The officer service system in the Armed Forces promotes constant improvement and wishes to seek higher levels of education and professional knowledge.

**Commander Development at the Military Academy of Lithuania**

Commander development is a gradual, progressive, and integral part of the military training when the cadets train as commanders of academic military units, execute tactical tasks during field training, and practice in Army units as platoon sergeants and platoon commanders.

While studying at the Military Academy of Lithuania cadets are granted the
possibility to obtain practical skills as commanders of military units at different levels.

In the first term, cadets are taught individual military actions in different types of battle in summer and winter to get acquainted with the organizational structure of the Army and with the evolution of weapon and their classification. Training in shooting of automatic weapons and small arms is conducted.

In the second term, cadets are trained to function as infantry squad leaders under different conditions that simulate various battle types. They must learn to operate as squad commanders.

Cadets get acquainted with illuminating and signaling means, learn to handle optical surveillance devices and different medium and heavy machine guns. They learn to master the basics of internal and external ballistics, and learn to conduct theoretical and practical exercises in shooting and armaments.

The second-year cadets’ functions as mentors for the first-year cadets. The objective of the 3rd and 4th terms is to teach cadets to perform the functions of the infantry platoon commander such as planning and executing various combat operations both in daytime and at night, as well as to fulfil various duties of platoon soldiers. They get acquainted with sniper rifles, Makarov, Czech, Colt pistols, modern submachine guns, night-vision devices, APC armaments, and infantry combat vehicles.

In the 3rd year of studies cadets perform the duties of the squad leader, platoon sergeant and company sergeant. In the 5th term the cadets are trained to perform as platoon commanders executing defensive and offensive operations under different circumstances and are also trained to execute territorial defence operations with no support from central place.

Cadets are acquainted with optical and lasers range-finders, modern mortars, and must master the firing rules from the APC armaments.

In the 6th term cadets get acquainted with the duties of the company commander. They organize, plan and execute different combat operations. Young men get acquainted with modern automatic grenade launchers, anti-tank guided missile system, portable air-defence weapons, and they learn to fire small arms, antitank weapons, and mortars and antitank grenade launchers.

After 3 years of studies the cadets will practice for four weeks in Army units as platoon sergeant and platoon commander. The aim is to provide cadets with self-confidence and experience, methodological and leadership skills in conducting soldiers’ training, in planning, organizing and controlling every day activities. It is also the aim to improve the skills to employ and maintain armaments and machinery.

In the 4th year of studies cadets perform the duties of the platoon commander and battalion commander. Rotation is applied meaning that after a certain period of time the cadet may be promoted to a higher position, remain in the same position or demoted to a lower position if he is not able to handle his position’s responsibilities.

The objective of the 7th term is to acquaint cadets with the work of the battal-
ion staff and its departments, to plan operations and prepare combat orders for defensive and offensive operations. Future commanders learn about different types of Command posts, their siting and installation. They also acquire knowledge in the rules for accounting and storing of armaments and ammunition, and familiarize themselves with heavy antitank grenade launchers and recoilless rifles.

In the final semester the structure of the United Nations is presented as well as its operations, its objectives and its tasks. During the combat commander course the readiness of cadets to carry out the duties of the platoon commander in various combat operations both in daytime and night is tested.

### Field Training at the Central Firing Range

Every summer cadets go for 3-4 week training at the Central Firing Range. The training aims at developing future leaders, expanding knowledge of combat operations and developing practical skills, psychological endurance and improving cadets’ physical fitness. After they have achieved the theoretical knowledge practical skills are assessed.

2-3 weeks of the summer training is assigned for tactics. The training in tactics, firing, and combat support (field fortifications, installation and negotiation of obstacles, demolition operations, protection against means of mass destruction, communications etc.) is conducted at the firing range. During tactical training ca-
det’s leadership-skills are developed by using various forms and methods of teaching (leading sub-units, to arrange ambushes, marches, raids, attacks, setting up camps, guarding and defending objects, and organizing offence and defence under various conditions). Combined training exercises are held during which cadets are assigned special tasks, which they must execute independently. Having been given assignments, cadets make decisions, prepare orders and command sub-units. Later, the results are discussed, instructors point out shortcomings and assess the work of cadets. To prepare the cadets for organizing and conducting firing exercises in sub-units, they learn to fire weapons assigned to the squad and platoon in daytime and at night under any weather conditions.

In combat support training the cadets are taught general military engineering: to install and negotiate engineer obstacles and barricades (antitank and antipersonnel minefields, wire and other obstacles), to set up battle field fortifications and structures, to camouflage positions, to execute the simplest demolitions as well as organize and uphold radio communications among sub-units. They learn to teach military personnel of sub-units to operate as sub-unit commanders in case radioactive, chemical, bacteriological and incendiary weapons are used. Field training is the basic form of training and it provides a possibility to consolidate theoretical knowledge under combat like conditions.

The System of Studies at the Military Academy of Lithuania

The Academy provides training for cadets and officers. Applicants admitted to the Academy are also called up for the mandatory military service, which they perform during their studies at the Academy.

During eight terms, three blocks of studies – academic, military science, formation and physical training are allotted an approximately equal period of time. In other words, the Academy combines academic and military training.

Summing up the overall duration of the four-year studies (Daytime Department), cadets undergo 1,588 hours of lectures. Their practical training covers 2,548 hours (tactical field training takes up more than 1,000 hours) and 2,406 hours are allotted for self-study (homework). The overall time amount of studies are 6,542 hours which is sufficient for cadets who have successfully completed their studies for the Bachelor’s degree.

Academic studies comprise three parts:
- Humanities and social education;
- Technical education;
- Management education.

Humanities and social education studies include foreign languages, history of the State of Lithuania, political science, ethics, aesthetics, pedagogy, psychology, logic, philosophy, sociology, and language culture.

Technical education consists of mathematics, physics, chemistry, applied mechanics computer science, engineering computer graphics, electrical engineering, and electronics.

Management education comprises management, economics, fundamentals of law,
mathematical methods in management, accounting and finance, marketing, management information systems, psychology, and other studies. Theoretical military studies encompass courses in staff service, military administration, history of military art, and safety and ergonomics also known as special management education. Cadets also take many special development courses: in tactics, armaments and shooting, wheeled combat vehicles, combat vehicle maintenance technologies, combat engineer support, protection against mass destruction means, communications, commander training etc.

During the time assigned for formation and physical training, cadets study the statute of the national defence, take part in formation and physical training classes, combined field training, and during the second term in the fourth year of studies cadets take state examinations in tactics and management.

Starting in the year 2001 studies of how to reform the military educational system are planned: There will be a Stage I consisting of basic university studies, and upon completion of which the Bachelors Degree is conferred (4 years). Here the basic studies of military training are included, upon completion of which cadets are conferred the qualification of platoon commander and as lieutenants.

It is planned to organize basic studies for the Bachelor’s degree according to the following programs of studies - Engineering management - Personnel management - International relations

Stage II is studies for the Masters-degree alongside the course for captains (1.5 - 2 years). It is planned to conduct programs of studies for the Masters-degree in two directions - management and international relations. Starting in the year 2002, the studies will be conducted parallel to a 6 month course for captains.

The course for captains involves company commander and junior staff officer training. The program of the course must conform to similar course programs of the other Baltic States, and must be coordinated with the study-program at the Baltic Defense College because graduates from the captains course can apply for Baltic Defence College.

Specialists from the American Command & General Staff College, the German Bundeswehr, and military experts from Denmark assisted in preparing this program.

The Military Academy of Lithuania will continue to organize a platoon commander course for officers and civilians with university education from the national defense system and also a Reserve officer course for students from higher educational institutions.

---

Survey of the Departments for Academic Training

Academic training subunits include 5 departments:
1. The Department of Management;
2. The Department of Foreign Languages;
3. The Department of Applied Sciences;
4. The Department of Humanities;
5. The Department of General Technical Sciences.
Most of the teachers in all the departments hold degrees in higher education. Most of them have graduated from Vilnius University and Pedagogical University. 11% of the teachers are professors (doctors habilitus); 33% are associate professors (doctors). Thus, the teachers at the Military Academy of Lithuania are highly qualified and able to provide cadets with the academic education necessary to acquire the Bachelor’s degree.

In the Department of Management there are 19 teachers, including 2 doctors habilitus, professors, 9 doctors and 8 lecturers. Teachers base their lectures on the experience of West European and North American countries, the US West Point Academy, the Canadian Royal Military College, and the German higher military Academies. They carry out scientific research in the field of the state monetary policy and currency market, analyze the evolution of the democratic relationship between civilians and military personnel, and explore the history of the Armed Forces and sociological changes in military structures.

The level of Bachelor-degree training in management at the Military Academy of Lithuania corresponds to the university level. This is confirmed by the fact that even 45% of Bachelor-degree graduates have continued their Master-degree studies at Vilnius University.

There are 21 teachers at the Department of Foreign Languages: 15 teach English, 4 teach German and 2 teach French. The English Language Center with 4 teachers is attached to the Department of Foreign Languages. Officers and employees from the National Defence System are taught here. They must reach Level 3 of English language proficiency in accordance with STANAG 6001, which means fluent professional communication.

In the course at the Military Academy the cadets are taught English and they must acquire Level 2 in English language proficiency. In the third year of studies they are given a possibility to choose a second foreign language: either German or French. Lecture-rooms well equipped with tape and video recorders facilitate the study of foreign languages. A modern electronic system of imparting and assessing knowledge has also been installed in some of the lecture-rooms. This allows lecturers to interface with the individual learning process of the cadet at all times in order to specify or correct his or her answer to the questions without interfering with the learning process of others.

There are 8 teachers at the Department of Applied Sciences: 2 professors (doctors habilitus), 5 associate professors (doctors) and 1 lecturer. The Head of the Department, prof. R. Rakauskas has taken part in many prestigious European and World congresses, and scientific NATO activities. He has conducted lectures in the USA and is the author of monographs and textbooks.

Scientists of this Department carry out scientific research in the following directions: mathematical modeling, application of parallel computing to the military science, creation of laser and real time management systems and applying them in Ecology, Biology and Military Science.
The level of teaching physics and mathematics for the Bachelors Degree at the daytime department corresponds to the teaching for the Bachelors Degree of engineer specialties at Vilnius Gediminas Technical University.

There are 6 teachers at the Department of Humanities: 5 doctors and 1 doctor habilitus. The principal objectives of the studies are to develop “a citizen in uniform”, to foster cadets’ national consciousness and civil awareness, to install respect for the history and cultural heritage of their country, and to develop the integration of national and patriotic education of cadets into the learning process. Scientists of the Department write scientific studies in the following fields: formation of war psychology and the direction of its investigation in Lithuania in 1918 – 1940; the correct usage of military terms; the problem of the development of national identity, the history of pedagogy and Lithuanian school, etc.

In the Department of General Technical Sciences there are 10 teachers working including 2 professors (doctors habilits), 6 associate professors (doctors of sciences). Prof. A. Ambrazevicius was awarded a Republican premium for his merits in the field of thermal energetic. Since 1994 the teachers of the Department have issued 13 scientific methodological publications. In the Department there are specialized computer and structure classrooms as well as electrical engineering, electronics and chemistry laboratories where research work in the fields of automobile technology, electroenergetics, chemistry, explosives and computer science is carried out. The basic aim of studies in this Department is to provide cadets with theoretical knowledge and practical skills in the field of military materiel, on modern equipment, chemical substances and technologies and their application, and teach them computer skills on a user level.

Sport at the Military Academy of Lithuania

The Physical Training Section organizes physical training and sport activities. The basic sports are basketball, combat self-defence and wrestling, track- and field-athletics, cross-country race, triathlon, heavy athletics, weight lifting, football and boxing. Every year cadets and teachers participate in sports games. The Academy team successfully participates in the sports games of the National Defense System, in the higher school students and teachers championships in Lithuania, in competitions held in Vilnius and the Republic of Lithuania, in international competitions and tournaments and Sports games comprising Finland, Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania.

Since 1996 basketball players of the Academy have been participating in the prestigious Basketball Tournament of NATO Countries and their partners held in Belgium.

The team of runners, one of the strongest in the National Defense system, has won the race to “The Hill of Three Crosses”, five times in a row since 1994. The military personnel of the Academy widely participate in the international race “On the Road of Life and Death” to commemorate the events of January 13, 1991.
Library

Since 1994, the library of the Academy has become recognized as a scientific academic library. It is the youngest library among those of Lithuanian higher educational institutions.

The library has a very good collection of materials; therefore, cadets and scientists can be timely supplied with materials necessary for studies and work according to the teaching plans and programs. The library subscribes to more than 60 periodicals in different languages. The library stock amounts to 80,000 copies (19,000 titles).

Interlibrary orders are also available for the readers. The library renders services for 1,125 users. There are departments of teaching materials and fiction and also a 60-seat reading room. The library is presently being modernized. The computer program ALEPH-500 has been acquired. It will enable the creation of an electronic catalogue as well as integration into the combined electronic catalogue of higher educational institutions. An Internet reading room is being installed.

International cooperation

The Academy participates in diverse international Cooperation Programs together with military personnel of Great Britain, Denmark and the United States of America.

According to the bilateral cooperation plan with the Armed Forces of Great Britain the Academy has for two years been running a basic military training course assisted by British officers and sergeants as instructors.

Friendly relations have also been established with the Danish Royal Military Academy. Working meetings are held, and exchanges of cadets and officers take place.

The Armed Forces of the United States of America, primarily the West Point Academy, provide methodological assistance on officer training and administration issues. Visits are exchanged, and seminars are arranged.

Cadets from the Saint-Cyr Academy, France, have made presentations at the Academy. Officers and cadets of the Academy participate in different international exercises arranged according to the program “Partnership for Peace”. In addition, the Academy has close cooperation with Higher Military Schools of Latvia, Estonia, the Czech Republic and other countries.

Resume

At present, the Military Academy of Lithuania is undergoing fast changes. A three-direction Bachelor-degree program has been developed. It comprises personnel management, engineering management and international relations. For this purpose, the material base has been established, staff positions determined and teachers selected.

In 2001 a training program for a course for captains as well as a three directions: Masters degrees in personnel management, engineering management and international relations will be developed.

Parallel to the preparation for the course for captains, similar programs in NATO countries will be analyzed, a semi-
nar conducted by the USA experts will be arranged, and instructors that have battalion commander’s or a similar positions will be selected.

During the preparatory stage for Master-degree studies, the Academy is going to expand the scope of scientific work, promote research in personnel management, development of security strategy and defence economy as well as mathematical modeling of military operations and other fields.

Wide-ranging relations and common research work with military academies of NATO countries and Lithuanian research institutions are planned.

Also, the infrastructure of the Military Academy of Lithuania will be developed to ensure proper training and education of cadets and officers and living conditions will be improved.

Only having completed these above-mentioned essential and necessary reforms, the level of officer training in Lithuania could be expected to correspond to NATO Standards.