



Royal Netherlands Army

FACTBOOK

Korps Commandotroepen

PAST - PRESENT - FUTURE





Cover quick facts:

Green beret

After the establishment of the first commando units in Scotland, headgear was needed that would distinguish the commandos from all other military personnel. Green was considered the most suitable colour and it became the symbol of all commando units.

Motto

The motto of the Korps Commandotroepen is Nunc aut Nunquam: Now or Never. It represents the perseverance and indomitable spirit that characterize all commandos.

Colofon

This factbook was published by:

Royal Netherlands Army
Communication Section
Korps Commandotroepen

Engelbrecht van Nassaukazerne
Parabaan 10, Roosendaal
Tel: (+31) 165 358 023

Design/ DTP
Communication Section KCT | B. de Graaff

Photographs:
Cover, p. 3, B. Bijkerk | p. 1, 11, 14, 17 L. van Westervolgen | p. 15, V. Franke | p. 5, R. Gieling

Translation:
Netherlands Ministry of Defence Translation Service | R. van Heck | R.W.A. van den Berg

2014 | first edition



Foreword

This factbook provides information about a unique unit within the Netherlands armed forces. Part of the Royal Netherlands Army, the Korps Commandotroepen (KCT) is ready for deployment 24 hours a day for operations worldwide. The most valuable aspect in these operations is the human factor: the Special Operations Commando. Our people are carefully selected and undergo the most arduous training to be able to practise this profession. Central to our training and to our work are the core values which form the foundation of the KCT:

Courage, Judgement, Loyalty, Honour and Pride

From the very beginning in 1942, the Korps Commandotroepen has contributed to military operations all over the world. In the last twenty years, the commandos have been deployed almost continuously: from Bosnia to Afghanistan and from Iraq to Mali. A significant number of commandos have been awarded for bravery during these missions.

Despite the secret nature of Special Operations, I think it is important to inform the society about who we are and what we do. Every day we are working for peace and security in our society, side by side, along with our sister services, interagency- and coalition partners.

Take a look at the words that make up the logo on the opposite page: we are the Korps Commandotroepen. Our trademark is the green beret, our motto Nunc aut Nunquam: Now or Never.

I hope you enjoy reading this unique insight in our unit.

Colonel J.R. (Jan) Swillens
Commander, Korps Commandotroepen

Table of Contents

Foreword	1
The Korps Commandotroepen	
Mission	4
Principal tasks	5
Strength	6
The future	7
Locations	8
Organisation	10
Commandos tell their story	
Commandos tell their story	9,33
Training and specialisations	
Special Operations Training Company	12
Basic training	13
Individual specialisations	14
Counterterrorism	15
Infiltration methods	16
Joint Fires	17
History and operations	
History	20
Operations from 1942 to present	22
Materiel	
Weapon systems	25
Mobility	26
Commando for life!	
Killed in action	29
The Commando Foundation	29
Honours and awards	
Honours and awards	31

Quick facts:

The beginning

On 22 March 1942, 48 volunteers of the 'Prinses Irene' Brigade started the commando training program in the Scottish Highlands. This date is considered to be the date of establishment of the Korps Commandotroepen.

Deployments

Since 1991, the Korps Commandotroepen has been deployed almost continuously. This makes it one of the most frequently deployed units in the Netherlands armed forces.



Initial Commando Training
work together, toil together, suffer together

The Korps Commandotroepen

Mission

The mission of the Korps Commandotroepen can be covered in one sentence:

The Korps Commandotroepen is immediately deployable for Special Operations, anywhere in the world.

The Korps Commandotroepen is ready for operational deployment anywhere in the world, 365 days a year, 24 hours a day. Within the spectrum of Special Operations, we distinguish three principal tasks: Military Assistance, Special Reconnaissance and Direct Action. When we discuss full-spectrum Special Operations it involves all three principal tasks, as described on the next page.



South Sudan, 18 December 2013

Wednesday afternoon, 18 December 2013. KCT personnel were on parade for a special roll call. That afternoon two combat badges and two red honorary cords were awarded. Just as the last handshakes were being given, the KCT Commander's phone buzzed. It was an order from the Directorate of Operations: 'The Ministry of Foreign Affairs requests assistance in evacuating Dutch nationals from South Sudan. Estimated time of departure from Eindhoven Airport is half past seven this evening.' This meant there were just four hours left to get personnel and equipment ready. Parallel and collaborative planning was started immediately, focusing on logistics and intelligence. The two stand-by teams were briefed and ready for deployment well ahead of time, as were the support personnel.

By 20 December, the Non-combatant Evacuation Operation of around 80 people from South Sudan was completed successfully. In the night of 21 December, after thorough debriefing, the KCT could look back on a successful operation.

Quick facts:

SOF truths

- Humans are more important than hardware.
- Quality is better than quantity.
- SOF cannot be mass produced.
- Competent SOF cannot be created after emergencies occur.
- Most Special Operations require non-SOF support.

Principal tasks

Special Operations can be divided into three principal tasks:

1

Military Assistance

Providing assistance to foreign military units:

- Instruction and training of security forces
- Advising
- Mentoring/partnering

2

Special Reconnaissance

Gathering intelligence:

- Environmental reconnaissance
- Target assessment
- Threat assessment
- Post-Strike Reconnaissance

3

Direct Action

Offensive tasks:

- Raids, ambushes and assaults
- Terminal Guidance Operations
- Recovery Operations
- Precision Destruction Operations

SOF activities within the Allied Joint Operations

SOF principal tasks are applied to support the activities below:

- Counter-insurgency (COIN) • Counterterrorism (CT) • Hostage Release Operation (HRO) • Faction Liaison

Strength

Core values of the Korps Commandotroepen:

Courage

A commando does what is necessary, regardless of the personal consequences.

Judgement

*Act boldly, unconventionally and surprisingly.
A commando is always accountable for what he does.*

Loyalty

Loyal to your mission, loyal to your comrades, loyal to the unit and loyal to yourself.

Honour

It is a point of honour to never give up and always bring out the best in ourselves.

Pride

Proud of our unit, our history, our traditions and our deeds.

Our mission is clear: to be immediately deployable for Special Operations anywhere in the world. That not only requires an excellent level of training among the personnel as well as availability of materiel, but also professional logistic support and a highly functional headquarters to allow rapid deployment. At the KCT, everything is geared towards the success of the commandos 'in the field'.

Our core values are our strength. They play a pivotal role in the selection process and define our identity. Many consider physical aspects as decisive on the battlefield, but nothing could be further from the truth. The true strength, and the difference, lies in the mental component: character and the will. Commandos must be self-sufficient, think and act independently and always be accountable for their actions. 'We instead of I', 'a deal is a deal' and 'if it isn't right, start again' are guiding principles in commando training and beyond.

The world around us changes fast and as a result so does our projected operational environment. The KCT must adopt an adaptive stance to anticipate our future operational challenges. We must continually analyse our environment and developments. What has happened in the past ten years, and what can we expect in the coming years? What have we learned on operations and how do we incorporate lessons learned and experiences in our training programmes and exercises? Focal areas include:

Personnel

Our strong belief that the human factor is decisive on the battlefield was reinforced during deployments in the last decennia. Teams consisting of a wide range of individuals led by well trained, experienced officers and NCOs are capable of conducting complex operations. In order to increase diversity and intellectual capabilities (for instance language proficiency), the KCT not only recruits from within the armed forces, but from civilian society as well. For that latter group of aspiring commandos, with no military experience, the requirements are set higher (at least senior vocational education level 3 or senior general secondary education, but preferably higher vocational education or a university degree). The reason for this is that these civilian candidates will have to be able to acquire a large amount of knowledge in a very short time, without being able to fall back on any military experience. Many enlisted commandos continue their military careers as officers or NCOs.

Materiel and infrastructure

The Korps Commandotroepen has its own headquarters and its own training facilities. It also has a logistics base, where materiel can be securely readied for deployment. With regard to materiel, there are close ties between the Korps Commandotroepen and the Special Operations Interservice Centre of Expertise. Recently, the close ties and extensive cooperation between the KCT (the user), industry and the Defence Materiel Organisation has resulted in innovative materiel programmes (Air Transportable Tactical SF vehicles, quads, autonomous parachutes etc.) Our people have state-of-the-art equipment: from communications equipment to weapons and from night vision equipment to ballistic vests.

Instruction and training

The training programs of the KCT are high-quality, challenging and very diverse. After all, the nature of future deployments remains unpredictable. The training programmes take place all over the world and are as realistic as possible. Jungle training in French Guiana, mountain training in Austria or Norway, counterterrorism training in the United States, etc. However, the intensive training schedule also requires close monitoring of the balance between work and homelife. The KCT not only provides support to our people, but also to the home front and our veterans. We owe that to them: 'Commando for life!'.

Cooperation

Special Operations almost always take place in an international context, involving special forces and other units of various nationalities. The KCT has a strong international focus and often conducts exercises with international partners. Our people attend courses at the NATO Special Operations Forces Headquarters in Mons, Belgium, and at the International Special Training Centre in Pfullendorf, Germany. Owing to the fact that the human domain is central to our future environment, language skills are key to mission success. There is also close cooperation at the national level with other units of the armed forces.

Our future is unknown and unknowable but KCT continuously tries to adapt to operational trends. We owe that to our society, our soldiers, and our heritage. Deployments may involve autonomous teams or larger configurations, referred to as Special Operations Task Groups. It is important to continue to improve, to be innovative, to incorporate lessons learned and to prepare for the future. After all, stagnation equals decline.

Locations

Engelbrecht van Nassau Barracks

The headquarters of the Korps Commandotroepen is situated in Roosendaal.

Van der Meer camp and Bakhuis Roozeboom camp

These locations near the town of Rucphen are where external training programmes and the commando training are conducted.

Rucphen mobilisation centre

This facility is used as a logistic support centre for the KCT.

Joint parachute school (DPS)

All military paratroopers are trained by the DPS, which is located at the Seelig Barracks in Breda.

Training center for riverine operations (TCWG)

This is the KCT center of expertise for riverine operations. It is situated on a tributary of the river Bergsche Maas, near Raamsdonksveer.

Quick facts:

Colour

In the past, a colour or standard was an indispensable reference point on the battlefield. It also had, and still has, a symbolic function. It was the soul of the unit. The troops would rally round the colour to protect it.

The Korps Commandotroepen received its colour from Her Majesty Queen Juliana on 22 December 1955.

The following feats of arms are embroidered on the colour:

Arakan 1944, Arnhem 1944, Nijmegen 1944, Eindhoven 1944, Vlissingen 1944, Westkapelle 1944, Djokjakarta 1948 and Midden-Sumatra 1948-1949



Her Majesty Queen Juliana presents the KCT with its colour

Commandos tell their story

Sergeant 1 Hessel, aged 26

"I have just completed the Initial Commando Training. It has been the toughest period of my life. The extreme conditions and the constant time pressure in particular mean you have to get the very best out of yourself. I didn't know you could learn so much about yourself in such a short period."

Now, in the Advanced Commando Training, the conditions are less extreme, but there is still a high expectation. In a few weeks, we will be doing Military Free-fall parachute jumping. It must be a great experience to jump out of the back of an aircraft with your team under cover of darkness."

Sergeant 1 Marc, aged 40

"After 14 years, I left the Korps Commandotroepen to run the family business. By now I have been working in the family business for seven years, and every day fall back on things I learned during commando training:

never give up, be accountable, trust the man next to you and have confidence in yourself."

Second Lieutenant Michiel, aged 32

"I joined the KCT from a civilian background in 2004. I always loved doing sports and, after my hotel management studies, I was looking for something challenging and varied. I found that in the KCT. After two deployments I decided to do the Officer Training and now I am a team commander. In my spare time, I am doing my Master's in International Relations."

Sergeant Class 1 Tom, aged 35

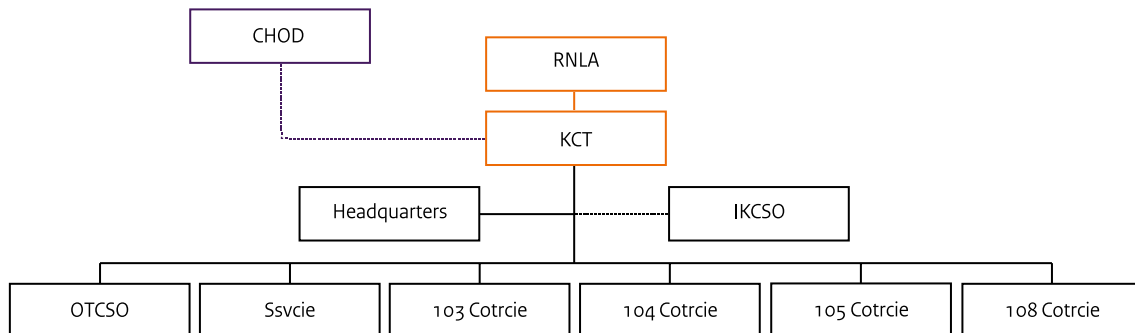
"In 2006, immediately after completing NCO training, I started my commando training and earned my green beret."

After four great years I left the service to become a branch manager. In that job I missed the variety and my mates. I have since reenlisted the service as a Joint Terminal Air Controller in one of the teams."

Organisation

The Korps Commandotroepen is part of the Royal Netherlands Army (RNLA). When the KCT is conducting operations, it is directed by the Chief of Defence (CHOD).

The KCT has its own headquarters, linked to the Special Operations Interservice Centre of Expertise (IKCSO) and four operational Commando Companies (Cotrcie). There is also a Special Operations Training Company (OTCSO) and a headquarters and combat service support company (Ssvcie).



Organisational structure

The OTCSO consists of various branches, each with its own focus. The Ssvcie supports the operational companies during training and on operational deployment, with the following elements:

- signals platoon;
- logistic platoon;
- medical platoon;
- command & control support section;
- two camps: Van der Meer Camp and Bakhuis Roozeboom Camp.

The Military Medical Service, Defence Social Services and the Spiritual Welfare Service are part of Support Command and provide support to the KCT, as does the Physical Education and Sports Organisation.

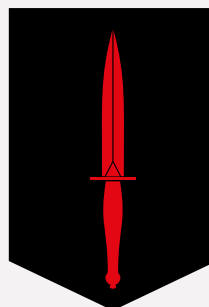
Quick facts:

Badges



Beret badge

The badge shows a styled 'W', referring to Queen Wilhelmina, the commandos fighting knife, the KCT's motto and a burning hand grenade, symbolising every commandos fighting spirit.



Sleeve badge

All emblems and badges of the KCT show the commando fighting knife. This infamous dagger has become the symbol of many commando units.



Achnacarry Castle, Scotland

During the Second World War, the estate was used for commando training

Training and specialisations

Special Operations Training Company

The Special Operations Training Company (OTCSO) provides the vast majority of the training for the KCT; including both initial and specialist training. The company consists of various instruction sections and platoons, in which specialists instruct and train personnel of the commando companies in all disciplines of Special Operations. In addition, they can serve as advisors in their area of expertise leading up to and during operational deployments. The training programmes directly incorporate the most recent lessons learned from operations, as well as technological innovations. The IKCSO a development branch responsible for tracking future trends and developing future concepts and equipment, plays an important role in the development of these innovations.

OTCSO includes:

- Commando Training Instruction Platoon
- Instruction Section for Operations in Mountainous Terrain
- Instruction Section for Operations in Riverine areas
- Instruction Platoon for Shooting & Special Techniques and Tactics
 - Counterterrorism Instruction Section
 - Demolition Instruction Section
 - Weapons Instruction Section
- Joint parachute school
 - Military Free Fall branch
 - Static line Instruction Section
 - Logistical support group

Quick facts:

64 programmes

The Special Operations Training Company provides 64 internal programs. This broad spectrum of training programmes allows the KCT to maintain skills and insure quality standards in order to be able to conduct Special Operations anywhere around the globe.

And more...

Training is provided in the areas of communications, intelligence and medical skills.

Personnel also attend training courses at various levels either within the Netherlands armed forces, internationally or specific units from sister services and contractors.



Riverine operations team in action

Basic training

The core values of Courage, Judgement, Loyalty, Honour and Pride are the foundation of our training activities and development of every Special Operations Commando (CoSpecOps). They feature throughout initial training and the students are assessed regularly in terms of these values. No concessions are made with regard to these values, so the Special Operations Commandos must meet the toughest requirements.

Candidates are primarily recruited from within the Defence organisation, but civilians may also apply. It is important for every candidate to consider his choice carefully. After applying, the candidates go through an extensive assessment and selection process.



Introduction Days KCT

This is the candidate's first introduction to the KCT. The aim is twofold. On the one hand, the candidate gets a realistic idea of the training programme and of what it means to be a Special Operations Commando. On the other hand, the candidate is tested extensively for physical and mental fitness by physiologists and psychologists. Civilians stay for a fourth day for the psychological assessment.

Basic Airmobile Training

After their physical and psychological assessments, civilian candidates must complete the Basic Airmobile Training before they can start the Introductory Training with the KCT.

Introductory Training (VO)

During Introductory Training, the basic military skills are further developed and the students are given an extensive physical work-up programme in preparation of the Initial Commando Training.

Initial Commando Training (ECO)

During Initial Commando Training, the training cadre assesses the commando attributes of the candidates. The eight week program follows a harsh regime, that exposes candidates to sleep and food deprivation and tests the physical and mental abilities of candidates. Every candidate is pushed to his limits to prepare them for the future operational environment. The program culminates in an endurance test in which all candidates have to apply all their skills. After successfully completing this ultimate endurance test candidates receive the green beret and become badged commandos.

Advanced Commando Training (VCO)

During Advanced Commando Training, the commando pushes his boundaries, learns special skills and performs under great pressure. The programme is divided into modules, such as:

- basic military free-fall training;
- operations in mountainous terrain;
- riverine operations;
- Special Operations in urban areas;
- ground mobility operations;
- close combat shooting skills;
- helicopter operations;
- medical training.

The last phase of the advanced commando course includes personal skill qualification courses: Demolition, Communication, Sniper or Medic.

After successfully completing all the phases of the commando training candidates are qualified Commandos Special Operations.



Sniper with Accuracy AW
on operations with SFTG Viper, 2007

Specialisations

Individual specialisations

The teams of the KCT must be able to operate independently, without direct outside support, for lengthy periods of time. That need for self-sufficiency requires a great deal of the individual operators. They need to acquire a plethora of skills. This is partly achieved during the Advanced Commando Training, when the operator is trained in one of the four specialisations present in every commando team: Demolition, Communication, Sniper or Medic. This specialist training generally takes 12 weeks.

Demolition

The Demolition Specialist is able to achieve highly accurate results using explosives. He is able to put objects out of action or force entry to buildings, without causing collateral damage. He can also identify and disable improvised explosive devices. The Demolition Specialist uses an array of explosives and equipment to carry out his work with surgical precision.

Communication

No communication no mission. Communications are crucial to Special Operations. The Communication Specialist is able to set up and operates all the state-of-the-art equipment that is taken on operations. If necessary, he can even carry out emergency repairs. Sometimes the team will need to be able to communicate with headquarters from very great distances. The Communication Specialist therefore has various types of communication equipment, such as satellite and high-frequency equipment. He is also trained in the use of audiovisual equipment.



Demolition specialist



Communication specialist

Quick facts:

1.800 metres

The Sniper has various weapons at his disposal. The longest range at which the Sniper can take out point targets is 1.800 metres. This is done using the Barrett M82 sniper rifle.

Ambulance

To train his medical skills, the Medic does an 'internship' with an ambulance crew or at an Accident & Emergency department at least once a year.

Around the world

Using tactical radio systems, the Communication Specialist can send videos or pictures to headquarters from around the world in just one minute.

Access

An assault team need not always enter a building through a door or a window. Using a specially designed wall charge, which consists of a plastic frame, some water and a small explosive charge, the Demolition Specialist can blow a hole the size of a man in the wall. This technique enables assault elements to gain and maintain initiative by achieving maximum surprise.

Sniper

The Sniper is specialised in the covert approach of targets in order to gather information or to eliminate them. Using special optical equipment and weapons, he can eliminate targets at distances up to 1.8 kilometres. He is specially trained and instructed in the many aspects involved in these assignments, such as shooting, camouflage, stalking, range finding, observation and memory training. The Sniper is expected to work alone or in a pair.

Medic

The Medic is able to treat serious injuries on the battlefield and stabilise one or more casualties for up to 72 hours. He has all the necessary equipment and is trained to carry out a large number of life-saving procedures that could normally only be done by a doctor. In addition to trauma treatment, the Medic can also provide his team members with regular medical care. He is, as it were, the team's 'family doctor' in the area of operations.

Counterterrorism (CT)

Counterterrorism is an overarching umbrella of offensive measures designed to reduce the vulnerability of our interests, our forces and our society. SOF conducts the full spectrum of Special Operations to mitigate terrorist threats. An example of operations within this context is hostage release operations in a non permissive environment. The CT training includes a 12 week course in which candidates acquire specific skills, like close combat shooting skills, special breaching techniques and hand to hand combat.



Medics in action during SFTG Viper, 2006

Deployment specialisations

In addition to the regular teams, the commando companies also have teams at their disposal that are specially trained and instructed in three types of deployment:

Parachute operations (HAHO/HALO)

Every team in the KCT is trained in military free fall (MFF). In addition there are free-fall teams which can be deployed covertly from altitudes up to ten kilometres. Conditions at this altitude dictate that operators must use oxygen equipment. KCT uses two methods of MFF insertion: High Altitude Low Opening (HALO) and High Altitude High Opening (HAHO).

Operations in mountainous terrain (OBT)

The OBT teams operate in various types of mountainous terrain and are able to conduct a wide range of special operations in a mountainous environment. They can also provide assistance to other units. They have state-of-the-art climbing equipment. The OBT teams of the KCT train in mountain regions all over the world, from the Alps to the Rocky Mountains.

Riverine operations (OWG)

The OWG teams are deployed primarily on rivers and other inland waterways. They are trained in a wide range of infiltrations techniques, both subsurface as surface. The teams use specialist diving equipment, specialized boats, and kayaks for infiltration purposes. Some of these boats can be dropped by parachute along with the team.

Quick facts:

60 kilometres

During a HAHO deployment, a team can travel distances of more than 60 kilometres from high altitude, without being detected by enemy radar.

Heeresbergführer

The OBT teams have their own mountain leaders who have been trained at the very highest level as Heeresbergführer. This allows them to operate independently in the toughest conditions in mountain regions anywhere in the world.

Rebreather

The divers of the OWG teams use specialist diving equipment, called rebreathers, which allows them to stay under water for long periods of time. One of the features of this system is that it does not emit any air bubbles, making it very suitable for covert approaches.



Oxygen Military free-fall

Joint Fires

JTAC

Joint Terminal Attack Controller

LTMO

Laser Target Marker Operator

QFO

Qualified Forward Observer



UAV operator

Raven mini-UAV operator, Germany
in preperation of the Mali mission

Joint fires

KCT is trained in various joint fires disciplines. These include: air support, ground bases and UAV. Every operator learns the basics of coordinating both air support and ground-based fire support, so that he can apply them in extreme conditions.

Joint Terminal Attack Controller (JTAC)

The JTAC is a qualified operator who is able to direct fighter aircraft, attack helicopters and armed UAVs over the area of operations, from a forward position. The JTAC training is given at the Netherlands Air/Ground Operations School (NLAGOS) and lasts ten weeks on average, followed by a six-month training period with the operator's own unit. During the training, the operator learns how to provide terminal guidance for various types of air support in complex operational conditions. In order to maintain his operational qualification, the JTAC must complete a practical test at least once every six months, in which real bombs are dropped in realistic scenarios. Air support can be a decisive enabler on the battlefield. Therefore JTACS are considered a mission essential capability.

Laser Target Marker Operator (LTMO)

In various aspects of his specialised task, the JTAC is supported by the LTMO. This operator is trained and certified to employ a LTD laser target marker/designator to designate targets for laser-guided ammunition. The LTMO is also the assistant JTAC and supports the JTAC in the deployment of air support. LTMO training is given at the NLAGOS and takes four weeks.

Qualified Forward Observer (QFO)

The QFO is a qualified operator who is able to direct ground-based fire support from various indirect weapons systems. As ground-based fire support is often not within sight of its target, it is dependent on forward observers to guide the munitions towards the target. QFO training is given at *Fire Support Command* and lasts eight weeks on average.

Unmanned Aerial Vehicle (UAV) operator

KCT employs a range of UAV. The Raven is a mini-UAV and is employed as an observation platform for several purposes, which include but are not limited to intelligence gathering and force protection. Each Raven system is piloted by two operators who can take over each other's duties.

UAV training is given at *Joint Intelligence, Surveillance, Target Acquisition and Reconnaissance Command* and takes four weeks.

Quick facts:

Reaper UAV

From the end of 2016, the MQ-6 Reaper UAV will enter the service of the Defence organisation. This is an unmanned aerial vehicle which can be deployed 24 hours a day, almost anywhere in the world. Information gathered by the Reaper can be sent directly to the ground station.

JTAC

A large number of operators in the KCT are trained as JTACs. This is necessary due to the nature of Special Operations. Teams often operate independently and rely on air support. The JTAC specialist is essential for coordinating the use of these assets.



Commando Memorial Spean Bridge, Scotland
3 commandos and the inscription "United we conquer"

History and operations



Commando training, Achnacarry Scotland
morning sports at the Commando Training Depot

History

1942

Establishment of No. 2 (Dutch) Troop

In 1942, 48 Dutch military personnel started the Commando course in Achnacarry, Scotland. In the end, 25 of them received their green berets. These men formed No. 2 (Dutch) Troop, which was part of No. 10 (Interallied) Commando.



In 1945, No. 2 (Dutch) Troop was disbanded, after part of the unit was transferred to the Bloemendaal Storm School.

Establishment Korps Insulinde

Established in the Far East for tasks such as gathering intelligence and organising guerrilla activities on the island of Sumatra, at that time occupied by the Japanese Imperial forces.

These units used submarines for infiltration purposes.



1945

Establishment of Stormschool Bloemendaal

After No. 2 (Dutch) Troop was demobilised, its officers and NCOs were assigned as instructors at the Storm School.

1946

Establishment of the Special Troops Depot and the Paratroopers School Training

Part of the personnel of the disbanded No. 2 (Dutch) Troop and the Korps Insulinde formed the core of these new para commando units in the Netherlands East Indies.

1948

Establishment of the Special Troops Regiment

The Special Troops Regiment was the amalgamation of the Special Troops Corps and the Para Combat Group.

1950

Establishment of the Korps Commandotroepen

The Korps Commandotroepen was created from the Bloemendaal Stormschool and the Special Troops Regiment.

The KCT consisted of three commando companies and a varying number of mobilizable companies. There was also an instruction company and a combat service support company.

1953

Floods

For two weeks, the commandos worked day and night with boats, rafts and pontoons to save as many people as possible from drowning.



1993

108 Commando Company

After the Berlin War, the security situation became more complex. Modern Special Operation Forces have to be able to conduct operations across the full spectrum of conflict and as part of article 5 collective defense or non article 5 crisis response operations. To anticipate the future operational environment and to tailor its forces to the accomplishment of defined political and strategic objectives the Dutch government decided to create new, expeditionary capabilities in the early 1990s: Airmobile Brigade and 108 Cotricie.

Personnel of the 108 were designated "Special Operations Commando".



2007

103 Commando Company and OTCSO

In Army Plan 1472, KCT was expanded to include a fourth company: 103 Commando Company. All instruction sections were grouped in the Special Operations Training Company (OTCSO).



1964

Operation Surgeon

The State Secretary for Defence introduced an extensive set of cutback measures. The three combat-ready commando companies made way for the new combat-ready unit: 104 Long Range Reconnaissance Company (LRRC).



Armoured Storm

In addition to the operational task of 104 Long Range Reconnaissance Company, the KCT was given an important task in the instruction of the combat units of 1 (NL) Corps. November of this year saw the start of the first three-week edition in Roosendaal of the soon to be infamous combat training programme 'Armoured Storm'.

1995

End of 104 LRRC

Conscription was suspended and the last conscript Long Range Reconnaissance Company commandos were given a ceremonial send-off.

1997

Re-establishment of 104 and 105 Commando Companies

As part of Army Plan 1049, the KCT has three companies. In addition to this expansion, the KCT was specifically tasked with the full spectrum of Special operations: MA, SR and DA.



One of KCT new tasks is counter-terrorism. The CT training course was developed for this purpose.

Operations, 1942 – present

Netherlands

Market Garden	1944
Infatuate (Walcheren)	1944

Bosnia-Herzegovina

United Nations Protection Force (UNPROFOR)	1994 - 1995
Implementation Force (IFOR)	1995 - 1996
Stabilisation Force (SFOR)	1996 - 1998
Joint Commission Observer (JCO)	1995 - 2001

Surinam 1952 - 1953

Mali

Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission (MINUSMA) 2014 - ...

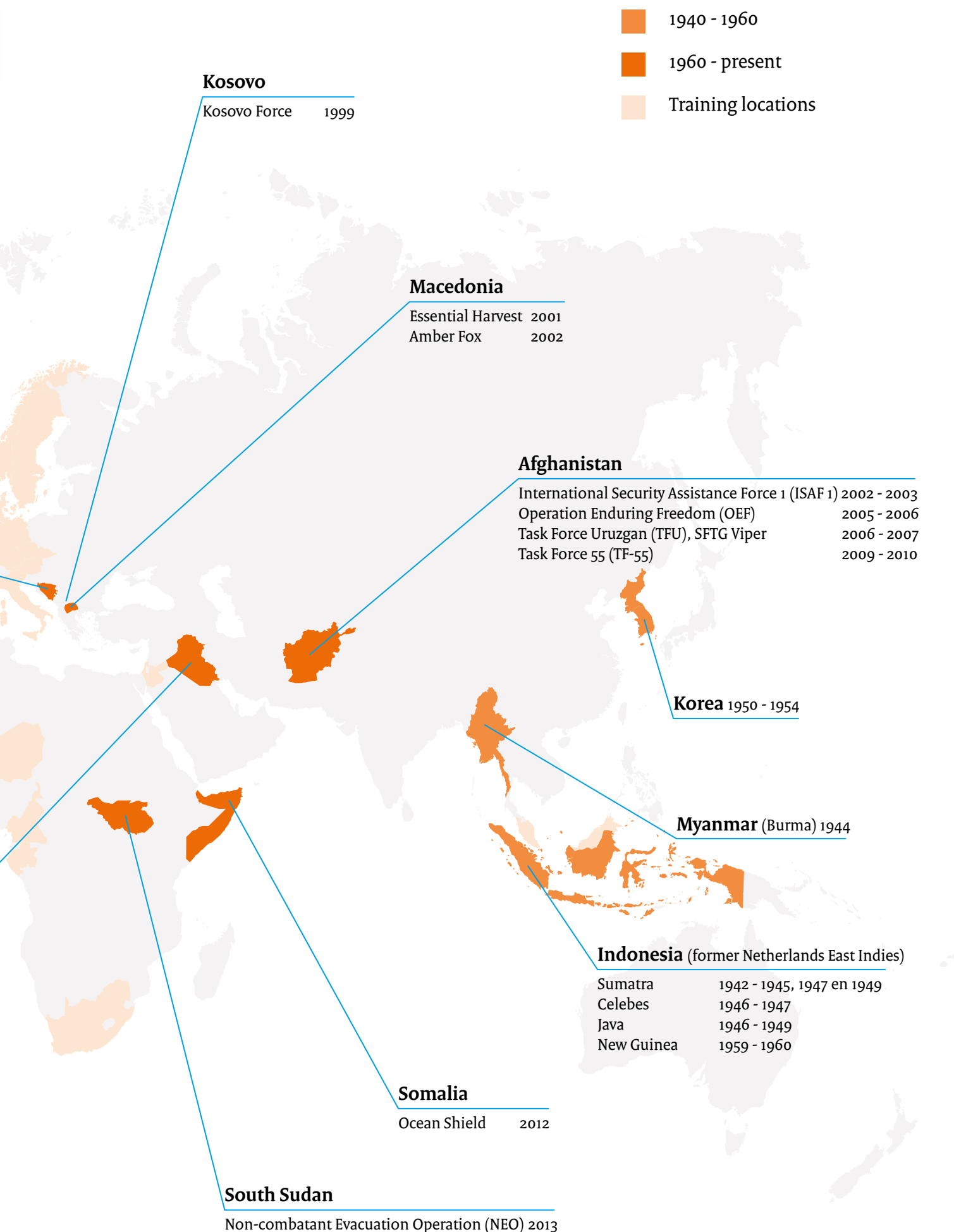
Ivory Coast

Non-combatant Evacuation Operation (NEO),
Royal Netherlands Embassy Abidjan

2004

Iraq

Provide Comfort (PC)	1991
Stabilisation Force Iraq (SFIR)	2003
Stabilisation Force Iraq, Field Liaison Team (SFIR, FLT)	2004 - 2005





Night firing with the Browning M2 QCB
during SFTG Viper

Materiel

Weapon systems - General



Heckler & Koch 416

- 5.56x45 mm NATO - 30 rounds per magazine.
- 700-900 rounds per minute – Maximum effective range 300-400 metres.



Mossberg M-590 shotgun

- 12 gauge - 8 shells in magazine tube.
- Maximum effective range depends on ammunition type.



Glock 17 maritime

- 9x19 mm Parabellum - 17 rounds per magazine.
- Maximum effective range 30 metres - With Surefire x300.



Heckler & Koch M320 GLM

- 40x46 mm – Takes several ammunition types.
- 5-7 rounds per minute – Maximum effective range 150 metres.



FN Herstal MINIMI

- 5.56x45 mm NATO – Linked ammunition, 200 rounds per belt.
- 700-1000 rounds per minute – Maximum effective range 400 metres.

Weapon systems - Sniper



Accuracy AW

- 7.62x51 mm NATO - 10 rounds per magazine.
- Bolt action – Maximum effective range 800 metres.



Accuracy AWM

- 8.6x70 mm Magnum - 5 rounds per magazine.
- Bolt action – Maximum effective range 1,200 metres.



Heckler & Koch 417

- 7.62x51 mm NATO - 20 rounds per magazine.
- 600 rounds per minute – Maximum effective range 500+ metres.



Barrett M82

- 12.7x99 mm NATO (.50 cal) - 10 rounds per magazine.
- Semi-automatic – Maximum effective range 1,800 metres.

Weapon systems - Anti-tank



M72 LAW

- 66 mm HEAT - 250 mm armour-piercing.
- Recoilless – Maximum effective range 200 metres.



Panzerfaust 3

- 110 mm HEAT-RA - 700 mm armour-piercing.
- Recoilless – Maximum effective range 300 metres (Dynarange 600 metres).



GILL Spike-MR

- 170 mm HEAT missile - 700+ mm armour-piercing – infrared capability.
- Recoilless – Maximum effective range 2,500 metres.

Weapon systems - Team



FN Herstal MAG-2000

- 7.62x51 mm NATO – Linked ammunition, 230 rounds per belt.
- 700-750 rounds per minute – Maximum effective range 600 metres.



Browning M2 QCB

- 12.7x99 mm NATO (.50 cal) – Linked ammunition, 100 rounds per belt.
- 450-550 rounds per minute – Maximum effective range 1,000 metres.



Heckler & Koch AGW

- 40x53 mm NATO – Linked ammunition, 32 or 48 rounds per belt.
- 350 rounds per minute – Maximum effective range 1,500 metres.



Commando mortar

- 60 mm – Illuminating or high-explosive shells
- 20 rounds per minute – Maximum effective range 1,050 metres

Mobility - Land



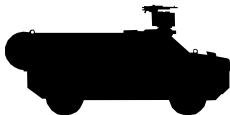
Suzuki King Quad 750 AXI

- 50 hp, automatic transmission, four-wheel drive.
- The KCT uses the Suzuki King Quad to increase its mobility.



Mercedes-Benz G280 CDI soft-top

- 670-kilo load over 1,280 km at 160 km/h.
- 700 kilos of integrated armour in floor and sides.



Bushmaster IMTV

- 2,500-kilo load over 800 km at 120 km/h.
- Floor has V-shaped highly flexible plates.



Armoured cars

- Various models of armoured car.
- Used for VIP transport and non-combatant evacuation operations.

Mobility - Water



Rigid Hull Inflatable Boat (RHIB)

- The RHIB offers a high speed surface infiltration vehicle.
- The RHIB is armed with a .50 Browning on the stem.



Medium Inflatable Boat (MIB)

- Water teams use the MIB for covert operations.
- The MIB can be transported under water and assembled on location.



Work safety boat

- The work safety boat is used for various tasks.
- Amongst other things it is used for diving and exercises.



Kayak

- Fully collapsible two-seater kayak.
- Suitable for covert operations on inland waterways.

Quick facts:

Development

The KCT will receive 50 new vehicles, so-called Air Transportable Tactical Vehicles. The Special Forces vehicle, which will be newly developed, will replace the current Mercedes Benz off-road vehicles.

Silent

The autonomous precision airdrop system is a guided precision aerial delivery system. This special parachute can deliver loads of up to 1,000 kg to remote or dangerous areas, fully independently, silently and with a high level of precision.

Mobility - Air



Raven mini-UAV

- 60-minute flight time at 100 km/h.
- Optical or infrared camera.



Autonomous parachute

- 1,000-kilo load within 50 metres.
- Silent delivery of supplies.

Sister services support Special Operations with their unique capabilities. These include rotary and fixed wing assets.



Eurocopter AS-532U2 Cougar

- 2,450-kilo load over 800 km.
- Tactical movements.



NHIndustries NH90

- 4,200-kilo load over 800 km.
- Tactical movements.



Boeing CH-47F Chinook

- 10,200-kilo load over 500 km.
- Tactical movements and para-drop.



Lockheed C-130 Hercules

- 17,500-kilo load over 7,800 km.
- Tactical movements and para-drop.



*Shooting from a helicopter,
Denmark*



The commando monument at the Engelbrecht van Nassau Barracks
with the names of the commandos killed in action from the Second World War to the present day

Commando for life!

Quick facts:

Veterans

Korps Commandotroepen Veterans Association (VVKCT)

Although existing organisations such as the Commando Foundation and various commando associations mention their involvement with veterans in their articles of association, they were not specifically founded for veterans. In the past years, there has been an increased interest in veterans, with the adoption of the Veterans Act as an important milestone, which legislates for the recognition, appreciation and care for veterans. Anyone who has been on deployment with a unit formed by the KCT is a KCT veteran and is entitled to join the VVKCT.

Reunion

Every five years, the Commando Foundation, the KCT and the commando associations together organise a reunion for commandos, former commandos and anyone else who has worked at the KCT. It is held at the Engelbrecht van Nassau Barracks and begins with a parade through the city centre of Roosendaal. This is to express the ties between the KCT and the city of Roosendaal.

Killed in action

Since the establishment of the KCT, a roll call for the fallen is held every year on 22 March, the KCT anniversary. A special ceremony is dedicated to our fallen comrades. During this ceremony we honour the comrades who gave their lives during operations and training.



Lance Corporal Kevin van de Rijdt

The last commando killed in action was Lance Corporal Kevin van de Rijdt. On 6 September 2009, special unit Task Force 55 was on reconnaissance near the town of Dzangal in Afghanistan. The unit became involved in a heavy firefight with insurgents and was forced to retreat. During this manoeuvre, Corporal Van de Rijdt was fatally wounded. Several members of Task Force 55 brought Kevin's body back to their own line under enemy fire, putting their own lives at risk.

The Commando Foundation

On 18 February 1952, the Commando Association was established. In 1952 the commando foundation was established, which records and maintains KCT traditions. In 1982, it was decided for practical reasons to incorporate the Commando Association into the Commando Foundation. In addition to the Commando Foundation, there are nine regional commando associations throughout the Netherlands. The Special Troops Regiment Commando Foundation arose from the main elements of the KCT in the Netherlands East Indies. Other commando associations are the Commando Walking Foundation, the Commando Diving Association and the Commando Business Club. For more information, please visit the website of the Commando Foundation: www.korpscommandotroepen.nl



Parade during the 2012 reunion, Roosendaal



The Cross of Merit and the Bronze Cross
as awarded to various operators of Task Force 55

Honours and awards

Decorations



Captain M.J. Kroon, Knight of the Military Order of William

Captain Marco Kroon, Knight of the Military Order of William, fourth class, was awarded the Dutch highest military honor for his actions during his deployment to Uruzgan from March to August 2006. He was platoon commander in Special Forces Task Group (SFTG) Viper. SFTG Viper conducted Special Operations in order to enable the reception, staging and onward movement of the Task Force Uruzgan (TFU) into the Afghan province of Uruzgan. During six separate actions, Captain Kroon showed exceptional leadership, often at great risk to his own life.

Over the years, members of the KCT have received a great many bravery awards. They include 11 Knighthoods of the Military Order of William, 33 Bronze Lions, 54 Bronze Crosses and 20 Crosses of Merit.

Knights of the Military Order of William

Awarded to those who have distinguished themselves in battle by outstanding acts of courage, judgement and loyalty.

Captain	J. Faber
Lieutenant	M. Knottenbelt
Sergeant	P. Tazelaar
Lieutenant Colonel	J. Borghouts
Lance Corporal	C. Laatzer
Sergeant	L. Snijders
Lieutenant	J. Ulrici
Lieutenant	G. Schüssler
Captain	J. Anemaet
Lieutenant Colonel	M. den Ouden
Captain	M.J. Kroon



x 11

Bronze Lion

x 33

Awarded to those who have distinguished themselves by exceptionally courageous conduct and acts of judgement in the face of the enemy.

Bronze Cross

x 54

Awarded to those who have distinguished themselves by acts of bravery or judgement in the face of the enemy.

Cross of Merit

x 20

Awarded to those who have distinguished themselves by acts of bravery and judgement in the face of enemy action.

Operation Lewe

In July 2009, a Task Force 55 (TF-55) team of nine operators from the KCT and an Afghan coalition partner carried out a highly exceptional parachute deployment in Afghanistan. It was the first time since 1949 that Dutch personnel carried out an operational parachute jump.

The team was tasked with reconnaissance activities to identify enemy movements, intentions and strength and neutralize enemy threats against approaching ground elements of TF55. As it was not possible to enter the area unseen by vehicle or on foot, it was decided to use paratroops.

the team conducted a clandestine MFF insertion into Taliban held territory by night. "Everyone thought that it would never happen," one of the commandos said, "but in Afghanistan, the parachute proved to be the best way of moving people at that particular point in time. Back in Roosendaal, we realised that it was really quite special."

Quick facts:

Honoured

Of the Dutch units taking part in the ISAF operation in Afghanistan, the KCT received the highest number of honours and awards.

- 1 *Military Order of William*
- 2 *Bronze Lions*
- 8 *Bronze Crosses*
- 5 *Crosses of Merit*

Bronze shield

For exceptional performance in the Afghan province of Uruzgan in 2006, 108 Commando Company was awarded the Bronze Shield. The Bronze Shield is the highest group honour awarded to units of the Royal Netherlands Army.

Military Free-fall

Rotation 1 of TF-55 in Afghanistan saw the first operational parachute jump using a free-fall parachute during operation Lewe. A new operational wing was designed for this action.



The team just before the parachute deployment

Commandos tell their story



Corporal Anton, aged 25

"Commandos are expected to show a high degree of self-sufficiency. That is one of things I like about this job. It takes a long time to complete the training. It's a mental and physical battle, but it is absolutely worth it."

"If I hadn't taken up the challenge in 2009, I would have been a sports instructor now. Nothing wrong with that, but contributing to peace and democracy as a commando is a hundred times better."

Lieutenant Fred, aged 26

"I attended the Royal Military Academy from 2007 to 2011, training as an infantry officer. After an initial placement as a platoon commander in the mechanised infantry, I wanted to take up the challenge and become a commando."

"I have just earned my green beret and I am now doing the Advanced Commando Course. If your physical fitness is normal, and you really want it, you can do it!"

Sergeant 1 Erik, aged 28

"After six years in the Marine Corps, I applied to become a Special Operations Commando. Since then I have been deployed twice as a medic."

Lance Corporal Tim, aged 23

"During my deployment as an armoured engineer in Uruzgan, I carried out operations with commandos. The work they did was complicated and demanding, and I wanted that too!"

"I wondered: Could I do that? Could I meet the toughest requirements? Commando training has shown me that if you really want something, you're capable of more than you think."



Korps Commandotroepen

This Factbook describes the past, present and future of the Korps Commandotroepen and it's most important asset: the Special Operations Commando.



/Landmacht.kct