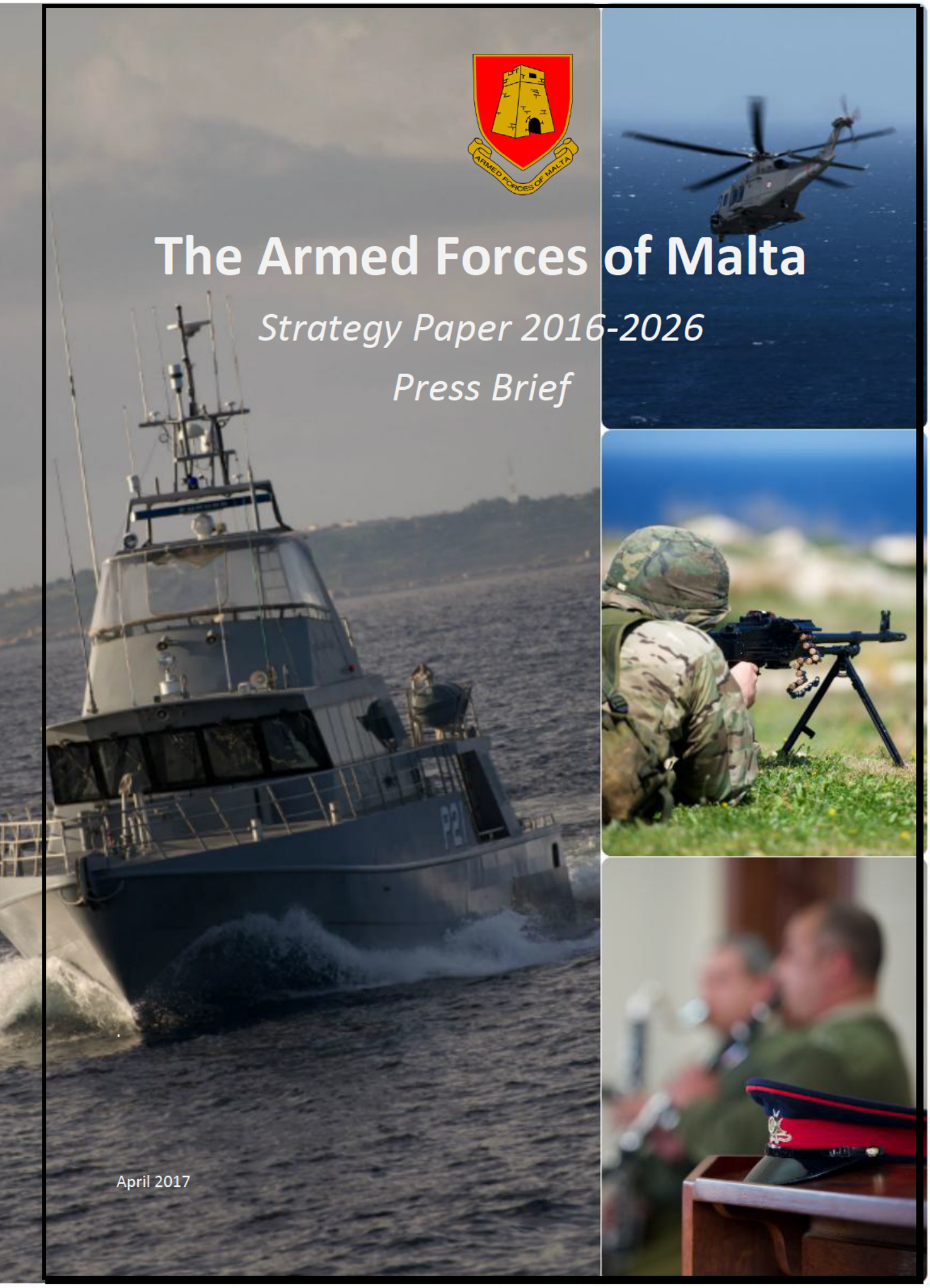

The Armed Forces of Malta

Strategy Paper 2016-2026

Press Brief

April 2017

WHAT DOES THIS DOCUMENT SET OUT TO ACHIEVE? This Strategy Paper is a document that outlines the policy direction for the Armed Forces of Malta. It follows on from the 1996 White Paper issued by Government to provide a formal setting for the development of Malta's military capabilities and, in doing so, attempts to provide continuity for this important national institution.

It is not a tactical publication in that it does not describe or proscribe the detailed activities that the Force intends to or shall be prepared to undertake in the coming years. Instead, it lays out the general expectations of Government as to what objectives the military instrument of power should be able to achieve and lays out a framework for generating the capabilities to achieve these goals.

This document sets the context within which the military shall be expected to operate, analyses the threats, vulnerabilities and risks that our nation currently faces or can be expected to face and defines the national, European and international obligations that the Force is expected to be able to meet.

This keystone publication is intended to serve the next generations of military leaders and decision makers as the basis for taking decisions at the strategic, operational and tactical levels and to ensure that all such decisions are taken within a single coherent framework that supports achieving the specified strategic objectives.

WHO PARTICIPATED IN THE DRAFTING OF THIS DOCUMENT? This Strategy Paper was drafted through a coordinated effort between the Ministry for Home Affairs and National Security (MHAS) and the Armed Forces of Malta (AFM). Each of these partners brought their own unique perspective to the process.

As the political entity responsible for the AFM, MHAS provided input regarding the policy direction that Government intends to take and the political perspective within which the AFM is expected to operate. As in any democratic system, the military serving our nation answers to civilian leadership and works to fulfil policy goals set by Government. The Ministry has thus set the wider strategic priorities in which it perceives that the AFM has a contribution to make to national policy.

Based upon the priorities set by Government, the AFM has worked to conduct a robust analysis of the strategic environment, identified the threats, vulnerabilities and resultant risks to our nation and detailed the current force structure available to face these challenges. Subsequently the AFM has set out a vision for the future of the Force, a future that seeks to address the concerns of Government.

WHAT IS THE TIMEFRAME ADDRESSED BY THIS PAPER? Initially issued in September 2016, the considerations of this Strategy Paper cover the 10-year period between 2016 and 2026. The limitations of attempting to plan for a decade in the current fluid security environment are recognised and accepted. However, the nature of the military institution, for example the time needed to design, generate and implement new military capabilities, requires that this medium to long term perspective be held throughout the considerations.

That is not to say that no consideration has been given to the inherent degree of uncertainty being faced. This is a living document that shall be subjected to continuous review and revision. Its purpose is to serve as a baseline from which future change and modification can be leveraged rather than as a definitive and prescriptive script for all future activities.

WHERE WILL THE IMPACT OF THIS DOCUMENT BE FELT? This document is intended to shape every facet of the business of the AFM, from financing to procurement, from human resource management to operational planning. This vision is designed to serve as the focus of every action implemented within the AFM to guarantee a coherent implementation of policies and strategies that contribute to national goals.

At a political level, this document is intended to contextualise the role of the AFM in achieving national policy goals. It provides policy makers with a clear framework within which to employ the various capabilities of the military in the widest possible range of operational activities. It serves to highlight the fact that, while designed to succeed in conflict, the AFM brings a number of other capabilities to the table that are of increasing relevance in today's security environment, an environment typified by a lack of clear definitions and an increased blurring between states, non-state actors, International and Non-Governmental Organisations and an increasingly-influential private sector.

HOW IS THIS DOCUMENT STRUCTURED FOR SUCCESS? Solving any problem first requires that the problem is accurately defined and a considerable amount of this Strategy Paper is devoted to analysing and defining the wider security environment, the specific threats, vulnerabilities and risks that are currently faced or are likely to face in the future. This is followed by a factual analysis of the tools that the AFM currently brings to the table in the form of resources, both technical and human.

An objective consideration of the current strengths and weaknesses of the Force, the constraints and restraints within which the Force operates and the impact of internal and external influences and commitments has been conducted to provide a clear picture of the here and now. This has been supplemented by a detailed consideration of the roles and missions currently assigned to the Force.

The results of this process are two key Statements that embody the way forward for the Force. The first is the Mission Statement, a statement that outlines the Strategic Objective that the Force shall be designed to achieve.

Mission Statement of the Armed Forces of Malta

To protect the territorial integrity of the Republic of Malta, the security of its citizens, contribute towards international peace and stability and carry out any other task assigned by the Government.

Transforming this Objective into concrete results requires a vision that provides the way forward and contextualises the efforts of Government and the AFM.

Vision Statement of the Armed Forces of Malta

To continue working to develop a modern, disciplined, motivated and well trained professional force that will be able to conduct the assigned roles efficiently and effectively in Malta and overseas.

These two statements are the foundation for identifying the strategic goals towards which the AFM shall aim in the next decade. Each goal addresses a key line of development.

1) Establish the necessary level of **military capability** that will be used to contain, repel and defeat any armed or hostile activity against the Maltese territory;

2) Ensure that the appropriate **deterrent to hostile intention** is in place by providing the adequate military presence throughout the sovereign territory in all relevant theatres of operation;

3) In partnership with other Maltese agencies, assist in the **protection** of key critical infrastructure, key strategic locations and activities across all the sovereign territory;

4) Improve the **intelligence gathering** function of the AFM to improve the national security awareness picture in order to ensure that the military commanders have the best possible information to make sound and informed decisions, as well as to provide the best advice to Government on military and defence matters;

5) Provide **deployable military capabilities** that can be utilised in international missions with the goal of contributing towards international peace and stability;

6) Conduct the above activities by generating an **adequate, trained and motivated Force** that can respond efficiently and effectively to the diverse assigned tasks and missions.

WHAT ARE THE CONCRETE RESULTS? The Strategy Paper has already yielded significant results in the first year following its inception and a number of other measures are currently in the planning and implementation phases.

Organisational Reforms

- The Force and Rank establishment of the AFM has been revised and approved, providing a Human Resource base that better meets the needs of the Force;
- The internal structures have been revised and enhanced to address new functions and enhance existing ones. Notable examples include an increased emphasis on defence estate management and the creation of a Special Operations Unit;

- The legislative framework regulating the Volunteer Reserve Force has been amended to increase the utility and relevance of this formation. Increased emphasis has been given to the recruitment, retention and employment of Reserve Personnel;
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- A skills profiling exercise shall be conducted to identify skillsets where shortfalls already exist or may develop in order to structure training efforts to mitigate these shortfalls;
- Consideration is being given to areas where support services may be assigned to civilian personnel or external contractors in order to free up military personnel for core tasks;
- The AFM is now assuming full in-house responsibility for IT functions in light of specific requirements and security concerns;
- Consideration is being given to implementing improvements in branding strategy and relations with the civilian community;
- The AFM is implementing a data management strategy based on centralisation, digitisation and full compliance with the Data Protection Act;
- Efforts are underway to improve headquarters facilities to sustain management capabilities;
- The Force has commenced a revision of the legal instruments and policy documents governing the activities of the AFM and shall be engaging with legislators as appropriate for the necessary approvals;
- Enhancements of in-house legal expertise including in specialist areas such as international and maritime law are being targeted;
- The enhancement of Occupational Health and Safety provisions is being achieved with the introduction of new policies and guidance documents;

<u>Humans Resources Management and Development Reforms</u>

- A review of the recruitment process with the goal of streamlining this process has been concluded;
- Various family-friendly measures are being considered with the goal of an overall improvement in morale and welfare levels;
- All personnel have been given the opportunity to join a Union of their choice within the limitations imposed by the disciplined character of the Force;
- A process of review has been instituted in respect of all allowances received by members of the Force with a number of adjusted allowances already being paid to personnel;
- A legal amendment that modifies the pension paid to AFM personnel or their families following injury or death on duty has been passed;
- Efforts are being made to increase the scope and availability of further educational opportunities to members of the AFM;
- The AFM is targeting an increase in the availability of cross-training opportunities with foreign military agencies;

- The AFM's Training School is being resourced to provide a wider range of improved training opportunities at all levels in collaboration with the Academy for the Training of Disciplined Forces;
- Personnel will be eligible to apply for overseas deployments on the basis of open calls;
- Efforts are being made to increase the number and variety of overseas deployment opportunities available to AFM personnel;

Operational Reforms

- A Special Operations Unit has been established to consolidate all special warfare tasks within the AFM;
- Individual weaponry will be upgraded and modernised while legacy items shall be disposed of in an appropriate manner;
- The process to procure an additional Offshore Patrol Vessel (OPV) to consolidate maritime capabilities is underway;
- Aviation assets continue to be strengthened and enhanced, both in number and quality;
- A study shall be initiated to consider the implementation of a National Air Defence System;
- The operational and training focus on maritime challenges shall be enhanced;
- The ongoing programme of upgrades to basing facilities and infrastructure shall be sustained;
- Improvements to the Command and Control (C2) structures of the AFM are being implemented;
- The national and international role of the AFM's Maritime Security and Safety Training Centre (MSSTC) shall be further strengthened in concert with international partners;
- The capabilities provided to Government by the AFM's Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD) Section shall be enhanced through the upgrading of equipment and additional training;
- Efforts to leverage modern technology to deliver more effective and efficient operations shall continue;
- The provision of AFM officers in support of international verification efforts related to the Dayton Accords and OSCE Vienna Document shall be sustained.

All of these reforms have been associated with an implementation timeframe which shall be used to monitor implementation progress and which shall support amendments to and modifications of this Strategic Policy as required by the developing security environment.

WHY IS THIS STRATEGY PAPER NECESSARY? While a significant institution in its own right, the Armed Forces of Malta does not act in isolation. It contributes to the whole-of-government approach that is required to address the serious security challenges being faced in today's changing world.

This Strategy Paper provides a structure that allows the AFM and our Government partners to understand the capabilities, resources and constraints that must be considered when the military is

called on to contribute to our nation's interests. It sets out the strategic direction for the Force, both for the immediate future as well as for yet-to-be-defined future challenges.

Ultimately, the aim of such actions is to ensure that the safety and security of our nation and our citizens, both in the local context and, when possible, overseas, is increased. Such increased security supports the economic and social development of our nation, both at home and in the international context.

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