



STUDENT INFORMATION GUIDE (SIG)

FOR THE

INTERNATIONAL STAFF OFFICERS' COURSE

TO BE HELD AT THE

SLOVAK ARMED FORCES ACADEMY

LIPTOVSKÝ MIKULÁŠ

SECTION 1

INTRODUCTION

1. The Standing Administrative Instruction (SAI) for the ISOC will be submitted to all SVK Defence Attachés (DAs) in NATO Member and Partner capitals. Soft and hard copies will be provided to their respective Ministry of Defence (MOD) and/or General Staff (GS) Headquarters (HQ) in English. Copies will also be available for other Ministries or Armed Forces' organisations as required. The SAI will also be available for SVK REPs to NATO HQ, SHAPE, SACT and at the ISOC's own website.
2. The intention is that the SIG will contain the majority of information required by any MOD officer, student or visitor to the ISOC. **Acceptance on to the ISOC by a student or visitor is taken as complete acceptance by that person of the rules and regulations contained in this SIG and in other ISOC instructions issued at the Academy.**
3. There will be a short additional instruction for each course issued directly by the Science and Foreign Relations division / SVK AFA through the SVK DA containing any supplementary information required for a particular course. This will be delivered at least four (4) weeks prior to the course starting date.

SECTION 2

ISOC

4. **Aim.** The aim of the ISOC is to provide staff training for officers in English, in order to enable them to participate in the planning and conducting of military activities throughout the full spectrum of conflict in a multinational environment.
5. **Performance and Enabling/Learning Objective (PO and ELO).**
 - a. Identify the organisations, roles and capabilities of Land Forces.
 - b. Study the principles of the different types of operations within the spectrum of conflict.
 - c. Apply military doctrine to operations within the spectrum of conflict.
 - d. Develop analytical and problem solving skills.
 - e. Conduct Operational Staff Work.
 - f. Plan and Manage operations as part of the staff at Battalion and Brigade level.
6. **Subsidiary Objectives.** The subsidiary objectives of this training are to allow those officers who complete the course to operate more effectively in the following roles:
 - a. Appointments in national or multinational military headquarters in support of normal peacetime military activity or on conventional, peace support or humanitarian operations.

- b. Staff appointments in PC exercises' planning and operations staffs at national or multinational level.
- c. Appointments in their national diplomatic mission or Partnership Coordination Cell (PCC) to NATO/SHAPE.
- d. Appointments as partnership nations' staff officers at NATO's Partnership for Peace Staff Element (PSE) in the International Military Staff (IMS) or at SHAPE and the Joint Forces Headquarters.

7. **Status of the ISOC.** Each country that sends students to the ISOC, must determine the status to which they will accord the course regarding their national priorities and the overall career structure of their officers. This can be assisted by briefings from the SVK DAs at post, through the information available on various websites (particularly the ISOC page at www.aos.sk, the SAI and through the ISOC staff briefing held on a regular basis at Liptovský Mikuláš. ISOC staff will also to brief MODs and GS as required. The ISOC is supported by NATO and is open to validation by NATO as to the content of its syllabus.

SECTION 3

GENERAL

8. Importantly, the course will also allow officers to work together and to get to know each other in order to enhance mutual confidence and better understanding as well as exposing all students to a sustained and concentrated period in a full English language environment. The course also provides essential basic training for officers who are destined to attend more senior staff training at a national or international Staff College at a later stage in their career.
9. Each ISOC will last 9 weeks and will take place two times per annum. The course will start on Monday first week and ends on Friday in order to facilitate travel.
10. The ISOC is **not** a Peace Support Operations (PSO) course although instruction will be given covering the subject of Crisis Response Operations. It is therefore a course which covers the full spectrum of operations in its syllabus.
11. The ISOC is a national project of the Slovak Republic (SVK) assisted by NG Indiana and supported by the NATO.
12. The ISOC staff consists of the following personnel.
 - a. Commander – Lieutenant Colonel
 - b. Senior Instructor – Major
 - c. Senior Instructor – Major
 - d. Instructor - Captain
 - e. Instructor – Captain
 - f. Senior Training NCO - MSGT
 - g. Senior Logistic Support NCO - MSGT
 - h. Personal - Civil Service

LOCATION

15. The course is based at the Slovak Armed Forces Academy at Liptovský Mikuláš which is located in the Liptov region of north-central Slovakia (the Academy's location is approx 019.35°E, 049.04°N). The town is 270 km from Bratislava by road or rail. There is a Liptov Region website: www.liptov.sk

16. The Liptov region is a principal tourist area within Slovakia providing a wide range of activities both in winter and summer. Activities range from skiing, downhill as well as cross-country, snowboarding and sledding and in the summer, hiking, caving, camping, water sports and cycling as well as hunting and fishing. The region is also well known for its mineral springs, historical and archaeological sites.

17. The area is also home to a wide variety of natural life including European brown bears, deer, wild boar, foxes, badgers and otters together with numerous varieties of birds and fish.

18. The town of Liptovský Mikuláš, named after Saint Nicholas, has a population of around 33,500. It is situated on the River Vah and lies 577m above sea level. The website, in various languages, on the town can be accessed through www.mikulas.sk.

19. The town can be reached by both rail and road communications.

20. Time and Weather.

a. **Time.** The SVK is in the Central European Time Zone (GMT + 1). Summertime (GMT +2) is in effect from the last Sunday in March until the last Sunday in October.

b. **Weather.** In Liptovský Mikuláš the temperatures can differ from -25°C in winter to +36°C in the mid summer. The Tatra mountain region is a very different climate to that of Bratislava. It is common for snow to be on the ground from late Nov – mid Apr.

21. **Postal Address:** The postal address for the ISOC is:

**Rank and Name,
ISOC
Armed Forces Academy
P. O. Box 45, Demänová 393
031 06 Liptovský Mikuláš 6
Slovak Republic**

22. Fax and E Mail.

- a. Fax: 00 421 44 54 776 51
- b. E Mail: contact@aos.sk
- c. Web page www.aos.sk

SECTION 4

23. Pre-course Qualifications.

a. English Language.

(1) The ISOC is carried out only in the English Language. It is a course that relies almost completely on discussion, presentations and the formal issue of orders. It is therefore a mandatory requirement that students attending the ISOC have reached NATO STANAG 6001 Level 2 (2.2.2.2.) in the English language.

(2) Students are expected to arrive at the course with a written biography/CV. This CV is to be sent to the ISOC no later than 30 days prior to the start of the course.

(3) During the initial period of the ISOC, English language 'orientation' will take place during the first part of the syllabus. This will include military and NATO terminology, the opportunity to give short presentations, discussion practice and reading.

b. IT/Computer Training.

(1) There are **no** mandatory training levels for IT/computer skills. It is recommended that students have working level of knowledge of the Microsoft Office applications Word, Power Point and Excel.

SECTION 5

Travel and Pre Course Administration

25. Having been selected for the ISOC a student's travel and administration will be organised as follows:

a. Travel.

The students' countries are responsible for the travel arrangements to and from Liptovský Mikuláš.

b. Dress and Equipment.

This is the responsibility of the officer's own command organisation in conjunction with the list shown at Annex A. Certain equipment is provided at the ISOC and need not be taken by officers. This is also detailed at Annex A.

Pre-Course Administration

26. **Documentation.** Each student is to arrive at the ISOC with the following documents:

- a. A valid passport, with visa if applicable, for which the expiry date should be at least 6 months **after** the final day of the course.
- b. A NATO Travel Order provided by the SVK DA for non NATO members.
- c. A certificate, in English, to show that the officer is medically and dentally fit to attend the course.
- c. A biography/CV (**this should be faxed or E-mailed ahead to ISOC at least 30 days prior to the course start date**).

- g. Travel and medical insurance document if required, e.g. for holders of Schengen visas.
- h. ISOC Registration and Arrival/Departure forms, Medical Clearance Certificate and Residence Report .

27. **Finances.** All officers must arrive at ISOC being able to support themselves financially for the duration of the course including any period of travel to and from the course such as trains, buses, taxis, food and accommodation. There are ATMs in the Liptovský Mikuláš which take the normal credit cards of Visa, MasterCard, Cirrus and Amex. For students who bring cash, ISOC staff will provide secure facilities to hold that cash.

28. **Students' Status.** The status of students attending the ISOC is covered by the NATO SOFA 1951 and the NATO PfP SOFA 1996. It is for this reason that students should be in possession of a NATO Travel Order which can be issued by the SVK DA. Students coming from countries which have a visa or special visa regime with the Slovak Republic will be provided with a visa through the Slovak Ministries of Foreign and Internal Affairs for the duration of the course. The maximum stay in Slovakia without a visa is 90 days for **all** students from NATO allied or partner nations. The ISOC lasts 65 days, which allows time for travel at each end of the course. This status affords students no special privileges or immunity while in the Slovak Republic.

29. **Medical Requirement.** All ISOC students must be medically and dentally fit to join the course. A Medical certificate, in English and to be signed by a Doctor or Medical Officer, is to be brought by all students on the ISOC. It is mandatory for every student to be in possession of this form on arrival at ISOC.

Note: Students travelling to and from Slovakia using Schengen visas are required to have valid travel and medical insurance before a Schengen visa is issued.

30. **Registration with National Embassy accredited to Slovakia.** It is important that all students or visitors to the ISOC register their presence with their Embassy accredited to the Slovak Republic.

ISOC Administration

31. **Discipline.** All students are expected to conduct themselves correctly as representatives of the Armed Forces of their country. Compliments should be paid to senior officers in accordance with national custom. Students should bear in mind that the considerable number of foreign nationalities, with differing badges of rank and uniform, at the Academy, might cause uncertainty with Slovak soldiers and junior officers as to rank and status. All students are required to obey the laws of the Slovak Republic and the laws and regulations of the Slovak Academy.

32. **Leave and National Holidays.**

- a. It is not possible to allow each student time off to celebrate his, or her, own national holidays during the course except as allowed for on the official programme.

b. Leave may not be taken during the course, by any student, except under compassionate or medical circumstances. Where there are formal ISOC organised weekend activities all students are expected to attend.

33. Families and Dependants.

a. There is **no** provision for families and dependants to accompany students on the ISOC. However, where students bring families or dependants for weekends or short visits advice may be given in finding local hotels or agents for house rental.

b. Students are to be aware that when families visit Liptovský Mikuláš during a course no special leave will be granted and students are expected to attend all ISOC classes, formal weekend activities where applicable and complete all required out of hours work.

34. Course Attendance and Reports.

a. **Attendance.** All ISOC students are expected to attend the full ISOC course including the 'Joining Week'. It is not possible for students to attend parts of the course to suit their own or their national requirements.

b. **Reports.** All students will be given a written report at the end of the course which will be sent to their MOD, or appropriate command through the SVK DA. Reports may include a recommendation for further international training where appropriate as well as for consideration as a potential future ISOC instructor. Students' reports remain confidential information between the SVK and the country concerned.

35. **Post Course Qualifications.** At the end of the course each officer will receive a Certificate in addition to his/her course report. Although the ISOC cannot recommend officers for individual posts or appointments there is a generic NATO job description which covers the type of responsibilities an officer could undertake having successfully completed the course.

36. Cars, Car Parking and Bicycles.

a. Students who come to the course in their own cars are to be aware that only official vehicles may enter the Academy. All other cars are to be parked outside the Academy in the large car park provided. During winter, officers should note that there is no cover provided for cars.

b. Foreign students who bring their cars into Slovakia are to ensure that they have the correct insurance for the duration of the course and that they bring documentation to show they possess a valid driving licence as well as proof of ownership of the vehicle.

c. It is mandatory in Slovakia to drive with headlights. It is also required to have a valid vignette to drive on motorways. These vignettes are obtainable at border crossing points and at most petrol stations.

37. **Security.** The following security issues are to be observed.
- a. The level of classification of information on the course is UNCLASSIFIED.
 - b. The ISOC instructional and accommodation areas are secure areas accessed by push-button locks and smart card. Students are to ensure they do not let anyone apart from members of ISOC know the code or to allow anyone else to enter the ISOC areas.
 - c. ISOC students will be issued with a Slovak Academy identity (ID) card for the duration of the course. This will be handed in at the end of the course. ISOC students **do not need** to bring their national armed forces ID card with them. Their passport, and where applicable their visa, will be the principal proof of identity to the Slovak authorities together with their NATO Travel Order.
 - d. At the end of the ISOC students will be given a CD which contains course material, which they are authorised to take away from the course.
 - e. Accept for certain items (travel tickets, passports and cash), which will be accepted for secure storage by ISOC HQ, student officers are responsible for the security of all their own personal belongings and property.

SECTION 6

Facilities and Administration at the Academy Liptovský Mikuláš

38. Within the Academy the ISOC occupies areas within two buildings, an instructional block and an accommodation block.
39. **Internet.** There are Internet facilities in the instructional block for use by students. Cable internet connection is provided for students at accommodation rooms (no WiFi).
41. **Accommodation.** The accommodation floors provide living accommodation for 14 students on each floor together with a small kitchen facility for hot drinks.
42. **Rooms.** Each living accommodation floor contains 7 suites, each with two single bedrooms and a shared shower/basin facility and separate toilet. There is also one single bedroom and bathroom for the fifteenth student. Bed linen is provided but officers are to bring their own bath and hand towels.
43. Every officer will sign for his/her room and the contents on arrival and will be responsible for its condition and any damage that occurs during the course. Such damage or losses must be paid for by the student.
44. The electrical supply throughout the Academy is 220v 50Hz. The sockets and plugs are standard central European design, round double pin with earth. There are electrical points in each room. There are no telephone sockets or computer/data points in the accommodation rooms.

45. **Smoking.**

Please note that ALL bedrooms are non-smoking (including the balconies located outside each bedroom).

Smoking is prohibited in the Academy except for designated smoking areas.

Combined Facilities.

46. **Dining Hall.** The ISOC takes its meals in the main Academy dining room. There are 3 meals each day except on Weekends dinner when a packed meals are provided.

47. **Alcohol.** Note that alcohol is prohibited throughout the Academy but there is a restaurant situated opposite the Academy main entrance which can be used as well as bars and restaurants in the nearby villages as well as in Liptovský Mikuláš.

48. **Sports Facilities.**

a. The National Defence Academy has a considerable range of indoor and outdoor sports facilities. These include:

- (1) A 50m indoor Olympic standard swimming pool.
- (2) Indoor tennis, volleyball, basketball courts.
- (3) Indoor 5-a-side football and handball pitch.
- (4) Weight training room.
- (5) Outdoor running track, football pitch, volleyball and tennis courts.

49. **Religion.** The Academy includes a Chapel for those who wish to worship. The principal religion is Roman Catholicism but arrangements for Protestant or Orthodox worship can also be made. Arrangements for prayer for Muslim students can be made on request.

50. **Medical Centre.** The Academy possesses a medical centre to which all students will have access under the terms of the NATO and NATO PC SOFA for the duration of their course. Under the terms of the SOFA students are entitled to the equivalent medical care which would be due to a Slovak student officer. Students from EU countries should also bring EU Medical Form E111.

51. **International Day.** To give you the opportunity to present your Country, an "International Students Party" will be organized during the course. Students are invited to bring a little of their national specialities (food and/or drink) and share them with their colleagues. Please inform the Course Training Logistic Support NCO when you arrive if you need cold storage or such. Cutlery, glasses and a chilled storage area will be provided.

SECTION 7

COMMUNICATIONS

USEFUL SLOVAK TELEPHONE NUMBERS

Organisation	Telephone number
International Call Code (ICC) Slovakia	00 421
ICC – Bratislava	00 421 2
ICC – LiptovSVKý Mikuláš	00 421 44 (Inside Slovakia the code is 044)
Fire – Ambulance - Police	150 – 155 – 158
Emergency Calling	112
Foreigners' Police Department	096 101 1111
Information within Slovakia	1181
Eurolines – (Bus Vienna Airport to Bratislava bus station)	02 5541 4438
Slovak Rail Enquiries	02 5058 7565
Bratislava Central Railway Station	02 5249 5906
ISOC Duty Officer	00 421903 824 726

THE SAI IS ISSUED UNDER THE AUTHORITY OF SVK MOD AND THE ISOC COMMANDANT

ANNEX A**TO ISOC SIG****DRESS AND EQUIPMENT**

1. Students should wear field uniform (combat/camouflage uniform) throughout the course. Field equipment such as messing items, compass, binoculars etc. are not required. This equipment, where required, will be provided by the ISOC.
2. Students will need to bring the following items in addition to their field uniform:
 - a. Civilian clothes. This should include smart casual clothing (no jeans or sport suits) for the few formal evening occasions during the course (Icebreaker, Closing Dinner). Jacket and tie is **NOT** required. Clothing should be suitable for the time of year of the ISOC.
 - b. Uniform and a supplementary clothing list will be issued for winter courses by ISOC although it is important that cold weather clothing is taken. It is essential that students bring appropriate uniform to cope with winter temperatures of -25°C and summer temperatures of $+35^{\circ}\text{C}$. Note however that there are **no** overnight field exercises. TEWT and exercise reconnaissance activities are confined to daylight hours only.
 - c. Gloves / Winter cap.
 - d. Waterproof jacket.
 - e. A second pair of boots.
 - f. **Bath and hand towels** (these are not provided)
 - g. Sports clothing including footwear and swimming trunks as required.
 - h. Washing and shaving equipment.
 - i. Sewing and shoe cleaning materials.
3. Students should also bring:
 - a. A moderately sized dictionary of their own language and English.
 - b. A watch.
 - c. Map case (but these are available at the ISOC).
 - d. 2 padlocks (with shanks (the locking part) no bigger than 5mm diameter) to secure their wardrobe and personal possessions box in their rooms.
 - e. Spare pair of spectacles (if worn), sufficient contact lenses for the duration of the course (if worn)
 - f. Sunglasses

4. Students may bring cameras on the course but are to take advice from the ISOC staff on their use inside Slovak military facilities.
5. Students are reminded that if they bring a penknife they should pack it in their main baggage and not attempt to take it on an aircraft in their hand luggage or on their person. Students are **not** to bring oversized or large knives on the course. **Personal weapons of any sort are prohibited.**
6. If non-Slovak students bring a mobile telephone they should ensure that it can be used in Slovakia prior to arrival. All mobile telephones are to be switched off during instructional periods.
7. **Irons and Ironing Boards.** These are supplied in the ISOC accommodation.
8. **Launderette.** Laundry facilities are available to students. Detail arrangements are to be determined.
9. **Valuables.** Students are advised that ISOC can accept **no** responsibility for personal items brought to the course except in the case of tickets, passports and money which may be officially stored under secure conditions. Students who bring valuable items such as laptops, mobile telephones and electronic equipment are responsible for the security of those items and also for other personal belongings such as cash, bank and credit cards etc.

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

&	And
ACT	Allied Command Transformation
AD	Air Defence
AOS	Akadémia ozbrojených síl generála Milana Rastislava Štefánika (Academy of the Armed Forces)
Armr	Armour
Arty	Artillery
Avn	Aviation
BAE	Battlefield Area Evaluation
BC	British Council
C3 (C4I)	Command, Control and Communications (Computers and Intelligence)
CD (Rom)	Compact Disc (Read-only material)
CI	Chief Instructor
CIMIC	Civil Military Co-operation
COA	Courses of Action
Comdt	Commandant
CONOPS	Contingency Operations
COS	Chief of Staff
CPE	(NATO) Contact Point Embassy (found in each PfP Capital by a NATO Ally)
CSRC	Conflict Studies Research Centre (part of the UK Defence Academy)
CSS	Combat Service Support
CV	Curriculum Vitae (Life Description or Biographical Notes)
DA (ADA)	Defence Attaché (Assistant Defence Attaché)
DComdt	Deputy Commandant
DCOS	Deputy Chief of Staff
DS	Directing Staff (Instructors)
DSL(ELW)	(UK) Defence School of Languages (English Language Wing)
DVD	Digital Video Disc
DW	Defence Writing
€	The common sign for the Euro/euro currency
EAPC	(NATO) Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council
e.g.	for example
ELD	English Language Development
ELT	English Language Training
Engr	Engineers (Pioneers)
etc	et cetera, - and so on
EU	European Union
Ex	Exercise
FCO	(UK) Foreign and Commonwealth Office (Ministry of Foreign Affairs)
FYROM¹	Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia
GENFORCE	Generic Force (an imaginary enemy force)
GMT	Greenwich Meantime (Zulu time)
GS	General Staff
HN	Host Nation
HQ	Headquarters
ICC	International Call Code

¹ Turkey recognises the Republic of Macedonia with its constitutional name.

ID	Identity (Card)
IELTS	International English Language Testing System
Intel	Intelligence
IPB	Intelligence Preparation of the Battlefield
IPP	Individual Partnership Programme
IS/IMS	(NATO) International Staff/International Military Staff
ISTAR	Intelligence, Surveillance, Target Acquisition and Recognition/ Reconnaissance
IT	Information Technology
JS	Job Description
ISOC	International Staff Officers' Course
kgs, kms	Kilograms, kilometres
Log	Logistics
m	Metres
MAP	(NATO) Membership Action Plan
MapEx/ MAPEX	Map Exercise
ME	Mission Estimate/Main Effort
MFA	Ministry of Foreign Affairs
MOD	Ministry of Defence
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
Msn/msn	Mission
MTI	Military Targets for Interoperability (NATO Strategic Commands)
NAO	Národná akadémia obrany (National Defence Academy)
NEO	Nationals' Evacuation Operation or Non-combatant Extraction Operation
NLD	The Netherlands
No	Number (English shortened version, used for buses, trains etc)
NSC	NATO Strategic Commands (e.g. SHAPE)
Obs/obs	Obstacle or observer
OF 2, 3, 4.	(NATO) Officer (Grades) OF 2 Capt, OF 3 Maj, OF 4 Lt Col
OOTW	Operations Other than War (PSO, Humanitarian or Natural Disaster ops)
OpO	Operation Order
Ops	Operations
OS	Operational Studies/Offensive Support
OSW	Operational Service Writing
PA	Personal Assistant
PCC	Partnership Coordination Cell (SHAPE) or Prague Capabilities Commitment
PEP	(UK) Peacekeeping English Project (Joint project between UK MOD, Foreign Office and BC to support ELT in foreign Armed Forces under bilateral co-operation programmes.
PC/PfPTC	(NATO) Partners Countries /Partnership for Peace Training Centre
PO	Post Office (Box)
POC	Point of Contact
Pr	Presentation
Prac	Practical
PSE	(NATO) Partnership for Peace Staff Element
PSO	Peace Support Operations
PWP	(NATO) Partnership Work Programme
RIC	'Red Ink Correction' (the formal marking of a student's written or oral work by the DS) RICs are key assessments in a student's overall course work.

SAI	Standing Administrative Instruction
Schengen Agreement	A Treaty between Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Iceland, Italy, Greece, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, Spain and Sweden regarding unrestricted travel by citizens of those countries within the Schengen region. All these countries except Norway and Iceland are European Union members.
SEEBRIG	South East European Brigade
SEESP	South East Europe Stability Pact
SHAPE	Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe
SVK or SVKK	Slovak Crown (unit of currency)
SLP	Standardised Language Profile (NATO STANAG 6001)
SOB	Senior Officers' Briefing
SOFA	Status Of Forces Agreement
SR/SRD	Syndicate Room/Syndicate Room Discussion
SVK	Slovak Republic (international 3-letter code)
STANAG	Standardisation Agreement (NATO)
TEWT	Tactical Exercise Without Troops (Tactical discussion and analysis exercise using real ground as opposed to a MAPEX)
UIN	Unit Identification Number (a UK administrative and budgeting code)
UK/UKDEL	United Kingdom/ United Kingdom Delegation (NATO)
UN	United Nations
WO	Warrant Officer (in UK can be Class 1 (Senior) or Class 2 (Junior))
Mon, Tue, Wed, Thu, Fri, Sat & Sun	Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday, Saturday and Sunday.