

USAR.NL



NED-01

65 USAR.NL team members, 8 search-dogs, and 16 tonnes of equipment were deployed to the Hatay province of Türkiye. The team consisted of 4 SAR groups, a Staff and Support Group, a Command Group and a dedicated UCC module, which established and managed the UCC. Furthermore, one NED-01 IMWG member was deployed to Ankara at the request of UN-OCHA.

The mission to Türkiye was a very memorable one for NED-01. The decision making process was effective, the deployment was fast, we were able to rescue 12 live victims and had a role in the coordination of the USAR efforts.



Wins and Challenges

- This was the most successful NED-01 operation in its 20 year history. Not only due to the amount of people rescued, also in the way the whole USAR-cycle had been performed.

- Speed is always key to the success of USAR-deployments. Besides coordination, it is preparation which saves lives. The very quick international request for assistance issued by Türkiye combined with the low-key domestic decision making process- distanced from politics- was crucial for quick deployment, as were the arrangements with the MoD on transport. The team deployed extremely fast and was in-country within 22 hours after the earthquake. However, due to airport logistics in Adana, cargo was rerouted and delayed for 5 hours.



- Availability of mobile and internet connections were strained whereas the availability of these has become critical, given the use of more web-based information and coordination tools.

- The Turkish-Dutch community is the second largest population group in The Netherlands. A deployment to a country with a large diaspora brings forth extra challenges in the team's home country that need to be addressed. This was, in part, due to the growing phenomenon of the role of (social) media in reporting and influencing the ground operations.



Selection of Lessons Identified

- An ASR2 as described in the Guidelines was not feasible under the circumstances. The concept needs rethinking or adjusting to fit major disasters like this one. This includes the role of the UCC and satellite SCC's.

- Although of an unknown scale, catastrophes like this is what INSARAG prepares for. However, we hardly see any reference to the importance of civil Host Nation Support, which is critical for smooth USAR operations. Transportation and commodities are vital to the success. The Guidelines should at least refer to this important factor.

- Circumstances were demanding, both physically and mentally. Comprehensive hygiene and sanitation are helpful in dealing with both.

- The availability of interpreters were crucial for fluid operations in a country with cultural and language barriers.

Team Website

[Documentary: "Orange Helmets in Turkey"](#)

[X: @usar.nl](#)

[Instagram: @usar.nl](#)