

News Release



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Ref: SNMCMG1 2010/01

19th January 2010

Polish Navy makes history with NATO group

London: Today, a Polish Navy officer took command of Standing NATO Mine Countermeasures Group 1 (SNMCMG1) creating history in NATO. The outgoing Commander SNMCMG1, CDR s.g. Henrik Holck Rasmussen Royal Danish Navy passed the command over to CDR Krzysztof Jan Rybak Polish Navy.

Each year the command of Standing NATO Mine Counter Measures Group 1 is rotated and for the first time a Polish Navy officer is the commander of SNMCMG1.

The change of command ceremony took place in the Polish Navy Base at Gdynia, Poland. The Flagship is the Polish ship ORP "Kontradmirał Xawery CZERNICKI", who takes over from the Danish HDMS "THETIS".

Standing NATO Mine Countermeasures Group 1 consists of the following units:

- ORP "Kontradmirał Xawery CZERNICKI" (Flagship - Poland);
- HMS "BLYTH" (UK)
- FGS "ROTTWEIL" (German)
- HNLMS "MIDDELBURG" (The Netherlands)
- BNS "ASTER" (Belgium)

**Standing NATO Mine Countermeasures Group 1
Safeguarding our Seaways**

Vice Admiral Hans-Jochen WITTHAUER (GER–N), DCOM MCC Northwood, Rear Admiral Nils WANG, Admiral Danish Fleet and Vice Admiral Andrzej KARWETA, Polish Navy Commander-In-Chief attended the ceremony.

The 2010 SNMCMG1 schedule includes Live Mine Clearance Operations in the Baltic and the North Sea as well as participation in several exercises including the NRF Live Exercise.

Notes to editors

1. **SNMCMG1** (Standing NATO Response Force Mine Countermeasure Group 1) provides a continuous Maritime Mine Countermeasures capability for operations in peacetime and periods of conflict. The force demonstrates the support of the contributing nations to the NATO alliance. SNMCMG vessels are key assets in the NATO Response Force (NRF) and are able to fulfil a wide range of roles from humanitarian tasks, right through to high intensity operations. They are able to deploy at short notice and are often the first assets to go into an operational theatre both enabling and making a significant contribution to subsequent naval operations SNMCMG1 makes the sea a safer place for everyone. For more information about SNMCMG1, visit www.manw.nato.int
2. **ORP “Kontradmirał Xawery CZERNICKI”** - modern, multi-task command ship. She meets all requirements for a NATO warship as well as the world’s standards. She can operate in each and every area of our globe, strengthening the operating possibilities of Polish warships during exercises and peacekeeping operations, as well as operation of NATO warships. More detailed about the ship on the web: <http://www.mcm.mw.mil.pl/>