**INITIAL EXERCISE NEWS RELEASE**

**AMPLE STRIKE 2016**

**Date: August 30, 2016**

The third Czech-led international Joint Terminal Attack Controller (JTAC)\* exercise Ample Strike will kick off in the Czech Republic on August 30, 2016. Until September 20, seventeen Allied and Partnership for Peace nations will come together to train their JTACs, aircrew and commanders of units on the ground in realistic, complex and demanding scenarios.

\* Also referred to as Forward Air Controller or FAC

"The Army of the Czech Republic is actively involved in developing capabilities   
of both our own, Allied and Partner troops. Ample Strike 2016 offers the perfect venue   
to further effective collaboration of air and ground forces preparing them to respond to joint missions whenever needed,” said the Commander of the Czech Air Force, Brigadier General Jaromir Sebesta. "As a well-established Ally we have continued   
the tradition of the Ramstein Rover JTAC exercise series organised by NATO’s Allied Air Command at Ramstein, Germany. With Ample Strike 2016, the Czech Armed Forces is now hosting this major event for the JTAC community for the third time, providing   
a training organisation and comprehensive logistic support for Allied and Partner troops.”

In 2015, Ample Strike achieved a record approx. 1600 control runs allowing JTACs   
to keep up their skills of controlling aircraft in support forces on the ground. In 2016, Ample Strike is not about exceeding this number, but about providing even more complex and challenging Air Land Integration scenarios.

"The setup of JTAC training posts with aircrew and ground troop commanders is still the main theme of Ample Strike,” said exercise director Colonel Zdenek Bauer from the Czech Air Force Command. "However, this year, scenarios will plug in air defence assets   
in a Base Defence Zone supporting the ground units and engaging the jet and helicopter pilots. This will create realistic challenges that are going to improve anti-air defence tactics.”

Adding to exercise complexity, another novelty are air-to-air refuelling missions during tactical aircraft and bomber missions. "US Air Force KC-135R tankers will refuel   
not only the German Tornado jets, Czech and Hungarian Gripen aircraft, but also US Air Force strategic bombers,” said Colonel Bauer. "These strategic assets together will operate out of Royal Air Force Fairford in the United Kingdom. Just like any other aircraft flying in from abroad they will not carry hot weapons.”

"German Pilatus PC-9 and Learjet aircraft, a Lithuanian L-39 Albatros, Slovenian Pilatus PC-9M aircraft and four Polish Su-22 jets will be operating out of our base," said Colonel Peter Cepelka, commander of the 22nd Helicopter Base in Náměšť. "My staff are going to update information about flight activities in operational areas on a daily basis and post them at the air base website,” added Colonel Čepelka. Other Allied aircraft will fly   
in from their home bases. At present Ample Strike assets involve 24 Allied and Partner aircraft and ten aircraft and helicopters from the Czech Air Force.

The total number of exercise participants is approx. 1,500 including almost 300 Allied and Partner soldiers, two rotations of 180 each Czech active reserve soldiers and about 1,000 regular Czech soldiers. Twenty-seven JTAC teams totalling 150 soldiers will be the primary training audience this year. Seventeen Allies and Partners have confirmed their participation during Ample Strike - Belgium, the Czech Republic, Canada, Croatia, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Netherlands, Poland, Slovenia, the United Kingdom and the United States.

Flying activities will be conducted mainly from 9 am to 11 pm on weekdays from September 5-16. Some flying will occur outside this time frame as international assets arrive and deploy to the operational areas.

**Ample Strike 2016 facts (as at August 25, 2016)**

Allied and Partner participation: 297 military personnel, 24 aircraft, 24 FAC teams

Allied aircraft participion:

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Aircraft** | **Number** | **Based at** | **Country** |
| L-39 Albatros | 1 | 22nd Helicopter Base Sedlec, Vícenice u Náměště nad Oslavou | Lithuania |
| Pilatus PC-9M | 2 | 22nd Helicopter Base Sedlec, Vícenice u Náměště nad Oslavou | Slovenia |
| Pilatus PC-9M | 1 | 22nd Helicopter Base Sedlec, Vícenice u Náměště nad Oslavou | Germany |
| Learjet | 2 | 22nd Helicopter Base Sedlec, Vícenice u Náměště nad Oslavou | Germany |
| Tornado | 2 | Germany, Neuburg | Germany |
| Su-22M4 | 4 | 22nd Helicopter Base Sedlec, Vícenice u Náměště nad Oslavou | Poland |
| JAS-39 Gripen | 2 | Hungary, Kecskemét | Hungary |
| AH-64 | 5 | Military training area Libavá | USA |
| KC-135 | 2 | Pardubice airport | USA |
| B-1 | 2 | Royal Air Force Fairford, United Kingdom | USA |
| B-52 | 1 | Royal Air Force Fairford, United Kingdom | USA |

Czech Army participation: 1,000 military personnel, 10 aircraft, 3 JTAC teams, 2 x 180 Active Reserve personnel

Czech aircraft participation:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Aircraft** | **Quantity** | **Based at** |
| Mil Mi-24/35 Hind | 3 | Military training area Libavá |
| L-39ZA Albatros | 1 | 21st Tactical Air Base Čáslav |
| L-159 ALCA | 4 | 21st Tactical Air Base Čáslav |
| JAS-39 Gripen | 1 | 21st Tactical Air Base Čáslav |

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Information about Ample Strike exercise will be continuously updated on: [www.lznamest.army.cz](http://www.lznamest.army.cz).