



Leadership in challenging environment

"If you can fight and survive in the extremes of the Arctic, you can fight anywhere in the world"

NATO UNCLASSIFIED

NATO Centre of Excellence
Cold Weather Operations



Content

- ✓ *What is winter?*
- ✓ *Challenges of Winter*
- ✓ *Leadership and the leaders role*
- ✓ *Control functions and risk management*
- ✓ *Education*





Definitions

- ✓ **Cold Weather Operations** are defined by NATO as “*operations in any region where cold weather and/or temperature phenomena affect military and civilian functions. Executing operation in cold weather conditions requires special planning, training and equipment*” (ATP 3.2.1.5)
- ✓temperatures of +8 °C and below”
- ✓ Cold weather is not limited to the winter season, it's a defined condition which also includes some mountain areas in summertime





Cold weather environments

Scandinavia

- ✓ Climate affected by the Gulfstream bringing weather from tropical conditions
 - ✓ Wet and cold coast
 - ✓ Dry and cold further inland
- ✓ Lack of sun

Eastern European countries

- ✓ Continental: affected by weather coming from Siberia = dry and cold

Middle East

- ✓ Cold weather environment in mountainous areas
- ✓ Kabul, Afghanistan
- ✓ Difference between day/night





Cold Weather Injuries

The danger of cold weather injuries is present during the majority of the year for all military activity in Norway and other Northern countries.

Hypothermia or General Cooling:

- ✓ Core temperature 35 °C and below

Non-Freezing Cold Injuries:

- ✓ Nerve and tissue damage can occur as a result of moisture, cold and pressure over time.
- ✓ Typically occurs from 0 to +10 °C

Freezing Injuries or Frost Bite:

- ✓ Frozen Tissue
- ✓ Superficial (1 and 2 degree)
- ✓ Deep (3 and 4 degree)





Trends and Reasons for Cold Weather Injuries

✓ Where do we get Frost Bite:

- ✓ Hands and feet
- ✓ Ears, nose and chin

✓ Possible reasons for Cold Weather Injuries:

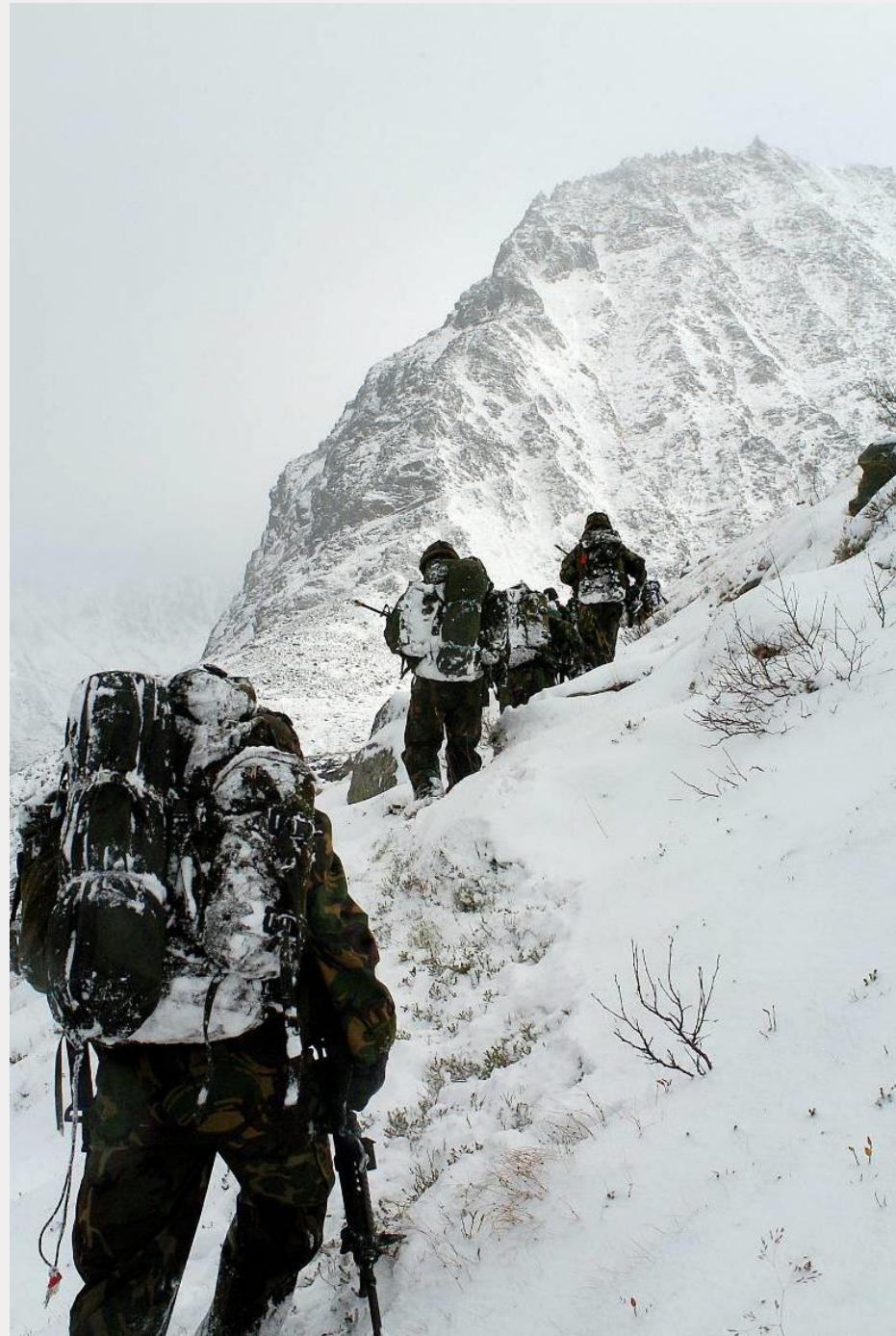
- ✓ Use of incorrect clothing or incorrect use of clothing
- ✓ Ignoring the danger signs and fear of informing leaders
- ✓ Bare skin against metal
- ✓ Wet or frozen boots
- ✓ Ambition of commanders exceeding the units ability
- ✓ Food - water - sleep
- ✓ Different or reduced cold tolerance





Challenges

- ✓ Navigation and movement
- ✓ Avalanches
- ✓ Ice
- ✓ Food and hydration
- ✓ Hygiene
- ✓ Keeping up fighting capabilities
- ✓ Maintenance
- ✓ Everything takes more time
- ✓ The risk of cold weather injuries





Challenges

Some are already dressed for winter



Others need to improve!





How Do we meet the Challenges?

- ✓ Leadership at every level
- ✓ Discipline and routines
- ✓ Practical training
- ✓ Correct use of equipment
- ✓ Correct equipment

20% equipment – 80% field craft





Leadership During Winter Time

- ✓ Winter makes leadership more demanding and challenging – winter will bite you
- ✓ Suck it up does not work in the winter!
- ✓ Gain trust through professional competency, good leadership and clear communication
- ✓ Two-way dialogue – cultural differences
- ✓ Task – Purpose - Intention





A Leaders Responsibility

- ✓ Presence in the situation
- ✓ Make sure that the soldiers and officers are being followed up
- ✓ Amplify the control at all levels: individual, buddy pair, patrol, platoon...
- ✓ Responsible for ensuring that their own personnel are given the necessary education, and that they are mentally and physical fit
- ✓ Ensure that their own subordinates are trained in the appropriate use of their issued equipment
- ✓ Risk assessment conducted before the planned activity starts, and continuously during the activity
- ✓ Know the correct safety regulations





Control Functions

Control Functions are the units standard operating procedures and routines put into a system to ensure all missions are executed as intended, and to prevent unwanted situations.





Control Functions

- ✓ Must be based on the units collective training level, equipment and mission
- ✓ System for control is a leaders responsibility at all levels:
 - from Brigadier to Section leader
- ✓ Who, what, where, when and how
- ✓ Requires presence and continuous follow-up of routines





Examples

✓ **Handing out equipment**

Right size and quality? Does it meet winter requirement.....

✓ **Battle readiness check**

All of personal and team equipment shall be controlled

✓ **Buddy check**

Everyone shall have a buddy

✓ **Hygiene**

Are the conditions set to go to the toilet?

✓ **Nutrition**

Is everybody eating at least one hot meal a day?

✓ **On the march**

Regulation of clothing

✓ **Water**

Do all personnel have a thermos? Is there enough time to melt snow?

✓ **In the bivouac**

Are routines incorporated? TEXAS / SIBERIA / LAS VEGAS / DETROIT



Safety and Risks

Safety is the absence of situations that leads to unwanted events, near misses or accidents

✓ **Ambitions vs training levels:**

- ✓ Is the unit trained and equipped for the activity or the mission?
- ✓ Avoid – Handle - Exploit

✓ **Risk management**

- ✓ Paperwork vs fieldwork
- ✓ Integrated in planning
- ✓ Continuous risk assessment

✓ **Abort criteria**

- ✓ When is enough, enough?





The Individual Responsibility

- ✓ Regardless how good the preparations are, it's often up to the individual leader and/or soldier on the ground to make the final decision.
- ✓ Encourage junior leaders to take responsibility and decisions.

Who is the local commander on the scene to take the decision?





Education

«Winter service is a collective skill»

- Brigadier Lervik CO Brigade North





Education

Basic winter lectures for Norwegian soldiers:

- ✓ Clothing and gear
- ✓ Carbon monoxide and heat sources
- ✓ Control functions
- ✓ Establishing winter bivouacs
- ✓ Cold weather injuries
- ✓ Safe routing
- ✓ Buddy rescue and use of Txr



- These are basic introduction lectures – winter service is taught and experienced over time in the environment.
- Norwegian conscripts are used to the environment since childhood.

Focus on the basics first - knowledge, skills and attitude



Basic Cold Weather Unit Training

- ✓ 4 week program
 - Week 1: NCO, medic, staff
 - Week 2-4: Unit training
- ✓ Supported by winter instructors
- ✓ Move – fight - maintain combat readiness
- ✓ End state:
Unit ready to start specialist to arms training and field integration training with other units in cold environment.



Curriculum for NATO Basic Cold Weather Unit Training

Determined for use by
Centre of Excellence – Cold Weather Operations

Elverum, 1.October 2020

A handwritten signature in blue ink.

Jo Christen Haugom
Colonel

Director of Centre of Excellence
Cold Weather Operations



Education support

- ✓ Courses
- ✓ Individual and unit training programs
- ✓ Mobile training teams
- ✓ SME
- ✓ Handbooks, lectures and templates
- ✓ coe-cwo.org

Home > Organisation > Centre of Excellence – Cold Weather Operations



Centre of Excellence – Cold Weather Operations

Surrounded by freezing temperatures and extreme weather, the Norwegian Armed Forces have experience and knowledge on how to survive and conduct military operations in cold weather.

Updated: 6.09.2021 16:12

[See information about the upcoming Cold Weather Operations Conference 2021 \(CWO 2021\)](#)

The NATO Centre of Excellence for Cold Weather Operations acts as the main provider and coordinator of expertise and capabilities in the area of Cold Weather Operations in NATO.

We provide NATO and partner nations the necessary competence in order to operate under Arctic, sub-Arctic and Cold Weather conditions. This is done through utilising the full spectrum of competence in the Norwegian Armed Forces, coordinated with other nations' competence in cold weather environment.

The centre is a Norwegian-sponsored organisation that provides NATO with a tool to enhance interoperability in the area of operating in a cold weather climate.

The centres of excellence (COE) are not in the C2 of the NATO Command structure, but HQ SACT's Transformation Network Branch is responsible for providing the Centre with the annual Request for Support on behalf of NATO.



[Our courses and educations](#)

Through our courses and seminars we offer specialised training and education for operating in cold weather.



[NATO Staff Officer Cold Weather Operations Webinar](#)



Education support



Cold Weather Injuries

"If you can fight and survive in the extremes of the Arctic, you can fight anywhere in the world"

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Handbook in Winter Service – Cold Weather Injuries

Adopted for use by the Norwegian Armed Forces

Berita 1 September 2020

Lars Magnus Huse
Brigadier
Chief of the Norwegian Army Weapons

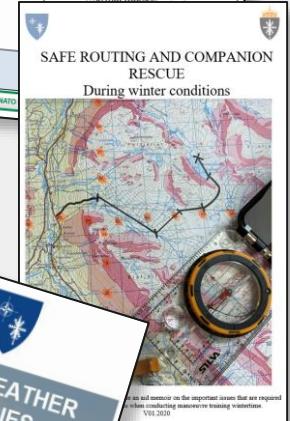
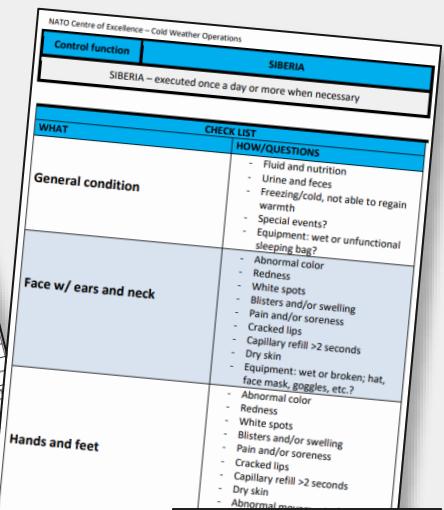
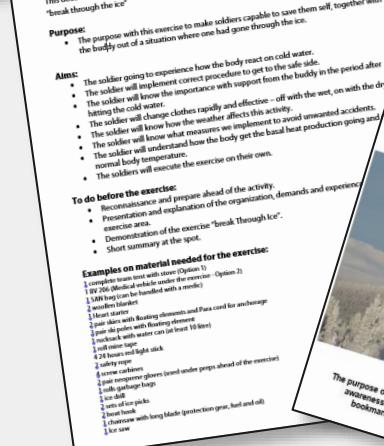
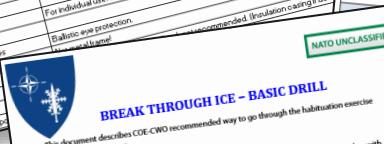
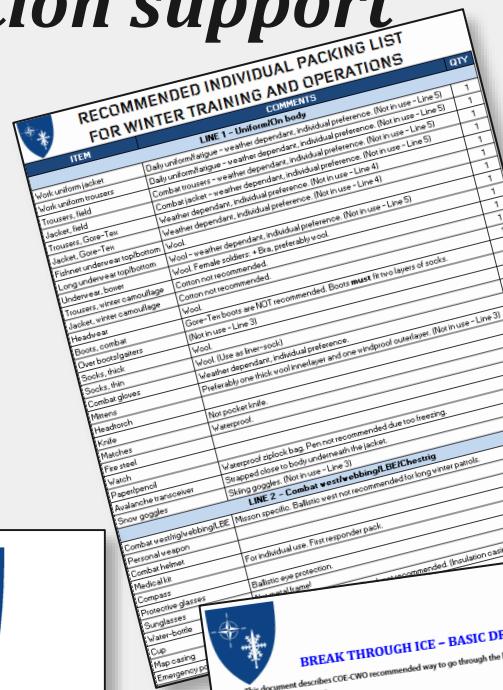


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Jo Christen Haugom
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COE CWO E&T offers to NATO

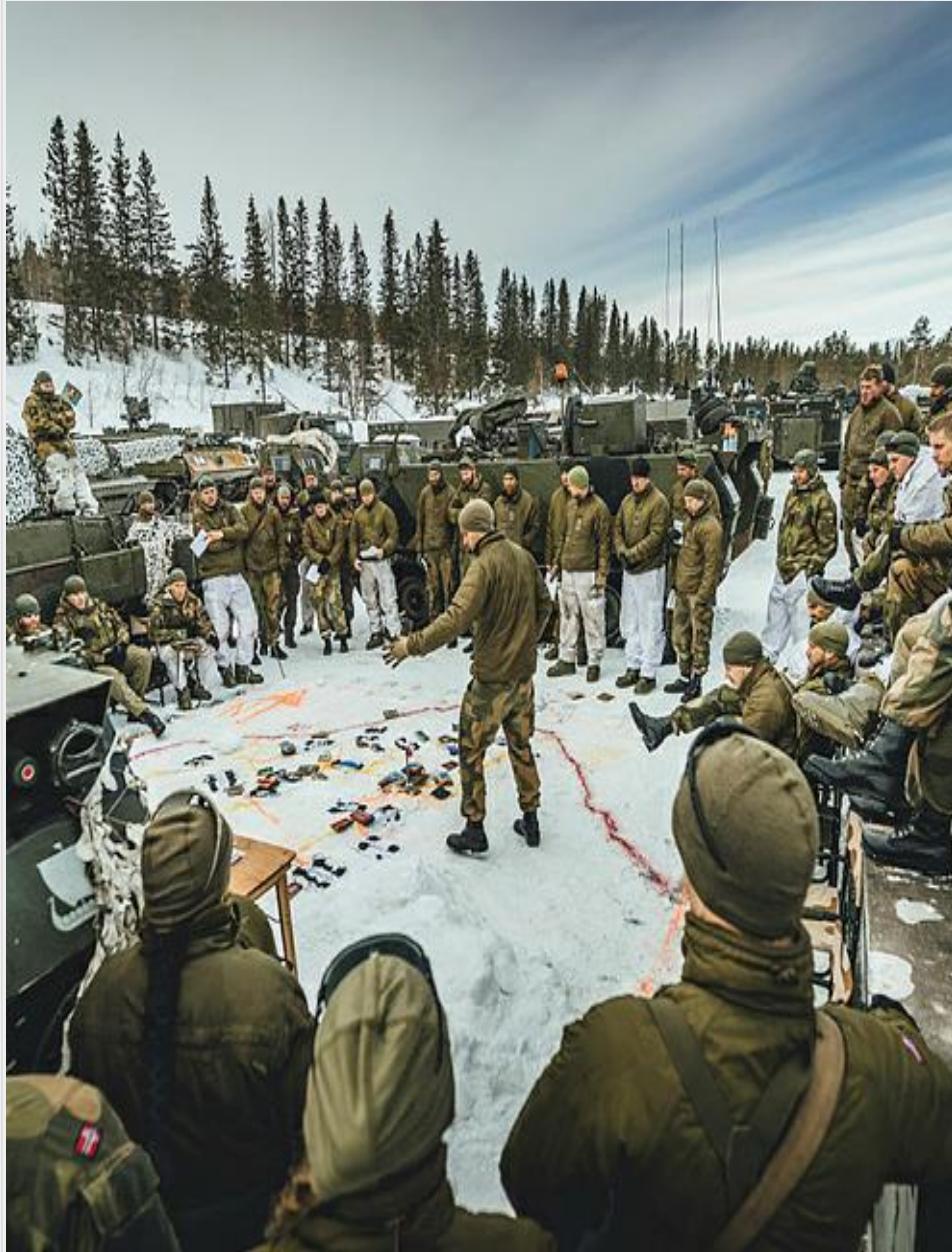
- **Pre deployment support -Trainer and advisor team at home base**
Key personnel - Planners, Coy and Plt leaders and trainers
 - **NATO Staff Officer Cold Weather Webinar**
2 days Sep – Oct. Online seminar on CWO and the different field functions on brigade level
- **Courses:**
 - **Army SERE C Instructor Course - Autumn**
18 days Aug - Sep
 - **NATO Cold Weather Operation Survival Instructor Course**
12 days Oct - Nov
 - **NATO Cold Weather Combat Medic Instructor Course**
12 days Nov - Dec
 - **NATO Winter Instructor Course**
26 days Jan - Feb
 - **NATO Avalanche Warning Course**
10 days Feb - Mar.
 - **NATO Avalanche Companion Rescue Instructor Course**
5 days Mar – Apr
 - **NATO Staff Officer Winter Course**
12 days Feb - Mar
- **Unit support after deployment and during CET/FIT**
SME and trainers



Cold Weather Capable?

A comparison of articles and literature done by Norwegian Defence Research Establishment (FFI) points out three factors needed to be capable for CWO:

- ✓ The technology must **withstand the weather**, and the units needs sufficient equipment
- ✓ Soldiers must be able to **take care** of themselves and to keep their equipment operational
- ✓ Leaders and planners must understand the **limitations** that weather gives, but also make use of the **possibilities** that cold weather offers





End of Brief

