

NATO's Eastern Flank Special Operations Forces

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CONTEMPORARY IMAGE OF POLISH SPECIAL FORCES

For centuries, special forces have played a very important role in the strategic process of military operations. Special units with appropriate forces and means to carry out special operations in various conditions and circumstances are a very valuable formation, which more than once decided about the fate of battles, wars, or even the future of individual states or nations.

The following publication aims to outline the most important elements that shape the image of contemporary special forces in Poland. Based on the literature on the subject, basic special units will be presented as part of the Special Forces Component in Poland. I will outline the legal basis of each formation in outline, as well as I will place it in the process of shaping special forces in the country. By showing the current tasks of each of the units, it will be possible to look through the eyes of the contemporary theater of actions and perspectives that force subsequent armed conflicts.

In the next part of the work, I will present selected elements of the activities of individual special units, which, as I emphasize, are known to the public through the mass media. The listed examples are only a substitute for what specialized soldiers do, also for other

tasks that are part of the process of ensuring security in the country and constitute a commitment to international alliances.

I. The process of forming Special Units in Poland

When discussing the formation of special units in Poland, it should be mentioned that the traditions of special operations in the history of our homeland go back to the medieval times, when subsequent dynasties had an army for special tasks. Traveling through the centuries of history, you can list numerous formations, ranging from Lisowczyk, dagger units, the Combat Organization of the Polish Socialist Party, or units for sabotage and subversive tasks during the Second World War. Their producers were, among others, the famous Cichociemni, but also soldiers of the Home Army who fought in the partisan units of the Union of Retaliation, Kedyw and Wachlarz. The above-mentioned traditions of the units are continued by modern Special Forces soldiers¹. In the post-war period, apart from numerous reconnaissance and airborne units, it should also be mentioned incl. 1st assault battalion from Dziwnów and special companies – the 62nd from Bolesławiec, the 56th from Szczecin and the 48th from Kraków, which after 1993 were reformed, among others in the 1st Special Commando Regiment, and the remaining soldiers began their service, incl. in the 6th Airborne Cavalry Brigade and in the 25th Air Cavalry Brigade.

¹ „Wojska Specjalne”, red. K. Frącik, Warszawa 2019, ASzWoj, s. 11–25; K. Śledziński, „Cichociemni. Elita polskiej dywersji”, Kraków 2012, Znak, s. 15.

The fate of the location and affiliation of modern Special Forces was different, incl. The Maritime Special Operations Unit was subordinate directly to the commander of the 3rd Navy Flotilla, while the GROM Military Unit was under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of the Interior. After the events of September 11, 2001 in the United States, during the NATO summit in 2002, it was decided to establish a Special Operations Force in Poland as part of the Armed Forces of the Republic of Poland. In October 2005, the rank of the Special Operations Division operating within the structures of the General Staff of the Polish Armed Forces was raised, transforming it into the Special Operations Headquarters (SzDS), and on January 1, 2007, the Special Forces Command with its seat in Bydgoszcz was established².

Finally, on May 24, 2007, the Special Forces were given a separate status of the Armed Forces Type (RSZ). The above act regulated the functioning of four types of the Armed Forces and the scope of activities of the Special Forces Commander³. The basic elements of the functioning of the Special Forces include:

- commanding organizational unions and military units of Special Forces;

² K. Frąciak, „Wojska Specjalne Sił Zbrojnych Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej w obliczu transformacji ustrojowej”, w: „Jednostka Wojskowa GROM jako instrument polityki bezpieczeństwa Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej. Jubileusz 30 lat istnienia formacji”, „Bezpieczeństwo Teoria i Praktyka”, Kraków 2020, Nr 2 (XXXIX), s. 52–53; „Wojska Specjalne w latach 1967–1993”, <http://wojskaspecjalne.wp.mil.pl/pl/22.html>, dostęp 12.04.2015.

³ Journal of Laws of 2007 107, item 732. The Act of May 24, 2007 amending the Act on the universal obligation to defend the Republic of Poland and certain acts.

- planning and implementation of mobilization and operational development and use of Special Forces;
- training subordinate organizational unions and military units;
- preparation of forces and resources of Special Forces for combat operations and in situations provided for in laws and ratified international agreements⁴.

On the basis of the above Act, Special Forces were subordinated to the joint Special Forces Command (DWS).

Over the next years, the process of shaping the Special Forces in Poland was formed. In the period from September 2011 to December 2013, the Special Forces Command functioned, then in January 2014, the Special Forces Command, transformed into the General Command of the Armed Forces. The next stage of the reform of the command and control system of the Polish Armed Forces, which eliminated separate commands of the types of armed forces, including the Special Forces Command (DWS), was the creation on 1 January 2014. Of the General Command of the Kinds of Armed Forces, within which the inspectorates transformed from the headquarters of the types of troops were subordinated, Command of the Special Forces (DWS) transformed into the Inspectorate of Special Forces (IWS). On the other hand, from August 3, 2015, the Special Forces Component Command (DKWS) functioned, which largely took over the functions and tasks of the Special Forces Command, existing until December 2013, which was liquidated as part of the above-mentioned reform.

⁴ Ibidem, Art. 13 a. 1.

The merger of the Special Forces Component Command and the Special Forces Inspectorate of the General Command of the Armed Forces General took place at the beginning of 2018. The decision resulted from the need to prepare for duty in the NATO Response Force.

Currently, the Command of the Special Forces Component with its seat in Krakow is subordinate to the following units of Special Forces: Military Unit GROM im. Cichociemnych Paratroopers of the Home Army no 2305, Military Commando Unit no 4101, Military Unit FORMOZA them. Gen. Włodzimierz Potasiński no 4026, Military Unit NIL them. Brig. Gen. August Emil Fieldorf „Nil” no 4724, Military Unit AGAT them. div. gen. Stefan Rowecki „Grot” no 3940, and operationally – located in the structure of the Air Force – 7th squadron of special operations intended to support the operations of Special Forces from the air.

Within the command there are also Training Centers, such as the Special Forces Training Center in Krakow, the Special Forces Training Center in Strzecz, the Land Training Center in Lubliniec, the Diving Training Center in Gdynia⁵.

⁵ „Dowództwo KWS”, <http://wojskaspecjalne.wp.mil.pl/pl/42.html>, access 12.04.2015.

The current commander of the Special Forces Component in Poland is gen. brig. dr inż. Sławomir Drumowicz⁶.

Over time, the currently functioning Special Units were formed: GROM, FRMOZA, NIL, Military Commando Unit and AGAT⁷.

The oldest special unit in Poland, GROM, was established on July 13, 1990 as the Operational and Maneuver Response Group. The first commander was Colonel Sławomir Petelicki. An important moment in the life of the Unit, as successive commanders claim, was the acceptance of the heritage of the tradition of the Cichociemni Paratroopers of the Home Army 1940–1945 by the decision No. 119 / MON of the Minister of National Defense of August 4, 1995⁸ The name of the Unit was changed on October 1, 1999 to the Military Special Formation „GROM” them. Cichociemnych Paratroopers of the Home Army in connection with the finding of JW. GROM in the structures of the Ministry

⁶ A graduate of the Mechanized Forces Academy in Wrocław – mechanized (1992), National Defense Academy (AON) in Warsaw (2001), post-graduate studies at the University of Silesia in Katowice (2005). He served in the 62nd Special Company (62 priests) in Bolesławiec, the 1st Special Commando Regiment (1st PSK) in Lubliniec, where he went through the various levels of the command process, including the Deputy Commander of the Unit. Then he served in the Special Forces Command (DWS) in Krakow as the head of the J-2 reconnaissance unit, the head of the combat support division – deputy chief of staff for combat support at the Special Forces Command (DSS). He participated in missions outside the country of the former Yugoslavia (UNPROFOR / UNCRO) and during the 9th rotation of the PMC IRAK. In the years 2014–2018, he was the Commander of the AGAT Military Unit. Until today commander in the Command of the Special Forces Component.

⁷ S. Crawford, „Encyklopedia sił specjalnych SAS”, Warszawa 1993; „Wojska Specjalne 2007–2012”, red. T. Dytko, Kraków 2012.

⁸ Decision No. 119 / MON of the Minister of National Defense of August 4, 1995 on taking over the heritage of tradition and assigning the distinguishing name to the Military Unit No. 2305 in Warsaw.

of National Defense after transferring from the Ministry of the Interior.

The current name of the Military Unit **GROM** was adopted on September 30, 2011 under Decision of the Ministry of National Defense No. PF-60 / Org. / SSG / ZÖiU-P1 of March 18, 2011 on the reform of organizational units of Special Forces⁹.

From 1 to 10 January 2014, the unit was subordinate to the Special Forces Command, then to the Special Operations Center – Special Forces Component Command (COS-DKWS) under the General Command of the Armed Forces. Ultimately, from August 3, 2015, the GROM Military Unit is subordinated to the Command of the Special Forces Component subordinated to the General Command of the Armed Forces. The current commander from January 1, 2020 is Colonel Grzegorz Mikłusiak¹⁰.

The second in the order of formation of the Special Unit is the Military Unit **Comandos** in Lubliniec, which directly continues the traditions of the 1st Special Commando Regiment, which was formed on the basis of the 1st assault battalion in

⁹ „Jednostka Wojskowa GROM”, https://www.jednostki-wojskowe.pl/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=680&Itemid=54, access 15.07.2021.

¹⁰ S. Petelicki, „GROM. Siła i honor. Z generałem Sławomirem Petelickim rozmawia Michał Komar”, Wydawnictwo Literackie, Kraków 2010, s. 61–149; H. Królikowski, „Wojskowa Formacja Specjalna GROM im. Cichociemnych Spadochroniarzy Armii Krajowej 1990–2000”, wyd. 2, Gdański Dom Wydawniczy, Gdańsk 2002, s. 45–68; J. Rybak, „GROM.PL. Tajne operacje polskich sił specjalnych”, wyd. 2, Wydawnictwo Jeden Świat, Warszawa 2009, s. 59–83. A special issue of the journal was also issued for the 30th anniversary of the Unit: „Jednostka Wojskowa GROM jako instrument polityki bezpieczeństwa Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej. Jubileusz 30 lat istnienia formacji”, „Bezpieczeństwo Teoria i Praktyka”, red. Marcin Lasoń, Grzegorz Wydrowski, Kraków 2020, Nr 2 (XXXIX).

1993 on the basis of the order of the Chief of General Staff of the Polish Armed Forces No. 079 / Org. on October 8, 1993. The unit was formed by Col. Zbigniew Kwintal. Currently, the unit is subordinate to the Special Forces Command. The current name of the Military Commando Unit was adopted on September 30, 2011 under the Decision of the Ministry of National Defense No. PF-60 / Org. / SSG / ZOiU-P1 of March 18, 2011¹¹. The current commander since October 28, 2016 is Colonel Michał Strzelecki.

Another Special Unit in Poland is the Maritime Special Action Unit **FORMOZA** im. Gen. Włodzimierz Potasiński, formed in 2007 by virtue of subsequent decisions of the Minister of National Defense in 2006 and 2007¹². The unit was created from the Special Group of Scuba divers and maritime operations specialists from the Reconnaissance Ships Group and was initially subordinated to the Navy Commander. During the establishment of the Special Forces Command, on January 1, 2008, the Maritime Special Operations Unit was subordinated to this command¹³. The current

¹¹ Decision of the Ministry of National Defense No. PF-60 / Org. / SSG / ZOiU-P1 of March 18, 2011 on the reform of organizational units of Special Forces.

¹² Decision of the Ministry of National Defense no. Z-90 / Org. / P1 of November 14, 2006, decision of the Ministry of National Defense no. Pf-7 / Org. / SSG / ZOiU-P1 of January 24, 2007 and the executive order of the Navy Commander no. Pf-40 / Org./N-1 of March 9, 2007.

¹³ Decision of the Ministry of National Defense no. Z-50 / Org. / P1 of July 26, 2007, decision of the Ministry of National Defense no. Pf-65 / Org. / SSG / ZOiU-P1 of September 12, 2007 and an executive order of the Navy Commander no. Z-85 / Org./N1 of November 5, 2007.

name of the unit was adopted on September 30, 2011¹⁴. The current commander since 2014 is Cdr Radosław Tokarski.

The Military Unit NIL No. 4724 in Krakow is a Unit established on December 2, 2008 as a Special Forces Command Support and Security Unit. On June 25, 2009, the Unit took the name of its patron – Brig. August Emil Fieldorf „NILA”, founder and first commander of the Kedyw KG AK. He celebrates his holiday on September 6¹⁵. It adopted its current name on October 1, 2011. The current commander since November 7, 2018 is Colonel Andrzej Gardynik

The youngest Special Unit in Poland is the AGAT Military Unit div. gen. Stefan Rowecki „Grot” was created by the Decision of the Minister of National Defense of 18 March 2011 on the basis of full-time jobs and infrastructure of the disbanded Special Unit of the Military Gendarmerie in Gliwice¹⁶.

The first unit commander, who was the head of the organizational team to form a unit on the order of the Special Forces Commander, Brig. Piotr Patalong at the beginning of April 2011 was Colonel Sławomir Berdychowski. On July 1, 2011. The AGAT Military Unit joined the structures of the Special Forces. The official date of the formation of the Unit is June 30, 2011. By the decision

¹⁴ Decision of the Ministry of National Defense No. PF-60 / Org. / SSG / ZOiU-P1 of March 18, 2011 on the reform of organizational units of Special Forces.

¹⁵ Decision No. 208 / MON of the Minister of National Defense of June 25, 2009 on naming the patron and establishing the annual Feast of the Unit is named after the patron – Brig. Gen. August Emil Fieldorf „NILA”.

¹⁶ „Agat powrócił. Sformowanie Jednostki Wojskowej AGAT”, http://agat.wp.mil.pl/pl/1_9.html, access 12.04.2015.

of the Minister of National Defense No. 55 / MON of February 28, 2012, the annual JW AGAT holiday was established on June 30 as the date of the formation of the Unit¹⁷. The current commander since 2018 is Colonel Artur Kozłowski.

II. The contemporary scope of tasks of the Special Forces in Poland

Contemporary operations of the Special Forces include special operations carried out in the country as well as abroad. Activities can be carried out in certain states, in times of peace, crisis and war¹⁸.

In the following part of the work, I will present the current activities assigned to individual Special Units in Poland.

The **GROM** Military Unit, thanks to combat experience in missions, is ready to conduct special operations in all climatic and geographical conditions. There are three areas to the basic training process that prepares soldiers for military action:

- **Against terrorist land and sea operations** (the so-called black tactic): freeing hostages from fixed objects (houses, skyscrapers) and vehicles (planes, cars, trains), protection of VIPs and facilities, securing the activities and operations of other military and non-military services.
- **Special Actions** (the so-called green tactic): conducting reconnaissance, destructive actions in the enemy's deep rear and hinterland, eliminating potential personnel and technical threats in

¹⁷ Official Journal of the Minister of National Defense. Item 78. Decision No. 55 / MON of February 28, 2012 on the establishment of the annual AGAT Military Unit holiday.

¹⁸ „Wojska Specjalne”, <http://wojskaspecjalne.wp.mil.pl/pl/41.html>, access 12.04.2015.

- the enemy's structures, participation in the evacuation of the population, conducting the so-called "fighting for souls and hearts".
- **Maritime activities against terrorism** (the so-called blue tactic): combating terrorism at the land / sea interface, on floating objects and platforms¹⁹.
 - The **Comandos** Military Unit can be used for special reconnaissance, support and direct combat tasks, using a large range of the unit's capabilities, from parachute jumping to diving.
 - **Special diagnosis** it is concerned with obtaining exploratory information (providing well-defined, highly probable and timely information). is an extended function of personal recognition (so-called HUMINT), consisting in direct, optical tracking of a target in a hostile, inaccessible or politically sensitive territory. (environmental recognition, hazard assessment, target assessment, impact assessment).
 - **Direct Actions** are precise operations, performed independently in a limited time and scope, directed at specific objects of operational and strategic importance (raids, ambushes, and direct attacks, precision guidance, recovery operations, precision destruction operations, water management, reconnaissance and destruction).
 - **Military support** These are activities aimed at supporting troops and friendly forces in the range from basic, material and technical training to the use of local forces in combat operations.

¹⁹ „Jednostka Wojskowa GROM, Działania bojowe”, <https://grom.wp.mil.pl/pl/pages/dziaania-bojowe-2019-04-04-j>, access 15.07.2021.

- **Support to counteract irregular activities** (anti-terrorism, anti-insurgency operations, counter-proliferation of chemical, biological and nuclear weapons, hostage-release operations)²⁰.

The **FORMOZA** Military Unit consists mainly of highly trained specialists who previously served in the Special Groups of Scuba Divers and the Marine Special Action Unit with extensive experience in military missions abroad, including Iraq. The unit specializes in naval operations, diversion, operations behind enemy lines, reconnaissance operations²¹.

The Military Unit **NIL** was established to carry out the tasks of information support, command and logistic support of special operations conducted by Special Forces in the country and abroad, in the national and allied system.

The main areas of activity of the Military Unit of the **NIL**:

- Organizing and implementing projects related to the command system of special forces.
- Information security for special operations by separating support elements for task forces and special forces components.
- Securing the command and control system of special forces components in missions and operations carried out under allied contingents and obligations.
- Organizing a logistic security system for the functioning of special forces units and the implementation of special operations.

²⁰ „Jednostka Wojskowa Komandosów, Zadania”, <https://jwk.wp.mil.pl/pl/pages/zadania-2017-01-16-4>, access 15.07.2021.

²¹ „Jednostka Wojskowa Formoza”, https://www.jednostki-wojskowe.pl/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=536&Itemid=27, access 15.07.2021.

- Financial and logistic security of the unit and the Command of the Special Forces Component.
- Carrying out purchases for the needs of special forces²².

The AGAT Military Unit is a special unit, light infantry special operations, designed to conduct direct actions, military support, support anti-terrorist operations and protect critical infrastructure. It carries out its purpose as part of supporting special operations in the national, allied and coalition system. At the same time, it conducts direct actions as well as military support actions, protection of critical infrastructure and support for anti-terrorist operations.

The basic tasks of the unit include:

- Special reconnaissance – activities carried out with the potential of task elements, using special techniques, tactics and equipment, in extremely unfavorable conditions, on own, hostile and inaccessible territory, in order to obtain, collect and process information.
- Direct actions – operations of physical impact on key objects planned down to the smallest detail, carried out by task elements, aimed at achieving specific goals of strategic importance
- Military support: activities aimed at increasing the level of training of allied troops, non-military institutions and pro-defense organizations. It consists of training, partnership and consulting in order to increase the level of safety and exchange of experiences.

²² „Jednostka Wojskowa NIL, Zadania”, <https://nil.wp.mil.pl/pl/pages/zadania-2017-01-16-4>, access 15.07.2021.

- In addition, the AGAT Military Unit conducts training and carries out tasks in the field of combating terrorism and anti-insurgency, as well as counteracts hybrid threats²³.

The AGAT Military Unit performs tasks in accordance with its intended purpose by preparing, maintaining, separating and recreating the combat capability of the Task Assault Teams. The AGAT Military Unit organizes combat support elements for Task Force Combat Teams, which prepares them for operation and, if necessary, recreates their combat capability. For the time of performing combat tasks, it provides support elements for task force combat teams in the subordination of Special Forces.

The AGAT Military Unit uses the following methods of transfer to the area of operation:

- by road: foot patrol, vehicle patrol;
- by air: on helicopters, parachute landing;
- by water: boats, canoes, on pontoons (rivers, lakes)²⁴.

The numerous mentioned tasks performed by individual Special Units, which also have their specializations, also include the above-mentioned Training Centers and the Special Forces Training Center in Krakow, under which for over a year he has been conducting specialist and qualification courses for commandos, among others in the field of combat diving, parachute jumps with oxygen apparatus, training in indoor combat, guidance of aircraft

²³ Szkolenie, <https://agat.wp.mil.pl/pl/pages/szkolenie/>, access 10.05.2021.

²⁴ S. Bylina, „Siła i Ogień” społeczno – militarne uwarunkowania Jednostki Wojskowej AGAT w Gliwicach im. gen. dyw. Stefana Roweckiego „Grota”, Wydawnictwo Difin, Warszawa 2021.

to ground targets (so-called JTACs), special reconnaissance, communication and battlefield medicine.

The task of the Center is also to prepare civilians for service in Special Forces, which has already been done by the Special Forces Training Center in Lubliniec through courses for civilians codenamed „Commando”, and then as the Jata Course. The course prepares interested persons to participate in the testing training by preparing for the PE exam and selection in the mountains. The last such course took place in June 2021 in Krakow, and was also a recruitment procedure for the candidate service for professional soldiers of the Special Forces²⁵.

III. Contemporary activities of Polish Special Units

The activities of the Special Forces Component are coordinated by the Special Forces Component Command, which, in accordance with the message of the formation's activities, conducts special operations in the country and abroad in times of peace, crisis and war. The tasks are carried out independently or in cooperation with other types of armed forces, and may be of operational or strategic importance.

Thanks to many years of cooperation with the allied forces, training processes are carried out and then specific activities in the theater of wars around the world. An example can be the cooperation with the American military, which has been going on

²⁵ M. Kowalska-Sendek, „Nowa jednostka do szkolenia specjalsów”, <http://www.polska-zbrojna.pl/home/articleshow/30199?t=Nowa-jednostka-do-szkolenia-specjalsow>, access 15.07.2021.

intensively for over a dozen years and carried out its tasks, among others during the Puma 12 command post exercises at the NATO Joint Forces Training Center in Bydgoszcz. It was then confirmed that Poland had achieved the initial capabilities to command the special forces component. In the following years, there were more rips during regular Cobra exercises²⁶, Noble Sword, which took place in Poland and Lithuania, where a total of 1700 soldiers from 15 NATO member states were trained²⁷.

Another important training, which was related to Poland's duty of special forces in NATO in the period from January 1 to December 31, 2015, was the Trident Juncture 14 exercise. NATO Response Force²⁸.

The cooperation of the Polish Special Forces recently completed the last year of 2020, when the Polish Special Forces were on duty in the NATO Response Force. For 12 months, Polish soldiers of Special Forces were ready to take action anywhere in the world. The Command of the Special Forces Component was responsible for the overall management of special operations of the allied forces. On the basis of the Krakow command, the Allied Command of the Special Operations Component was established, headed by a Pole – Commander of the Special Forces Component,

²⁶ B. Politowski, „Przywództwo zobowiązuje”, <http://www.polska-zbrojna.pl/home/articleinmagazineshow/10916?t=PRZYWODZTWO-ZOBOWIAZUJE>, access 12.04.2021.

²⁷ M. Kowalska-Sendek, „W elitarnym klubie”, <http://www.polska-zbrojna.pl/home/articleinmagazineshow/14122?t=W-ELITARNYM-KLUBIE>, access 12.04.2021.

²⁸ M. Kowalska-Sendek, „Gotowi do dyżuru w NATO”, <http://www.polska-zbrojna.pl/home/articleshow/14276?t=Gotowi-do-dyzuru-w-NATO>, access 12.04.2021.

Gen. Brig. dr inż. Sławomir Drumowicz. The Allied Special Operations Component of the SON, in addition to Poles, who accounted for over half of the positions, also included representatives of the other thirteen other countries: Bulgarians, Croats, Greeks, Estonians, French, Spaniards, Lithuanians, Latvians, Germans, Romanians, Slovaks, Hungarians and Italians. The task of the soldiers was to periodically check the preparation of forces and resources during various types of exercises and training. It was also important to constantly exchange information with subordinate allied task forces, commands of other components: land, sea, air and logistic support group, and with the superior, i.e. the Joint Force Command, JFC in Brunssum. The soldiers of the Special Units participated, for example, in the international exercise „Brilliant Jump 20” and in numerous staff training sessions. The next shift will take place in 2024²⁹.

As for the participation of soldiers from individual Special Units, it should be noted that the **GROM** Military Unit has the greatest combat experience, whose achievements are very impressive. Examples of special operations in the land, sea and air environment with the participation of coalition forces with the cooperation of the best formations in the world, such as the American Delta or the British SAS, should be mentioned. The basic activities include the missions in Haiti „UPHOLD DEMOCRACY” in 1994, in the Balkans in 1996 – 2001 and operation „Little Flower”, in Kuwait and the Persian Gulf in 2002–2003. boarding for ships. The next

²⁹ Magdalena Kowalska-Sendek, „Specjalsi zakończyli dyżur w Siłach Odpowiedzi NATO”, <http://www.polska-zbrojna.pl/home/articleshow/33490?t=Specjalsi-zakonczyli-dyzur-w-Silach-Odpowiedzi-NATO>, access 15.07.2021.

place was the „IRAQI FREEDOM” mission in Iraq in 2003–2004, where the UM-KASR (BASRA) oil terminal was seized at the start of the mission. The dam over Mukaraja was captured, people from the „deck of cards” were detained, and terrorist groups were liquidated. The next place is Afghanistan in 2002–2004, 2007–2013, operation „Enduring Freedom”, where operations were carried out throughout the country, including (over 20 hostages were released, protection of Polish soldiers was carried out in Bagram and Vipów). The operators of the GROM Military Unit also participated in the Flintlock 20 exercise in Mauritania, 2020, where they conducted training for commandos from the Republic of Guinea. Currently, GROM operates, among others, as part of the Polish Military Contingent in Afghanistan as Task Force 49. In terms of operational subordination, they perform tasks for ISAF SOF (ISAF Special Operation Force)³⁰.

Another Special Unit with extensive experience is the Military **Commando** Unit from Lubliniec, whose soldiers took part in missions abroad, including in Macedonia in 2001–2003, Iraq in 2003–2008, Congo in 2006, Pakistan in 2005–2006 and now they took part in the mission in Afghanistan.

³⁰ „Jednostka Wojskowa GROM, Zadania”, https://www.jednostki-wojskowe.pl/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=680&Itemid=54, access 15.07.2021; „Jednostka Wojskowa GROM, Działania bojowe”, <https://grom.wp.mil.pl/pl/pages/dziaania-bojowe-2019-04-04-j>, access 15.07.2021; More on: T. Sapieryński, „Operacje bojowe JW GROM w pierwszej dekadzie XXI wieku”, w: „Jednostka Wojskowa GROM jako instrument polityki bezpieczeństwa Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej”, op. cit, s. 155–165.

The experiences of the next Special Unit **FORMOZA** include, among others participation in the EU Sophia mission in the Mediterranean in 2018. The soldiers of the FORMOZA Military Unit also certified the Ukrainian 3rd Special Purpose Regiment. Prince Światosław the Brave, during which, among others, training activities of Ukrainian commandos. In 2019, a similar certification procedure was carried out in the first Ukrainian special unit 140 of the Special Operations Center. This is the first time a special unit of a non-NATO country has received such a certificate. Also in this country, Formosa operators conducted training for the soldiers of the Ukrainian Sea 73 Special Purpose Center in Ochakiv during the international Sea Breeze 21 exercise, as well as participation in the Silver Saber 21 exercise.

The last example of a Special Unit is the **AGAT** Special Unit, which from the beginning of its establishment has established cooperation with international entities such as: International Special Training Center, Security Assistance Training Management Organization – SATMO (USA), 10th Special Forces Group (USA). The soldiers of the AGAT Military Unit built their combat abilities as part of training courses organized as part of the exchange of experiences (JCET) and with the ISTC Pfullendorf Training Center (Germany). Cooperation was also established with the Operational Planning Course for Platoon Leaders; SOTG Planning Course; French Army Mountain Training Center in Modane and Special Forces Support Group (Great Britain). a course for section commanders, conducted in the jungle of French Guiana by instructors

of the Foreign Legion³¹. The Unit's soldiers regularly take part in the Kobra, Fort, Noble Sword, Noble Jump, Kobra and Dragon exercises. Also since 2016, they have been cooperating with Georgians in the training process, including mountain training in the Caucasus, also during the last Noble Partner 20 exercise in Georgia. In terms of participation in the Polish Military Contingents, they take part in missions in Iraq and Afghanistan³².

Summing up the discussion of contemporary aspects of the functioning of Special Units in Poland, it can be noted that the intensively developing organizational structure and special activities contribute to increasing the importance of this type of military formation in the country. Through the presented tasks of individual Special Units, it is possible to distinguish not only individual Units but also to show common accents of activity. Thanks to the above-mentioned activities in the country and the international arena, numerous exercises at the highest level, Polish Special Forces belong to the elite of Special Forces in the world. I hope that to some extent the above content presented a contemporary picture of the activities of these Special Forces.

³¹ „W piekle Gujany. Żołnierze JW AGAT w piekle Gujany”, http://agat.wp.mil.pl/pl/1_3.html, access 12.04.2015; M. Kowalska-Sendek, „W sercu dżungli”, <http://www.polska-zbrojna.pl/home/articleinmagazineshow/13503?t=W-SERCU-DZUNGLI>, access 12.04.2021; M. Kowalska-Sendek, „Dwa tygodnie w dżungli”, <http://www.polska-zbrojna.pl/home/articleshow/13221?t=Dwa-tygodnie-w-dzungli>, access 12.04.2021.

³² M. Kowalska-Sendek, E. Korsak, „Gruzińscy specjaliści bliżej NATO”, <http://www.polska-zbrojna.pl/home/articleshow/23774?t=Gruzincy-specjaliści-bliżej-NATO>, access 12.04.2021; P. Glińska, „Komandosi na Kaukazie”, <http://polska-zbrojna.pl/home/articleshow/29986?t=Tym-zylo-wojsko-I-kwartal-2019-roku>, access 12.04.2021.

In the future, they will probably help to outline the next elements of the research process of such an interesting type of the Armed Forces in Poland.