

TLP history

Category : About us

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The Allied Air Forces Central Europe (AAFCE) Tactical Leadership Programme (TLP) was born out of a desire by the Central Region Air Forces to not only improve the tactical capabilities of their own air forces but also to develop tactics, techniques and procedures which would enhance multi-national tactical air operations.

With this aim in mind, in January 1978, the signatory nations, namely Belgium, Canada, Germany, The Netherlands, UK and the USA formed the AAFCE TLP at the German Air Force base of F?rstenfeldbruck. Early TLP courses took the form of a two week seminar where aircrew from the signatory nations briefed, discussed and formulated NATO tactics, techniques and procedures. In September 1979 the TLP moved to Jever AB in Northern Germany where a flying phase was added to the course, extending it to four weeks. The TLP remained at Jever until December 1988 by which time some 71 flying courses had been completed and nearly 2000 NATO aircrew had graduated. In March 1989 the TLP moved to the Belgian Air Force Base at Florennes where two further branches, Academic and Concepts & Doctrine were added. At this stage a French Liaison Officer joined the staff, and France now participates in most Flying Courses. While originally a Central Region organisation, the TLP has now expanded to include a number of nations from outside the Region. Denmark and Italy officially became Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) Signatory Nations in January 1996, and Spain joined the Programme in 2002. Canada withdrew from the Programme in 1997 following the withdrawal of its forces from Germany, but maintains a Liaison Officer on the TLP staff and participates regularly in Flying and Academic Courses. In January 2002 TLP became a "Unit in Support of SHAPE" and SHAPE became a Party of the MOU. TLP is therefore now called "Allied Command Operations Tactical Leadership Programme", or ACO TLP.

In July 2009 ACO TLP moved to Albacete Air Base in Spain to continue its operations under the Spanish sun. At that moment Canada withdrew his liaison officer and Greece and France became full MOU members. The first course in Albacete will start on 4 October 2009 after which many will follow. The staff at TLP are justly proud of the programme's reputation for not only providing excellent training but also for fostering friendships and engendering an important spirit of cooperation between nations. There is no doubt that a generation of airmen have greatly benefited from lessons learned while taking part in the programme and it is hoped that this important tradition will continue for many years.