

Improving the FAF's capability to get air support: TAC-P Course

In accordance with the agreement between the Malian Armed Forces (MAF) and EUTM-Mali to provide Tactical Air Control Party (TAC-P) basic training, the Education and Training Task Force (ETTF) in the Koulikoro Training Center (KTC) has conducted a 12 weeks TAC-P Course, from the 05FEB18 to 27APR18.

The objective of the course was to provide specialized training to selected MAF personnel and continue to develop MAF's individual training capabilities. 20 trainees participated in the course together with four MAF instructors; former students from the "Train the Trainers" program. The main effort of the training activity was to empower the MAF trainers to maximum extent, as well as a minimum of theory classes and a maximum of practical exercises while using equipment that is likely to be available in the future to MAF personnel. EUTM trainers supported and mentored the trainers throughout the process.

After 12 weeks, the trainees were familiarized with tactical movements, ensured a standard of knowledge of basic topography skills such as map reading and the use of compass and GPS, got the principles of Individual Combat First Aid and Care under fire and C-IED procedures and learnt how to request and lead an Emergency Close Air Support (ECAS) and a MEDEVAC. To finalize, they demonstrated and practiced how to request and direct an aircraft according to the established radio procedures.

During the course the students participated in a live exercise called "Waraba", where they put into practice all the lessons received. During the exercise they simulated an air support request and also the evacuation of casualties through a helicopter MEDEVAC. These procedures are crucial in the operations currently being conducted by the MAF and will help in saving soldiers' lives and gaining a substantial advantage in the combat. Eight helicopters flight hours were used during the exercise.

To honor those students that successfully finished the course, a closing ceremony was held where they received their Course Certificate from the hands of the ETTF's Commander, Colonel Olazabal.