

## NAVAL MISSILE UNIT DEPLOYED TO ESTONIA

---

**“Polish minelayer-landing ship, along with an embarked Naval Missile Unit element, involving 6 vehicles and their crews, is taking part in a navigation-training deployment, during which the Polish assets would also participate in an exercise” - said Lt. Col. Marek Pawlak, spokesman for the Polish General Command of the Armed Forces, responding to our questions referring to the Polish involvement in the Estonian Spring Storm 2019 exercise.**

Spring Storm 2019 exercise kicked off in late April this year. The operation involves Polish units as well. This year, the exercise is going to last until mid-May (active phase between 2nd and 10th May). Over the course of the operation the allied forces will be working on synchronizing their combat plans, command collaboration and readiness. The task is to be accomplished this year by more than 9 thousand soldiers who would be using hundreds of aircraft and vehicles. The units involved in the operation include the Polish Naval Missile Unit utilizing the NSM effector. This marks the first ever deployment of Polish NSM missiles abroad (excluding the live firing events that may only be held in Norway).

Polish Armed Forces participate in the Spring Storm 2019 exercise. PL Ambassador Grzegorz Kozłowski, Major Gen. Dariusz Malinowski and our great soldiers with Missile Launch Vehicle Jelcz. We're proud what you are doing for the strengthening of the eastern flank of NATO! [pic.twitter.com/xA9Qv1jta](https://pic.twitter.com/xA9Qv1jta)

— PLinEstonia (@PLinEstonia) [3 maja 2019](#)

The photographs published by the Polish embassy in Estonia depict the MLVs that can carry up to 4 NSM missiles each. The launchers have been deployed a few days ago, one may assume.

Poland is the second user of the NSM anti-ship missile, following the Norwegians. As a result of contracts signed, in a successive manner since 2008, with Kongsberg and its Polish partners, the Naval Missile Unit (Morska Jednostka Rakietowa) has 12 MLV launch vehicle platforms grouped into two squadrons. Whereas for the 1st Fire Squadron a full fire unit - 24 missiles on the launchers and 24 extra missiles - has been procured, the 2nd squadron only had 24 NSMs at its disposal. The very same missile has been acquired by Malaysia and the US. The weapon in question has been integrated, in the latter case, on the LCS vessels.

*“Deployment to Norway has shown that we are a highly mobile unit capable of operating beyond the borders of Poland” - Captain Artur Kołaczyński, MJR Commander stressed last year, in an interview. The unit also deployed its assets to Norway back in 2016, as a part of scheduled live firing. Within the Polish coastal waters the military is unable to secure the potential live firing of a missile*

the range of which is so long.

The Naval Missile Unit's seamen based in Siemirowice and subordinated to the 3rd Ships Flotilla first launched the NSM missile back then, in the area close to the Andoya Island, northern Norway. Furthermore, a combat module with two vehicles was transported to Norway, but without a radar, since the unit was not detecting targets at sea.

Meanwhile, responding to questions regarding the potential Baltic states deployment, Kołaczyński said: *"Plans as such are unknown to me. This question should not be addressed to me."* Seemingly however, the deployment of elements of the unit has been included in the training plans, and this has been ultimately turned into an actual involvement in a training exercise.

*The goal that the Polish military has set for itself, taking part in this exercise, is to obtain and refine the skills related to air warfare and reconnaissance and to provision of air defence, along with Navy force integration within the scope of loading and unloading the equipment. The Poles are also willing to obtain new experience within the scope of the ability to use the forces and assets that remain at their disposal, in the context of allied operations.*

*Lt. Col. Marek Pawlak, spokesman for the General Command of the Armed Forces, referring to the Polish involvement in the Spring Storm 2019 operation.*

Polish Su-22 Fitter bombers have also appeared over Estonia during the exercise. This is not the first time that they are involved in this event. Their deployment, within the framework of Spring Storm 2019 interlude, took place late in the evening on 3rd May. The Estonian military warned the Estonians about the presence of the low flying aircraft.

Polish Su-22 from the 21st Tactical Air Base in Świdwin take part in the Estonia's large-scale annual military exercise nicknamed [#SpringStorm](#) 2019 ([#Kevadtorm](#)).  
<https://t.co/F9HZtLPo3Z> [pic.twitter.com/gAy4Um0sGp](https://pic.twitter.com/gAy4Um0sGp)

— Cezary Stachniak (@cezarysta) [4 maja 2019](#)

According to the spokesman for the Polish General Command of the Armed Forces, the Polish participants of the exercise include elements of the 1st Tactical Air Wing, 12th Mechanized Division, 3rd Ships Flotilla, 8th Coastal Defence Flotilla, 1st Army Aviation Brigade, 9th Reconnaissance Regiment and 5th Engineering Regiment.

British and German Eurofighter jets and British and American Wildcat, Apache and Pave Hawk helicopters are involved in the operation as well. The exercise also involves the Estonian Navy and other allied naval assets, including the Polish ORP "Gnieszno" Lublin-class minelayer-landing ship.

Szef [#SGWP](#) rozpoczął oficjalną wizytę w Estonii podczas której spotka się z ministrem,

szefem obrony Estonii, a także z polskimi żołnierzami realizującymi zadania w ramach ćwiczenia [#SpringStorm](#) 2019. [#Estonia](#) [#WeAreAllies](#) [pic.twitter.com/Xeb6fzmIF](https://pic.twitter.com/Xeb6fzmIF)

— Sztab Generalny WP (@SztabGenWP) [6 maja 2019](#)

General Rajmund T. Andrzejczak, Polish Chief of the General Staff also travelled to Estonia to meet the head of the Estonian MoD and the Polish soldiers involved in the Spring Storm 2019 exercise.

This year's edition of the operation is organized in the northeastern part of Estonia, close to the Russian border. The participants include: The UK, Belgium, France (its forces are stationed in Estonia), Germany, Georgia, Canada, Latvia, Lithuania, Ukraine, Finland and the United States of America.

Spring Storm exercise has been organized regularly by the Estonian military since 2003. Since 2007 it has also been involving the allies.