



BUNDESWEHR

German Navy Headquarters
P.O. Box 15 11 36 18063 Rostock Germany

See Distribution List

Date
13 July 2026

Dear Admirals, Dear Generals,

the Baltic Sea Region (BaSR) remains an area of heightened maritime activities. Our adversary is challenging us and our navies in several ways, for example shadow fleet operations, hybrid activities, the appearance of UxVs, and interferences in the electromagnetic spectrum.

In order to remain ahead of the game and provide the appropriate answers, a common understanding of the relevant NATO and national plans is essential and will substantially facilitate a coordinated and harmonized approach by the Alliance.

Simultaneously the war in Ukraine demonstrates a rapid evolution in technology and tactics. This evolution has substantial consequences for our navies, especially should we fail to adapt to the realities of contemporary (naval) warfare.

Building on the excellent experience gained during the wargame "BATTLE OF THE KATTEGAT" in 2024, "BALTIC CHALLENGE" was created and further developed as a follow-on wargame in 2025, covering the entire BaSR.

The coordination between NATO and state entities, CTF Baltic's role as well as national defence plans were effectively exercised. Despite the successful wargame and many valuable lessons learned, the necessity for further developing the battle space remains.

"BALTIC CHALLENGE 26" will be conducted again at the German Maritime Warfare Center in Bremerhaven from 7 to 11 December 2026. It will build on the results of last year's iteration and focus on the identified training objectives:

- Conduct the decision-making process on the tactical level and enhance the coordination and synchronization between NATO and national commands.
- Conduct the protection of reinforcement & resupply shipping in the BaSR.
- Train the employment of NATO ROE to understand their decisive role in allowing NATO's mission accomplishment.
- Support the continuous refinement/ testing of the MARDOM OPLAN and CTF Baltic TOPLAN/ Tactical Orders in view of JOA delineation, implementation of UxVs and engagement space management.
- Build trust and a sound warfigthing network between all wargame participants.



**GERMAN NAVY
HEADQUARTERS
COMMANDER GERMAN FLEET
AND SUPPORTING FORCES**

P.O. Box 15 11 36
18063 Rostock
Germany
Phone +49 381 802-51010

WWW.BUNDESWEHR.DE





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Representatives from HQ MARCOM, CAOC UEDEM and MCLCC will participate in HICON to create a realistic operational framework and thus advance the complexity of the wargame closer to reality.

If you require more information, please do not hesitate to contact the DEU MWC (POC: Cdr Maximilian Hirnstein (eMail: MaximilianHirnstein@bundeswehr.org) or the COE CSW (POC Cdr Jörg Feldhusen (eMail: J.Feldhusen@coe-csw.org)).

I very much look forward to meeting your representatives in Bremerhaven and discussing our challenges in the BaSR.

Yours sincerely

Deertz
Vice Admiral

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