Introduction
The Physical Security and Stockpile Management Workshop is part of a traditional project activity carried out by RACVIAC - Centre for Security Cooperation in cooperation with the Verification Centre of the Austrian Federal Ministry of Defence and Sport.

Following the last years’ Workshop, where the main emphasis was put on the evaluation of real needs of the countries in the region regarding PSSM, this year the main objectives were:

- To bring together professionals and experts in the field, namely SALW experts from the armed forces and national MoDs;
- to present and discuss PSSM practices in different countries and demonstrate the differences and common points in national defence policies;
- to evaluate the possibility of constructing and managing a common network for the purpose of cooperation;
- to evaluate the possibility of using RACVIAC as a platform and intermediary for regional cooperation regarding PSSM;
- to stress positive experiences in previous cooperation that could serve as models for future improvements;
- to assess the role of cooperative security in PSSM;
- to explore the possibilities of international assistance (Republic of Austria, Federal Republic of Germany and OSCE).

The Workshop participants came from the following countries: Republic of Albania (3), Republic of Austria (1), Bosnia and Herzegovina (2), Republic of Croatia (3), Federal Republic of Germany (1), Montenegro (2), Republic of Serbia (2), Republic of Slovenia (3) and the United States of America (1) as well as different organizations dealing with PSSM issues: ITF (2), OSCE Mission to Bosnia and Herzegovina (2), OSCE (2), participants representing the Parliamentary forum (1), UNDP SEESAC (2) and HALO Trust (2).

Activity Facilitators
The workshop was conducted with the assistance of experts and moderators Col Richard Monsberger (MoD AT, Verification Centre) and Mr Dieter Schneider (OSCE, Conflict prevention Centre).

Execution
The Workshop was carried out as a combination of presentations whose aim was to foster dialogue and discussions between participants in order to find common ground for regional cooperation in SEE and a field demonstration.

National presentations and presentations including projects based on cooperation between countries were the main focus of this Workshop. This Workshop was designed with the goal not only to share expertise, opinions and lessons learned but also to make the steps needed for future projects based on cooperation between the countries in the region. On the third working day the participants were presented with the new technologies in this field, followed by the demonstration of new technologies on the demonstration site. The workshop also provided a favourable environment and atmosphere for valuable and focused discussions.

Activity Description and Content
The Workshop began on 16 March 2015 with the welcome address given by the Director of RACVIAC, Ambassador Branimir Mandić, which was followed by the opening remarks given by the Head of the Verification Centre of the Austrian Federal Ministry of Defence and Sport, Col Richard Monsberger and the opening remarks which were given by Mr Dieter Schneider (OSCE).

During the first working day (Monday, 16 March) the following topics were presented:

- Horizontal cooperation in SEE as a concept, presented by Mr Dieter Schneider, Security Co-operation officer and coordinator for South East Europe, Conflict Prevention Centre, OSCE
Mr Schneider in his opening speech stressed the importance of workshops and activities related to the physical security and stockpile managements. He pointed out that the problem of stockpile in the region has changed for the better and that the nations have done a great deal to reduce their stockpiles and improve the ways of securing them. However, he added, this work will not be finished until there is the same level of security in every country in the region. He stressed the importance of sharing experience between the countries and also the activities that might be of help, such as to establish a network designed for sharing of experience.

- **SALW and SCA strategies in SEE/ National presentations**

  During this session each country was given the opportunity to present national regulations, adaptations of international standards, achievements and challenges in implementing the national normative framework. Republic of Albania was the first one to give a national presentation. Its presentation contained a brief overview of the inherited issues, the progress made so far and also the lessons learned. In the presentation itself the emphasis was put on the numerous projects that were realized together with the partners in order to meet their objectives, as stated in the conclusion, such as demilitarization of all excess munitions, elimination of all hazardous materials and destruction of all excess armaments.

  Next up was Bosnia and Herzegovina. Its presentation underscored certain challenges that this country is facing, such as large amounts of surplus ammunition and arms, large number of ASS, insufficient number of professional personnel engaged in the management of stocks of ammunition and weapons and the lack of a unified and well-developed system of training and education. The presentation also consisted of ways ahead and ideas on how to overcome those challenges.

  Montenegro gave an overview of the topics of maintenance and storage of ammunition, training of personnel and disposal of surplus ammunition. It presented the demilitarization programs that the country has started to work on together with its partners. The way ahead was depicted as a continuation of ammunition destruction, reconstruction of the Storage Site "Brezovik" and training of personnel for safe storage and handling of weapons and ammunition. Montenegro also introduced the possibilities for international cooperation in the field of SALW/CA which proved to be very good material for the next panel.

  ![In the Seminar room](image-url)

  The Slovenian presentation consisted of information on national legislation and its harmonization with the EU and NATO standards. In it the audience was briefed on very useful information on training in the PSSM as well as the existing gaps and needs.

  The last presentation for the day was the Serbian one. In it, the Republic of Serbia briefed the participants on the current status of national training and education and implementation. Also, it gave possible suggestions on the regional level for training in the field of PSSM. All of these presentations provided ample substance for the discussion that followed.

  ![Inter-governmental dialogue-challenges and prevailing gaps](image-url)

  After the national presentations some time was devoted to an informal discussion
regarding OSCE’s implementation of the SALW and SCA document, including its assistance mechanism from the government’s point of view.

**The second day** started with the Croatian national presentation. In it a general overview was presented regarding the stockpiles storing and managing as well as the system of education and training. Also presented were the possible ways ahead on the regional level, such as: cooperation in the field of sharing capacity for demilitarization of weapons and ammunition and exchange of knowledge and standard operating procedures.

The following regional projects were presented:

- **Montenegro:** “Capacity development program for demilitarization and safe storage of SALW in Montenegro”. The project is being carried out together with OSCE and UNDP in Montenegro. The main objectives of this program are: demilitarization of toxic substances, ammunition and explosives’ surplus and heavy weapons as well as the development of the safe storage site.

- **“Hazardous chemicals disposal conducted in the Republic of Albania together with OSCE”**. In this presentation data was presented which showed that this project has been almost completed.

- Two presentations from ITF: “Technical Cooperation on Explosive Hazards Response and Reduction in Central Asia” and “ITF- Regional PSSM trainings”.

In the afternoon session, Deputy Director of RACVIAC, BrigGen Zdravko Jakop presented a new project: development of the expert data base. The intention of this project is to gather all experts from the region together in one place in order to exchange ideas and make comments for future work, connect both national authorities dealing with PSSM issues as well as organizations and experts. That will provide a platform under a RACVIAC umbrella which will make communication and idea sharing even more easier, BrigGen Jakop explained.

**Practical part**

**The third day** of the Workshop was devoted to the topic of new technologies and the field demonstration. The first speaker on the third day was Ms Daniela Pavlinić from the Republic of Slovenia. She gave a presentation on the new technologies in human personal protection. She presented research done in this field in order to protect people working in extreme environments. Next up was Prof Zvonko Orehovec, whose presentation bore the title “Counter IED/EOD & CBRNe threats by remote controlled systems”. In this interesting presentation the participants were informed about the Counter-Improvised Explosive Device Operations and how robotics can be used to detect and neutralize IEDs or mitigate the effects of detonations. Mr Goran Kokoruš was the last presenter before the practical part. He introduced the participants with the exercise that was held afterwards and explained how machines can help provide safety from fire and chemicals in case of explosions and how they can clear and access the path for second responders.

After the presentations the participants were brought to the demonstration site where the
exercise was held. The scenario was planned as a simulation of an explosion and fire in the storage site and how machines can prepare the path for the fire department and all other necessary units (from reconnaissance to fire extinguishing).

**Conclusion**

Thanks to the cooperation between RACVIAC, the Austrian MoD and the OSCE this workshop provided a favorable environment to discuss topics related to PSSM. According to the participants` evaluations, the workshop was successful, very interesting and well organized. Based on the final words of the lecturers and feedback given in the questionnaire the following conclusions can be made:

- this workshop was helpful and information gathered will be used in the future work of participants in their respective countries;
- the next topics should be more discussed in the future events: implementation of the national normative framework, possible offers on the regional level, more practical ways on how to cooperate in organizing trainings and more examples of cooperation between countries and international organizations.

The conclusions proved that regional cooperation in this field is what countries need and want and are interested in learning more about. RACVIAC would like to encourage personnel in the countries dealing with the PSSM issues to come up with ideas and suggestions throughout the whole year and share them with activity managers in RACVIAC in order to ensure that the next activity is as successful as this one.

This event proved to be a good example of strong cooperation between RACVIAC, the Verification Centre of MoD AT and the OSCE. RACVIAC, in cooperation with its partners, will continue to promote the issue of the right management of ammunition and weapons with all of the means it has at its disposal.