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**D. Tretiak**



**D. Karasov**

### **PECULIARITIES OF APPLICATION OF THE RAPID RESPONSE BORDER COMMAND IN THE DE-OCCUPIED AREAS OF THE STATE BORDER**

*The article examines the procedure for the protection of the state border by rapid response border commands in the de-occupied areas of the state border. The author analyzes the situation that currently affects the procedure for the use of military units, border guard units and other military formations in the performance of combat and special tasks in the North of Ukraine. The tasks performed by the rapid response border commands while protecting the state border in the de-occupied territories are formulated, and the ways of their practical implementation are determined. The authors consider the option for the use of rapid response border commands as a part of the defense forces in the de-occupied areas of the state border. The procedure for interaction of border units with other units of the defense forces of Ukraine involved in combat missions in the de-occupied territories adjacent to the state border of Ukraine is generalized.*

**Keywords:** *de-occupied territories, operational and service activities, border unit, rapid response border command, restoration of control over the state border, state border, stabilization operation (actions), defense actions.*

**Statement of the problem.** The formation of the theory and practice of protection and defense of the State border (SB) in the context of the full-scale invasion of the Russian Federation into the territory of Ukraine is due to the fact that the modern theory of protection and defense of the SB does not take into account such scenarios of war (combat operations), so in the practical use of border units there was a contradiction between the tasks assigned to them and their capabilities.

The combat experience of military units and defense forces in protecting and defending the SB during warfare, as well as practical recommendations, have been taken into account and set out in a number of normative documents [1–6]. However, the procedure for organizing and implementing the protection of SB in wartime requires further study, and the theory and practice of protection and defense of SB needs to be improved. There is a need to substantiate the role of border units, in particular, the rapid response border command (RRBC) as one of the most capable units in the system of the State Border Guard Service of Ukraine (SBGS), in the protection and defense of the SB during the implementation of measures to restore control over the border in the de-occupied territories. In modern conditions, objective changes related to the procedure for organizing and implementing measures for the protection and defense of the SB require the formation of new border units in terms of their organizational and staffing structure, their appropriate combat and special training, improvement of the tactics of border patrols, reserves, as well as equipment with appropriate weapons and equipment.

**Analysis of recent research and publications.** The issues of analyzing and systematizing the experience of using the forces and means of border guard units during the complication of the situation in the area of responsibility were considered in a number of works [7–12], and the experience of participation of border guard units in the areas of ATO (OOS) was summarized. The participation of units in stabilization actions in crisis situations was studied by A. Horbatiuk and A. Mysyk [12]. An analysis of the use of the border guard commandant's office in the context of restoring control over the State border was made [7]. However, the issue of the procedure for the involvement of border units, in particular the RRBC, and the ways in which they perform combat tasks to protect and defend the SB in the de-occupied territories has not been studied.

**The purpose of the article** is to systematize the experience and substantiate the procedure for protecting the State border by border units, in particular, the rapid response border command, in the de-occupied territories.

**Summary of the main material.** In April 2022, the Border Guard Units of the 5th, 105th, 9th Border Guard Detachments (BGDs) went back to their areas of responsibility and began to perform tasks of protection and defense of the SB within Sumy, Chernihiv and Kyiv regions.

In September 2022, as a result of a counteroffensive operation by the Armed Forces of Ukraine in the Kharkiv sector, about 245 km of territory along the SB within the Kharkiv region was liberated.

In general, in 2022–2023, control was restored over sections of the Ukrainian-russian and Ukrainian-belarusian border with a total length of 1446.6 km.

922.5 km of the land border with Russia within Donetsk, Luhansk and part of Kharkiv regions remain occupied.

The fact of Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine requires changes to the requirements for the organization and planning of operational activities of border guard agencies and the tactics of border guard units. Thus, during the stabilization operation (actions), border guard detachments and subordinate units of the State Border Guard Service of Ukraine are operationally subordinate to the commanders of the relevant groups of troops of the defense forces. The protection of the State border is carried out within the defined areas of responsibility by regular and attached units in cooperation with the forces and means of the units of the Armed Forces of Ukraine, the National Guard of Ukraine (NGU), the Territorial Defense Forces and other components of the security and defense forces. During a defensive operation, units of border guard detachments are transferred to the operational subordination of the commanders of certain brigades or battalions of the AF or the NGU in the manner determined by the commander (commander) of the grouping of troops (forces). It involves the movement of subordinate forces and means and the occupation of certain positions, strongholds (designated areas and other areas of task performance) [1].

Taking into account the significant grouping of enemy forces and means in the border regions of the Russian Federation and Belarus, the threat of provocations, the military command decided to conduct a stabilization operation in the crisis areas (within Sumy, Chernihiv, Kyiv, Zhytomyr, Volyn regions).

The forces and means of all components of the security and defense forces of Ukraine are involved in the stabilization operation. Given the intensity of hostilities in other areas, which involve the main units of the Armed Forces of Ukraine, the tasks of the stabilization operation are entrusted to the border units of the SBGSU (especially the RRBC), which are properly trained, armed and provided with everything necessary to repel and deter an armed invasion. A rapid response border command is a structural unit of a border guard detachment designed to protect and strengthen the protection of a certain section of the State border [5].

The purpose of stabilization operations in the de-occupied areas of the SB is to regain control over the uncontrolled area of the SB by the forces and means of existing or newly created border detachments (border units) using the SBGS reserves. Such operations are carried out in a special period in wartime and during the partial reconstruction period (see Table 1).

In the course of regaining control over the uncontrolled section of the SB, a set of measures is taken to provide operational and military cover for the liberated border sections and to organize operational and service activities (OSA) there to ensure their security. During stabilization border operations, a set of measures is also taken to identify agents, sabotage and reconnaissance forces, and other armed formations of the aggressor in the controlled border area, to destroy (neutralize) them, and to impose regime restrictions on residence, movement and performance of any work in the controlled border area, etc. After the end of hostilities and the withdrawal of the SBGS forces and means from the grouping of troops (forces), they will be assigned tasks aimed at maintaining security and stability in the controlled border area in the post-conflict period, as well as regaining control over the uncontrolled section of the SB.

The results of the use of the security and defense forces in the Northern regions of Ukraine (as opposed to the eastern and southern regions) are not often covered in operational reports. However, for a long time, the enemy continues to maintain a large group of troops in these areas, constantly conducts armed provocations and shelling from its own territory, actively uses sabotage and reconnaissance groups (SRGs), and may at any time escalate the situation to distract defense forces from other strategic areas or attempt to seize the capital and major cities in northern Ukraine. Given the situation in the de-occupied areas of the Donetsk and Luhansk regions, certain threats will remain for a long time (see Figure 1).

Table 1 – Modes of operation of the State Border Guard Service of Ukraine in different conditions

| Peaceful time            |                                 |                    | A special period             |   | Peaceful time            |
|--------------------------|---------------------------------|--------------------|------------------------------|---|--------------------------|
| Daily operation          | Complication of the situation   | Threatening period | Wartime period               | Partially recovery period                 | Daily operation          |
| Daily security of the SB | Strengthened security of the SB | Cover of the SB    | Defensive, offensive actions | <i>Stabilization actions</i>              | Daily security of the SB |
|                          |                                 |                    |                              | <i>Restoration of control over the SB</i> |                          |

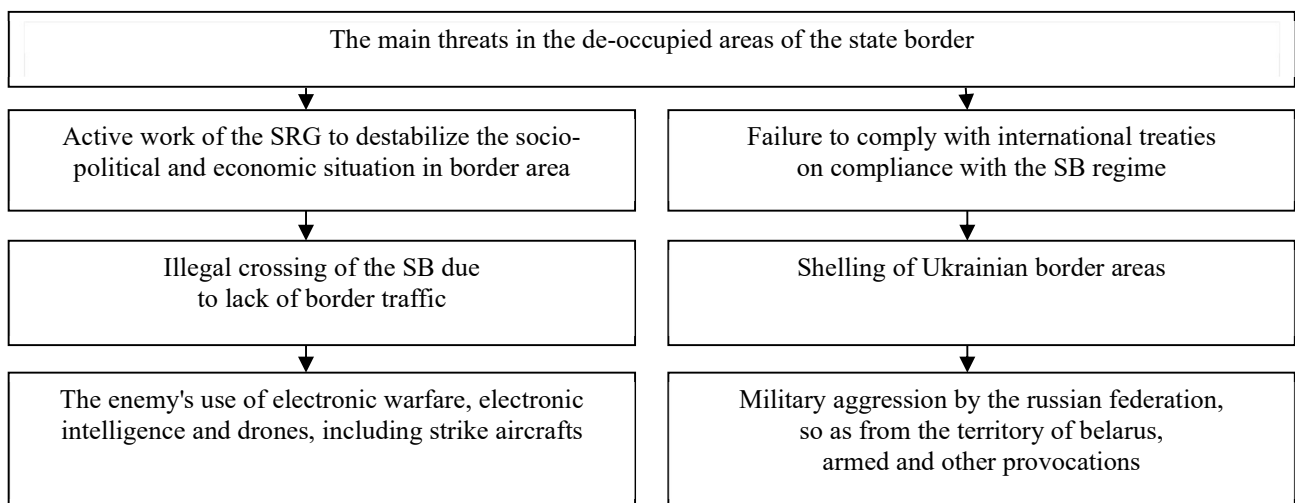


Figure 1 – The main threats on the de-occupied sections of the state border

Currently, the bodies and units of border protection, in particular the RRBCs, on the sections of SB with russia and belarus are operationally subordinated to military command bodies. These bodies and units of the SBGS carry out their tasks in accordance with decisions approved by the commanders of the military groups from the designated locations (control points).

Two variants for the application of border guard units as part of the defense forces in the de-occupied areas have been agreed upon (Figure 2).

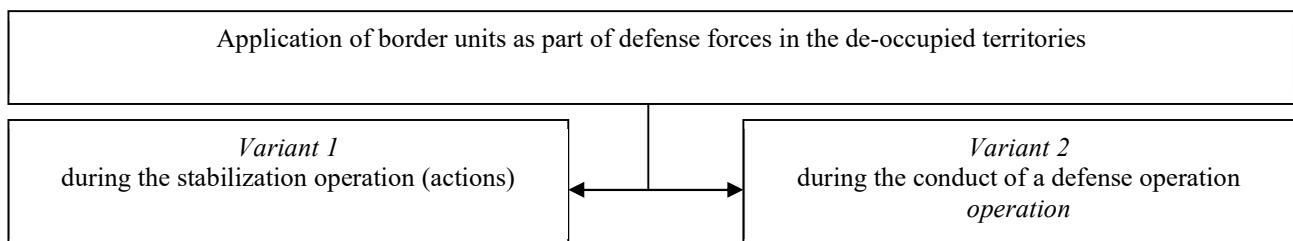


Figure 2 – Variants for the application of border units as part of the defense forces in the de-occupied territories

*Option 1.* During the stabilization operation (actions), border units are operationally subordinated to the commanders (commanders) of the relevant groups of troops of the defense forces: the protection of the SB is carried out within the defined areas of responsibility by regular and attached border units in cooperation with

the forces and means of the units of the Armed Forces of Ukraine, the NGU, the territorial defense forces and other components of the security and defense forces.

In this case, the responsibility for organizing the protection of the SB lies with the head of the BGD, and the direct responsibility for the protection of the SB lies with the head of the border protection unit within the area of his responsibility.

*Option 2.* During the defensive operation, border guard units are transferred to the operational subordination of the commanders of certain brigades or battalions of the AF, NGU in the manner determined by the commander (commander) of the grouping of troops (forces), the movement of subordinate forces and means and the occupation of certain positions, strongholds (designated areas and other areas of task performance) are carried out.

The management of the bodies (subdivisions) of the protection of the SB is carried out according to the plan of the head to whom they are operationally subordinated.

The construction of the protection and defense of the SB by border units in the de-occupied territories includes three systems (Figure 3).

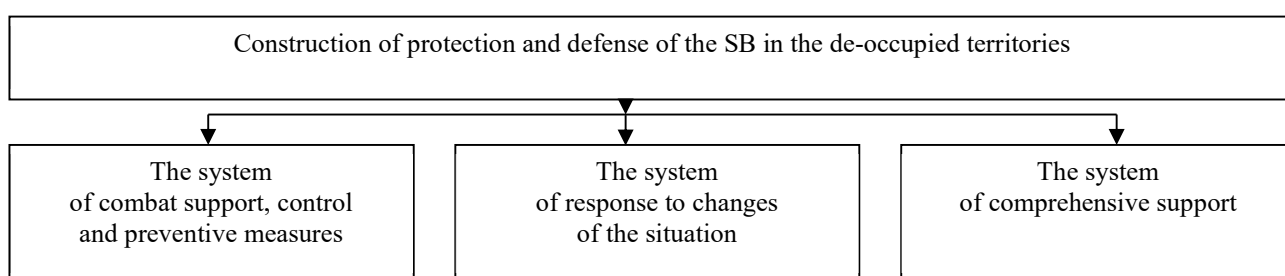


Figure 3 – Construction of protection and defense of SB in the de-occupied territories

The system of combat support, control and preventive measures includes the following elements:

- a strip of protection of the SB, which is used for visual and technical surveillance of the adjacent territory and the border of Ukraine;
- covering certain areas with mobile technical means of surveillance and control;
- patrolling certain areas, setting up control posts (checkpoints) to control regime restrictions;
- work of border guards in settlements.

The system of response to changes of the situation consists of the following:

- the service of border patrols designed to implement specific advance information ("Secret", "Ambush");
- readiness for action of regular forces and reserves intended for actions in elements of the service (combat) order under various scenarios of the situation;
- reinforcement of border guard units with reserves of the senior chief and transferring to them the protection and defense of a part of the unit's area of responsibility.

The system of comprehensive support includes the following types of support: information and analytical, moral and psychological, engineering, camouflage, communications and information systems, personnel training, canine, RHB, technical and logistics.

Today, the Ukrainian Defense Forces continue to conduct stabilization operations (actions) in the areas designated by the military command.

Stabilization actions are a form of military action that is the organized use of a certain composition of troops in cooperation with bodies and units of other military formations and law enforcement agencies within the framework of stabilization and other operations or independently to stabilize the situation in a crisis area [6].

The analysis of guiding documents [1–3], [5–7] made it possible to identify the main tasks of the security and defense forces units while participating in stabilization operations (see Figure 4)

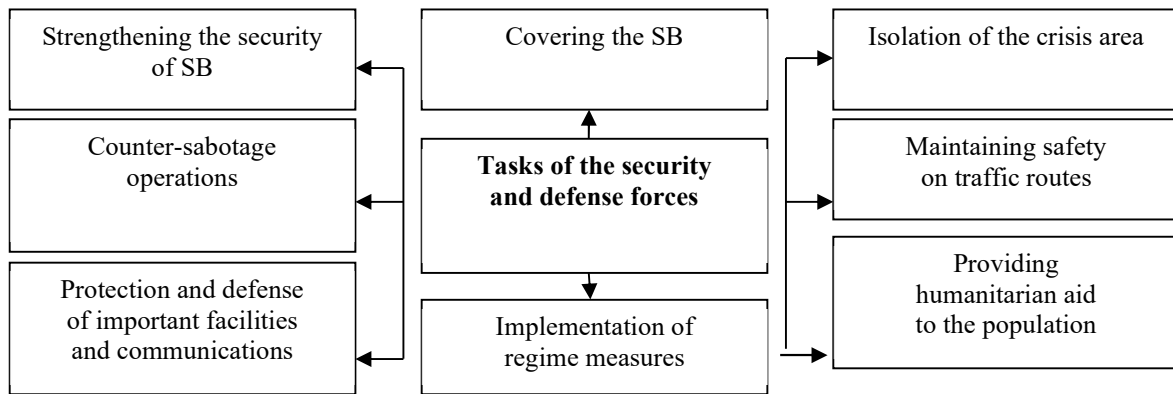


Figure 4 – Tasks of the security and defense forces units when participating in stabilization operations

Border guard units can perform the assigned tasks in different ways: it will depend on the situation in the area (section) of responsibility and the nature of the tasks (Table 2).

Table 2 – Modes of action of border guard units when participating in stabilization activities

| Tasks of the units  | Modes of action  |
|---|--|
| Strengthening the protection and cover of the SB areas  | Reconnaissance, surveillance, demonstration, defense, security, search, patrol actions |
| Carrying out measures to counteract the enemy's SRGs, illegal armed groups, terrorist groups trying to operate through the SB | Defensive, security, reconnaissance and search, search and strike, isolation actions   |
| Providing humanitarian aid to the population  | Emergency and restoration, patrol actions  |
| Implementation of security measures, isolation of the crisis area   | Isolation, patrol, security, actions   |

In order to fulfill these tasks, border units will act in cooperation with military units, units of other military formations and law enforcement agencies.

The analysis of the use of border units in the performance of combat missions during a stabilization operation (actions) has revealed the following features [6–10]:

- restriction or prohibition on the use of certain methods of action and means of destruction;
- avoidance of civilian casualties and destruction of infrastructure;
- direct contact and constant informational and psychological influence from anti-state groups of the population;
- autonomy of the units' actions;
- joint execution of tasks with the other military formations and the law enforcement agencies.

Taking into account the nature of combat missions of the RRBC, separate areas (sections) of responsibility and locations may be determined for participation in the protection and defense of the SB in the de-occupied areas.

Fire damage to the enemy during any actions will be limited and will be carried out on a selective and targeted basis, taking into account the established restrictions, ensuring the safety of civilians and the preservation of infrastructure.

The general procedure for the work of commanders and staffs will be carried out according to the algorithm for preparing a general battle. When organizing actions, in addition to the usual issues, the following should be taken into account:

- peculiarities of the socio-political conditions in the area of operations;
- the level of threat of possible invasion of the enemy troops into the territory of the state;
- presence and nature of actions of enemy sabotage and reconnaissance groups;
- restrictions on the use of destruction means;
- the extent and quality of infrastructure;
- attitude of the local population to the troops, etc.

The content of the decision to use forces and means will be influenced by the following elements of the situation:

- 1) the content of the task – the established legal regime;

2) the composition of the interacting troops and bodies

3) restrictions on the use of weapons, ammunition and other means of warfare.

When assessing the enemy, the following are taken into account:

- directions of possible enemy actions;

- possible areas (locations) of provocations, composition of participants and possible scope of actions, sources and ways of supplying them with weapons, ammunition and other material means.

When assessing their own units and neighbors, they take into account

- the state, position, manning of units, state of combat readiness and moral and psychological state of personnel, level of preparation for actions in specific conditions;

- forces and means of territorial defense of local authorities, legal grounds and scope of the task;

- composition, condition of military units, other military formations and law enforcement units, nature of their tasks;

- the procedure for maintaining communication and interaction.

When assessing the area of operations (area of responsibility), the following is taken into account

- the socio-political and crime situation in the area of responsibility;

- the composition of the local population and its attitude to the troops, the presence of separatist, nationalist and other parties and movements;

- the capabilities of the local industrial base, labor and other resources that can be used under the legal regime of martial law in the interests of fulfilling the assigned tasks.

For units participating in a defensive (counteroffensive) operation, the structure and content of tasks are similar to those in a defensive (repelling an enemy invasion) and offensive battle (restoring the situation on the SB).

The main issues of interaction of border units with other military formations and law enforcement agencies are defined in [4], [6] and are given in Table 3.

Table 3 – Main issues of interaction between border guard units and other military formations and law enforcement agencies

| Interacting unit   | Issues to be agreed upon  |
|--|---|
| Units of the Armed Forces of Ukraine   | Joint tasks, the procedure for conducting reconnaissance in the border area and information exchange; the procedure for accepting from the border units the areas of the BC designated for strengthening security and cover; forces and means of the battalion (company) allocated to ensure measures to strengthen the regime within the controlled border areas and checkpoints through the BC; the scope, procedure and timing of engineering equipment of strongholds, defense areas and terrain in the border area, etc.   |
| Units of the National Guard of Ukraine   | Tasks and the procedure for their joint implementation, the list of forces and means involved; tasks for NGU units to search for and destroy enemy subversive groups; the list of areas whose protection and defense is fully entrusted to the NGU and objects whose protection is reinforced by the forces and means of the battalion (company); the procedure for participation in maintaining the legal regime of the state of emergency (martial law); the procedure for organizing road advisory service and ensuring traffic; the procedure for supporting (ensuring) the actions of the NGU by the forces and means of border units; measures for resettlement |
| Bodies of the Security Service of Ukraine  | The procedure for exchanging information and carrying out counterintelligence measures in the interests of stabilization actions; measures to strengthen the protection and defense of objects that may be targeted by terrorist groups and extremist organizations, enemy subversive groups; the procedure for ensuring the legal regime of the state of emergency (martial law)   |
| Local authorities and local self-government bodies (headquarters of territorial defense zones and districts) | Procedure for interaction with the territorial defense forces during the performance of tasks; tasks to assist in the evacuation (resettlement) and provision of humanitarian aid to the population; procedure for exchanging information on the actions of terrorist groups and separatist organizations, enemy subversive groups, alerting and maintaining communication; procedure for protecting the objects of vital infrastructure; measures to implement and maintain the legal regime of martial law, establishing commandant's offices in settlements and supporting their activities; procedure for establishing curfews                                    |

## Conclusions

The article analyzes the experience of protecting and defending the State border by border guard units during participation in a stabilization operation (actions) in the de-occupied territories. On the basis of the analysis, the author summarizes the main tasks assigned to the SBGSU units, in particular, the SBGS, as part of the defense forces of Ukraine, and formulates the modes of action and the procedure for organizing interaction. The generalized experience gained by the SBGSU border units while participating in the performance of tasks related to the defense of the State is the basis for building models of their use in various forms of combat operations as part of the defense forces and for creating an appropriate methodology for the work of the SBGSU management bodies.

Prospects for further research include the development of models for the use of ACS in a stabilization operation during the execution of tasks to restore control over the SC.

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**Д. А. Третяк, Д. Л. Карасьов**

### **ОСОБЛИВОСТІ ЗАСТОСУВАННЯ ПРИКОРДОННОЇ КОМЕНДАТУРИ ШВИДКОГО РЕАГУВАННЯ НА ДЕОКУПОВАНИХ ДІЛЯНКАХ ДЕРЖАВНОГО КОРДОНУ**

*Досліджено порядок охорони державного кордону прикордонними комендатурами швидкого реагування на деокупованих ділянках державного кордону. Проведено аналіз обстановки, яка наразі впливає на порядок застосування військових частин, прикордонних підрозділів та інших військових формувань під час виконання бойових і спеціальних завдань на Півночі України. Сформульовано головну мету проведення стабілізаційних операцій на деокупованих ділянках державного кордону, що полягає у відновленні контролю над неконтрольованою ділянкою державного кордону. Визначено часові проміжки проведення таких операцій, а також комплекс заходів щодо оперативного й військового прикриття звільнених ділянок кордону та організації на них оперативно-службової діяльності з метою забезпечення їх безпеки. Окреслено завдання, які виконуватимуть сили й засоби Державної прикордонної служби після закінчення бойових дій і виведення їх зі складу угруповування військ (сил).*

*Сформовано завдання, які виконують прикордонні комендатури швидкого реагування під час охорони державного кордону на деокупованих територіях і визначено способи їх практичного виконання. Розглянуто варіанти застосування прикордонних комендатур швидкого реагування у складі сил оборони на деокупованих ділянках державного кордону. Узагальнено порядок взаємодії прикордонних підрозділів з іншими підрозділами сил оборони України, що залучаються до виконання бойових завдань на деокупованих територіях, прилеглих до державного кордону України.*

**Ключові слова:** *деокуповані території, оперативно-службова діяльність, прикордонний підрозділ, прикордонна комендатура швидкого реагування, відновлення контролю за державним кордоном, державний кордон, стабілізаційна операція (дії), оборонні дії.*

**Tretiak Dmytro** – Adjunct of the Department of Doctoral Studies and Adjuncts of the Scientific and Organizational Department of the Bohdan Khmelnytskyi National Academy of the State Border Service of Ukraine  
<https://orcid.org/0000-0001-6916-0713>

**Karasov Dmytro** – Senior Lecturer of the Department of National Security and Management of the National Academy of the Bohdan Khmelnytskyi National Academy of the State Border Service of Ukraine  
<https://orcid.org/0000-0003-1479-9186>