



NORTH ATLANTIC TREATY ORGANIZATION

Central Europe Pipeline System (CEPS)

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The Central Europe Pipeline System (CEPS) is the largest of the NATO Pipeline systems. It is designed and managed to meet operational requirements in central Europe in peace, crisis and conflict.



Highlights

- The Central Europe Pipeline System (CEPS) is the largest petroleum pipeline system in NATO and crosses the Host nations of Belgium, France, Germany, Luxemburg and The Netherlands.
- The CEPS can quickly provide military commanders with fuel for aircraft and ground vehicles, whenever and wherever required.
- The CEPS also delivers jet-fuel to major civil airports such as Brussels, Frankfurt, Luxembourg, Schiphol and Zurich.

The CEPS can expeditiously provide military commanders with fuel for aircraft and ground vehicles, whenever and wherever required in light of the prevailing military situation. The non-military use of the CEPS was permitted by the North Atlantic Council in 1959 on condition that priority is given to military capability (the Military Priority Clause). While ensuring the necessary investments, one

priority of the CEPS is to offer an optimal service for its military and non-military clients under all circumstances.

The CEPS Programme member nations are Belgium, France, Germany, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, and the United States. Member nations with CEPS assets within their territory are called the "host nations" and include Belgium, France, Germany, Luxembourg and the Netherlands.

It is one of the most complex and extensive networks of refined product pipelines in the world. It comes under the authority of the CEPS Programme Board, which is the governing body of the CEPS Programme and acts with regard to the collective interests of all CEPS Programme member nations. The CEPS is managed, on a daily basis by the CEPS Programme Office (CEPS PO), which is the executive arm of the CEPS Programme and an integral part of the NATO Support Agency (NSPA).

^ Facts about the CEPS

The CEPS is a state-of-the-art, high-pressure pipeline network that transports different products across Central Europe including jet fuel, gasoline, diesel fuel and naphtha.

The pipeline network

The CEPS comprises some 5,500 km of pipeline with diameters ranging from 6 to 12 inches. This network of pipelines links 30 NATO depots and six depots for non-military use (offering a total storage capacity of 1.22 million m³), military and civil airfields, refineries, civil depots and sea ports situated in the host nations.

Use of the CEPS in time of conflict

At the beginning of a military operation, military demands increase exponentially, which means that the CEPS is used to maximum capacity. The reserve stocks in the system and the connection to European refineries, civil depots and maritime entry points provide the flexibility in the CEPS to meet surges in requirements. Non-connected installations can be supplied by train or trucks loaded in one of the numerous truck- or train-loading stations belonging to the system.

Civilian use of the CEPS

Operating costs for the CEPS are shared by the member nations. In order to keep operational costs as low as possible and to increase the use of the pipeline, the system is also extensively used for the transport and storage of products for non-military clients.

However, under all circumstances, the Military Priority Clause included in the commercial contracts guarantees the primacy of supply to military forces.

The delivery of jet-fuel to major civil airports such as Brussels, Frankfurt, Luxembourg, Schiphol and Zurich represents an important part of the volume pumped. With approximately 12 million m³ delivered in 2013, the revenues from non-military activities considerably reduced the cost to the six CEPS countries.

Management of the CEPS

The CEPS is managed by the NATO Central Europe Pipeline System (CEPS) Programme which was established by the NATO Support Organisation Charter as from 1 July 2012.

The new NATO Support Organisation (NSPO) was created by merging the former NATO Maintenance and Supply Organisation (NAMSO), the former NATO Airlift Management Organisation (NAMO) and the former Central Europe Pipeline Management Organisation (CEPMO). The former CEPMO became the CEPS Programme within the NSPO. The former Central European Pipeline Management Agency (CEPMA) became the CEPS Programme Office (CEPS PO) within the NATO Support Agency (NSPA).

The CEPS Programme consists of the CEPS Programme Board, the CEPS Programme Office and the national organisations.

The CEPS Programme Board is the governing body acting with regard to the collective interests of all CEPS Programme member nations. It is comprised of representatives from each member nation.

The CEPS Programme Office (Versailles, France) is responsible for the execution of the mission of the CEPS Programme and sets policy and technical standards to be used in the system. It coordinates and designs the planning of cross-border traffic, the use of storage capacities and manages product quality control. The CEPS Programme Office develops investment plans and is responsible for the development and execution of the CEPS Budget. Operations are run on a 24/7 basis, with the CEPS Programme Office serving as the intermediary between national organisations and NATO authorities, suppliers and clients.

The day-to-day pipeline operations and maintenance is executed by four national organisations and their respective dispatching centres. The CEPS Programme Office assures operational, technical, budgetary and administrative control of the CEPS in peace- and war-time in accordance with the NSPO Charter.. According to the Charter, the national organisations that support the CEPS Programme are regarded as being part of the CEPS Programme, but are not part of NATO.

^ The development of CEPS over time

The CEPS was created to distribute fuels to NATO forces in the central region of Europe.

In 1958, the NATO Common Infrastructure Programme funded the construction of the CEPS. It was a joint project between NATO and nations for coordinating and interconnecting national facilities on the host nations' territories. Before the creation of the CEPS, individual countries already possessed some pipelines, storage depots, ports, loading stations, airfield connections, pumping facilities, and highly trained personnel. Within the CEPS, these systems were interconnected, extended and centrally managed.

The end of the Cold War

With the end of the Cold War, the former Central Europe Pipeline Management Organisation (CEPMO), established in 1997 and in place until 30 June 2012, carried out two major restructuring programmes to adapt the CEPS to the new strategic situation. A considerable number of installations, which had no further military relevance, were eliminated. This resulted in significant annual cost savings.

Smart CEPS

In 2011, a review of the current business model was initiated by the former CEPMO Board of Directors. Optimisation of the current business model and rationalisation of the layout of the system were important topics of this review. A new system layout was approved in 2012 with the aim of generating significant cost reductions over the next five years starting in 2013.

Supporting NATO operations

Since 1990, the CEPS has supported a number of large operations within and outside the European theatre. A prime example of the absolute necessity of the CEPS was provided during NATO operations in Kosovo in support of the major air campaign. The CEPS continues to support operations in a number of different theatres including Afghanistan. 2011 was marked by NATO's commitment to Libya. The CEPS demonstrated once more its reliability as a key logistics asset in support of NATO operations. Deliveries to Istres Airbase were increased in support of the French forces involved in Operation Unified Protector.
