

The Civilian Side

Subordinate to the Council are both civilian and military bodies. On the civilian side, (see chart on page four), there are committees and working groups to deal with such aspects of the Organization's work as the Annual Review of member countries' defence plans, the construction of fixed military installations for the common use of the NATO forces (called "infrastructure"), budgetary control, information and cultural activities, emergency planning, civil co-operation, and security. Some of these topics may be considered by a single committee, others by three or more, each with or without its specialized working group. Each committee is responsible to the Council and each has a group of experts on the international staff working with it. All meet in Paris. Generally speaking, the chairman of these committees together with the secretaries are provided by the International Staff. In some cases chairmen may be drawn from the permanent delegations of the member countries in Paris.

A number of committees composed of national experts in specific fields also meet frequently to discuss problems of a technical nature.

The Military Side

On the military side, the senior organ reporting to the Council is the Military Committee, composed of the chiefs of staff of the member countries. It normally meets when the Council meets in ministerial session in order to provide the Council with military advice and receive from the Council political guidance. It is also responsible for providing general policy guidance of a military nature to the Standing Group. The Standing Group is the permanent executive body of the Military Committee. It is located in Washington and is composed of the Chiefs of Staff (or their representatives) of the United States, the United Kingdom and France. The other members of NATO are in continuous association with the work of the Standing Group by means of the Military Representatives Committee, which is also located in Washington, and which consists of representatives of the national military authorities. Thus, between meetings of the Military Committee, top level military direction and co-ordination is provided by the Standing Group, and the interests of all the member countries are safeguarded by the Military Representatives Committee.

In order to provide close and continuous contact between the work of these military bodies, located in Washington, and the Council, meeting in Paris, there is a Standing Group Representative, located at the NATO Headquarters. He or his assistants attend all Council meetings and important committee meetings and are responsible for bringing the viewpoint of the Standing Group to the attention of the Council and of seeing that the Standing Group is, in turn, fully informed of the Council's deliberations.

Direct military command of the NATO forces is delegated to the supreme commanders, who are perhaps as well known to the public as the Council itself. The new Supreme Allied Commander Europe (SACEUR) is General Lauris Norstad, United States Air Force, with headquarters at SHAPE, near Paris. He is responsible for the defence of northern, central, western and southern Europe (including Turkey) which, for this purpose, is divided into a number of subordinate naval, army and air commands. The Supreme Allied Commander Atlantic (SACLANT), with headquarters at Norfolk, Virginia, is responsible for the defence of the lines of communication across the Atlantic