

New challenges for law enforcement agencies of Ukraine in the context of the ongoing Russian aggression

Nuevos desafíos para los organismos encargados de hacer cumplir la ley de Ucrania en el contexto de la actual agresión rusa

Novos desafios para as agências de aplicação da lei da Ucrânia no contexto da agressão russa em andamento

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Abstract

The importance of this scientific research is due to the multi-vector nature of the challenges faced by law enforcement agencies of Ukraine in the context of the ongoing aggression by Russia. In the context of the study, attention is focused on problematic aspects in the field of logistical support of law enforcement agencies. Firstly, it concerns such problematic issues as lack of adequate lighting; security difficulties in organizing work, especially in those cities that are subject to constant shelling; inability to effectively ensure public safety and order, etc. Analyzing the security challenges, it was noted that the scientific community has not developed a comprehensive approach to the tactics of law enforcement agencies in the face of radiation contamination, an emergency with nitrogen emissions, artificial flooding caused by the destruction of a hydroelectric power plant, etc. The tactics of law enforcement agencies during the inspection of the site of a missile strike in the face of possible repeated attacks, and the interaction of various bodies and units to ensure their maximum safety also need to be developed. An important area of scientific research is to rethink the use of special means and weapons by law enforcement agencies, as the use of the latest tactical techniques best allows them to fulfill the tasks facing law enforcement agencies in the context of armed aggression and countermeasures. Law enforcement agencies also face challenges related to information flows of narratives.

Keywords: law enforcement agencies, armed aggression, logistics, information warfare, management decisions.

Resumen

La importancia de esta investigación radica en la naturaleza multifacética de los desafíos que enfrentan los organismos encargados de hacer cumplir la ley en Ucrania en el contexto de la actual agresión rusa. En este estudio, se pone especial énfasis en los problemas relacionados con el apoyo logístico de dichas entidades. Entre las principales dificultades destacan la falta de iluminación adecuada, las deficiencias en seguridad en la organización del trabajo—especialmente en ciudades sometidas a bombardeos constantes—y la incapacidad para garantizar eficazmente la seguridad y el orden públicos. Al analizar estos desafíos, se identificó la ausencia de un enfoque integral en la comunidad científica sobre las tácticas policiales frente a escenarios de alto riesgo, como la contaminación por radiación, emisiones de nitrógeno en situaciones de emergencia o inundaciones artificiales provocadas por la destrucción de infraestructuras hidroeléctricas. Asimismo, es necesario desarrollar tácticas especializadas para la inspección de zonas afectadas por ataques con misiles, considerando la posibilidad de ataques sucesivos, así como mejorar la coordinación interinstitucional para garantizar la seguridad del personal y la población. Otro aspecto clave de esta investigación es la revisión del uso de medios y armas especiales por parte de los organismos de seguridad. La implementación de técnicas tácticas avanzadas puede mejorar significativamente su capacidad operativa frente a la agresión armada y sus contramedidas. Además, estos organismos deben hacer frente a desafíos derivados del flujo de información y las narrativas mediáticas, lo que resalta la necesidad de estrategias comunicacionales efectivas para contrarrestar la desinformación y fortalecer la confianza pública.

Palabras clave: organismos encargados de hacer cumplir la ley, agresión armada, logística, guerra de información, decisiones de gestión.

Resumo

A importância desta pesquisa científica se deve à natureza multivetorial dos desafios enfrentados pelas agências de aplicação da lei da Ucrânia no contexto da agressão russa em andamento. No contexto do estudo, a atenção está focada em aspectos problemáticos no campo do suporte logístico das agências de aplicação da lei. Em primeiro lugar, diz respeito a questões problemáticas como: falta de iluminação adequada; dificuldades

de segurança na organização do trabalho, especialmente nas cidades sujeitas a bombardeios constantes; incapacidade de garantir efetivamente a segurança e a ordem públicas, etc. Analisando os desafios de segurança, observou-se que a comunidade científica não desenvolveu uma abordagem abrangente para as táticas das agências de aplicação da lei em face da contaminação por radiação, uma situação de emergência com emissões de nitrogênio, inundações artificiais causadas pela destruição de uma usina hidrelétrica, etc. As táticas das agências de aplicação da lei durante a inspeção do local de um ataque de míssil em face de possíveis ataques repetidos e a interação de vários órgãos e unidades para garantir sua segurança máxima também precisam ser desenvolvidas. Uma área importante da pesquisa científica é repensar o uso de meios e armas especiais por agências de aplicação da lei, pois o uso das últimas técnicas táticas permite que elas cumpram melhor as tarefas enfrentadas pelas agências de aplicação da lei no contexto de agressão armada e contramedidas. As agências de aplicação da lei também enfrentam desafios relacionados aos fluxos de informação de narrativas.

Palavras-chave: agências de aplicação da lei, agressão armada, logística, guerra de informação, decisões de gestão.

INTRODUCTION

Today, no one doubts that war is the greatest and most terrible disaster in the history of mankind. War not only destroys large cities, but it also takes the lives of hundreds of thousands of civilians, and, unfortunately, the law of armed conflict remains inactive. Therefore, an increasingly pertinent question arises: Does international humanitarian law truly exist, or is it merely a subject of discussion in the media and journalistic literature? This concern underscores the critical role of law enforcement agencies in the context of armed conflicts and military operations.

In the context of the ongoing aggression by the Russian Federation, Ukrainian law enforcement agencies face numerous challenges, many of which were previously unaddressed in the country's legal tradition. This is largely due to Ukraine's commitment to a democratic and legal development trajectory. Since the restoration of its statehood in 1991, Ukraine has consistently upheld the principles of peaceful conflict resolution, renunciation of force in international disputes, and non-interference in the internal affairs of other states as the cornerstone of its foreign policy. As a testament to these principles, Ukraine voluntarily relinquished its substantial nuclear arsenal in exchange for security assurances from several of the world's most militarily powerful nations, including Russia. However, this did not deter Russia from initiating a hybrid war against Ukraine in 2014, culminating in a full-scale military invasion on February 24, 2022 (Komziuk et al., 2022; Gusarov et al., 2023; Sokurenko et al., 2023). Moreover, Russia's full-scale aggression has exacerbated crime rates, led to a crisis in social control, and placed an additional burden on Ukraine's law enforcement system (Dzafarova & Dunaieva, 2023, p. 848). The continuous hostilities and daily offensives by Russian

forces have placed the Ukrainian population under persistent stress, resulting in devastating consequences for the nation's intellectual and psychological well-being. Some scholars estimate that even conservative projections of the number of individuals expected to suffer from severe mental illnesses and common mental health conditions, such as depression and anxiety disorders, indicate that in a country the size of Ukraine, these figures may reach approximately 690,000 and 17 million people, respectively. Of these, at least 200,000 individuals are anticipated to require ongoing professional intervention (Fossey, Serdyuk, & Markovska, 2023). Unsurprisingly, such widespread psychological distress has significant implications for crime dynamics, further influencing the operational demands on law enforcement agencies.

Thus, in the context of Russia's ongoing aggression, law enforcement agencies face unprecedented challenges that are new not only to Ukraine but to the entire international community. These include widespread instances of sexual violence and rape—committed both against civilians and prisoners of war—underreported war crimes against the environment, as well as forced deportations and coerced labor. Notably, individuals previously incarcerated in occupied territories, including those serving fixed-term and life sentences, have also been subjected to forced labor (Orlov & Pribytkova, 2022, p. 56). At the same time, such war crimes leave irreversible consequences, not only through the destruction of cities and the loss of human lives but also by undermining the very foundations of international humanitarian law. This erosion poses a significant threat of unprecedented global crises (Goncharenko & Ablamskyi, 2023, p. 82). Under these circumstances, the role and operational strategies of domestic law enforcement agencies are undergoing a fundamental reassessment, as they strive to adapt to the evolving challenges posed by Russia's continued aggression.

A broad range of issues related to the regulatory, legal, organizational, and managerial aspects of law enforcement agencies has been extensively studied by leading scholars. However, in the context of the ongoing aggression by the Russian Federation, law enforcement agencies face fundamentally new challenges that demand a comprehensive reassessment of their role and a profound transformation of their operational framework. For instance, Komziuk, Komziuk, and Lypii (2022) argue that the administrative and legal framework of martial law, imposed in Ukraine in response to Russia's military aggression, encompasses the following key elements:

1) establishing a special procedure for the organization and activities of public administration entities - executive authorities and local self-government bodies - aimed at ensuring the defense of Ukraine, protection of public safety and interests of the state;

2) determining the scope and limits of temporary restrictions and a special procedure for the exercise of the rights and freedoms of citizens and the rights and legitimate interests of legal entities;

3) determining the types and procedure for implementing measures of the martial law regime.

Dzafarova and Dunaieva (2023) emphasized that one of the important areas of law enforcement activities under martial law is the prevention of illegal arms trafficking. Such activities should be implemented through the application of preventive measures using the latest achievements of scientific and technological progress. The researchers rightly pointed out that “digitalization increases the effectiveness of control and reduces the risks of unlawful use of registered firearms in violent acts”.

The purpose of this article is to identify the new challenges faced by Ukrainian law enforcement agencies in the context of Russia’s ongoing aggression. To achieve this objective, the study aims to: Examine the impact of Russian aggression on the operations of domestic law enforcement agencies; and analyze some of the most critical challenges confronting Ukrainian law enforcement in the context of the Russian-Ukrainian war.

The authors seek, first, to conduct a comprehensive analysis of the effects of Russian aggression on law enforcement agencies during the process of operational adaptation. Second, they aim to assess specific challenges that, collectively, contribute to the reassessment of logistical, digital, and security frameworks within domestic law enforcement agencies.

METHOD

During the study, both general and special methods of scientific knowledge were used. The documentary analysis method facilitated the characterization and compilation of statistical data on the involvement of law enforcement agencies in providing assistance to the civilian population since the onset of the full-scale invasion. Through the comparative legal method, the role of international organizations—particularly the European Union Advisory Mission in Ukraine—in promoting the Scandinavian model of public safety and order was examined. Additionally, this method enabled an analysis of key aspects of the functioning of domestic law enforcement agencies, both prior to and at the outset of the Russian full-scale military incursion into Ukraine. The analytical method was employed to clarify the most pressing challenges confronting

Ukrainian law enforcement agencies in the context of the ongoing conflict. Meanwhile, the structural-logical and system-functional methods were utilized to further specify these challenges and analyze their implications within the operational framework of domestic law enforcement agencies.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Russian aggression has caused unprecedented humanitarian and social losses in Ukraine and serious destruction of infrastructure in the area of hostilities, disorganization of established production ties and critical supplies of raw materials, partial loss of external markets and export potential (Chernysh et al., 2023). Such events, crisis in nature, require the state to respond appropriately, particularly, the introduction of the legal regime of martial law, which is

a special legal regime introduced in Ukraine or in certain localities in the event of armed aggression or a threat of attack, a danger to the state independence of Ukraine, its territorial integrity, and provides for the provision of the relevant state authorities, military command, military administrations and local self-government bodies with the powers necessary to avert the threat, repel armed aggression and ensure national security, eliminate the threat of danger to the state independence of Ukraine, its territorial integrity, as well as temporary, due to the threat, restrictions on the constitutional rights and freedoms of man and citizen and the rights and legitimate interests of legal entities, with an indication of the term of validity of these restrictions (Law of Ukraine No. 389-VIII, 2015) .

It is worth noting that at the time of the Russian Federation's full-scale invasion of Ukraine, domestic law enforcement agencies were European-oriented, with the values of service orientation, partnership-based interaction with the public, etc., which have not lost their importance and fundamental nature in the context of active hostilities. Ukraine's international partners, in particular, the European Union Advisory Mission in Ukraine, played a role in shaping the values outlined above, actively promoting the Scandinavian model of public safety and order in Ukraine as the best European practice while creating the basis for the current police model (Shatrava & Parkhanov, 2019). Despite the vector of development of law enforcement agencies towards the best European practices outlined at the regulatory and legal level and proclaimed at

the level of top political leadership, certain challenges have become more acute with the beginning of the full-scale invasion, in particular, the problems of preventing and combating corruption in their daily activities. Thus, Pchelin (2019) emphasizes that “one of the most negative phenomena that hinders the development of Ukrainian statehood, directly affects almost all national social institutions, including the economic development of our country, is corruption” (p. 72).

As Parfentii (2020) rightly notes, “the phenomena that have been taking place in Ukraine since the first years of independence are destructive for the state: corruption at all levels of government, organized crime with its penetration into the sphere of economic relations, the shadow economy, and especially its criminal component” (p. 130). These challenges are closely related to the participation of law enforcement agencies in the implementation of martial law measures, including control over compliance with curfews, service at checkpoints, and implementation of mobilization training and mobilization activities. In the context of the ongoing aggression of the Russian Federation, the areas of activity outlined above are characterized by a high degree of corruption risks.

Another important challenge that faced domestic law enforcement agencies with the beginning of the full-scale invasion of the Russian Federation into Ukraine was the rethinking of their material and technical support under martial law. This challenge is thoroughly analyzed in the work of Muzychuk and Bugaychuk (2023), who focus on the problem of

creating the maximum possible conditions for resource (electricity, water, heat), material and technical and economic (food, drinking water, availability of potentially necessary material and technical, technological, office and other equipment in quantities sufficient for functioning in conditions of impossibility of delivering additional equipment (equipment) and full provision of services for its repair) independence of public administration entities; ensuring a sufficient number of support and service personnel for full autonomous functioning of public administration entities; arranging areas for recreation, sports, and other meaningful leisure activities for employees, as well as places for smoking, cooking, washing dishes, bringing bathrooms and showers to a condition that is suitable for their use for a long time during the actual residence of employees (their families) at their workplace. (p. 205)

It is worth adding to this completely fair thesis that these challenges are exacerbated in conditions of martial law due to the prolonged absence of electricity. This, on the one hand, actualizes the need to provide bodies and units with generators and other sources of autonomous power supply, and on the other hand, requires understanding the tactical aspects of law enforcement activities in blackout conditions. Therefore, it is probably no coincidence that some scientists draw attention to the fact that the use of energy is of great importance for the existence of any country in the modern world. The electric power industry is essential for the economy and has a great impact on its industries, since their normal functioning depends on it. The key to the country's energy security, and therefore its sustainable development, is a reliable, stable, sufficient, cost-effective and environmentally friendly energy supply (Samoilenko et al., 2020).

The security challenges faced by law enforcement agencies amid the ongoing aggression by the Russian Federation cannot be overlooked. The primary issue is the inability to establish a clear and comprehensive system for addressing these security threats, as the aggressor state continues to enhance its weaponry and tactics aimed at terrorizing the Ukrainian civilian population. Furthermore, these challenges are multidimensional, as a missile strike on critical infrastructure can trigger man-made disasters with nationwide repercussions. The wide array of challenges confronting law enforcement agencies stems from their critical role in providing humanitarian assistance to populations enduring life-threatening conditions. In this context, the activities of the "White Angels" police units, which evacuate people from front-line territories, should be especially noted. According to the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Ukraine, such police units "delivered and personally shipped a record amount of humanitarian aid transferred by the authorities and charitable organizations. The police alone brought about 300 tons of food kits. In addition to food, these are generators, sleeping bags, gas burners and cylinders for them, building materials for housing reconstruction, etc. Residents of 18 settlements survive thanks to these supplies. The "White Angels" are universal employees who sometimes have to both pull people out of the rubble and put out fires. They also record the consequences of Russian war crimes for use in international courts as evidence. Therefore, the groups are appropriately equipped. They have armored vehicles adapted for transporting seriously wounded and people with limited mobility, medical backpacks, stretchers, a set of tools, spare wheels, a fire extinguisher, and communication equipment, protective kits for their safety, as well as special children's helmets and bulletproof vests".

In addressing this challenge, particular attention should be given to social initiatives that enable law enforcement agencies to effectively adapt their strategies and

operational approaches in response to the population's existing security concerns. Thus, social projects

become the organizational basis for the public's influence on social relations outside the regulatory influence of the state, as well as in the course of effective interaction between the public and the state. When studying the topic of social projects, it should be noted that such activities can become an effective mechanism for interaction between Ukrainian law enforcement agencies, including the police, with non-governmental organizations and international donors in the course of creating and implementing joint social projects. (Naida, 2023, p. 325)

Within the framework of effective counteraction to this challenge, the activities of law enforcement agencies, in particular public relations units, in covering information important for the population also become of particular importance. Thus,

in conditions of martial law, timely receipt of information by the public about the consequences of enemy shelling, the nature of the possible threat, and overcoming certain emergency situations is not only the basis for ensuring trust and partnership between the police and the public, but also a guarantee of ensuring security and avoiding even greater casualties among the civilian population (Naida, 2024, p. 444).

Another challenge for domestic law enforcement agencies has been to rethink the means and weapons used in their daily activities. If in peacetime, as noted by Fedorov and Piskunova (2021), "the use of firearms in the performance of official duties is almost the everyday practice of every police officer today" (p. 68), then in conditions of martial law, skillful possession of firearms is the basis for preserving the life and health of those law enforcement officers who participate in combat operations alongside military personnel. Combat training of law enforcement officers is a requirement of the time, which in conditions of martial law should become an integral part of their service training. It is no coincidence that some researchers draw attention to the fact that

participation in combat operations by personnel of the National Police is the realities of war. The forces and means of the National Police are involved in repelling enemy aggression in almost all areas of combat

operations. The effectiveness of the National Police units depends on the specifics of the participation of groups and their units in combined arms combat, on their tactics of action, planning, and organization of actions of small tactical police groups, interaction with other units of the Armed Forces of Ukraine, the National Guard of Ukraine and the Security Service of Ukraine (Vlasenko, Fedorov & Zurov, 2024, p. 18)>

In the context of Russian aggression, a separate group of challenges is associated with information flows, which by their nature are disinformation, causing panic in society. In this regard, law enforcement officers, primarily cyber-police, play a special role during information (mental) warfare. On this issue, it is worth agreeing with the thesis of Tkachenko and Diadin (2022), who note that

information warfare is also a mental warfare because it affects the minds and behavior of people. If we do not show people our version of what is happening, then the enemy will do it for us, which will affect the worldview and behavior of our citizens. We are obliged to counterattack while on the enemy's field. Distract the enemy with our information sabotage, mislead his soldiers and officers, etc. We must seize the initiative and force the enemy to defend himself; otherwise, he will spend all his time attacking us. It is necessary to get out of the format of leaflets, wall newspapers and linear thinking. We have long since begun to live in an era when information technologies have immersed the entire active population in the virtual world of 80% of their free time. To do this, it is necessary to attract specialists to work in the information space who are able to think unconventionally and see the world from a different angle (pp. 135-136).

Other scientists draw attention to the fact that organizations around the world have begun to accumulate a large amount of information in structured or unstructured formats. Information management is not a simple task and is becoming increasingly important; companies that do not properly manage their documents risk incurring higher costs associated with document search, document manipulation, and information duplication. As a result, companies are looking for reliable, scalable and secure programs for digitizing, indexing, tracking, managing and distributing organizational documents (Toma & Carstoiu, 2002). Considering this, as well as the scale and danger of modern information and psychological operations in the context of armed conflict,

the lack of an effective mechanism for interaction between all participants in the information space can have negative consequences in the form of misinformation of the population, spreading fakes, propaganda, and leakage of important data. In addition, the lack of reliable channels of information exchange can lead to improper or untimely performance of tasks by public administration entities, including the defense forces (Nosach, Ostapenko & Zhukova, 2022). This challenge is also closely related to the use of modern information systems by law enforcement agencies in documenting war crimes, in particular the System of Data Management, Processing and Analysis for Case Investigation (SORC), a pilot project that operates based on the Investigation Department of the Main Directorate of the National Police in Kharkiv region and significantly simplifies the work with the war crimes evidence base (Bolvinov, 2024).

In the context of the Russian-Ukrainian war, another challenge facing law enforcement agencies is the specificity of making managerial decisions at the level of the organization of law enforcement agencies' work in conditions of uncertainty and risks to life and health. Thus, Rolland et al. (2010) argue that decision support systems used to combat crisis phenomena must cope with the complexity and uncertainty associated with planning and assigning differently qualified personnel and means to perform specific tasks. Operational constraints, such as workload and labor requirements, priority restrictions, resource availability, and critical deadlines, among others, make it difficult to assign tasks in a timely and appropriate manner and sequence them. The inability to allocate personnel effectively and efficiently can lead to unnecessary deaths and significant additional property losses, as well as damage the reputation of organizations.

Analyzing the activities of police units, Muzychuk, Komziuk and Naida (2023) argue that management decisions in martial law conditions are characterized by the following features:

1) transfer of personnel of police units in regions of active combat operations, especially in the first days of the introduction of martial law, to barracks positions, which provides for a whole range of management tasks for organizing the accommodation, food, and leisure of personnel; 2) performance by personnel in certain cases of combat functions that are not typical for them and are not provided for by functional duties, as well as services to assist the population. (p. 167)

At the same time, management decisions in the activities of law enforcement agencies in conditions of ongoing armed invasion are aimed at solving complex

problems that require a whole range of measures that are carried out over a long period of time and cover a significant number of the population. An example of such solutions are those implemented during stabilization measures in the de-occupied territories, which are broadly considered as “a complex of coordinated and interconnected measures in terms of purpose, objectives, place and time, carried out by authorized entities of the security and defense sector in cooperation with state authorities and local self-government bodies in the territories that have come under the general jurisdiction of Ukraine and the control of its state authorities after temporary occupation” (Buhaichuk, 2024, p. 444).

When making management decisions at the level of organizing activities, interaction and coordination of law enforcement agencies, it is important to consider potentially possible ways of using the assistance of civil society institutions, this is especially relevant in the de-occupied territories. After all, as Filipiska (2022) rightly notes:

in areas located in combat zones, near the contact line or near it, state bodies whose competence includes providing assistance to socially vulnerable segments of the population, to ensure the safety of personnel, work mostly remotely and are unable to provide the necessary assistance. This form of work makes it impossible to provide assistance in the form of social services in kind (care, medicines, rehabilitation, social and household assistance, etc.) to those who need it. It should be noted that a significant number of social issues regarding the evacuation of the population, the delivery of necessary medicines, drinking water, food and other necessary goods were actually taken over by existing or created after February 24, 2022 non-governmental associations of citizens, volunteer organizations, individual initiative individuals as representatives of civil society. (p. 73)

CONCLUSIONS

Summarizing the above, we can conclude that the challenges faced by the law enforcement agencies of Ukraine in the context of the ongoing aggression by the Russian Federation are extremely multifaceted.

The analysis of material and technical challenges allowed us to draw attention to the problem of conducting investigative (search) actions in the absence of full-fledged lighting, organizing the escort of individuals taken into custody, ensuring

public safety and order in such conditions because one of the fundamental conditions of the modern system of tactical and special training of law enforcement agencies is the presence of sufficient sunlight or artificial lighting.

While studying security challenges, it should be noted that the scientific community has almost not developed a comprehensive approach to the tactics of law enforcement agencies in the event of radiation contamination, the emergence of an emergency with nitrogen emissions, an artificial flood caused by the destruction of a hydroelectric power plant. The tactics of law enforcement agencies during the inspection of the site of a missile strike in the event of probable repeated shelling, the interaction of various bodies and units to ensure their maximum safety also require development.

Considering the challenge of rethinking the means and weapons used in the daily activities of law enforcement agencies has allowed us to focus on the fact that tactics and military art are currently no less important for law enforcement agencies than the legal aspects of their daily activities. Furthermore, domestic law enforcement agencies have faced challenges related to information flows in modern society, which actualizes the need for active counteraction to hostile information and psychological operations, as well as maintaining the information hygiene of law enforcement officers.

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