

WEHRMACHT AUXILIARY FORCES



EDITOR: MARTIN WINDROW

OSPREY
MILITARY

MEN-AT-ARMS SERIES

254

WEHRMACHT AUXILIARY FORCES

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First published in Great Britain in 1992 by
Osprey Publishing, Elms Court, Chapel Way,
Botley, Oxford OX2 9LP, United Kingdom.
Email: info@ospreypublishing.com

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Reprinted 1995, 1998, 2000

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ISBN 1 85532 257 9

Filmset in Great Britain
Printed in China through World Print Ltd.

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OSPREY MILITARY, AUTOMOTIVE AND AVIATION
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Authors' acknowledgements

This survey would not have been possible without the kind and unselfish assistance of many knowledgeable correspondents, friends and agencies. The authors would like to thank: Dr. Baumgarten, Bundesarchiv Koblenz; Philip Buss; Josef Charita; Brian L. Davis; Dieter Deuster; David Littlejohn; Hans Werner Neulen; Henry Rüütel; Franz W. Seidler and Henry L. de Zeng IV. Nigel Thomas would like to thank his ever-supportive family—Heather, Alexander and Dominick.

Any corrections or additional information would be most welcome, and may be addressed to the authors via the Publishers' address.

WEHRMACHT AUXILIARY TROOPS

INTRODUCTION

In 1938 Adolf Hitler directed two paramilitary labour organizations—the Reichsarbeitsdienst, recruits undergoing pre-military training; and Organisation Todt, a unique mobilization of private construction firms—to support the armed forces (Wehrmacht) in their duties. Hard-pressed transport and supply units were further aided by the NSKK, the Nazi motoring organization, and, from 1944, by the Transportkorps Speer. Finally, in September 1944, with military defeat looming, all manpower with any military potential was drafted into the Deutscher Volkssturm. These organizations were designated 'Wehrmachtsgefolge' (Armed Forces Auxiliaries) to give their members protection under the Geneva Convention if taken prisoner. The total strength of these organizations was about 1,200,000 in 1939, peaking in 1944 at about 3,800,000—40% of the size of the armed forces. Although units were generally inferior to their armed forces equivalents, their contribution to the war-effort was far from negligible.

Determined that these Auxiliaries should not achieve armed forces status, Hitler decreed in 1941 that their uniforms should not be Army field-grey; that they should wear rank insignia on collar-patches, not shoulder-straps; and that their organization identification badge should be worn on the upper sleeve, not on the right breast. These orders were only partially obeyed:

personnel, considering themselves increasingly to be members of the overall armed forces, introduced uniform and insignia modifications which, especially in the case of the NSKK and Transportkorps Speer, made them virtually indistinguishable from their comrades in the four armed services.

THE NSKK

In 1928 the SA (Stormtroopers—see MAA 220, *The SA 1921-45*), formed Motor Transport Detachments, which were designated Motor SA on 1 April 1930. Then, on 1 May 1931, the NSKK (Nazionalsozialistisches Kraftfahrkorps—National Socialist Motor Transport Corps) was established by Korpsführer Adolf Hühnlein as a branch of the SA, from the 3,000-strong NSAK (Nazionalsozialistisches Automobilkorps) set up on 1 April 1930 to transport top Nazi officials.

On 23 August 1934, with the SA in decline after the potentially rebellious leadership had been purged in Hitler's Night of the Long Knives, the NSKK became an independent organization, absorbing the Motor-SA (now with Motor Battalions—Motorstaffeln, attached to SA Brigades) and also the DDAC (German Automobile Club) established in 1933 by a forcible amalgamation of civilian motoring organizations.

NSKK-Korpsführer Hühnlein, with Army Generals Fürth (centre) and Fromm (right), and members of NSKK-Regiment 73, in September 1936. Hühnlein wears his full-dress uniform with kepi, and SA brown shirt with Veteran's sleeve chevron and 'Blood Order' medal, awarded to participants in Hitler's unsuccessful coup in Munich on 9 November 1923. (Josef Charita)





NSKK personnel from Regiment 30 inspect an engine in 1939. Note the commemorative regimental sleeve title, and the rank insignia on the right side of the black side-cap. (Brian Davis)

As a subordinate branch of the Nazi Party, the NSKK's mission was the control of all motoring activities in Germany, the promotion of motor transport, and the indoctrination of the public in National Socialism. It ran six-week driving and mechanics courses at its 23 Motor Sport Schools (plus the National School at Döberitz-Elsgrund); and by 1938 187,000 members of the motorized section of the Hitler Youth, the Motor-HJ, had graduated from these schools. It promoted and organized tourism by car in Germany and abroad, ran motor-racing events, and established highway patrols to help the Police enforce traffic regulations. Membership was voluntary, and part-time for all but senior ranks.

In 1934 the 350,000-strong NSKK comprised four divisions and 19 brigades (including the Ostmark Brigade in then-independent Austria) totalling about 90 regiments, formerly Motor-SA battalions. A division (Motorgruppe) contained about five, a brigade (Motorbrigade) about three regiments. A regiment (Motorstandarte) usually had three to six battalions, a battalion (Motorstaffel) three to ten companies, a company (Motorsturm) three to four platoons, a platoon (Trupp) three to four sections, and a section (Schar) eight to 16 men.

By 1939 most brigades had become divisions, and new units were raised from the occupied Austrian, Czech and Polish territories. There were 500,000 men in 28 divisions and one brigade—a total of 100 regiments—plus four Motorboat Regiments (Motorbootstandarten) to assist the River Police, all organized in eight Corps Districts (Motorobergruppen).

In September 1939 the NSKK assumed new responsibilities to support the German war-effort. From 27 January 1939 NSKK-Wehrstaffeln (Defence Battalions) were forming, paralleling the SA-Wehrmannschaften (SA Defence Teams); and by 1943 200,000 Army recruits for motor transport (Fahrtruppen) and armoured units had taken the five-month pre-military driving and mechanics courses. Engineer assault-boat crews were trained by the Motorboat Battalions.

In summer 1940 the NSKK Regiment Luftwaffe, soon redesignated NSKK Transportregiment Luftwaffe, was formed to deliver munitions to forward airfields in France. In December 1940 it expanded to become NSKK Transportbrigade Luftwaffe; and in January 1942 reached divisional strength as NSKK Gruppe Luftwaffe, redesignated NSKK Motorgruppe Luftwaffe on 11 May 1942 and NSKK Transportgruppe Luftwaffe in July 1943. The division, under Lt.Gen. Graf von Bayer-Ehrenberg, recruited 4,000 Belgians (3,000 Flemish and 1,000 Walloons, from the AGRA and Rex political parties); about 2,000 French and 4,000 Dutch recruits also joined NSKK units.

Each brigade, with 6,100 men and 2,758 vehicles, contained three 2,014-strong regiments; each regiment (Regiment) had two to three 985-man battalions. A battalion (Abteilung) contained three companies (Kompanien) or 313-man Main Columns (Hauptkolonnen) divided into three platoons (Züge) or ten 28-man 'columns' (Kolonnen) respectively, sometimes with Special Columns (Sonderkolonnen) under the regimental staff.

1st Brigade (Maj.Gen. Vogel), with Regiments 1–3, formed in France in summer 1941, remaining there, as its personnel were unfit for service on the Eastern Front. In late 1943 the Brigade Staff was demoted to Brigade z.b.V. status and its regiments detached. 1st Regiment, now with Flemings, Dutch and AGRA Walloons in the 3rd Bn., and French in the 4th–6th Special Columns, merged with 2nd Regiment, and in 1944 retreated with 3rd Regiment eastwards—4th and 6th Special Columns fought at Arnhem—and by 1945 were in Germany.

2nd Brigade (Brig. Hans Keller) formed in May 1941 at Diest, eastern Belgium, with a German cadre and Flemish (4th Regt.) and Dutch (5th Regt.) personnel; 6th Regt., with French, Dutch, Flemish and AGRA and Rex Walloons, was added in April 1942. It served in occupied Poland until December 1941 and from May 1942 in Ukraine—2nd Bn., 6th Regt. was lost fighting as infantry in Stalingrad—returning to Diest in March 1943 where the Brigade Staff disbanded. Subsequently 4th Regt. served in

NSKK personnel line up for inspection in 1939. Note the combined NSKK eagle and Veteran's chevron on the right upper sleeve, and the rank insignia arrangement worn on the sidecap by the lieutenant-colonel at far right. (Brian Davis)



Yugoslavia, Hungary and Eastern Germany; 5th Regt. remained in the West; and 6th Regt. fought in Yugoslavia, disbanding in late 1944.

NSKK *Staffel Wehrmachtbefehlshaber Niederlande* (NSKK Battalion Armed Forces Commander Netherlands) was engaged from October 1943 until 10 November 1944 on internal security duties, with German and Dutch personnel. Finally, in March 1945, NSKK *Transportkompanien* (Flak) 1–5, NSKK *Kraftwagenzüge* (transport platoons) 1–9, and 69 NSKK *Kolonnen* (11–22, 24–25, 101–134, 203–4, 211–5, 301–310, 361–4) were allocated to the Air Force.

The largest wartime NSKK formation was *Transportgruppe Todt* (Transport Division 'Todt') formed on 22 July 1942 by Maj.Gen. Wilhelm Nagel from the NSKK *Transportgruppe 'Todt'* (containing NSKK *Transportbrigade Todt* and NSKK *Transportbrigade Speer*), and *Legion Speer*. In October 1942 the division totalled 70,000 men; by September 1943, 50,000. Nagel also controlled *Transportflotte Speer* (Transport Fleet 'Speer'). In June 1944 these units became NSKK *Transportkorps Speer*.

Albert Speer and the NSKK

Albert Speer, 'Architect-General for the Renovation of Berlin', set up the NSKK *Baustab Speer* (NSKK Construction Staff Speer) in 1938 to transport building materials to Berlin, and, from August 1939, to build airfields in Germany, under the supervision of his *Baustab Speer*. In May 1940 the unit was renamed NSKK *Transportstandarte Speer* and in June 1941, now with 1st–3rd Regiments, NSKK *Transportbrigade Speer*.

The brigade eventually contained 10 Motor Transport Regts.; each regiment (NSKK *Kraftwagen Transportregiment* (Speer)) had a number of companies (*Kompanien*), sometimes grouped into battalions (*Abteilungen*). Seven regiments (Nos. 1–6, 10) were assigned to transport munitions from Speer's factories to Air Force units, three (7–9) to Army units. 1st–3rd,

8th and 9th Regts. served on the Eastern Front—1st Bn., 3rd Regt. was lost at Stalingrad, 5th and 6th in Croatia, 7th in Italy, 10th in Finland and 4th in North Africa—the only Nazi Party formation to do so. The brigade also included NSKK *Transportabteilungen* 496–500, formed in 1941, and probably reallocated later to 5th, 6th and 10th Regts; NSKK *Brigade Speer Kraftwagenabschnitt Süd* (Motor District South), formed in March 1944 with four battalions for Northern Italy; and OT-Regiment Speer, formed in 1942 on construction duties in the Ruhr district.

The Organisation Todt employed NSKK personnel from its establishment in June 1938, when 'Westmark' Motor Division dispatch-riders carried messages from OT Headquarters in Wiesbaden to the Westwall fortifications on the western frontier. From September 1938 NSKK *Verkehrskompanien* (Traffic Companies) transported materials and machinery in 15,000 lorries, and 200,000 workers in 5,000 buses to 22,000 building-sites—a total of two million journeys per month. Then in September 1939 the 1,600 NSKK personnel working for the OT formed the NSKK *Transportstandarte Todt* regiment, supplying OT and Army units in the French campaign, even under enemy fire. In May 1940 the unit expanded to form NSKK *Transportbrigade Todt*, taking over all OT transport duties.

From 1942 the brigade attached a staff (NSKK *Kraftwagenleitung bei OT Einsatzgruppe* ...) to each OT Corps (OT-*Einsatzgruppe*) operating in rear areas, and four 'special staffs' (NSKK *Kraftwagenleitungen beim OT Verbindungsführer*) for Eastern Front forward areas. The staffs controlled Transport Battalions (*Transportstaffeln*) with Main Columns and Independent Main Columns (*Transporthauptkolonnen*). In spring 1943 each staff became a Sector Command (*Abschnittsführung*), one per OT Corps, with battalions (*Abteilungen*), companies (*Kompanien*) and Main Columns.

Abschnittsführung 'West', the largest command, administered France, Belgium and Netherlands; 'Wiking', Denmark

and Norway; 'Südost', Greece, Yugoslavia, Albania, Rumania, Bulgaria, Hungary and Slovakia. 'Russland-Nord' covered the Baltic States and Northern Russia, 'Russland-Mitte' Byelorussia and Central Russia, and 'Russland-Süd' (from June 1944 'Süd') Ukraine and Southern Russia. 'Jacob-Nord', 'Jacob-Mitte' and 'Jacob-Süd' controlled Northern, Central and Southern forward areas, but were absorbed into the corresponding rear area command in 1943 as the Germans retreated westwards. 'Kaukasien' administered the Caucasus. Four smaller commands—Motor Transport Battalions (NSKK Kraftwagen-Transportabteilungen)—were formed in Norway ('Wiking'), Finland ('Finland'), Southern Russia ('Russland-Süd') and Northern Italy ('Süd'), but were later reallocated within NSKK Transportgruppe Todt.

In September 1944, with most foreign territory recaptured by the Allies, the OT reorganized in Germany proper, and the

brigade formed four German sector commands: 'Ruhr' (later 'Ruhrgebiet') in Western Germany; 'Reich' in Northern, Central and Southern Germany; 'Tannenberg' in Danzig, East and West Prussia; and 'Brugmann', occupied Poland. Other commands were retained or reorganized.

Non-German organisation

From 22 July 1942 non-Germans were organized into battalions (Abteilungen) and companies (Kompanien) of Legion Speer and assigned to OT Corps 'West'. Recruiting was so successful, especially among Russian emigrés in France and Soviet prisoners-of-war, that in 1943 the I Bn. (Companies 1-7) and II Bn. (Companies 1-7) transferred to NSKK Transportgruppe Todt as Transportstaffeln 67 and 69, and henceforth Legion Speer companies were integrated into Sector Command battalions. The five Legion Speer recruiting districts, each with a

Order of Battle, NSKK (major units only), 1944

Motorobergruppe Alpenland—MB Kärnten (MS 90, 190); MB Salzburg (MS 91, 191); MB Steiermark (MS 88, 89, 188); MB Tirol-Vorarlberg (MS 92, 192).

Motorobergruppe Mitte—MG Berlin (MS 25, 27-32, Mb1); MG Franken (MS 78, 79, 83, 95, 187); MG Magdeburg-Anhalt (MS 135); MG Mark-Brandenburg (MS 22-4, 26, 112, 122); MG Niederrhein (MS 71-6); MG Nordsee (MS 62-3, 160).

Motorobergruppe Nord—MB Hamburg (MS 12-3); MB Hansa (MS 11, 111); MG Niedersachsen (MS 58-61); MG Ostsee (MS 7-10, 108); MG Schleswig-Holstein (MS 14-6, 115).

Motorobergruppe Nordost—MG Danzig-Westpreussen (MS 5, 6, 105-6, 130); MG Ostland (MS 1-4, 101-4, 233); MG Wartheland (MS 114-6, 124-6, 144)

Motorobergruppe Ost—MG Leipzig (MS 35-9, 137-8, 141); MG Niederschlesien (MS 18-9, 21, 118, 120); MG Oberschlesien (MS 17, 117, 119, 121, 123).

Motorobergruppe Süd—MG Bayernwald—firstly 'Bayrische Ostmark', then 'Bayreuth' (MS 77, 80-2, 181); MG Adolf Hühnlein, formerly 'Hochland' (MS 84-7, 181).

Motorobergruppe Südost—MG Oberdonau (MS 99, 100, 199, 299); MG Niederdonau (MS 96-8, 196-7, 296, 396); MG Sudeten, formerly 'Egerland' (MS 200-15, 313); MG Wien (MS 93-4, 193-4, Mb3).

Motorobergruppe Südwest—MG Rhein-Mosel (MS 52, 152); MB Schwaben (MS 87); MG Südwest (MS 53-4, 155-9, Mb4); MG Westmark (MS 51, 149-51, 153, 161-7).

Motorobergruppe West—MG Hessen (MS 46-50, 146-8); MG Thüringen (MS 40-5, 142); MG Westfalen-Nord (MS 64-6); MG Westfalen-Süd (MS 67-9).

NSKK Transportgruppe Luftwaffe (1943)

Brigade 1—Rgt. 1 (I/Kp. 1-3; II/Kp. 4-6; III/Kp. 7-9; SK 4-6); Rgt. 2 (I/Kp. 1-3; II/Kp. 4-6); Rgt. 3 (I/Kp. 1-3; II/Kp. 4-6).

Brigade 2—Rgt. 4 'Flandern' (I/HK 1-3; II/HK 4-6); Rgt. 5 'Nederland' (I/HK 1-3; II/HK 4-6); Rgt. 6 (I/HK 1-3; II/HK 4-6).

NSKK Transportgruppe Todt

Transportbrigade Speer—Kw.Tr.Rgt. 1 (Kp. 1-9); 2 (Kp. 1-11); 3 (Kp. 1-9); 4 (Kp. 1-9); 5 (Kp. 1-11); 6 (I/Kp. 1-7; II/Kp. 8-14); 7 (Kp. 1-18); 8 (I/Kp. 1-4; II/Kp. 5-8; III/Kp. 9-12; IV/Kp. 13-6; V/Kp. 17-20; Kp. 21); 9 (I/Kp. 1-4; II/Kp. 5-8; III/Kp. 9-12; IV/Kp. 13-6; V/Kp. 17-20); 10 (Kp. 1-14); Kw.Abt.Süd (50/Kp. 1-7; 51/Kp. 8-14; 52/Kp. 15-21; 53/Kp. 22-8); Tr.Abt. 496-500; OT-Rgt. Speer (Kp. 1-5).

Transportbrigade Todt:

NSKK Kw.Ltg bei OT-EG... (1941-2/3)

West (*1941)—Tr.St. 7-9, 15, 19, 21, 22, 29, 34, 36, 37; THK 3, 4, 6-8, 14-5.

Wiking (*Summer 1942)—Tr.St. 44-5; THK 9, 10, 19, 20.

Südost (*Summer 1942)—Tr.St. 24, 26; THK 2.

Russland-Nord (*Summer 1942)—Tr.St. 16, 42-3; THK 2, 17-8.

NSKK Abschnittsführung (1942/3-4)

West (*Spring 1943)—Tr.St. 1-10, 21, 29, 34, 60-73—TK Speer (1.11.1944)

Wiking (*Spring 1943)—Abt. I-VI (Kp. 1-26); THK 1-20—TK Speer (1.11.1944).

Südost (*Spring 1943)—Abt. 40-2; Kp. 1-13—TK Speer (1.11.1944)

Russland-Nord (*Spring 1943)—Abt. I (Kp. 1-5), II (6-10), III (11-4), IV (15-9); THK 17-8—A.F. Tannenberg (early 1944).

OT-EG.

West

Wiking

Südost

Russland-Nord

depot battalion (in Kiev a regiment), were retained. Foreigners could also enlist as drivers or mechanics on short-term contracts as NSKK Freiwillige (NSKK Volunteers).

Transportflotte Speer was formed in 1937 by Speer to transport stone along the Spree, Havel and Elbe rivers to Berlin. In 1941 the Fleet, with 10,000 personnel, mostly Norwegians, including 280 barges originally intended for the invasion of Great Britain, was attached to OT Corps 'Wiking'. Headquarters was moved from Berlin to Groningen, Netherlands, and Grosskapitän Seyd, a shipping owner, held nominal command. Allied bombing of road communications enhanced the importance of shipping, and by July 1944 the Fleet controlled over 2,000 vessels (500,000 tonnage), serving a network of 31 coastal and inland ports in Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, Italy, Netherlands, Norway, Rumania and Soviet Union.

In September 1939 the NSKK Verkehrserziehungsdienst

(Traffic Control Service) replaced traffic police drafted into the armed forces and Police battalions for the Polish campaign. From December 1939 four traffic units—Verkehrsstandarte 'Wien', Verkehrsstaffel 'Berlin' and 'Gross-Hamburg', and Verkehrskompanie 'Lemberg'—helped comb forests for guerrillas and carried dispatches in Poland. Later at least eight traffic companies—'Berlin', 'Dortmund', 'Kattowitz', 'Kauen', 'Nürnberg', 'Posen', 'Stuttgart' and 'Wien'—were assigned to Police battalions or local Police commanders in the Soviet Union. Motorboat units supported Rhine and Danube Police patrols, and NSKK personnel patrolled highways, arrested vagrants and escaped prisoners-of-war, and issued driving licences on behalf of the Police.

The NSKK was also active on the home front. Following the Nazi-Soviet Pact of August 1939 Lt.Gen. Lorenz resettled 200,000 Ethnic Germans from Soviet-occupied Poland, Baltic

NSKK Kw.Ltg bei OT-EG ... (1941/3)

Russland-Mitte (*Summer 1942)—Tr.St. 5, 14, 23;

40-1, 46, 47; THK 12, 16.

Russland-Süd (*Summer 1942)—Tr.St. 48-9.

NSKK Kw.Ltg.beim OT-Verbf.

Nord (*Summer 1942)—Tr.St. 5, 14, 23;

THK 1.

Mitte (*Summer 1942)—Tr.St. 1, 11-3, 18, 32; THK 5.

Süd A (*Summer 1942)—Tr.St. 2, 4, 6, 20, 28; THK 13.

Süd B (*Summer 1942)—Tr.St. 3, 17, 25.

NSKK Kw.Tr.Abt.bei OT.

Wiking (*Summer 1942)—Kp. 1-10

Finnland (*Summer 1942)—Kp. 1-4.

Legion Speer, 1943 (attached Sector Commands).

Leg.Sp. West (HQ Paris)—Estonians, Latvians, Lithuanians, French, Russians, Ukrainians (A.F. West).

Leg.Sp. Norwegen (HQ Oslo)—Danes, Dutch, Flemish, Norwegians, Swedes (A.F. Wiking).

Leg.Sp. Südost (HQ Belgrade)—French, Walloons (A.F. Südost).

Leg.Sp. Ost (HQ Kiev)—Bulgarians, Croats, Czechs, Danes, French, Norwegians, Serbs, Swedes, Slovaks, Walloons (A.F. Russland-Nord/Mitte/Süd; Kaukasus).

Leg.Sp. Reich (HQ Berlin-Nikolassee)—Dutch, Flemish (A.F. Reich).

NSKK Abschnittsführung (1942/3-4)

Russland-Mitte (*Spring 1943)—Abt. I-V (Kp. 1-37)—Kw.Tr.Rgt. 8 (1.7.1944).

Russland-Süd (*Spring 1943)—Abt. I-V (Kp. 1-6, 11-13, 22-3, 31-7, 47)—A.F.Süd (10.6.1944).

Süd (*Autumn 1943)—Kp. 1-10—Kw.Abt.Süd (1.3.1944).

Ruhr (*5.1943, then 'Ruhrgebiet', 15.12.1944 'Hansa')—Abt. I-V—TK Speer (1.11.1944).

Reich (*5.1943)—Kp. 1-33—TK Speer (1.11.1944).

Tannenberg (*early 1944)—Kp. 1-33—TK Speer (1.11.1944).

Brugmann (*1.7.1944)—TK Speer (1.11.1944).

Süd (*10.6.1944)—Abt. 30-3; Kp. 1-37—TK Speer (1.11.1944).

Jacob-Nord (*12.1942)—Abt. I (Kp. 1-4); II (Kp. 5-8); III (Kp. 9-12); IV (Kp. 13-14)—A.F. Russland-Nord (21.9.1943).

Jacob-Mitte (*12.1942)—Tr.St. 1, 11-3, 18, 32; THK 5—A.F. Russland-Mitte (21.9.1943).

Kaukasien (*Spring 1943)—Abt. I-V—A.F. Süd (10.6.1944).

Jacob-Süd (12.1942)—Tr.St. 3, 17, 25—A.F. Russland-Süd (Spring 1943).

Wiking (*Spring 1943)—Kp. 1-10—A.F. Wiking (22.8.1943).

Finnland (*Spring 1943)—Kp. 1-4—Kw.Tr.Rgt. 10(Todt) (Summer 1943).

Süd (*Summer 1943)—Kp. 1-10—A.F. Süd (Autumn 1943).

Russland-Süd (*Autumn 1942)—Kp. 1-15—A.F. Russland-Süd (Summer 1943).

OT-EG.

Russland-

Mitte

Russland-

Süd

Italien

III, V

II, IV, VI, VIII

I

Brugmann

VII

Jacob

Jacob

Kaukasien

Jacob

Wiking

Finnland

Italien

Russland-

Süd

States, Bessarabia and Bukovina in 'Wartheland'—occupied West Poland.

By 1942 NSKK strength had fallen to 220,000 as personnel joined the armed forces. Transport units delivered post, food, salvage and raw materials, and the NSKK Katastrophendienst (Emergency Service) carried out heavy-rescue, ambulance, evacuation and debris-clearance duties after Allied bombings. In Carniola (Southern Austria) and Lower Styria (occupied Slovenia) NSKK Wehrmannschaften (Home Guard Companies) fought Slovene guerrillas alongside SA Styrian Home Defence League units. By 1945 NSKK personnel were being drafted into Volkssturm battalions and NSKK Kampfgruppen (battle groups).



Members of NSKK-Transportbrigade Todt, with olive brown uniforms and Army M1940 canvas anklets, unloading supplies from a lorry in France, 1943. Note the aluminium eagle on the left collar patch. (Brian Davis)

NSKK-Korpsführer Kraus (right), wearing the NSDAP Party badge, Iron Cross 1st Class, Wound Badge and 1914-18 Bavarian Air Observer's badge, talks to Corporal Georg Rietscher, holder of the Knight's Cross with Oak-Leaves; Berlin, 5 May 1943. (Josef Charita)



Adolf Hühnlein died on 18 June 1942 and was succeeded as Korpsführer by Erwin Kraus. By 6 June 1944 Motordivision names and boundaries were to be altered to correspond to NSDAP Districts, except 'Adolf Hühnlein', retained for reasons of tradition, and 'Niederrhein', which covered Düsseldorf, Essen and Köln-Aachen districts. The war ended before this reorganization, which necessitated reallocation of the 200 understrength regiments between the divisions, was fully implemented.

NSKK leaders skilfully capitalized on the organization's military value to build a huge transport network which performed a vital function in sustaining the German war-effort, a contribution which has been undervalued in post-war studies of the Second World War.

TRANSPORT-KORPS SPEER

By early 1944 the commander of NSKK Transportgruppe Todt, Maj.Gen. Wilhelm Nagel, was actively plotting with Reichsminister Speer to free his division from NSKK control—a strategy his angry superior, Korpsführer Kraus, was powerless to prevent.

In June 1944 NSKK Transportkorps Speer was established from NSKK Transportgruppe Todt, Transportflotte Speer and Legion Speer. Sector (Abschnitt) 'Brugmann', and Sector Commands (Abschnittsführungen) 'Wiking', 'West', 'Südost', 'Tannenberg', 'Süd', 'Ruhgebiet', 'Reich' and 'Russland-Nord' (absorbed in September 1944 into 'Brugmann'), divided into Motor Transport Battalions (Kraftwagen Transportabteilungen) and Companies (Kompanien) and Independent Battalions (Kraftfahr Transportstaffeln), supplied Organisation Todt units. Transport Regiments 2 and 3, divided into battalions and companies, supplied the Air Force; Regiments

5-10, later also 11-12, the Army. There were also Depot Battalions (Ersatzabteilungen); two Vehicle Repair Regiments (Kraftfahr-Instandsetzungs-regimenter); an Ordnance Staff (Rüstungsstab) with 11 companies distributed regionally; an Engineer Bn. (Pionierabteilung), Signals Bn. (Nachrichtenstaffel), motorized Medical Bn. (Sanitätskraftfahrstaffel), motorized Security Bn. (Sicherungsabteilung(mot)); vehicle parks, an officers' school at Könitz near Weimar, an NCO School at Fürstenwalde near Berlin, and OT-Regiment Speer in the Ruhr. Transportflotte Speer supplied the Navy.

On 31 July 1944 Transport Sectors (Transportabschnitte) I-VIII were formed, absorbing 'Ruhrgebiet' and 'Reich' Sector Commands, covering Greater Germany and the Baltic States—although Sector Command I (Riga, Latvia) was almost immediately transferred to Berlin, when the Baltic fell to the Red Army. The Commands corresponded in name and approximate extent to the newly formed OT Corps Districts. In August 1944 the Corps was reorganized into four divisional-status Inspections. Inspektion 'Reich' (formed 8 August) covered North, Central and Southern Germany and Bohemia-Moravia; and was followed in September by 'West'—Western and Southern Germany; 'Ost'—Eastern Germany and occupied Poland; and 'Süd'—Austria, Northern Italy and Northern Yugoslavia. Sector Command 'Wiking' remained under direct OT command. Each Inspection supervised regimental-status Transport Sectors, Sectors or Sector Commands, whose commanding officers (Abschnittsführer) were attached to the local OT Corps staff.

On 12 September 1944 the Corps, under Lt.Gen. (Korp-



Gen. Heinz Guderian, 2nd Panzer Army commander, talks to NSKK-Transportbrigade Todt personnel, Russia, 1941; in

the background, two NSKK officers with blank right hand collar patches. (Josef Charita)

skommandant) Nagel, was formally transferred to armed forces control and on 1 November, as an independent organization, dropped NSKK from its title. Transportkorps Speer (HQ Kreuzbruch) comprised 47,727 men, including 17,000 Germans, 20,000 foreign volunteers and 800 foreign auxiliaries (Hilfswillige), with more than 35,000 trucks—including 5,066 under Sector Command 'Wiking', 5,953 with Inspektion 'Süd', 11,990 with Inspektion 'Reich' and 821 in the Medical Service.

In February 1945 the Corps was again reorganized, this time into six Supply Commands (Intendante): four from the existing Inspections, plus Intendant 'Wiking', covering Norway and Denmark, and Intendant Ersatz und Ausbildung (Depot and Training Command). 1st Transport Brigade (1. Fahr-brigade) was planned, but only the 1st Bn., 1st Regt. and Depot Bn. were actually formed.

Transportkorps Speer units served on all fronts and frequently saw action. In March 1945 Transport Regiment 5 (Col. Schönherr), with 160 trucks and 600 men, suffered heavy losses fighting as infantry against Yugoslav partisans near Bihac, Western Bosnia.

On 17 April 1945 the Corps, now much reduced by losses, underwent its final reorganization. The remaining nine Transport Sectors, one Sector Command, five Transport Regiments and smaller units were grouped into three brigades—'Nord' (Norway, Denmark, Northern Germany), 'Mitte' (Central Germany and Bohemia-Moravia) and 'Süd' (Austria, Italy, Northern Yugoslavia), plus a Depot and Training Regiment.

Three weeks later Nazi Germany surrendered. Transportkorps Speer personnel were treated under the Geneva Convention as prisoners-of-war, thus avoiding the harsher treatment accorded their former NSKK colleagues, who were branded as members of a criminal organization.

A Flemish member of NSKK-Transportgruppe Luftwaffe, wearing the 'Streifendienst' gorget and

carrying an MP40 sub-machine gun. (Josef Charita)



NSKK-Maj.Gen. Graf von Bayer-Ehrenburg (left), commander of NSKK-Transportbrigade Luftwaffe, with fellow officers and Dr. Hendrik Elias (centre), head of the Flemish VNV party; Diest, Belgium, 10 June 1941. Note the combined eagle and Veteran's badge worn on the left arm by the officer at far right. (Josef Charita)

Order of Battle, Transportkorps Speer

September 1944–February 1945

Insp. Reich (Berlin): Tr.Ab. 'Berlin' (Berlin-Charlottenburg)—Ers.Abt. I, II, Rüstungsstab, San.Kw.St., Nachr.St.: Tr.Ab. II (Berlin-Wannsee): Tr.Ab. IIIb 'Hansa' (Bremen): Tr.Ab. IV 'Kyffhäuser' (Weimar)—112 & 113 Abt./Kw.Tr.Rgt. 11: Tr.Ab. VI (Munich): Tr.Ab. VII (Prague)—Kw.Tr.St. 125, 1. Pl.Abt.
Insp. West (Essen-Werden): Tr.Ab. IIIa 'Rhein-Ruhr' (Essen-Werden)—Tr.Rgt. 6 (Abt. I, II), OT-Rgt. Speer: Tr.Ab. V (Heidelberg)—III Abt./Kw.Tr.Rgt. 11.
Insp. Ost (Poznan): Ab. 'Tannenberg' (Rastenburg)—Tr.Rgt. 3 (Kp. 1–11), 8 (Abt. I–V), 1.Kfz.Inst. Rgt. 'Ost'; Ab. 'Brugmann' (Ottmachau).
Insp. Süd (Brescia): Tr.Ab. VIII (Villach-Warmbad)—2.Kfz.Inst.Rgt. 'Ost': A.F. 'Südost' (Pinkafeld)—Tr.Rgt. 5 (Kp. 1–11): A.F. 'Süd' (Stern)—Tr.Rgt. 2 (Kp. 1–11), 7 (Kp. 1–18), Ers.Abt. I, II.
A.F. Wiking (Oslo): Kw.Tr.Rgt. 10 (Kp. 1–14).

February–16 April 1945

Int. Reich: Tr.Ab. II 'Berlin' (Berlin-Wannsee)—Rüstungsstab, 1. Fahrbrig.: Tr.Ab. IIb 'Hansa' (Bremen): Tr.Ab. IV 'Kyffhäuser' (Weimar): Tr.Ab. VI (Munich): Tr.Ab. VII 'Brugmann' (Prague)—Kw.Tr.Rgt. 12, Kw.Tr.Abt. 125.
Int. West: Tr.Ab. IIIa 'Rhein-Ruhr' (Essen-Werden)—Kw.Tr.Rgt. 6, Kw.Tr.St. 60, OT-Rgt. Speer: Tr.Ab. V (Heidelberg)—Kw.Tr.Abt. 111, 114.
Int. Ost: Tr.Ab. I 'Tannenberg'—Kw.Tr.Rgt. 3, 8 (Abt. 82, 84), 9 (Abt. 81, 83, 85, 91–5), 1. Kfz.Inst.Rgt., Sich.Abt. (mot).
Int. Süd: Tr.Abt. Süd (Villach-Warmbad)—Kw.Tr.Abt. 50–2, Ers.Abt. Süd I, II, Kw.Tr.Rgt. 2, 7: Tr.Ab. Südost (Pinkafeld)—Kw.Tr.Abt. 40–4, 113, Kw.Tr.Rgt. 5: Tr.Ab. VIII.
Int. Nord: Tr.Ab. Wiking—Ers.Abt. Wiking.
Int. Ers.u. Ausb.: Ers.Abt. I, II, Fahrbrig. Ers.Abt.

17 April–8 May 1945

Brigade Nord: Tr.Ab. Wiking (Oslo): Tr.Ab. II 'Berlin' (Wrack, bei Kellinghusen)—Kw.Tr.Rgt. 3, Kw.Abt. 'Ost': Tr.Ab. IIIa 'Rhein-Ruhr' (Essen-Werden): Tr.Ab. IIIb 'Hansa' (Hamburg-Wedel).
Brigade Mitte: Tr.Rgt. 6, 9: Tr.Ab. IV (Weimar): Tr.Ab. V (Heidelberg)—Kw.Tr.Abt. 111, 114: Tr.Ab. VI (Munich): Tr.Ab. VII 'Brugmann' (Prague).
Brigade Süd: Tr.Abt. Süd—Kw.Tr.Rgt. 2, 7, Kw.Tr.Abt. 113, 2. Kp/Sich. Abt.(mot): Tr.Ab. Südost.
Ers.u. Ausb.Rgt.: Ers.Abt. I, II.

REICHSARBEITS- DIENST

From April 1925 over 200 work camps were established throughout Germany by political, church and youth groups and county authorities, so that civic improvement schemes could be completed by young volunteers prevented by the Treaty of Versailles from doing military service, and by men thrown out of work by the economic collapse of May 1930.

On 5 June 1931 Chancellor Brüning authorized the Voluntary Labour Service (Freiwilliger Arbeitsdienst-FAD) with Col. Konstantin Hierl as Staatssekretär. Hierl absorbed the work camps into this national organization which, in August 1933, following Hitler's seizure of power, became the National Socialist Labour Service (NSAD) and, on 11 July 1934, the State Labour Service (Reichsarbeitsdienst-RAD), divided into RAD/M (RAD/Männer) for men, and RAD/wJ (RAD der weibliche Jugend) for women.

From 26 June 1935 all non-Jewish men aged 18–20 (25 at the latest) had to complete six months' service in the RAD/M before their two years' military service (reintroduced 21 May 1935). RAD/M contained conscripts and 'volunteers' (reporting for at least one year's service) under a cadre of professional line officers and NCOs who had completed their military service. There were also professional legal officers, medical and administrative cadres, bandmasters and, from February 1944, specialist line, administrative and (from October 1941) war correspondent cadres without military training, appointed as RAD-Sonderführer.

The RAD/M was organized in 1938 in Divisional Districts (Arbeitsgaue) I–XXXII, each under a brigadier, with a staff, HQ Guard Company (Wachabteilung, e.g. W17—17th Division Guard Company), and about eight 1,200–1,800-man Battalions under a lieutenant-colonel or major. Several battalions could be grouped into a regimental-status Bereich under a colonel. A battalion (Arbeitsgruppe) contained about six companies

(Abteilungen—although in the armed forces an Abteilung was a battalion).

The company, the normal tactical unit, commanded by a captain, occupied a work camp and carried a number, sometimes also a name; e.g. Abteilung 5/60 'Wallenstein'—5th Company, 60th Battalion (6th Division) commemorating the Thirty Years' War general Albrecht von Wallenstein. It had 214 men in a six-man staff and four 60-man platoons (Züge) under a subaltern or warrant officer, each with three 17-man Sections (Trupps) under a sergeant or corporal. Rank and file were 'armed' with spades, and transported by bicycle.

The RAD's mission was to educate German youth physically and politically, and to use them to help farmers feed the nation by increasing the amount of cultivatable land. Companies reclaimed marshland—the draining of the huge Elmsland marsh, near the Dutch border, was the biggest, though unfinished, project; developed wasteland and waterways; and improved land already under cultivation. In wartime they were to provide support for Army engineers in building and repairing roads, railways, bridges, airfields and fortifications.

The RAD supported the bloodless invasions of Austria (March 1938), the Sudetenland (October 1938) and Czechoslovakia (March 1939). From June 1938 to September 1939 300 companies supported civilian contractors under Organisation Todt building the Westwall ('Siegfried Line') along Germany's western border, from Emmerich on the Dutch frontier to Lörrach on the Swiss border. About 100 companies helped on the Ostwall fortifications on the Polish border. As tension with Poland increased in August 1939, 115 companies helped with harvesting in East Prussia, and in Danzig RAD units supported the German Army.

The RAD reached its peak strength of 360,000 men in 1,700 companies when, on 26 August 1939, general mobilization was announced. Immediately 1,050 companies were transferred to the Army to form the new Construction Troops (Bautruppen) branch. Fifty-five Regimental Staffs (Abschnittsbaustäbe), numbered in the 1–III series, each controlled four 2,000-man

French members of the NSKK, probably 6th Regt. of NSKK-Transportgruppe Luftwaffe, being awarded the Iron Cross. Note the first model armshield worn by the NCO on the right. (Josef Charita)





Maj. Renaat Rits, Flemish liaison officer between the VNV and NSKK-Transportgruppe Luftwaffe, wearing the

service dress peaked cap and blank right hand collar patch. (Josef Charita)

Construction Battalions (series 1–335), each with four companies (ex-RAD Abteilungen, expanded to 401 men each by mobilizing older untrained Army reservists) and an Army Transport Column. There were also 18 Heavy and 12 Light Motorized Road Construction Battalions. About 60% of these units served in the Polish campaign of September–October 1939, clearing roads for supplies for the advancing forces.

In December 1939, the Polish campaign won, the German Army retained the Construction units; but Hitler, against Goering's advice that the RAD be disbanded for the duration of the war, ordered Hierl to rebuild his organization. Consequently 900 companies were re-formed, and the RAD reverted to its pre-war status, providing pre-military training and supporting Army engineers in the field.

During 1940 about 900 RAD companies supported operations in Norway in April, and Netherlands, Belgium and France in May, ensuring supplies to the advancing motorized divisions.

A sergeant of NSKK-Transportbrigade Todt carrying flowers at a funeral. He wears a blank right hand collar patch,

M1942 NCO collar braid, and black shoulder straps edged with NCO braid with an aluminium pip. (Brian Davis)

They were now expected to repair roads up to the front line, load and unload ammunition, and provide temporary guards for prisoners-of-war and key installations. In occupied France they repaired and built airfields and serviced aircraft during the Battle of Britain, and constructed coastal fortifications and gun-emplacements for the Navy; and they improved the road network in occupied Poland. Some units served in Yugoslavia and Greece in April 1941.

In May 1941 Divisional Staff HVIII, 18 companies of 2/I Brigade, K344, K363 and K376 Battalions, with 12,000 Norwegian Labour Service personnel, began upgrading the Trondheim-Kirkenes section of National Highway 50 in Northern Norway to winter capability. In July they were transferred to Northern Finland, building supply roads for the German 3rd Mountain Division. They came under fire between 26 April and



27 May 1942 during Soviet attacks from Murmansk, before their repatriation to Germany in July.

The Eastern Front

The Eastern Front provided the RAD's greatest challenge. During 1941 companies supported Army Group Centre's push on Moscow. In August a divisional staff under Brig. Schmeidler, advancing into Ukraine with 1st Panzer Army with five motorized battalions—K40 (3/40, 5/42, 6/43 companies), K60 (3/60, 4/60, 5/60), K130 (1/130, 8/130, 1/133) K145 (8/145, 10/145,



RAD conscripts of Battalion 284 (Franconia), wearing the M1943 peaked field cap, 'present spades' at a parade in Germany, 1944. They are still wearing obsolete M1935 collar patches. (Josef Charita)

12/145) and K184 (5/184, 9/186, 7/188)—crossed the Dnieper on assault-barges, helping to establish and secure a bridgehead under fire, and remaining in Ukraine until July 1942.

By 1942 there were 427 RAD companies on the Eastern Front: 67 with Army Group Centre, and 324 in Ukraine and Caucasus with Army Groups B and A respectively. In June 1942 Companies 4/161, 5/162, 5/163 and 10/165 defended a German fighter airfield near Novy Crinev from a Soviet regimental attack; and RAD personnel bicycled 2,000 miles through Ukraine supporting 4th Panzer Army's advance into the Caucasus. From 30 July to 6 September 1942 Divisional Staff HXXXV (Brig. von Bothmer) with Battalions K83 (3/80, 2/82, 3/82, 7/85), K84 (4/84, 4/86, 5/86, 10/86) and K122 (6/120, 2/122, 4/122, 4/123) and Companies 4/314, 3/315 and 5/332, serving with 9th Army, successfully helped defend Rzhev from Soviet infantry and armoured attacks. In rear areas partisan groups were frequently engaged. In August 1942 RAD units in Russia were drafted directly into the Army and Air Force.

Also during 1942, 56 RAD companies served with the Air Force in the West; 226 worked in munitions factories; and 20,000 personnel helped clear Allied bomb damage in the Ruhr. In December some companies transferred to Greece, others to France to build the Atlantikwall fortifications along the Channel and Atlantic coasts; and from October 1943 the RAD built roads in Albania.

From 1943 about 420 Companies were each given six weeks' training on anti-aircraft guns before posting to an Air Force anti-aircraft battalion as an AA battery with dual designation, e.g. AA Battery 5/217 (RAD Company 6/10). In 1944 two Air Defence Inspectorates were formed, controlling 10 Divisional Staffs, each attached to an Air Force Command, to oversee the batteries.

Order of Battle, Reichsarbeitsdienst, 1945

The Divisional District number and name, with alternative names in brackets, is followed by the constituent battalions.

- I Ostpreussen—10-17, 19.
- II Danzig-Westpreussen—20, 20A, 21-9.
- III Wartheland-West—30-9.
- IV Pommern-Ost—40-7.
- V Pommern-West—50-5.
- VI Mecklenburg—60-4, 67.
- VII Schleswig-Holstein—70-1, 73-7.
- VIII Brandenburg-Ost (formerly Ostmark)—80-7.
- IX Brandenburg-West (formerly Berlin-Brandenburg)—90-6.
- X Niederschlesien—100-7.
- XI Mittelschlesien—110-6, 119.
- XII Oberschlesien—120-7.
- XIII Magdeburg-Anhalt—130-8.
- XIV Halle-Merseburg—140-5.
- XV Sachsen—150-7.
- XVI Westfalen-Nord—160-5.
- XVII Niedersachsen-Mitte—170-7.
- XVIII Niedersachsen-Ost—180-8.
- XIX Niedersachsen-West (Oldenburg)—190-8.
- XX Westfalen-Süd—200-9.
- XXI Niederrhein—210-7.
- XXII Hessen-Nord—220-7.
- XXIII Thüringen—230-8.
- XXIV Moselland (Mittelrhein)—240-9.
- XXV Hessen-Süd—250-8.
- XXVI Württemberg—260-7.
- XXVII Baden—270-9.
- XXVIII Franken—280-8.
- XXIX Bayreuth (Bayrischer Ostmark)—290-8.
- XXX Bayern-Hochland—300-6.
- XXXI Oberrhein—310-9.
- XXXII Saar-Pfalz (Westmark)—320-9.
- XXXIII Alpenland—330-5.
- XXXIV Oberdonau—340-8.
- XXXV Wien-Niederdonau—350-6.
- XXXVI Südmark—360-8.
- XXXVII Sudetenland-West—370-6.
- XXXVIII Böhmen-Mähren (Sudetenland-Ost)—380-6.
- XXXIX Süd Ostpreussen—390-3.
- XXXX Wartheland-Ost—400-5, 408, 500-1.



RAD 2nd Lt. Heinz Korn, Knight's Cross holder, wearing the RAD service tunic with M1942 collar patches. (Josef Charita)

Inspectorate 'Reich' had L I, L II, L XIII, L XIV, L XVI and L XVII under Air Fleet 'Reich' and L IV and L V under Anti-Aircraft Corps II and I respectively; while Inspectorate 'West' had L III and L XVIII under Air Districts Western France and Belgium-Northern France respectively. In May 1944 a RAD AA battalion joined SS-Flak-Regiment 'Obersalzberg'.

RAD anti-aircraft batteries were employed against Allied tanks, causing Allied protests that the RAD was abusing its non-combatant status under the Hague Convention; but RAD personnel continued to lay minefields, man and defend fortifications and carry out civil defence duties in German cities.

On 1 July 1944 five Labour Service Inspectorates, under major-generals or brigadiers, were created to administer the Divisional Districts in Germany, now numbered I-XXXX. These Inspectorates were: 'Nordost' (HQ Königsberg); 2 'Nordwest' (HQ Oldenburg); 3 'Mitte' (HQ Halle); 4 'Südwest' (HQ Munich); 5 'Südost' (HQ Vienna). In September 1944 AA Batteries 1/295 (RAD 2/371) and ?/137 (RAD 4/310) distinguished themselves as gunners and infantry at Arnhem against the British 1st Airborne Division, for which 4/310 (Capt. Roland Mayer) was awarded, but probably never received, the sleeve-titule Arnhem. From August to October 1944 RAD personnel helped build defensive earthworks along the threatened German borders before being withdrawn for drafting into the armed forces.

In 1945 the Labour Service period was reduced to six-eight weeks, now devoted exclusively to infantry basic training. In September 1944 Hielr had successfully resisted pressure to integrate the RAD into the Home Guard (Deutscher Volksturm) 'as this would prejudice its non-military status; but he accepted joint tactical operations. He did, however, sanction the formation, on 29 March 1945, six weeks before the end of the War, of four RAD Infantry Divisions, each with Army personnel and 7,500 RAD members in one artillery and three infantry

RAD troops singing marching songs at a parade in Jersey, Channel Islands, 1941; note the Jersey policeman in characteristic British police helmet; and the contrast in uniform details between the officer in the right foreground and the troops. (Brian Davis)



A medal award ceremony for RAD Company 6/386 (Sudetenland). The two warrant officers (right) are wearing M1935 collar patches, the officer (far right) the brown aiguillettes of a battalion adjutant and M1942 collar patches. (Brian Davis)



regiments. 1st 'Schlageter' Division engaged Soviet troops at Waren with 3rd Panzer Army; 2nd 'Friedrich Ludwig Jahn' and 3rd 'Theodor Körner' Divisions served west of Berlin with 12th Army. The 4th Division and RAD Mountain Brigades 'Steiermark' and 'Enns' were formed but did not see action.

Foreign enlistment

The RAD was primarily intended to train German youth and foreign enlistment was originally forbidden, but rules were later relaxed. Ex-Norwegian Labour Service members were encouraged to join RAD, and by 1942 180 Danes had enlisted. A 300-strong Dutch battalion—'Gruppe Niederlande'—was raised, and served in Russian rear areas from May to October 1942. In autumn 1943 young Estonians, and presumably other nationalities, could volunteer for RAD service in Germany to qualify for German university entrance, but no national units were formed.

In November 1932 six months' voluntary labour service in the FAD was offered to young unemployed German women, and this continued in the RAD/wJ. On 4 September 1939 this period was made compulsory for women aged 18–25, and in October 1941 extended by a further six months' community service under RAD/wJ supervision in offices, hospitals, factories, farms or public utilities. In 1940 the RAD/wJ, with 100,000 women, was organized into 25 Regimental Districts (Bezirke), numbered I–XXV, each with five or six battalion-status Groups of Camps (Lagergruppen), each controlling about 15 company-status Camps (Lager). There were 2,005 camps, each with three to six 12-woman Dormitories (Kameradschaften). From 1943 the RAD/wJ served in RAD uniform in the Air Warning Service (Flugmeldedienst), from spring 1944 in AA batteries, and from January 1945 in searchlight batteries as Anti-Aircraft Auxiliaries (RAD-Flakwaffenhelferinnen).

Labour services modelled on the RAD and developed by RAD liaison officers were established in most states under German occupation. In Denmark there was the Land Arbejds-Tjenesten; in Norway the Arbejdstjenesten; in the Netherlands the Nederlandse Arbeids Dienst (in 1942–3 three NAD com-

panies, designated 'Oostkorps', supported German Air Force operations in Russia); in Belgium the Flemish Vrijwillige Arbeidsdienst voor Vlaanderen and the Walloon Service volontaire du travail pour la Wallonie, in Poland the Sonderdienst, in Serbia the embryonic Construction Service. Enlistments, whether voluntary or compulsory, were low, probably nowhere exceeding 20,000, as native populations condemned the organizations as collaborationist. The labour services of Germany's allies, which could claim to be patriotic, were more successful. The Vichy-French Chantiers de la Jeunesse Française offered a substitute for military service; in Rumania a Munca Tinerelului Român company was attached to each Army Division, and the Croatian Državna Časna Radna Služba assisted Army engineers.

The RAD was fortunate that its commander, Konstantin Hierl (b. 24 February 1875, d. 23 September 1955) possessed outstanding foresight, political and organizational skills, enabling him to preserve its independent status by subtly adapting its role from an agricultural development agency to an auxiliary branch of the armed forces, performing vital duties as infantry, construction and combat engineers, and anti-aircraft artillery.

ORGANISATION TODT

On 28 May 1938 Hitler ordered Fritz Todt, since June 1933 the Inspector-General of German Roads responsible for Germany's revolutionary motorway network, to build a line of 5,000 concrete blockhouses along the border with the Netherlands, Belgium, Luxembourg and France—the Westwall ('Western Rampart'). Completion date was to be 1 October 1938, in time to repel a French attack in response to Hitler's planned invasion of Czechoslovakia.

From 22 June 1938 Todt mobilized 1,000 private construction firms, and organized them in 22 brigade-status



A RAD field officer in service dress distributes medals to RAD NCOs and privates, wearing M1942 rank insignia and collar patches. Most of the men have removed their 'spade' unit badges for security reasons. (Brian Davis)

Oberbauleitungen. In a speech on 18 July Hitler christened them 'Organisation Todt'. The French attack never materialized; and by late November 340,000 OT personnel, 90,000 Army engineers and 300 RAD companies were engaged on the Westwall, with 9,000 railway waggons, 96,000 lorries and 4,100 Postal Service buses transporting workers and materials (the project used 51% of the cement industry's annual production), co-ordinated from OT Headquarters (OT-Zentrale) in Wiesbaden. Work continued until the French surrender in June 1940.

On 9 December 1938 Todt was appointed Commissioner-General of Construction Industries; and on 4 September 1939 he declared that the OT would function in wartime as a fortress construction organization, employing building firms organized on military lines, with Xaver Dorsch as operational commander. Some 40,000 OT personnel served in Poland in Road Construction Companies (Strassenbautrupps) and Bridge Construction Companies (Brückenbautrupps), repairing and upgrading communications damaged in the fighting. The OT also cleared sites and built administrative and living quarters for the German occupation forces, using Jewish Battalions (Judenbataillone) recruited by Polish Jewish Councils.

On 7 March 1940 Todt gained more power by being appointed Reichsminister for Armament and Munitions. For the seven-week Western campaign (10 May–25 June 1940) 13 Westwall Oberbauleitungen were reformed as mobile Front units (Frontoberbauleitungen) and assigned to Field Army Engineer Staffs. The 13,500 Front Workers (Frontarbeiter) in the eight units under Army Group A built 324 bridges and repaired 2,000 miles of roads in Northern France, hiring 1,600 French labourers (at 3 Reichsmarks a day). The 8,650 personnel in the five units under Army Group C in Eastern France built 157 bridges, often under fire from guns in the Maginot Line, and replaced road-signs destroyed by retreating French troops.

The OT was mainly active in the occupied territories, responsible for all construction projects behind the front line, and, from August 1943, also in combat zones. Members were designated Armed Forces Auxiliaries until November 1942 when they were granted full armed forces status.

Todt dies

On 8 February 1942 Todt died mysteriously in a flying accident; and the architect and confidant of Hitler, Albert Speer, the 'Architect-General for the Renovation of Berlin', assumed Todt's duties. He made the OT directly responsible to Hitler, thus avoiding a take-over by the state trade union, the Deutsche Arbeitsfront. On 19 August 1943 Army Construction Troops (Bautruppen) were transferred to the Engineers as Construction Engineers (Baupioniere) to avoid transfer to the OT; but Speer insisted that Field Army and Army Group Staffs included an OT Engineer-General (Generalingenieur), usually the local OT Corps Commander, to co-ordinate all construction projects.

OT organization remained very flexible; but in 1943 the largest unit was the corps-status Einsatzgruppe (EG), under a lieutenant- or major-general controlling brigade-status Oberbauleitungen, 5–15,000 strong, each under a colonel or lieutenant-colonel, sometimes grouped into division-status Einsätze (ES), under a brigadier or colonel. An Oberbauleitung (OBL) comprised regimental-status Bauleitungen (BL), 3,000 strong, each under a lieutenant-colonel or major, with battalion-status Baustellen (building sites) or Lager (camps) with about 1,000 men under a subaltern, sometimes grouped into Abschnittsbauleitungen (ABL) under a captain. A Baustelle was divided into company-size Trupps, 150 strong, under a subaltern or later a senior NCO, with platoons (Kameradschaften) and sections (Rotten) under junior NCOs.

The organization comprised German volunteer and conscript personnel (OT- eigenes Personal) plus civilian workers (Zivilarbeiter)—employees of private companies on OT contracts. As men were drafted into the armed forces the OT accepted older recruits; in March 1942 these were mainly 35–55-year-olds, from mid-1943 43–58-year-olds, from April 1944 45-year-olds and above. To make good the deficiency Ethnic Germans (mainly from Rumania, Yugoslavia and Hungary), military detention camp inmates, and civilian petty and political criminals were conscripted; from mid-1943, women volunteers were accepted for signals and secretarial posts; and from April 1944, men with part-Jewish ancestry.

Foreigners joined the OT as volunteers, often to avoid deportation to Germany, service in Army penal units, or, especially for Jews, imprisonment and death in a concentration camp. Employees of firms under OT contract joined, and from 1941 forced labourers (*Zwangsarbeiter*), and from 1943 some Allied prisoners-of-war were transferred to OT command. Men of the 'Germanic nations'—Dutch, Danes, Flemish, Walloons, Finns, Norwegians and Ethnic Germans—received German pay and conditions. OT-Legionaires (OT-Legionäre)—Bulgarians, Croats, Estonians, French, Hungarians, Italians, Latvians, Lithuanians, Rumanians, Slovaks and Spaniards; Polish Legionaries (Polnische OT-Legionäre); and Eastern Legionaries (OT-Ostlegionäre)—Byelorussians, Don, Kuban and Terek Cossacks, Russians and Ukrainians—received progressively inferior treatment. Russians comprised the largest foreign group. In September 1942 Hitler decreed that menial tasks, e.g. carrying cement-bags and breaking stones, should be carried out by foreigners, and indeed by 1944 most Germans in the OT were in supervisory positions.

OT strength reached its maximum in November 1944, with 1,360,000 members—44,500 German and 12,800 foreign personnel, 4,000 German women, 313,000 Germans and 680,700 foreigners in contracted firms, 165,000 prisoners-of-war, and 140,000 petty criminals (including Jews).

In late 1941 *Einsatzgruppe 'West'* was formed to supervise three divisions, with nine OBLs, in France, Belgium and the Netherlands. From November 1940 *Einsatz Westküste* built 56 submarine pens in Bordeaux, Brest, La Pallice, St. Nazaire and Lorient; and in March 1942 joined *Einsatz Kanalküste*, originally formed to support the invasion of Great Britain, in the construction of the *Atlantikwall* ('Atlantic Rampart'), envisaged as 15,000 fortification units ultimately stretching from the Franco-Spanish frontier to the Norwegian Arctic Circle, employing in France 112,000 German and 152,000 French workers, including 17,000 North African Arabs. *Einsatz Luftwaffe* built airfields, but its V-1 rocket sites were repeatedly destroyed by

Allied bombing. By May 1943 'West', now with 18 OBLs, was also fortifying the Mediterranean coast, extracting bauxite for aluminium production near Toulon, and repairing bombed railway track. It retreated in disorder into western Germany following the Normandy invasion, and in October its 6,000 OT and 130,000 foreign workers were assigned to *Einsatzgruppe V*, refortifying the Westwall against the expected Allied offensive.

OT units active in Denmark and Norway since June 1940 were reorganized in summer 1941 as *Einsatzgruppe 'Wiking'*, with three divisions in Norway (12 OBLs with 41 ABLs) and one in Denmark (five BLs). Strength in April 1944 was 74,200 with 4,500 OT personnel, 6,900 German and 32,000 foreign workers,



A sentry from RAD Company 7/41 (East Pomerania) talks to Russian children. Note the Air Force badge on the left side of the helmet. (Brian Davis)



RAD troops from Battalion K122 (Upper Silesia) watching an approaching Soviet tank. This battalion distinguished itself in the defence of Rzhev, July–September 1942. (Brian Davis)

28,000 Soviet POWs and 2,800 criminals. Einsatz 'Finland' (four BLs) joined in July 1944. 'Wiking' built coastal artillery emplacements on the Norwegian and Jutland coasts and on Bornholm Island, submarine pens at Trondheim and Bergen, and maintained vital nickel and aluminium factory production. To supply 20th Mountain Army in the Arctic it upgraded Highway 50 to all-weather standard, built supply roads in Finland, and in November 1944 detonated bridges and snow-

tunnels to cover the German retreat southwards before the Red Army.

Einsatzgruppe 'Südost', formed in early 1942, covered German-occupied Serbia, Greece and from late 1943 Albania; Bulgarian-occupied Macedonia; and Axis partners Bulgaria, Croatia, Hungary and Rumania. It worked mines for minerals vital for the war-effort—copper from Albania and Serbia, where 6,000 Hungarian-Jewish forced labourers worked under Hun-

Order of Battle, Organisation Todt

Occupied territories—20 May 1943 (Italy—4 March 1944, OT-Front—February 1945)

EG West (HQ Paris)—OBL Audinghen, Bayonne, Belgien, Bordeaux, Brest, Brügge, Burgund, Cherbourg, Holland, Marseille, Mitte, Normandie, Nordwest, Paula, Rouen, Süd, W2, W3.

EG Wiking (HQ Oslo)—E.S. Polarbereich (OBL Kirkenes, Alta), Nordnorwegen (OBL Narvik I, Narvik II, Fauske, Nordlandbahn), Mittelnorwegen (OBL Mo-i-Rana, Drontheim, Andalsnes, Bergen, Kristiansand, Tönsberg), Dänemark, Finnland.

EG Russland-Nord (HQ Riga)—Linienchef Dg X, XII, XIIIa; E.S. Baltöl, Hoheussle, Kulka, Freie Fahrt; Hochbau-E.S. Doldt; Eisenbahneinsatz I; Baugruppe Giesler.

EG Russland-Mitte (HQ Minsk)—Linienchef Dg VI, VII, VIIa, IX; Eisenbahneinsatz I, II, Mitte; E.S. Industriebau, Kaufman, Panther, Metzner, Rummler, Weissruthenien, Wedekind, Zinth; Hochbau-E.S. Wagner; Sondereinsatz Wolga.

EG Russland-Süd (HQ Kiev)—E.S. I—III, IVa, IVb; E.S.; Linienchef Dg IV, V; E.S. VI—XVI, XVII (incl. OBL Herbert), XXXIV, XXXV (incl. OBL Taman & Sondereinsatz Zmölnig), Hakelberg, Kretzer, Nawratil; Hochbaueinsatz Heidenrösch.

EG Kaukasus (HQ Stavropol)—E.S. Bilger, Graf, Herbert, Nawratil, Quest.

EG Brugmann (HQ Cracow)—E.S. Adler (OBL I, II), Krakau (OBL Merkur I—VI); OBL Blücher, Böckemühl, Havel I, II, Memel, Neckar, Scharnhorst, Slowakei, Süd-Holz, Wartburg, Ziethen; O.T.-Front—Brig. Nord (Rgt. 18, 80—3, 85—90, 109, 161, 166—8, A, B).

EG Südost (HQ Belgrade)—OBL Agram, Belgrad, Bor, Saloniki, Skoplje; OBL Skutari (5.4.1944); O.T.-Front—Rgt. 60—4.

EG Italien (HQ Sirucione)—E.S. Seefalke; Eisenbahneinsatz Teetzen; OBL Tessin, Garda, Isonzo, Herbert, Herzeg, Adria-Süd, Ponente, Levante, Adria-Nord, Istrien, Emilia, Theoderich, Krain, Geiserich, Alarich, Etsch, Alpen, West.

German Reich—6 December 1944 (OT-Front—February 1945)

EG 'Tannenberg' I (HQ Rastenburg)—E.S. Rül I (OBL Elbe, Spree); O.T.-Front—Brig. 8 (Danzig) (Rgt. 101, 106—8, 110—5).

EG Deutschland II (HQ Berlin-Dahlem)—E.S. Rül II (OBL Schwerin, Stettin), III (OBL Berlin I—IV), XX, XXI (OBL Posen); O.T.-Front—Brig. 7? (Rgt. 116, 122—7).

EG 'Rhein-Ruhr' III (HQ Essen-Heidhausen)—E.S. Rül VI (OBL Aachen, Bonn, Düren, Düsseldorf, Essen, Köln-Mühlheim, Münster, Recklinghausen, Siegburg, Diana, Eder, Möhne); O.T.-Front—Brig. 2 (Cologne), 4, 6?; Rgt. 1—5, 9, 20—1, 100, 103—5, 121, Ruhr.

EG 'Kyffhäuser' IV (HQ Weimar)—E.S. Rül IVa (OBL Chemnitz, Dresden, Leipzig), IX (OBL Kassel), XIa (OBL Hannover), XIb (OBL Leuna).

EG 'Oberrhein' V (HQ Heidelberg)—E.S. Rül Va (OBL Balingen, Biberach, Freudenstadt, Kiebitz, Reutlingen, Stuttgart), Vb (OBL Bruchsal, Freiburg, Mannheim, Offenburg, Schlettstadt, Strassburg, Tann), XIIa (OBL Eberbuch, Frankfurt-am-Main, Heidelberg, Ludwigshafen, Wiesbaden), XIIb (OBL Homburg-Saar, Koblenz, Mosel, Neustadt, Saarbrücken, St. Ingbert, St. Wendel, Speyer, Trier I, II); O.T.-Front—Brig. 1, 5 (Giessen), 3 (Bendorf); Rgt. 21—4, 31, 120, 140, 160.

EG Deutschland VI (HQ Munich)—E.S. Rül VII (OBL Biberach, Diana 2, Kauferring, München-Oberbayern, München-Stadt, Ringeltaube, Schwaben, Walnuss I, Weingut I, II), XIII (OBL Bayreuth, Franken, Mainfranken), XVII (OBL Linz, Oberdonau-Linz, Wien).

EG Deutschland VII (HQ Prague)—E.S. Rül IVb 'Sudetenland' (OBL Reichenberg), VIIIa (OBL Breslau), VIIIb (OBL Bad Charlotten-brunn, Kattowitz), 'Protektorat' (OBL Brünn, Pilsen, Prag).

EG 'Alpen' VIII (HQ Villach)—E.S. Rül XVIII (OBL Graz, Innsbruck, Klagenfurt, Salzburg), Alpenvorland (OBL Tessin, Etsch), Adriatisches Küstenland (OBL Isonzo), Süd (OBL Garda, Ponente, Cäsar).

EG 'Hansa' XII (HQ Bremen)—E.S. Rül X (OBL Emsland, Hamburg, Holland-Süd, Holland-Nord, Ostfriesland, Ost-Hannover, Schleswig-Holstein-Ost, Schleswig-Holstein-West, Unterweser).

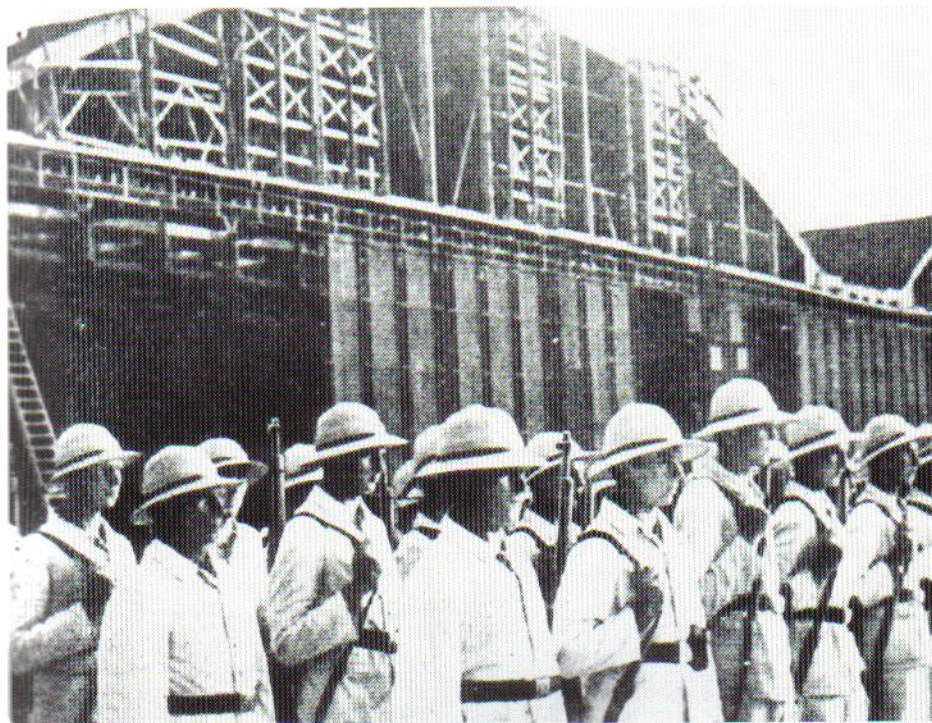
garian Army guards; chrome ore (Albania, Macedonia); iron ore (Albania); bauxite (Croatia, Hungary); manganese (Rumania), and asbestos (Serbia). Of the 3,000 German and 57,000 foreign workers, 24,000 built roads and railways and upgraded the rail link to Salonika, a port supplying Rommel's Afrikakorps in North Africa; they were faced with hostile mountainous terrain and under constant attack from Yugoslav Royalist Chetniks and Communist partisans. On 19 July 1944 Einsatzgruppe 'Karpaten' was formed with Divisions 'Rumänien', 'Ungarn' and 'Slowakei', building roads and fortifications in Rumania, Hungary, Slovakia and Southern Ukraine. From September 1944 'Südost' was retreating northwards before partisan and Soviet forces, and on 14 December absorbed 'Karpaten' and Eastern Austria.

The 20,000 OT personnel assigned to support the invasion of the Soviet Union in June 1941 were designated Einsatz 'Jacob', and divided into four groups. The eight divisions of OT-1, each (except 1/2) carrying the Field-Army number to which they were allocated (1/2, 4, 6, 9, 11, 16, 17, 18) supported front-line troops, while OT-2 (2/4, 6, 9, 11, 16, 17, 18) worked in rear areas. The Highway Managers (Linienchefs) 1-5, later DgIV-VII, VIIa, VIII-X, XII, XIIIa, personally responsible to Speer, controlled strategic roads as OT-L. Eleven divisional-status Gruppen of OT-U (U/I-X, XII), later redesignated OT Hochbau (multi-storey constructions), built 48-man wooden defensive barrack-blocks for the armed forces. The divisions were split into battalion-status Einheiten, numbered in the sequence 1-150, each with eight Batrups (companies) in the sequence 1-900.

Units created serviceable lime- and sand-surfaced roads passable in spring floods or winter snow; converted all railway track to the narrower European gauge; built 581 bridges; and constructed harbour facilities, and dams in marshy districts. They ran oil-extraction facilities in Estonia; and in Ukraine managed collective farms, supervised the harvest, ran munitions,



RAD personnel from XXX Division (Bavaria), in off-white linen fatigue uniforms, parade for rifle inspection; Upper Bavaria, autumn 1943. The inspecting officer wears the 'Edelweiss' cap-badge normally reserved for Austrian Divisions XXIII-XXVI. (Josef Charita)



RAD troops in the off-white linen fatigue uniform and, unusually, the tropical pith-helmet, on parade by an aircraft hangar. (Josef Charita)



RAD troops in Bavaria and Austria regularly trained with skis, and in mid-1945 raised two Mountain Brigades. Note the ski-trousers gathered at the ankles. (Brian Davis)

Members of an OT-Schutzkommando unit parade for kit inspection, 1941. They are wearing M1940 work tunics, and rank armbands on the lower left sleeve instead of the official cuff-title, and are carrying MP40 sub-machine guns. (Brian Davis)

car and tank factories, established an electric power grid, and evacuated wounded personnel using commandeered buses. All activities were under intermittent attack by Soviet partisans.

On 18 February 1942 the 50,000 German and 750,000 foreign workers were reorganized into four Einsatzgruppen: 'Nord', covering Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania and Northern Russia; 'Mitte', Byelorussia and Central Russia; 'Süd', Ukraine—each attached to the corresponding Army Groups—and the 28,000-strong Einsatzgruppe 'Jacob', which was absorbed into the other three in 1943. Baustab Speer (Construction Staff Speer), with 10,000 men deployed on railway construction in Southern Ukraine since December 1941, transferred to the OT in February 1942, its 24 Einheiten (I–XXIV) becoming Divisions of Einsatzgruppe 'Kaukasus', formed 23 September 1943 to support Army Group A in the Caucasus.

The retreat westwards

After the fall of Stalingrad in January 1943—Einsatz 'Hakelberg' was captured there—German forces retreated westwards. OT units destroyed installations, many of which they had built during the German invasion, and began a series of ineffective defensive lines. 'Russland-Nord' reached East Prussia, becoming 'Tannenberg' on 30 October 1944. 'Russland-Mitte' started the Ostwall ('Eastern Rampart') line in June 1943 and 'Panther I & II' in February 1944, before disbanding on 1 July 1944. 'Russland-Süd', redesignated 'Brugmann' on 26 May 1944, built the 'Venus', 'Merkur', 'BX' and 'Krakau' lines in occupied Poland from July 1944, while 'Kaukasus' joined 'Karpaten' the same month.

Formed in Italy on 1 June 1943, Einsatzgruppe 'Italien' initially prevented Allied bombers severing the Brenner and Naples-Reggio di Calabria rail links supplying the Sicilian Front. It built harbours for Sardinia and Elba ferries, and coastal defences from the French border to Pisa. In June 1944 it began fortifying the central Italian Gothic Line, only to abandon it in

August before the Allied advance. In July OBL 'Alpen' in Northern Italy was detached to form Einsatzgruppe 'Alpen VIII'. 'Italien', with 6,300 German and 223,700 foreign workers, began the Alpine 'Blue Line' fortifications, and rebuilt bombed River Po bridges and railways and roads damaged by partisans. On 14 December 1944, reduced to northern Italy, it was absorbed into 'Alpen VIII'.

The OT began operations in Germany from 1941, rebuilding hospitals and clearing bomb damage; and on 20 May 1943 Einsatzgruppe 'Ruhrgebiet' was formed with 50,000 workers from 'West', 30,000 German civilians and 20,000 RAD conscripts, to repair the Möhne and Eder dams in the Ruhr damaged by 617 Squadron RAF.

On 1 July 1944 the OT in Germany, 780,000 strong, controlling all military and civilian construction, was reorganized as eight Corps—'Tannenberg I' (East and West Prussia); 'II' (Wartheland, NE Germany); 'Rhein-Ruhr III' (Ruhr district, formerly 'Ruhrgebiet'); 'Kyffhäuser IV' (Central Germany); 'Oberrhein V' (SW Germany); 'VI' (S. Germany, NE Austria); VII (South Central Germany, Bohemia-Moravia); and 'Alpen VIII' (S. Austria, from December 1944 N. Italy). On 6 December 1944 'Hansa XII' was formed from 'III's' northern districts, and on 5 February 1945 'Brugmann' absorbed 'VII'. Each corps controlled divisions corresponding to local Munitions Inspectorates (Rüstungsinspektionen—RüI).

To prevent conscription into the Volkssturm of OT personnel from corps areas now in Allied hands, Speer established on 13 October 1944 the mobile, militarily organized Front-OT. Nine brigades—'Nord', 1–8—were formed. Each brigade had about five regiments; each regiment, four to five battalions; each battalion, four to five companies; each company, about 150 men. But the 20,000 German and 60,000 foreign personnel could not prevent the collapse of the German communications and energy network in March 1945.

OT-Schutzkommando (Protection Command) was formed



in 1941, to guard building sites against theft and guerilla attack, reinforced in November 1942 by German Police Regiment 28 (from December Police Regiment 'Todt'). SK companies (Kompanien, e.g. Kp. 711-23 in 'Russland-Süd') were reorganized on 9 August 1943 into battalions numbered within the OT Corps: 11+—'West'; 21+—'Wiking'; 31+—'Einsatz Finnland'; 41+—'Italien'; 51+—'Russland-Nord'; 61+—'Russland-Mitte'; 71+—'Russland-Süd'; 81+—'Südost'; 91+—'Ruhgebiet'; and 101+—'Reich'. Each battalion (Abteilung) had up to 10 companies, e.g. 81/1-10; each company (Bereitschaft) divided into platoons (Züge) and sections (Kameradschaften). Total strength was about 10-20,000. Many foreigners, especially Dutch, Flemish and Walloons, served; only Czechs, Poles and Russians were barred. By 1944 the SK guarded POWs, criminals and concentration camp inmates serving in OT detachments, but by March 1945 all companies had disbanded.

After the war many firms contracted to the OT employing forced labour were expropriated, and OT personnel received treatment ranging from instant pardon to imprisonment, and, for many Soviet workers, execution. Organisation Todt was a unique reorganization of private firms into a pan-European paramilitary construction corps, which by 1943 had almost become the fifth branch of the armed forces, and whose projects can still be visited on the Channel Islands and French Atlantic coast.

DEUTSCHER VOLKSSTURM

On 25 July 1944, having just escaped assassination in the 20 July bomb plot and with Allied forces massing on Germany's western and eastern borders, Hitler issued a 'Decree for Total War'. He announced on 25 September that all Germans aged 16-60 who were not Jews, gypsies, criminals, or members of French, Polish or Slovene minorities, and who were not already in the armed forces or RAD, would join the new 'People's Militia', the Deutscher Volkssturm. The six-million-strong force would have about 10,180 battalions—limited staff personnel and rear-echelon facilities, and lack of weapons standardization, made the battalion the largest tactical unit—divided into four Levies (Aufgebote):

1st Levy 1.2 million men in 1,850 battalions (400 in frontier districts); all physically fit 20-60-year-olds without essential war work exemption, assigned to front-line battalions, quartered in barracks, liable for service outside their home district, and including all available NSDAP political officials, Allgemeine-SS, SA, NSKK and NSFK (Nazi Air Corps).

2nd Levy 2.8 million men in 4,860 battalions (1,050 in frontier districts); all physically fit 20-60-year-olds with essential war work exemption, usually organized in factory battalions, quartered at home, liable for service within their home county.

3rd Levy 600,000 16-19-year-olds, plus some 15-year-old volunteers, in about 1,040 battalions; mostly 16-year-old Hitler Youth trained in the toughening-up camps (HJ-Wehrertüchtigungslager).

4th Levy 1.4 million 20-60-year-olds unfit for active service, plus volunteers over 60, in about 2,430 battalions, for guard duty, including guarding concentration camps.

The Nazi Women's League (NS-Frauenchaft) provided



An Organisation Todt second lieutenant, his armband designating him as a battalion commander, distributes medals to his junior officers. All wear the M1940 service tunic with M1942 insignia, and the

M1938 officer's sidecap with officer's aluminium piping, except the officer second left, who wears the M1935 Air Force sidecap for NCOs and privates, without aluminium piping. (Josef Charita)

rear-echelon support, and on 23 March 1945 were issued firearms.

Not all planned battalions were formed, but at least 700 did see combat, the vast majority of these recruited from the frontier districts in the East—Danzig-West Prussia, Mark Brandenburg, Lower and Upper Silesia, East Prussia, Pomerania, Wartheland; the South-East-Lower Danube, Styria, Sudetenland, all facing Soviet forces; but also in the West—Essen and Westmark, facing the western Allies.

Reichsleiter Martin Bormann, NSDAP Head Office Chief and Hitler's deputy, commanded the Militia on the Führer's behalf. He was assisted by two Chiefs of Staff (Stabsführer): Oberbefehlsleiter Helmut Friedrichs, responsible for organization and political affairs; and SS Lt.Gen. Gottlob Berger, SS Main Office Chief, representing the SS and Replacement Army commander, Heinrich Himmler. A staff of Army officers, under Col. Hans Kissel, was responsible for equipment, weapons and training.

Each of Germany's 42 districts (Gau) formed a Volkssturm District (Volkssturmschnitt) under a NSDAP Gauleiter assisted by a Gaustabsführer, usually an SA General or senior NSDAP official. A district contained on average 21 counties (Kreise), each under a NSDAP Kreisleiter assisted by a Kreisstabsführer, and required to raise about 12 battalions.

Berger and Friedrichs achieved a good working relationship, but Bormann and Himmler frequently clashed for control of the Volkssturm, a situation exacerbated by a confused chain of command, leaving NSDAP officials and SA officers resentful of the SS's upper hand.

The Volkssturm's mission was to surround and contain large seaborne and airborne landings; to eliminate agents and small sabotage groups; to guard bridges, streets and key buildings; to reinforce depleted Army units; to plug gaps in the front after enemy breakthroughs, and to man quiet sectors; and to crush feared uprisings by the estimated 10 million prisoners-of-war and foreign workers in Germany.

A 649-man 1st Levy Battalion had a 27-man Staff; Companies (Kompanien) 1-3, each with three or four Platoons (Züge) containing three or four 10-man Sections (Gruppen); and a 4th Infantry Howitzer Company. Other Levy battalions had 576 men. Each company was supposed to have three five-man Tank Close Combat Squads (Panzerabekämpfungstrupps), each with 10 Panzerfaust anti-tank projectors, often manned by Hitler Youth volunteers.

Each battalion received a consecutive number within its district, e.g. Bataillon 25/97 = 97th Battalion (HQ Königsberg) in District 25 (East Prussia). Unofficially, Tirol-Vorarlberg battalions also received traditional Rifle Association Battalion titles, e.g. 'Standeschützenbataillon Bregenz'; and in Westphalia-South elite battalions, one per county, were grouped unofficially into 'Freikorps Sauerland' Regiments.

Specialist units

Specialist units were designated Combat (Kampf-, in East Prussia Einsatz-) Battalions; Emergency Battalions (Bataillone z.b.V.) recruited from non-frontier districts for Eastern Front duty; and Pioneer (Bau) or Reserve (Ersatz) Battalions. The Volkssturm was prohibited from serving outside the Reich, but at least four battalions were formed from Germans living abroad — 400 and 402 in Denmark, 605 and 610 in Bohemia-Moravia. A medical service was formed in November 1944, with a medical officer and medical orderly per battalion; and in January 1945 a Tank Warning Service in frontier districts. Nachtjagdstaffel 1 was an East Prussian night-fighter squadron with NSFK personnel equipped with light aircraft.

During 1945 Volkssturm units helped form Army 'Gneissau' formations within the Replacement Army. In January 26

'Baden' battalions joined Upper Rhine Infantry Regiments 1-15, later grouped into the 805th and 905th Divisions and 1005th Brigade of the 19th Army—nicknamed the 19th Volkssturm Army. The 303rd, 309th, 324th, 325th and 328th and 'Bärwalde' Divisions contained Volkssturm battalions, as did the People's Infantry Divisions (Volksgrenadierdivisionen) established by Himmler; 16 Grenadier (Führernachwuchs) Regiments, numbered 1233-42, 1246-50, 1256, formed from Officer Cadet Schools; and SS-Grenadierregiment 'Becker', later part of the '30. Januar' Waffen-SS Division.

Also in 1945 the Army formed 3000-series Fortress (Festungs-) units from Volkssturm companies with Army staffs, to man defensive lines in the East. There were 11 four-company Machine-Gun Battalions (3095-3105); two Infantry Battalions (3132-4); 25 Artillery Depot Battalions (3117-26, 3135-9, 3158-60, 3163-6, 3176, 3177, 3184); two Artillery Battalions (3086-7) and some Engineer Barrier Companies and Engineer Demolition Companies. Volkssturm battalions served in town garrisons cut off by the Soviet advance, notably in Breslau (38 battalions), Frankfurt-an-der-Oder (3), Küstrin (4), Kolberg (2), Posen (1) and Schneidemühl (2).

Volkssturm recruits, many already working a 72-hour war-emergency week, were given a 48-hour training programme by armed forces instructors, and were expected to master the rifle and Panzerfaust, the grenade-launcher, hand grenade and Panzerschreck anti-tank weapon, and in emergency the pistol, sub-machine gun and land mine. In fact there were scarcely enough weapons for the 1st and 2nd Levies, and many militiamen were sent into battle unarmed. The 3rd Levy was not issued weapons, and the 4th Levy were expected to use hunting-rifles or captured firearms. Troops were often only issued a trench-spade for self-defence.

The Gauleiters on the Eastern Border began to establish a series of defensive lines during the pause in the fighting after July 1944. Thousands of local men and women, Hitler Youth, RAD conscripts, prisoners-of-war and foreign forced labourers built tank-traps, artillery and anti-tank positions, protected by earth-



An OT captain of Signals wearing the M1940 service tunic, M1938 Army-style officer's sidecap with aluminium piping, and M1942 insignia with lemon yellow shoulder strap piping. He has the 1914-18 Iron Cross ribbon with a silver eagle indicating a second award in the Second World War. (Josef Charita)

works and linked by trenches. Eight lines skirted the East-Prussian frontier: 'Memel', 'Inster-Angerapp', 'Hohenstein', 'Ortelsburger Wald', 'Heilsberg', 'Deime', 'Frisching' and

'Masuren'; there were three in Wartheland—'A' (East), 'B' (Centre), 'C' (West), and in Upper Silesia 'Berthold' and 'B-1'. Other lines faced the Czech border. By December 1944 these lines were manned by armed forces and Volkssturm units, many organized from January 1945 into Fortress Battalions.

Order of Battle, Deutscher Volkssturm

Given are Volkssturm District names (NSDAP District names were identical) with, in brackets, English translations where they exist, and/or locations if outside the German pre-war frontier of 1937. Asterisks indicate the vulnerable eastern and western frontier districts.

- *1—Baden.
- 2—Bayreuth.
- 3—Berlin.
- *4—Danzig-Westpreussen (Danzig-West-Prussia, N.W. Poland).
- *5—Düsseldorf.
- *6—Essen.
- 7—Franken (Franconia).
- 8—Halle-Merseburg.
- 9—Hamburg.
- 10—Hessen-Nassau.
- *11—Kärnten (Carinthia, S. Austria).
- *12—Köln-Aachen (Cologne-Aachen).
- 13—Kürhessen.
- 14—Magdeburg-Anhalt.
- 15—Mainfranken (River Main-Franconia).
- *16—Mark Brandenburg.
- 17—Mecklenburg.
- *18—Moselland (Mosel District).
- 19—München-Oberbayern (Munich-Upper Bavaria).
- *20—Niederdonau (Lower Danube, N.E. Austria).
- *21—Niederschlesien (Lower Silesia).
- 22—Oberdonau (Upper Danube, N.W. Austria).
- *23—Oberschlesien (Upper Silesia).
- 24—Ost-Hannover (Hannover-East).
- *25—Ostpreussen (East-Prussia).
- 26—Pommern (Pomerania).
- 27—Sachsen (Saxony).
- 28—Salzburg (Central Austria).
- 29—Schleswig-Holstein.
- 30—Schwaben (Swabia).
- *31—Steiermark (Styria, S.E. Austria).
- *32—Sudetenland (Czech Border area).
- 33—Süd-Hannover-Braunschweig (South Hanover-Brunswick).
- 34—Thüringen (Thuringia).
- 35—Tirol-Vorarlberg (Tyrol-Vorarlberg, W. Austria).
- *36—Wartheland (W. Poland).
- *37—Weser-Ems.
- *38—Westfalen-Nord (N. Westphalia).
- 39—Westfalen-Süd (S. Westphalia).
- *40—Westmark.
- 41—Wien (Vienna, E. Austria).
- 42—Württemberg-Hohenzollern.

The Last Ditch

On 16 October 1944 the Soviet 3rd Byelorussian Front attacked East Prussia and occupied Goldap, Gumbinnen and Nemmersdorf before the German 4th Army, with eight Volkssturm battalions in the 170th Infantry Division, forced them out. On 12 January 1945, 156 Soviet divisions in five army groups (1st Baltic, 2nd–3rd Byelorussian, 1st Ukrainian Fronts) launched a general offensive into Germany against German Army Groups A and Mitte (50 divisions). Smashing through the makeshift defence lines in Wartheland into Danzig-West Prussia, East Prussia and Silesia (where Hitler had appointed the respective Gauleiters as National Defence Commissioners (Reichsverteidigungskommissare) in the vain hope that they might stiffen resistance) the Red Army had breached the concrete 'Pomeranian Rampart' (Pommernwall) and reached the River Oder by 1 February.

A belated general evacuation was ordered, and three million civilians joined convoys of waggons, escorted by Volkssturm, heading westwards along congested snow-swept roads harassed by Polish guerrillas. About 750,000 died from exposure, were killed by overtaking Soviet or Polish forces, drowned on evacuation ships in the Baltic sunk by Soviet air or submarine attacks, or caught in the Dresden air raid of 13/14 February 1945. Some Volkssturm soldiers, aware of the Soviet writer Ilya Ehrenburg's encouragement to Red Army troops to butcher all Germans, still stood their ground to buy time for the escape of the refugees; others, afraid of being shot as guerrillas if captured, joined the mass retreat.

By 24 February German forces had halted the Soviets along the Oder-Neisse line and were still holding out in about twenty pockets—Fortresses—behind Soviet lines, including Küstrin, Königsberg, Posen (Poznan) and Breslau (Wrocław). On 15 January, Emergency Battalions were ordered from inner German districts for the front. Hamburg, Hessen-Nassau, Magdeburg-Anhalt, Mecklenburg, Pomerania, Schleswig-Holstein and South Hanover-Brunswick battalions dug in near Stettin (Szczecin); Bayreuth, Franconia, Halle-Merseburg, Kürhessen, Saxony and Thuringia battalions near Frankfurt-an-der-Oder. In February 16-year-old Hitler Youths, many of them veterans of the anti-tank squads, were withdrawn to begin military training, further weakening the Volkssturm battalions.

The final Soviet offensive began on 16 April 1945. The Oder Line was breached; and by the 25th Berlin was defended by 41,000 troops including 24,000 Volkssturm (18,000 of whom were 'Clausewitz Levy' troops of the 2nd Levy, on six hours standby). Breslau, with 45,000 defenders including 25,000 Volkssturm in 38 battalions, finally surrendered on 6 May—Battalion 21/41 and two Hitler Youth 3rd Levy battalions distinguished themselves in the fighting.

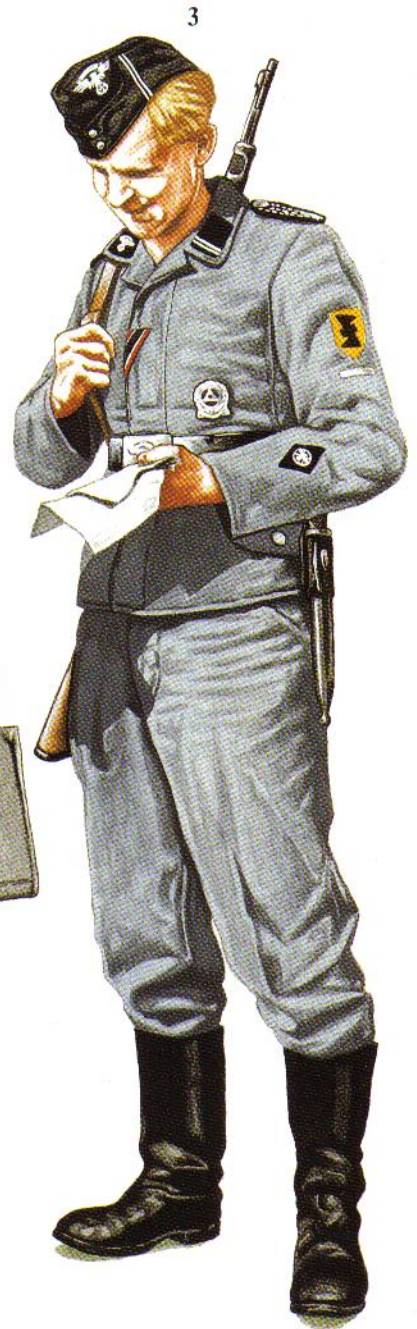
On 8 February 1945 the Western Allies, in three army groups, began their advance into western Germany, defended by German Army Groups B, G and H. On the 12th the local Volkssturm was mobilized and sent to man the Westwall, but they showed none of the desperate determination of their comrades in the East. Many ignored the call-up; others surrendered at the first opportunity or threw away their armbands and hid in the woods, or returned home. The Westwall was

NSKK:

1: Hauptsturmführer, Germany, May 1940

2: Standartenführer, Ukraine, June 1942

3: Obersturmmann, Serbia, June 1944



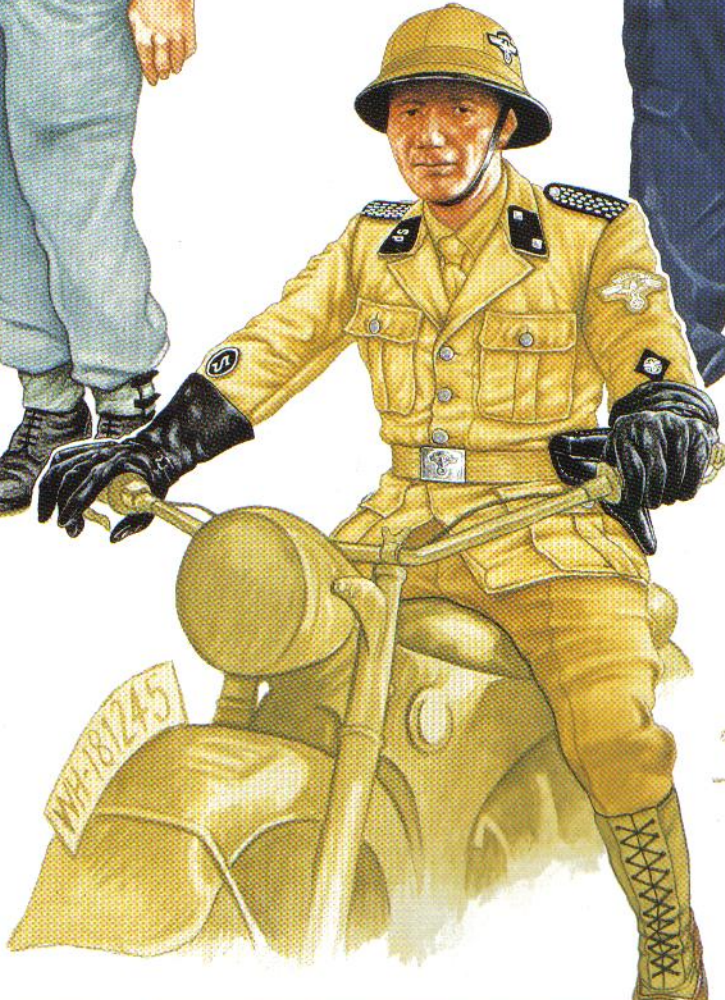
SIMON
SMYKOWSKI

2



- 1: NSKK-Truppführer, Libya, 1941
- 2: NSKK-Oberscharführer, Italy, winter 1943
- 3: Hauptschiffsführer, Transportflotte Speer, Norway, 1943

1



SIMON
McLOUGHLIN

3



Transportkorps Speer:
1: Oberfeldkapitän, Italy, winter 1944
2: Unterfahrmeister, Oder Front, March 1945
3: Hauptkraftfahrer, Germany, winter 1944



Reichsarbeitsdienst:

1: Oberarbeitsführer Konopka, Germany, 1944

2: Obervormann, Bn. K184; Ukraine, 1941

3: Untertruppführer, Atlantic Wall, 1943



- 1: Volunteer, RAD Co.8/199; Ukraine, 1942
2: Haupttruppführer, RAD Co.4/16; Prussia, 1944
3: Frontarbeiter, Organisation Todt; France, 1940

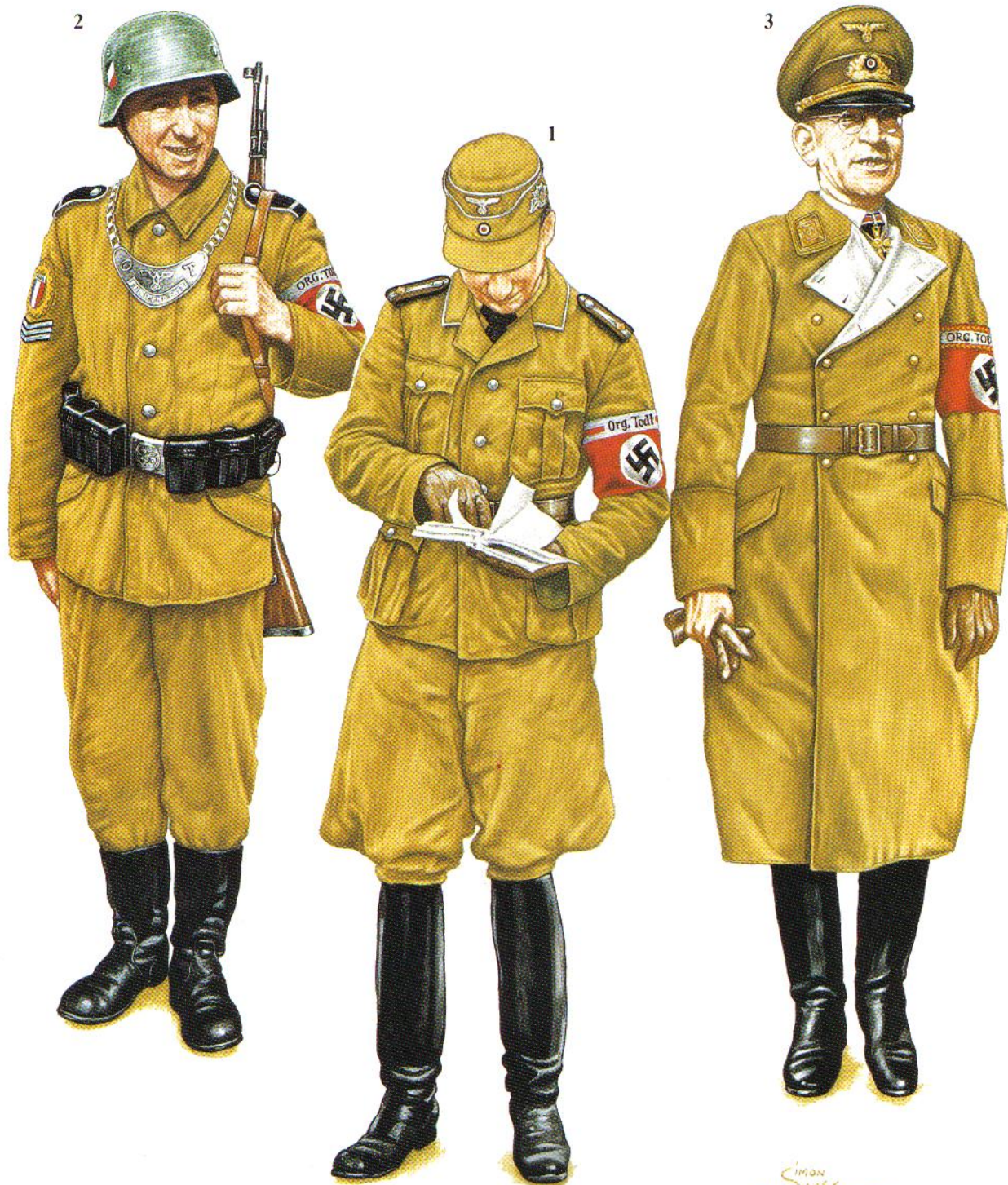


Organisation Todt:

1: Obertruppführer, Einsatzgruppe 'Wiking'; Norway, 1942

2: SK-Meister, Schutzkommando 'West'; France, 1942

3: Einsatzgruppenleiter Brugmann; Ukraine, 1944



1: OT-Hauptfrontführer, Belgrade, 1944
2: Volkssturmmann, Saarbrücken, January 1945
3: Volkssturm Bataillonsführer, Oder Front, 1945



SIMON
SMYLOVAZ

Volkssturm:

1: Medical orderly, Ruhr, April 1945

2: Zugführer, Poznan, January 1945

3: HJ-Hauptscharführer, Berlin, April 1945



quickly breached and on 7 May the Western Allies met Soviet forces in central Germany.

Hitler deceived himself into believing that a huge civilian army, led by militarily inexperienced Nazi officials, could stave off Germany's defeat. The Volkssturm's ultimate failure, however, should not blind us to the bravery of many of its members who, though unfit, untrained and underequipped, fought not to preserve the Nazi state but to save fellow Germans from a Red Army eager to exact vengeance for the brutal German occupation of the Soviet Union.

THE PLATES

Ar: NSKK-Hauptsturmführer, 3rd Co., 37th Motor Regt., Motor Division 'Leipzig'; Germany, May 1940

The M1934 olive brown service and field uniform included an SA kepi with divisional-colour cap band (same colour as the corresponding SA Division) and silver-embroidered NSKK eagle; or a black sidecap with a silver-embroidered eagle on a black (officers) or divisional-coloured (NCOs & men) triangle; from 1936, with silver rank insignia on the left side. Personnel of Motor Divisions 'Adolf Hühnlein', 'Oberdonau', 'Niederdonau', 'Wien' and 'Alpenland' (later a corps) and 'Südwest' Corps Staff wore a white metal Edelweiss on the left side of all headgear.

The tunic had a dark brown closed collar (open with black tie and brown shirt for walking-out) with silver collar and collar patch piping for general and field officers, with rank on black collar-patches; crimson for lt.gen. and above and general staff and technical staff; red (later crimson) for corps staff. Field-marshal to col. wore silver oak-leaf insignia on both patches—3 in wreath, 3 and silver pip, 3,2 and pip, 2, 1. Lower ranks wore pips and black stripes edged white on the left patch—4 and 1-0 stripes, 3 and 2-0 stripes; 2 and 2-0 stripes, 1 and 1-0 stripes, 2-0 stripes; recruit no patch.

Right hand patches carried white metal insignia—'MS' (Motor School Staff), 'T' (Technical Staff); none (General Staff); name, e.g. 'OST' (Corps Staff); abbreviated name, e.g. 'Hbg'—Hamburg (Divisional and Brigade Staff); 'M' & number, e.g. 'M80' (Regimental Staff); 'I-VI/M' & number, e.g. 'III/M80' (Battalion Staff); '1-20/M' & number, e.g. '4/M80' (Company Staff and personnel); 'L'/abbreviation, e.g. 'L/He' (Divisional/Brigade Training Company). Medical officers wore their badge behind the patches, later on the left lower sleeve.

Only a single right shoulder strap was worn: field-marshal—silver-white-silver plaited cords and 3 silver metal oak-leaves; other general officers without the leaves; Oberführer, 2 gold-2 silver cords; all on a black underlay piped red (piping later omitted). Field officers—4 silver plaited cords; subalterns—flat silver cords; all on a black underlay with divisional-colour piping (here emerald green); NCOs and men—black and white flat cords on a divisional-colour underlay. Some strap buttons had a '1' or '2' where more than one division shared a colour.

Officers wore ex-Motor SA black breeches and riding-boots, NCOs and men black trousers and marching boots, and on the left upper sleeve the NSDAP armband. The olive brown greatcoat with dark brown collar (dark brown lapels for general officers) carried all insignia. Motorboat personnel wore dark blue naval uniforms with gold insignia and 'Mb' and regimental number—e.g. 'Mb1'—on the right collar patch.



A Flemish sergeant of OT-Schutzkommando troops wearing the distinctive black shoulder straps piped white, the M1940 service tunic and 'Streifendienst' gorget, platoon commander's lanyard, and an SS runes

tie-pin presumably indicating SS membership, but no 'OT' armband. (Josef Charita)

From September 1939 many NSKK officers on duty with the armed forces adopted a peaked cap with dark brown cap band, silver embroidered eagle and black chin strap (subalterns) or silver piping and cap cords (field officers); but subalterns soon adopted field officers' silver collar, collar patch and cap pipings and cap cords. All officers adopted silver piping on the sidecap upper flap, and all ranks wore a silver embroidered eagle on the right upper sleeve. Personnel with six months' Driver Instructor Branch (NSKK Verkehrserziehungsdienst) service wore a black and white shield on the right upper sleeve and a duty gorget. Personnel seconded to the OT wore grey M1940 OT armbands on the lower left sleeve.

This officer wears a silver company commander's lanyard, NSDAP membership badge and SA Defence Badge, the M1931 Motor SA driver's qualification badge (a white metal eagle and wheel on a black diamond, as the first pattern NSKK driver's badge), and the Veteran (Alter Kämpfer) silver braid chevron awarded to SA, SS or Hitler Youth members who joined before 31 December 1932.

A2: NSKK-Standartenführer, Staff, 2nd Brigade, NSKK-Motorgruppe Luftwaffe; Kiev, Ukraine, June 1942

Officers of this division wore M1935 grey-blue Air Force uniforms. The cap had a silver NSKK eagle above an Army red-white-black cockade in silver embroidered oak-leaves on a dark brown cap band. The right collar patch was blank; and shoulder strap underlays were black for German personnel. By 1941 the NSKK arm eagle had replaced the conspicuous NSDAP arm band on the left upper sleeve. Early units wore black cuff bands with aluminium edging and silver woven titles on the left lower sleeve: 'NSKK Transport-Regiment Luftwaffe', autumn-December 1940; 'NSKK Brigade Luftwaffe', December 1940-January 1942. The M1935 Air Force greatcoat carried the same insignia.

A3: NSKK-Obersturmmann, 6th Regt., NSKK-Transportgruppe Luftwaffe; Belgrade, Serbia, June 1944

German NCOs and men of the brigade, later division, wore the black sidecap or the steel helmet painted grey-blue with a silver NSKK or Air Force eagle on the left side; and the M1940 blouse with a blank right hand collar patch, later carrying a silver metal NSKK eagle.

Foreign volunteers initially wore the uniform dyed black, but in 1942 adopted the grey-blue blouse with normal insignia. On the left upper sleeve they wore national shields instead of the eagle, and coloured shoulder strap underlays: AGRA—yellow circular swastika on a grey-blue or orange shield or disc (orange,

from July 1943 yellow, strap underlay); Rex—red crossed ragged staves on black edged red (yellow); Flemish—black lion on yellow with yellow 'FLANDERN' on black, from July 1943 black wolf's hook on orange or yellow (green); Dutch—yellow wolf's hook on black edged yellow (red); French—black double-headed axe on blue-white-red with a white 'NSKK' on black above, or blue-white-red with a white 'FRANCE' on black above (light blue strap underlay).

This Flemish sentry wears a silver stripe for one year's active service, the Iron Cross 2nd Class ribbon, the VNV (Flemish National Union) long service badge, and the second pattern driver's badge in silver-grey silk.

B1: NSKK-Truppführer, 4th Regt., NSKK-Transportbrigade Speer; Libya, December 1941

Regimental personnel wore the Air Force tan tropical uniform with NSKK insignia, and a white metal 'Sp' on the right collar patch. The Army tropical helmet carries the red-white-black Army shield on the right and an NSKK eagle on the left side. This NCO carries a 9mm Po8 Luger pistol, and wears the white 'S' on black sleeve badge of a Schirmmeister (technical quartermaster-sergeant)—a Fahrmeister (motor transport sergeant) wore an 'F'. He rides a 750cc BMW R12 motorcycle.

In Europe NSKK motorcyclists wore a grey blouse and trousers with standard insignia, and a large silver-embroidered eagle on the left breast pocket and on the black leather or fibre crash-helmet.

B2: NSKK-Oberscharführer, 7th Regt., NSKK-Transportbrigade Speer; N. Italy, winter 1943

In 1942 NSKK Transportgruppe Todt adopted rank insignia shoulder straps of the equivalent Waffen-SS rank, NCOs adding aluminium braid collar edging; and in October 1943 an olive brown six-button tunic with (for officers) open cuffs, and a dark brown collar; olive brown breeches or trousers; they retained the olive brown peaked cap with insignia as for Plate A2. Transportbrigade Todt personnel wore a silver metal NSKK eagle on the right collar patch, Transportbrigade Speer an 'Sp' and, for Regiments 1-6 and 10, Air Force uniforms as for NSKK-Motorgruppe Luftwaffe.

This section leader wears a Waffen-SS reversible camouflage smock over his field tunic and a camouflage cover over his M1940 steel helmet; also a belt with M1939 NSKK buckle, M1943 Army trousers and M1940 canvas anklets. He carries an MP40 sub-machine gun and an M1943 stick grenade, canvas ammunition pouches and 10 x 50 Zeiss binoculars.

B3: Hauptschiffsführer, Transportflotte Speer; Narvik, Norway, 1943

According to February 1943 regulations officers wore a dark blue peaked cap with a black mohair band. General officers had gold pipings, anchor buttons, cap cords, eagle and wreath; other officers the same in silver, with a red-white-black cockade. The blue sidecap had a silver-embroidered eagle, cockade, and silver flap piping (gold for general officers). The tunic had a black collar

Another Flemish OT-Schutzkommando sergeant wearing the M1940 service tunic and the M1937 Air Force grey-blue peaked field cap. Note

the vehicle sign on the car—'WH (Wehrmacht-Heer—"Army")/OT' ('Organisation Todt'). (Josef Charita)

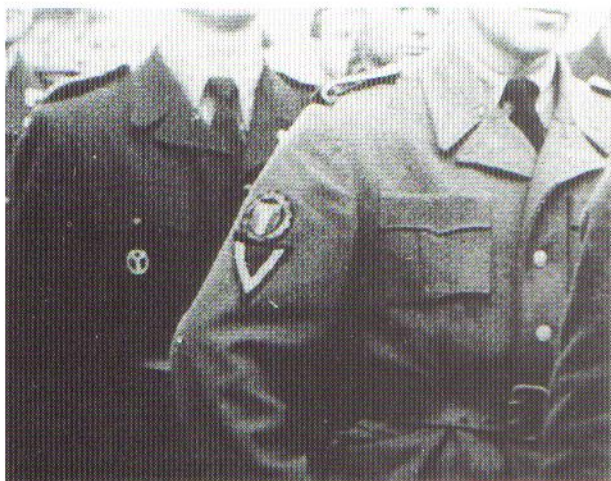


Rank Titles of Auxiliary Transport Units

NSKK	Legion Speer	Transportflotte Speer	Transportkorps Speer	(British Army comparative ranks)
23.8.1934–8.5.1945 (Einsatzdienst) ¹	22.7.1942–6.1944 ⁶	1.1943–8.5.1945 (Einsatzdienst) ⁷	12.9.1944–8.5.1945 (Einsatzdienst) ¹¹	
<i>Höhere Führer (General Officers)</i>				
NSKK-Korpsführer	—	—	—	Field-Marshal
NSKK-Korpsführer	—	—	—	General
NSKK-Obergruppenführer	—	—	Korpskommandant	Lt.General
NSKK-Gruppenführer	—	Grosskapitän	Gruppenkommandant	Maj.General
NSKK-Brigadeführer	Generalkapitän	Generalkapitän	Brigadekommandant	Brigadier
NSKK-Oberführer	—	—	—	—
<i>Führer (Field & Subaltern Officers)</i>				
NSKK-Standartenführer	Chefkapitän	Kommodore	Oberstkapitän	Colonel
NSKK-Oberstaffelführer	Stabskapitän	Stabskapitän	Oberfeldkapitän	Lt.Colonel
NSKK-Staffelführer	Kapitän	Kapitän	Oberstabskapitän	Major
NSKK-Hauptsturmführer ¹	Hauptzugführer	Hauptschiffsführer	Stabskapitän	Captain
NSKK-Obersturmführer	Oberzugführer	Oberschiffsführer	Oberfeldkornett	Lieutenant
NSKK-Sturmführer	Zugführer	Schiffsführer	Feldkornett Kornett ¹²	2nd Lieutenant
<i>Unterführer (Non-Commissioned Officers)</i>				
NSKK-Haupttruppführer	Stabsfahrmeister	—	Stabsfahrmeister	} Warrant Officer II
NSKK-Obertruppführer	Hauptfahrmeister	Hauptbootsmann	Hauptfahrmeister	
NSKK-Truppführer	Oberfahrmeister	Oberbootsmann	Oberfahrmeister	Sergeant
NSKK-Oberscharführer	Fahrmeister	Bootsmann	Fahrmeister	Lance-Sergeant
NSKK-Scharführer	Unterfahrmeister	Unterbootsmann	Unterfahrmeister	Corporal
<i>Mannschaften (Privates)</i>				
NSKK-Rottenführer	Hauptkraftfahrer	Hauptmatrose	Hauptkraftfahrer	} Lance-Corporal
NSKK-Obersturmmann ³	Oberkraftfahrer	Obermatrose ⁸	Oberkraftfahrer	
NSKK-Sturmmann ⁴	} Kraftfahrer	} Vollmatrose ⁹ Matrose ¹⁰	} Kraftfahrer	} Private
NSKK-Anwärter ⁵				

Notes:

- 'Einsatzdienst'—Line personnel. Medical, dental and pharmaceutical officers prefix ranks with 'Sanitäts-'.²
- From 1934–9 designated NSKK-Sturmhauptführer.
- From 1934–9 designated NSKK-Sturmmann.
- From 1934–9 designated NSKK-Mann.
- 'Recruit'—soldier undergoing basic training.
- From 12 September 1944–February 1945 foreign volunteers in Transportkorps Speer used Legion Speer titles, from February–May 1945 Corps titles.
- 'Einsatzdienst'—Line personnel. Administrative Personnel (Capt.-Private) had different titles.
- Later redesignated Vollmatrose.
- Later redesignated Matrose.
- Later redesignated Leichtmatrose.
- 'Einsatzdienst'—Line personnel. Legal Officers (Brig.-Capt.); Technical, Medical, Paymaster and Administrative Officers (Brig.-2nd Lt.); Specialist Officers (Maj.-2nd Lt.) and Medical and Paymaster officer candidates, used different rank-titles.
- Technically an NCO, a Kornett was a trained officer candidate (equivalent to Army Oberfähnrich) awaiting promotion to 2nd Lieut.



A corporal of a French OT-Schutzkommando unit, wearing a non-standard rank chevron probably obtained from German Navy stores, parades with

blue-uniformed members of the French collaborationist Milice, wearing the distinctive 'gamma' breast-badge. (Josef Charita)

and a silver-embroidered eagle (gold for general officers) on the left upper sleeve, with rank insignia on a black cloth collar patch piped in silver cord (gold for general officers): generals—gold plaited braid with 1-0 silver metal pips; field officers—silver plaited braid and 1-0 gold pips; subalterns—4 parallel silver braids and 3-0 gold pips. Blue trousers or breeches; in action a matt navy blue helmet, black belt, pistol.

NCOs wore the peaked cap without piping or wreath with a black leather chin strap; the sidecap without piping; the jacket with no breast pocket and all five buttons fastened. The black collar patch had silver braid edging and 3-0 gold metal pips; on the left upper sleeve they wore the officer's eagle, then 3-1 silver chevrons edged red, point up. The officer's and NCO's greatcoat had a black collar worn closed (for generals open with black lapel linings) and normal insignia.

Seamen wore the traditional blouse with a wide light blue collar with three white edge tapes; trousers; helmet or sidecap; or blue sailor's cap with a silver eagle, cockade, and 'Transportflotte Speer' in silver embroidery on a black silk band, when walking out. On the upper left sleeve were 3-0 red rank chevrons, point up. The blue work dress had a plain sailor's collar, and a left breast pocket.

C1: Oberfeldkapitän, Transport-Regiment 2, Transportkorps Speer; Cavalese, NE Italy, December 1944

Officers' field and service uniform consisted of the NSKK-Transportgruppe Todt M1943 uniform with NSKK rank insignia, replaced in September 1944 by new Corps insignia. Usually the black peaked field cap, with silver-grey machine-woven Army eagle and tricolour cockade and silver crown piping (gold for generals) was worn, but this officer prefers the walking-out dress peaked cap with dark brown band, aluminium crown and band piping, silver buttons and cords, and a silver metal or embroidered eagle, wreath and cockade. General officers wore gold insignia, and 2nd and 3rd Transport Regiment officers had

Air Force pattern eagles and, occasionally, Luftwaffe blue uniforms.

The tunic had branch-colour collar patches with aluminium piping and embroidered stylized 'Sp' (gold for generals) on a dark brown collar. Army shoulder straps, only two-thirds Army width, had branch-colour underlay: generals, gold-aluminium-gold plaited braids and 2-0 aluminium pips and branch badges; field and subaltern officers, aluminium plaited or flat braids, and 2-0 gold metal pips and branch badges.

Branch insignia (and colours) were: Line personnel—Transport Regts. Arabic numerals 2, 3, 5-10—Transport Sectors, Roman numerals I-VIII (all numerals omitted in the field); Brigade and Corps Staff—no insignia (black branch colour); Technical Service—'T' (pink); Medical Service—snake and staff (dark blue); Legal Service—sword (maroon); Paymasters—winged staff (light blue); Administrative officials—'V' and dark green chevrons woven into the aluminium braid (dark green); Specialist Officers—very thin shoulder cords with gold rank knots (lilac grey).

Above the right breast pocket an aluminium-embroidered (gold for generals) Army or Air Force eagle was worn on a dark brown cloth backing; and on the breeches generals and staff officers (col.-capt.) had dark brown piping flanked by two 4cm wide dark brown stripes. The olive brown greatcoat had a plain dark brown collar with dark brown lapel linings for generals, and shoulder straps.

This officer has the M1939 Wound Badge in black (1-2 wounds) and the Iron Cross 1st Class.

C2: Unterfahrmeister, Transport-Sector I Tannenberg, Transportkorps Speer; Frankfurt-an-der-Oder, March 1945

NCOs and men wore the black field cap with silver-grey machine-woven insignia, or a steel helmet painted olive-brown, sometimes with a black-white-red shield on the right side and a silver-grey Air Force eagle or black shield with a silver Army eagle on the left. The tunic had black collar patches for all branches, with a silver-grey machine-woven stylized 'SP'; for NCOs it had aluminium collar braid.

NCOs had olive brown shoulder straps piped black with aluminium-braid edging and 3-0 aluminium pips—a corporal omitted the braid on the shoulder-seam. Privates had plain shoulder straps with black piping, lance-corporals with 2-1 aluminium-braid chevrons on the left upper arm.

Above the right breast pocket was a silver-grey machine-woven Army or Air Force eagle. No unit or branch badges were worn, but technical quartermaster sergeants (Schirrmeister) and medical personnel had a silver-grey gothic 'S' or a snake and staff respectively on a dark brown cloth disc on the lower left sleeve. A Hauptfahrmeister (company sergeant-major), or NCO acting as CSM, wore 2 aluminium-braid rings on each lower sleeve.

The same shoulder and sleeve insignia was worn on the olive brown greatcoat with plain dark brown collar. Officer cadets wore the Hauptfahrmeister's uniform (omitting the sleeve braids) with branch-colour shoulder strap piping, officers' cap cords, collar patches and shoulder strap branch badges, and no collar braids.

C3: Hauptkraftfahrer, Transportkorps Speer; Germany, December 1944

NCOs and men had a one- or two-piece 'motoring uniform' consisting of the field cap and an olive brown denim blouse and trousers, with olive brown metal or horn buttons and a silver-grey

woven eagle on an olive brown cloth triangle above the right breast pocket. NCOs wore field tunic shoulder straps, privates aluminium metal 'Sp' titles on plain chevrons and sleeve chevrons for lance-corporals. In hot climates (Italy, Southern France, Balkans) all ranks could wear a light olive brown short-sleeved summer shirt, tie and trousers. For a time officers' and NCOs' sleeve rank insignia similar to that worn on Army and Waffen-SS camouflage smocks were worn.

From 1942 Legion Speer personnel wore French, Belgian or Dutch Army uniforms dyed black, from January 1943 NSKK olive brown uniforms, all with NSKK shoulder straps and collar patches, with an aluminium NSKK eagle on the right collar patch. On the left upper sleeve French, Walloons, Flemish and Dutch wore NSKK-Transportgruppe Luftwaffe national shields (see Plate A3).

Foreign volunteers in Transportkorps Speer were prescribed new shields: French—red-white-blue shield below a blue 'FRANCE' on white; Walloons—black-yellow-red shield below a black 'WALLONIE' on white; Flemish—a black lion on a yellow shield below a yellow 'VLAANDEREN' on black; Dutch—red-white-blue (horizontal) shield below a blue 'NEDERLAND' on white; stateless persons, e.g. White Russian emigrés in France—a plain white shield. Insignia for other nationalities unconfirmed.

Dr: Oberarbeitsführer Konopka, Reichsarbeitsdienst; Germany, 1944

RAD M1935 officers' and warrant-officers' service uniform consisted of a brown tunic with open cuffs and a dark brown collar, brown breeches (generals with black piping and two thick black stripes) and black riding-boots. The distinctive service cap, symbolizing the traditional farmer's work cap, had a silver-embroidered spade and corn-sheaves badge and silver flap and peak piping (gold for general officers).



A veteran OT second lieutenant from Upper Danube, Austria, wearing the M1940 work tunic, M1942 insignia, and the tropical peaked field cap; photographed on 5 February 1944, he should by then have adopted the M1943 insignia. (Josef Charita)

Albert Speer, in his idiosyncratic OT uniform with M1943 armband, talks to OT workers wearing M1942 armbands. (Josef Charita)



Byelorussian members of the OT muster for inspection, wearing the

M1940 work tunic and M1943 field cap. (Josef Charita)

General officers wore M1936 black collar patches edged in gold braid with a gold corn-ear; field-officers the same in silver, subalterns a silver 5-sided braid, from September 1942 a 7-sided braid, on branch-colour patches. General officers wore M1936 pattern gold-aluminium threaded black-gold plaited shoulder-pieces, black underlay and a silver eagle and wreathed spade (field-marshal), then 3-0 silver pips; field officers, 2-0 gold pips on aluminium or light-grey black threaded plaited shoulder-pieces; subalterns, 2-0 gold pips on aluminium or light grey black threaded flat shoulder-pieces, all on branch colour underlay; WOs, aluminium or light grey flat outer cords, brown inner cords, black piping. Line officers had black, legal officers light blue, administrative officers dark green, medical officers and NCOs dark blue branch-colour; specialist officers, half-width cords piped black, dark green, lemon yellow (war correspondents). Bandmasters had red and silver plaited cords, later line officer straps.

Certain administrative, legal, medical and band personnel also wore silver branch-badges on brown shields on the lower left sleeve. On the lower left sleeve some units also wore distinctive

Subaltern officers of the OT taken prisoner by United States troops in Normandy in June 1944. Note that they are all wearing obsolete M1942

insignia, and have removed their swastika armbands to avoid being accused of Nazi Party membership. (Brian Davis)



1944: Col. Heinrich Remlinger, Army Knight's Cross holder, talking to an NSDAP Bereichsleiter, probably the chief-of-staff of a Volkssturm District, who is wearing the 'Volkssturm' armband. (Josef Charita)



cuff-bands: silver 'Stabswache RAF' on dark brown—Hierl's bodyguard; silver 'ANHALT' on green edged red—awarded October 1935 to XIII District officers and Battalion 135; silver 'Emsland' on black—units assigned to the Emsland project, later redesignated XXXI District. There were also black bands with a gold (generals), silver (officers, WOs), or grey thread (NCOs, privates) central stripe broken by a Sector letter for Westwall units 1938-9: 'N'—'Nord'; 'W'—'West'; 'O'—'River Our'; 'S'—'River Saar'; 'R'—'River Rhine'. RAD companies transferred to Army 'Bau' units in 1939-40 wore a white or silver-grey 'Deutsche Wehrmacht' on black. All ranks wore the swastika armband, indicating a Nazi organization, and a 'spade' unit badge, sometimes omitted in the field.

On the left upper arm war correspondents wore a lemon yellow armband with 'RAD/Kriegsberichter' in black; on the lower left arm personnel under armed forces command wore, until 30 September 1941, a golden yellow armband with 'Deutsche/Wehrmacht' in black; and Hierl's staff wore a dark brown armband edged silver with Hierl's shoulder strap badge in silver.

On ceremonial occasions a black tie and brown shirt were worn with the tunic collar open, with a silver brocade (gold for generals) belt and dagger; for field service, a brown belt and pistol and sidecap.

Lt.Col. Konopka typifies the career RAD officer and NCO, respected by his armed forces equivalents as their equal. He wears the Knight's Cross, German Cross in Gold, Nazi Party badge, Iron Cross 1st Class, gold Wound Badge (8 wounds), Close Combat Clasp for 15 days' hand-to-hand combat unsupported by armour, the Anhalt Labour Service commemorative swastika badge, and four badges each indicating the single-handed destruction of a tank with a grenade or Panzerfaust (instituted 9 March 1942).

D2: Obervormann, RAD Company 5/184, Battalion K184; Ukraine, August 1941

The M1935 NCOs' and privates' field uniform consisted of a four-pocket brown tunic with dark brown collar, brown trousers,

black boots and brown sidecap, which in 1939 replaced the peaked service cap piped dark brown.

NCOs wore black cloth collar patches with a 5-sided aluminium braid with a grey centre stripe, and from 1940 aluminium collar-braid: senior lance-cpl. a thin white and grey 5-sided braid and a black edged white vertical stripe; lance-cpl., no stripe; private, plain black patch. NCOs wore brown shoulder straps piped black with black-edged silver rank braid, from 1940 plain aluminium braid: Sgt., braid encircling the strap, aluminium pip; Cpl., braid on outer edges. Conscript privates had no shoulder straps, volunteer privates straps piped black and silver.

All ranks wore the 'spade' unit badge on a black cloth shield above the swastika arm band: generals a gold spade, officers and WOs silver, NCOs and privates white, sometimes on a dark brown shield. On these were worn red (for generals, black) insignia: general staff, no badge; divisional staff, numerals I-XXXX; battalion staff, numerals in the sequence 10-501; lower ranks adding a small company numeral 1-12 below; training schools had large letters and company numbers. Gruppe Niederlande wore a red-white-blue shield with a black 'Niederlande' on the white.

This soldier parades for work detail with a spade, 7.92mm Karabiner 98k rifle and standard infantry equipment.

D3: Untertruppführer, Reichsarbeitsdienst; Atlantic Rampart, France 1943

For fatigue duties NCOs and privates wore an off-white or brown linen jacket and trousers in varying styles with the sidecap and woven cap badge—generals had gold, officers and WOs silver flap piping. M1942 rank insignia was worn on the left upper arm: sgt.—silver pip in an aluminium braid triangle; lance-sgt.—an aluminium bar; cpl.—a plain triangle; lance-cpls.—a braid chevron with 2 pips and bar, 2-0 pips; private—no insignia. Spade drill was substituted for rifle drill.

E1: Arbeitsmann mit einjähriger Verpflichtung, RAD Company 8/199; Ukraine, December 1942

In combat zones the M1940 steel helmet was worn with Army or



Air Force decals on the left side, or RAD badges on either side. The M1935 greatcoat had a dark brown collar with brown lapel lining (dark brown for field officers, black for generals). From September 1942 lance-cpl. ranks wore: 2 silver pips above an aluminium NCO candidate bar; 2 pips and black and silver volunteer cords; 2-1 pips, with cords for volunteers; conscript private, no strap. This volunteer private wears a strap edged black with volunteer cords, and carries standard infantry equipment, including the 98k, gas cape pouch threaded through the gasmask shoulder belt, M1909 ammunition pouches, bayonet and entrenching tool.

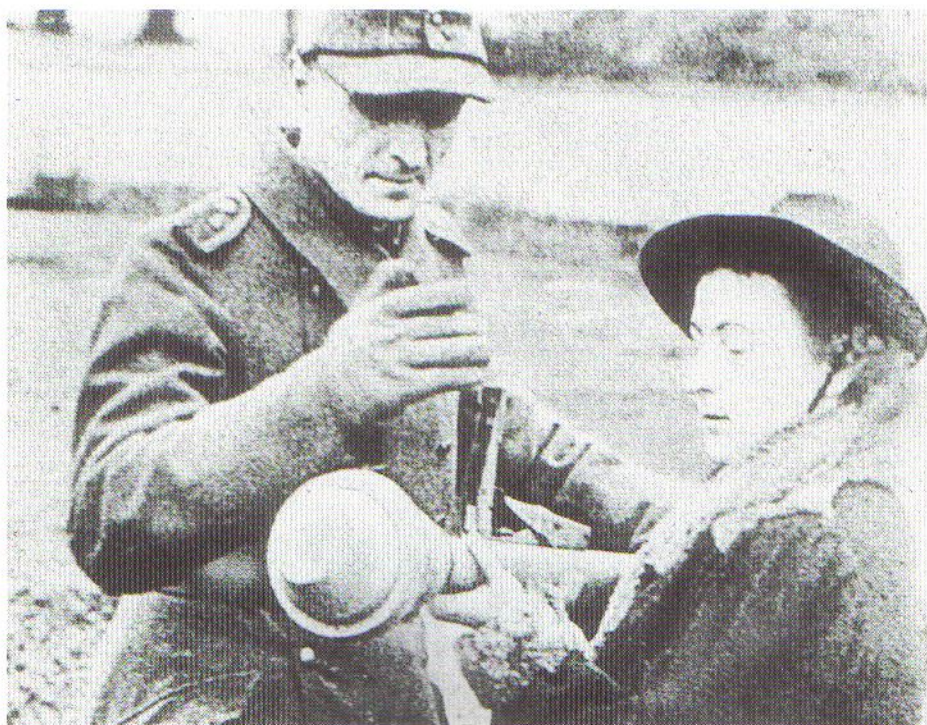
E2: Haupttruppführer, RAD Company 4/16; East Prussia, September 1944

In September 1942 NCOs and privates adopted a 7-sided aluminium braid with a black stripe on a black cloth collar patch. NCOs retained M1940 rank insignia, this rank (introduced 1 May 1944) wearing a sergeant's insignia without the pip. A brown peaked field cap was introduced in 1939, and in 1943 a brown version of the Army M1943 peaked field cap, generals wearing gold, officers and WOs aluminium crown piping. In July 1943 distinctive enamel coloured badges were adopted for 16 Traditional Districts (here I District), worn on the left side of the cap. This sergeant, probably a platoon commander, wears Army webbing and carries an MP40 sub-machine gun and P.08 pistol.

E3: Frontarbeiter, Oberbauleitung Audinghen, Einsatz Kanalküste, OT-Einsatzgruppe 'West'; Cap Gris-Nez, Northern France, September 1940

From June 1938 OT personnel on the Westwall wore civilian clothes, but in September 1939 NCOs and privates were issued a brown uniform—an Army M1934 or Air Force M1935 style sidecap with a machine-woven Army eagle and cockade, a five-button, two-pocket work tunic, breeches, puttees and boots. By

Old and young recruits for the Volkssturm wearing civilian clothes and the provisional armband, October 1944. Note the Panzerfaust anti-tank weapon. (Josef Charita)



A female volunteer in the Volkssturm is given instruction in the Panzerfaust by an Army corporal, 1945. (Josef Charita)

Jakob Hoffen (left) from Cologne, and Wilhelm Sitt, at the parade when they were awarded their Knight's Crosses, 7 February 1945. (Josef Charita)



1940 privates were wearing a light grey armband with a black printed 'Org. Todt' on the left upper sleeve, sergeants adding a black eagle below.

Officers wore the Army M1938 or Air Force M1935 style sidecap with aluminium piping along the crown seams and front scallop of the flap, a khaki shirt with black tie, and a four-pocket open-necked service tunic (some lower ranks wore this buttoned to the neck), sometimes with unofficial aluminium collar piping: breeches and marching boots. Subalterns had brown shoulder straps with a silver-braid longitudinal stripe and 2-0 gold pips, and the sergeant's armband with red upper and lower edging; lower edging and silver pip in the lower left hand corner; or lower edging only. Field officers had double upper and lower red edgings (col.) or double upper edging only (lt.col.), and, unofficially, 2 strap braids and 2-1 pips. Higher officers, not prescribed a uniform, wore their previous armed forces, DAF, SS, SA or NSKK uniforms with the OT armband—Todt himself wore an Air Force brigadier's uniform. All ranks had a six-buttoned double-breasted overcoat, gasmask, bread bag, water bottle, back pack, medical bag, rubber boots, and steel helmet with Army shield badges.

To avoid being mistaken for brown-uniformed French troops the red swastika armband was adopted (although the OT was not a Nazi organization), necessitating relocation of the OT armband to the left cuff.

OT drivers wore OT armbands with two grey triangles edged black flanking the 'Org. Todt', and medical and pharmaceutical officers wore a gold snake and staff or 'A' on the shoulder- straps. 'OT-Schutzkommando' wore a blue title on the left cuff with a silver-grey woven DAF badge (swastika in cogwheel) between 'O' and 'T', and 3-1 silver chevrons point-down on black backing on the right upper arm for NCOs. Officers wore normal shoulder strap rank insignia and silver-grey cuff title edging.

F1: OT-Obertruppführer, Abschnittsbauleitung Bodö, Oberbauleitung Nordlandbahn, OT-Einsatzgruppe

'Wiking'; Bodo, central Norway, June 1942

March 1942 regulations retained the M1940 uniforms, introducing a distinctive officer's peaked field cap with M1940 insignia, to which this officer has unofficially pinned an Army Edelweiss badge to commemorate service alongside 3rd Mountain Division.

The service tunic now had aluminium cord collar piping and branch-colour piped shoulder straps with longitudinal silver braid stripes (2 for field, 1 for subaltern officers) and 2-0 gold or silver pips. Gold pips and black piping—Construction (Bauwesen), Supply (Verpflegung) and Equipment (Ausrüstung); lemon yellow piping—Signals (Nachrichtenwesen); dark blue—Medical Service (Sanitätswesen) with snake and staff (Doctors) or 'A' (Pharmacists); crimson—Band (Musikzug); white with black straps—OT-Schutzkommando. Silver pips and dark green piping—Administration (Verwaltung); brown—war correspondents (Propagandastaffel), with left cuff title 'Kriegsberichter'.

On the left upper sleeve the swastika armband was worn below a narrow light grey armband with 'Org. Todt', printed or machine-woven in black with a central broken red stripe for company (Bautrup) commander, illustrated here; red edging—battalion (Einheit) commander or medical officer; central broken silver stripe—division (Einsatz) commander or medical officer; white edging—corps (Gruppe) commander or medical officer. An Army brown belt or black belt with aluminium OT buckle was worn.

Some officers had silver-braid speciality badges on black discs on the right cuff: trowel—mason; crossed saw and axe—carpenter; ladders—scaffolder; crossed spanners—mechanic; steering-wheel—driver.

F2: SK-Meister, Company 113, Schutzkommando-West, Organisation Todt; France, January 1942

NCOs and privates wore the M1940 service tunic or work tunic with branch-colour piped shoulder straps (with a silver braid bar for WOs); on the right upper arm 3-0 chevrons previously

restricted to OT-Schutzkommando; and on the left upper arm armbands as for officers. Speciality badges were silver-grey on black, and on the left cuff bandmen wore a silver-grey lyre, medically qualified personnel a snake and staff, signallers a lightning-flash, all on brown discs.

Foreign volunteers wore national shields on the left upper arm, but only France (tricolour in yellow cogwheel) and Flanders (black lion on a yellow shield edged with 'FLANDERN' in yellow above) have been confirmed.

OT-Schutzkommando personnel adopted distinctive black shoulder straps piped white, and wore the Streifendienst (patrol service) duty gorget when on street patrol.

F3: OT-Einsatzgruppenleiter II Professor Doktor Walter Brugmann, OT-Einsatzgruppe 'Russland-Süd'; SW Ukraine, March 1944

1 May 1943 regulations introduced new collar patch rank insignia and braids on the light grey armband with black embroidered or printed 'ORG.TODT' (note capital letters) for officers. General officers had gold cord collar piping and light brown parallelogram-shaped collar patches piped in gold cord with a gold wire 'OT' monogram. A general had a gold eagle and laurel-leaf border, and gold laurel armband edging on red backing and gold leaves flanking the title. Other general officers had gold laurel patch edging, gold or silver ornamental border, and gold laurel armband edging on red backing. Field officers had silver cord collar piping, and brown patches piped silver, with 2 ornamental silver bars and 2-0 gold pips, and silver laurel-leaf armband edging. Subaltern officers had silver collar piping and 3-1 Military Fortification Badges (Wehrbauabzeichen), and silver ornamental armband edging. Lower ranks had branch-colour collar piping, brown diamond-shaped collar patches with a red 'OT' monogram and 3-1 silver pips for senior NCOs, and 3-1 red braid chevrons, point down, on the right upper arm for junior NCOs, and plain armbands.

Many generals and field officers adopted a service tunic with silver buttons, open cuffs and dark brown collar, and a brown peaked cap with dark brown band, silver cord crown and band piping, silver metal Army eagle and cockade in a silver oak-wreath, and silver cords—all silver items in gold for general officers, who also wore light grey breeches piping and double stripes. Speer wore a field officer's uniform omitting collar patches, and a subaltern officer's armband.

Brugmann, commander of 'Russland-Süd', wears a brown greatcoat with light grey general officer's lapel linings, and the War Merit Cross with Swords in gold. After his death in action on 26 May 1944 his Corps was renamed OT-Einsatzgruppe 'Brugmann'.

Gr: OT-Hauptfrontführer, OT-Front Regt. 62 'Hakelberg', OT-Einsatzgruppe 'Südost'; Belgrade, August 1944

This officer wears the M1943 Army peaked field cap in brown with silver crown piping, silver embroidered eagle and cockade. General officers had gold pipings and badges, NCOs and privates an off-white woven eagle and cockade only. OT personnel wore a stylized bird in branch colour on the left sleeve, piped gold for general officers, silver for lower ranks, with no piping for workers contracted from construction firms. The colours were: red—construction; white—command (probably also OT-Schutzkommando); lemon yellow—signals; brown—war correspondents; dark blue—medical; black—band; dark green—administration. Personnel on deserter or straggler patrol (Fahndungsdienst) wore an aluminium gorget with a silver eagle and black 'Organisation Todt' title.

Cuff rank insignia, with thick and thin braids below the 'OT' monogram in silver and/or red, were manufactured for the work tunic, but were probably never issued.

On 30 September 1944 new coloured arm shields for Byelorussian, Bulgarian, Croatian, Danish, Estonian, Flemish,



Army Maj. Gen. Hellmuth Reymann supervises Army and Volksturm personnel in the digging of slit-trenches, January 1945. (Josef Charita)

French, Hungarian, Italian, Latvian, Lithuanian, Netherlands, Norwegian, Rumanian, Russian, Slovak, Spanish, Ukrainian and Walloon volunteers were manufactured but probably never issued. Characterized by the country's name in German (rather than the native language), they have often been assumed to be foreign volunteers in the Army or Waffen-SS. Army-style Don, Kuban and Terek Cossack shields were also prescribed.

On 8 November 1944 non-Germanic OT personnel were ordered to remove the swastika armband, whilst OT-

Einsatzarbeiter (contracted workers) wore a red 'OT' on the light grey armband and no cap insignia, adding 'OT' collar patches after three months' service. OT-Hilfsarbeiter (casual labourers)—Poles, Czechs, and German criminals—wore 'Arbeitet für OT' (OT-Worker) with civilian clothes.

From December 1944 female signals auxiliaries were prescribed a dark blue battledress blouse, skirt, and field or sidecap, with a silver eagle left upper arm badge and a lightning-flash cuff badge.

Rank Titles of Auxiliary Labour and Militia Units

RAD/M		Organisation Todt		Volkssturm	(Brit. Army comparative ranks)
6.1935–8.5.1945 (Aussendienst) ¹	5.1940–3.1942 (Bau) ⁵	3.1942–30.4.1943 (Bauwesen) ¹⁰	1.5.1943–8.5.1945 (Technik) ¹¹	12.10.1944–8.5.1945— ²⁰	
<i>Höhere Führer (General Officers)</i>					
Reichsarbeitsführer	—	Chef der O.T.	Chef der O.T.	Reichsleiter	FM
Generalarbeitsführer	Chef der Frontführung	Leiter der OT-Zentrale	Chef des Amtes Bau-OT	Stabsführer	Gen.
Reichsarbeitsführer	—	—	OT-Einsatzgruppenleiter I	Gauleiter ²¹	Lt.Gen.
Obergeneralarbeitsführer	—	—	OT-Einsatzgruppenleiter II	Gaustabsführer ²²	Maj.Gen.
Generalarbeitsführer	—	—	OT-Einsatzleiter	—	Brig.
<i>Stabsführer und Führer (Field & Subaltern Officers)</i>					
Oberstarbeitsführer	Frontführer	OT-Gruppenleiter	OT-Hauptbauleiter ¹⁶	Kreisleiter ²³	Col.
Oberarbeitsführer	Stellv. des Frontfs. ⁷	OT-Oberbauleiter ¹¹	OT-Oberbauleiter	Kreisstabsführer	Lt.Col.
Arbeitsführer	—	OT-Bauleiter	OT-Bauleiter	Bataillonsführer	Maj.
Oberfeldmeister	OT-Haupttruppführer	OT-Haupttruppführer ¹²	OT-Hauptbauführer	Kompanieführer ²³	Capt.
Oberfeldmeister	OT-Obertruppführer	OT-Obertruppführer ¹²	OT-Oberbauführer	—	Lt.
Feldmeister	OT-Truppführer	OT-Truppführer ¹²	OT-Bauführer	—	2nd Lt.
<i>Unterführer (Non-Commissioned Officers)</i>					
Unterfeldmeister	Dienstgruppenleiter ⁸	OT-Meister	OT-Haupttruppführer ¹²	—	WO II
—	—	—	OT-Obertruppführer ¹⁷	—	Col.Sgt.
Haupttruppführer	Kameradschaftsführer	OT-Kameradschaftsführer	OT-Truppführer ¹⁷	Zugführer ²⁴	Sergeant
Obertruppführer	—	—	OT-Obermeister	—	Lt./Sergt.
Truppführer	Rottenführer ⁹	OT-Rottenführer	OT-Meister	Gruppenführer ²⁵	Cpl.
<i>Mannschaften (Privates)</i>					
Untertruppführer ²	—	—	—	—	—
Hauptvormann ³	—	—	—	—	—
Obervormann ⁴	—	SK-Mann 1. Klasse ¹³	OT-Vorarbeiter ¹⁸	—	Lt./Cpl.
Vormann ⁴	—	—	OT-Stammarbeiter ¹⁹	—	—
Arbeitsmann ⁵	Frontarbeiter	OT-Frontarbeiter ¹⁴	OT-Arbeiter ¹⁴	Volkssturmmann	Pte.

Notes:

- 'Aussendienst'—Line personnel. Medical, legal, administrative and specialist personnel used different rank-titles.
- Introduced September 1942 for corporal-candidates.
- Volunteer rank only.
- Conscript or volunteer rank.
- Conscript private. A volunteer private was called Arbeitsmann mit einjähriger Verpflichtung.
- 'Bau'—construction personnel. Transport personnel had different ranks.
- Rank in full—Stellvertreter des Frontführers.
- SK rank only. Later designated Stosstruppführer.
- SK rank only.
- 'Bauwesen'—construction personnel. Command, supply and equipment branches, medical branches, SK personnel had different ranks.
- In SK called OT-Einsatzleiter.
- From May 1943 suffixed 'äl.A' ('älterer Art'—'old style') to distinguish from the new NCO ranks.
- SK rank only. Insignia unconfirmed.
- SK rank—'SK-Mann'.

- 'Technik'—technical and supply branches. Administrative personnel, command and signals branches, and medical branches had different rank titles.
- SK used 'Command' branch ranks: for officers—Oberst-, Oberstabs-, Stabs-, Haupt-, Ober-frontführer, Frontführer; NCOs as for Technical and Supply branch with prefix 'SK'.
- From May 1943 suffixed 'n.A' ('neuer Art'—'new style') to distinguish from the old officer ranks.
- Classified as an NCO rank. In SK—SK-Kameradschaftsführer.
- Technical and supply branches only. Same insignia as '27'.
- General service branch. Technically, as Volkssturm personnel held positional appointments, not ranks. Medical and administrative personnel had different rank titles.
- Held by NSDAP officials.
- Usually held by NSDAP officials or SA general officers.
- 'Company commander'. Also Adjutant, Ordonnanzoffizier (administrative officer) and Bataillonsarzt (battalion medical officer).
- 'Platoon leader'. Also Zahlmeister (paymaster-sergeant) and Waffenmeister (ordnance sergeant).
- 'Section leader'. Also Sanitätsdienstgrad (medical orderly).



The M1942 insignia was forbidden after July 1944 (the three Truppführer ranks, now demoted to NCO status, had to remove their officer's cap piping), but the chaotic supply situation prevented compliance with this order.

G2: Volkssturmmann, Westmark Volkssturm; St. Wendel (Saarbrücken), January 1945

Order 318/44 (12 October 1944) and the order of 1 December 1944 required Volkssturm personnel to provide their own uniform. Accordingly they wore old Army, Navy or Air Force uniforms, even of First World War vintage; or a paramilitary uniform—especially NSDAP officials, NSKK, NSFK, SA, OT, Hitler Youth or Police, sometimes dyed Army field grey; or uniforms donated through public appeals; or civilian clothes. Most wore a mixture of uniform items. All insignia was to be removed and only the official 'Volkssturm' armband worn on the upper left sleeve, and rank collar patches—introduced 12 October 1944—where appropriate.

This private wears the first pattern armband, supposedly superseded on 1 December 1944, and, as a member of the Tank Warning Service recruited in frontier districts to warn Tank Close-Combat Squads of approaching enemy armour, the stamped steel gorget. He carries his own sporting rifle. Although the armband bestowed armed forces status under the 1929 Geneva Convention, the lack of uniform allowed personnel in the West to avoid capture by posing as civilians, whilst rendering those in the East liable to summary execution as guerrillas by trigger-happy Soviet troops.

G3: Bataillonsführer Ernst Tiburzy, Volkssturm; Oder Front, March 1945

Senior Volkssturm positions, down to and including colonel, were usually held by NSDAP officials or SA officers wearing their own uniforms with the 'Volkssturm' armband. Other officers wore plain black cloth collar patches on both collars, some unofficially adding aluminium-cord piping, with aluminium pips: 4 for field officers, 3 for subalterns (the battalion medical officer adding an aluminium snake and staff in front). Sometimes insignia were fixed directly to the collar.

Army uniform items were not surprisingly the most popular, and Tiburzy wears the M1935 officer's tunic with collar, shoulder and breast insignia removed according to regulations, although many soldiers retained these to emphasize their military status. The usual headgear was the M1943 cap with Army eagle and cockade, but Tiburzy prefers the distinctive brown field cap with white fur ear-flaps worn by Eastern Ministry (RMBO) officials. He wears the armband on the lower sleeve; and his Knight's Cross—the first awarded to the Volkssturm—for the single-handed destruction on 28 February 1945 of five Soviet tanks of the Oder Front with Panzerfausts, despite serious wounds. Hitlerjunge Nowak, 16 years old, gained his award for destroying nine Soviet tanks.

H1: Sanitätsdienstgrad, South Westphalian Volkssturm; Ruhr, April 1945

As a member of the élite 'Freikorps Sauerland' this medical

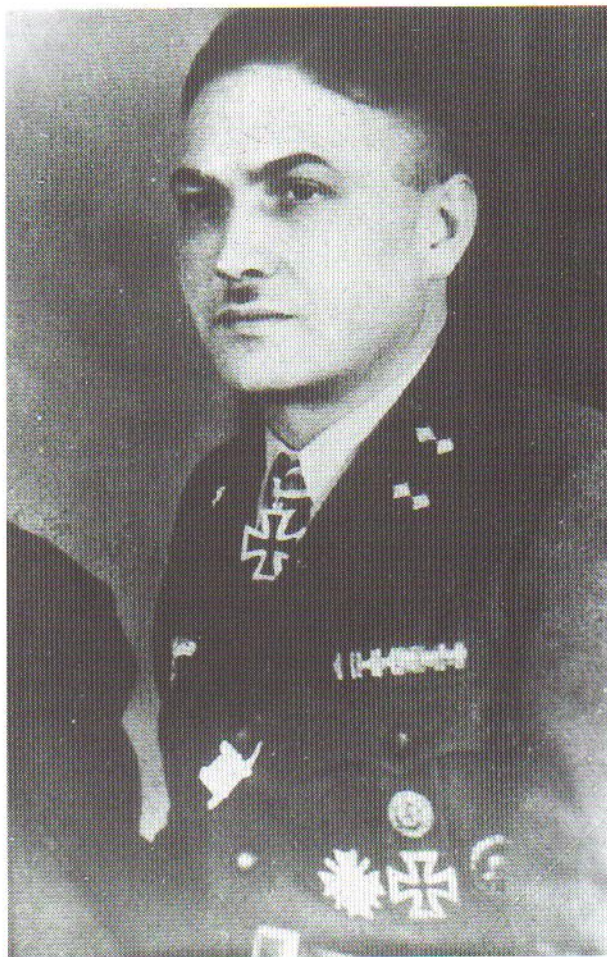
A Volkssturm member wearing an M1935 Air Force tunic, M1942 OT field cap, and 'Volkssturm' armband. (Josef Charita)

orderly wears the Army uniform with M1943 field cap and M1940 greatcoat, over a brown OT tunic. As a corporal equivalent (the two medical ranks were introduced 9 November 1944) he should wear his rank collar patch on both collars, but the left patch was sometimes omitted. A sergeant wore two pips, a private no collar patches.

He wears the white artificial wool armband with a machine-woven red cross introduced 6 March 1937 for armed forces medical personnel, and a yellow armband stamped with the local NSDAP seal and 'Deutscher Volkssturm/Wehrmacht' in black—white, red and orange armbands were also worn. He carries the M1941 tropical bread bag manufactured for the Afrikakorps, for his medical supplies. 'Freikorps Sauerland' personnel wore their unit badge in cloth on the right upper arm and as a transfer on the left side of the steel helmet; a white sleeve title with black lettering was apparently also authorized. 'Tirol-Vorarlberg' battalions wore light green unit numerals on the right collar patch, Army shoulder straps, and a red Tyrolean eagle and unit district on a dark green diamond on the left upper arm.

H2: Zugführer, 19th Bn., 4th Combat Command, Wartheland Volkssturm; Poznan, January 1945

Wartheland District was established on 26 October 1939 from occupied western Poland, with Germans, resettled Ethnic Germans, and a hostile Polish majority. It felt the full force of the January 1945 Soviet offensive. 19 Volkssturm battalions formed Regimental 'combat commands' (Kampfkommandeure) 1–7. This sergeant of the 19th (Posen, now Poznan) Battalion of 4th (Schieratz, now Sieratz) Combat Command, has unofficially painted his battalion number on his black M1944 Air-Raid Protection Service (Reichsluftschutzbund) helmet, and is wearing the distinctive brown NSDAP official's greatcoat. Many Volkssturm personnel captured by the Red Army wearing brown NSDAP, RAD or OT uniforms were shot 'for trying to disguise themselves as Soviet troops'. This NCO wears an Air Force belt and trousers, M1940 canvas leggings, and M1931 canvas bread



Bataillonsführer Wilhem Sitt, a former Police demolitions officer (Sprengmeister), of the Cologne Volkssturm, wearing his Army tunic open at the collar to display his Knight's Cross, awarded 7 February 1945; he was killed exactly a month later. He wears the 1914–18 Iron Cross with 1939–45 eagle bar, Iron Cross 1st Class, golden Party Badge, Wound Badge, and War Merit Cross with Swords. (Josef Charita)



A unit of Hitler Youth 3rd Levy parade with an Army officer. They are wearing the HJ winter uniform and are carrying machine guns, stick-grenades and Panzerfausts. (Josef Charita)



A member of the Saxony Hitler Youth (note sleeve triangle) serving in the Volkssturm, wearing Air Force Auxiliary (Luftwaffenhelfer) greatcoat and Air Force peaked field cap, the first pattern armband, and carrying an MP40. (Josef Charita)

bag. He carries a 98k rifle and a Panzerfaust 60 anti-tank weapon. His armband is yet another variant, found in grey or white cotton with black lettering and eagle.

H3: HJ-Hauptscharführer, Berlin Volkssturm; Berlin, April 1945

Hitler Youth personnel formed the 3rd Levy and often volunteered for the 1st and 2nd Levy Tank Close-Combat Squads; by April 1945 even 10-year-old Deutsches Jungvolk (junior Hitler

Youth) were serving in these units. Most retained their HJ or DJ uniforms with full insignia, often even omitting the 'Volkssturm' armband. Hitler's last public appearance, on 20 April 1945 (his 56th birthday) in the grounds of the Reich Chancellery, was to decorate 20 HJ members, the youngest only 12 years old, with the Iron Cross.

This Hitler Youth NCO, technically a Volkssturm private, wears the HJ winter uniform with M1933 black ski-cap with HJ diamond cap badge, and M1938 dark blue blouse and trousers,

Volkssturm troops taken prisoners-of-war, dressed unusually uniformly in Army greatcoats and M1943 field caps, with first model armbands. Their relaxed attitude suggests that they had surrendered to the Western Allies. (Josef Charita)



tucked into white socks. The shoulder straps, piped red for the General HJ branch, have two white metal rank pips and the regimental (Bann) number 155, covering Berlin's Kreuzberg and Mitte districts. The M1933 sleeve triangle denotes the corps (Obergebiet) district—'Nord', and the divisional (Gebiet) district—Berlin; the 42 HJ divisions in Germany corresponded, with some name variations, to the Volkssturm districts.

He wears the 'Volkssturm' armband over his 'HJ' armband; a green-black lanyard as HJ-Hauptscharführer (company sergeant-major); and a badge for the single-handed destruction of an enemy tank. He is armed with the M1933 camping knife, and the 8.8cm RPzB54 Panzerschreck anti-tank projector, firing hollow-charge armour-piercing projectiles and operated by a three-man team of leader, gunner and loader.

Notes sur les planches en couleur

A1 La tenue de service M1934 est de couleur olive. A noter le cordon argenté du commandant de la compagnie. Les insignes d'NSDAP et de la SA. A2 Les officiers portent l'uniforme gris-bleu de l'Armée de l'Air. On voit un aigle argenté sur le képi placé au dessus de la cocarde rouge-blanc-noir de l'Armée. L'aigle NSKK au bras est remplacé par le brassard voyant de l'NSDAP en 1941. A3 Cette sentinelle flamande porte la chemise gris-bleu adoptée en 1943 ainsi que le képi noir porté sur le côté. A noter qu'on porte le blason national plutôt que l'aigle sur le haut de la manche gauche.

B1 L'uniforme ocre de l'Armée de l'Air et le casque ocre de l'Armée. L'insigne blanc en 'S' désigne le 'Schirmmeister' (l'intendant militaire adjoint technique). Celui-ci porte un pistolet Luger 9mm Po 8 et il conduit une BMW 750CC R12. B2 Ce chef de groupe porte la blouse de camouflage réversible de la Waffen-SS et une étoffe de camouflage sur le casque d'acier M1943. Les pantalons M1943 sont réglementaires ainsi que les anneaux de cheville en toile M1940. Il porte une mitraillette MP40, une grenade à bâton M1943 et des jumelles Zeiss 10 x 50. B3 Tenue réglementaire bleu foncé daté de février 1943 avec la ganse argentée, boutons, cordes au képi, l'aigle et la couronne. Les insignes de grade sur le col noir sont ceux d'un capitaine.

C1 L'uniforme NSKK-Transportgruppe Todt daté de 1943 avec les insignes de Corps. A noter les pièces stylisées au col et l'insigne du Blessé M1939. C2 On n'utilise pas l'insigne de division ou d'unité mais les pretelles couleur olive aux épaules avec la ganse noire sont ceux d'un sous-officier. C3 La tenue de voyage à deux pièces couleur olive avec, sur la manche, les chevrons d'un caporal.

D1 La tenue de service M1935 appartenant à un officier est constitué d'une tunique marron à col marron foncé, une culotte de cheval marron et des bottes de cheval noires. Le képi de service caractéristique symbolise celui porté par les ouvriers agricoles. D2 Ce soldat en enue porte une bêche, un fusil 7,92mm karabiner 98k et l'équipement d'infanterie ordinaire. Il porte la tenue de combat M1935 du sous-

Farbtafeln

A1 Olivebraune Dienstiniform M1934. Siehe Silberkordel des Kompanie-Kommandanten, NSDAP-Abzeichen und SA-Verteidigungsabzeichen. A2 Offiziere trugen die graublau Luftwaffenuniform M1935. Die Kappe zeigt den silbernen NSKK-Adler über einer rot-weiss-schwarzen Armeekokarde. 1941 wurde das auffallende NSDAP-Armband durch den NSKK-Adler ersetzt. A3 Dieser flämische Wachsoldat trägt die graublau Bluse von 1943 und eine Kappe mit schwarzen Rändern. Am linken Ärmel oben das Nationalwappen anstatt des Adlers.

B1 Luftwaffen-Tropenuniform und Arme-Tropenhelm. Das 'S'-Abzeichen kennzeichnet einen Schirmmeister. Er trägt eine 9mm Luger-Pistole Po 8 und sitzt auf einem BMW R12-Motorrad zu 750 ccm. B2 Dieser SS-Gruppenführer trägt die reversible Tarnbluse der Waffen-SS und einen Tarnüberzug über seinem M1940-Stahlhelm. Die M1943-Hose ist Standard-Armeemodell mit Segeltuch-Halbsocken M1940. Er trägt eine Maschinen-pistole MP40, eine Stülhandgranate M1943 und einen Zeiss-Feldstecher 10 x 50. B3 Dunkelblaue Standard-Uniform von Februar 1943 mit Silber-Litzen, Knöpfen, Kappenschmüren, Adler und Kranz. Die Rangabzeichen auf dem schwarzen Kragenaufschlag kennzeichnet einen Hauptmann.

C1 Uniform der NSKK-Transportgruppe Todt aus dem Jahr 1943 mit Korpsabzeichen. Siehe stilisierte 'SP'-Aufschläge am Kragen und das Verwundeten-Abzeichen M1939. C2 Kein Einheits- oder Waffengattungsabzeichen wurde benutzt, aber die olivbraunen Schulteraufschläge, schwarz eingefasst, zeigen einen Unteroffizier an. C3 Olivbraune, zweiteilige Kfz-Uniform mit den Ärmelwinkeln eines Gefreiten.

D1 Dienstiniform M1935 eines RAD-Offiziers: braune Bluse mit dunkelbraunem Kragen, braunen Breeches und schwarzen Reitstiefeln. Die typische Dienstkappe symbolisiert die traditionelle Bauernkappe. D2 Dieser Soldat ist auf Appell für ein Arbeitskommando, mit einem Spaten, einem Karabiner 98k zu 7,92mm und der

officier et du soldat. D3 Tenue de corvée blanc-cassé du soldat et sous-officier et le chevron du grade de caporal.

E1 Manteau M1935 et le casque d'acier M1940 portés dans les zones de combat. La position du volontaire est illustré par la bretelle à bordure noire et les cordes de volontaires. Il porte l'équipement ordinaire d'infanterie ainsi qu'un étui à gaz. E2 A noter l'insigne en émail caractéristique sur le képi du sergent qu'on adopte en 1943. Il porte la toile forte de l'armée, une mitraillette MP40, et un pistolet Po8. On distribue les uniformes réglementaires au personnel OT à Westwall à partir de septembre 1939 et ils sont d'habitude de couleur marron. On introduit le brassard rouge portant la croix gammée sur l'uniforme du personnel OT pour leur éviter d'être pris pour des troupes françaises.

F1 L'uniforme M1940 portant l'insigne non-officiel de l'Armée Edelweiss sur le képi démontre le service aux côtés de la 3ème division alpine. La rayure rouge cassée sur le brassard des OT illustre la position de commandant de compagnie. F2 Soldat volontaire de l'OT-schutz kommando (à noter l'insigne tricolore au bras) porte la gorgette 'streitendienst' (service de patrouille) par dessus la tunique de service M1940. F3 Ce commandant Brugmann du la 'Russland-Süd', porte un manteau marron au revers gris-clair de l'officier et la Croix d'Honneur figurant des épées dorées.

G1 Cet officier porte le képi marron pointu réglementaire M1943 avec la ganse argentée et l'aigle. L'oiseau stylisé à la manche gauche a la ganse blanche, démontrant le pouvoir. G2 Le personnel de Volkssturm fournissent leur propre uniforme après octobre 1944. Ce soldat porte le premier brassard à motif et la gorgette d'acier du service de signalisation des tanks. Il porte un fusil personnel. G3 Figuré ici, la tunique d'officier M1935 - on a enlevé les insignes du col, de l'épaule et de la poitrine. Ce képi porté par les employés du Ministère de l'Est (RMBO) est caractéristique - il est marron avec des caches-oreilles en fourrure blanche.

H1 Le brassard blanc est introduit chez le personnel médical en 1937. Cet ordonnance porte un sac à pain couleur ocre fabriqué pour l'Afrikakorps, pour contenir les provisions médicales. H2 Ce sergent a peint non-officiellement son numéro de bataillon sur son casque anti-bombardement. Il porte le manteau marron des NSDAP, un fusil 98k et l'arme anti-tank panzerfurst 60. H3 Ce sous-officier de la HJ (Jeunesse Hitlerienne) porte l'uniforme d'hiver de la HJ avec un képi de ski noir. Il porte le cordon vert foncé d'un HJ Hauptscharführer et est armé du projecteur anti-tank RP2B54 8.8cm.

Standart-Armecausrüstung. Er trägt die Unteroffiziers- und Soldatenfelduniform M1935. D3 Weissliche Soldaten- und Unteroffiziersuniform mit Gefreiten-Rangabzeichen.

E1 Langer Mantel M1935 und M1940-Stahlhelm, im Fronteinsatz getragen. Der Status dieser Freiwilligen wird durch den schwarz eingefassten Schulterriemen mit Freiwilligenschnüren angezeigt. Er trägt normale Infanterie-Ausrüstung inkl. eines Gasmantel-Sacks. E2 Siehe typisches Bezirks-Emalleabzeichen an der Feldwebelmütze aus dem Jahre 1943. Er trägt Armgurte, eine Maschinenpistole MP40 und eine Po8-Pistole. E3 Seit 1939 wurden an OT-Personal beim Westwall Uniformen ausgegeben, meistens in Braun. Das rote Hakenkreuz-Armband wurde eingeführt, damit OT-Personal nicht mit französischen Truppen verwechselt werden sollte.

F1 M1940-Uniform mit inoffiziell Edelweiss-Abzeichen an der Kappe, das Denstmit dr 3. Gebirgsdivision anzeigt. Der durchbrochene rote Streifen auf dem OT-Armband zeigt einen Kompanie-Kommandanten an. F2 OT-Schutzkommando, französischer Freiwilliger (siehe Trikoloren-Armband) mit Streifendienst-Abzeichen auf einer M1940-Dienstbluse. F3 Brugmann, Kommandant von 'Russland-Süd', trägt einen langen braunen Mantel mit hellgrünen Offiziers-Revers und das Kriegsverdienstkreuz mit Schwertern in Gold.

G1 Dieser Offizier trägt die Arme-Schirmkappe M1943 in Braun, mit silbernen Aufschlägen und Adler. Der stilisierte Vogel am linken Armel hat ein weißes Paspel, was Kommandostellung anzeigt. G2 Volkssturmmänner mußten nach Oktober 1944 ihre Uniform selbst erstellen. Dieser einfache Soldat trägt die erste Form von Armband und das Stahlabzeichen des Panzer-Wardienstes; er ist mit seinem eigenen Sportgewehr bewaffnet. G3 Offiziersbluse M1935; alle Distinktionen am Kragen, Schulter und Brust wurden entfernt. Er trägt eine typische braune Feldkappe mit weißen Pelz-Ohrenwärmer, wie sie die Beamten des Ostrministeriums (RMBO) trugen.

H1 Das weiße Armband wurde 1937 für Sanitätspersonal eingeführt. Dieser Sanitäter trägt einen Tropen-Brotbeutel M1941, hergestellt für das Afrikakorps, in dem er seine medizinischen Güter aufbewahrt. H2 Dieser Zugführer hat seine Bataillonsnummer inoffiziell auf seinen Luftschutzhelm gemalt. Er trägt den langen braunen Mantel eines NSAP-Funktionärs und ein 98k-Gewehr sowie eine Panzerfaust 60 zur Panzerbekämpfung. H3 Dieser Hauptscharführer der Hitlerjugend trägt die HJ-Winteruniform mit einer schwarzen Schikappe. Er hat die grünschwarze Schnur eines HJ-Hauptscharführers und ist mit einer 8,8cm-Panzerschreck-Panzerabwehrwaffe ausgerüstet.