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## A relationship between the fourth Rapid Deployment Brigade soldiers in the Army of the Czech Republic and combat sports or martial arts

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**Key words:** military training, Special Forces, combat training

### Abstract

**Problem.** To be ready for defending the country is one of the main goals of every national army. The aim of the paper is to find out what is the relationship of the fourth Rapid Deployment Brigade soldiers in the Army of the Czech Republic and combat sports or martial arts.

**Method.** 234 soldiers took part in the research by a short questionnaire. 33% of the fourth Rapid Deployment Brigade soldiers in the Army of the Czech Republic are doing combat sport, martial art or self-defence system in their civil sphere as well (mostly box, MMA, Thai box and others).

**Results.** Most of the tested persons agree that combat sports should be part of soldiers' identity and they are familiar with the idea to add one more combative activity to their soldiers training. Those, who do some combat activity in their free time confirm, that the knowledge of combat activity helped them to do well the professional soldier training.

**Conclusions.** We can conclude, that soldiers of The Army of the Czech Republic are familiar with martial arts and combat sports and they would welcome more combative activities in their working time.

### Introduction

The Army of the Czech Republic is a prime unit of armed forces in the Czech Republic whose main goal is to defend our country. Other tasks are connected with membership of the Czech Republic in NATO organization since 1999. The whole Army of the Czech Republic became fully professional on 1<sup>st</sup> January 2005.

The fourth Rapid Deployment Brigade was formed on 1<sup>st</sup> July 1994 and it has four battalions nowadays. It took part in many foreign missions e.g. in Bosnia, Kosovo, Irak, Afghanistan and others. You can notice its soldiers help by disposing flood consequences or other large disasters in the Czech Republic.

To be ready for defending the country is one of the main goals of every national army [Heckler 1992]. The aim of the paper is to find out what is the relationship of the fourth Rapid Deployment Brigade soldiers in the Army of the Czech Republic and combat sports or martial arts. In theory, even professional self-defence comes from applied martial arts and combat sports [Reguli 2005;

Reguli *et al.* 2007] which is supported by hand to hand combat manuals focused on professional self-defence [Wagner 2008; Applegate, Melson 1998; Holifield 1997; Suarez 2005; Thompson, Peligro 2011; Deuster 1997].

### Methods

234 soldiers of the fourth Rapid Deployment Brigade in the Army of the Czech Republic took part in the research by short questionnaire. All tested persons were male between 18 – 40 years of age (see figure 1), most of the tested persons were between 18 - 29. The fewest of the tested persons were in the age between 35 and 40 because there is high physical demand and high health requirements for soldiers at the fourth Rapid Deployment Brigade.

All of the tested persons were soldiers placed in combat troops who are determined for fight on the field. Headquarters staff, logicians and similar staff were excluded from the research.

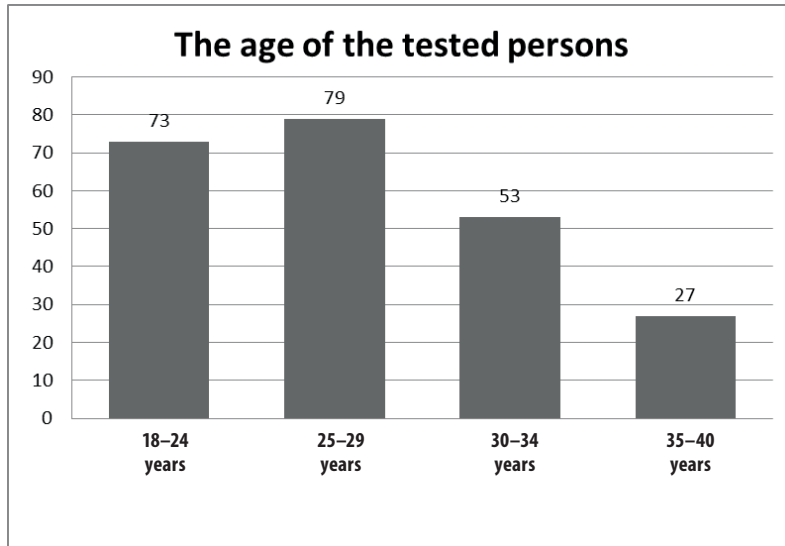


Fig. 1. The age of the tested persons

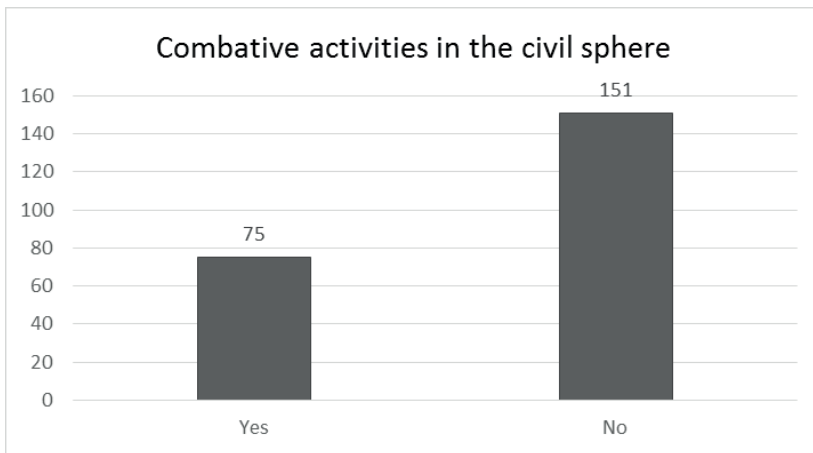


Figure 2. Combative activities in the civil sphere

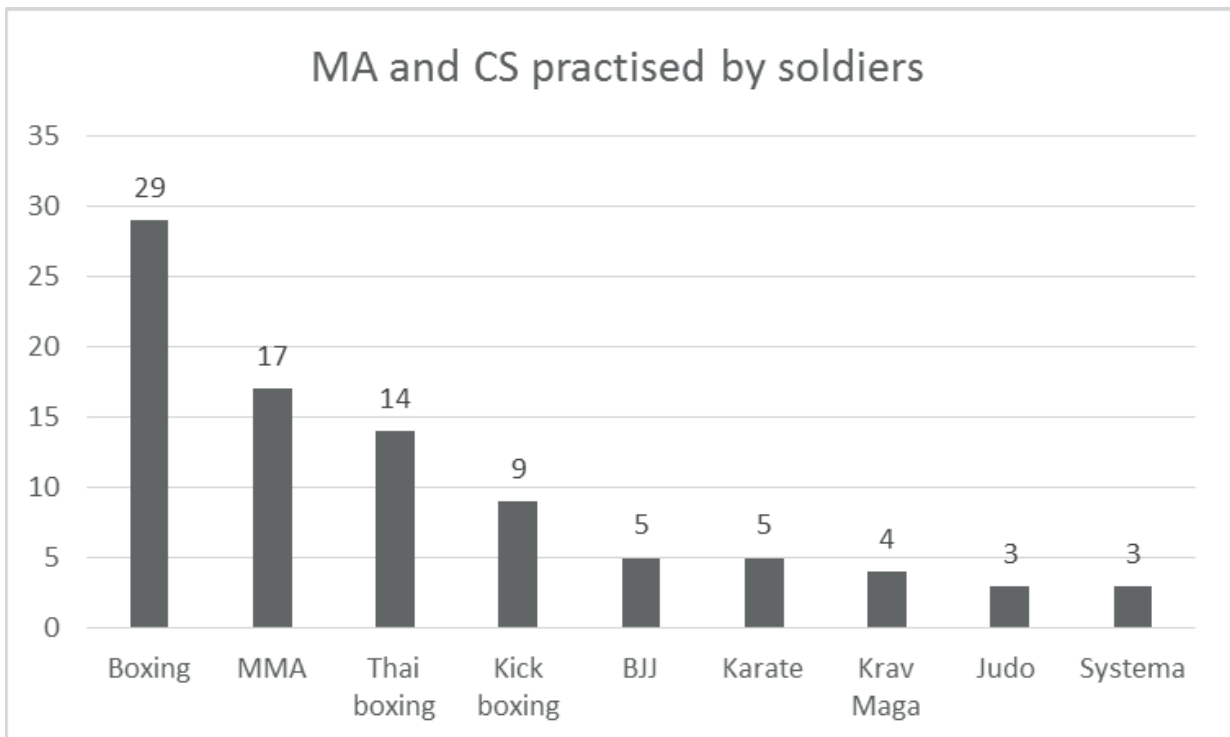


Figure 3. Martial arts and combat sports practised by soldiers

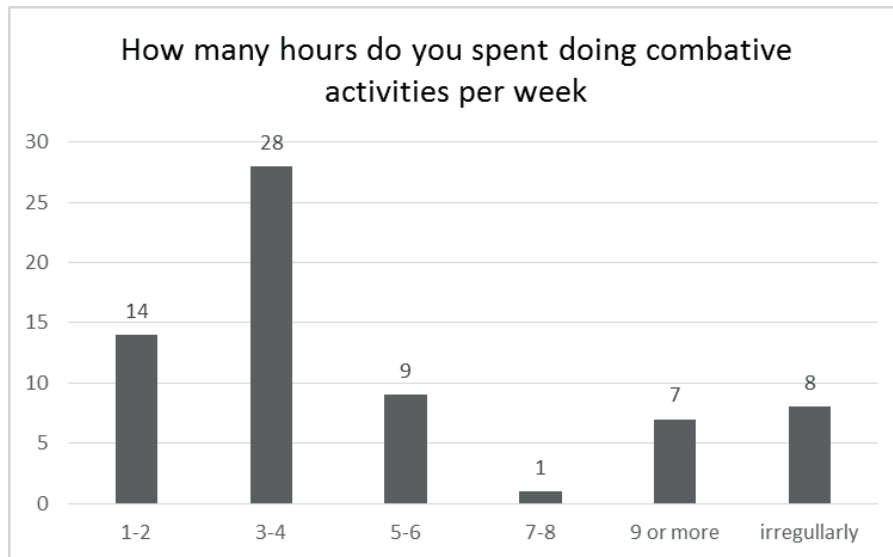


Figure 4. How many hours do you spent by doing combative activities per week

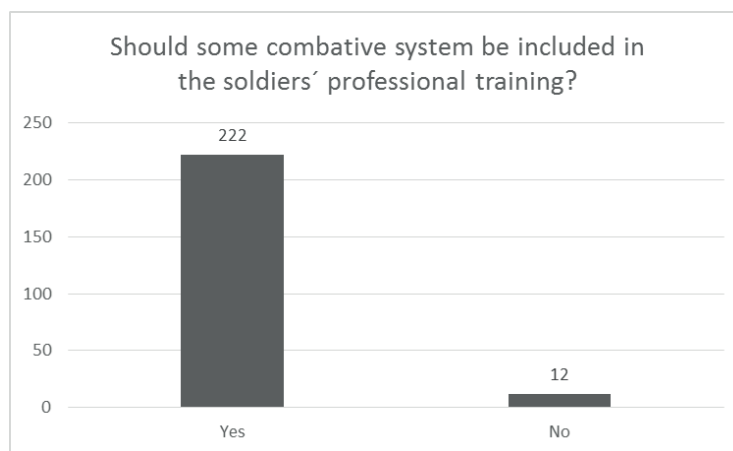


Figure 5. Should some combative system be included in the soldiers' professional training

The experience of tested persons in The Army of the Czech Republic was mostly 1-9 years (74 tested persons 1-4 years, 97 tested persons 4-9 years; 20 tested persons less than 1 year, 38 tested persons more than 10 years).

The data collection was finished in February 2014.

## Results

33% of the fourth Rapid Deployment Brigade soldiers in the Army of the Czech Republic are doing combat sport, martial art or self-defence system in their civil life as well (mostly boxing, MMA, Thai box and others). 151 (67%) soldiers do not do any combative activities in their leisure time (see figure 2). Very often they mentioned a lack of time for doing any combative activity in their free time. Most of the soldiers are travelling to work every day, or they spend their weekdays away from their families. Then at the weekend they want (as they mentioned in the questionnaires) to spend as much time as possible

with their children, that is why they gave up combative activities in their free time.

Most of the soldiers (see figure 3) who do some combative activity in their free time are doing boxing (29 persons, 39%). 17 soldiers (23%) go in for MMA, 14 (19%) Thai boxing, 12% Kick boxing, Brazilian jiu jitsu and Karate with 7% and others (Krav Maga, Judo, Systema etc.).

Most of the soldiers (42% from those who do some combative activity in their free time) are doing martial art or combat sport 3-4 times a week (28 persons). 21% of soldiers (14 men) train 1-2 hours a week and 13% 5-6 hours a week (9 soldiers). 9 or more hours a week is training 11% soldiers (7 persons) and 12% train irregularly (8 persons). The data is demonstrated in figure 4.

38 tested persons (60%) are avocational sportsmen, 24 (38%) do sports on the level of competing as well and 1 tested person is a professional sportsman. 14 soldiers (23%) have been doing martial art or combat sport for more than 11 years, 8 persons (13%) 10 years, 11 persons (18%) 5-6 years, 12 soldiers (19%) 3-4 years, 11

persons (18 %) 1-2 years and 2 soldiers (3 %) are beginners who have been doing martial art or combat sport only for a few months.

Most of the tested persons agree that combat sport should be a part of soldiers' identity and they agree with the idea of adding one more combative activity to their soldiers training. Those who do some combative activity in their free time, confirm (66 from 73 tested persons) that the knowledge of combative activity helped them to do well in their professional soldier training.

168 tested persons (72 %) would appreciate one more combat sport or martial arts added into their professional soldiers training, 62 soldiers not (27 %). From the combative systems they mostly suggested Israeli Krav Maga (46 from 168), boxing (41), MMA (23) then Thai boxing, Judo, Systema, Brazilian jiu jitsu and others.

222 soldiers of the fourth Rapid Deployment Brigade soldiers in the Army of the Czech Republic (95% of tested persons) agree that some combative system (martial art, combat sport or self-defence system) should be included in the soldiers' professional training (see figure 5). The present results reflect soldiers' knowledge that they are a part of the security forces whose task is to defend interests of the state and citizens of the Czech Republic and it is necessary to be skilled in combat at any job position.

## Conclusion

We can conclude that soldiers of The Army of the Czech Republic recognize the importance of martial arts and combat sports and they would appreciate more combative activities in their working time.

In each army unit there is a university educated P.E. teacher with the focus on military P.E. who should be able to reflect soldiers' requirements. As said above the benefits of combative activities are not only in self-defence situations but also in multilateral development of the personalities of individual soldiers.

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## Związek pomiędzy żołnierska 4 Brygadą Szybkiego Reagowania Armii Republiki Czeskiej a sportami i sztukami walki

**Słowa kluczowe:** szkolenie wojskowe, siły specjalne, szkolenia bojowe

### Abstrakt

Cel. Gotowość do obrony kraju jest jednym z głównych celów każdej armii narodowej. Celem pracy jest sprawdzenie, jaki jest związek 4 Brygady Szybkiego Reagowania Armii Republiki Czeskiej a sportami i sztukami walki.

Metoda. W badaniu w formie kwestionariusza wzięło udział 234 żołnierzy, płci męskiej w wieku 18 - 40 lat. Wszyscy z badanych stanowili żołnierze oddziałów bojowych. Pracownicy sztabowi, logistycy i pracownicy o podobnych zajęciach zostali wykluczeni z badania. 33% z żołnierzy 4 Brygady Szybkiego Reagowania Armii Republiki Czeskiej w cywilu zajmuje się sportami walki, sztukami walki lub systemem samoobrony (głównie boksem, MMA, tajskim boksem itp.).

Rezultat. Większość badanych osób zgadza się ze stwierdzeniem, że sport walki powinien być częścią tożsamości żołnierzy i są świadomi dodatkowej potrzeby szkolenia w tym zakresie. Ci, którzy zajmują się sportami czy sztukami walki w czasie wolnym, potwierdzają, że nabyta w tej dziedzinie wiedza pomogła im w szkoleniu zawodowym żołnierza. Istotną przeszkodą dla wielu zawodowych żołnierzy był brak czasu na dodatkowe ćwiczenia z powodu codziennych dojazdów i chęci spędzenia wolnego czasu z rodziną.

Wnioski. Można stwierdzić, że żołnierze Armii Republiki Czeskiej znają sztuki walki i sporty walki oraz, że z zadowoleniem przyjąłby dodatkowe szkolenie w tym zakresie w ramach swojej pracy.