



Lt. Col. Mark Prendergast has recently returned from a six-month operational tour, leading an Irish Defence Forces unit serving with the UN mission on the Golan Heights Syria. This unit was deployed on the 31st March 2015 to act as the UN Force Commander's Quick Reaction Force (QRF) and during their six-month tour of duty they were frequently tasked to conduct high-risk, complex military operations in support of their multinational partner nations.

Mark was commissioned into the Infantry in 1988 and his service has included command at Platoon, Company and Battalion levels. Prior to his deployment to Syria, he led the 28 Infantry Battalion, located at Finner Camp County Donegal. He is a graduate of the Senior Command and Staff Course, and has a BA (Hons) in Economics and Politics from National University Galway, a MA in Leadership and Defence Studies from National University Maynooth and a MSc in Human Resource Leadership from Sheffield Hallam University in the United Kingdom.

In addition to his unit experience, Mark has seven years of extensive leadership development experience, gained during his service as an instructor in the Officer Cadet College, where he led the staff in developing leaders of character and competence using an action-orientated leadership development programme.

The experience of leading elite high-performing teams is a specific challenge. Mark met this challenge during his four years' service in the Army Ranger Wing (ARW), Ireland's elite Special Operations Force (SOF). Leading highly talented individualists who have the mental discipline to learn and apply the skills of teamwork and the fortitude to sustain unwavering focus on the mission objectives needs an experienced leader. Mark gained this experience on operations on island and overseas in West Africa.

Mark's multinational operational experience has included three deployments to UNIFIL in South Lebanon, two years with the UN in Damascus and on the Golan Heights, a tour of duty in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Battle Group Operations officer with the Finnish/Irish Battle Group in Kosovo and most recently he led the Force Commander's QRF in Syria.

Lt Col Prendergast is currently serving as director of Human Resources for the Defence Forces Training Centre, located in the Curragh County Kildare.