

a. At NATO HQ level, review of the CONOPS during the approval process focuses on identifying issues categorised as:

- (1) **Essential.** An essential comment automatically ‘breaks silence’ (i.e. stops any ongoing approval procedure to be completed at a fixed time) and must be addressed/revised for final approval. Justification or clarification may be provided to the approving authority if the issuing authority does not agree with the essential comment.
- (2) **Important.** Important comments normally require justification or clarification of the issue at hand, but do not break silence. An important comment *could* culminate into an essential comment if the approval authority disagrees with the justification or clarification provided.
- (3) **Miscellaneous.** Miscellaneous comments are generally administrative in nature.