Strade Sicure: 17 Years of the Army Alongside Citizens

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Since 2008, the **“Strade Sicure” operation** has been one of the most important, visible, and continuous missions of the Italian Army on a national level. Created to support the Police Forces in monitoring sensitive areas and protecting the population, it has evolved into a pillar of urban security in the country.

Today, **over 6,600 men and women of the Army** are engaged daily in this operation, assisted by about **150 military personnel from the Navy and Air Force**, distributed across **58 provinces**. The units operate in **about 1,000 sites** considered strategic or high-risk, with a careful and constant presence, particularly in the **main metropolitan areas**.

Among the most significant interventions are **“Stazioni Sicure”**, involving **800 soldiers** in the surveillance of **21 major Italian railway stations** (including Genoa, Milan, Turin, Bologna, Rome, Naples, and Palermo), and the delicate environmental operation in the **“Terra dei Fuochi”**, where **200 soldiers** are engaged daily in combating environmental crimes.

In 17 years, the activity report is clear: **over 60 million checks on people and vehicles**, **more than 100,000 individuals stopped, arrested, or reported**, **2,000 weapons seized**, **17,000 vehicles** and **more than 2.5 tons of drugs** intercepted. Numbers that testify to the effectiveness and concreteness of an operation that, while not having a military nature, produces tangible results in terms of public safety.

The “Terra dei Fuochi” and the Environmental Aspect of the Operation

Among the most significant missions of “Strade Sicure” is undoubtedly the intervention in the **“Terra dei Fuochi”**, an area sadly known for waste fires and illegal disposal. There, the professionalism of the military has evolved by integrating the most modern technologies: the **use of drones with high surveillance capacity**, used to monitor the territory “from the third dimension,” has allowed for more thorough and immediate control.

Thanks to these tools and constant presence in the field, **almost 2,000 arson fires** and **over 8,300 illegal dumping sites** have been identified. This is a fundamental contribution not only to public safety but also to the **environmental protection and health of citizens**.

The operation demonstrates how the Italian Army is not only engaged in defense against military threats but also in the **protection of the territory in a broad sense**, collaborating with civil authorities, police forces, local entities, and environmental agencies. This multidisciplinary approach strengthens the perception of the Army as a **versatile and modern tool at the service of the country**.

The adaptability of the units, their rapid **deployment**, and coordination with other forces in the field prove decisive not only for **prevention** but also for **containing threats** in real-time, thanks to the timeliness of intervention.

Training, Values, and Technology: The Pillars of Operational Readiness

The success of the “Strade Sicure” operation is based on a highly specialized training system. Every soldier destined to operate in an urban context, alongside the Police Forces, undergoes a **structured training path** in various areas: **crowd management**, **Basic Life Support (first aid)**, **movement in urban areas**, and **Military Combat Method (MCM)** – a self-defense system developed internally by the Army, inspired by martial arts, to intervene with **graduality and precision** in risky situations.

This **multidimensional training** allows for handling complex contexts while maintaining **discipline, self-control, and decision-making readiness**, essential elements when operating in close contact with the civilian population. The **MCM**, in particular, represents an added value, allowing soldiers to act effectively even in close-range aggression situations, limiting the use of force to the minimum necessary.

At the core of everything remain the three **mainstays of the Italian Army**: **values, training, and technology**. These elements translate into **professionalism, effectiveness, and reliability**, qualities that every citizen recognizes in the military personnel employed daily to ensure the country's safety.

After 17 years of uninterrupted service, “Strade Sicure” confirms itself as a virtuous operational model, capable of combining defense, prevention, and assistance in a modern key. The Italian Army, strong in its history and its ability to renew itself, confirms itself as **a fundamental resource for national cohesion and collective security**, ready to intervene wherever needed.