



5 June 2018

**DOCUMENT**  
C-M(2018)0025 (DNK-OVERVIEW)

## **NATO DEFENCE PLANNING CAPABILITY REVIEW 2017/2018**

### **DENMARK**

### **OVERVIEW**

1. The 2018-2023 Danish Defence Agreement assesses that Denmark faces more serious threats than in any other period following the fall of the Berlin Wall. In response to this, Denmark wishes to enhance its capacity for collective deterrence and defence within NATO; to enhance its ability to participate in international military operations and international stabilisation efforts for the purposes of, inter alia, fighting terrorism, capacity building, and handling of irregular migration flows; to strengthen its ability to contribute to the national security of Denmark, which includes increasing support to the Danish National Police; and to enhance its ability to protect Danish society from cyber threats and propaganda campaigns. Denmark considers NATO as the cornerstone of its defence and security policy, recognising that it may become a staging area for reinforcements from other NATO Allies, and that, therefore, it must be able to receive and protect these reinforcements. Denmark also wishes to improve its ability to operate with larger Allied army formations that can be deployed within NATO's territory. The Government also wishes to enhance cyber defence, to allocate more resources to the Danish Defence Intelligence Service, to enhance its strong defence presence in the Arctic, whilst ensuring the Arctic remains a low-tension area. In 2017, the Ministry of Defence (MOD) and the Defence Staff were collocated which improves the synergy in the strategic management of defence.

2. The Defence Agreement changes the organisation of the Danish Armed Forces by slimming the command structure in order to focus financial and personnel resources towards the operational force structure. It also refocuses the generation of military capability from a system that was optimised for the delivery of bespoke capabilities to support commitments to current operations, to a system that generates formed units and formations, with integral combat support (CS) and combat service support (CSS), from which operational contingents can be drawn.

3. With the Defence Agreement, the Parliament announced an accumulative increase of DKK 12,800.00 million (US\$ 1901.44 million) in defence spending out to 2023 largely to fund its planned capability enhancements. This equates to about a 20% rise in defence spending in cash terms, a welcome development.

4. In terms of capability development, Denmark plans, inter alia, to establish a brigade-level capability of roughly 4,000 soldiers as an independent formation in 2024. An additional three mobilisation companies will be attached to its combat battalions and a further 1,000 reserves can be called-up if necessary. This brigade will comprise heavier units and enhanced capabilities, including more and upgraded main battle tanks (MBT), anti-tank weapons and additional artillery, with procurement of a ground-based air defence (GBAD) system and supported by elements of the Danish joint intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance (JISR) capability. This new emphasis at the brigade level will see a more coherent structure to deliver capabilities for operations. Denmark also plans to establish a new light infantry battalion consisting of regular personnel which can be deployed at very short notice. In addition to its short-range missiles, Denmark wishes to fit its frigates with long-range missiles to provide area air defence. It also intends to fit its frigates and its maritime helicopters with advanced anti-submarine warfare (ASW) capabilities. A fifteen-year capability development plan is now being prepared, following publication of the Defence Agreement, which will provide continuity of planning past the 2023 period of the current agreement, into the medium term. Denmark will introduce these capabilities through a national planning process which is closely harmonised with NATO, although national priorities are not entirely coincident with NATO's.

5. At the end of 2017, the strength of the Danish Armed Forces was some 16,700 military personnel, including conscripts, supported by about 4,700 civilians. As part of the Defence Agreement, the Danish Armed Forces will reorganise and slim higher staffs in order to refocus personnel resources on operational capabilities. This is intended to increase the operational force structure by approximately 1,450 personnel by 2024. The number of conscripts called up each year is some 4,200; the intent is to increase this number by approximately 500 per year. Basic training lasts for four months; conscripts seeking employment following compulsory service will receive a further advanced military training. The reserves consists of approximately 2,500 personnel and as a consequence of the Defence Agreement, this can be increased by approximately 600 personnel by 2023. Reservists are called up for seven to fourteen days of training annually.

6. The overall strength of the Home Guard (HG) is about 550 permanently employed, 15,000 volunteers in the active structure, and 30,000 in the reserve structure. The HG is used in support of the military and civilian services, and it will also have a role in the reception and protection of Allied reinforcing forces, and for the protection of infrastructure. HG personnel are also used as individual or platoon-size augmentees in international operations and missions, and defence capacity building engagements.

7. The announced increase of increase of DKK 12,800.00 million in defence spending out to 2023 is intended to enable the investment in the capabilities identified in the Defence Agreement which is a positive step to meeting some of the priority capabilities requested by Allied Defence Ministers. The proportion of gross domestic product devoted

to defence decreased from 1.35% in 2009 to an estimated 1.16% in 2017, and is projected to rise to 1.21% in 2018, 1.23% in 2019, and 1.27% in 2020, which is well below the NATO guideline of 2% set out in the Defence Investment Pledge (DIP). Expenditure on major equipment was 13.68% of total defence expenditure in 2016 and is forecast to be 10.39% in 2017, 13.43% in 2018, 18.55% in 2019, and 20.95% in 2020, thereby exceeding the NATO guideline of 20% as set out in the DIP.

8. Denmark's contributions to operations and missions were either commensurate with the size of its armed forces or, especially in the case of its air force, they exceeded what would be expected in relative terms. Denmark also routinely provides substantial land contributions to the NATO Response Force and air contributions to the Baltic Air Policing Mission. It also supports enhanced Forward Presence in Estonia as part of the United Kingdom-led multinational battle group.

9. Allied Defence Ministers agreed that Denmark should give priority to the development of: a heavy infantry brigade, including associated CS and CSS elements; JISR capabilities; and ASW capabilities. As a stepping-stone to delivering the heavy infantry brigade by 2032, Denmark has a number of plans to enhance its combat (more MBTs), CS and CSS capabilities by 2024. There are currently no concrete plans to deliver all of the required heavy infantry capability, a key component of that brigade. The second prioritised capability, JISR, will mostly be met by Denmark's current national plans for its broad JISR capability, less the two requested signals intelligence (SIGINT) aircraft which Denmark has no plans to acquire. ASW, the third prioritised capability, should be largely met if all the planned ASW enhancements are delivered into service, and in the required timelines.

10. Denmark plans to transform its army to a more operational structure with an Army Command (which includes the function of the Danish Division Headquarters (HQ)), an infantry Reaction Force Brigade, an Adaptable Force Brigade and the Force Troops consisting of one logistics, one signals, one engineer, one artillery and one army intelligence regiment as well as the Royal Life Guards Regiment and the Royal Guards Hussars. The Reaction Force Brigade is planned to consist of three "medium" infantry battalions (based on companies with a mix of platforms of armoured personnel carriers (APC), infantry fighting vehicles (IFV) and MBTs), one intelligence surveillance and reconnaissance (ISR) battalion; one artillery battalion, one combat engineer battalion, one logistics battalion, one HQ and signals company, as well as a military police company. The Adaptable Force Brigade is expected to consist of one light infantry, one armoured, and one reconnaissance battalion, as well three basic military training battalions. Denmark is introducing new artillery and mortar systems, and plans to introduce GBAD, counter-improvised explosive device and ISR capabilities as well as modern engineering and communications and information systems to fulfil its current capability shortages and provide many elements of the requested medium infantry brigade by 2024. This is a positive development. In order for Denmark to fully meet the requirement to develop a fully-capable heavy infantry brigade by 2032, it will have to resolve a number of capability limitations including: critical firepower, the low readiness of units, the lack of brigade-level training, and the low levels of stocks and munitions.

11. Denmark can provide one heavy infantry battalion group, as a high-readiness element of the requested medium infantry brigade in the NATO Capability Targets, but currently with limitations in air defence. However, the requested medium infantry brigade is provided at initial operational capability at 24 months' notice until 2024 and with severe quantitative and qualitative capability limitations across the combat, CS and CSS areas. Until Denmark enhances the combat power and readiness of its brigade, it will be poorly equipped and prepared to engage in large-scale high-end operations against a peer adversary.

12. The existing Naval Staff will be transformed into a Navy Command responsible for development, planning and the generating of naval forces. The new Navy Command will be formed with three subordinate naval squadrons: Arctic and Northern Atlantic, International Operations and National Operations. The operational logistics, the naval surveillance centre sites, the six training, technical and expert centres and the two main naval bases are to be organised under the three squadrons. Deployed naval forces are controlled by the Joint Operations Staff, or by the Joint Arctic Command for the North Atlantic area. The transformation of the fleet's ocean-going capabilities is complete. At the core of the navy are three frigates and two flexible support ships. These are supplemented by four ocean patrol vessels (OPV) and three Arctic patrol ships that are dedicated mainly to patrolling the North Atlantic and the Arctic, but can be made available for NATO operations. In the short term, the navy's capability development priorities, which all have funding plans, include the procurement of an area air defence capability for the frigates; procurement of advanced towed sonar systems, torpedo counter measures and fire control radars for the frigates and the flexible support ships; and procurement of advanced ASW capabilities for the naval helicopters. The medium-term naval capability development priorities are the acquisition of SM-6 long-range surface-to-air missiles and the procurement of replacement OPVs.

13. The navy is a modern ocean-going force that is expected to meet almost all of the requested NATO Capability Targets, in quantitative terms. In qualitative terms, the current shortfalls in ASW, above-water warfare, maritime BDM stockpiles and mine countermeasures capabilities will, for most part, be addressed by funding identified in the Defence Agreement.

14. In 2019, the Air Staff and the Expeditionary Air Wing will reorganise into the Air Command. The new Air Command will include a new National Air Operations Centre. Furthermore, the Air Force Training Centre will be closed and all tasks outsourced to other units and entities. An Operations Support Wing will also be stood up. The air force consists of: 30 combat aircraft (F-16), four medium transport aircraft (C-130J), 14 tactical transport helicopters (EH-101 Merlin) of which eight are used for national SAR missions, and eight light transport helicopters (AS-550 Fennec). The air force operates seven MH-60R Seahawk helicopters (with an additional two expected in 2019) and four CL-604 Challenger aircraft. The current F-16 fleet has no suppression of enemy air defence (SEAD) or electronic attack capability. With the introduction of the F-35, the air force expects to introduce some SEAD capability. Denmark plans to replace its F-16 with 27 F-35 combat aircraft in the timeframe 2021 to 2026, resulting in a gap in Denmark's deployable combat air capability in the period 2022-2024 and limited combat air capability

in the period 2025-2027. Most of the air force crews assigned as NATO deployable meet the flying hours required by ACO Forces Standards, less combat aircrews which are slightly below the requirement. Aircrew-aircraft ratios meet the requirements.

15. Denmark's relatively modern air force will not provide all of the capabilities requested in the air-related NATO Capability Targets. For some of these targets, there will be delays. For other targets, Denmark has no current plans or intent to provide the requested capabilities in full. This applies in particular to the number of combat aircraft, air-to-air refueling and SIGINT aircraft, as well as the deployable airbase activation modules.

16. The Danish Special Operations Command controls both the army and the navy regiment-level special operations forces (SOF) units. Air SOF capabilities remain under air force control. The national SOF capability includes: one special operations land task group, providing up to six special operations land task units; one special operations maritime task group, providing up to four special operations maritime task units; and one special operations air task group providing two special operations air task units-rotary/tilt wing with two EH-101 Merlin helicopters each and one special operations air task unit-fixed wing with one C-130J transport aircraft. Denmark provides all the quantitative contributions sought by the SOF-related NATO Capability Targets. However, shortfalls do exist including lack of dedicated or organic CS, CSS and aircraft, and lower readiness than requested for some capabilities.

17. Tactical-level logistics support to the army is provided by the Army Combat Service Support and Joint Military Police Centres, while the navy and air force are supported by their integral logistics organisations. In addition to the capabilities of the armed forces and the HG, joint and enabling capabilities are also, to some extent, provided by other MOD agencies and commands. Denmark is able to provide many of the quantitative enabling forces and capabilities requested in its NATO Capability Targets with a number of noticeable exceptions for reception, staging and onward movement; medical; transport; supply; chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear; and military engineering capabilities. In other cases, the requested capabilities can be provided, but only at a lower readiness than required, or not simultaneously with the deployment of the Reaction Force Brigade. There is generally good progress in the implementation of Denmark's qualitative NATO Capability Targets, although some shortfalls persist.

18. Denmark attaches high importance to a comprehensive approach for achieving coherence among the actions of governmental, non-governmental and international actors involved in stabilisation and reconstruction (S&R). Denmark is fully implementing all its S&R Capability Targets, less for the police training cadre target, where it provides 25% of the requirement.

19. Denmark is largely robust and resilient in terms of civil preparedness and inter-ministerial coordination is ensured. Updated civil crisis response measures have been integrated into revised national crisis management plans and national defence and civilian plans are coordinated and deconflicted at the national level.

20. In sum, the Defence Agreement is a welcome recognition of Denmark's need to reinvest after years of cuts in defence. The announced increase in defence spending out to 2023 is intended to enable the investment in the capabilities outlined above which is a positive step to meeting the priority capabilities requested by Allied Defence Ministers. However, this is not enough as even with the announced funding uplift, Denmark's defence spending still remains low.

21. Denmark's Armed Forces have consistently provided substantial contributions to operations. The reorganisation of higher staffs in order to refocus personnel resources on operational capabilities will provide increased manpower for operational units. The renewed emphasis at the brigade level will see a more coherent structure to deliver capabilities for operations, particularly in the new security environment, where larger formations are required at shorter notice. These are very welcome initiatives.

22. Denmark is nevertheless encouraged to do more. In order to meet all of its NATO Capability Targets in quantity, in quality and in time, including the prioritised capabilities identified by Allied Defence Ministers, a sustained increase in funding and continuing political will is required well out into the medium term. If this extra effort is not forthcoming, then other Allies will potentially need to carry a part of Denmark's share of the Alliance burden, particularly in the case of large-scale, high-end operations against a peer adversary.