

An Historical and Political Overview of the Reserve and Guard Forces of the Nordic Countries at the Beginning of the Twenty-first Century

*By Milton Paul Davis **

From the last decade of the 20th century, with the end of the Cold War there have been dramatic changes in Central and North-Eastern Europe, which have affected the security situation in Scandinavia. These changes have brought greater reflection within Scandinavia on the defence force structures, which were developed to meet the security challenges of the Cold War. An armed forces reserve and home guard were key elements of Cold War Scandinavian defence force structures. Are the reserve and guard forces still relevant to the contemporary Nordic security situation? This paper will overview the present reserve and guard situation in the five countries of Scandinavia by first explaining the role of the reserve and guard in the two basic defence models available: “total or territorial defence” and “collective defence.” Second, the paper looks at the relationship with NATO and the EU and the implication of the relationship to Scandinavian reserve and guard systems.

The dramatic changes in the Nordic¹ security situation with the end of the Cold War have been most evident in Scandinavia’s near neighbours, the three Baltic states of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania. Less than twenty years ago, these countries were not only behind the Iron Curtain, but also inside the Soviet Union, and were the location of Soviet operational and strategic forces, which had a menacing offensive posture towards Scandinavia. Today the Soviet military build-up in the three Baltic states is gone and the three countries are not only free and independent, but have maturing market economies. In 2004 all three countries joined the European Union (EU) and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO). The changes in Europe with the end of the Cold War are not only evident in the three Baltic states, but in smaller ways are also noticeable in other parts of

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Europe, such as Scandinavia. Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden are the five Nordic countries that make up Scandinavia. Denmark, Finland and Sweden are physically close to Central Europe especially the Baltic states, and Finland and Norway touch Russia. Consequently, the geography of northern Europe means that the menacing activities of the Cold War and now the absence of these activities have had a direct impact on the countries of the Baltic Sea Region.

The culture and history of Scandinavia are intertwined. The languages of Denmark, Norway, and Sweden are very similar and Icelandic is directly related to these three. Finnish is completely unlike the other four languages, but is very similar to Estonian, and English is widely spoken in all five countries. The five countries have had a long history of working together and from 1392-1448 were under one crown, the Union of Kalmar, and also the majority of today's population have the same Lutheran religion (Derry, 2005:64-85). This Nordic cooperation has not always been completely friendly since Norway and Iceland at times have been part of the Danish empire, and Norway and Finland at times have been under Swedish influence. However, since the end of the Napoleonic Wars, actual "civil wars" within Scandinavia have completely ended (Bellquist, 1933).

Table 1: The EU/NATO Baltic Sea Region of Northern Europe (Thompson, 2007).

NATO	EU	Country	Size (sq kilometres)	Size (sq miles)	Population of country
Y	Y	Denmark	43069*	16629*	5.4 m.
Y	Y	Estonia	45227	18370	1.35 m.
N	Y	Finland	338144	130119	5.2 m.
Y	Y	Germany	357050	137691	82.5 m.
Y	N	Iceland	102952	39768	309699
Y	Y	Latvia	65786	25400	2.3 m.
Y	Y	Lithuania	64445	25174	3.4 m.
Y	N	Norway	324219	125182	4.6 m.
Y	Y	Poland	312683	120727	38.6 m.
N	Y	Sweden	449793	173654	9 m.

* Does not include Greenland and the Faeroe Islands

From the final end of the Kalmar Union in 1523 until the present the desire of the citizens of the five Nordic countries to have "inter-Scandinavian cooperation," with decreasing political, but increasing

economic and cultural interests, has grown (Bellquist, 1933). Many Scandinavian organizations have developed. Concurrently the most important organizations are the Nordic Council of Ministers, for government cooperation, and the Nordic Council, for parliamentary cooperation, which alone helps fund over 20 other Nordic institutions. In addition, all Scandinavian countries belong to the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE), and the United Nations (UN) (Nordic Council web, 2008). Between WWI and WWII and immediately after WWII, under the umbrella of the League of Nations and later under the early UN, serious attempts were made to have cooperation in defence issues and even to form a defence union among the Nordic countries. With the creation of NATO these concepts seemed to diminish, but now with the European Battlegroups, the concept of a Nordic defence group has reappeared (see Sweden below).

1. Defence concepts – total and collective

The key to future cooperation within Northern Europe is self-defence starting with a military that is credible to both friends and potential enemies. If the Nordic countries want help from other countries including NATO members, they must be able to hold off the enemy at least long enough for that help to arrive. To restrain the enemy with limited budgets requires both a small professional military and a force that can expand the small army rapidly upon mobilization. To make this concept successful, a well-organized reserve and guard system is essential (NATO Information, 1989:77). The reserve and guard system is an integral part of the “total or territorial defence” which is a Scandinavian Model sometimes called the Finnish-Swedish Way. The concept is to have the whole country involved in its defence, not just the military. The Swiss use a modified version of this concept (Clemmesen, 1999). In total defence, business, industry, local government, etc. are all involved in integral plans on how to defend the country. Local armed and non-violent actions are employed to help the security of the country. It is not just a military issue, but also a national issue (Werin, 1999). This defensive strategy of “denial” and “total defence” can be adapted to the regional conditions of the local geography and can be summarized as follows: “...A great power aims at a swift military victory that forces the defender to capitulate militarily and surrender politically. Small countries must deny the aggressor its objective through

extended, small-scale actions. They must mobilize, at short notice, reasonably well-equipped forces. Total defence also includes passive resistance by the civilian population” (Trapans, 1998).

In a well-developed total defence system, standby reserves allow both active and reserve units to have the ability to grow when necessary in a rapid and organized fashion. For example, platoons become companies and companies become battalions, etc. This can be done by a conscript system that trains most of the adult male population to be ready to serve when needed (Gabrielsson, 1999).

The conscript system of most countries, using the total defence concept, has the troops on active duty for approximately one year. At the end of that time a few of the conscripts volunteer to stay on active duty or to join the home guard. But the majority become members of the reserves with some becoming part of organized units and others just ready for call up upon mobilization. Most of the Scandinavian countries also have a system to provide these reserves some refresher training every few years (Wadensjo, 1999).

But another model does exist from the total concept, and this is the model of “collective defence” which has been the main concept of NATO. Collective defence is normally institutionalised, by a treaty and an organization, among participant countries that commit support in defence of a member country if it is attacked by another country outside the organization. NATO is history’s most famous collective defence organization. Its Article V asks, but not fully requires, members to assist another member under attack (Colorado, 2008).

Before the end of the Cold War, Sweden and Finland mainly employed territory defence, while the other Nordic countries, as members of NATO, employed a combination of territory and collective defence. Today, with the EU developing its own defence initiatives and NATO reaching out to all of Europe, collective defence is becoming more important and, as the Supreme Allied Commander, Europe (SHAPE) has recently stated: “NATO has transitioned from a defensive alliance to a security focused alliance” (Craddock, 2008).

The question remains, are the Scandinavian forces credible and how do the political leaders see their use. If a force is not credible, it will not deter the enemy. "The greater reliance on Reserve Forces in future defence arrangements is an attractive alternative for political leaders concerned about defence expenditures... The cost of Reserve Forces is a fraction of the cost of ... Active Forces. Reserve Forces constitute ... a credible deterrence (and) a stabilizing and less provocative element to an opposing international coalition" (Gerry, 1990).

What is the position of credible reserve forces in the Nordic countries? One key element in the non-active duty Scandinavian armed forces is the Home Guard.

2. Home Guard units

Scandinavian home guard units are similar to the US National Guard or British Territorial Forces. They are completely filled with volunteers, are attached to the local community and are frequently aligned with the regular military in training, uniforms, chain of command, etc. At the same time, they have a paramilitary function to perform as auxiliary to the local police/fire/emergency responders and their primary mission in time of total war would be to conduct unconventional (partisan/guerrilla) warfare in conjunction with the regular military forces (Trautner, 1999).

The home guard, recruited in local areas, provides great advantages when compared to active duty or reserve forces that are not recruited locally. In the home guard troops are:

- a. Spread all over the country (almost the same as being constantly mobilized in areas);
- b. Knowledgeable of the local areas (both geographical and societal);
- c. Volunteers: commanders and soldiers are always willing, committed and motivated;
- d. Deeply rooted in the social fibre of the society (almost a national popular movement);
- e. Financially very reasonable to keep on stand-by; and
- f. Bringing many civilian acquired skills to the units (Ullestad, 2008).

"Most of the armies (militaries) of NATO are organized with a mix of active and reserve forces. The size, composition, and the degree of mix is

usually the result of a nation's perception of the ... threat, "out of area" commitments, and (important) budgetary constraints (Tripp, 1999:3)"

As the above quote shows, NATO's use of reserve forces allows countries to use models, such as the total defence model, for their reserve forces. The following sections will comparatively examine the guard and reserve structures in the Scandinavian states.

2.1 Denmark

During WWI, Denmark was able to maintain its neutrality but, because of five years of German occupation in WWII, Denmark lost faith in neutrality and became a founding member of NATO. Thus later, when joining the EU, this constitutional monarchy, became the only Nordic country to be a member of both the EU and NATO. Denmark redeveloped its military at the end of WWII (US State – Den, 2007).

The Danish defence establishment consists of the Ministry of Defence, the Defence Command with the Army, Navy, Air Force, the *Hjemmeværn* or Home Guard (HG), the Emergency Management Agency, the Intelligence Service's Support for International Operations, and the Administration of Navigation & Hydrography. "The Danish Home Guard is an organization where the soldiers – on a voluntary basis – take part in the defence of the country." They train in supporting the police and the Emergency Management Agency as well as performing military tasks in co-operation with, and in support of, the Army, the Navy, and the Air Force as part of the Danish Total Defence Concept (Denmark's Ministry of Defence, 2004:5; 2004:33).

Since the end of the Cold War, Denmark has basically eliminated the concept of mobilization, thus the need for a reserve mobilization force is non-existent, but Denmark still has conscription. "Some of the ... young men do four-month basic training. Afterward about 25% ask to become professionals. The rest (about 12000 soldiers) are noted in a reserve register for use only on Danish soil in case of disaster or ... high threat level" (Jacobsen, 2007).

The HG in Denmark is not a reserve of the active force for mobilization and deployment outside of Denmark, but mainly a force for use in defence

against terrorism, as well as natural, civil or military emergencies within Denmark. The Danish armed forces used to rely heavily on a large mobilization force of reserve officers and NCOs (non-commissioned officers). Now the need for reserve officers and NCOs has declined to about 1000 simply to assist with training (Olsen, 2007).

Table 2: Approximate numbers of Danish military personnel as of December 2007 (Hackett, Siebken, & Winkler, 2008).

Total active military*	Army*	Navy*	Air Force*	Civilians [some in HG & reserves]
15790	9,240	3110	3440	6234
Total Home Guard [HG]	HG Actively Involved	HG Rapid Reaction Force	Full Time HG	Mobilization: <i>Estimated</i> total including active, HG, & reserves.*
51500	23000	3000	616	73500

*Includes conscripts

The HG is commanded by The Chief of the HG and has a joint service staff to assist him. The HG, divided into three branches (army, navy, and air force), was founded in 1945 by veterans of the resistance of WW II, and it was later institutionalized by Parliament in 1948 (Tripp, 1991:24-25). The Danish HG consists of unpaid volunteers who receive their meals and transportation to and from training at the expense of the government. The members of the HG wear the same uniforms as the regular forces and are enrolled in a retirement programme (Jacobsen, 2007).

The Army HG is organized into five regions that are subdivided into 18 districts, 356 companies and over 1000 sections spread all over the country. Each section comprises 6-12 men and/or women. The Army HG has four basic tasks or missions: surveillance, guarding and securing key points, combat operations, and special tasks (Larsen, 2007).

The Navy HG is divided into two districts and has 30 vessels in harbours spread around the coastlines. "Its missions include: surveillance of coastal waters and harbours, search and rescue, naval control of shipping, demolition and the blocking of harbours" (de Jong, 1992).

The Air HG actually started between the world wars as observers for low flying aircraft (Jacobsen, 2007). The Air Force HG has two districts and provides basically two kinds of services: ground observing which monitors low-altitude air space and air base defence which assists with surveillance tasks, etc. Many of the members of the Air Guard are civilian employees of the Danish Air Force bases (Larsen & Clemmesen, 2008).

With the active military no longer having a large reserve, the HG has created a force of about 3000 of its best-trained members to form a HG Reaction Force spread across all five regions of the country (Danish political parties, 2004). This Reaction Force is made up of about 2600 Army Guard troops, 140 Naval Guard troops, and approximately 260 Air Guard troops (Larsen, 2007).

The Danish armed forces make up an important segment of the democratic society of Denmark. The missions of the armed forces are defined clearly in the legislation of the Danish parliament, in treaties and in the weaponry employed by the military. Historically, the Danish military was a force designed for defensive war, not offensive actions. However, with the Defence Agreement of 2005, the military is presently transitioning to an expeditionary force (Olsen, 2007). Recently Danish forces have had experience in Afghanistan in offensive operations (Jacobsen, 2007).

The military doctrine of Denmark obviously has a background based on total or territorial defence, as previously discussed, but modern Denmark favours the NATO programmes of collective defence and is involved with peace keeping/humanitarian missions of the UN, NATO, and other coalitions (Larsen, 2007). Thus, the Danish doctrine is presently evolving in response to these new challenges in ways similar to, but not as drastic as, the US Military's transformation to a more modern system. According to a new memorandum of understanding (MOU) signed in 2007 between Denmark and Iceland, Denmark, as well as Norway, will be taking on special missions to help Iceland which has no military of its own and is a member of NATO (see Iceland below).

The Danish standing armed forces consist of full time soldiers (who initially serve four months of conscription), NCOs and officers divided into the three services: air force, army, and navy. Today's regular military is separated into two distinct parts: the professionals who can be sent

worldwide and the conscripts who can only be used within Denmark or in combat if it is for the territorial defence of Denmark. Denmark trains about 6900 conscripts each year (6000 army, 600 navy and 300 air force). The conscripts' only purpose in peacetime is training (Hansen-Nord, 2007).

Since the end of the Cold War the active military is now more involved in world peacekeeping missions. In addition, the ending of the Cold War and the consequent reduction in the size of active forces have allowed the HG to take on more of the territorial defence issues that were handled by the active military. In an indirect way the Danish HG is now part of NATO's collective defence programme because they would be the troops responsible for the defence of Denmark while preparing for reinforcements, if needed, to arrive (Winkler, 2008).

As a result the HG is showing signs of and a potential for more professionalism. The Hjemmevaern's nationalist esprit de corps and stubborn determination are the basis of a force that could be very professional, competent and effective in defensive combat (Larsen, 2007). As this quote from an active duty American lieutenant colonel shows, the HG can function in the international arena: "During my tour in Estonia, the Danish HG was actively engaged in supporting the training of the Estonian Defence League ("Kaitseliit"). In fact, a full-time liaison officer, Commander Jens Koefoed, with an office in the Defence League headquarters, acted as an advisor to the Commander of the Estonian Defence League. He was intimately involved in the creation of a Defence League school with its own facilities and support staff. His efforts were recognized by the President of Estonia" (Teel, 2008).

2.2 Finland

Finland was not occupied during WWII, but the war had had a profound impact on Finland with a loss of approximately 11 per cent of its pre-war territory, including some economically very important sections, and over 100000 citizens of Finland had been killed or permanently disabled during the war. Finland ended WWII in a unique position because at different times during the war it had fought along side of and also against both Nazi Germany and Soviet Russia.

The early post-war development of Finland grew during the Cold War out of these ashes of WWII. With the absence of an active military threat from

the USSR since the end of the Cold War in 1991, Finland has been able to pursue a security policy that focuses on military modernization, restructuring, and increasing cooperation with NATO and the EU (Mil. Periscope – Fin, 2007).

During 1989, Finland joined the Council of Europe, then in May 1994 Finland joined NATO's Partnership for Peace (PfP) programme, which opened the door to possible eventual full membership in NATO, and, as of 1995, Finland became a full member of the EU (Kolbe, 2005).

The Finnish Defence Forces (FDF) consist of the Chief of Defence, the Defence Command, the Army, the Navy and the Air Force ("Facts ...Finnish...", 2005). As for Finland's paramilitary forces they presently only consist of the Frontier Guard (FG), which includes the coast guard and some air capabilities. The FG, really a border guard, is under the auspices of the Ministry of Interior and in peacetime the FG has the strength of 3100, but could be increased to 22000 during full mobilization when part of the FG would become under operational control of the defence forces (Mil. Periscope - Fin). Finland used to have a home guard/militia called the Civil Guard (CG), but the Treaty of Paris disbanded that in 1947 (Solsten, 1990).

With the end of the Cold War and the breaking up of the USSR, Finland nullified the 1947 Treaty of Paris, and the CG could have been re-created, giving Finland back its militia or home guard. Some Finnish citizens preferred this re-creation because they believed that the CG was one key to halting the Soviets in the 1939 Winter War. At the same time, many in Finland did not want the return of the CG because the name CG resurrects memories of the 1918 Finnish Civil War.

In place of the CG, the FDF in 2007 started creating locally placed emergency units to meet the needs of the communities for militia type components. This pilot project is called "Maakuntajoukot" (Provincial Forces (PF)). These PF, a *de facto* home guard, but fully controlled by the FDF, are built by placing voluntary reservists into company units. The PF members, who are reservists, receive all of their personal gear, except weapons, from the FDF and this gear is stored at their home (Toveri, 2007). "The idea is that these units can be rapidly used in peacetime assisting civil authorities in tasks that do not require use of force, like

search and rescue efforts. These units will also have a military task in case of threat, when they can be armed quickly for local defensive operations, like protecting installations. The PF are strictly under the FDF chain of command. On top of regular refresher training arranged by the FDF, the units may arrange additional voluntary training. If it includes use of arms, the FDF will provide weapons and instructors. The project has just started . . . The goal is to have PF units in every province in the next decade” (Ibid).

During 2007, with a total of only five PF company size units in the first test year, an accidental serious crisis happened in Nokia, a town in the middle of Finland. Some of these new PF units, even though not fully trained, were “mobilized” and used to help. They proved to be very successful and during 2008 another 23 PF companies are being activated working towards the goal of over 6000 PF troops in “Defence Companies” spread across the country. By 2010, these PF units will be involved in collective defence via host nation support for incoming allied troops. According to the Finnish Army Representative to Defence Command Finland, Colonel Pekka Toveri: “The Finnish Army is very satisfied with the highly motivated voluntary locally recruited PF troops who bring a lot of civilian skills and local knowledge to this new concept” (Toveri, 2008).

The present reserve system in Finland requires officers to attend refresher training for 100 days, NCOs for 75 days, and enlisted personnel for 40 days. The foundation of the armed forces of Finland is based on conscription and all male citizens starting at the age of 18 are eligible for mobilization. This requirement ends for privates at age 50 and for NCOs/officers at age 60 (Ibid).

Table 3: Approximate numbers of Finnish military personnel as of December 2007(Hackett, & Toveri, 2008)

Total active military*	Army*	Navy*	Air Force*	Civilians [some in reserves]	Mobilization: Estimated total including active and reserves.*
33800	25200	5150	3450	7200	275000

*Includes conscripts.

The Finnish armed forces, especially the Army, are structured into four regional commands or Operational Military Provinces. The Finnish army has led the world in the modern development of the brigade, rather than the division, as its highest unit. The Finnish army brigades are only at full strength when including the well-motivated and trained reserves (Toveri, 2007).

The active military has three assignments: territorial defence of Finland, support the civil administration in natural or man-made crisis situations, and involvement in international peacekeeping. The reserves only have two purposes: Finnish territorial defence and support the civil administration in domestic or international crisis situations. History has shown that no one should doubt the toughness and creativity of the Finns in the mission of territorial defence (Engle, 1992).

The dynamics affecting Finland's security are associated with the progress of Europe's security and defence policy, the expansion of the EU and NATO, and the progression of social and military occurrences in Russia (Jane's ... Central, 2007). Finland is involved in active bilateral cooperation with Russia and accomplishes widespread cooperation with NATO under the PfP programme. Although its official stance is neutral, Finland has had troops in Kosovo and Afghanistan supporting NATO. Finland also seriously participates in the crisis management operations of the EU including joining the EU Nordic Battlegroup (see Sweden below) (Honkamaa, 2007). "...Sweden's present government is ready to take part in international forces led by NATO known as the NATO Response Force (NRF). The Swedes hope that Finland would participate along with Sweden in NATO cooperation. The NRF decision ... would be a significant step ... in cooperation between Finland and Sweden. And one step at a time, Finland could be joining NATO" (Jakobson, 2007).

As of May 2008, the NRF decision has not been decided on by Sweden but was approved by Finland on a limited basis. Thus Finland can participate in the training for the NRF, but will not take part in the rotations except maybe to fill a gap if a rotation is short of some troops (Toveri, 2008).

Finland, similar to the other Scandinavian countries, is a very large player on the UN's international stage of conflict prevention and crisis

management (Finnish Security ..., 2004). Working through Nordic cooperation Finland provides over 700 personnel per year to international peacekeeping operations (Jane's Army-Fin, 2007). All of Scandinavia has been extremely helpful to the rebirth of the three Baltic states, but because of similarities in language and culture, Finland has been especially supportive to Estonia.

Considering the overall total population, Finland has quite broad commitments to European and international operations that are second only to the territorial defence of the homeland. On September 6th, 2007 in Washington, DC, the Finnish Minister of Defence described the undertakings of the military, including the reserves, in Finland as three concentric circles: one for UN missions, one for EU/NATO missions, and one for the defence mission of the homeland (Häkämies. 2007).

2.3 Iceland

During WWII, when Germany conquered Denmark in 1940, the United Kingdom occupied Iceland. In July 1941, approximately five months before the United States entered WWII, US soldiers replaced the British troops on Iceland because Iceland had no military to defend itself (Thompson, 2007:84). Iceland is one of the few countries of the world and the only member of NATO that still has no military. Since there is no Ministry of Defence, all defence issues are presently handled by the Defence Department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Vilhjalmsdottir, 2007).

Iceland does have a coast guard and police, but they come under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Justice and Ecclesiastical Affairs. The Icelandic Coast Guard consists of approximately 125 personnel with three lightly armed small ships. The police are broken into two segments: a 300 unarmed section and a 36 person heavily armed section called the Viking Squad or the Special Weapons and Tactics Team. In addition, the police have used search and rescue teams as auxiliary reserve forces for civil protection operations and other general supervisory tasks (Birgisson, 2007).

There has been some discussion within Iceland about increasing the size and organization of the police special operations by forming a reserve or "national guard" of approximately 500 to 1000 personnel who would be

able to provide some measure of independent self-defence for Iceland and assist with providing host nation support for incoming NATO troops as part of collective defence (Mil. Periscope – Ice, 2007). Draft legislation to create such a force has been presented to Iceland's Cabinet in March 2007, but as of February 2008 no action has been taken (Iceland's ... Justice Web, 2007). In addition, in December 2007, Mr. Bjorn Bjarnason, the Minister of Justice and Ecclesiastical Affairs, has stated that he will introduce legislation in the beginning of 2008 to develop a police reserve of 240 personnel to provide security for official visits of foreign dignitaries, for international conferences, and for use in civil emergencies (Birgisson, 2007).

Except for the small coast guard and the special unit of the police, Iceland's security and defence have depended for the last 56 years on its membership in NATO and its special relationship with the United States. The defence agreement signed on May 5th, 1951, in Reykjavik was amended on September 27th, 2006, in Washington, DC (Vilhjalmsdottir, 2007), and so, after 65 years of having U.S. military forces stationed in Iceland, the United States has withdrawn its forces on September 30th, 2006. Even though the United States promises to continue to defend Iceland, the government of Iceland felt it had to develop two new special agreements with other NATO members: Denmark and Norway.

Iceland's agreements with Denmark and Norway were both signed on April 26th, 2007, at the NATO Foreign Ministers' Meeting in Oslo and are very similar to each other. The agreement between Norway and Iceland is a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) and the one between Iceland and Denmark is entitled a Declaration. "Both of these terms (Declaration and MoU) are used to signal intent, rather than establishing clear legal obligations" (Birgisson, 2007).

These agreements could provide additional extra security to Iceland and the North Atlantic while continuing the NATO special training exercises in the Iceland area. The first of these exercises, named Northern Viking 07, was conducted in August 2007, and included some involvement of the United States and other NATO members (Iceland News Briefs, 2007).

Even though Iceland has no military, this has not prevented Iceland from being an active member of NATO and UN peacekeeping missions. In

2001, Iceland formed the Icelandic Crisis Response Unit (ICRU) and has since been involved in many worldwide activities using police officers, medical personnel, engineers, etc. in places like Kosovo, Afghanistan, Iraq, and Macedonia. It has been rumoured that Iceland might even consider providing a very limited amount of support to the EU Nordic Battlegroup, and this is from a country that is not a member of the EU and has only a total population of under one third of a million (Jane's ... Western, 2007).

2.4 Norway

Since neutrality did not save Norwegian shipping in WWI or stop German occupation in WWII, at the end of WWII Norway became one of the founding members of both NATO and the UN. The first Secretary General of the UN was Trygve Lie, a Norwegian (US State – Nor, 2007).

The Norwegian army officially started in 1628, but its largest wartime component, the Home Guard, the "Heimevernet" (HV), did not start until 1946 when the military was redeveloped after WWII (Kjosnes). "The HV was formed ... in response to the failed mobilisation of Norwegian defence when Germany invaded the country in 1940" (Jane's ... Western, 2007). Presently Norwegian defence consists of the Ministry of Defence, the Chief of Defence (CHOD), the Army, Navy, Air Force, and the HV (Granholt, 2007).

In the Norwegian peacetime armed forces, there are approximately 14000 personnel including approximately 8000 conscripts that are on active duty for one year (Rasmussen, 2007). Upon mobilization military strength would increase from the reserves of the HV (Knutsen, 2006). "The Norwegian Home Guard's mission is as follows: Secure key personnel, installations and infrastructure; Force Protection of own or allied forces; (and) at District Level: plan and lead military operations (and) support of civil society functions" (Kjosnes, 2008). "It is a force that can be activated at very short notice and whose members maintain their uniforms (and) personal weapons ... at home. Although the Norwegian HV is spread over the three forces, the (vast) majority ... wear Army green" (de Jong, 1992:46).

The Norwegian HV members receive some pay for training and they wear the same uniforms as the regular active armed forces. Also, Norway is

presently looking at developing some pension benefits for the HV forces (Kjosnes, 2008).

Most of the HV is basically a light infantry force held in reserve and available for active duty on short notice. The HV has been recently restructured from 80000 static personnel in 18 districts to 50000 in 13 districts (Mil. Periscope – Nor, 2007). The new HV includes approximately 5000 highly trained rapid reaction forces, 20000 follow on forces with annual training and 25000 reinforcement forces with less than annual training (“Norwegian Def.”, 2006:19).

The Land HV maintains a ground defence of Norwegian territory. “Its organization mirrors that of the (13 districts of the) HV. These are divided into departments and “areas” which in peace, crisis or war are under the district commanders of the HV, who have the main responsibility for the territorial defence of Norway” (Jane’s ... Western, 2007).

Table 4: Approximate numbers of Norwegian military personnel as of December 2007 (Granholt, Hackett & Kjosnes, 2008).

Total active military*	Army*	Navy*	Air Force*	Civilians [some in HV & reserves]
13200	7500	3500	2200	5127
Total Home Guard [HV]*	HV Actively Involved*	HV Rapid Reaction Force	Full Time HV	Mobilization: <i>Estimated</i> total including active, HV, & reserves.*
50000	25000	5000	530	69500

*Includes conscripts.

Each “area”, generally a platoon size unit, is the basic HV element. “Home Guard weapons depend on mission, but include rifles, machine guns, mortars and anti-tank guns” (Tripp, 1991:60).

The Naval HV specializes in coastal survey, control, and protection. Its tasks include force protection, protection against terrorism, search and rescue missions, and overall, support to the operations of the armed forces (Norwegian Armed Forces, 2007).

The Air HV is specialized to secure the Air Force bases. It contributes guards, surveillance, medical service and NBC (nuclear, biological and chemical) protection. Overall its tasks include force protection and protection against terrorism (Knutsen, 2006).

“The HV has a national mission and will, of course, contribute to the collective defence of NATO – in Norway (by providing excellent host nation support)” (Kjosnes, 2008). HV personnel also can transfer on a short term and/or long term basis into other branches of the defence establishment for actions outside of Norway. As some HV units have improved and are approaching the training level of active units, they will soon be allowed to have whole units transfer into other military branches for international operations and thus this will be another way that the HV can be part of the NATO collective defence programme. “Generally speaking the quality of the HV has improved radically over the last five years, this due to better materiel and improved training” (Ibid).

The Norwegian HV has a special relationship with the National Guard (NG) of the USA through the State of Minnesota (MN) whose early settlers included Scandinavians. For the last 35 years over 100 HV personnel have trained each year with the NG in Minnesota, and over 100 MN Army and Air NG personnel train each year with HV personnel in Norway (There has been no Naval NG in the USA since the end of WWI). This relationship was the basis of the State Partnerships that were formed after the Cold War between the NGs of several states and the HGs of some countries that had been behind the “Iron Curtain” e.g. Estonia/Maryland, Latvia/Michigan, Lithuania/Pennsylvania, and Poland/Illinois (Minnesota web, 2008). A full time MN NG Lieutenant Colonel states the faith NATO officers have in the HV: “I have observed Norwegian HG troops in exercises in both Norway and in the USA. I rank the Norwegian HG as very professional, well equipped and well trained. I would not be concerned if I had to depend on these HG troops to help defend our fighting positions” (Olson, 2008).

In addition to the HV, each branch of the military has its own small reserves to supplement its forces in the case of a national emergency, with the Air Force tripling in size when fully mobilized. Unlike the HV forces that have their own missions, the reserves of the three branches of the

armed forces are designed to fit into the tasks of the active forces upon mobilization. (Granholt, 2007)

The king is head of state of the Kingdom of Norway and in that role he is also the commander-in-chief of the armed forces. "The Minister of Defence heads the Royal Norwegian Ministry of Defence and carries the constitutional and political responsibility for the activities of the Armed Forces" ("Norwegian Def.", 2006:7). The Minister of Defence expresses the political basis for the Norwegian Armed Forces (NAF) through the published Strategic Concept that "... sets the security and defence policy framework for the doctrines and operational activities of our Armed Forces" (Norway's Ministry of Defence, 2005). The majority of the people of Norway favour participating in NATO and supporting the EU's positions in the UN. Recently Norway, along with Denmark, has increased its exercise activity in the North Atlantic filling the void left with the 2006 withdrawal of US forces from Iceland (see Iceland above).

The above implication is that Norway, with an active duty military of only about 15000, has the confidence to provide extra security to another country. Norway is only able to do this because of its very dependable and high quality reserve and HV system that allows the country to feel that its home territory is secure. Another sign that Norway feels secure is its willingness, even though not a member of the EU, to participate in the EU Battlegroup System by joining the Nordic Battlegroup (see Sweden below) ("Norwegian Def.", 2006:6).

2.5 Sweden

Sweden, the most populated of the Nordic countries, is interestingly also the largest country in land area of all the EU/NATO nations in the Baltic Sea Region (Thompson, 2007:23). During and after WWI Sweden remained neutral. In the 1930s, there were abortive efforts at Nordic defence cooperation, Sweden's policy was armed neutrality during WWII, and it currently still officially remains non-aligned (US State – Swe, 2007).

Since Sweden is a parliamentary democracy, the defence establishment comes under the political authority of the prime minister as the leader of Parliament. The prime minister appoints a defence minister who exercises administrative control over the armed forces, but operational control is by

the senior military officer who is responsible to the Swedish Cabinet that includes the defence minister as well as the prime minister. The senior military officer, the Supreme Commander of the Armed Forces, has the assistance of an integrated defence staff and is responsible for the Joint Forces Command, land, naval, and air forces as well as the territorial defence forces (Petersson, 2007).

The organization of the Swedish Armed Forces is the cadre system. With the end of the Cold War, Sweden now has no active units as defined by OSCE's 1992 Vienna Document (i.e. all units are maintained at less than 15 per cent of allowed strength). Thus the use of reserves, conscripts and volunteers can really allow the cadre units to defend Sweden on very short notice (Svensson, 2007). For the purpose of total defence, Sweden has been divided into three military districts: north, central, and south. It is the responsibility of the three districts to conduct training, set up territorial defence and develop cooperative programmes with the civil agencies (Jane's ... Central, 2007). Also, Sweden has a coast guard of approximately 600 personnel, but these are under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Commerce except upon mobilization when they become subordinate to the Ministry of Defence (Mil. Periscope – Swe, 2007).

Table 5: Approximate numbers of Swedish military personnel as of December 2007 (Hackett, Stolt & Ullestad, 2008).

Total active military*	Army*	Navy*	Air Force*	Civilians [some in HG & reserves]
23587	9787	7900	5900	7275
Total Home Guard [HG]	HG Actively Involved	HG Rapid Reaction Force	Full Time HG	Mobilization: <i>Estimated</i> total including active, HG, & reserves.*
33600	28,000	5000	400	100000

*Includes conscripts.

Even though there is much debate within Sweden to eliminate conscription and make the military 100 per cent professional, at present the conscript system still continues many years after the end of the Cold War. Starting in 2006, the majority of conscripts served 11 months (instead of the previous seven to 15 months). Following the 11 months of active service, the conscripts are required to be part of the reserves or HG (Hemvärnet) until

they reach the age of 47. The reserves have periodic refresher training of about three weeks every four years for enlisted personnel. NCOs and officers serve three weeks every two years (Swedish Armed Forces, 2006, p. 11). Conscripts can only be used within Sweden unless they volunteer for overseas duty. Approximately 30 per cent of the conscripts do volunteer to help with Sweden's vast European and worldwide assignments (Jane's-Central, 2007).

“Since the beginning of the 1990s, interstate tension has decreased ... in Sweden's neighbourhood ... The Baltic Sea region is, to a previously unforeseen extent, characterized by stability & close ... cooperation. The further European integration, especially the memberships of Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania and Poland of the EU and NATO, has decisively strengthened also Sweden's security. These positive developments are deemed to continue” (Vienna Document 1999, 2006).

With the reduction in interstate tension in the Baltic Sea region not only comes a decrease in the size of the Swedish military but also a change in the functions of the different segments of the military. As in the other Scandinavian countries, one change is the increased dependence on the HG and the improved training provided to the HG (Stolt, 2007). Since the end of the Cold War, a particularly important reason for the increased use of the HG in Sweden has been to have a war deterrent that allows a financially larger “peace dividend”. But even with a greater HG, Sweden still has serious problems with financing the armed forces according to a recent article (Nygards, 2008).

The Swedish HG has a long history with roots in the local militia groups of olden times. The present HG was organized after a vote in the parliament (Riksdag) in May of 1940 as neutral Sweden wanted to make sure to have a method to protect local families and homes in case of a potential invasion with WWII escalating in the whole of the Baltic Sea Region. The modern Swedish HG is the largest part of the territorial defence of Sweden. The personnel of the HG are volunteers and are drawn from the local communities. Besides the HG's military missions, it is also designed to support the civil community in peacetime disasters (Swedish Home Guard, 2007).

The HG includes approximately 7600 individuals from voluntary organizations (like the Voluntary Flying Corps, the Red Cross, the Swedish Women's Voluntary Service Corps, the Swedish Working Dog Clubs, etc). In addition, because military traditions are associated with military music and marches, the HG has over 30 local military bands, consisting of approximately 1500 voluntary musicians (Ullestad, 2008). Those members of the voluntary defence organizations who are not members of the HG make up an additional approximate half million citizens of Sweden who, in times of total emergency, could and would be types of paramilitary forces (Mil. Periscope – Swe, 2007).

The HG's voluntary members are divided into about 60 battalions (formerly about 80 battalions) spread across HG Districts, one or more in each municipality and some HG Areas. The HG trains for combat tasks annually plus sustains a high degree of preparedness by keeping uniforms, weapons and even ammunition at the members' homes. In addition to Swedish Army training centres and schools, the HG has its own school in Norsborg, near Stockholm (Jane's ... Central, 2007).

Sweden is not a member of NATO, and is only a member of the PfP and the EU defence programmes. Consequently Sweden is not as much involved in collective defence planning as Denmark, Iceland and Norway. But the HG, as the main modern defender of Swedish territory, is very well prepared to provide host nation support thus doing its part in collective defence for Sweden and her allies (Ullestad, 2008).

Members of the Swedish HG when training receive a stipend that includes their expenses, and members do wear the same uniforms as the regular active armed forces. Even though many come to the HG immediately after conscript training, all members of the HG are volunteers (Svensson, 2007).

As the following statement shows, even though Sweden has been a non-aligned nation for many years, because of NORDIC cooperation, officers of NATO nations have had opportunities to view the Swedish HG while working with the HV of Norway. One full time field grade officer observing Sweden's HG has had very positive impressions: "... I have also had chance to work with soldiers from Sweden and Finland (while training with Norway), commanded a Swede (HG) platoon during a PfP exercise, and witnessed one of their (HG) soldier's during this year's NOREX 35. I

have found them to be high quality soldiers and their leaders to be the equal of anyone. Their and our HG/NG Units are a wise use of funding, they are quality citizen soldiers that bring many other qualities and skills to the table. The benefit they provide, as a bridge, both ways between the actives & citizens, is immeasurable..." (Worde, 2008).

The other Scandinavian nations and Sweden, although relatively small in population, play a very large role on the European and world stage in peacekeeping missions. Sweden has, as part of the EU/OSCE, NATO's PfP, and the UN, taken part in Bosnia, Kosovo, Georgia, Afghanistan, Congo, Ethiopia/Eritrea, Sierra Leone, Sudan, etc. When the three Baltic states first became independent, Sweden played a very large role in providing assistance (Wadensjo, 1999).

Within the EU, Sweden has become the lead nation of the Nordic Battlegroup along with Estonia, Finland, Ireland, and Norway. This is one of several rapid reaction force structures of about 1500 troops set up by the EU's European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP) (Svensson, 2007).

Even though Sweden is not a member of NATO, it was one of the first nations to join NATO's PfP programme when formed in 1994. The PfP agreement has given Sweden a far-reaching relationship with the Allies, including actions such as joint training exercises and partaking in NATO's operational programmes that allows Sweden to become a member of the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council (EAPC) in 1997. Sweden is now one of the Allies' most visible supporters, among the many PfP nations, with over 700 troops spread in Afghanistan and Kosovo under the NATO flag. The role Sweden has played for many years with NATO is unique, but a role that can set an example for other neutral countries like Ireland that has now joined the EU's Nordic Battlegroup (Hendrickson, 2007).

It is interesting to note that, for the first time since the 1815 Congress of Vienna, Sweden has made a significant shift to its foreign and security policy of neutrality. In December 2007, the Swedish Defence Commission made the following announcement as part of a press release: "Sweden will not take a passive stance if another EU Member State or other Nordic country suffers a disaster or an attack. We expect these countries to act in the same way if Sweden were affected" (Stolt, 2007).

Conclusion

The programmes in the Nordic countries that promote interoperability, although complicated to coordinate, help to strengthen the credibility of the militaries in the eyes of NATO and any potential foes. The programmes increase the ability of the reserve/guard and standing forces of these northern states to train successfully to NATO standards no matter if a country is a member of NATO or not.

There is considerable debate among Western nations about potential new members of NATO and the defence mechanisms of the EU and how this improves security in Europe. According to a specialist on world security, Barry Buzan, international security is a five dimensional issue (military, political, economic, societal and environmental) and joining NATO only assists with one or maybe two of these dimensions. Some Nordic countries have also joined the EU. This step has helped add another one or two of Buzan's security dimensions. Through a combination of joining NATO and the EU, as well as generally working closely together with other European nations, maybe all five of the dimensions have been addressed for this northern tier of Europe (Buzan, 1991).

The positive attitudes of Scandinavian countries concerning joint cooperation in northern Europe should be contrasted with Russia's antagonistic attitude, which drives some of the external debate about the security of the Baltic Sea Region. Since the end of the Cold War should Russia be seen as the enemy or even a threat? Russia had hoped to develop a buffer zone between it and the West or at least a trading zone, but no one in the Baltic Sea Region is interested in being part of this "gray zone". "Russia's threats have produced precisely the opposite of their intended aim" (Blank, 1998). Russia's unpredictable actions, as demonstrated by its recent cutting off natural gas to the Ukraine, create tension and only fortify Nordic interest in looking westward to both NATO and the EU (Ruutsoo, 2006). As stated by a member of the Finnish Parliament on September 4th, 2007, in the Financial Times, "neutrality is a thing of the past" (Salolainen, 2007).

In an article, Lieutenant General Hillingsoe of Denmark states that a major reason for membership in a collective defence organization like NATO is that if a country is a member of NATO it does not matter if it is

defendable or not because an attack on one is an attack on all. Thus, an enemy would think twice before it attacks small nations, if it knows that all NATO would mobilize. A key statement the general makes is that for a group of small nations to survive they must work together and they must have a total defence system that mobilizes the whole nation. He and others advocate the theory that to mobilize the whole country, a strong reserve and guard system is needed that is quick to respond with credible plans and weapons (Hillingsoe, 1999).

In the field of collective defence, the Scandinavians have believed for the West (NATO/EU) to be able to help them, they must be strong enough to hold on until reinforcements arrive. The Nordic countries have helped themselves by adopting NATO standards for interoperability, participating in NATO exercises, working together, and developing both total and collective defence systems which include credible reserve and guard structures (Archer, 1998).

The reserve component concept first developed by the Swedes, Prussians (Germans), and other Europeans in the 17-1800s is very significant today in Scandinavia (Corvisier, 1979): "This idea that the army was not to fight the next war, but was to train the nation to fight the next war, should not be underemphasized! ... Theoretically, the Prussians believed, when the reservists marched off to war, his hometown support marched (symbolically) with him" (Gray, 1992).

This concept of total mobilization is what allowed Finland to successfully defend itself in WWII against the USSR. The guard and reserve systems of the Nordic countries are becoming professional. Therefore, the reserve forces are more easily able to mobilize within a few hours to protect strategic locations and be part of collective defence by providing host nation support. Also, if necessary, the home guard forces are able to form plausible partisan forces, which would provide an additional deterrent to any enemy thinking of attacking (Nordberg, 1994).

The home guard concept continues to develop in Scandinavia: three of the countries have HG organizations, and Finland is developing its "Maakuntajoukot" (Provincial Forces (PF)). The PF are in reality a HG that is under centralized control of the regular military forces similar to other Scandinavian HGs. In addition, Iceland is having political discussion

about the development of a “National Guard” to supplement its armed police.

As previously stated, one governmental reason for more interest in greater use of HGs is budget constraints and the reduced cost of HGs vs more expensive active forces. But as Sweden is finding, even wide use of the HG does not completely compensate for insufficient funding from parliament. Gradually the HG, if not properly funded, cannot train and be equipped enough (Ullestad, 2008). Since HGs are deeply rooted in society, HG members could form voluntary political associations whose purpose would be to influence elected officials to keep finances adequate. Extra Congressional funding for the NG, in addition to regular funding through the active forces, is the successful method used by the US NG to keep abreast of needs. The US NG members use the voluntary National Guard Association of the USA and other social organizations for this purpose.

The Scandinavian HGs have developed many similarities including compensating for training: some countries reimburse for meals and travel and some countries pay for certain types of training. Norway is even looking into developing a retirement programme for members of the HG, which indicates a willingness to integrate the HG with the total military as is the case of the US NG and its retirement programme (US NG part time members can start collecting retirement at age 60 after 20 years of service. The US Congress might soon lower this age to 55). One major difference between the three Nordic countries is that HGs in Denmark and Sweden are filled with volunteers while in Norway individuals can be drafted into the HG. Table 6 below compares the troop strength of the home guards in the five Nordic countries:

Table 6: Approximate numbers of Scandinavian Home Guard personnel as of December 2007 (Birgsson, Kjosnes, Siebken, Tovei, Ullestad, Winkler, 2008).

Country	Total in HG	Actively Involved	Rapid Reaction Force	Full time
Denmark	51500	23000	3000	616
Norway	50000	25000	5000	530
Sweden	33600	28000	5000	400
Finland	In early stages of building a 6000 person local force.			
Iceland	In the very early stages of political discussions about maybe developing a National Guard.			

All the HGs of the Scandinavian countries are becoming completely integrated into the military structure of each country by wearing the same uniforms as the regular forces, by the use of the same basic rank structure and by having the same standard equipment as the regulars. This intermixing of regular forces and HG troops is similar to recent changes in Britain with its Territorial Army (TA) and in the United States with its NG. This intermixing encourages HG professionalism and a better understanding and appreciation by the regulars of the needs and peculiarities of the HG. During a national emergency, when every second counts, a smoother transition is possible if all parties have a better understanding of each other. In the world, especially since the U.S. 9/11 terrorist attack, rapid reaction is extremely important. Iceland's earthquake in May 2008 shows that even a natural emergency can need auxiliary emergency guard forces that are well integrated into the system.

Officers of NATO countries, like Britain, have high regard for the HG troops of Scandinavia and consider them "... impressively professional and certainly on a par with our own ..." (Roads & Jenkins, 2008). In addition, the following quote from the commanding general of the U.S. 29th Infantry Division shows the high regard for the HG troops of Scandinavia: "While serving as the OIC of a Baltic Challenge (training exercise) for the U.S. Army National Guard I observed the HG soldiers from Norway, Sweden and Denmark. They were properly equipped and all performed in a very professional, well trained manner" (Hayden, 2008).

Since the end of the Cold War the Nordic HGs have changed from strategic reserves into operational reserves for homeland defence and security. The future could hold deployments for them to be used not just within their own country but also anywhere within the Nordic countries and the EU. This would be similar to U.S. NG units that while performing their "state militia" duties can be deployed outside their home state anywhere within the continental USA. As stated above, Norway is already preparing to do something similar to this for its HG.

Based on information from the many individuals interviewed, it is obvious that the reserves in Finland in the PF format (like a HG) and the HGs of Denmark, Norway and Sweden have greatly improved and become better equipped, trained, and employed since the end of the Cold War. In an unofficial survey of several non-Nordic defence attachés from two

continents stationed in Washington, DC, all agreed that Nordic officers are of a high calibre, but they suggested that the HG of Norway was the best trained. The one area that allows Norway to look possibly better than the others is its involvement in America's Small Unit Reciprocal Exchange Programme (SUE).

Norway and Germany are the only Baltic Sea countries that are part of this programme, but other European countries do belong (Britain, Belgium, etc). SUE is open to non-NATO countries as well (e.g. Australia & Singapore), and allows reciprocal training exchanges of company size units every year for training and 50 per cent of the costs are paid by the USA. Countries formerly behind the "Iron Curtain" might be able to get 100% coverage by the USA (Werley, 2008).

In the case of Norway, for over 35 years the HG of Norway and the NG of the USA, specifically the Minnesota NG, have trained together. Every year the Norwegian HG has had exposure to training opportunities from a non-Nordic source. Therefore long before the end of the Cold War, the recent European reductions in the size of active forces, and the consequent improvement of reserves and HGs, Norway has had some special company size training for its HG. Maybe this long-term special cooperative training can partly explain Norway's preparedness. Naturally, Norway's annual training with the U.S. military is only one factor, but it is something that could be explored by other Baltic Sea countries. The training opportunities allowed by law under the State Partnership Programme (SPP) between nations (like Estonia with Maryland, etc.), could be expanded into SUE by a memorandum of understanding (MOU) before the SPP ends in its present format.

As the following summarizes, and the above sections on each country help demonstrate, the Scandinavian nations are carefully modifying their reserves and HGs to deal with current situations: "Throughout the world military reserves are changing. National governments are transforming the relationships between their active and reserve components; the allocation of roles and responsibilities among reserve forces; and the way they train, equip, and employ reservists. One central precept is driving these changes: Nations no longer consider their reservists as strategic assets suitable primarily for mobilization during major wars. Whereas previously they managed reservists as supplementary forces for use mainly during national

emergencies, major governments now increasingly treat reservists as complementary and integral components of their “total” military forces”. (Weitz, 2007)

Acknowledgements

The author would like to recognize the late Brigadier Mart Tiru, Brigadier Vello Loemaa, and Lieutenant Colonel Harri Ints all of the Estonian Defense Forces for their assistance provided on this project. In addition special thanks are due to the many others who were interviewed and corresponded with the author.

The same author published an earlier article (Dec. 2006) in the *Journal of Baltic Studies* looking at the reserves and home guards of the three Baltic states and also an unpublished version of that paper in 1999 at the U.S. Army War College, Carlisle, PA. These papers were presented at the 17th and 20th Association for the Advancement of Baltic Studies (AABS) Conferences in Washington, DC.

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¹ This paper uses the words Nordic countries and Scandinavia interchangeably, but the word Scandinavia can also mean only Denmark, Norway, and Sweden (Olsen, 2008).