

**ASSEMBLY OF WESTERN EUROPEAN UNION**

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**THIRTY-FIFTH ORDINARY SESSION**

**(First Part)**

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**State of European security – intervention forces  
and reinforcement for the centre and the north**

**REPORT**

submitted on behalf of  
the Committee on Defence Questions and Armaments  
by Mr. Speed, Rapporteur



*State of European security – intervention forces  
and reinforcement for the centre and the north*

REPORT <sup>1</sup>

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by Mr. Speed, Rapporteur*

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between the national units of the individual member nations

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1. Adopted unanimously by the committee.

2. *Members of the committee:* Mr. Kittelmann (Chairman); MM. de Beer (Alternate: *Maris*), *Fourré* (Vice-Chairmen); Mr. Alloncle (Alternate: *Baumel*), Mrs. *Baarveld-Schlaman*, MM. Cariglia (Alternate: *Mezzapesa*), *Cox*, De Decker, Derycke (Alternate: *Kempinaire*), *Ewing*, *Fiandrotti*, *Fillon*, *Fioret* (Alternate: *Fassino*), *Irmer*, *Jung*, *Konen*, *de Kwaadsteniet*, Mrs. *Lalumière*, MM. *Pecchioli*, *Scheer*, *Sinesio*, *Sir Dudley Smith*, MM. *Speed*, *Steiner*, *Steverlynck* (Alternate: *Uyttendaele*), *Sir John Stokes*, Mr. *Zierer*.

N.B. *The names of those taking part in the vote are printed in italics.*

*Rapporteur's Preface*

In preparation for his report:

*The Rapporteur took part as an observer (on 22nd and 23rd September 1988) in the exercise Free Lion in the Federal Republic of Germany.*

He also had the following interviews:

*11th October 1988*

*Headquarters of the rapid action force (FAR), Maisons-Laffitte, France*

General Henry Préaud, Commanding Officer, FAR.

*The Rapporteur was also invited to the presentation of the FAR at Canjuers, near Draguignan, on 25th October 1988.*

*9th and 10th November 1988*

*SHAPE, Mons, Belgium*

General John R. Galvin, United States Army, Supreme Allied Commander, Europe;

General Sir John Akehurst, United Kingdom Army, Deputy Supreme Allied Commander, Europe;

Vice Admiral Fiorenzo Rosso, Italian Navy, Deputy Chief-of-staff, Support;

Rear Admiral James Weatherall, Royal Navy, Deputy Assistant Chief-of-staff, Operations;

Minister Counsellor Don Gelber, Special Assistant for International Affairs;

Mr. Harry Brown, Special Assistant, Strategic and global events; Captain Nick Paige, Royal Navy, Deputy United Kingdom National Military Representative;

Col. Farrar-Hockley, United Kingdom Army;

Lt. Col. Heidler, Danish Army, Operations Division;

Commander Rath, German Navy, Policy Division.

*14th December 1988*

*Ministry of Defence, The Hague, Netherlands*

Mr. Frits Bolkestein, Minister of Defence;

Rear Admiral H. van Foreest, Director of Personnel, RNLN;

Commodore J.W. Stuurman, Deputy Chief Operations, Naval Staff.

*Headquarters RNLMC, Rotterdam, and Royal Netherlands Marine Corps, Doorn*

Major-General Willem J.I. van Breukelen, Commandant RNLMC;

Col. G.G. Weenink, RNLMC, Commanding Officer, Marine Barracks, Doorn.

*15th December 1988*

*Dutch Parliament, The Hague*

Mr. W.F. van Eekelen, former Minister of Defence.

*The Rapporteur was invited to attend the inauguration ceremony of the Franco-German brigade which took place in Böblingen, Federal Republic of Germany, on 12th January 1989.*

After the ceremony, discussions were held with:

General Gilbert Forray, French Army, Chief of the Army Staff;  
 Lieutenant-General Henning von Ondarza, German Army, Inspector of the Bundeswehr;  
 Brigadier-General Helmut Willmann, Ministry of Defence, Bonn;  
 Brigadier-General Jean-Pierre Sengeisen, French Army, Commandant, Franco-German  
 brigade;  
 Colonel Günther Wassenberg, Germany Army, Deputy Commandant.

*24th January 1989*

*Headquarters 24th Airmobile Brigade, Catterick, United Kingdom*

Brigadier A.I.G. Kennedy, OBE, Commanding Officer;  
 Major Charles Sloane, Gordon Highlanders, Chief-of-Staff.

*7th February 1989*

*NATO Air Base, Geilenkirchen, Federal Republic of Germany*

Col. C.M. van den Hoven, RNLAF, Deputy Commander;  
 Col. Eugene Deibert, USAF, Assistant to the Commander for Special Projects.

In the course of his visit, the Rapporteur was given an in-flight demonstration of the NATO AWACS (airborne warning and control system).

*The committee as a whole held meetings and was briefed as follows:*

*Norway*

*13th June 1988*

*Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Oslo*

Mr. Dagfin Stenseth, Director, Planning Department.

*Storting, Norwegian Parliament, Oslo*

Mr. Thor Knudsen (Conservative), Vice-Chairman of the Committee on Defence;  
 Mr. Rikard Olsvik (Labour Party), Elected Secretary of the Committee on Defence;  
 Mrs. Marit Lovvig (Conservative), member of the committee;  
 Mr. Age Ramberg (Christian Democrat), member of the committee;  
 Mrs. Aud Blattmann (Labour Party), member of the committee;  
 Mr. Hans J. Rosjorde (Party of Progress), member of the committee;  
 Mrs. Kaci Kullmann Five (Conservative), member of the committee;  
 Mr. Jan Petersen (Conservative), member of the committee;  
 Mrs. Ingeborg Botnen (Labour Party), member of the committee.

*Institute for Defence Studies*

Mr. Olav Riste, Director of the Institute;  
 Mr. Rolf Tamnes, senior research associate;  
 Lt. General Tonne Huitfeldt, Strategic Studies Co-ordinator;  
 Dr. Tomas Ries, research fellow;  
 Mr. Ragnvald Solstrand, Director of the Defence Research Institute;  
 Vice Admiral C. Lütken, research associate;  
 Dr. Finn Sollie, expert consultant;  
 Captain Gjelsten, Naval Staff College;  
 Mr. John Kristen Skogan, research fellow, Institute of International Affairs.

*MS CARNEVAL, Oslo Fjord*

Mr. Johan Jorgen Holst, Minister of Defence.

14th June 1988

*Ministry of Defence, Oslo*

Mr. Finn Molvig, Director-General, Ministry of Defence;  
Rear Admiral Per Sollien, Headquarters Defence Command;  
Mr. Tom Eidesen, Policy Division;  
Captain Arne Sperbund, Headquarters Defence Command.

*Headquarters Allied Forces Northern Europe, Kolsas*

Rear Admiral K.J. Steindorff, GE N, Chief-of-Staff, AFNORTH;  
Major-General J. Schriver, DA A;  
Rear Admiral J. Ruth, DA N;  
Brig. General P.J. Rowe, USMC;  
Brig. General D.R. Williams, CA AF;  
Colonel J.M. von Radowitz, GE A;  
Colonel L. Ness, NO A.

*CS FINNMARKEN (at sea)*

Commodore Per Anton Enghaug, Commanding Officer, Narvik Naval District.

15th June 1988

*Headquarters Defence Command Northern Norway, Reitan*

Brigadier Alv Midthun, Chief-of-Staff;  
Colonel Per Bothun, No AF, Deputy Chief-of-Staff Plans and Operations;  
Captain (N) Torbjorn Romuld, No N, Allied Naval Forces North Norway.

*Bodo Main Air Station*

Brigadier Egil Omdal, No AF, Commanding Officer Bodo Main Air Station;  
Major Rolf Noel, No AF, Commanding Officer 331 Squadron.

**Denmark**

16th June 1988

*Foreign Ministry, Copenhagen*

Mr. Uffe Ellemann-Jensen, Minister for Foreign Affairs.

*Folketing (Danish Parliament), Copenhagen*

*(morning)*

Mr. Bjoern Elmquist (Liberal), Chairman of the Foreign Affairs Committee;  
Mr. Hans Haekkerup (Social Democrat), member of the committee;  
Mrs Ritt Bjerregaard (Social Democrat), member of the committee;  
Mr. Anker Soergensen (Social Democrat), member of the committee;  
Mr. Hanne Severinsen (Liberal), member of the committee;  
Mrs Connie Hedegaard (Conservative), member of the committee;  
Mr. Per Stig Moeller (Conservative), member of the committee;  
Mr. B. Bollmann (Centre Democrat), member of the committee.

*(afternoon)*

Mr. Knud Enggaard, Minister of Defence.

17th June 1988

*Defence headquarters, Vedbaek*

Lieutenant-General Joergen Lyng, Acting Chief of the Defence Staff;  
Lieutenant-Colonel O.L. Kandborg;  
Major T. Kruger;  
Commander L. Kragelund;

Major B. Cornelius;  
Major O. Kruger;  
Major T.E. Vimmerslev;  
Colonel S. Schriver.

*Stevnsfortet*

Major-General H. Havning;  
Commander (SG) P. Garde.

***Iceland***

*20th June 1988*

*NATO base, Keflavik*

Rear Admiral Eric McVadon, USN, Commandant of the Iceland Defence Force;  
Colonel L. Aikman, Operations Officer;  
Lieutenant-Colonel R. St. Laurent, Logistics Officer.

*21st June 1988*

*Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Reykjavik*

Mr. Helgi Agustsson, Deputy Permanent Under-Secretary;  
Mr. Stula Sigurjonsson, First Secretary of the Defence Department.

*Althingi (Icelandic Parliament)*

Mr. Johann Einvarðsson (Progressive Party), Vice-President of the United Althingi;  
Mr. Kjartan Johannsson (Social Democrat), Deputy Chairman of the Committee for Foreign Affairs;  
Mr. Pall Petursson (Progressive Party);  
Mr. Ingi Bjorn Albertsson (Citizens Party).

*Pingholt*

Mr. Hannes Hafstein, Permanent Under-Secretary, Ministry for Foreign Affairs.

***United Kingdom***

*3rd November 1988, London*

The Hon. Archie Hamilton, MP, United Kingdom Minister of State for the Armed Forces.

*4th November 1988, HQ RAF Strike Command, High Wycombe*

Air Chief Marshal Sir Patrick Hine, KCB, FRAeS RAF, Air Officer Commanding in Chief;  
Air Vice Marshal Anthony Woodford, Chief-of-Staff.

***France***

*6th February 1989, Paris*

Mr. Jean-Pierre Chevènement, French Minister of Defence.

***Federal Republic of Germany***

*25th and 26th April 1989, Bonn*

Mr. Helmut Schäfer, Minister of State for Foreign Affairs;  
Mr. Alfred Biehle, Chairman of the Parliamentary Defence Committee;  
Mr. Willy Wimmer, Parliamentary State Secretary.

The committee and the Rapporteur wish to express their special thanks to all the ministers, officials and senior officers who briefed the Rapporteur or the committee and replied to questions, and also in particular, to the Secretary of the Committee on Defence Questions and Armaments, Mr. C.R.K. Cameron.

***Draft Recommendation***

*on the state of European security –  
intervention forces and reinforcement for the centre and the north*

The Assembly,

- (i) Welcoming the improved relations between NATO and Warsaw Pact countries, the Soviet withdrawal from Afghanistan and the arms reduction agreements that have been achieved or are being negotiated;
- (ii) Noting nevertheless that the USSR and its allies are still maintaining a high level of arms production and that the present disarmament agreements have been reached by NATO maintaining its own high level of security and unity of purpose;
- (iii) Recognising that it will be politically difficult to maintain western defence budgets in real terms, let alone increase them;
- (iv) Underlining therefore the increased urgency of making as cost effective as possible existing procurement, personnel, and command, control and communication systems;
- (v) Stressing the key strategic importance to NATO of reinforcement and resupply from North America to Europe, which itself can act as a deterrent in time of tension, and increases the importance of the northern flank,

RECOMMENDS THAT THE COUNCIL

Urge member governments to recommend to NATO:

1. That the highest priority be given to improving command, control and communication systems:
  - (a) firstly, aircraft “ identification friend or foe ” (IFF) systems, to achieve a high-grade common standard in NATO air operations which is now long overdue;
  - (b) secondly, in interoperability of tactical radio equipment between multinational units;
  - (c) thirdly, in communication, tactics and doctrine, for better control of the land/air battle;
2. That France be encouraged to join the United Kingdom in taking part with its four Boeing E-3 AWACS *ab initio* in the training and development of the teams destined for the alliance air defence system aircraft;
3. That in view of the importance of the northern flank in securing maritime and air superiority for transatlantic reinforcement and resupply, the United Kingdom and the Netherlands should reach an early decision on new amphibious ships;
4. That in view of the withdrawal of Canadian forces from the northern flank, apart from their replacement by other allies, consideration should be given to the skilled elements of the force d’action rapide being assigned to Norway;
5. That still greater efforts be made on weapon and ammunition standardisation, interoperability of equipment and more cost-effective joint procurement ventures;
6. That through the member countries of WEU the following steps should be taken to give practical expression to the European pillar of defence:
  - (a) encourage more multinational units such as the United Kingdom-Netherlands landing force and the Franco-German brigade;
  - (b) take specific action to allow at an individual level the exchange of military personnel between countries to enhance their awareness of European co-operation, give them greater opportunity for travel and a more interesting work environment, and serve as a useful recruiting incentive at a time when the demographic levels are making recruiting most difficult;
7. That proper recognition and understanding be given to greater concepts of speed and flexibility in European forces to meet the changing situation in Europe. The doctrines and equipment which underly the force d’action rapide and 24 Airmobile Brigade are good examples that could be emulated and enhanced throughout the alliance (although dedicated helicopter lift capacity for 24 Brigade is an essential priority).



## *Explanatory Memorandum*

*(submitted by Mr. Speed, Rapporteur)*

### *I. Introduction*

1.1. In recent years, the Committee on Defence Questions and Armaments has produced a range of reports concerning various aspects of European security:

- "The state of European security", November 1982, Rapporteur: Mr. Blaauw (Document 936), looked at maritime surveillance, certain national contributions to allied defence and conventional weapons and NATO strategy;
- "European security and burden-sharing in the alliance", November 1983, Rapporteur: Mr. Wilkinson (Document 959), dealt with a perennial subject under the headings of: the concept of allied defence, measuring and comparing the defence effort, the transatlantic debate, the European pillar and defence production;
- "The state of European security", May 1984, Rapporteur: Sir Dudley Smith (Document 971), considered the implications of membership of NATO, the status of individual countries and intermediate-range nuclear forces;
- "The state of European security - the central region", May 1985, Rapporteur: Dr. Miller (Document 1018), reviewed levels of forces in the central region and the rôle of allied forces on the central front.

Other reports have provided regular updating of the situation in the Mediterranean (the southern flank) (the latest being Document 1073, October 1986, Rapporteur: Mr. Kittelmann), and further afield.

1.2. The aim of this present report is:

- (a) to examine aspects of allied reinforcement for the central region and the north, in the light of current ideas regarding intervention forces generally and bi- and multilateral co-operation in particular;
- (b) to highlight various problem areas and propose possible solutions.

1.3. Producing such a report as this in the context of today's rapidly evolving political situation is no easy matter. Initiatives and proposals abound, for example, as East and West manoeuvre on the arms control scene. There are

indications that we may be about to enter a state of "super-détente" in Europe and nobody hopes that this may be so more fervently than your Rapporteur.

1.4. However, whatever one's hopes for the future, there is no escaping today's realities which remain major preoccupations for we Western Europeans, especially where our defence is concerned. We all trust that the present spirit of good-will and openness will prevail and be translated into genuine acts to reduce and eventually remove any perceived threat. That "trust" will be eroded, however, if capabilities are not modified to match recently-declared intentions. In another report ("Current aspects of arms control", Rapporteur: Mr. de Beer), being prepared in parallel with this one, these changing dimensions and relationships are examined in detail and recommendations made which should help achieve "super-détente" even more quickly, if implemented by the Council.

1.5. Meanwhile, the Committee on Defence Questions and Armaments has also to consider the present setting, where in the context of reducing working populations, sometimes faltering national economies and changing public attitudes towards defence, the governments of member countries and other NATO allies have to make important decisions in order to secure the best use of diminishing resources.

1.6. In 1988, the committee was invited by the governments and parliaments of Denmark, Iceland and Norway to make a fact-finding visit to those countries to see some of the problems of the "northern" areas at first hand and for exchanges of views on the state of European security. Although none of the countries concerned is a member of Western European Union, it is worthy of note that the visit took place in the run-up to Portugal and Spain's membership of the organisation and that a great deal of interest was shown in Denmark and Norway, by both parliamentarians and the media, in the conditions for WEU membership. This subject is considered further in a current report being prepared by the General Affairs Committee on "The future of European security", Rapporteur: Mr. van der Sanden.

### *II. Geography*

2.1. Alliance interests in the northern flank area centre on NATO's Northern European Command which is one of the major subordinate commands of Allied Command Europe. This is a

region of contrasts. From Kirkenes on the Barents Sea to the River Elbe, the command stretches for 2 800 km and comprises Norway, Denmark and Schleswig-Holstein and Hamburg north of the Elbe in the Federal Republic of Germany. In the north it borders the Soviet Union and Finland; to the east is neutral Sweden and the Baltic Sea, while the south-east boundary is the inner German border. The Norwegian archipelago of Svalbard, the island of Jan Mayen and the Danish territories of Greenland and the Farøes are all under the responsibility of the Supreme Allied Commander Atlantic (SACLANT) and so is the major part of the Norwegian economic zone. Iceland also has a key geographical position and rôle in alliance defence.

2.2. The coastline of Norway runs for thousands of kilometres with its hundreds of large and small fjords and inlets. The land area of the country presents a rugged picture with innumerable hills, valleys and mountains and, for both geographical and economic reasons, rail and road communications are limited. On the whole the area is very narrow with many fjords and south of Narvik, for example, Norway is no more than 7 km wide. Denmark and Schleswig-Holstein on the other hand present a contrast with flat plains and only a few natural defence barriers. Compared with Norway their rail and road communications are good.

2.3. The Commandant General of Britain's Royal Marines, Lieutenant General Sir Martin Garrod, in an interview for NATO's Sixteen Nations, sums up the situation in the north:

“ The problems that we face in arctic operations are those out of our control. Firstly climate, which means that all our men have to be trained and equipped to fight in the Norwegian winter. It is not so much the cold which is the problem but rather the variation in conditions caused by the effect of the Gulf Stream. In North Norway in January and February, for example, the temperature may be  $-30^{\circ}\text{C}$  or lower, or it may be  $+5^{\circ}\text{C}$  and raining. A cold dry man can fight indefinitely, a cold wet man will rapidly become a casualty. The terrain, particularly in the north, is rugged. This makes cross-country movement difficult and tends to canalise vehicles and tracks along valleys, which of course favours the defender. Inland communications, road and rail, are tenuous. The main trunk road, the E6, running from Finmark to Oslo is in places tortuous and vulnerable, and the single track railway running north from Oslo terminates at Bodo, some two-thirds of the way up Norway. The coastline is vast, some 13 000 km long, indented by innumerable fjords and scattered with some 150 000 islands. This coast does however give us

an infinite number of landing areas, protection from the elements and the enemy, and allows us a waterborne means of tactical and logistic movement. ”

2.4. Norway (323 886 sq. km) has a population of just over 4 million, Denmark (43 069 sq. km) has a population of 5 million and Schleswig-Holstein and Hamburg (16 400 sq. km) together have a population of 4.5 million. Thus, the population of the whole area amounts to about 14 million compared to the more than 100 million inhabitants in both the central and southern regions of NATO in Europe.

2.5. The Northern European Command would be of crucial importance in a war between the Warsaw Pact and NATO. It stretches across a third of the European NATO area, dominates the sea routes from the Baltic in the south and in the north from the Barents Sea into the Atlantic. It also sits astride the direct air routes from Central Russia to the North American continent. It provides important early-warning facilities and would constitute an important base for allied counter-offensive operations.

### *III. Defence forces in the area*

#### *(a) Norwegian forces*

3.1. In Norway military training of soldiers and partly also of non-commissioned officers is based on general conscription. A certain percentage of regulars is recruited for special units and tasks. The national service period is 12 months (plus four call-ups for refresher-training) for the army and 15 months for the navy and the air force.

3.2. The Norwegian land forces will amount to some 225 000 men on mobilisation. The standing land forces are, however, limited to North Norway. These forces are well-trained and -equipped and the brigade in North Norway (Troms) is supported by medium tanks and medium artillery. In South Norway the standing units consist of His Majesty the King's guard battalion, one medium tank squadron and some other minor units. On mobilisation, an additional 12 brigades will be called up. The local defence forces mobilised in battalion or company groups comprise another 100 000 men. To this should be added some 85 000 men of the home guard.

3.3. Types of aircraft at present in use in the Royal Norwegian Air Force are the F-16, F-5, P-3B Orion (maritime patrol), C-130H transport and the UH-1B Sea King (SAR) and Lynx helicopters. At present the air force has five squadrons of combat aircraft. In addition, there are one squadron of helicopters for army support and one transport squadron. Norway is participating in NATO's airborne early-warning project

and has a forward-operating facility for the force of 18 aircraft at Oerland air base at Trondelag (Mid-Norway). A number of airfields have been built in Norway, financed nationally and under the NATO infrastructure programme. Others have been and are being extended and modernised.

3.4. The main operational area for the Royal Norwegian Navy is North Norway. The Norwegian naval forces consist of five frigates, two corvettes, 14 submarines, 46 fast patrol boats (missile and torpedo/gun boats) two mine-layers, nine mine-sweepers and one mine-hunter, seven landing craft and a support ship. Naval manning in peacetime is at 70%. The main naval base is at Haakonsværn in Bergen on the west coast (South Norway). In North Norway there are smaller bases at Ramsund and near Tromsø (Olavsværn) and a substantial number of coastal artillery fortresses. The coastguard has its main base at Sortland in North Norway. Five coastguard ships, three of them carrying a helicopter, are manned by military personnel.

*(b) Danish forces*

3.5. In Denmark one-third of the peacetime army are volunteers, whereas the augmentation force and the mobilisation force consist of conscripts with a training of nine to 12 months. Conscripts can be called up for refresher-training for a total of 60 days during the first nine years after their initial training period. Beyond this, they can be called up for short-time musters. The Danish Defence Act of 1985 provides for a personnel peacetime strength of the army of 13 000 men, 7 000 of whom form the standing force consisting of volunteers only. The 6 000 soldiers of the augmentation force are in a high state of readiness and can be called up at very short notice without implementing any alert or mobilisation measures. In a time of tension, the standing force, reinforced by the augmentation force, will form the covering force of about 13 000 men. The total strength of the wartime army, after mobilisation of the field army reserve and the local defence forces, is about 72 000 officers and men and a home guard of approximately 78 000 – or all in all 150 000 men.

3.6. The peacetime standing force is organised in five armoured infantry brigades – the three in Jutland forming a division, two battalions and the Bornholm combat group. These are partly manned but they possess all their operational equipment. The requisite fire-power and heavy equipment is thereby maintained at a high state of readiness and the integration of mobilisation forces is consequently made easier. After mobilisation, these forces would be built up to full wartime strength. Two brigades would be formed – three regimental combat teams and seven regions with from one to four infantry battalions

all supported by artillery, engineers and anti-tank units. Their equipment totals 200 medium tanks, 48 light tanks, 650 armoured personnel carriers, 72 self-propelled howitzers and a number of helicopters.

3.7. For the Danish navy the following minimum force objectives are established: two destroyers, three corvettes, five fishery-protection ships with helicopters, 16 fast patrol boats, three submarines, seven mine-layers, three mine-sweepers, eight small submarine-hunting vessels, 26 other vessels and light helicopters (although not all ships are in commission continuously). A new construction programme to meet these objectives is now in progress. Naval shore establishments include three naval bases, fortresses, coastal and mobile radars and combat divers. Wartime personnel strength is about 10 000 to which should be added some 4 300 navy home guard men and women.

3.8. Royal Danish Air Force units are available in a high state of preparedness in peacetime. There are now 89 fighters in four squadrons of F-16 and two squadrons of F-35 Draken. Additionally, the air force maintains eight I-Hawk missile squadrons and a number of transport and inspection planes and rescue helicopters. The air force's activities are supported by a modern control and warning system and the Danish air defence system operates within the framework of NATO's air defence ground environment (NADGE) system. NADGE operates 24 hours a day in a high state of readiness and consists, in addition to the planes and missiles, of a control and warning system which includes a number of radar stations, for example, one on Bornholm well to the east. Denmark also participates in the NATO airborne early-warning project in which long-range surveillance and early warning is made possible by airborne radar coverage.

*(c) German forces (northern Germany)*

3.9. The military forces of the Federal Republic of Germany stationed in Schleswig-Holstein and Hamburg, north of the River Elbe, consist of forces of all three services (half of them are conscripts with a service period at present of 15 months, increasing shortly to 18 months). The army is primarily represented by the Sixth Armoured Infantry Division (headquarters at Neumünster) with about 24 000 men (peace- and wartime strength) which is the largest in the Bundeswehr. This division consists of two armoured infantry brigades, one armoured brigade and the Home Defence Brigade 51 (the latter due for disbandment under the "army 2000" project). Besides conventional artillery battalions, the artillery regiment of the Sixth Armoured Infantry Division includes a Lance battalion. An air defence regiment forms also part of the divisional troops.