



Total Defence for a Stronger Gotland

Summary of final report

In parallel with rebuilding Sweden's military capabilities, work is ongoing to equip the nation's civil preparedness within the framework of new total defence objectives. Given the strategically important location of Gotland, in 2017 the Swedish Government tasked the Swedish Armed Forces and the County Administrative Board of Gotland with developing cooperation and organisation within the total defence of the island. The final report on this assignment, the Total Defence Development Initiative, has now been delivered. The hope is that the work conducted on Gotland will contribute to the nationwide build-up of total defence.

Government assignment

In 2018, an initiative was launched to strengthen total defence in the county of Gotland. The island of Gotland has been designated as strategically important to the security of the Baltic Sea and the Swedish Government was keen to see change work in the region accelerated.

The assignment is intended to strengthen total defence capabilities and create a permanent cooperation organisation on Gotland with the requisite personnel and material resources. The initiative has come to be known as the Total Defence Development Initiative.

Work has been conducted by the County Administrative Board of Gotland and the Gotland Regiment (P18) in collaboration with stakeholders including Region Gotland, the island's business community, voluntary defence organisations, the Swedish Civil Contingencies Agency (MSB) and a number of other government agencies. The Government is keen for the Total Defence Development Initiative to serve as a role model as total defence is built up in other parts of Sweden.

Points of departure

The assignment was formulated with the intention of providing a certain amount of leeway to adapt the work as it progressed. While, to a certain extent, the rebuilding of total defence in Sweden

commenced as a nationwide endeavor, there was a lack of a clear strategic objective, direction and sense of scale as points of reference. As such, a number of points of departure set the tone for the initiative:

- It was to be based on existing statutory framework (acts, ordinances and regulations).
- The scale of all work was to meet the demands of war, rather than of civil emergencies. By starting from a heightened state of alert, peacetime emergency preparedness is also strengthened, leading to greater robustness across the threat-level scale.
- There should be a willingness to improvise rather than waiting for national guidelines. The work was to be substantive, with measures implemented where possible.
- Total defence planning was to be based on three months of resilience as described by the Ministry of Defence¹ and the Swedish Defence Research Agency's Type 4 scenario².
- An adequate level of security protection shall be implemented during peacetime emergency preparedness work.

Three tracks of total defence planning

Work on the Total Defence Development Initiative has followed three main tracks:



Joint evaluation and reflection. Photo: Mikael Carlsson, County administrative board of Gotland.

(1) **Total defence planning for the protection of vital societal functions & critical infrastructure** is the basis for strengthening the county's energy supply, food supply and healthcare provision. This work is based on the 11 sectors³ with vital societal functions & critical infrastructure identified by the MSB, each of which has a working group consisting of representatives from relevant national, regional and local stakeholders. Working groups have been tasked with mapping needs within each sector for 90-day resilience from the perspective of operating on an island; i.e., operations should be able to function independently of the mainland.



Refugee reception in Slite Harbor in exercise 2021. Photo: Tomas Ängshammar/ Gotland Regiment.

(2) **Organisational development for a total defence** is the internal work to increase capabilities within the County Administrative Board and the Swedish Armed Forces on Gotland. The aim has been to conduct exercises, training and other activities to build up the capability of public authorities to command and collaborate during a heightened state of alert. Important elements of this capability include the war and emergency management organisation, security, legal counsel, personnel provision, training, exercises, continuity management, supply and logistics, internal communication, as well as follow-up and auditing. The ongoing rebuilding of total defence on Gotland has created good opportunities to develop and establish cooperation between the military and civil defence from the outset.

¹Ministry of Defence (2017). Motståndskraft, Inriktning av totalförsvaret och utformningen av det civila försvaret 2021–2025, Ministry Publications Series (Ds 2017:66) p. 76

² Swedish Defence Research Agency (FOI) (2014). FOI Memo 5089 Project Studies of Civil Defence: Threat scenarios in the development of civil defence.

³ Action Plan for the Protection of Vital Societal Functions and Critical Infrastructure (2013) MSB 597.

(3) **Total defence cooperation during a heightened state of alert.**

On track 3, a method has been developed for total defence collaboration, primarily between the Swedish Armed Forces and the County Administrative Board, but also with other civilian stakeholders. The method is based on the MSBs handbook on common ground for collaboration and leadership, but with the emphasis on a heightened state of alert. The method has been presented and discussed with national, regional and local stakeholders and tested and evaluated in workshops and exercises.

Cross-perspectives

Security has been one important perspective in the Total Defence Development Initiative. Considerable emphasis was placed on security measures at the start of the initiative and systematic security management has permeated the entire process. This work has contributed to the establishment of procedures for secure information sharing in total defence planning and to cement trust between the involved stakeholders.

Gender equality and human rights have been given due consideration throughout the development of the initiative in sector working groups. The intention of highlighting these perspectives is to be able to reach balanced decisions in difficult situations and to ensure that no one is overlooked. External experts have contributed training and process support to increase understanding of the impact of societal crises on men, women and children.



Slite Harbor. Photo: Axel Öberg/Swedish Armed Forces.

Results

The work performed during the Total Defence Development Initiative has created broad competence and laid the foundation for ongoing long-term efforts to build up a total defence for a

strong Gotland. By beginning with worst-case scenarios, and based on the experience gained, it has also been possible to strengthen everyday emergency preparedness. A large number of stakeholders have been involved in this work and, in combination with the information and training initiatives that have been implemented, much of the experience gained has been widely shared with others. The aim of this final report and its appendices is to assist and inspire others who are working with similar issues.

The mapping of vital societal functions and critical infrastructure sectors with the goal of achieving 90-day resilience as an island has now begun and has thus far yielded a list of measures as a basis for continued planning. Templates and procedures have been updated and contingency plans for the county have been started. Over the course of the four years, the County Administrative Board has also developed a structure for a war and emergency management organisation, trained its staff and held exercises, and prepared a long-term plan for personnel provision. A model has been developed for cooperation between the civil and military defence during a heightened state of alert and exercises held. This development work has resulted in increased knowledge of the various stakeholders' roles and responsibilities in both a civil emergency and wartime.

In addition to results obtained on the three tracks, several other areas have been explored. These include the cultural environment, reinforcement resources available from voluntary defence organisations, a survey of the attitudes and behaviour of the people of Gotland in an emergency and wartime, as well as extensive efforts over the course of the initiative to share experiences and specific solutions with other stakeholders within and beyond Sweden's borders. The results have been made available in the final report and its appendices.

Conclusions

One unavoidable conclusion to be drawn from the initiative is that the transition to a total defence demands time, flexibility, involvement and support at all levels of relevant organisations and society at large. The meeting between the military and civil defence stakeholders is now on different terms than it once was and thus demands new approaches. One vital factor for success is the building of relationships and trust between stakeholders. Among the most important conclusions of the initiative are:

- that building up knowledge about total defence takes time and considerable resources from both civilian organisations and the Swedish Armed Forces. This encounter demands a change to organisational culture and the emergence of a “total defence culture”, something that implies stronger trust between, knowledge of and collaboration between people and organisations. The initiative has been driven by the joint implementation of concrete plans and measures;
- the dependence of the Swedish Armed Forces on civilian functions for the supply of critical resources makes demands of the capabilities and resources of both civilian stakeholders and the military;
- it is important that the Swedish Armed Forces can prepare and share unambiguous plans at an early stage and specify their needs at a regional level. This is a first step in dealing with the challenge of prioritising society’s resources;
- total defence requires broad commitment at all levels of society in both the private and public sector. The benefits for the business community, assignments and the division of resources must all be clarified in order to maintain commitment and perseverance, as well as to increase understanding of the role of businesses in securing supplies at regional and national level;
- creating functioning structures for cooperation during a heightened state of alert demands knowledge and understanding of one’s own and others’ information needs in the event of any given external threat. Establishing cooperation models at regional level requires clarity regarding how cooperation is being achieved at national level;
- the level of self-sufficiency in Sweden must be increased and supply systems must be

- decentralised to increase the robustness of society. This will contribute to achieving island operation, an approach that can be applied in all parts of Sweden. Emergency stocks must also be established and administered within all vital societal functions & critical infrastructure;
- at regional level, Sweden is highly dependent on national solutions, such as payment solutions, emergency stocks and framework agreements between public authorities and businesses;
- civil contingency legislation should be reviewed in its entirety, with a view to supplementation, clarification and modernisation. A number of enabling acts are ill-suited to the societal developments that have unfolded. Most of this legislation has not been amended since the end of the 1990s;
- the overall war and emergency management organisation at the County Administrative Board is adapted to function in all situations regardless of the state of civil preparedness. One prerequisite for the long-term planning of and support for total defence is that it is implemented within the framework of the regular line organisation throughout the authority;
- systematic security management in terms of personnel security, physical safety and information security is a prerequisite for both building up total defence and creating a trusting collaboration.

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