



FOLKETINGET
STATSREVISORERNE



FOLKETINGET
RIGSREVISIONEN

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Extract from Rigsrevisionen's report
submitted to the Public Accounts Committee

The Ministry of Defence's protection of military areas

1. Introduction

1.1. Purpose and conclusion

1. The Ministry of Defence must protect Denmark's military areas against espionage, sabotage, burglary and theft. These areas, including barracks, naval bases and air bases, are used to carry out military tasks, handle classified military information and store the Danish Defence's weapons, ammunition and explosives.

If the Ministry of Defence does not provide sufficient protection of the military areas, there is a risk that unauthorised persons gain access to the areas and insight into military secrets. In the worst case, this could pose a threat to national security, for instance by undermining or destroying the Danish Defence's ability to conduct military operations.

Classified information

Classified information is information that, in military work, is considered sensitive and must be protected. This may include information about military operations and materiel.



Military area.

Photo: Jakob Eskildsen/Ritzau Scanpix

2. In 2024, the Danish Defence Intelligence Service (DDIS) reported that the threat against Denmark had become more serious. The report is based, among other things, on the assessment that *"Russia is acting more boldly towards countries in Europe and, among other things, has carried out sabotage actions."* According to DDIS, foreign states – especially Russia and China – are engaged in espionage against Denmark. DDIS assessed that *"Both Russia and China are trying to gain access to information about political processes, foreign, security and defence policy and military capabilities"*.

Documents from the Ministry of Defence concerning the protection of military areas state that the threat landscape against the Danish Defence has changed significantly, and the threat of espionage and sabotage now appears considerably more serious and wide-ranging. According to the ministry, this places heavy demands on detecting and preventing unauthorised access to the ministry's military areas.

Since 2024, the Danish Parliament has allocated approximately DKK 315 billion for investments in the Danish Defence until 2033. Consequently, the amount of military materiel, such as weapons and tanks, that the Danish Defence must store and protect will increase over the coming years. The volume of classified military information is also expected to increase.

A 2023 report from the Ministry of Defence states that investments must be made in the protection of military areas so that they meet applicable security requirements. The ministry reported that approximately DKK 38 billion was allocated in 2023 to restore the Danish Defence's foundation, including the refurbishment of its buildings.

In October 2024, the Danish media TV 2 revealed problems with the Ministry of Defence's protection of several of the Royal Life Guard's weapon depots. According to TV 2, the alarms at the weapon depots did not work, there were holes in fences in several places, and the guards protecting the areas lacked assault alarms. At the same time, suspicious persons and drones had been observed around the areas. The ministry did not wish to comment on the specific cases but informed TV 2 that it is well known that there is a backlog in the maintenance of the Danish Defence's buildings, which also to some extent affects their level of security.

3. The requirements for how the Ministry of Defence must protect the military areas against threats are described in the ministry's own security regulations. According to the regulations, military areas must be protected against espionage, sabotage, burglary and theft. The ministry must inspect whether the requirements are met.

4. The purpose of the study is to assess whether the Ministry of Defence has ensured sufficient protection of military areas against espionage, sabotage, burglary and theft.

Rigsrevisionen initiated the study in February 2025.

5. The Ministry of Defence has assessed that some of the security issues identified by Rigsrevisionen in the study are confidential. According to the ministry, public disclosure could damage Denmark's security and make it easier to commit serious crime. Rigsrevisionen has accommodated the ministry's request for confidentiality, and the report therefore only contains general and summarised descriptions of the problems, with authorities anonymised.

The Ministry of Defence has engaged in a constructive dialogue with Rigsrevisionen and has proposed specific changes to enable publication of as many details of the study as possible. The ministry has received a report on all the issues identified by Rigsrevisionen in the study.



Conclusion

The Ministry of Defence's protection of military areas warrants criticism. The ministry has been aware of serious deficiencies in the security of military areas for several years. Consequently, the ministry has not provided sufficient protection of the areas against a range of threats and does not comply with its own security requirements. This may have significant consequences for the Danish Defence and has, in specific instances, affected security.

The Ministry of Defence's inspections show extensive deficiencies in security. The ministry has assessed security as "unsatisfactory" every year from 2020 to 2024. "Unsatisfactory" is the lowest possible assessment. This means that during the period, security has not met the majority of the key requirements or has failed to meet certain highly important requirements. Rigsrevisionen's study shows that the overall security has declined during the period.

The deficiencies include, for example, missing alarms, inadequate guarding and lack of soundproofing.

Rigsrevisionen notes that the Ministry of Defence has failed to make sufficient progress in fixing the security deficiencies during the period. Rigsrevisionen's study shows that several of the deficiencies have been highlighted repeatedly over several years. The ministry lacks an overview of its remediation of the deficiencies and therefore also lacks an overview of its prioritisation and handling of the most critical deficiencies.

The Ministry of Defence has stated that it has established a steering group tasked with developing a strategy to improve the protection of military areas. The strategy will set out how the ministry should prioritise projects established to address the security deficiencies. The ministry expects the strategy to be completed by March 2026. The terms of reference for the steering group state that all key requirements and standards for the protection of military areas cannot be met within a foreseeable number of years.

Rigsrevisionen notes that the Ministry of Defence has specific knowledge from the inspections about where the deficiencies are and how critical they are. In this light, Rigsrevisionen finds that the ministry should begin remedying the most critical deficiencies immediately and in parallel with the work of the steering group.