PREFACE

As politically responsible head of the Defence Ministry’s ambit, I am pleased to introduce the first joint communication policy in our combine. Effective and timely communication is crucial in the normal run of things, internally as well as externally.

We constitute one of the country’s largest workplaces with about 27,000 employees and about 60,000 volunteers, distributed over large parts of the country and in many of the world’s focal points. This contributes to defining the way we communicate. Efficient internal communication is not least essential in a time of frequent organizational restructuring, in order to avoid insecurity and uncertainty.

The tasks in the ambit of the Ministry of Defence cover a wide field and affect the everyday lives of many people. This means that many people are interested in knowing what we do, and there is much public and media attention. The attention has intensified in later years, among other things because of the steadily increasing international involvement of the Danish Ministry of Defence.

We ourselves have a great responsibility for and a duty to inform the Danish public that we are solving a vital task for society. We work for peace and security at home and abroad. In other words, the tax payers need to know about the services we provide in return for the about 20 billion DKK allocated to our ambit every year.

Communication has been a prominent issue on the agenda in later years. We have improved substantially. A joint communication policy is a good tool for improving even more in areas of both internal and external communication, in the local authorities as well as across the conglomerate. In the future, I shall give out a communication prize to units that have made a significant difference in the internal or external communication effort.

Søren Gade
Minister of Defence
A JOINT COMMUNICATION POLICY

In the ambit of the Ministry of Defence we work for peace and security, at home and abroad. Our tasks span from the participation of Danish soldiers in international operations to securing Danish territory by land, air, and sea. We contribute to securing the robustness of society against accidents and disasters – created by for instance terrorism, storms, or power failure. We also work with navigation security, environmental surveillance, pollution control, and life-saving services.

The tasks affect security and everyday life for both employees and the population, in Denmark as well as in countries where international tasks are being carried out. This makes heavy demands on task performance, including the securing of effective communication in relation to the surrounding world, as well as within and between the authorities of the ambit.

We therefore have a joint policy for how we wish to communicate within each authority, between authorities, and with the surrounding world. The policy ensures at the same time coordination and diversity across the combine.

VISION
The Ministry of Defence as a conglomerate must develop into an efficiently communicating unit at all levels. We ensure that our employees and the outside world know and understand our goals, tasks, and results.

External communication: the outside world can expect clear, prompt, and open communication from the combine of the Ministry of Defence.
Internal communication: Both employees and the authorities of the combine must take an active share in clear, prompt, and open communication.

MISSION
The purpose of the communication policy is to ensure an unequivocal common understanding of the purpose of our communication. Communication is a tool for establishing knowledge of and understanding for our work. We must continuously develop and boost communication within the organization and with the surrounding world. Communication and dialogue must be a natural part of everyday life for management and employees alike.

We want to be acknowledged for our active dialogue across the ambit and with the outside world. We want to create a dynamic web communication and an effective crisis communication. We want to boost a joint identity within our combine by creating better coherence and coordination in our decentralized organization.

The policy will be revised in 2007
GROUND RULES OF GOOD COMMUNICATION

The ground rules accommodate the ambition of the combine for how we wish to communicate.

1. **We lead an active dialogue** – We create commitment, work satisfaction, and responsibility with a good internal and external dialogue. We want to communicate with the employees first – especially on decisions affecting them. We share our knowledge and seek out knowledge contributed by others, in order to create better results.

2. **We are open** – We are accessible - with respect for the special limitations applying to public authorities, especially to the defence. We show willingness and ability to communicate – also in situations when the surrounding world requests information which is not in our immediate favour.

3. **We are offensive** – We take initiatives and are active setting the agenda, internally as well as externally. We are alert and prevent the emergence of rumours and myths. We follow up on misunderstandings, and give our account of the stories.

4. **We are credible** – Our credibility is crucial to our employees' trust in us and to the trust of the outside world. This means that there must be coherence between words and action. We communicate correctly and timely.

5. **We are easy to understand** – We communicate comprehensibly to others than ourselves. It is our responsibility that other people understand our messages. This is why we use clear, concise, and correct language.

6. **Communication is an integrated part of problem-solving** – We always communicate with a purpose. Communication must be incorporated early on in our work with for instance new Bills, projects, and tasks. We deliberate why, what, with whom, how, and when we communicate.
IT IS EVERYBODY’S RESPONSIBILITY

All authorities are responsible that communication within their sphere meets with the demands of the communication policy. Responsibility for communication comes with responsibility for the task.

Communication is not only a responsibility for leaders and communication specialists. All employees have co-responsibility for communication. Managing staff members have a special responsibility to create an efficient internal and external communication, and to lead the way with their good example.

OUR TARGET GROUPS
The conglomerate of the Ministry of Defence deals with a varied range of tasks. It is a principle that we communicate in a manner so that others than ourselves may understand. Communication must be adapted to the target group.

Priority of and relations to the various target groups vary from one authority to another, and can be more carefully determined by the individual authorities in the decentralized communication strategies.

Below some of our common target groups:

COMMON TARGET GROUPS:
- The public
- The elected
- The media
- The employees
- Future employees
- Relatives of employees
- Opinion makers
- Other public authorities
- International collaborators

EDUCATION AND DEVELOPMENT
Both internal and external collaborators make demands on our ability for dialogue and communication. Therefore we must continuously improve internal and external communication. This calls for training, re-education, and, in this connection, the courage to try out new ways of communicating.

MEASURING AND FOLLOW-UP
Communication can and should be measured. Measuring gives us an idea of the efficiency of our communication. We must document how far the individual authority and the combine have taken the implementation of the communication policy. Measuring and follow-up are crucial to the actual implementation, success, and further development of the policy.
As a main rule, measuring should be aimed at specific communication activities. Measuring can make demands on resources, but even a tight budget may allow space for minor measuring and evaluation. It is better to measure on a small scale, ‘only’ taxing working hours, than not to measure at all.

Evaluation and follow-up on communication activities can be a part of the governing relations between the ministry and the authorities in its ambit.

STRUCTURE
The communication policy is divided in two. The first part defines the overall framework and principles for effective communication. The second part details the visions and principles in a series of strategically chosen focus areas. They are the areas that will receive special attention in 2006 and 2007. At each focus area we begin with stating the combine’s attitude to good communication. After this we set up the goals for how we may translate the attitude to practical terms.

The action strategy describes the activities initiated by the Ministry of Defence and the authorities of its ambit, together or individually, to carry out the vision for the communication policy. Priority, responsibility, and time plan for the activities are stated in the communication action plan 2006-2007.

Manuals on best practices for communication are being worked out on a continuous basis. The manuals are published on the joint combine intranet as well as on the authorities’ local intranet.

WHO ARE INCLUDED
The communication policy applies to all authorities in the ambit of the Ministry of Defence. This makes it a general basis for communication – also to the locally applied policies and strategies.

In parts of the Ministry’s combine – such as the intelligence service, the special force, and the judge advocate corps – communication may be limited in certain cases, due to basic considerations for functioning conditions, personnel security, and national and international collaborators. Of course also personal cases, commercially confidential issues, and ongoing operations call for special precautions.

THE STRATEGIC FOCUS AREAS FOR THE COMMUNICATION POLICY ARE:

- Internal communication
- Cooperation with the external media
- Crisis communication
- Internet
FOCUS AREA – INTERNAL COMMUNICATION

ATTITUDE
The many authorities, varied tasks, and diverse groups of employees of the Ministry of Defence demand a focus on coordination. The internal communication must strengthen cooperation and sharing of know-how with a view to joint goals, among other things, in order that the combine is perceived as a whole. Well-functioning internal communication enhances enthusiasm, job satisfaction, adaptability, and responsibility among the employees of the combine.

Internal communication ensures that both authorities and employees are sufficiently well-informed to be able to act and assume co-responsibility for problem-solving, internally as well as externally. Consequently, internal communication is a prerequisite for effective problem-solving. At the same time it is the basis for external communication. The employees are ‘ambassadors’ for the conglomerate, and through their contact to the surrounding world they contribute to establishing knowledge of and understanding for our tasks and results.

Internal communication is also a management tool, and as such a management responsibility, from the individual conversation and professional coaching to the general information flow from top level.

Internal communication is communication within an authority and between authorities in the ambit of the Ministry of Defence.

This means that we focus on these goals for internal communication:

1. **We communicate timely, clearly, and comprehensibly.** We communicate so that others than ourselves may understand. Our communication is goal-oriented, and the message is differentiated, adapted to the recipient.
2. **We make information accessible.** Information on what goes on in the combine must be easily accessible to employees and authorities. All employees must have the necessary insight in their own case area and be well informed within their own authority sphere.
3. **We coordinate our activities.** When we need to make a decision and initiate activities, we must consider whether other authorities may contribute to solving the task, and whether the decision affects other authorities.

This is what we do to reach our goals:

1. **We communicate timely, clearly, and comprehensibly.** This means that: We work with our language. Each authority may work out a language policy, based on overall combine directives for language, abbreviations, etc. - We use illustrations to emphasize our messages and clarify our points.
2. **We make information accessible.** This means that: We need to establish a joint combine net – as a supplement to the authorities’ own nets, where we can share joint combine knowledge and information. - The authorities ensure that relevant information is available on their net. - We ensure that the employees who do not
have access to the electronic network in a normal workday are kept informed some other way. The authorities decide on the best suited channel in each case. - We use classification with care, as it impedes exchange of information between the authorities and the employees. - We state a contact person in mails, letters, advertisements, intranet, etc., in order that we may be easily contacted by the recipient.

3. **We coordinate our activities. This means that:** We ensure knowledge of the goals and decisions of the authorities across the combine. - We ensure that the internal communication of the combine and its authorities form part of various measurements. - We make an annual leaflet for internal use. It is meant to give a speedy overview of the tasks of the individual authorities. The leaflet is to be found on the individual authorities’ homepages.

**RESPONSIBILITY**
The Ministry of Defence ensures the initiation of specific joint ambit activities.

The management of the individual authority is responsible for securing that its internal communication is on a par with the principles of the joint ambit communications policy. The authorities may supplement the joint communication policy with supplementing guidelines.

All employees are responsible for active mutual sharing of relevant information, also between authorities. The employees are also obliged to search out any information relevant to their problem-solving.
FOCUS AREA – COOPERATION WITH THE (EXTERNAL) MEDIA

ATTITUDE
Society holds a natural interest for the sphere of the Ministry of Defence. We are one of Denmark’s largest workplaces, and at the same time we have a large group of volunteers connected to our organization. This gives us a special obligation to inform about what we do.

The media world is an important source for communicating information on our activities to politicians, the public, employees, leaders, and other interested parties. How the media present us is very important to the public knowledge of our goals, tasks, and results, and it is also important to our reputation in the general public. The purpose is therefore to achieve the best possible cooperation with the media.

We want to create and develop good relations to the media, also in situations when we are exposed to criticism. This means that we want to give the journalists the best possible conditions to communicate any issues to the public.

In parts of the combine of the Ministry of Defence, communication may be limited on occasion, due to the constitutional limitations regarding functioning conditions, security of personnel, and national and international collaborators. Further, individual personal cases, commercially confidential relations, and ongoing operations may add to these limitations.

This means that we focus on these goals for the cooperation with external media:

1. **We are accessible.** Accessibility and speed are prerequisites for good cooperation with the media. We are a public conglomerate, which makes it easy for the media to achieve knowledge and information on our goals, tasks, and results. We are accessible – with respect for the special limitations that apply to public authorities, and especially the defence.

2. **We offer timely and adequate information to the media.** We deliver specific and timely information, both when it comes to actual information, background information, statements, right of access, etc. We also take the initiative to keep the public informed. The point of departure is not only what we want to tell, but also the issues that interest the outside world.

3. **We give priority to cooperation with the media as a management task.** The management ensures that the cooperation with the media is a priority task in our daily work. It must take place in cooperation with the responsible for press relations. As head of a unit you represent your unit externally towards the press.

4. **We coordinate media handling internally.** We inform and coordinate internally on ongoing cases to prepare for possible enquiries from the media. For us to have a good preparedness, we must be ahead of current trends that may interest the media.

This is what we do to reach our goals:

1. **We are accessible. This means that:** The conglomereration of the Ministry of Defence must to the greatest possible extent always be able to communicate with
and through the media. – Whenever a journalist enquires, we make sure that the right person calls back to the journalist. We respond as fast as possible, and as far as possible before deadline. – We are prepared to make shortcuts in the chain of command, if the demand for information from the outside world calls for speedy action.

2. **We offer timely and adequate information. This means that:** Contact to the media should be considered at the initiation of new tasks and projects by the employees responsible for their solution. – We render visible the general attitude to ongoing issues by the ministry and its authorities on the homepages and the press releases of the combine. – We support a high level of knowledge of the sphere of the Ministry of Defence combine. – We willingly contribute background information to interested media. – We service the media with general or specific interest in the sphere of the Ministry of Defence.

3. **We give priority to cooperation with the media as a management task. This means that:** We also give priority to good communicative skills at the employment or promotion of new leaders. – Leaders can impart the messages to the public so that they appear unequivocal and relevant. – A leader must be actively involved in the handling of specific issues. Whenever there is a need, the leaders are the ones to address the media.

4. **We coordinate media handling internally. This means that:** Good cooperation with the media implies an unequivocal distribution of work and responsibility and distinct procedures. The employees must know what to do, if they are being contacted by a journalist. This applies to the overall combine as well as in the individual authorities. – Each authority has clear internal procedures for media handling and unequivocal distribution of responsibility.

**RESPONSIBILITY**

The Ministry of Defence maintains all contact regarding the minister and the overall political and economic relations.

It is the responsibility of the head of each authority to establish rules for who is authorized to respond on behalf of the authority to principal questions from journalists.

The media responsible unit/staff member of the authority is responsible for sparring and coordination of media activities in and between the authorities.

As employees we share a responsibility for making communication work within our area of responsibility. This means that as an employee you can make factual statements within your own field – also to the press – with reference to the Administrative Law and the Official Secrets Act. However, in relation to a request by the media you should always inform your immediate head and the media responsible in your own organization.

It is a right to make a statement, not an obligation. On the other hand, we as employees are obliged to refer to a person who will and can make a statement, if we cannot ourselves. It can be our immediate head.
FOCUS AREA – CRISIS COMMUNICATION

ATTITUDE
Whenever unpredicted and/or unusual events occur that must be expected to stir considerable political or media interest, an acute need for communication is likely to arise. The ensuing demand for information from the public and the media may rise to a level way beyond the communicative powers of the basic organization alone.

In situations of crisis, the media are an indispensable collaborator, as we need to communicate instructions to the public, by means of the media, what they need to do in the specific situation. We must at any time be prepared to communicate in a situation of crisis.

In situations of crisis, we communicate openly, prompt, and credibly, internally as well as externally. The management must have a clear overview of what is reported to the media. Therefore only the appointed spokespersons and possibly the top management make public statements.

At times of major crises, the usual rules of communication may be suspended, and procedures for crisis communication come into force.

This means that we work with these goals for crisis communication:

1. **We are proactive.** We inform as much as possible – as soon as possible. In a situation of crisis, we give priority to delivering current and exact information to the public by means of homepages, the media, etc.
2. **We are accessible.** We make it as easy as possible for the media, relatives, and others to gain overview, knowledge, and information on the ongoing crisis situation
3. **We give priority to information of our employees.** Also in times of crisis it is essential that our employees know what is happening and are prepared to take co-responsibility for the problem-solving. At the same time the employees contribute through their contact with the outside world to defining the profile and the image of their workplace.

This is what we do to reach our goals:

1. **We are proactive. This means that:** We release information, positive as well as negative, as we uncover the facts around a specific occurrence. – We establish strategy, media policy, and messages for the handling of a specific crisis. – In situations of crisis, primarily the appointed spokespersons, and possibly the top management, make any statements. The appointed spokespersons are given authority.
2. **We are accessible. This means that:** We establish a preparedness regime in order to deal promptly with enquiries from media, the public, and relatives in the crisis period. – The management is a part of the response preparedness.
3. **We give priority to information of our employees. This means that:** The employees receive the same information as the media, before or at the latest at the same time as these. – Any directly affected employees will be informed first, if possible by word of mouth.
RESPONSIBILITY
As a point of departure, communication at the Ministry of Defence takes place in a decentralized structure.

Crisis communication preferably takes place close to the occurrence, where the unit and its tasks are known. This principle is also valid for units sent out in international operations.

Regardless of which level handles the crisis, there will be a need for a statement from the minister of defence or his top executive in the authority in question. This task is being coordinated between the ministry’s head of press and the communication unit of the authority in question.

The individual local head is responsible that his employees receive the necessary education, and adjusts his organization to the handling of crisis communication, possibly supported by other authorities.
FOCUS AREA – INTERNET

ATTITUDE
Our homepages communicate current and updated knowledge as well as information on the individual authority and its tasks. The internet is the central external communication media, as press releases, news, images, video, etc. can be published on the net.

The homepages of the individual authorities demonstrate and create cohesion between the authorities of the ambit, and at the same time often mirror the diversity of the combine. The homepages appear professional and of high quality. There is a connection between the vision and the resources, in order to carry out a focused development of the homepage. The homepages are developed according to user needs, the development of the combine, and the technological development.

This means that we work with these goals for the internet:

1. **We work with a standardized layout and structure of the homepages of the authorities.** – This enhances the cohesion between the authorities and the employees of the combine, and the users will recognize the authorities as a part of the ambit of the Ministry of Defence.

2. **We will base our work on, among others, the criteria established in the annual measuring by the National Telecom Agency, ‘Best on the net’**. This measuring is based on the following web-conventions:
   - **User-friendliness** – Focus on structure and communication, based on the user’s needs
   - **Usefulness** – Reliable and useful contents in relation to the user’s needs and the purpose of the homepage
   - **Openness** – The homepage is open and welcoming to the user’s needs. Senders openly show who they are, and what their basis for decisions is, so that the user can identify which kind of organization he/she is dealing with.
   - **Technical accessibility** – Focus on accessibility on the net, partly for handicapped people, partly for people with other browsers than Internet Explorer, control systems, and other terminals than pc’s.
   - **User evaluation** – User satisfaction surveys.

3. **We deliver factual and updated knowledge on the net** – All authorities carry factual and updated information on their homepages.

4. **We make the user our main focal point** – The needs and behaviour of the users on the homepages are the basis for development. User-friendliness is ensured by creating cohesion between structure, design, and contents. One way of doing this is to carry out systematic target group analyses and measuring of user behaviour.

5. **We make an effort to get more users to our homepages** – By working determined with user-friendliness, openness, and usefulness, the number of users will increase. This means that the target groups of the Ministry of Defence and its subordinate authorities can obtain factual knowledge and information in a fast and efficient manner.

This is what we do to reach our goals:

1. **We work towards a consistent layout and structure of the homepages of the authorities. This means that:** The affiliation to the combine is underlined with a
common basic element: ‘An authority (in the ambit) of the Ministry of Defence’. This line is on the start page of the homepage. We work towards a consistent layout. -
Joint combine minimum demands are worked out with relation to navigation, link structure, and information architecture. We work towards a consistent structure.

2. **We will base our work on, among others, the criteria of the annual measuring by the National Telecom Agency, ‘Best on the net’. This means that:** ‘Best on the net’ is a part of the ‘clear goals’ combine management tool. ‘Best on the net’ is a guideline and a help to increase user-friendliness on the authorities’ homepages.

3. **We deliver factual and updated knowledge on the net. This means that:** the authorities ensure that the contents on the homepage are correct, serious, and available, whether they be news, facts, good stories, or dialogue. – There is a well-defined sharing of knowledge and information between the Ministry of Defence and its affiliated authorities. – The homepage of the Ministry of Defence is an overall entry to the entire combine. The users on [www.fmn.dk](http://www.fmn.dk) can be informed on overall political problems directly on the homepage, and they can effortlessly move on to the homepages of the authorities. The authorities can develop joint functions, such as:
   - News boxes with news from other authorities
   - Contents: News, facts, good stories, or dialogue
   - Service and self-service solutions – including joint publications, news subscription, registration for education, available positions, etc.

4. **We make the user our main focal point. This means that:** Tools are developed for analyzing target groups and user behaviour on the net, adapted to the needs of the authorities. – User-friendliness is ensured by creating a connection between structure, design, and content, based on, among other things, systematic target group analyses and measuring of user behaviour.

5. **We make an effort to get more users to our homepages. This means that:** We define the target groups for our homepages. We adapt the homepages to the needs of the users and ourselves on a current basis. – The authorities continuously check the development on their homepages and follow up on the success of their efforts.

**RESPONSIBILITY**
The Ministry of Defence is responsible for the establishment and maintenance of the W-network. It is a network for webmasters and gateway administrators in the combine. The purpose is exchange of knowledge, experience, and ideas between the authorities of the ambit regarding electronic communication. The primary focus is web communication, and not the technology behind it. The W-network is also a support group for a series of joint combine homepage and intranet projects.

The local head is overall responsible for the homepage of the authority being on a par with the joint combine policy in this field, and for the establishment of an effective web organization with clear procedures and distribution of responsibility.

The authorities are locally responsible for the development and education of their own web staff, and for the establishment, updating, and maintenance of their own homepages.

The Defence Media Centre will have a future capacity for offering and coordinating relevant web courses in cooperation with the W-network.