Danish contribution to Baltic Air Policing

How does Denmark contribute?
In 2019 the Danish contribution to Baltic Air Policing (enhanced Air Policing) will consist of four F-16 fighters – two operational and two in reserves. In addition to the aircrafts approx. 60 people will be stationed at the Lithuanian Air Base in Siauliai.

Denmark has previously contributed to Baltic Air Policing six times, most recently from January to April 2018. Furthermore, Danish fighter jets were deployed in 2004, 2009, 2011, 2013 and 2014.

What is Baltic Air Policing?
Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania are without the necessary means to provide air policing of their own territory. Therefore, in 2004 NATO – by request from the three countries – took over the responsibility of enforcing sovereignty in Baltic airspace. The mission is a collective task for the NATO members.

Baltic Air Policing was intensified following the Russia-Ukraine crisis.

Why does Denmark contribute?
The first Danish contribution to Baltic Air Policing was in 2004 after nine new member nations, including Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania, joined the Alliance. Today, the mission strengthens NATO’s collective deterrence and defense as well as sends a clear message of solidarity across the Alliance.

Enforcing sovereignty in the air is a well-known operation for the Danish Defence as the Royal Danish Air Force maintains Quick Reaction Alert every day on Danish territory. It is the same type of mission the Danish F-16’s are tasked to do in the skies above Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania.

Which other countries are contributing?
Besides Denmark, a large number of countries in the Alliance contributed to Baltic Air Policing, including The United States, United Kingdom, Canada, France, Germany, Italy, The Netherlands, Belgium, Norway, Spain, Portugal, Poland and Hungary.

The right to use force
The F-16’s will have the right to act in self-defense as well as to enforce sovereignty in the airspace above Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania according to NATO procedures.

The use of force beyond self-defense is only allowed as a last resort.