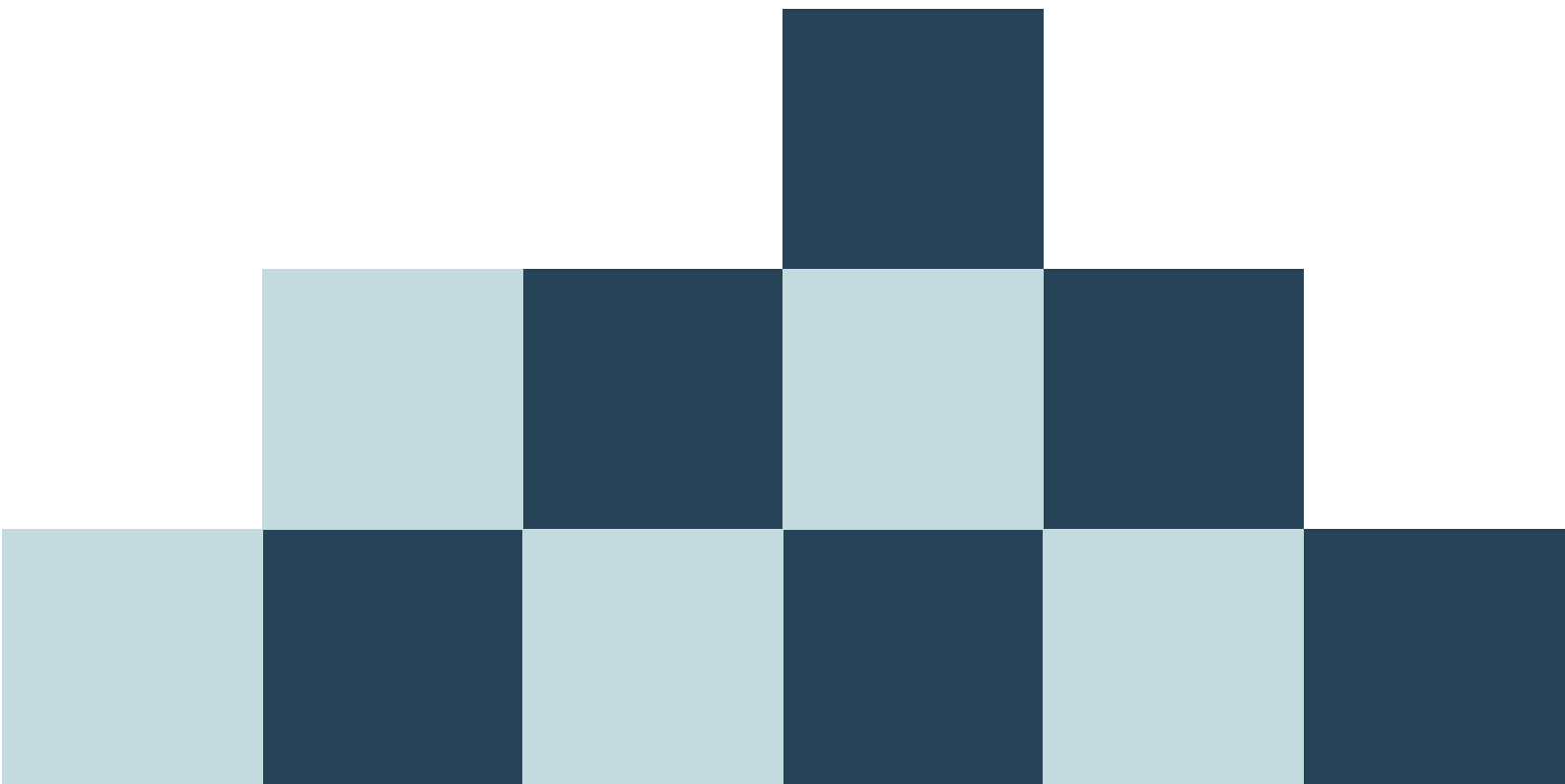




Myndigheten för  
totalförsvarsanalys

# The Swedish Civil Contingencies Agency's system-supporting role in the structure

Interim report 3 of the government assignment to evaluate the implementation of the new structure for civil defence and societal crisis preparedness



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## Summary

The new structure for civil defence and societal crisis preparedness entered into force on 1 October 2022.<sup>1</sup> Its purpose is to strengthen society's ability to manage peacetime crisis situations, situations of heightened preparedness and, ultimately, war. The Swedish Agency for Defence Analysis (MTFA) has been tasked by the government with following up and evaluating the implementation of the new structure.

The Swedish Civil Contingencies Agency (MSB) has an important role to play in developing, supporting and coordinating civil defence work. Of particular importance is the agency's work in ensuring coherence in civil defence planning. We have chosen to refer to this, in brief, as the Swedish Civil Contingencies Agency's system-supporting role. This is a role that the agency held in the preparedness system even before the structure came into force, and the structural reform did not result in any major changes to MSB's tasks. However, the structural reform introduced a new organisation and new roles and responsibilities for many other agencies, such as sector-responsible agencies and county administrative boards responsible for civil areas. This means that MSB needs to adapt its role and work to the reorganisation of civil defence that the new structure entails.

The evaluation in this interim report concerns MSB's work on and implementation of the new structure on the basis of the agency's system-supporting role. Our work on the interim report has been based on the following research questions:

- How is MSB working to develop and support the agencies' civil defence work?
- How is MSB working to support the agencies' civil defence planning?

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<sup>1</sup> The structural reform comprises the Ordinance on the preparedness of central government agencies (2022:524), the Ordinance on county administrative boards responsible for civil areas (2022:525), amendments to the Ordinance on total defence and heightened preparedness (2015:1053), amendments to the Ordinance containing instructions for the Swedish Civil Contingencies Agency (2008:1002), and certain adjustments to the instructions of a number of other agencies.

- How is MSB working to support the agencies and the government during periods of heightened preparedness?

## **MSB's work is important for the implementation of the structure, and for the development of civil defence**

MTFA's overall conclusion is that MSB has approached the work on the new structure in a manner that supports and develops the agencies' work on the structure and civil defence. However, our evaluation highlights a number of challenges associated with MSB's system-supporting role.

### **MSB's work has contributed to the establishment of the new structure**

The new structure has brought new roles and responsibilities for many agencies. The decision to introduce preparedness sectors and civil areas has also involved reorganisation of civil defence. MSB recognised at an early stage that there was a need for the agencies to work together and collectively interpret the division of responsibilities and roles, and also to work together on addressing cross-sectoral issues. MSB also recognised that the working methods of various preparedness sectors and civil areas needed to be aligned in order to avoid differing interpretations and working methods becoming obstacles to collaboration. Therefore, MSB brought together the future preparedness agencies even before the structure came into force and initiated implementation work.

MTFA assesses that MSB's efforts have allowed the structure to be established more quickly than if other agencies had needed to coordinate the joint implementation and development work themselves while also focusing on establishing the work in preparedness sectors and civil areas.

### **The meeting structure requires resources from sector-responsible agencies and county administrative boards responsible for civil areas**

One tool for MSB's work on the implementation of the structure and the development of civil defence is a meeting structure for issues of joint relevance to multiple actors that aims to create coordination and orientation. Meetings are held at head of agency, head of division and administrator level. The aim is to ensure support for preparedness work within the participating agencies and create good conditions for their development work in civil defence and crisis preparedness. Most meetings are aimed at sector-responsible agencies and county administrative boards responsible for

civil areas, which are then expected to pass on information to the agencies in the respective preparedness sectors and civil areas.

MTFA's study shows that MSB's meeting structure has created a forum and a systematic framework for the agencies' joint work on developing civil defence. The focus on sector-responsible agencies and county administrative boards responsible for civil areas streamlines coordination and may create scope for additional work among other preparedness agencies. At the same time, MTFA's study shows that sector-responsible agencies and county administrative boards responsible for civil areas consider that too much time is spent preparing for and participating in MSB meetings. MTFA recognises that there is a conflict of interests between the need for time and resources for coordination and time and resources for agencies' internal preparedness work. Although MSB is already making an effort to examine the needs of the agencies and adapt the meetings to these, it is important for MSB, together with the agencies concerned, to continue its efforts to streamline meetings and coordination. MTFA notes that this is also a question of how other agencies allocate and prioritise their resources, but MTFA is unable to comment in this interim report on how this is done.

### **Focus on sector-responsible agencies and county administrative boards responsible for civil areas leaves other preparedness agencies less informed**

Most of the meetings organised within the framework of MSB's meeting structure is aimed at for sector-responsible agencies and county administrative boards responsible for civil areas. This means that other preparedness agencies have less contact with MSB now than before the structure came into force. Agencies therefore need to rely on information being passed on to them via the sector-responsible agency or the county administrative board responsible for the civil area. Several agencies emphasise in our interviews that they are perceiving a loss of information compared to how things used to be. MTFA notes that it is essential for the necessary information to be made available to all relevant preparedness agencies, as otherwise there is a risk of misunderstandings and reduced system understanding among other agencies in the long run.

### **MSB is experiencing increased acceptance of its coordinating role, although some agencies feel that MSB applies an overly directive approach**

According to MSB, the agency endeavours to ensure that the agencies work together to provide orientation and coordination. MSB is of the opinion that

its role is to drive and facilitate this work and is perceiving growing acceptance of its coordinating role among other agencies.

Our study also shows that the agencies are generally satisfied with how MSB is working with its assignment and understand the difficulties associated with the role of the agency. Guidance documents and other support materials are viewed as important for creating alignment, although several agencies find that the quality varies. However, some agencies are more questioning and consider MSB's work to be a form of conceptual governance, in that meetings, guidelines and other support material define how other agencies should work.

MTFA assesses that the approach of creating the conditions for joint orientation and coordination is reasonable in relation to the independence of the other agencies. MTFA also considers that MSB's instructions could be made clearer in certain respects (see below for further information) and assesses that this would further increase understanding of the agency's role and assignment.

### **Government assignments have been important in the development of a planning process, but they are also perceived as an obstacle to capability development**

During the previous defence decision period, MSB was tasked by the government with assessing civil defence capabilities. Additionally, the agency was given further government assignments that concern the preparedness agencies' civil defence work in various ways. These government assignments focused on capability development and contributed to MSB's work on the overall planning of civil defence. That said, our study shows that the preparedness agencies feel that the government assignments have resulted in such a substantial workload that they consider that capability development has been impeded.<sup>2</sup>

MTFA notes that total defence is undergoing an intensive growth phase involving substantial investments. It is necessary to follow up developments and the use of the allocated funds. It is also essential for the government to have a good overview of both military and civil defence capabilities. MTFA considers it important to continue monitoring developments and

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<sup>2</sup> This has also been pointed out in the Swedish National Audit Office's report *Den statliga styrningen av det civila försvarets uppbyggnad*, RiR 2025:4, pp. 57–58 and the Committee on Defence's report *Uppföljning av det civila försvaret – erfarenheter från tre beredskapssektorer*, 2024/25:RFR3, p. 120.

investments in civil defence. Therefore, MTFA recommends that the government, in dialogue with MSB, create more sustainable distribution of future government assignments in terms of both time and content.

### **There is a lack of planning for vital societal functions that are not based within preparedness sectors**

MSB compiled a list of vital societal functions during the COVID-19 pandemic. Most of these functions are based within preparedness sectors, and preparedness planning for that particular societal function is performed by the preparedness agencies in sector in question. However, some vital societal functions are not based within a preparedness sector, and thus – according to MSB – there is no systematic preparedness planning for these functions. Interviews with MSB employees reveal that the agency has raised the issue with the government on a number of occasions.

MTFA notes that the lack of preparedness planning for certain vital societal functions may ultimately hinder attainment of the civil defence objective of maintaining vital societal functions. For this reason, MTFA recommends that the government, with the support of MSB, review the division of responsibilities between central government agencies in relation to vital societal functions.

### **It is difficult for MSB to obtain a clear overview of civil defence support to military defence**

One element of the civil defence objective involves contributing to military defence capability. However, MSB's ability to obtain a full overview of agencies' planning for support to military defence is limited. The Swedish Armed Forces primarily communicate the needs bilaterally to individual agencies; and for reasons of confidentiality, MSB is only able to access these at a general level. As a result, this means that the agency finds it difficult to form a complete picture of the resources available. MTFA therefore considers it particularly important for MSB, as far as possible, to reveal to the government the aspects of which the agency is not aware. When prioritising and allocating resources, it is important for the government to be able to take into account the fact that the material from MSB does not provide a complete overview.

## **MSB's work would be facilitated if responsibility for comprehensive planning were expressed more clearly in the agency's instructions**

MTFA's study shows that MSB uses sections 2 and 6 of the agency's instructions as a formal basis for its work on developing a planning process, a national ten-year plan for capability planning and the national system documentation. Additionally, the agency has received support for this work through various government assignments.

MTFA notes that section 6 refers explicitly to civil defence, while section 2 is more open to interpretation. This section focuses mainly on work on risk and vulnerability assessments. MTFA considers that the structure and wording of MSB's instructions generally need to be reviewed in order to communicate clearly the agency's assignment in respect of civil defence. Including the task of developing a comprehensive plan in section 6, which clearly refers to civil defence, could be one way of increasing clarity and reducing the scope for interpretation.

## **The Swedish Armed Forces perceive a risk of MSB's coordination potentially creating centralisation that counteracts regional redundancy**

In the new structure, the sector-responsible agencies are expected to coordinate work in each preparedness sector, and the county administrative boards responsible for civil areas will coordinate work within the civil area. In an interview with the Swedish Armed Forces, the parties interviewed emphasise that there is a risk of sector-responsible agencies and county administrative boards responsible for civil areas relying too heavily on MSB's coordinating role, resulting in lower priority for the agencies' own coordination assignments. Parties interviewed at MSB emphasise that the agency's role is to contribute a national perspective.

MTFA agrees with the importance of sector-responsible agencies and county administrative boards responsible for civil areas developing and strengthening their work on coordination. However, MTFA does not consider MSB's coordination to present an obstacle to this, but regards the agencies' coordination responsibilities as complementary.

## **MTFA's recommendations**

In light of the above, MTFA makes the following recommendations to the government in this report:

- There is a lack of systematic preparedness planning for a number of vital societal functions. MTFA recommends that the government, with the support of MSB, review the division of responsibilities between central government agencies in relation to these vital societal functions.
- MTFA considers it important to continue monitoring developments and investments in civil defence. At the same time, it is highly important to create scope for capability development work. It is necessary to find appropriate intervals between follow-up operations. Therefore, MTFA recommends that the government, in dialogue with MSB, create more sustainable distribution of future government assignments in terms of both time and content.
- MTFA considers that the structure and wording of MSB's instructions should be reviewed in order to communicate more clearly the agency's assignment in respect of civil defence. MTFA would like in particular to emphasise that MSB is currently finding support for its work of conducting comprehensive planning together with other agencies in section 2 of the instructions, which otherwise deals with risk and vulnerability assessments. MTFA therefore recommends that the government clarify MSB's assignment involving development of comprehensive planning for civil defence. This could, for example, be done by adding the assignment to section 6, which explicitly refers to civil defence.

# 1. Introduction

The new structure for civil defence and societal crisis preparedness entered into force on 1 October 2022.<sup>3</sup> Its purpose is to strengthen society's ability to manage peacetime crisis situations, situations of heightened preparedness and, ultimately, war. The government has tasked the Swedish Agency for Defence Analysis (MTFA) with following up and evaluating agencies' implementation of the new structure over a period of three years.

The Swedish Civil Contingencies Agency (MSB) has an important role to play in developing, supporting and coordinating civil defence work. The agency's work in ensuring coherence in civil defence planning is also of importance. We have chosen to refer to this, in brief, as MSB's system-supporting role. This is a role that the agency held in the preparedness system even before the structure came into force, and the structural reform did not result in any major changes to MSB's tasks. However, the structural reform introduced a new organisation and new roles and responsibilities for many other agencies. Sixty-one agencies have become preparedness agencies, and some of them are also county administrative boards responsible for civil areas or sector-responsible agencies. This means that MSB needs to adapt its role and work to the reorganisation of civil defence that the new structure entails.

In this interim report, MTFA follows up and evaluates how MSB has handled its system-supporting role in its work on and implementation of the structure for civil defence and societal crisis preparedness.

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<sup>3</sup> Ordinance on the preparedness of central government agencies (2022:524); Ordinance on county administrative boards responsible for civil areas (2022:525); Ordinance amending the Ordinance containing instructions for the Swedish Civil Contingencies Agency (2008:1002). See also Ministry of Justice, Ärendeförteckning I, ärende 18, regeringssammanträde 2022-05-19; Dir. 2018:79, *Ansvar, ledning och samordning inom civilt försvar*; government press conference, 18 May 2022.

## 1.1 The government's assignment to MTFA

### **The government has allocated the following assignment to MTFA:**

The Swedish Agency for Defence Analysis shall follow up and evaluate agencies' implementation of the new structure for civil defence and societal crisis preparedness and the agencies' prerequisites for this. In its work, the agency shall operate on the basis of the goals adopted by the Riksdag for total defence, military defence and civil defence. Follow-up and evaluation shall focus on the agencies' coordination and establishment of work under the new civil defence structure, and also on how the structure contributes to efficient use of resources in order to achieve the set goals.<sup>4</sup>

In the first interim report of the government assignment, MTFA mapped the regulatory financial criteria for the agencies' work with the new structure. We also conducted a brief analysis of the purpose of introducing the reform.<sup>5</sup> The second interim report was a follow-up and evaluation of the agencies' work on establishing civil areas.<sup>6</sup>

This report is a follow-up and evaluation of the Swedish Civil Contingencies Agency's system support role in the structure. In forthcoming reports on the government assignment, MTFA will focus on the establishment of preparedness sectors, and also on an overall analysis of the implementation of the new structure.

## 1.2 The structural reform in brief

The new structure for civil defence and society's crisis preparedness is part of the ambition to strengthen Sweden's total defence. In May 2022, the government adopted new ordinances and amendments to ordinances and presented them as a structural reform of the organisation of the state. The purpose of the structure is to create clearer lines of responsibility and leadership and to strengthen coordination in the field of civil defence.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> Government decision Fö2022/01177, Fö2022/01610 (in part), *Regleringsbrev för budgetåret 2023 anseende Myndigheten för totalförsvarsanalys*. The final report on the assignment is to be submitted by 30 November 2025.

<sup>5</sup> Swedish Agency for Defence Analysis, *Uppföljning och utvärdering av ny struktur för civilt försvar och samhällets krisberedskap*, Interim report 1, 2023.

<sup>6</sup> Swedish Agency for Defence Analysis, *Uppbyggnaden av civilområden. Delredovisning 2 av uppdraget att utvärdera den nya strukturen för civilt försvar och samhällets krisberedskap*, Interim report 2, 2024.

<sup>7</sup> Ministry of Justice, Ärendeförteckning I, ärende 18, regeringssammanträde 2022-05-19; Dir. 2018:79, *Ansvar, ledning och samordning inom civilt försvar*; government press conference, 18 May 2022.

In concrete terms, this structural reform comprises:

- the Ordinance on the preparedness of central government agencies (2022:524) (hereinafter referred to as ‘the Preparedness Ordinance’)
- the Ordinance on county administrative boards responsible for civil areas (2022:525)
- amendments to the Ordinance on total defence and heightened preparedness (2015:1053) and the Ordinance containing instructions for the Swedish Civil Contingencies Agency (2008:1002), as well as a number of adjustments to the instructions of several other agencies.

In the first interim report of this government assignment, we worked on the basis of the above-mentioned ordinances and assessed that the new structure for civil defence and societal crisis preparedness includes four main elements:

- an increase in the responsibilities and tasks of central government agencies in the field of civil defence and societal crisis preparedness
- designation of certain central government agencies as preparedness agencies, categorisation of the majority of these preparedness agencies into ten different preparedness sectors, and designation of ten sector-responsible agencies
- geographical division of county administrative boards into six civil areas with six designated county administrative boards responsible for civil areas
- MSB in the role of a coordinating and supporting function within the structure.<sup>8</sup>

### 1.3 Purpose and research question

The overall aim of the report is to follow up and evaluate MSB’s system-supporting role<sup>9</sup> in and work on the implementation of the new structure; which will include examining whether there are any obstacles that will affect implementation, prevent efficient use of resources or otherwise present problems within the structure.

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<sup>8</sup> Swedish Agency for Defence Analysis, *Uppföljning och utvärdering av ny struktur för civilt försvar och samhällets krisberedskap*, Interim report 1.

<sup>9</sup> Our work is based on the responsibilities and tasks assigned to MSB in accordance with the Ordinance containing instructions for the Swedish Civil Contingencies Agency (2008:1002).

Our work on the interim report has been based on the following research questions:

- How is MSB working to develop and support the agencies' civil defence work?
- How is MSB working to support agencies in civil defence planning?
- How is MSB working to support the agencies and the government during periods of heightened preparedness?

The intentions underlying the reform and MSB's system-supporting role in the structure provide the point of departure for the evaluation.

### 1.3.1 Scope and interpretation of the assignment

According to the assignment, the evaluation is to be based on the Riksdag's objectives for total defence, military defence and civil defence.<sup>10</sup> MTFA evaluates the implementation of the structure in relation to the intentions and assumptions that provided the foundation for the reform. These intentions, as well as the purpose of the structure, are in turn linked to the Riksdag's objectives. Therefore, these objectives form a general point of departure for the evaluation.

Furthermore, according to the government assignment, the evaluation must focus on the coordination and establishment of work by agencies under the new structure. MTFA therefore considers it to be of particular interest to examine how different actors interpret roles, responsibilities, concepts and boundaries, and how this impacts the establishment and coordination of work under the new structure. Therefore, this interim report focuses on the interfaces between MSB and the relevant agencies, and on the work that takes place there.

The government assignment also requires the follow-up and evaluation to focus on how the structure contributes to efficient use of resources in efforts to attain the set goals. As the structural reform is in an implementation phase, it is too early to provide a detailed assessment of whether the new structure contributes to the efficient use of resources. Therefore, MTFA focuses on obstacles to the efficient use of resources in the implementation of the new structure.

The government assignment also states that MTFA's follow-up and evaluation should focus on civil defence. The emphasis is therefore on

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<sup>10</sup> Prop. 2020/21:30, p. 125; Bet. 2020/21: FöU4; Rskr. 2020/21:133–136.

MSB's work and role in the new structure linked to civil defence. However, civil defence cannot be separated entirely from crisis preparedness, and so observations and conclusions related to crisis preparedness are also included in the evaluation where relevant.

Finally, MTFFA would like to emphasise that this interim report involves MSB's supporting, developing and coordinating role within the new structure; that is, the tasks that provide MSB with a system-supporting role. MSB is also part of the structure as a preparedness agency and sector-responsible agency, but the agency's work on these tasks is not included in the interim report. Furthermore, we have limited the report to certain key tasks in the system-supporting role. Other elements, such as training, exercises and responsibility for ensuring that civil defence planning is coordinated with military defence<sup>11</sup>, have not been included in our study.

This interim report covers the period from 1 October 2022 to April 2025.

## 1.4 Method and implementation

MTFA applies a programme-theoretical approach in order to follow up and evaluate the implementation of the new structure for civil defence and societal crisis preparedness. In simplified terms, this means that we evaluate our results against the purposes of the reform. In order to do so, it is necessary to understand the background to the reform, what problems the reform is intended to address and how the reform is assumed to be able to achieve this. In Chapter 2 sets out the background to the reform. Appendix 1 provides a brief description of programme theory.

The material used for the report includes semi-structured interviews and document studies. Interviews focusing on MSB's system-supporting role in the structure were conducted with managers and staff at MSB, and also with a number of preparedness agencies and a civil area administration. These interviews were mainly conducted in the spring of 2025. Furthermore, a number of interviews conducted within the framework of the interim reports on the establishment of the civil areas and the establishment of the preparedness sectors have been included in the supporting material for this report. These interviews did not focus primarily on the role of MSB in the

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<sup>11</sup> For an analysis of the process for coherent total defence planning, see MTFFA's forthcoming report on the government assignment for the evaluation of Handlingskraft, Ministry of Defence, Appropriation directions for the 2025 fiscal year concerning the Swedish Agency for Defence Analysis. Fö2024/00407.

structure; but the role of MSB is nevertheless mentioned in most of them. The interviews were conducted in 2024 and the spring of 2025. A list of the interviews can be found in Appendix 2.

The material for the document studies consists mainly of reports, guidelines, meeting agendas and other internal documentation from MSB, as well as inquiries, government decisions and similar documentation linked to the structural reform, and to MSB's assignment.

Quality assurance of the report has been conducted via MTFA's internal procedures and with the support of the agency's Scientific Advisory Board. MSB and the agencies<sup>12</sup> that participated in interviews focusing on MSB's system-supporting role have been given the opportunity to fact-check the content of chapters 1 to 5.

## 1.5 Outline of the report

Chapter 1 includes a description of the purpose of and background to this report. We also provide a brief description of the methodology, implementation and delimitations, as well as the various components of the structure.

Chapter 2 describes how MSB's system-supporting role is intended to function in the structure for civil defence and societal crisis preparedness.

Chapter 3 describes how MSB is working to support and develop the agencies' civil defence work. The emphasis is on MSB's efforts to implement the new structure for civil defence and societal crisis preparedness. We also describe the meeting structure formed by MSB in connection with the implementation of the structure, which is a tool for development, orientation and coordination.

In Chapter 4, we describe MSB's work of supporting the agencies in their civil defence planning efforts.

Chapter 5 describes how MSB is working to be able to support the government and other agencies during crises and periods of heightened preparedness.

Our conclusions are presented in Chapter 6.

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<sup>12</sup> The Civil Area Administration at Stockholm County Administrative Board, the Swedish Energy Agency, the Public Health Agency of Sweden, the Swedish Armed Forces and the Swedish Police Authority.



## 2. MSB's role in the new structure for civil defence and societal crisis preparedness

In this chapter, we analyse how MSB's role is intended to function in the structure for civil defence and societal crisis preparedness. At the beginning of the chapter, we describe how we use the inquiries that preceded the decision to introduce the structure in order to gain an understanding of the intentions behind the structural reform. We then present the findings concerning MSB's system-supporting role and assignment from our analysis of the inquiries. The last part of the chapter briefly sets out a number of proposals on the role of MSB from the government and the Committee on Defence that have emerged since the structure came into force.

### 2.1 The inquiries that preceded the structure provide an understanding of the background and explain the purpose of the reform

MTFA applies a programme-theoretical approach in this evaluation. Essentially, this means that we evaluate our results against the purpose of the reform and, in this case, specifically against the intentions of MSB's role in the structure (see also Appendix 1). To understand the intentions, we take as our point of departure the line of reasoning in the Committee on Defence's report *Motståndskraft* [Resilience] and in the report *Struktur för ökad motståndskraft* [Structure for increased resilience] (hereafter referred to as 'the structural inquiry'), and also the government's terms of reference for the structural inquiry. The inquiries preceded the decision to introduce the structure and, together with the terms of reference of the structural inquiry, provide an understanding of the background and objectives of the reform. However, it is important to note that not all the proposals put forward in *Motståndskraft* and the structural inquiry have been implemented. The new ordinances that make up most of the structural reform have no explanatory

memoranda that can explain the trade-offs made by the government.<sup>13</sup> Analysing the texts nevertheless provides an overview of the intentions of the structural reform; that is, what problems the structure is intended to resolve and how various elements and constructions of the structure are assumed to be able to resolve these problems. These intentions and assumptions provide points of departure for our follow-up and evaluation of MSB's system-supporting role in the new structure.

## 2.2 The structural reform consolidates MSB's system-supporting role

One of the points of departure for the structural reform was the Committee on Defence's assessment that leadership and responsibilities in civil defence needed to be clarified and strengthened. The Committee on Defence therefore considered that the leadership structure at central agency level needed to be clarified and strengthened with a view to achieving coherent planning in peacetime and coordinated action during periods of heightened preparedness. In the terms of reference for the structural inquiry, the government states that a structure with central government agencies divided into sectors, sector-responsible agencies and a higher regional command entails a need for an agency which has overall responsibility for coordination and can promote coherent planning for and coordinated action during peacetime crises, heightened preparedness and, ultimately, war.<sup>14</sup>

MTFA notes that the reform involved only consequential amendments to MSB's instructions, but the line of reasoning in *Motståndskraft* and the structural inquiry indicates that MSB has a system-supporting role. A number of tasks and assignments linked to this role are highlighted as being of particular importance. MSB played a system-supporting role in the preparedness system to a great extent even prior to the new structure, but it now has to be adapted to the reorganisation of civil defence that the new structure entails.

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<sup>13</sup> According to a report from the Committee on Defence, the Ministry of Justice produced a number of memoranda prior to the decision on the structural reform, but these have not been jointly prepared at the Government Offices of Sweden. However, the memoranda have been circulated to an extent among the actors within the preparedness system. See further Committee on Defence, 2024/25:RFR3 *Uppföljning av det civila försvaret – erfarenheter från tre beredskapssektorer*, p. 125.

<sup>14</sup> Dir. 2018:79, p. 15.

A brief description of the proposals made by the Committee on Defence and the structural inquiry and descriptions of MSB's assignment and tasks in the new structure are presented below.<sup>15</sup>

### 2.2.1 MSB's role is to support the government

The Committee on Defence noted that society's overall resources and the preparations for heightened preparedness that are taking place in civil defence need to be capable of being overseen. The Commission proposed, therefore, that MSB should coordinate civil defence planning, exercises and training at a central level in peacetime and coordinate the activities of sector-responsible agencies at a central level. The agency must also be able to submit proposals to the government regarding priorities and allocation of resources to various activities and areas.<sup>16</sup> The structural inquiry also emphasised the importance of an agency maintaining an overview of civil defence and its resources, needs and planning, and being able to assist the government with documents to support decision-making and other information.<sup>17</sup>

During times of heightened preparedness and war, the government needs to make decisions that are strategically crucial for the country. The Committee on Defence considered that the government needs to concentrate its efforts on the strategically crucial decisions during periods of heightened preparedness and should therefore be relieved of the task of coordinating the many actors involved in total defence. The Committee on Defence also assessed that coordination between military and civil defence at a central level was impeded by the fact that the Swedish Armed Forces need to collaborate with a large number of agencies. The Committee on Defence therefore considered that MSB should support the government and the Government Offices of Sweden with coordination, information and expertise during periods of heightened preparedness. This coordination would include aspects such as overall responsibility for civil defence at a central level by coordinating and supporting other agencies with civil defence tasks. However, the Committee on Defence stressed that the

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<sup>15</sup> In this context, it should be noted that MSB has a large number of tasks. The agency originates from the 2008 merger of the Swedish Rescue Services Agency, the Swedish Emergency Management Agency and the Swedish National Board of Psychological Defence. Today, the agency's responsibilities also include areas that fall outside the thematic scope of civil defence and crisis preparedness, such as tasks related to accident prevention. Furthermore, MSB also holds the roles of preparedness agency and sector-responsible agency in the structure. However, this report focuses on MSB's system-supporting role.

<sup>16</sup> Ds 2017:66, pp. 93-95.

<sup>17</sup> SOU 2021:25, pp. 405-411.

agencies are responsible for their own activities in accordance with the principle of responsibility. Furthermore, the Committee on Defence felt that there ought to be consideration of whether MSB should have the ability to direct and coordinate sector-responsible agencies following a specific decision by the government.<sup>18</sup>

The structural inquiry, like the Committee on Defence, considered that MSB should support the government and the Government Offices of Sweden with information, expertise and documents to support decision-making during periods of heightened preparedness. However, the structural inquiry did not consider it appropriate for MSB to be automatically granted an extended mandate for the coordination of civil defence during periods of heightened preparedness. The inquiry assessed that the prerequisites for allowing an agency to take over the command of civil defence were not in place, nor was it appropriate or effective to do so. Instead, the report assessed that the government should lead civil defence under normal circumstances, but that a regulatory amendment to MSB's instructions should clarify the fact that the government can, if necessary, decide that MSB is to assist the government with coordination tasks.<sup>19</sup> The proposal that the government may decide, where necessary, that MSB should assist the government with coordination tasks did not result in a regulatory amendment as part of the structural reform.

### **2.2.2 Representing civil defence**

According to MSB's instructions, the agency has to represent civil defence at a central level in matters of significance for the balance between civil and military needs for society's resources, unless otherwise provided by other legislation.<sup>20</sup> The inquiry considered that MSB still needed to maintain this role, and also perceived a need for MSB to be able to represent civil defence in other long-term development processes, such as total defence planning and the work of the Committee on Defence.<sup>21</sup>

### **2.2.3 MSB shall support and promote coordination among other agencies**

The structural inquiry considered that MSB should continue to hold the role of supporting and promoting the coordination of other agencies' work on civil defence and crisis preparedness, not least in respect of planning within

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<sup>18</sup> Ds 2017:66, pp. 93–94.

<sup>19</sup> SOU: 2021:25, pp. 100, 419–422.

<sup>20</sup> Section 1 of the Ordinance containing instructions for the Swedish Civil Contingencies Agency (2008:1002)

<sup>21</sup> SOU 2021:25, pp. 407–408.

preparedness sectors and civil areas. This work is to be adapted to the new structure including preparedness sectors and civil areas proposed by the inquiry.

The work of the structural inquiry revealed that other agencies were generally satisfied with the support provided by MSB, but that agencies also felt that the interpretation of MSB's supporting and coordinating role had been too far-reaching during the management of a number of crises. The inquiry considered that there was a risk of MSB's initiatives and decisions not being fully recognised as legitimate by other agencies, and therefore proposed an amendment to MSB's instructions which stated that MSB's support for the coordination of agencies should be based on the needs of those agencies.<sup>22</sup> No such amendment was implemented.

#### **2.2.4 MSB has a responsibility to develop the new structure**

For a long time, MSB has held an administrative and developmental role in the civil preparedness system. The structural inquiry considered that the agency should also fulfil this role in the new structure proposed by the inquiry, with emphasis on maintaining coherence.<sup>23</sup>

#### **2.2.5 MSB is to stand responsible for maintaining coherence in and developing civil defence planning**

Both the Committee on Defence and the structural inquiry considered that MSB should be responsible for maintaining coherence in and developing civil defence planning and for coordinating with military defence planning. According to the structural inquiry, efforts to develop coherent planning for civil defence should be implemented within the structure proposed by the inquiry. The preparedness agencies are to work on specific planning and preparation for heightened preparedness, and every preparedness agency has a responsibility to implement the measures needed. The sector-responsible agencies are to stand responsible for ensuring that work is conducted to achieve coherent planning in each sector, and that each sector has the ability to perform its role during periods of heightened preparedness. Regional perspectives must be taken into account in planning, and there must be coordination with the county administrative boards responsible for civil areas. In the inquiry's proposal, MSB is assigned overall responsibility for coherent planning by supporting the agencies in preparedness sectors and

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<sup>22</sup> SOU 2021:25, pp. 100, 407, 416–419

<sup>23</sup> SOU 2021:25, pp. 427–428

civil areas. This includes bringing together sectoral and area-based planning on the basis of a national perspective.<sup>24</sup>

## **2.3 Later proposals on MSB's role and responsibilities**

This section provides a brief description of a number of proposals and statements on MSB's role as set out by the government and the Committee on Defence since the new structure for civil defence and societal crisis preparedness came into force.

### **2.3.1 MSB is able to support the government's coordination of civil defence, but streamlining of the agency's assignment could improve support**

In its report *Kraftsamling* [Concerted effort], the Committee on Defence returns to the need for a central agency that is capable of supporting the government's coordination of civil defence and proposes streamlining of MSB's assignment in order to strengthen this capability.<sup>25</sup> The government agrees that there is a need for an agency that is able to support the government's coordination of civil defence and assesses that MSB, with its existing tasks and responsibilities, can largely be expected to meet this need.<sup>26</sup> However, the government is considering reshaping and streamlining MSB so that the agency is in a better position from which to support the government's coordination of civil defence at a national level. This also includes reviewing the potential structure of responsibilities for a function for planning, leadership capability and coordination.<sup>27</sup>

### **2.3.2 Proposal to change the name of MSB to the Swedish Civil Defence and Resilience Agency**

In a memorandum, the government proposes changing the name of MSB to the Swedish Civil Defence and Resilience Agency (Myndigheten för civilt försvar, MCF) and amending the agency's organisation. This change of name is intended to clarify the agency's assignment in the field of civil defence. Furthermore, the agency's activities in respect of accident prevention and civil protection measures are to be conducted within in a separate part of the agency. The purpose of this amendment is to provide the agency with a

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<sup>24</sup> Ds 2017:66, pp. 94-95; SOU 2021:25, pp. 405-408

<sup>25</sup> Ds 2023:34, pp. 130-132.

<sup>26</sup> The government also notes that the Instrument of government provides scope for the government to decide in the event of war or imminent threat of war, with the support of authorisation from the Riksdag, that a task to be performed by the government is to be performed by another agency instead. See Prop. 2024/25:34, pp. 114-115.

<sup>27</sup> Prop. 2024/25:34, pp. 114-115.

better structure to allow it to maintain coherence in civil defence planning and preparations at a national level.<sup>28</sup>

### 2.3.3 MSB as the top node in civil defence

*Top node* is a term used recently by the government to describe MSB's role in civil defence. The term 'top node' is not clearly defined in government documents, but has been used in various contexts to express the government's view of and expectations regarding the agency. For instance, the Minister for Civil Defence used the term in the parliamentary debate that preceded the total defence decision for the period 2025–2030.<sup>29</sup> MSB's annual report for 2024 states that the government has given the agency direction to serve as a top node and to provide support for the government's coordination of civil defence at a national level.<sup>30</sup>

## 3. MSB's efforts to develop and support agencies' work with civil defence and the new structure

According to MSB's instructions, the agency must work to develop and support civil defence work.<sup>31</sup> This chapter describes MSB's efforts to support the implementation of the new structure on the basis of its assignment to develop civil defence and support and coordinate other agencies in their civil defence work. The chapter begins with a description of how MSB has worked with implementation in various phases. We then set out the meeting structure that constitutes an important tool for development, orientation and coordination. Finally, the chapter highlights challenges related to MSB's role and mandate.

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<sup>28</sup> Ministry of Defence, Memorandum *Myndigheten för civilt försvar – Ett nytt namn för Myndigheten för samhällsskydd och beredskap och vissa organisatoriska förändringar*. 2024

<sup>29</sup> Parliamentary minutes 2024/25:52, Anf. 34 and 42.

<sup>30</sup> Swedish Civil Contingencies Agency, *Årsredovisning 2024*, 2025, p. 93.

<sup>31</sup> Section 1 of the Ordinance containing instructions for the Swedish Civil Contingencies Agency (2008:1002).

### **3.1 Summary observations**

- At an early stage, MSB identified the need for consistent interpretations of roles and responsibilities and a harmonised approach. The aim is to avoid variations in approaches between different preparedness sectors and civil areas, as such differences may impede collaboration.
- MSB began efforts to implement and develop the new structure even before the government had made a decision on it. Objectives developed jointly by MSB and the preparedness agencies for the early stages of implementation were an important tool in the initial implementation work.
- MSB considers it its role to promote the attainment of joint orientation and coordination between the agencies.
- A meeting structure for the preparedness agencies is one tool used in MSB's efforts to create coordination and common orientation. While the meeting structure is generally appreciated, many agencies find it resource-intensive and feel it prevents them doing other work.
- All in all, MSB perceives that there is a high level of acceptance among other agencies of how MSB interprets and exercises its mandate. However, greater clarity in the agency's instructions would facilitate this work.

### **3.2 MSB has taken a system perspective in its implementation work**

This section describes MSB's efforts to create conditions for the new structure and support its implementation. Our study shows that MSB has taken a systems perspective and viewed it as its role to identify and address issues of significance to the structure as a whole during the implementation process. Interviews and working material from MSB that have been viewed by MTFA also indicate that the role and approach selected by the agency were based on early analyses of both external and internal needs and challenges. MTFA's study also shows that other agencies have welcomed the fact that MSB assumed responsibility for the system perspective.

#### **3.2.1 MSB recognised early on the need for coordination, alignment and collective interpretation of roles and responsibilities**

MSB began working on preparing the implementation of the structure even before the government had made a decision on the structural reform. In

February 2021, the final report *Struktur för ökad motståndskraft* [Structure for increased resilience] (hereafter referred to as ‘the structural inquiry’) was submitted to the government with proposals for a new structure for civil defence.<sup>32</sup> Our interviews with preparedness agencies indicate that this heralded the start of intensive interpretation work.

MSB also describes in interviews and various working materials that in the autumn of 2021, there was a great deal of uncertainty among the agencies with monitoring responsibilities at the time. There was uncertainty as to how their proposed new roles as preparedness agencies – and in some cases, as sector-responsible agencies or county administrative boards responsible for civil areas as well – would be exercised. In its consultation response to the inquiry, MSB also noted that the proposed structure required cross-sectoral coordination between preparedness sectors and civil areas in order to avoid situations in which planning and operational management largely take place within sectors and areas at the expense of the system as a whole.<sup>33</sup>

It was clear to MSB that the development work needed to involve the intended preparedness agencies, and that the implementation process needed to be divided into various phases. MSB also considered it important to develop common working methods for the agencies within the structure. Therefore, MSB intended to create forums for dialogue and development that would promote alignment in the structure and, ultimately, facilitate collaboration between the agencies.<sup>34</sup>

### 3.2.2 Other agencies were in favour of MSB assuming responsibility for system issues

MSB assessed that the agencies concerned were very much in need of knowledge about the preparedness system and what the new structure would involve. In the spring of 2021, MSB held what are known as dialogue meetings on the new structure with the agencies with monitoring responsibilities at the time. At these meetings, the agencies requested guidance on how they should approach their assignments within the proposed structure. According to MSB, a consensus emerged during the meetings that it was necessary to create a common understanding of work within the structure, and joint solutions for this work.

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<sup>32</sup> SOU 2021:25

<sup>33</sup> Swedish Civil Contingencies Agency (2021). *Remissvar. Betänkandet SOU 2021:25 – Struktur för ökad motståndskraft*. MSB 2021-035999.

<sup>34</sup> See, for example, Swedish Civil Contingencies Agency. Memorandum *Implementering av struktur för ökad motståndskraft: Sammanfattning och slutsatser ISMÖ 2022-2024*. 2024.

The dialogue meetings with the agencies continued in the autumns of 2021 and 2022. According to MSB, the agency was encouraged during these meetings to assume a leadership role with regard to system-wide issues within the new structure. Interviews with other agencies confirm that the agencies perceived a need for a national node that could hold the system together.

### **3.2.3 MSB, together with the preparedness agencies, developed objectives for the implementation process**

One tool in MSB's efforts to establish and develop the new structure has involved developing objectives for what is to be achieved in the initial stages of the implementation process. In June 2022, MSB convened a meeting of all heads of the future preparedness agencies. The aim of this was to develop common objectives for the implementation work. The first step was to agree with other agencies on what needed to be in place before the structure came into force in October that same year.<sup>35</sup>

After the structure came into force, other agencies focused primarily on internal work within preparedness sectors and civil areas; but in the spring of 2023, the agencies jointly developed new objectives for tasks to be completed in 2023. Among these objectives was the fact that all preparedness sectors and civil area administrations should be established and possess a basic capacity to complete their tasks. A consensus would also be reached on the boundary between geographical area responsibility and coordination responsibility for sector-responsible agencies, and also on MSB's coordinating role.<sup>36</sup>

## **3.3 The meeting structure is a tool for orientation, coordination and development**

This section describes MSB's meeting structure, which aims to facilitate coordination and common orientation. MTFAs study shows that the meeting structure has created forums and a systematic framework for the agencies' joint work on developing civil defence, interpretation of roles and responsibilities in the new structure and addressing cross-sectoral issues.

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<sup>35</sup> Swedish Civil Contingencies Agency, *Målbild för implementering av en ny struktur för civil beredskap*. MSB 2022-14500-107, p. 2.

<sup>36</sup> Swedish Civil Contingencies Agency, *Memorandum Målbild för implementering av en ny struktur för civil beredskap*, 15 May 2023

However, MTFA recognises that the meeting structure also presents challenges.

### 3.3.1 A civil preparedness council for heads of agencies with a view to providing orientation and following up on issues of joint relevance to multiple actors

On 1 December 2023, MSB established a civil preparedness council whose purpose is to provide orientation and follow up on issues of joint relevance to multiple actors within what MSB has chosen to refer to as civil preparedness (that is, civil defence and crisis preparedness). This council is made up of the heads of the preparedness agencies, county administrative boards responsible for civil areas, other county administrative boards and the Riksbank. MSB chairs and administers the meetings, but the content is determined in consultation with other agencies. The council meets in both a larger and a smaller format.

The heads of the sector-responsible agencies and the county administrative boards responsible for civil areas, and also of the Riksbank and the Psychological Defence Agency (MPF), participate in the smaller format. The aim is to provide orientation and coordination on common issues. Three meetings are scheduled for 2025.

The focus of the larger format is on communicating information of relevance to the development of civil defence and crisis preparedness. The heads of all the preparedness agencies and the head of the Riksbank meet in the larger format. The county administrative boards may choose to be represented by a number of county governors. One meeting is scheduled for 2025.<sup>37</sup>

### 3.3.2 Meetings at head of division level for orientation

The *Civil Preparedness Forum* (Forum för civil beredskap, FCB) is aimed at heads of division at sector-responsible agencies and county administrative boards responsible for civil areas, as well as heads of division at the Psychological Defence Agency and the Riksbank. The purpose of this forum is to prepare meetings with the civil preparedness council, to take on board the orientation provided by the council, and to coordinate development work of joint relevance to multiple actors. The forum also follows up and provides direction for working groups linked to the meeting structure. Issues relating to

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<sup>37</sup> MSB 2024-00694-17, PM. *Beskrivning av forum med relation till det civila beredskapsrådet*; MSB 2024-00694-90, *Mötesdatum 2025. Forum på central nivå för att uppnå inriktning och samordning i beredskapssystemet.*

planning may also be addressed, but the forum does not deal with operational issues related to specific incidents. The forum has eleven meetings scheduled for 2025.

There is a *civil preparedness meeting* for heads of division at all preparedness agencies, as well as the Swedish Armed Forces and the Riksbank. The aim of this is to follow up development work, identify common development needs and share information on the state of development. One meeting for these heads of division is scheduled for 2025.

The *Forum for Operational Managers* is attended by heads of sector-responsible agencies, the Psychological Defence Agency, the Swedish Migration Agency, the Swedish Armed Forces, the Swedish Security Service, the Coast Guard and the Swedish Radiation Safety Authority. The county administrative boards are also represented. The purpose of the forum is to achieve overall coordination and orientation on the basis of the current situational assessment. Participants meet once a month.

There are also forums for direction on specific themes such as geographical area responsibility and communication. These various groups will meet anything from once to twelve times in 2025.<sup>38</sup>

### 3.3.3 Expert meetings for coordination

There are expert meetings for civil preparedness at administrator and expert level, with six meetings scheduled for 2025. The aim is for these meetings to address emerging needs and three themes are covered:

- development of methods and processes, information sharing, and knowledge-enhancing activities
- capability planning, with a view to processing and ensuring support for system documentation and achieving coherent capability development on a national level
- preparatory planning with a view to supporting planning efforts and achieving national coordination.

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<sup>38</sup> MSB 2024-00694-17, *PM. Beskrivning av forum med relation till det civila beredskapsrådet*; MSB 2024-00694-90, *Mötesdatum 2025. Forum på central nivå för att uppnå inriktning och samordning i beredskapsystemet.*

Working groups for reporting, communications security, premises and technology for leadership and collaboration, as well as communications officers, meet two to four times a year.<sup>39</sup>

**Table 1 Meeting structure for civil preparedness**

Head of agency level □ <b>Civil preparedness council</b>
Civil preparedness council, smaller format Civil preparedness council, larger format Collaboration conferences for heads of agencies
Orientation level □ <b>Forum for heads</b>
Civil Preparedness Forum (FCB) Civil preparedness meeting for heads of division (CCB) □ Planning group for geographical area of responsibility □ Forum for heads of communication □ Forum for operational managers
Coordinating level □ <b>Working groups and networks</b>
Communications security forum Expert meeting for civil preparedness (XCB) Forum for premises and technology for leadership and collaboration Forum for communications officers Regular collaboration conference

### 3.3.4 Forum for total defence coordination

In parallel with the meeting structure for civil preparedness, MSB and the Swedish Armed Forces jointly chair a series of meetings for total defence coordination. This is a result of the MSB's and the Swedish Armed Forces' joint assignment to promote and develop coherent total defence planning. These meetings are a tool for coordinating planning of military and civil defence and are used for initiatives such as evaluating completed activities

<sup>39</sup> MSB 2024-00694-17, PM. *Beskrivning av forum med relation till det civila beredskapsrådet*; MSB2024-00694-90, *Mötesdatum 2025. Forum på central nivå för att uppnå inriktning och samordning i beredskapsystemet.*

and existing capabilities and coordinating measures for achieving defined goals.<sup>40</sup>

### **3.3.5 The three levels of the meeting series are intended to develop and create support for preparedness work**

According to MSB, the three levels of the meeting structure are a way of developing and creating support for civil defence work and crisis preparedness. Before the reform came into force, MSB worked with series of meetings linked to the collaboration areas. These were mainly aimed at administrators and usually addressed one issue at a time. According to MSB, it was noted from this that preparedness issues largely remained at administrator level at the various agencies with monitoring responsibilities. There were also overall ambiguities with regard to the purpose of the collaboration areas, and it was difficult to resolve these issues at administrator level.

By linking different levels within the agencies and adopting a broader perspective at meetings where various issues can be addressed from a system perspective, MSB is seeking to ensure that civil defence work and crisis preparedness are rooted more deeply within the agencies. MSB argues that head of agency level is important for creating legitimacy, support and orientation. Head of division level is important for ensuring that orientation is translated into activities. Just as before, it is also important to include the administrator and expert level, as much of the work is done at that level. MSB hopes that using the meeting structure to link together different levels will create a more cohesive system where collective progress can be made.

### **3.3.6 The meeting structure is intended to enable coordination and common orientation**

According to MSB, the meeting structure is a tool for driving forward the development of the preparedness system. Documentation shows that MSB identified at an early stage the need to align working methods between preparedness sectors and civil areas so that the arrangements did not differ in ways that could ultimately create obstacles to collaboration. The emphasis is on issues that can be described as being of joint relevance to multiple

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<sup>40</sup> Swedish Armed Forces and Swedish Civil Contingencies Agency, *Handlingskraft – handlingsplan för att främja och utveckla en sammanhängande planering för totalförsvaret 2021–2025*, FM2021-1783:2, MSB2020-16261-3

actors, that are of significance to the system as a whole, and that create the conditions for coordination and common orientation.

### **3.3.7 Agencies perceive both advantages and disadvantages with MSB's focus on sector-responsible agencies**

MSB's meetings are aimed primarily at sector-responsible agencies and county administrative boards responsible for civil areas. Other preparedness agencies have less contact with MSB now compared to the initial period when the structure came into force, and particularly compared to the period prior to the introduction of the structure. Agencies such as county administrative boards and preparedness agencies that are neither sector-responsible nor responsible for civil areas feel that they had more frequent contact with MSB when they operated as agencies with monitoring responsibilities. The agencies perceive both advantages and disadvantages to this.

There is an understanding that it would be cumbersome if all agencies were to be invited to all meetings, and some state that having the sector-responsible agencies and the county administrative boards responsible for the civil area representing the sector and the civil area respectively relieves the burden on them. Smaller agencies in particular find it difficult to allocate sufficient resources to attendance at frequent series of meetings. Some agencies also emphasise that this approach is consistent with the purpose of the structure, in that MSB's points of contact are primarily established with sector-responsible agencies and county administrative boards responsible for civil areas.

However, some agencies are concerned about losing access to important information unless it is communicated by the sector-responsible agencies and the county administrative boards responsible for civil areas within the sectors and civil areas. MTFA's interviews with preparedness agencies also indicate that not all agencies are familiar with the interpretation of roles, responsibilities and boundaries that has been conducted jointly between sector-responsible agencies, county administrative boards responsible for civil areas and MSB.

### **3.3.8 The agencies consider MSB's meeting structure to be important, but feel that its scope places strain on their day-to-day work**

MSB describes how attitudes towards the meeting structure and its usefulness were cautious initially, but feels that the other agencies soon began to work actively within the structure and perceive the value of having

joint forums for discussion and collaboration. MSB seeks to be a unifying and driving force, while also considering it important for sector-responsible agencies and county administrative boards responsible for civil areas to take responsibility for coordination and development as well.

A number of agencies say that MSB's meeting structure has facilitated discussions on the division of roles and responsibilities, collaboration and the exchange of experience. The meetings also create points of contact between sector-responsible agencies and county administrative boards responsible for civil areas. One sector-responsible agency emphasises that there is a risk that contact with county administrative boards responsible for civil areas will cease without MSB's forum. Several civil area administrations consider that a coordinating body is needed for the structure at a national level and are in favour of the way in which MSB has handled this role.

Furthermore, most of the agencies we interviewed consider that MSB is responsive to existing needs and adapts the meeting structure to these. Some agencies also state that they are very much in favour of the fact that new forms of collaboration have been created at the overall level within the framework of the meeting structure, such as meeting forums for different roles such as lawyers at the agencies.

However, many sector-responsible agencies perceive the number of meetings to be onerous. Several agencies are calling for meetings to be spaced out a little more to leave time for capability-building activities. The benefits of the meetings are not always felt to be proportionate to the resources they require. Some agencies highlight the fact that both the purpose of the meetings and their outcomes are unclear. MSB states that the agency is endeavouring to create efficient and effective meetings, but also considers this to be an issue involving resource allocation among the participating agencies. According to MSB, the increased level of ambition and capabilities to be developed require time to be set aside for collaboration in various forms.

### **3.3.9 Some agencies are critical of the fact that MSB's work is not adapted to the various needs of the preparedness sectors**

Several preparedness agencies whose activities are more administrative in nature state that MSB lacks understanding of how their activities are conducted, and that both MSB meetings and MSB support are adapted to agencies that conduct more operational activities. They feel that MSB is attempting to apply a uniform model to all sectors despite the differing

needs of those sectors. They consider that the questions asked by MSB are based on the assumption that all agencies conduct operational activities themselves. Therefore, the meetings are of less relevance for agencies that do not belong to these sectors. MSB also perceives a difference between the agencies, noting that agencies that largely run the societally vital activities for which they are responsible are more used to collaborating with others.

### **3.3.10 Forums for total defence coordination are overshadowed**

One opinion raised in some interviews is that the meeting structure for civil preparedness takes time away from the forums for total defence coordination arranged jointly by MSB and the Swedish Armed Forces. Many of the issues on the agendas of meetings for total defence coordination have already been addressed in meetings on civil preparedness, which means that civil agencies lose interest when the issues are to be discussed again.

## **3.4 There are challenges related MSB's role and mandate**

This section describes a number of challenges associated with MSB's role and mandate. MTFA's study shows that MSB has selected an approach in which the agency drives and supports the agencies' efforts to create coordination and orientation. MSB has previously been criticised for interpreting its mandate too broadly, but argues that there is now greater acceptance for the agency's assignment. However, MTFA's study shows that there are still challenges related to MSB's role and mandate.

### **3.4.1 Previous shortcomings and criticism have influenced how MSB has approached efforts to implement and develop the structure**

MSB has previously been criticised for the fact that a lack of coordination between different branches of activity within the agency has created extra work for other actors. For instance, our interviews reveal that several agencies consider that MSB's internal coordination was inadequate previously, with different parts of MSB subsequently contacting agencies about the same issue, or with different messages. Furthermore, MSB has been criticised for interpreting its mandate too broadly wjem addressing a number of incidents, and for failing to take into account the needs of the agencies in question.<sup>41</sup> MSB documentation and interviews with MSB show that the agency was well aware of this criticism. Therefore, a coordination effort that included the entire agency was initiated in early 2022. It is hoped

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<sup>41</sup> SOU 2021:25, p. 417.

that other actors' time and effort can be utilised more effectively by coordinating the content and timing of external contacts between the various branches of activity. A number of agencies that we have interviewed state they have seen an improvement, although the problem still exists.

### **3.4.2 A balancing act for creating orientation and coordination**

From the outset, both MSB and other agencies recognised the need for MSB to assume a leading role with regard to system issues in the new structure. At the same time, as described above, there was a history of criticism levelled at MSB by other agencies for the broad interpretation of its mandate. MSB has therefore selected an approach in which the agency works to ensure that the agencies work together to achieve orientation and coordination of the system. This is consistent with the framework for leadership and coordination in the field of civil preparedness, which has been developed in collaboration with civil actors in the preparedness system. This framework is an approach to achieving orientation and coordination on the basis of the Swedish administrative model, where no agency has decision-making agency over another.<sup>42</sup> In interviews, MSB also clarifies the fact that the agency rarely has ready-made solutions to the challenges and issues that exist, and joint effort by the agencies is required in order to achieve solutions of joint relevance to multiple actors. Therefore, an early choice of approach has involved identifying challenges and bringing them up for discussion with others. Support materials and other documentation produced by MSB are also prepared in collaboration with the preparedness agencies.

Another point of departure for the work has involved an exploratory approach, working together with other agencies to try out solutions and backing off if the attempt is unsuccessful. One civil area administration highlights the fact that it perceives and welcomes MSB's cultural change resulting from the exploratory approach.

### **3.4.3 Most agencies are in favour of MSB's approach, but there are discussions about the mandate**

All in all, MSB perceives that there is acceptance among other agencies in respect of how MSB interprets and exercises its role. However, interviewees at MSB say that many agencies devote time to interpreting and discussing MSB's instructions. Our interviews with other agencies paint a similar picture. Most agencies state that MSB's assignment is difficult, and they consider that the agency is handling it well given the prevailing conditions.

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<sup>42</sup> Swedish Civil Contingencies Agency, Memorandum. Inriktning och samordning, MSB 2021-14046.

However, some agencies are critical and consider MSB to be devoting itself to conceptual governance, in that meetings, guidelines and other support material define how other agencies should work. Interviewees at MSB perceive no need for a stronger mandate in order to complete their assignment. However, it is felt that greater clarity in the agency's instructions would be desirable (see also chapter 4). It is also thought that alignment of terminology would reduce discussions and the risk of differing interpretations.

Furthermore, MSB feels that the introduction of sector-responsible agencies and county administrative boards responsible for civil areas has resulted in a greater understanding of MSB's role. The role and mandate of the agencies in relation to other preparedness agencies in the preparedness sectors and the county administrative boards in the civil areas broadly reflect MSB's role and mandate at a national level. This impression is also confirmed in interviews with sector-responsible agencies and civil area administrations.

#### **3.4.4 MSB's guidelines and other support materials are viewed as important for alignment**

Guidelines and other support material produced by MSB are viewed as important for creating alignment and clarity within the system. The agencies in question argue that in turn, this helps to promote favourable conditions for collaboration. One interviewee highlights the fact that consistent use of terminology and similar approaches are important for efficiency and help to avoid misunderstandings that cause extra work. Support material from MSB is considered to assist in such alignment. However, several interviewees indicated that previous support materials were not clearly linked, and that the quality varied. That said, the latest materials are perceived to be of good quality.

## 4. MSB's efforts to support agencies in civil defence planning

MSB bears responsibility for civil defence planning. According to its instructions, MSB has to support the relevant actors in planning for civil defence, promote coordination among actors planning for civil defence, and promote coordination in relation to military defence. They also state that MSB must work in collaboration with agencies, municipalities, regions, organisations and companies to identify and analyse vulnerabilities, threats and risks in society that are considered to be particularly serious and, together with the responsible agencies, conduct comprehensive planning of measures that need to be undertaken.<sup>43</sup>

This chapter sets out MSB's efforts to establish and promote planning of joint relevance to multiple actors in the field of civil defence, based on the new structure's establishment of preparedness sectors and civil areas. At the end of the chapter, we highlight challenges linked to MSB's work on civil defence planning that emerged from MTFAs study.<sup>44</sup>

### 4.1 Summary observations

- Government assignments have helped to ensure that MSB focuses on developing a process for capability planning. MSB now perceives a need to develop a wider systematic framework for preparatory planning of joint relevance to multiple actors.
- Employees at MSB emphasise that greater clarity in the agency's instructions would facilitate their work on planning.
- Most vital societal functions are fall within one or more areas of responsibility for preparedness agencies in the preparedness sectors. However, some vital societal functions do not fall within the area of responsibility of any preparedness sector or agency. According to MSB, therefore, there is no systematic preparedness planning for these functions.

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<sup>43</sup> See sections 2 and 6 of the Ordinance containing instructions for the Swedish Civil Contingencies Agency (2008:1002).

<sup>44</sup> For a more detailed analysis, see reports on the government assignment for the evaluation of Handlingskraft, Ministry of Defence, Appropriation directions for the 2025 fiscal year concerning the Swedish Agency for Defence Analysis. Fö2024/00407.

- It is difficult for MSB to obtain a clear overview of the planning of civil defence support to military defence, as many tasks are shared only between the Swedish Armed Forces and the relevant agency.

## 4.2 Several government assignments have shaped MSB's civil defence planning efforts

This section describes MSB's role and efforts in coherent civil defence planning. MTFA's study shows that a number of government assignments have provided support and impetus in MSB's efforts to create a national process for capability planning.

### 4.2.1 The work of the Swedish Armed Forces and MSB on total defence planning has highlighted the need for a process for civil defence planning

A number of government assignments have tasked the Swedish Armed Forces and MSB with resuming and shaping the planning of total defence. In December 2020, the government tasked the Swedish Armed Forces and MSB with promoting and developing coherent total defence planning during the period 2021–2025.<sup>45</sup> In August 2021, the agencies reported on the assignment in the form of an action plan for coherent total defence planning.<sup>46</sup> This is addressed directly to preparedness agencies<sup>47</sup> and other actors at a national level, and – indirectly – to actors at regional and local levels. Essentially, the aim of the action plan was to create a process in which civil defence planning is coordinated with military defence planning.<sup>48</sup>

In their efforts to develop and promote coherent total defence planning, the Swedish Armed Forces and MSB also noted that civil planning needed to be

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<sup>45</sup> Ministry of Defence, *Uppdrag till Försvarmakten och Myndigheten för samhällsskydd och beredskap avseende totalförsvarsplanering*, Fö2015/0916/MFI (in part), 10 December 2015; For a more detailed analysis, see reports on the government assignment for the evaluation of Handlingskraft, Ministry of Defence, Appropriation directions for the 2025 fiscal year concerning the Swedish Agency for Defence Analysis. Fö2024/00407

<sup>46</sup> Swedish Armed Forces and Swedish Civil Contingencies Agency, *Handlingskraft – handlingsplan för att främja och utveckla en sammanhängande planering för totalförsvaret 2021–2025*, FM2021-1 7683:2, MSB2020- 16261-3.

<sup>47</sup> The action plan was addressed to agencies with monitoring responsibilities. These agencies with monitoring responsibilities were replaced by preparedness agencies when the new structure came into force.

<sup>48</sup> Swedish Armed Forces and Swedish Civil Contingencies Agency, *Handlingskraft – handlingsplan för att främja och utveckla en sammanhängande planering för totalförsvaret 2021–2025*, p. 7.

developed and harmonised with the time horizons and needs of military planning, and also with the central government budget process.

#### 4.2.2 MSB develops processes for both planning to use existing capabilities and planning to create capabilities

MSB has progressively developed processes for civil defence planning that are of joint relevance to multiple actors. MSB divides its planning efforts into planning to create capabilities and planning to use existing capabilities.<sup>49</sup>

##### **Planning to create capability**

- capability planning – planning to create capability in the short to medium term (1–10 years).

##### **Planning to use existing capability**

- preparatory planning – generic or scenario-specific planning in order to deal with potential events that may have a significant impact on society
- response planning – planning for the handling of actual or imminent incidents and planning for changing conditions.

Source: MSBFS 2025:4

In 2023, MSB developed orientation and guidance for capability planning (see also section 4.2.4).<sup>50</sup> Interviews with MSB reveal that the agency perceives a need to design a process and guidance for preparatory planning as well, and such work is currently in progress. The aim is to create a consistent and coherent process in which methods used for capability planning can be emulated.

In the spring of 2025, MSB also adopted regulations that address aspects such as capability planning and preparatory planning among preparedness agencies. These regulations will come into force as of 1 June 2025 (see also section 4.2.6).

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<sup>49</sup> MSBFS 2025:4 *Myndigheten för samhällsskydd och beredskaps föreskrifter och allmänna råd om statliga myndigheters uppgifter inför och vid höjd beredskap*; MSB (2023). *Vägledning. Planerings för civil beredskap. Process och metod* (version 2023), p. 25. Swedish Armed Forces and Swedish Civil Contingencies Agency, *Handlingskraft – Handlingsplan för att främja och utveckla en sammanhängande planering för totalförsvaret 2021–2025*

<sup>50</sup> Swedish Civil Contingencies Agency (2023). *Vägledning. Planerings för civil beredskap. Process och metod* (version 2023).

### 4.2.3 Government assignments have accelerated work on civil defence capability planning of joint relevance to multiple actors

During the defence decision period 2021–2025, the government tasked the preparedness agencies with reporting annually to MSB and the Government Offices of Sweden on current capabilities and planned measures in the short and medium term. In connection with this, MSB has been tasked by the government to make an annual overall assessment of civil defence capabilities on the basis of material from the preparedness agencies.<sup>51</sup>

During the first year of Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine, MSB also received two government assignments that involved compiling the measures undertaken or needed to enhance civil defence capabilities, as well as the associated costs.<sup>52</sup> In an interview, MSB employees describe how the system was previously unaccustomed to long-term planning. Although the assignment has existed ever since the government's political decision in 2015<sup>53</sup>, the global situation and the 2022 government assignment accelerated the work on capability planning of joint relevance to multiple actors.

### 4.2.4 MSB's national plan for capability planning coordinates the agencies' planning

In 2023, MSB developed orientation and guidance<sup>54</sup> for a joint process for capability planning over a time horizon of 1 to 10 years. The guidance describes an annual process that focuses on actions requiring coordination within and between preparedness sectors and civil areas.

Interviews with MSB clarify the fact that the guidance currently functions as a normative overview of the planning process, and that the agencies follow it to varying degrees. The intention is for a cyclical process to operate within the preparedness agencies, and in preparedness sectors and civil areas. The agencies should work on the basis of an analysis of various inputs to plan for

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<sup>51</sup> Ju2020/04658 (in part), *Anvisningar för det civila försvaret för försvarsbeslutsperioden 2021-2025*, 17 December 2020; Ju2020/04658 (in part) *Uppdrag till Myndigheten för samhällsskydd och beredskap att göra en samlad bedömning av förmågan inom det civila försvaret*, 17 December 2020; Försvarsmakten och MSB, *Handlingskraft – Handlingsplan för att främja och utveckla en sammanhängande planering för totalförsvaret 2021-2025*, p. 27.

<sup>52</sup> Ju2022/00865, *Uppdrag till Myndigheten för samhällsskydd och beredskap att bedöma vilka åtgärder som bör vidtas för att stärka det civila försvaret*, 3 March 2022; Ju2022/01209, *Uppdrag till Myndigheten för samhällsskydd och beredskap att lämna förslag på åtgärder för att stärka det civila försvaret*, 2022-03-31.

<sup>53</sup> Ju2015/00054/SSK, Ju2015/00055/SSK, Ju2015/00067/SSK (in part), Ju2015/09669/SSK, *Planeringsanvisningar för det civila försvaret*, 10 December 2015.

actions that are to be implemented are two or more years ahead. This means that the process focuses both on ongoing measures and on measures that have not yet started or are about to start. All measures are included in MSB's national ten-year plan for preparedness measures, which is updated at least annually.

The purpose of MSB's ten-year plan is to assist in balanced development of preparedness within the framework of the government's overall orientation. This plan provides an opportunity to coordinate planning, thereby allowing MSB to identify possible synergies or competitive situations. For instance, MSB may propose an order of priority between agencies if several of them are planning to invest in a product with limited production possibilities. In this way, MSB can achieve strategic prioritisation in dialogue with the relevant agencies, instead of priorities being set by the supplier.

According to MSB, one obstacle to planning is that the agencies do not have a clear overview of the available financial resources. Funds for civil defence have been allocated in appropriations of different kinds. In some cases, funds are included in general administrative appropriations. This makes it more difficult to plan, as it is hard to gain an overview of how the funds will be allocated in relation to the agency's other activities.

#### **4.2.5 The national system documentation should provide a general overview for the government**

Since 2024, MSB has produced what is known as national system documentation containing a summary and assessment of planned measures and an analysis of any need for further measures at the end of the planning year. The system documentation can be regarded as a record of the past planning year and provides the government with a snapshot of the planning process, which is constantly ongoing.

According to MSB, the aim is to provide the government with information on which to base its decisions on prioritisation of funds within and between sectors and civil areas.<sup>55</sup> Another aim is to ensure coordination, so that allocated funds can be utilised as effectively as possible. More specifically, the idea is that the documentation should highlight gaps, the risk of duplication, opportunities for synergies, management of competition for suppliers, etc. MSB can also use the national system documentation to draw the government's attention to needs that have not been addressed. It

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<sup>55</sup> Swedish Civil Contingencies Agency (2023). Vägledning. Planering för civil beredskap – process och metod (version 2023) p. 13

emerged from the interviews that as things stand at present, MSB has not received any feedback from the government regarding the usefulness of the documentation.

There are varied views of the purpose and value of the system documentation among the preparedness agencies interviewed. Several of the agencies interviewed emphasise the fact that the idea behind system documentation is sound. There is a perception that MSB wishes to create a comprehensive overview so that the documentation can then be used to answer questions asked by the government. However, production of the system documentation has also generated additional work for the preparedness agencies, as they need to be involved in the process. Another objection from some agencies is that the volume of data is enormous while the level of detail is low, because the documentation is based on aggregated data. However, MSB believes that the current level of detail provides opportunities to coordinate capability planning at a national level.

#### **4.2.6 Regulations with a view to clarifying planning and tasks**

MSB's regulations and general recommendations on the tasks of central government agencies prior to and during periods of heightened preparedness will come into force on 1 June 2025. The aim is to align terminology and enhance clarity on key planning issues. The regulations state that the preparedness agencies are to participate in the joint capability planning process conducted by MSB, which aims at general planning of measures. The preparedness agencies also have to work in collaboration with MSB in their preparatory planning prior to heightened preparedness in order to achieve more coordinated planning within civil defence and between civil defence and military defence.<sup>56</sup>

### **4.3 Civil defence planning faces several challenges**

This section describes various challenges linked to MSB's work on civil defence planning that emerged from MTFA's study.

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<sup>56</sup> MSBFS 2025:4 *Myndigheten för samhällsskydd och beredskaps föreskrifter och allmänna råd om statliga myndigheters uppgifter inför och vid höjd beredskap*; MSB, PM. *Bakgrund och motiv till Myndigheten för samhällsskydd och beredskaps föreskrifter och allmänna råd (MSBFS 2025:4) om statliga myndigheters uppgifter inför och vid höjd beredskap.*

**Preventive and preparatory work**

**Section 6** The agency shall support the relevant actors in civil defence planning. The agency shall work in particular to ensure that actors coordinate their planning and that coordination takes place in relation to military defence.

The agency shall ensure that the necessary civil protection measures are undertaken.

#### 4.3.1 Clearer instructions would facilitate MSB's work

MSB is of the opinion that the agency's instruction provides a strong mandate to lead and coordinate civil defence planning. This has also been confirmed in a number of government assignments. However, the instruction is worded and structured in a way that makes it difficult to read, according to interviewees at MSB, and creates unnecessary scope for interpretation.

In its guidance on civil preparedness planning, MSB states that it has been tasked by the government with ensuring that relevant actors coordinate their planning and carry out comprehensive planning. The legal basis for the assignment is found in sections 2 and 6 of the

agency's instructions.<sup>57</sup>

Interviewees at MSB also highlight the fact that it is clear from a number of government assignments that the government expects MSB to be able to provide a coordinated response for the preparedness agencies, and that the government considers it to be MSB's job to be able to coordinate the planning that is done. The government assignments have helped to create an understanding and acceptance of MSB's role and assignment during the shaping of the planning process and the production of the national system documentation. It is also felt that other agencies perceive advantages with MSB being able to represent a holistic perspective.

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<sup>57</sup> Swedish Civil Contingencies Agency, *Vägledning. Planering för civil beredskap. Process och metod* (version 2023).

However, the interviewees at MSB emphasise the fact that the wording and structure of the instructions provide unnecessary scope for interpretation. It is not always clear, either to other agencies or within MSB, what different wordings mean or how they should be interpreted. The wording stating that MSB, together with others, shall carry out comprehensive planning of measures that need to be undertaken is found in section 2, for example. However, that section otherwise deals with serious threats, risks and vulnerabilities in society, and with the fact that MSB has to conduct a national risk and vulnerability assessment. Its placement in the text of the ordinance opens up the possibility of different interpretations of what the comprehensive planning is referring to. The interviewees emphasise the fact that MSB's work would be facilitated by including clearly worded tasks and

**Preventive and preparatory work**

**Section 2** The agency shall work in collaboration with agencies, municipalities, regions, organisations and companies to identify and analyse vulnerabilities, threats and risks in society that are considered to be particularly serious. *Furthermore, the agency shall work together with the responsible agencies to conduct comprehensive planning of measures to be undertaken.* The agency shall assess and compile the results of its work and report these results to the government.

The agency shall submit a national risk and vulnerability assessment to the government by the end of April in every odd-numbered year. In its work, the agency shall take into account the risk and vulnerability assessments submitted by preparedness agencies in accordance with section 19 of the Ordinance on the preparedness of central government agencies (2022:524). The agency shall conduct its assessment both at an overall societal level and by preparedness sector. The assessment shall identify particularly serious threats, risks and vulnerabilities and the measures undertaken and planned. \*

assignments in the instructions.

#### 4.3.2 There are gaps in the national planning process as the preparedness sectors do not cover all vital societal functions

The goal of civil defence includes safeguarding the most vital societal functions<sup>58</sup>, and so these functions constitute important points of departure in preparedness planning.<sup>59</sup>

MSB compiled a list of 59 vital societal functions during the COVID-19 pandemic. Most vital societal functions are fall within one or more areas of responsibility for preparedness agencies in the preparedness sectors. However, some vital societal functions do not fall within the area of responsibility of any preparedness sector or agency.<sup>60</sup> MSB therefore assesses that there is no systematic preparedness planning for these functions. Interviews with MSB employees reveal that the agency has raised the issue with the government on a number of occasions. Some areas have been included in public inquiries, but MSB has received no feedback for other functions.

#### 4.3.3 MSB does not obtain a clear overview of planning for civil defence support to military defence

One of the primary tasks of civil defence is to meet the need for civil support in military defence.<sup>61</sup> However, one dilemma in MSB's national process for preparedness planning is that the Swedish Armed Forces specify their support needs bilaterally with the relevant agencies. Therefore, MSB does not have a clear overview of the agencies' planning for civil defence support to military defence.

In its report *Den statliga styrningen av det civila försvarets uppbyggnad*<sup>62</sup> [State steering of the establishment of civil defence], the Swedish National Audit Office has described the fact that the preparedness agencies perceived the needs of the Swedish Armed Forces as unclear. The Swedish Armed Forces

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<sup>58</sup> Prop. 2024/25:34, p. 62.

<sup>59</sup> Societal functions are to be understood as interconnected activities that collectively constitute a function. Public transport, for instance, is a vital societal function. Vehicles, vessels, traffic management, traffic information and the operation and planning of infrastructure are societally vital activities that jointly maintain the public transport function. See Swedish Civil Contingencies Agency (2023), *Lista med viktiga samhällsfunktioner – Utgångspunkter för att stärka samhällets beredskap*

<sup>60</sup> Swedish Civil Contingencies Agency (2023), *Lista med viktiga samhällsfunktioner – Utgångspunkt för att stärka samhällets beredskap*.

<sup>61</sup> Prop. 2024/25:34, p. 62.

<sup>62</sup> Swedish National Audit Office, *Den statliga styrningen av det civila försvarets uppbyggnad*. 2025:4.

have conducted scenario-based discussions with all preparedness sectors in an attempt to concretise the support needs. The need for support has been placed in context, and the Swedish Armed Forces is of the opinion that this has clarified the need for support. Interviews with employees of the Swedish Armed Forces also show that bilateral dialogues with preparedness agencies have been conducted in this context. This bilateral communication allows detailed information to be isolated to relevant parties, which has enabled further precision.<sup>63</sup> However, it is more difficult in MSB's overall summaries to visualise how military defence needs are taken into account in planning. Therefore, MSB has to rely on the integration of the needs into the agencies' planning, and on the Swedish Armed Forces being invited to check that the needs are addressed.

#### **4.3.4 Government assignments have resulted in a substantial workload for preparedness agencies**

During the previous defence decision period, MSB was awarded a number of government assignments: this meant that MSB obtained material from other preparedness agencies. Although the government assignments provided support in the establishment of the planning process, MSB believes that the number of assignments has presented challenges.

MSB has worked to establish a planning process, and in this process has attempted to create an annual rhythm for when material should be produced and reported. MSB argues that this has been made more difficult by the introduction of additional government assignments that have resulted in a need for MSB to request new information, similar to that provided by the agencies previously. For instance, the agency reported on three separate occasions in 2022 on measures to strengthen civil defence on the basis of various government assignments. Proposals for prioritisation of measures to strengthen civil defence for the 2025–2030 period were reported in 2023. In 2024, MSB submitted an overall assessment of the feasibility and consequences of the proposed measures that were submitted by the Committee on Defence in its report *Kraftsamling* [Concerted effort]. Additionally, during the previous defence decision period, MSB had the ongoing task of assessing civil defence capabilities on an annual basis. All the

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<sup>63</sup> Swedish Armed Forces (2025). *Försvarmaktens redovisning av uppgift 9 i regleringsbrevet för budgetåret 2024 – Samverkan utifrån ny struktur för samhällets krisberedskap och civilt försvar*, FM2024-4113:42, 11 February 2025.

assignments indicated have involved obtaining material from other preparedness agencies.<sup>64</sup>

Interviewees at various preparedness agencies describe being ‘snowed under’ with government assignments, consultation responses and requests for information from MSB. They consider that this takes up time and resources that could otherwise be used for capability development. The material requested by MSB has been perceived as similar in nature, but with different emphases. For the agencies, this has meant repeated processing of data in order to produce the material requested by MSB. There are also ordinance-prescribed risk and vulnerability assessments that are perceived as overlapping with the issues addressed in the government assignments. For the agencies, the purposes of the various sets of documents are not always clear. Several agencies point out that the gathering of information could be coordinated more effectively in terms of both timing and perspective. Another criticism levelled at MSB is that the agency processes the information provided in such a way that the agencies themselves do not recognise it.

Interviews with both MSB and other agencies reveal a broad understanding of the government’s need to follow up on the investments made in civil defence and maintain a clear overview of its capabilities. However, the interviewees agree that these reports mean that time and resources that could have been used for capability development are invested in reports instead. MSB has notified the Government Offices of Sweden that there is a major need to reduce the frequency of reporting in order to reduce the burden on the system. The agency proposed, for instance, that civil defence capability assessments should be submitted once every two years.

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<sup>64</sup> Ju2022/00865, *Uppdrag till Myndigheten för samhällsskydd och beredskap att bedöma vilka åtgärder som bör vidtas för att stärka det civila försvaret*, 3 March 2022; Ju2022/01209, *Uppdrag till Myndigheten för samhällsskydd och beredskap att lämna förslag på åtgärder för att stärka det civila försvaret*, 2022-03-31; Fö2023/01000, *Uppdrag till Myndigheten för samhällsskydd och beredskap att föreslå en prioritering av åtgärder för att stärka det civila försvaret*, Fö2023/01997, *Regeringsuppdrag till Myndigheten för samhällsskydd och beredskap om kompletterande underlag med anledning av Försvarsberedningens delrapport*, Ju2020/04658 (in part), *Uppdrag till Myndigheten för samhällsskydd och beredskap att göra en samlad bedömning av förmågan inom det civila försvaret*, 17 December 2020.



## 5. MSB's efforts to support the agencies and the government during crises and periods of heightened preparedness

MSB has a responsibility to support the agencies and the government during crises and periods of heightened preparedness. In the event of heightened preparedness and crises, MSB's instructions include supporting the coordination of measures by the agencies concerned and assisting the Government Offices with documentation and information.<sup>65</sup>

This chapter describes MSB's efforts to assist the government with information and data in the event of crises and periods of heightened preparedness. This is then followed by a section on the MSB assignment that involves supporting the agencies' coordination.

### 5.1 Summary observations

- MSB supports the government by providing documents to support decision-making. This is done by means of cross-sectoral situation reports, the purpose of which is to map the national consequences of incidents that have occurred.
- According to the preparedness agencies, reporting is onerous for the entire preparedness system. Therefore, MSB is working together with other agencies to identify sustainable ways of managing the reporting burden.
- MSB supports the coordination of the relevant agencies during both crises and periods of heightened preparedness. However, the Swedish Armed Forces perceive a risk that sector-responsible agencies and county administrative boards responsible for civil areas will rely on MSB's coordination and that the preparedness system will become too centralised.

### 5.2 MSB supports the government by providing documents to support decision-making

This section describes how MSB assists the government with material and information in connection with serious accidents and crises and during

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<sup>65</sup> Section 7 of the Ordinance containing instructions for the Swedish Civil Contingencies Agency (2008:1002).

periods of heightened preparedness. We also describe how the preparedness agencies perceive the number of reporting channels as challenging.

### **5.2.1 MSB assists the government with cross-sectoral situation reports**

As indicated above, MSB is tasked with assisting the government with information and material during crises and periods of heightened preparedness. The task of keeping the government informed has been part of the agency's remit since it was created. MSB considers that good dialogue is maintained with the Government Offices of Sweden on any needs that the government might have during periods of heightened preparedness.

The external situation also means that MSB already submits monthly cross-sectoral situation reports to the government at a national level. These situation reports are based on the monthly situation reports submitted by the preparedness sectors and the county administrative boards to the agency. The purpose of MSB's situation reports is to describe the potential cross-sectoral consequences of an incident for society. In the event of specific needs, or if an incident occurs, MSB also requests reporting directly from the preparedness agencies concerned. MSB further processes and analyses the information on the basis of the agency's knowledge of aspects such as dependencies that may contribute to spillover effects in society. MSB's situation reports also aim to identify the impact of any incidents falling between the areas of responsibility of individual agencies. Furthermore, assisting the government with material includes communicating information on resources needed nationally and providing proposals for priorities with a view to allocating limited resources as effectively as possible.

### **5.2.2 Reporting is onerous for the entire preparedness system**

Our interviews indicate that statutory reporting and the rights of various agencies to request information impose a substantial workload on virtually all preparedness agencies. This applies not only to situation reporting, but to all forms of reporting and information gathering. There are also concerns that situation reporting will increase significantly during periods of heightened preparedness.

In an interview with MSB, situation reporting is described as a typical example of ambiguities in the preparedness system that also have specific consequences. There would be little time for other activities if all parties with a statutory right to request information were to start exercising that right, particularly during a period of heightened preparedness. Our interview with the Swedish Armed Forces confirmed the assessment that reporting

channels appear to be unsustainable during periods of heightened preparedness in terms of the number of actors that have to report to one another.

Several of the agencies interviewed by MTFA query the usefulness of the information being reported in our current situation. One sector-responsible agency cites the example of reporting to civil area administrations. The agency argues that the administrations request information so that they can create a situation report, but that the interviewees are unclear on how this situation report is used and what it contributes.

### **5.2.3 MSB is leading efforts to identify sustainable approaches to reporting**

At the request of the civil preparedness council, MSB has established a working group for the creation of practical, sustainable working methods for ordinance-prescribed reporting. MSB describes how it is attempting, together with the sector-responsible agencies and the civil area administrations, to work out who needs what information, and how to avoid actors being forced to report the same information in different channels.

## **5.3 MSB supports the coordination of relevant agencies**

This section describes how MSB is working to support agencies' coordination during crises and periods of heightened preparedness. We describe aspects such as how opinions vary on MSB's role and the need for national coordination during periods of heightened preparedness.

### **5.3.1 MSB believes that its mandate to coordinate extends a relatively long way, but that a shared understanding with other agencies is the important thing**

MSB's consultation response to the structural inquiry indicates that the agency is of the opinion that it should have the same coordinating role during periods of heightened preparedness as in peacetime crises. The interviewees emphasise the need to facilitate discussions on mandates and responsibilities, as well as coordination at a national level. One example presented by MSB is that regional and local actors may need national assistance to address major issues during periods of heightened preparedness, such as host nation support or similar.

MSB's tasks during periods of heightened preparedness are primarily regulated in section 7 of the agency's instructions. According to this section, MSB shall support the coordination of measures by agencies during crises or

periods of heightened preparedness. MSB shall ensure that relevant actors have the opportunity to coordinate actions.<sup>66</sup>

The interviewees at MSB argue that the mandate given to the agency on the basis of the wording of section 7 generally extends quite a long way. Bringing together actors and jointly developing a common situation report is often regarded as sufficient to achieve a common orientation. Interviewees at MSB also feel that acceptance of the agency's role as a coordinator in crisis situations has gradually increased; partly due to the new structure and MSB's meeting structure, and partly a result of lessons learned from past events demonstrating that coordination did not work as intended. This picture is also confirmed in interviews with other agencies, where interviewees indicate that the structural reform has clarified the preparedness system.

The government has recently described MSB as a *top node* in civil defence, and MSB's annual report for 2024 describes how the agency is to become a top node that aims to support the government's coordination of civil defence at a national level.<sup>67</sup> The interviews we have conducted with MSB reveal that the concept is not really perceived as adding much that is new, but rather as a clarification of how MSB has worked in recent years. However, a concern emerges in MTFAs interviews with other agencies; that top node will be yet another launch of an undefined concept in the preparedness system that will need to be interpreted jointly by the agencies.

### 5.3.2 Different views on the risk of overly centralised coordination

The Swedish Armed Forces have repeatedly pointed out in various consultation documents and communications that MSB's tasks and responsibilities should be refined. The Swedish Armed Forces are in favour of MSB's operational role providing support during crises and periods of heightened preparedness. However, they argue that there is a need to clarify what this involves.<sup>68</sup>

An interview with representatives of the Swedish Armed Forces reveals that they are in favour of MSB supporting agencies in their efforts to build up civil defence. They argue that there is a need for an actor to coordinate the

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<sup>66</sup> Section 7 of the Ordinance containing instructions for the Swedish Civil Contingencies Agency (2008:1002).

<sup>67</sup> Swedish Civil Contingencies Agency, *Årsredovisning 2024*, 2025, p. 93.

<sup>68</sup> Swedish Armed Forces, *Remissyttrande Struktur för ökad motståndskraft (SOU 2021:25)*, FM2021-8946:2.

development of the civil component of total defence, and to coordinate its content and funding. They are in favour of MSB collecting and preparing information from agencies and submitting it to the government, and consider that MSB assumes overall responsibility for civil defence in this way.

At the same time, the interviewees at the Swedish Armed Forces highlight the fact that there is a risk of sector-responsible agencies and county administrative boards responsible for civil areas relying on MSB's coordination. They argue that this may lead to them failing to engage fully with their own coordination tasks.<sup>69</sup> Ultimately, the interviewees perceive a risk of MSB's coordination contributing to undesirable centralisation of the preparedness system. MSB may constitute a delaying factor in critical situations if it becomes an additional layer between agencies and the government. The representatives of the Swedish Armed Forces argue that in many respects, responsibility for coordination is the same as the geographical area responsibility. At a national level, the government is what coordinates the nation, followed by the county administrative boards responsible for civil areas, the county administrative boards and, ultimately, municipalities. The important thing, in their opinion, is to strengthen and clarify that structure.

MSB also emphasises the need for coordination at local and regional levels, but also emphasises that the system must be coherent; from the government to the agencies in the preparedness sectors and civil areas, and down to municipal level. MSB's role in this context is to coordinate and hold together the system from a national and cross-sectoral perspective. The interviewees at MSB do not believe that county administrative boards responsible for civil areas or any other agencies could operate across sectors and nationally in the way that MSB does.

Interviews with various preparedness agencies reveal that several of the people interviewed do not believe that MSB's mandate during periods of heightened preparedness is clear. One ambiguity highlighted is how MSB's coordinating role during periods of heightened preparedness should be understood in relation to the role and responsibilities of the county administrative boards responsible for civil areas. At the same time, a number of agencies question the ability of the county administrative boards responsible for civil areas to coordinate. In MTFAs previous interim report,

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<sup>69</sup> Ordinance (2022:524) on the preparedness of central government agencies; Ordinance on county administrative boards responsible for civil areas (2022:525).

employees within the Swedish Armed Forces' military regions indicated that they felt the administrations were too small to deal with critical tasks during periods of heightened preparedness.<sup>70</sup>

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<sup>70</sup> Swedish Defence Research Agency (2024), *Uppbyggnaden av civilområden*, p. 44.

## 6. Conclusions

The purpose of this interim report has been to follow up and evaluate MSB's work on and implementation of the new structure for civil defence and societal crisis preparedness on the basis of the agency's system-supporting role.

The intention behind MSB's role in the new structure is set out in brief in the government's wording in the terms of reference to the structural inquiry. In these terms of reference, the government states that a structure involving central government agencies divided into sectors, sector-responsible agencies and a higher regional leadership involves a need for an agency with overall responsibility for coordination. This agency has to be able to ensure coherent planning for – and coordinated action during – peacetime crises, heightened preparedness and, ultimately, war.<sup>71</sup>

A number of tasks and assignments linked to MSB's role are also highlighted by the Committee on Defence and the structural inquiry as being of particular importance in this context. MSB has held a system-supporting role for civil defence for a long time. The structural reform involved only consequential changes to MSB's instructions, but consolidated the role of the agency at the same time. The line of reasoning put forward by the Committee on Defence and the structural inquiry reveals how the various elements of the structure are intended to interact. New roles and organisation for other agencies and the reflection of parts of MSB's assignment in the Preparedness Ordinance also clarify the role of the agency in the structure.<sup>72</sup>

Our study shows that MSB has approached the work on the new structure in a manner that is largely aligned with the role described for the agency by the Committee on Defence and the structural inquiry, and also in the government's terms of reference to the inquiry. However, our study investigation reveals a number of challenges associated with MSB's system-supporting role in the new structure.

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<sup>71</sup> Dir. 2018:79, p. 15.

<sup>72</sup> Sections 12 and 22 of the Ordinance on the preparedness of central government agencies (2022:524).

Our conclusions are presented in this final chapter. Three recommendations to the government are presented at the end of the chapter.

## **6.1 MSB's work on implementation has made a difference**

MTFA's study shows that MSB's efforts have facilitated the agencies' implementation of the new structure. There has been a major need to discuss and jointly interpret roles and responsibilities. The structure also means that a number of cross-sectoral issues need to be addressed. MSB has identified these needs at an early stage and created forums where the agencies can work together on these issues.

Both preparedness sectors and civil areas have been in an establishment phase in which the agencies have focused on establishment and the internal work of sectors and civil areas, respectively. According to MTFA's assessment, therefore, MSB's meeting structure, other support and coordination have helped to establish the structure as a whole more quickly than if the agencies had had to deal with this type of coordination themselves.

## **6.2 Conflicting objectives create challenges in MSB's work**

MTFA's study shows that MSB is working on tasks and assignments that the Committee on Defence and the structural inquiry associate with MSB's system-supporting role. However, there are a number of conflicting objectives that create challenges in the work done by MSB and other agencies. These are described in the section that follows.

### **6.2.1 The meeting structure takes up agencies' resources**

MTFA's study shows that other agencies consider MSB's meeting structure to fulfil an important development and coordination function. The agencies appreciate MSB's facilitating role, the work the agency does to highlight cross-sectoral issues, and the fact that the agency has created forums for collaboration and coordination. That said, sector-responsible agencies and county administrative boards responsible for civil protection stress that MSB's meeting structure demands a lot of resources and takes time away from other important preparedness work. In this context, MSB has emphasised that joint efforts and coordination are necessary in order to implement the structure and develop civil defence. MSB is therefore of the opinion that in part, this is a matter of resource allocation among other agencies.

MTFA recognises that there is a conflict of interests between the need for time and resources for coordination and time and resources for agencies' internal preparedness work. The study shows that MSB is making an effort to create effective and efficient meetings. MTFA considers it important for the agency to continue with this approach. To further take into account the needs of other agencies, MSB, together with the agencies concerned, should explore the options for further streamlining of meetings and coordination. In this interim report, MTFA is unable to comment on how other agencies allocate their resources, or whether further resources are needed.

### **6.2.2 Focus on sector-responsible agencies and county administrative boards responsible for civil areas may result in other preparedness agencies receiving less information**

One overall intention of the structural reform is to create clearer leadership and responsibilities in civil defence. The introduction of preparedness sectors with sector-responsible agencies and civil areas with county administrative boards responsible for civil areas creates clusters of preparedness agencies, as well as nodes in the structure. It is thought that this will be able to create clarity, better conditions for coordination and collaboration and help to improve efficiency in a number of ways.

MSB has monitored the establishment of the structure in its efforts to develop the structure and to support and coordinate the preparedness agencies. This means that the joint work done in order to develop the structure is largely undertaken by the sector-responsible agencies and the county administrative boards responsible for civil areas, together with MSB.

Our research suggests that this creates efficiency gains. Work will become more manageable and progress will be easier to achieve if the work is concentrated among fewer agencies that can also represent and pass on the work to other agencies within the respective preparedness sector and civil area. A number of preparedness agencies also express their relief that they themselves do not have to allocate resources to all the meetings needed to keep the structure together and promote its development.

However, our study shows that several preparedness agencies are experiencing a loss of information. It is emphasised that those agencies that previously held monitoring responsibilities had greater insight into overall issues in the past, when contact with MSB was more frequent. The interviews also show that some preparedness agencies have limited awareness of the development work being done by MSB together with

sector-responsible agencies and county administrative boards responsible for civil areas.

MTFA notes that the organisation of work on system issues on the basis of the structure has both advantages and disadvantages. On the one hand, it may streamline the work and the communication of information within the structure. On the other, county administrative boards and other preparedness agencies are becoming dependent on how well the county administrative board responsible for the civil area or the sector-responsible agency succeeds in passing on that information. There is a risk that information is being lost along the way, thereby leading to reduced understanding of the system as a whole. Ultimately, this may create obstacles to progress if agencies do not have sufficient knowledge of why certain tasks are to be performed or how roles and responsibilities are allocated. In the opinion of MTFA, it is necessary for MSB to continue working to ensure that the dissemination of information is accurate and manageable.

### **6.2.3 It is difficult for MSB to obtain a clear overview of the planning for civil defence support to military defence**

One important element of the civil defence assignment involves contributing to military defence capabilities. To do this, the Swedish Armed Forces need to share their support needs with the relevant agencies; for the most part bilaterally between the Swedish Armed Forces and individual agencies.

At the same time, MSB requires an overall picture of planning so that it can assist in the coordination of the agencies' planning and the development of civil defence in line with the government's orientation. This is complicated by the fact that for reasons of confidentiality, the need for military defence support from civil defence can be shared with MSB at only a general level. Earlier chapters have described how this means that MSB needs to rely on the agencies integrating the Swedish Armed Forces' support requirements into their planning, and on the Swedish Armed Forces verifying that these requirements are addressed.

MTFA notes that MSB is presented with a complex dilemma: to create an overview of planning and needs while essential parts of the planning and needs remain unclear to the agency. The task of representing civil defence at a central level in matters of significance for the balance between civil and military needs for society's resources may be particularly challenging. MSB needs to be able to maintain an overview of civil defence and communicate its status, development and needs to the government in various ways. According to MTFA, therefore, it is particularly important that MSB, as far

as possible, highlights to the government any areas where the agency's knowledge is lacking so that the government can take this into account in its assessment of how resources should be prioritised and allocated.

#### **6.2.4 The Swedish Armed Forces perceive a risk of MSB's coordination potentially creating centralisation that counteracts regional redundancy**

The new structure means that the sector-responsible agencies and the county administrative boards responsible for civil areas have been assigned coordination tasks: the sector-responsible agencies are to coordinate work in each sector, and the county administrative boards responsible for civil areas are to coordinate work in the civil area.<sup>73</sup>

Employees interviewed at the Swedish Armed Forces emphasise that there is a risk of sector-responsible agencies and county administrative boards responsible for civil areas relying too heavily on MSB's coordinating role, resulting in lower priority for the agencies' own coordination assignments. In the longer term, the interviewees perceive a risk of this contributing to excessive centralisation of coordination. MSB may constitute a delaying factor in critical situations if it becomes an additional layer between agencies and the government. Instead, the interviewees believe that the principle of geographical area responsibility should be strengthened.

For their part, interviewees at MSB emphasise that the agency does not take over other agencies' coordination responsibilities. According to MSB, the agency's role is to provide a national perspective and maintain an overview of resource needs throughout the country.

MTFA agrees on the importance of active work on ordinance-prescribed coordination tasks among the sector-responsible agencies and the county administrative boards responsible for civil areas. The functioning of geographical area responsibility is also a fundamental aspect. The existence of county administrative boards responsible for civil areas that are able to coordinate both within and between civil areas is an essential element of the structural reform, as this strengthens regional redundancy. However, MTFA does not consider that MSB's coordinating role needs to compete with the coordinating tasks of other agencies. In many ways, MSB's coordination is different to and broader than the coordination that takes place between

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<sup>73</sup> Section 24 of the Ordinance on the preparedness of central government agencies (2022:524); Sections 8 and 9 of the Ordinance on county administrative boards responsible for civil areas (2022:525).

preparedness agencies and within and between civil areas. It is essential for county administrative boards responsible for civil areas to be able to coordinate on host nation support and similar tasks. However, it is not reasonable to expect the coordination that takes place between civil areas to be capable of providing an equivalent overview of national needs and resources as the overview created by MSB through its work. In this context, it should also be indicated that staff in the military regions have stated that they assess the civil area administrations as lacking sufficient capacity to handle critical tasks during periods of heightened preparedness.

Overall, MTFA perceives a need for sector-responsible agencies and county administrative boards responsible for civil areas to develop and strengthen their work on coordination. However, MTFA does not perceive MSB's coordination as an obstacle to this. Rather, MSB is able to help strengthen the agencies' coordination by working to resolve issues at system level and issues that are cross-sectoral in nature. Addressing issues of a more fundamental nature should facilitate the specific coordination that needs to take place between the agencies. Finally, MTFA notes that our study has not revealed any information indicating that MSB's coordination currently presents an obstacle to contact between individual agencies and the government.

### **6.3 Government assignments place a burden on the system**

Total defence is undergoing an intensive growth phase involving substantial investments. It is necessary to follow up developments and the use of the allocated funds. It is also essential for the government to have a good overview of both military and civil defence capabilities. The number of government assignments awarded to MSB should be viewed from this perspective: it is a consequence of the government needing information on how the build-up of civil defence is progressing. However, our study shows that the preparedness agencies feel that the government assignments have resulted in such a substantial workload that they consider that capability development has been impeded.<sup>74</sup> MSB states that it has drawn the

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<sup>74</sup> This has also been pointed out in the Swedish National Audit Office's report *Den statliga styrningen av det civila försvarets uppbyggnad*, RiR 2025:4, pp. 57–58 and the Committee on Defence's report *Uppföljning av det civila försvaret – erfarenheter från tre beredskapssektorer*, 2024/25:RFR3, p. 120.

government's attention to the difficulties of managing government assignments.

MTFA considers it important to continue monitoring developments and investments in civil defence. At the same time, it is extremely important to create scope for capability development work. It is necessary to find appropriate intervals between follow-up operations. Therefore, MTFA recommends that the government, in dialogue with MSB, create more sustainable distribution of future government assignments in terms of both time and content.

#### **6.4 There is a lack of planning for vital societal functions that are not based within preparedness sectors**

Maintaining coherence in civil defence planning is identified by the Committee on Defence and the structural inquiry – and in the government's terms of reference to the inquiry – as one of the most important tasks linked to MSB's system-supporting role. The structural inquiry also emphasises the fact that planning should be based on the structure of preparedness sectors and civil areas as proposed by the inquiry. According to the structural inquiry, planning should take place within each preparedness agency and then be coordinated within sectors and civil areas, and subsequently at a national level.

MSB compiled a list of vital societal functions during the COVID-19 pandemic. Most of these functions are based within preparedness sectors, and preparedness planning for that particular societal function is performed by the preparedness agencies in sector in question. However, some vital societal functions are not based within a preparedness sector, and thus – according to MSB – there is no systematic preparedness planning for these functions. Interviews with MSB employees reveal that the agency has raised the issue with the government on a number of occasions.

MTFA notes that the lack of planning for vital societal functions may ultimately hinder attainment of the civil defence objectives of maintaining vital societal functions. MTFA therefore recommends that the government, with the support of MSB, review the division of responsibilities between central government agencies in relation to vital societal functions.

## **6.5 MSB's mandate could be clearer – clarity promotes action and resource efficiency**

MTFA's study presents a picture in which MSB, on the one hand, considers itself to have a strong mandate in its instructions for the tasks and assignments provided to the agency. On the other hand, it also emerges that interviewees perceive the instructions as unclear in some respects, and that other agencies spend time interpreting and discussing them.

The interviewees describe how a common understanding of MSB's role and assignment has developed among other agencies. However, according to the interviewees, greater clarity in the instructions in respect of various tasks would facilitate MSB's work.

MTFA concurs with the assessment that more limited scope for interpretation and greater clarity would reduce uncertainties with regard to responsibilities and tasks and facilitate the work of the agency. For this reason, MTFA argues that there is reason to review the wording and structure of MSB's instructions. The instructions date back to 2008 and have subsequently been expanded in stages. As a result, the agency has instructions whose structure dates back to a time when tasks related to civil defence constituted a relatively marginal part of the agency's activities. Today, civil defence is the focal point for the agency's activities, and it is ascribed such importance that the government intends to change MSB's name from the Swedish Civil Contingencies Agency to the Swedish Civil Defence and Resilience Agency. In this context, MTFA considers that the structure and wording of the instructions should convey more clearly the agency's assignment with regard to civil defence.

MTFA considers that a thorough review of the instructions is needed, and would particularly like to highlight the fact that MSB's work of supporting and coordinating other actors in the planning of civil defence is currently supported by section 6 of the instructions, and support for carrying out comprehensive planning together with other agencies is supported by section 2 of the instructions. While section 6 refers explicitly to civil defence, section 2 is more open to interpretation. The latter section appears to focus mainly on work on risk and vulnerability assessments. Including the task of developing a comprehensive plan in section 6, which clearly refers to civil defence, could be one way of reducing the scope for interpretation.

## 6.6 MTFFA's recommendations

In light of the above, MTFFA makes the following recommendations to the government in this report:

- There is a lack of systematic preparedness planning for a number of vital societal functions. MTFFA recommends that the government, with the support of MSB, review the division of responsibilities between central government agencies in relation to these vital societal functions.
- MTFFA considers it important to continue monitoring developments and investments in civil defence. At the same time, it is highly important to create scope for capability development work. It is necessary to find appropriate intervals between follow-up operations. Therefore, MTFFA recommends that the government, in dialogue with MSB, create more sustainable distribution of future government assignments in terms of both time and content.
- MTFFA considers that the structure and wording of MSB's instructions should be reviewed in order to communicate more clearly the agency's assignment in respect of civil defence. MTFFA would like in particular to emphasise that MSB is currently finding support for its work of conducting comprehensive planning together with other agencies in section 2 of the instructions, which otherwise deals with risk and vulnerability assessments. MTFFA therefore recommends that the government clarify MSB's assignment involving development of comprehensive planning for civil defence. This could, for example, be done by adding the assignment to section 6, which explicitly refers to civil defence.



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## Appendix 1. Methodology

MTFA applies a programme-theoretical approach in order to follow up and evaluate the new structure for civil defence and societal crisis preparedness. This means that we evaluate our results against the intentions of the reform.

### Programme theory

MTFA has chosen mainly to apply a programme-theoretical approach in order to evaluate the new structure for civil defence and societal crisis preparedness. In simple terms, programme theory can be said to comprise assumptions about *what* an intervention – in this case, structural reform – should achieve and *how* the reform should achieve this. A programme theory-based model is made up of two sub-theories – a general *theory of change* and a more operational *activity theory*.

The theory of change is made up of assumptions at a general/strategic level about what leads to change. Important points of departure in formulating a theory of change involve identifying the problems to be resolved by the intervention and defining the objectives and purpose of the intervention. The activity theory involves formulating, at a more concrete or operational level, what actions or processes are implemented in order to achieve the objectives of the intervention.

In some cases, evaluation is planned as soon as a reform is introduced, and an evaluation model is designed at the same time as the reform. This then provides explicit problem scenarios, aims, objectives and processes to be used as a basis for an evaluation. Where this is not the case, evaluators need to interpret and reconstruct the assumptions underlying the intervention to be able to design an evaluation model.<sup>75</sup>

### MTFA's programme theory-based evaluation model

Reforms, as indicated above, are often followed by some kind of programme statement that clarifies the intent of the reform, as well as the problems to be addressed by the reform. It may be aligned with programme theory from the outset. There may also be other types of programme statements, which

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<sup>75</sup> Vedung, Evert (2009), *Utvärdering i politik och förvaltning*. Studentlitteratur, Lund; Funnell, Sue C, Rogers, Patricia J (2011), *Purposeful Program Theory. Effective Use of Theories of Change and Logic Models*. John Wiley and Sons Inc San Francisco.

are produced with no link to or consideration of future evaluations, but which nevertheless provide the necessary keys for understanding the intentions behind programmes and reforms. Explanatory memoranda and other preparatory works are typical examples of this.<sup>76</sup>

In the case of structural reform, there are no explanatory memoranda that set out the government's intentions and choices. We therefore take as our point of departure the line of reasoning in the Committee on Defence's report *Motståndskraft* [Resilience] and in the report *Struktur för ökad motståndskraft* [Structure for increased resilience] (hereafter referred to as 'the structural inquiry'), and also the government's terms of reference for the structural inquiry. The inquiries preceded the decision to introduce the structure and, together with the terms of reference of the structural inquiry, provide an understanding of the background and objectives of the reform.

In interim report 1, MTFA began work on an evaluation model by reconstructing the problem scenarios on which the reform was based, as well as the presumed objectives of the reform. MTFA has developed the model in its further work on interim report 2. MTFA's work has included analysing in greater depth the problems and aims underlying the introduction of civil areas. As part of this sub-project, MTFA has studied the intentions behind MSB's role in the new structure (see chapter 2). These intentions then serve as points of departure for the evaluation of results from interview surveys and other sources.

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<sup>76</sup> Vedung, Evert (2009), *Utvärdering i politik och förvaltning*. Studentlitteratur

## Appendix 2 Interviews

Interviews with MSB focusing on MSB's system-supporting role (interim report 3)

Division/unit	Function/role	Date
<b>Crisis Preparedness and Civil Defence Division (KC)</b>	Deputy head of crisis preparedness and civil defence division, also chief of staff; strategist	4 March 2025
<b>Crisis Preparedness and Civil Defence Division: Unit for Civil Preparedness Planning</b>	Head of unit, head of operations	28 March 2024
<b>Crisis Preparedness and Civil Defence Division (KC), Operations Division (OA)</b>	Head of division for KC, Head of division for OA, strategist for OA, Deputy head of crisis preparedness and civil defence division, also chief of staff, analyst for OA staff	28 May 2025
<b>Operations Division: staff</b>	Strategist	23 April 2025
<b>Crisis Preparedness and Civil Defence Division: Unit for Civil Preparedness Planning</b>	Investigators	16 May 2025

Agency	Function/role	Date
Swedish Armed Forces, Total Defence and Societal Planning Section	Head of section, strategist	18 March 2025
Swedish Energy Agency	Operations coordinator	3 April 2025
Civil Area Administration at Stockholm County Administrative Board	Administration head	1 April 2025

Public Health Agency of Sweden	Two investigators	27 March 2025
Swedish Police Authority	Coordinator	27 April 2025

Interviews with other agencies, focusing on MSB's system-supporting role (interim report 3)

## Appendix 3. List of interviews in interim report 2

### Civil areas

Civil area	Agency/equivalent	Function/role <sup>77</sup>	Date
<b>Central</b>	Södermanland County Administrative Board	Director of preparedness	27 March 2024
	Swedish Police Authority, Bergslagen Police Region	Regional preparedness coordinator	4 April 2024
	Värmland County Administrative Board	Defence director	5 April 2024
	Uppsala County Administrative Board	Defence director; preparedness officer	10 April 2024
	Civil Area Administration at Örebro County Administrative Board	Administration head; administrator; functional manager; administration coordinator	11 April 2024
	Värmland County Administrative Board	County governor	15 April 2024
	Gävleborg County Administrative Board	Head of unit for civil protection and preparedness/defence director; deputy defence director	19 April 2024
	Swedish Transport Administration, Central Region	Head of the preparedness unit; preparedness coordinator for the preparedness unit	19 April 2024

<sup>77</sup> Refers to the function or role held by the individual at the time of the interview.

	Örebro County Administrative Board	Director of preparedness; deputy director of preparedness	23 April 2024
	Swedish Armed Forces, Central Military Region	Head of division	24 April 2024
<b>Northern</b>	Västerbotten County Administrative Board	Assistant Head of unit/preparedness director; preparedness officer	20 March 2024
	Region Västerbotten	Head of unit; preparedness consultant; preparedness coordinator	20 March 2024
	Municipality of Umeå	Head of preparedness; head of security	20 March 2024
	Civil Area Administration at Norrbotten County Administrative Board	Administration head; two operations coordinators	21 March 2024
	Swedish Transport Administration, Northern Region	Head of preparedness	21 March 2024
	Swedish Armed Forces, Northern Military Region	Head of division	21 March 2024
	Swedish Police Authority, Police Region North	Regional coordinator	3 April 2024
	Jämtland County Administrative Board	Defence director	8 April 2024
<b>South East</b>	Kalmar County Administrative Board	Director of preparedness	13 March 2024
	Civil Area Administration at Östergötland County Administrative Board	Administration head; civil area officer	15 March 2024
	Municipality of Linköping	Head of security; two security strategists	18 March 2024
	Swedish Police Authority, Police Region East	Chief Superintendent	19 March 2024
	Swedish Armed Forces, Southern Military Region	Head of division	26 February 2024

<b>Southern</b>	Swedish Armed Forces, Southern Military Region	Head of division	26 February 2024
	Skåne County Administrative Board; Civil Area Administration at Skåne County Administrative Board	County governor/civil area head; county director general; administration head	27 February 2024
	City of Malmö	Director of Security; Director of Sustainability	27 February 2024
	Region Skåne	Head of preparedness and security protection, also head of the preparedness unit; employees at the preparedness unit	27 February 2024
	Swedish Transport Administration, Southern Region	Head of preparedness	28 February 2024
	Kronoberg County Administrative Board	Defence director	5 March 2024
	Blekinge County Administrative Board	Defence director	8 March 2024
<b>Western</b>	Swedish Armed Forces, Western Military Region	Head of division	15 April 2024
	Civil Area Administration at Västra Götaland County Administrative Board	Administration head; two administrators	16 April 2024
	Swedish Police Authority, Police Region West	Total defence coordinator	16 April 2024
	Västra Götaland County Administrative Board	Head of unit for civil protection and preparedness/defence director; head of civil preparedness planning function	17 April 2024
	Swedish Transport Administration, Western Region	Regional Chief Executive	17 April 2024

	Halland County Administrative Board	Head of unit for preparedness matters/preparedness director	19 April 2024
	Västra Götaland Region	Head of the security and preparedness division	23 April 2024
	City of Gothenburg	Head of security, also head of security protection	24 April 2024
<b>Eastern</b>	City of Stockholm	Director of security, also head of security protection; security strategist	11 March 2024
	Civil Area Administration at Stockholm County Administrative Board	Administration head; deputy administration head; coordinator; administrator	15 March 2024
	Swedish Transport Administration, Eastern Region	Preparedness coordinator	22 March 2024
	Region Gotland	Acting head of the preparedness unit	26 March 2024
	Gotland County Administrative Board	Defence director	26 March 2024
	Stockholm County Administrative Board	Head of the civil defence unit; preparedness officer	5 April 2024
	Swedish Police Authority, Stockholm Police Region	Head of the preparedness planning group; operations development officer	22 April 2024
	Region Stockholm	Acting director for security and preparedness; head of unit for disaster medical preparedness; chief medical officer, also head of division	29 April 2024
	Swedish Armed Forces, P 18 Gotland Regiment	Head of division	7 August 2024

## Other interviews

Agency/equivalent	Function/role	Date
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Swedish Civil Contingencies Agency	Deputy head of crisis preparedness and civil defence division, also chief of staff; strategist; head of civil preparedness planning unit.	15 August 2024
Swedish Civil Contingencies Agency	Acting head of the collaboration and command unit; administrator for the collaboration and command unit	15 August 2024

## Other meetings

Agency/equivalent	Function/role	Date
Örebro County Administrative Board	County governor/civil area head; county director	12 June 2024

## Appendix 4. List of interviews in interim report 4

<b>Economic Security</b>		
<b>Actor</b>	<b>Position<sup>78</sup></b>	<b>Date</b>
Swedish Pensions Agency	Two security specialists	21 October 2024
Swedish Social Insurance Agency	Head of preparedness and sectoral responsibility; three operations development officers	23 October 2024
National Government Service Centre	Operations development officer	24 October 2024
Swedish Public Employment Service	Security specialist	25 October 2024
Swedish Payments Agency	Safety Manager	5 November 2024
Swedish Tax Agency	Two security specialists	7 November 2024
Swedish National Debt Office	Security analyst	27 November 2024

<b>Electronic Communications and Postal Services</b>		
<b>Actor</b>	<b>Position</b>	<b>Date</b>
Swedish Local Fibre Alliance	Head of development and security	17 September 2024
Swedish Post and Telecom Authority	Head of the preparedness unit; head of the resilience unit; staff at the preparedness unit	18 September 2024 24 September 2024
Teracom AB	Chief Executive Officer; Chief Operating Officer; Chief Financial Officer	20 September 2024
Swedish Civil Contingencies Agency	Head of unit; strategist	20 September 2024
Swedish Transport Administration	Two security strategists	23 September 2024

<sup>78</sup> 'Position' refers throughout to the position held at the time of the interview.

Svenska kraftnät	Two preparedness strategists	26 September 2024
TechSverige, Confederation of Swedish Enterprise	TS: two experts on industrial policy; SN: officer responsible for security and defence policy	30 September 2024

Energy Supply		
Actor	Position	Date
Drivkraft Sverige, Swedenergy Swedish Gas Association	DS: Head of the executive committee; EFS: officer responsible for security issues; EGS: Chief Executive Officer	20 January 2025
Swedish Energy Agency	Head of division; operations coordinator	3 February 2025

Financial Services		
Actor	Position	Date
Swedish Financial Supervisory Authority	Head of area; head of division; head of unit	25 November 2024
Swedish National Debt Office	Security analyst	27 November 2024
Sveriges Riksbank	Head of unit; preparedness specialist	28 November 2024
Swedish Bankers' Association, Insurance Sweden and Confederation of Swedish Enterprise	SB: advisor; SF: advisor; SN: officer responsible for security and defence policy	29 November 2024

Provision of Core Data		
Actor	Position	Date
Swedish Tax Agency	Analyst	2 December 2024
Lantmäteriet (the Swedish mapping, cadastral and land registration agency)	Acting head of preparedness	10 December 2024
Agency for Digital Government	Deputy head of security	10 December 2024
Swedish Companies Registration Office	Safety manager	8 January 2025

Health, Care and Welfare		
Actor	Position	Date

National Board of Health and Welfare	Coordinator for the preparedness sector; investigator	26 November 2024
Swedish eHealth Agency	Preparedness coordinator	28 November 2024
Swedish Association of Local Agencies and Regions	Team leader for civil preparedness; administrator	3 December 2024
Swedish Medical Products Agency	Acting Director of Security and Preparedness; security and preparedness strategist	5 December 2024
Swedish Association of the Pharmaceutical Industry, Swedish Medtech, Swedish Pharmacy. Association, Association of Private Care Providers and Confederation of Swedish Enterprise	L: policy expert; SM: chief executive officer; SA: chief executive officer; V: head of industrial policy; SN: officer responsible for security and defence policy	11 December 2024
Public Health Agency of Sweden	Two investigators	18 December 2024

Food Supply and Drinking Water		
Actor	Position	Date
Avfall Sverige – Swedish Waste Management	Chief Legal Officer	21 January 2025
Swedish Water & Wastewater Association	Drinking water expert	22 January 2025
Swedish Food Retailers Federation	Preparedness officer	23 January 2025
Federation of Swedish Farmers	Coordinator	28 January 2025
Swedish Food Agency	Head of unit; lawyer	29 January 2025

Security, Law and Order		
Actor	Position	Date
Swedish National Courts Administration	Two preparedness specialists	21 October 2024
Prison and Probation Service	Head of development and security	22 October 2024
Swedish Customs	Head of preparedness	24 October 2024
Swedish Police Authority	Preparedness coordinator	7 November 2024
Swedish Prosecution Authority	Head of division; head of unit	11 November 2024

<b>Bevakningsbranschens Yrkes- och Arbetsmiljönämnd (BYA, Security Industry Vocational and Working Environment Committee), Swedish Security Industry Association, Confederation of Swedish Enterprise</b>	BYA: Senior Advisor for Total Defence; SF: Head of industrial policy; labour law expert; SN: officer responsible for security and defence policy	12 November 2024
<b>Swedish Civil Contingencies Agency</b>	Two sector-responsible investigators	12 November 2024

<b>Rescue Services and Civil Protection</b>		
<b>Actor</b>	<b>Position</b>	<b>Date</b>
<b>Swedish Maritime Administration</b>	Director; Head of group	13 November 2024
<b>Greater Stockholm Fire Brigade</b>	Director	13 November 2024
<b>SMHI</b>	Operational manager for crisis preparedness	25 November 2024
<b>Swedish Radiation Safety Authority</b>	Head of division	28 November 2024
<b>Swedish Coast Guard</b>	Strategic advisor	3 December 2024
<b>Swedish Civil Contingencies Agency</b>	Head of unit; sector coordinator; administrator; research coordinator; operations manager	13/12/2024 18/11/2024
<b>SOS Alarm Sverige AB</b>	Head of preparedness	13 December 2024
<b>Swedish Association of Local Agencies and Regions</b>	Administrator	3 January 2025

<b>Transport</b>		
<b>Actor</b>	<b>Position</b>	<b>Date</b>
<b>BT POS Maritime</b>	Chairman	23 January 2025
<b>Swedish Transport Administration</b>	Head of division; head of security; two national preparedness planners;	24 January 2025
<b>BT POS Air</b>	Chairman	28 January 2025
<b>BT POS Land</b>	Chairman	30 January 2025

<b>Other interviews</b>		
<b>Actor</b>	<b>Position</b>	<b>Date</b>
<b>Swedish Armed Forces, Total Defence Section</b>	Strategist	8 April 2025
<b>Administration for the South East Civil Area</b>	Administration head	16 April 2025

<b>Other meetings</b>		
<b>Actor</b>	<b>Position</b>	<b>Date</b>
<b>Confederation of Swedish Enterprise Crisis and Defence Group</b>	Representatives of Confederation of Swedish Enterprise member organisations	26 August 2024
<b>National advisor for strengthening private-public collaboration in total defence</b>	Three inquiry secretaries	20/01/2025 07/01/2025