



Implementing a new basic military training system in Sweden – findings from the first year

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New trends in Sweden's Defence Policy 2016-2020

- Increased defence budget
- A renewed regional focus, emphasizing national defence
- Investments in recruiting and the sustainment of soldiers
- A renewed civil defence
- Increased operational warfighting capability
- A new system for the basic military training
- Reactivation of enrolment and conscription – gender neutral

Background

- The introduction of an AVF (2010) in Sweden has resulted in many vacancies and problems in recruiting and retaining personnel
- A new basic military training was introduced in the spring of 2016 – 9 or 11 months for ordinary recruit positions (4-7 months for the home guard)
- Return to a military training system that were very similar to the former conscription system

Study of the new basic military training system

- Aim of the study was to evaluate the officers attitudes towards the new system
- Officers– the key component for success for the new system
- 7 units were part of the study (covering all branches)
- Interviews before start of the first batch with the new system, and after five months of training
- 68 interviews completed
- A questionnaire was distributed to our sample at the end of the training period

General comments at startup

Strengths	Challenges
Good availability of commanders/instructors (good numbers, but not specialized)	Few recruits turned up
Skilled and experienced company commanders	Cancelled training programs due to lack of soldiers
The new concept is appreciated	Lack of specialists
The new system is prioritized at the different units	Lack of equipment

Fears and expectations

- Recruitment problems (~50 % vacancies)
- How many will sign for a contract?
- The lack of equipment
- Positive attitudes among officers
- Better trained soldiers
- Endurance of the system? First year highly prioritized, how 's the next years ?

Results questionnaire

- Serious concerns about the lack of equipment
- Positive assessments of colleagues in the platoon
- Time for preparation was short for NCO 's
- 1/3 of the NCO 's felt that there had been recruits approved, that should not have been approved...
- Lack of officers with relevant competence

Conclusions

- The new system for the basic military training of soldiers was seen as positive by the commanders/instructors
- The all-volunteer recruitment hasn't provided the Armed Forces with enough personnel
- The system has shortages in equipment and some expert skills, which will take time to resolve
- Although a new basic military training, there were few people attracted to the SAF

Reactivation of conscription

- The Swedish government has decided to re-activate conscription from January 1 2018
- Enrolment from October 2017
- Recruitment to the Armed Forces will be both voluntary and through conscription
- Basic military training with compulsory service for both groups
- Individual motivation and interest is considered as much as possible
- Will include both women and men – gender neutral

Reactivation of conscription

- The quality of the new conscripts is very high
- 75 % men 25 % women conscripted
- The need for more conscripts