



Centre for Military Studies



The Transformation of Danish Air Power

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Overview

- The Cold War Context
- RDAF Pre-History
- Enter the F-16
- Farewell F-35 *Draken*
- From Reluctant toward Impeccable
- RDAF: Unleashed but Unready
- OAF: The Wake Up Call
- An Expeditionary Air Force?
- Yes, an Expeditionary Air Force
- First In!
- Mali & Iraq
- Take Aways



The Cold War Context

- Denmark: Small but Geographically Relevant
 - Limited Resources
 - Difficult to Defend
 - Baltic Straits: Relevant to USSR
 - Greenland: Relevant to USA



- Strategic Culture
 - Strategic Fatalism
 - Reluctant NATO Ally
 - Symbolic Defence Effort
 - Enough to Justify Defending
 - Yet Inoffensive to USSR

Denmark's commitment to the Alliance and will afford the stability and continuity in defence which the Alliance and Denmark need at this time.

6. On the other hand, the new Agreement falls somewhat short of what the NATO Military Authorities had hoped for. The defence expenditure increases remain insufficient to meet fully the current NATO Force Goals.



RDAF Pre-History

- RDAF Established 1 October 1950
 - 10 Squadrons + Training & Recon Units
- Rapid Growth with Military Assistance Program (MAP)
 - But Insufficient Organization & Training
 - 80 aircraft, 62 crew lost
 - RAF Guidance
- Alliance standard Aircraft
 - RF-84F *Thunderflashes*
 - F-86D *Sabres*
 - F-100 *Super Sabres*
 - F-104 *Starfighters*
- 1968: 1st Significant Procurement
 - 2 Squadrons of Saab F-35 *Draken*

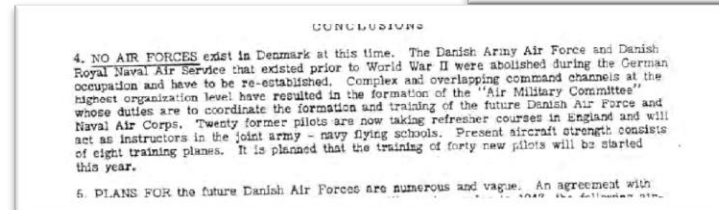


Foto: Flyvevåbnet

Enter the F-16

- 1973 – 1975: Technical Evaluation & Partnership
 - Process Insulated from Politics
 - EPAF consortium
 - Belgium, Netherlands, Norway, Denmark
 - All Select F-16
 - Danes Relieved
 - 46 F-16A + 12 F-16B

- 1st Delivery: January 1980

- 1980: 727 Squadron
- 1981: 730 Squadron
- 1983: 723 Squadron
- 1985: 726 Squadron

- 2 *Draken* Squadrons

- 725 Squadron
- 723 Squadron



Air Defense &
TASMO



Battlefield Interdiction
& Reconnaissance



Farewell F-35 *Draken*

- 1987: Replacement Proposed
 - Deferred in 1989
 - Retired with 1992 Defence Agreement
 - 725 Squadron disbanded 1991
 - 723 Squadron disbanded 1993
 - Recon Mission & Pods to 726th F-16 Squadron
- Impact
 - Post-Cold War Reductions in Force
 - Strong Civilian Pilot Job Market
 - → RDAF Bled Pilot Talent
- 1993 Defence Agreement
 - F-16s Mid-Life Update with EPAF



From Reluctant toward Impeccable

- After Cold War, Denmark's Geographic Advantage Declines
 - No Longer Front Line State
 - Relevance?
- Fairly Rapid Shift to Activism
 - 1990: Ship to Desert Shield
 - 1993: New Tasks for Armed Forces
 - Global & Regional Roles
 - Danish International Brigade
 - 1994: Troops Indicate Acceptance of New Missions
- Balkans: The Army in Front
 - 1991 – 2001: Average 1500 troops deployed
 - Armored Peacekeeping
 - Tuzla April 1994 Establishes Martial Reputation



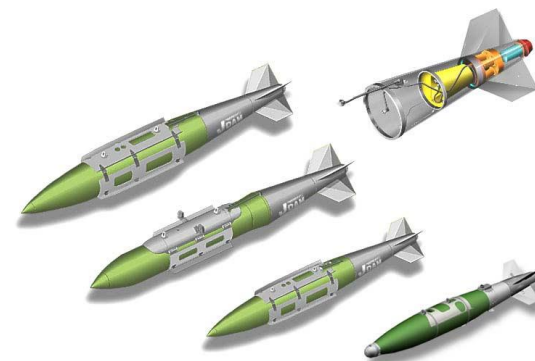
RDAF: Unleashed but Unready

- Balkans
 - 1994: RDAF Denied Request to Participate in Op Deny Flight
 - 1998: 2 F-16s (of 85 from 13 countries) in Determined Falcon
- 1999: Operation Allied Force
 - 4 F-16s authorized October 1998
 - Assigned CAP over Adriatic
 - Lack of Air-to-Ground Capability
 - 27 April: 4 MLU F-16s deployed
 - Capable of Limited Air-to-Ground Strikes
 - 3 Strike Missions
 - 24 Weapons Expended
 - → First Danish Strikes since 1940



OAF: The Wake Up Call

- Clear & Troubling Capability Gap with USA
 - Could Undermine Thrust of Activist Grand Strategy
- Air-to-Ground Capability Necessary to Play
 - Especially All-Weather Precision Strike
- A Call to Arm
 - Mid-Life Updates for Entire F-16 Fleet
 - Modernized Avionics, Communications, IFF, GPS
 - Precision Equipment Acquired
 - FLIR, Laser Designation, LANTIRN
 - JSOW (Joint Stand-Off Weapon)
 - JDAM (Joint Direct Attack Munition)



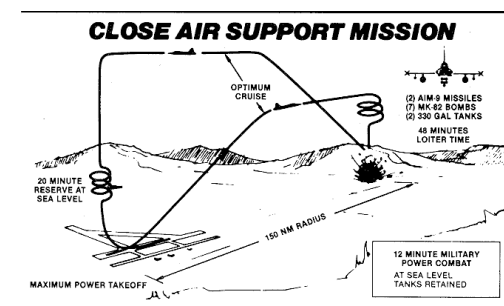
An Expeditionary Air Force?

- 9/11: To Afghanistan
 - 2002: EPAF C-130 Squadron (3x1)
 - 2003: EPAF F-16 Squadron (3x6)
 - 12 month Deployment
 - 743 Sorties
 - Reconnaissance, Close Air Support
 - 4347 flight Hours
- Lessons Learned
 - Smart Planes + Dumb Bombs = Inadequate
 - PGMs to be Acquired
 - Expeditionary Mind Set Necessary
 - Political Will & Military Equipment can be Undermined by Unprepared Personnel
 - EPAF: A Useful Framework
 - Acquisitions
 - Deployments



Yes, an Expeditionary Air Force

- Modernization
 - EPAF Cooperation to Upgrade F-16 Precision Strike
 - Niche Capabilities: Deployable Anti-Tactical Ballistic Missile Defence
 - C-130J Theatre Lift
- Mission Training
 - Air-to-Ground Missions become Core
 - Air-to-Ground Strike into Danish Exercises
 - Red Flag August 2005: 1st CAS focus
 - Increased Support to SOF
- Expeditionary Air Force Construct
 - Organized as Deployed
 - Assignments in Rhythm of Deployment
- Operational Focus
 - Support Wing vs Operational Wings
- Expeditionary Air Staff



First In!

- Libya 2011
 - All 3 Services Proffer Options
 - Airpower Chosen
 - 4+2 F-16s, C-130, & 120 personnel
 - 18 March: Parliament Debates
 - 19 March: F-16s leave for Italy armed
 - 20 March: Air Operations Begin (Odyssey Dawn Day 1)
 - 39 Missions
 - 102 PGMs
 - Only US delivered more
 - Unified Protector
 - 7 Months
 - 561 Missions
 - 821 PGMs
 - 10+ staff at CAOC Poggio Renatico



Mali & Iraq

- Reduced Size, Increased Activity
 - 2009 Defence Agreement
 - From 48 to 30 Operational F-16s
- Hercules Diplomacy
 - Jan 2013: Operation Serval
 - No Restrictions on Deployment
 - Aug 2014: Operation "Yet to be Named"
 - Intra-European Transport to Cyprus
- IS: Operation Inherent Resolve
 - Sept 2014: 4+3 F-16s deploy to Kuwait
 - Iraq-only Strikes
 - Oct 16: First Mission
 - As of 7 November
 - 41 Missions
 - 39 Munitions



Take Aways

- RDAF: Late to Expeditionary Operations
 - But Made up for Lost Time
- Required Modernization of Weapons Systems
 - AND Training
 - AND Retention of Skilled Personnel
 - AND Reorganization
 - AND Cultural Shift
- Future of RDAF will likely entail
 - New Aircraft
 - New Mission Sets
 - New Training Regimens
 - Better Educated & Trained Personnel
 - Better Personnel Policies

