

Handover of HMS Helsingborg to Swedish Defence Matériel Administration

At a formal ceremony held in Karlskrona, Kockums recently handed over HMS Helsingborg to the client, the Swedish Defence Matériel Administration. Helsingborg is the second vessel in the Visby series of corvettes. In the near future, Kockums can also look forward to the handover of HMS Visby and HMS Härnösand. The fourth vessel of the series is scheduled for handover to FMV in the end of August this year.

Each vessel, which is constructed of carbon fibre, features fully developed stealth technology. The term “stealth” comprises anything and everything that serves to reduce radar, magnetic and acoustic signatures and signals emissions, with a view to hindering and preventing detection and identification. The vessels are extremely difficult to detect by radar or by other modern and sophisticated sensors.

HMS Helsingborg is one of the Swedish Navy’s most advanced vessels, built to play a key role in Sweden’s new and modern rapid response force. The Swedish Navy has always operated in the extreme littorals (shallow-water coastal zone), and has unique expertise in this marine environment. Similar waters are found in many parts of the world, and current threat scenarios target just this type of coastal zone.

It is precisely in areas like this that stealth capabilities really come into their own. The crew can see and hear without being seen, or having to betray its own presence. However, should the mission require a visible demonstration of force, the stealth profile can be transformed into a more aggressive (and visible) role in a matter of seconds.

The Visby-class corvettes provide the Swedish Navy with much greater endurance and flexibility than before. Right from the start, the vessels have been equipped for smooth integration with other units of Sweden’s Total Defence Force, comprising the Swedish Air Force, Swedish Coast Guard, Swedish emergency and rescue services, Swedish Customs and Swedish Police.

The Visby-class corvettes are flexible and multi-mission capable, able to handle every type of mission, from mine warfare, anti-submarine warfare (ASW), surface combat, marine surveillance and protection to support for civic emergency and rescue services, as in the case of accidents at sea. They are also designed for participation in international peacekeeping missions. The vessels are constructed of carbon fibre reinforced plastic (FRP), a material that combines extreme tensile strength and impact resistance with excellent stealth properties.

HMS Visby, which is the first-of-series, will soon also be handed over to the client, the Swedish Defence Matériel Administration (FMV).

FMV is prime contractor for the Visby system. The vessels are designed and supplied by Kockums. Command, control and communications (C³) systems – and some weapon systems – are supplied by Saab. The guns are from Bofors Defence, the surveillance radar from Ericsson Microwave Systems and the ASW and mine clearance systems from General Dynamics Canada.

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Bylines: HMS Helsingborg on sea trials just outside Karlskrona.
Project manager Mats Elofson, FMV, and president Martin Hagbyhn, Kockums, have just signed the contract.
Photo: Peter Nilsson, Kockums.