



Kockums Information Department 24<sup>th</sup> of August 2006

## HMS Karlstad christened today Five Visby-class corvettes strengthen Swedish Navy

HMS Karlstad, the fifth and final vessel of the Visby series, was christened today, Thursday August 24<sup>th</sup> 2006, by Director General Marie Hafström, Swedish Armed Forces. The impressive ceremony was held at Kockums in Karlskrona, Sweden, in the presence of guest of honour Birgitta Samuelsson, Chairwoman of Karlstad Local Council. She presented the commander of the new vessel, Commander Carl David Philipsson, with a figurine of a young woman, portraying Sola, a waitress in 18<sup>th</sup> century Karlstad who was renowned for her sunny nature and became a symbol for Karlstad's sunny atmosphere. The commander and his crew promised that it would naturally be awarded a place of honour aboard the new vessel.

The many other guests attending the ceremony included Director General Gunnar Holmgren, Swedish Defence Materiel Administration (FMV); Rear Admiral Anders Grenstad, Chief of the Royal Swedish Navy; Eskil Erlandsson (Centre Party), Chairman of the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Defence and, from ThyssenKrupp Marine Systems, of which Kockums is a part, Christian Eckel and Torsten Köncker. Kockums was officially represented by acting CEO Ralf Kube.

HMS Karlstad, in common with the other vessels of the Visby series, is constructed of carbon fibre, featuring full stealth capability, making her almost impossible to detect with radar or other sophisticated sensors, such as IR imaging equipment.

HMS Karlstad is designed as part of Sweden's new rapid reaction force and is well equipped to fulfil this role. The ability to see and hear all, while remaining undetected oneself, offers a number of tactical advantages. The commander can also decide to exit stealth mode, should he wish to reveal his presence, and then "vanish" again. HMS Karlstad can handle everything from Mine Countermeasures (MCM), Anti-Submarine Warfare (ASW), surface combat, marine surveillance and maritime protection to general maritime support. She is also designed to provide emergency support at the scene of marine accidents and to participate in international peacekeeping missions. HMS Karlstad and her sister Visby-class vessels constitute a very considerable addition to the operational strength of the Royal Swedish Navy.

HMS Karlstad's crew comprises 43 men and women, of whom 16 are conscripts. The vessel is 72 metres long, with a draught of 2.4 metres. She will displace 650 tonnes when fully fitted. Powered by a combined diesel and gas (CODAG) turbine arrangement, she has a top speed in excess of 40 knots, precise figures being classified.

"The Visby corvettes enhance the strength of the Swedish Navy and offer a considerable advance in flexibility," said Ralf Kube, Kockums' acting CEO, addressing the assembled guests. He expressed his thanks to FMV for excellent cooperation throughout a highly complex and forward-looking project.

In particular, he addressed his fellow workers at Kockums:

"I wish to express my special thanks to all who have been involved in the Visby project, for your great efforts and commitment. After more than a decade, we are now entering the final phase of this challenging and complex project. We shall not only have contributed a strong link in Sweden's defence: we shall have accumulated essential experience and know-how on which future Kockums projects may be built."

Two earlier Visby-class vessels are operating abroad. HMS Helsingborg is currently engaged in trials in the Mediterranean, and HMS Härnösand is due to sail to Germany, where she will show her paces. International interest in the Visby corvettes is considerable.

### Further details:

For further details, call Kjell Göthe, Senior Vice President PR & Communications, +46 (0) 734 – 34 28 88.



Kockums stands for leading-edge, world-class naval technology - above and below the surface. We design, build and maintain submarines and naval surface vessels that incorporate the most advanced stealth technology. Other successful products include the Stirling Air Independent Propulsion (AIP) system, the Kockums Submarine Rescue Systems and mine clearance systems. We are based in Malmö and Karlskrona, where all production facilities are. Kockums is part of ThyssenKrupp Marine Systems.