

# National Security Council Act

No. 98, 20 September 2016

## Article 1. *Scope.*

This Act applies to Iceland's national security policy, its implementation and the review of the policy. It also covers consultation and coordination between government ministries and public bodies on the implementation of the national security policy.

## Article 2. *The National Security Council.*

A National Security Council shall operate in Iceland.

The prime minister is the chairman of the National Security Council and the Office of the Prime Minister shall provide the council with all the necessary working facilities and assistance with its work.

## Article 3. *Appointment of the National Security Council.*

In addition to the prime minister, the National Security Council shall consist of the minister responsible for foreign affairs and defence and the minister responsible for civil protection, and also the permanent under-secretaries of the ministries in question. Furthermore, the national commissioner of the Icelandic police, the director of the Coast Guard and a representative of ICE-SAR shall have seats on the council. Furthermore, two members of parliament shall have seats on the council; one shall be from a party in the parliamentary majority and one from a party in the parliamentary minority.

The National Security Council may call in more government ministers to sit on the council in connection with particular matters under discussion, in which case the permanent under-secretaries in the ministries in question shall also take seats on the council.

Public officials and other employees of the ministries and public bodies and public limited companies, and also individuals and representatives of legal persons, shall be obliged to attend meetings of the National Security Council if requested to do so.

## Article 4. *Responsibilities of the National Security Council.*

The National Security Council shall monitor to ensure that Iceland's national security policy is implemented in accordance with the Althingi's resolution and shall also be a forum for consultation on national security issues.

The National Security Council shall also assess the situation and the outlook in the field of security and defence on a regular basis, and discuss other matters with a bearing on national security.

The National Security Council shall take steps to have the national security policy reviewed at least every five years.

In collaboration with the academic community, think-tanks and the media, the National Security Council shall use its influence to encourage open and democratic discussion of national security issues, raise awareness and promote the provision of information on these matters.

## Article 5. *Consultation between the National Security Council and the Althingi.*

Each year, the National Security Council shall inform the Althingi of the implementation of the national security policy.

If the National Security Council considers there is reason to make changes to the national security policy, it shall send the Althingi its proposals on such changes.

The National Security Council shall inform the Althingi's committee on foreign affairs of all matters that are likely to have an impact on the national security policy and its implementation.

*Article 6. Calling of meetings of the National Security Council.*

The prime minister shall call regular meetings of the National Security Council.

The prime minister shall also call meetings of the National Security Council if events have taken place, or are imminent, that may be expected to have an impact on national security (*cf.* the second paragraph of Article 4).

The prime minister shall nominate a secretary for the council; other provisions on how meetings are to be held, and the council's working procedures, shall be set out in a regulation (*cf.* Article 10).

*Article 7. Confidentiality provision.*

Meetings of the National Security Council shall be held behind closed doors and the council may decide that its meetings, or individual matters on the agenda of a meeting, are to be treated as confidential.

*Article 8. Reporting to the National Security Council.*

The National Security Council may call for reports or materials concerning matters with a bearing on national security from government ministries, public bodies or public limited companies.

Government ministries, public bodies or public limited companies shall inform the National Security Council in full, and without withholding material, of new information or other matters that may have a bearing on the national security policy or the security of the state and the public.

*Article 9. Consultation with the Civil Protection and Security Council.*

The National Security Council shall consult the Civil Protection and Security Council regarding matters or events that could touch on the field of responsibilities of the Civil Protection and Security Council according to the Civil Protection Act, No. 82/2008.

*Article 10. Provision for regulations.*

The prime minister may issue regulations containing further provisions on the implementation of this Act, including the responsibilities of the secretary and the working procedures of the National Security Council.

*Article 11. Sanctions.*

Any person who, on purpose or through gross negligence, provides the National Security Council with incorrect information of such a nature as to threaten national security or arouse the fear that national security is under threat, shall be punished by fines or up to three years' imprisonment.

Any person who breaches the confidentiality obligation under Article 7 and discloses confidential information which threatens national security shall be punished by fines or up to two years' imprisonment, providing that no more severe penalties are prescribed for this offence according to other acts of law.

*Article 12. Commencement.*

This Act takes immediate effect.