

# The Swedish Army 1939-1945 - Armored troops

## Introduction

The Swedish armored troops were established as an independent type of weapon per 1 October 1942, on mobilization i.a. the following units:

Brigade	Stamenhed	Garrison
8. Armored Brigade	Royal Scanian Armored Regiment (P 2)	Helsingborg
9. Armored Brigade	Royal Skaraborg Armored Regiment (P 4)	Skövde
10. Armored Brigade	Royal Södermanland Armored Regiment (P 3)	Strängnäs

Added to this was the Kungliga Göta Pansarlivgarde (P 1), which was established in 1944, with a garrison in Enköping. This regiment provided, among other things, an armored unit that was part of the forces on Gotland.

## The prehistory



*Farewell at the Royal Göta Lifeguard, in Stockholm, September 24, 1939.*  
From Source 2.

Pr. On October 1, 1939, the training of armored units was transferred to the infantry - *the Royal Skaraborg Regiment (I 9)* and *the Royal Södermanland Regiment (I 10)*.

Despite the outbreak of war on 1 September 1939, there was no political reason to change the decision to disband the hitherto only armored regiment (in practice a battalion-sized unit that commanded all of the army's 64 tanks).

Throughout the war, they worked intensely to provide the necessary number of tanks; some

tanks were built in Sweden - by i.a. Landsverk - while others were purchased in Germany.



*Principle sketch:*

*Command stand for the commander of the 8th Armored Brigade.*

Own production according to Source 2.

The strength objectives were not really fully realized until after the end of the war. Thus, the 8th Armored Brigade, which should have participated in Operation Rädde Denmark, is still missing certain parts of its one armored battalion in May 1945.

## A Swedish armored brigade, 1943

After the 1943 organization, a Swedish panzer brigade was to consist of two panzer battalions and one motorized panzer gunner battalion. It also included a self-propelled anti-tank gun company, a reconnaissance company (motorcycles), as well as field artillery, anti-aircraft and supply units.

### Organisation

- Brigade
- Staff Telegraph
- Company 2 armored battalions - perhaps 3 light and 1 heavy squadron, as well as a
- supply element 1 armored artillery battalion - i.a. with 6 pcs. 37 mm anti-tank guns w/38, 6 pcs. medium heavy mortar w/29 and 16 pcs. 20 mm
- machine gun w/40 1 motorcyclist
- company (reconnaissance) 1 artillery section (12 pcs.
- 10.5 mm field howitzers w/39) 1 self-propelled anti-tank battery (75
- mm anti-tank guns) 1 anti-aircraft battery (12 pcs. 20
- mm machine guns)
- 1 engineer company 1 supply element.

The brigade had/should have the following equipment:

<b>Panzerbrigade, approx.</b>	<b>Number of Comments</b>
1943 Heavy tanks	76 Tank w/42
Light tanks Self-propelled anti-tank guns	105 Tank w/40 or Tank w/37
6 First introduced after the war	Anti-aircraft tanks 12 First introduced after the war
Anti-aircraft machine guns 28	20 mm Bofors machine gun
Medium weight mortars	6 8 cm
Artillery pamphlets	12 10,5 cm let felthaubits m/39

However, it took some time before one was able to set up such units. The self-propelled anti-tank guns and the anti-aircraft tanks thus only saw the light of day after the war.

### Tanks

Data	m/37	m/38	m/39	w/40 L and K w/41		m/42	
Quantity	48	16	20	100 + 80	222	282	
Weight	4,5 t	8,5 t	8,7 t	9,1 - 10,9 t	45	10,5 t	22,5 t
Fart	60 km/t	46 km/t	45 km/t	45 km/t	48 km/t	42 km/t	
Length	3,4 m	4,2 m	4,2 m	4,2 m	4,2 m	6,2 m	
Width	1,85 m	2,3 m	2,3 m	2,3 m	2,3 m	2,3 m	
Height	1,95 m	2,6 m	2,6 m	2,6 m	2,6 m	2,6 m	
Armor	14 mm	14 mm	14 mm	14 mm	14 mm	14 mm	
Ústřelivo*	2 x 8 mm MG	37 mm KN 2 x 8 mm MG	37 mm KN 2 x 8 mm MG	37 mm KN 2 x 8 mm MG	37 mm KN 2 x 8 mm MG	75 mm KN 4 x 8 mm MG	
Crew	2	3	3	3	4	4	



*Tank w/37.*

The picture was found on the Internet.

The tank is of Czech origin; 2 were delivered from Czechoslovakia, while the rest were manufactured under license in Sweden, at the company Jungner in Oskarshamn.

The tanks were delivered to the army in the years 1938-1939 and were originally acquired as a cheap, light tank, with which experiments could be carried out with a view to developing tactics etc.

When the Armored Troops were established, all the tanks were transferred to the Kungliga Göta Pansarlivgar-de unit on Gotland.

The tank was withdrawn from the war organization in 1953.

Landsverk Fabrikkerne in Landskrona became the largest supplier of tanks to the Swedish army - with various variants of the factory's light tank L-60. Landsverk also sold prototypes to Ireland (2) and Austria (1) as well as 1 prototype and license building rights to Hungary. In addition to Sweden, Hungary became the second major user of Landsverk tanks, where the tank is known under the designation Toldi [1](#)).

However, the Landsverk tanks also came into battle in a completely different part of the world, the Dominican Republic

Republik acquired 20 m/40 L tanks as well as 13 m/39 "Lynx" armored cars when they were phased out. When the United States intervened in the country in 1965, the Swedish equipment was used against American marine infantrymen, but quickly fell short against modern, armor-piercing shells.

The fact that the wagons were sold abroad paradoxically secured them for posterity, and in the last few years work has been done to bring some of the former Swedish wagons back to Sweden, with a view to restoration and exhibition 2) .



*Tank w/38.*  
From Source 5.

The army received 16 examples of this type in the years 1938-1939 and until 1941 it was the only tank that could actually be deployed against other tanks.

In 1943, the tanks were transferred to *the Royal Skånska Pansarregementet (P 2)* and they left the war organization in 1957.

If the tanks in 1945 were more than just training vehicles, then they could have been included in the 8th. Armored Brigade.



*Tank w/39.*  
From Source 5.

In principle, this tank is like the m/38, except for the turret construction. An additional armor was developed to be mounted on the bow, but this had to be mounted only during mobilization, as the extra weight (250 kg) put too much strain on the carriage's engine and other mechanical parts.

The carriages were to be delivered in the autumn of 1940, but due to problems in manufacturing the guns, were only delivered in the spring of 1941.

In 1943, the 20 m/39 tanks were transferred to *the Royal Skaraborg Pansarregement (P 4)* and they came from

the war organization in 1957.

The Swedish defense was well aware that the Landsverk tanks were not up to date, but it was not possible to acquire other types on the world market. Already in 1937 there was interest in the Czech tank TNH, better known by its designation in German service, Pz 38 (t), and in March 1940 an order was placed for 90 units, which could not be delivered due to deliveries to the German army. There was thus nothing else to do but enter into a contract with Landsverk for the supply of a further number of tanks.



*Tank w/40 L.*  
From Source 5.

The need for tanks was greater than the need for a specific tank, so an additional 100 were ordered instead. tanks at Landsverk; The L in the type designation stands for Landsverk.

It was an improved version of the m/39 tank - a different gearbox and a different air intake for the engine. Like the m/39, the m/40 L was also intended to be equipped with additional armour.

The vehicles were delivered from November 1941 to March 1942 and in 1943 they were transferred to *the Royal Skaraborg Armored Regiment (P 4)*. They left the war organization in 1957 and in 1960 20 units sold to the Dominican Republic where they served until the mid-1970s.



*Tank w/40 K.*  
From Source 5.

The ultimate version of the Landsverk L-60 tank consisted of 80 units. tanks that were given the type designation m/40 K, where the K stands for *Karlstad Mekaniska Verkstad*, which was a subcontractor to Landsverk.

The wagons were ordered in the summer of 1942, but the last ones were not delivered until the autumn of 1944.

All m/40 K tanks went to *the Royal Skånska Pansarregementet (P 2)* and came to make up the bulk of the light tanks in the 8th Armored Brigade. They came out of the war organization in 1957.



*Tank w/ 41.*

The picture was found on the Internet.

With the placement in the 8th Armored Brigade, it would thus be this type of light tanks that should have been deployed on Zealand.

In 1941, the order for the Czech tanks finally fell into place, not as the original with the delivery of finished tanks but a license agreement that allowed the production of the tanks in Sweden.

The Scania-Vabis factories came to be responsible for production; initially 116 were built, which were delivered from August 1942 to September 1943.



*Heavy artillery wagon w/ 43.*

From Source 4.

The need for tanks was increasing and an order for a further 122 tanks was placed in the summer. The 106 were delivered as Stridsvagn m/41 until October 1943, while the last 16 were delivered as storm guns - *Stormartillerivagn m/ 43*, equipped with a 10.5 cm Bofors gun.

The majority of the m/41 tanks were delivered to *the Royal Skaraborg Armored Regiment (P 4)*, where they were part of the 9th Armored Brigade.

The tank was used until the end of the 1950s, when it was converted into an armored personnel carrier - *Panserbandvagn 301*.

The assault guns went to *Bergslagen's artillery regiments (A 9)*, where they formed a self-propelled artillery division. (Source 7)



*Tank w/42.*

From Source 5.

The last shot on the tree is the Swedish army's then heavy, and most modern tank.

Based on foreign experience, a committee recommended in 1941 that the Swedish army acquire a heavy (actually medium heavy) tank. It was not possible to purchase such tanks abroad, so the choice fell on a project from Landsverk, originally developed for the Hungarian army.

The L-60 tank was made longer and wider, and was equipped with stronger armour.

The tank got a short 75 mm cannon, which was effective against both armored and soft targets. In addition, the tank was equipped with 4 pcs. 8 mm machine guns.



*Stridsvagn m/42 advances, supported by infantrymen with a 37mm anti-tank gun m/36.*

The picture was found on the Internet.

In a few rounds, a total of 282 tanks were ordered, which went to the units from April 1943 to January 1945. The tank was part of the heavy tank squadrons of the armored brigades.

The majority of the tanks were in the 1950s converted to Stridsvagn m/74, with a long 75 mm gun; since then they were replaced by Centurion tanks and gradually transitioned to the role of tank destroyers, to finally be withdrawn from the war organization in 1981.

The remaining 48 m/42 tanks were, with few changes, for a time the role of close support tanks for the infantry, under the designation Infanterikanonvagn 73.



*All-terrain vehicle w/ 42 KP.*

From advertising brochure for *Military Vehicles Museum Malmköping*.

#### **All-terrain vehicle w/42 KP**

The armored battalions in the 8th, 9th and 10th Armored Brigade were equipped with *Terrängbil m/42 KP*.

The wagons were built on truck chassis from Scania-Vabis and Volvo; they were technically designated as *SKP* and *VKP* (*KP* = *Kaross-Pansar*).



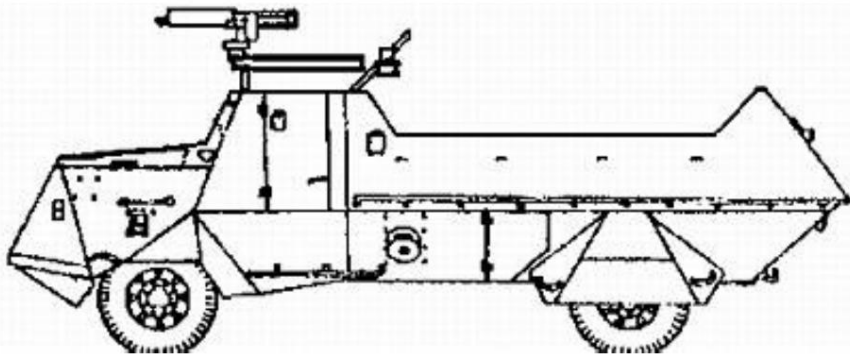
*All-terrain vehicle w/ 42 KP.*

From Source 5.

The armored superstructure (8-20 mm) was assembled at Landsverk in Landskrona.

Information on the wagon's transport capacity varies from 11 to 16 people. Correspondingly, the production figures vary.





All-terrain vehicle w/ 42 KPF.

The drawing was found *somewhere* on the Internet.

From 1946, the armored personnel carriers were armed with 6.5 mm machine guns m/36 in double barrel.

The type designation now became KPF.

The 1st and 2nd Armored Regiments got the VKP models, while the 3rd and 4th Armored Regiments got the SKP models.

The only difference between the two models is that the VKP has a built-in winch on the right side of the wagon, immediately below the wagon commander's seat.

Data	Trailer w/42 VKP	Trailer w/42 SKP
Quantity	(100?) 300	(250?) 6,460
Weight	2,040 kg	2,300 kg
Last	70 mph	70 mph
Speed, road		
Speed, terrain	35 km/h	35 km/h
Crew	2	2



All-terrain vehicle w/ 42 KPF.

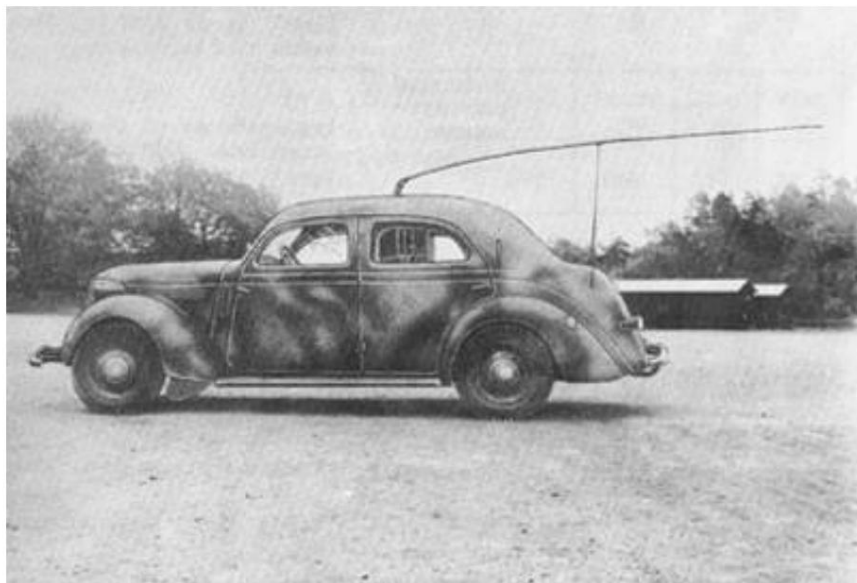
From Mechanized Vikings.

The vehicle was used in the Swedish defense right up to the beginning of the 1990s, i.a. in connection with UN service in the Congo and Cyprus.

A number were over time converted into command vehicles (16) and medical vehicles (23).

It is likely that the Danish Brigade's Panzerværnskompagni, which was de facto one

panzershuttekkompanie, was to be equipped with *Terrängbil m/42 KP*, to support the tank squadron, which was also envisaged to be created. These units are discussed in more detail in the Armored Unit, which never materialized, and the *Panzerværnskompagniet*.

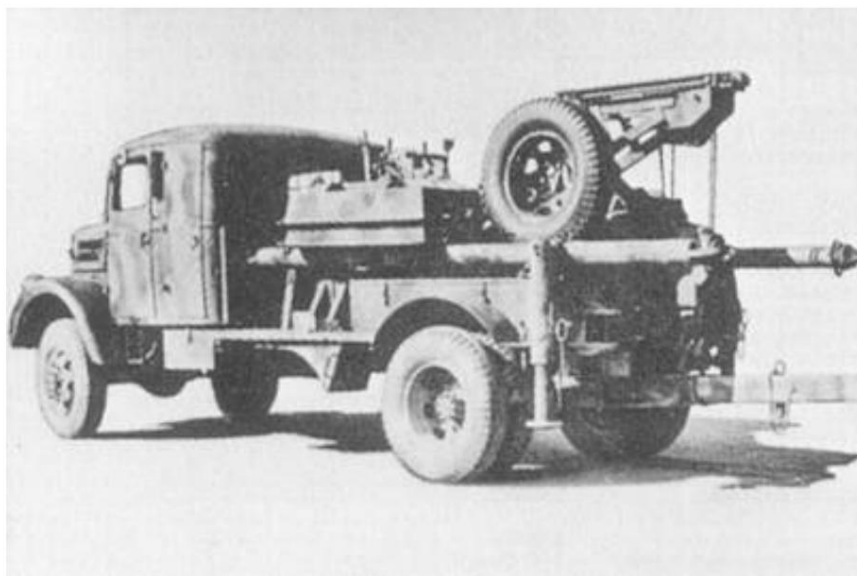


*Radio personal car 101.*  
From Source 10.

### **Other vehicle types**

The wagon is a Volvo, probably of the type PV 51, and is equipped with a *25 watt car radio station m/39*.

The signaling equipment that was mounted in combat and armored vehicles is dealt with in Source 9, pages 25 to 31.



*Recovery vehicle w/42, Scania-Vabis F12.*  
From Source 11.

Actual recovery tanks did not exist at this time, so it is conceivable that crane trucks of this type may have been part of the armored brigades.

### **Sources**

1. *Aid to Denmark - Military and political relations 1943-1945* by Ulf Torell, General Förlaget, Stockholm 1973, ISBN 31-38-01693-1.

2. *Second World War and Sweden - History and myth-making* by Jan Linder, Swedish Military Historical Library, Luleå 2002, ISBN 91-974056-3-9.
3. *Armor - The History of the Swedish Combat Materiel* af Didrik von Porat, Armémusei småskrifter 3, Armémuseum, Stockholm 1985, ISSN 0280-7254.
4. *Tanks and other Armoured Fighting Vehicles of World War II* af B.T. White, Peerage Books, London ca. 1980, ISBN 0-907408-35-4.
5. Landsverk - From forge to large-scale industry 1850-1992 - an exciting piece of industrial history and pictures of the military equipment that was produced.
6. The Swedish armored readiness, September 1939, from the Pansarcentralen v/Thorleif Olsson.
7. Historical units - from the Swedish Armed Forces (the Swedish Army's official website).
8. The armored museum in Axwall - especially Terrain vehicle m/42 KP and Armored vehicle m/40. 9. 60-year-old KP car soon a thing of the past by Arne Spångberg, Command no. 3, 2005, published by the Central Association for Officer Training.
10. A compilation of the army's light radio stations from the 1920s to the 1960s by Sven Bertilsson, Försvarets Historical Telecollections.
11. *Historic Military Vehicles Directory* af Bart Venderveen, After the Battle, London 1989, ISBN 0900913-57-6.
12. Mats' Weapons Page - especially Cars in the defense.

## Postscript - Uniforms



*Officers from the Armored Troops, approx. 1942.  
From Source 8.*



*Panzergunner, approx. 1945.  
The picture was found on the Internet.*

## Postscript - Armored vehicles



Armored car m/39 or m/40.

From Source 4.

From the start, these armored vehicles were not intended to be in Swedish service, but rather Danish, as the Danish army had ordered 18 armored vehicles from Landsverk. Only 3 managed to be delivered before the war, while the rest were seized by the Swedish state [3](#)), and introduced into the Swedish army under the designation *Pansarbil m/39*.

The army wanted another 30 Lynx armored vehicles, but Landsverk did not have available production capacity, which is why Volvo got the job. These vehicles were designated *Pansarbil m/40*. The armored vehicles look immediately the same, the main difference is the engine - m/39 had a Scania-Vabis engine, m/40 a Volvo.

The armored vehicles were part of the reconnaissance element of the armored brigades (motorcyclist company) and a corresponding unit in the motorized infantry brigades, i.e. probably also in the 7th Motorized Infantry Brigade, which was scheduled to participate in Operation Rädde Denmark. By a kind of irony of fate, some of these armored vehicles, which were never delivered to the Danish army, could still have found their way to Denmark.

## Supplementary material about the Swedish defense of the period

- Operation Save Denmark
- The Swedish Army 1939-1945 - Infantry
- The Swedish Army 1939-1945 - Artillery
- The Swedish Army 1939-1945 - Luftvärnsartilleriet
- The Swedish Army 1939-1945 - Engineer troops
- The Swedish Navy 1939-1945 - The Navy
- The Swedish Navy 1939-1945 - The coastal artillery
- The Swedish Air Force 1939-1945 - Operation Rädde Denmark
- The Swedish Air Force 1939-1945 - Experiments with airborne units

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### To note:

- 1) See e.g. Hungarian tanks.
- 2) Read more about the project here: [Purchase of an Armored Car w/39 "Lynx" and a Tank w/40 L.](#)
- 3) However, the Danish state was reimbursed the price for the undelivered armored vehicles. See [About Danish Cavalry 1932-1940, Part 3](#) for a discussion of the three Danish Lynx armored cars.