

NATO's increased European fly ops

A joint approach to secure safety



Since the earlier slowly rising of tensions in the Russian – Ukrainian border areas, have evolved into the current war between both countries late February of this year, it had an immediate effect to the surrounding and other nearby European countries. Although the signs of Russian military forces gathering close to the Ukraine border were monitored during the months before, only a few would have thought it would lead to a new war scene. As a consequence the neighbouring countries, of which a majority is bonded being member of NATO, started to prepare their defences towards the sudden changed and uncertain regional future developments.

Radar and Intel

Next to countries national preparations, the NATO community bundled the individual efforts into a common approach in order to be prepared to defend the territory of member states against whatever future threat which may come ahead. Although near border monitoring flights of NATO intelligence and radar aircraft had become a routine and carried out on a regular base over the past decades, these flights were immediately organised into a continuous ongoing day and night operation from the moment the war started on 24 February 2022. One of the key players for these flights were NATO's own E-3A Airborne

Warning And Control System (AWACS) aircraft of the NATO Airborne Early Warning & Control (NAEW&C) force based at Geilenkirchen Air Base, Germany. Based on the Boeing 707 aircraft, the military NATO AWACS version has now in operations for 50 years, since 1982. For the current monitoring flights, other radar and intel aircraft include French L'armee de l'air E-3CF Sentry's from Avord air base and RAF RC-135W Rivet Joint aircraft from Waddington air base. The USAF has a variety of aircraft deployed to Europe which include U-2 Dragon Lady aircraft operating from RAF Fairford in the UK, further a rotating mixture of several versions