

# General Riho Terras



As of December 5, 2011 Estonian Defence Forces and national defence organisations are led by the Commander of the Defence Forces **General Riho Terras**

Commander of the Defence Forces is appointed by the Parliament on the proposal of the President of the Republic.

## Biography

GEN Riho Terras was born on April 17, 1967 in Kohtla-Järve, Estonia.

1985 Graduated from Jõhvi Secondary School.

1985–1988 Compulsory military service in USSR navy.

After graduating from the Basic Officer's Course in Estonia, GEN Terras served as a Company Commander and as a Battalion Second in Command of the Kalev Single Infantry Battalion from 1992 to 1993. Between 1993 and 1994 GEN Terras served as the commander of the Põhja Single Infantry Company. After graduating from the Bundeswehr University (Germany) he served as the commander of the Guard Battalion from 1998 to 2000. GEN Terras was appointed the Chief of Staff of the Defence League Headquarters in 2000. From 2001 to 2004 he served as the Estonian Defence Attaché in Germany and Poland.

Between 2005 and 2008 GEN Terras served as the Chief of the Analysis and Planning Department and as Chief of the Planning Section, Analysis and Planning Department in the Estonian Defence Forces Headquarters. In 2007, GEN Terras served in the NATO Training Mission - Iraq as Deputy Chief of Staff. GEN Riho Terras was confirmed on December 2008 as Permanent Secretary of the Estonian Ministry of Defence. Before taking up the position of the Permanent Secretary, he was Deputy Chief of Staff for Operations in the Estonian Defence Forces.

GEN Terras served as the Deputy Chief of Staff for Operations of the Estonian Defence forces from January 2011 to March 2011 and then continued his service as the Chief of Staff of the Estonian Defence Forces.

GEN Riho Terras was appointed the Chief of Defence from December 5th 2011.

His military education includes studies in the Royal College of Defence Studies in the United Kingdom, the Joint Command and General Staff Course in the Baltic Defence College, the European Security Policy Course in the Geneva Centre of Security Policy, a Battalion Commander's Course in Switzerland, a Company Commander's course in Germany, a Company Commander's course in Sweden and the Officer's Basic course in Estonia.

GEN Terras's civilian education includes history studies in the University of Tartu, and a master's degree in Political Science and Sociology from the University of Bundeswehr.

**Awards and decorations:**

Order of the Cross of the Eagle  
Distinguished Service Decoration of the EDF  
Cross of Merit of the Ministry of Defence  
Estonian Defence Forces General Staff Cross of Merit  
MoD Medal of Participants in International Military Operations  
The Baltic Defence College Medal of Merit Gold

**Foreign decorations:**

2010 Gold Cross of Honour of the Bundeswehr  
2012 Order of Viesturs (Republic of Latvia)  
2013 Order of Merit of the Federal Republic of Germany  
2013 National Order of the Legion of Honour (French Republic)  
2014 Order for Merit of the Republic of Poland  
2014 Commander Grand Cross of the Order of the Lion of Finland  
NATO Medal

In addition to the Estonian language GEN Terras is fluent in English, German and Russian. He is married with two sons. His hobbies include opera, medieval history and hunting.