

M. Golubeva: Continuing to improve working conditions in the home affairs services

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On 19 January, the Minister of the Interior Marija Golubeva, the US Ambassador to Latvia John Carwile, the Chairman of Daugavpils City Council Andrejs Elksniņš and the Chief of the State Fire and Rescue Service General Oskars Āboliņš attended a ceremony to mark the completion of the renovation project of the 16th State Fire and Rescue Service (SFRS) depot.

The project was implemented by the US Embassy's Office of Defense Cooperation in cooperation with the Latvian Ministry of the Interior, SFRS and the US Army Corps of Engineers. Funding of USD 600 000 was provided by the US European Command's Civil Cooperation Programme. The construction work was carried out by Latvian construction company SIA Abora. The project included the renovation of the depot's administrative and recreation areas, changing rooms, showers, as well as the partial replacement of the heating and electricity systems. The renovation of the interior has significantly improved the working conditions for firefighters and will provide adequate infrastructure for SFRS equipment and operational vehicles.

☞ Minister of the Interior Marija Golubeva emphasizes: I am very pleased and honored that we are gradually starting to improve the working conditions of the services that keep people safe on a daily basis. I am pleased that the construction of eight depots with the support of the national budget will finally start this year and next, as well as the construction of eight more depots with the support of the European Recovery Fund. But today we are here to thank our friends and allies - the United States - for this contribution to the security of the people of Daugavpils. It is time for the state to ensure good working conditions in all internal affairs services, including the SFRS. I believe that the US contribution is a very important, friendly and supportive gesture. This shows that our allies are mindful of our needs, not only for external but also for internal security."

The renovation of the Daugavpils 2nd Unit depot is the 16th SFRS depot renovation project implemented by the US Embassy's

Office of Defense Cooperation, the US Army Corps of Engineers and the SFRS. Between 2009 and 2021, 15 renovation and reconstruction projects of SFRS depots were carried out under the Civil Cooperation Programme. In recent years, SFRS depots in Jelgava, Jēkabpils and Alūksne have been renovated. The projects implemented under the Civil Cooperation Programme represent a total investment of more than USD 5 million in the infrastructure of the SFRS.

Improving working conditions for staff is one of the key priorities of the Home Affairs budget. For infrastructure development in 2021 and 2022, EUR 11,779,513 will be allocated for the construction of new SFRS depots in Kandava, Saulkrasti, Rūjiena, Aizpute, Priekule, Dagda, Ilūkste and Iecava. These depots are planned to house the fire station, the State Police and the Emergency Medical Services units. The financing of the Recovery Fund of the European Union will be used to build new disaster management centers in Liepāja, Daugavpils, Madona, Alūksne, Līvāni, Salacgrīva, Talsi, Tukums, and possibly also in Viļāni and Alsunga.

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