

Elon Musk and the Starlink antennas: Leuk could become a military target

by Remo Massat*

Remo Massat, editor-in-chief of the Walliser Zeitung, raises a valid yet hitherto largely overlooked question: What impact does Elon Musk's Starlink project in Leuk have on Swiss neutrality?

In Leuk, [a municipality in the French speaking Canton of Valais with a population of 4300, edit.], by far the largest *Starlink* project in the whole of Europe has been approved by the local council. However, Starlink antennas are not purely a civilian project, but also a military one. And, it should be noted, a "crucial" factor in the wars currently being waged by the West, as well as in future conflicts.

Consequently, the Starlink project in Valais takes on an entirely different dimension. For if it were to go ahead, Switzerland – with Leuk as the site – would become a military target. Furthermore, stationing the Starlink project in Valais contravenes Swiss neutrality, provided the antennas are used for warfare, as has been the case in previous conflicts.

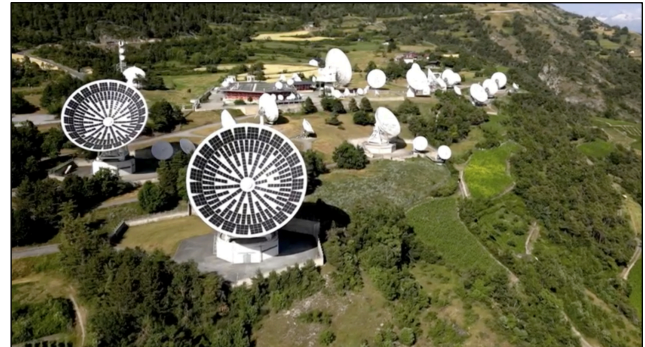
The war in Ukraine and Starlink

In the "proxy war" between the EU, the US and Russia in Ukraine, it has been known for years that Starlink constitutes "the technological backbone" (Google AI terminology) of Ukraine's warfare. This has also been reported by *SRF*.¹ Or *Deutsche Welle*, which writes that Starlink is "crucial". "*Starlink: How a satellite system shapes wars*".² Musk even wrote on X that Starlink is "the backbone of the Ukrainian army"; without his Starlink, "the front line would collapse".

Starlink is therefore extremely important from a military perspective. This is not the opinion of the author of this piece, but rather that of the owner of Starlink, who wants to build antenna stations in Leuk.

Iran war and Starlink

At the start of the war against Iran, during the failed coup attempt, the US smuggled "thou-



A further 40 Starlink antennas are to be installed above Leuk. (Picture screenshot from srf news)

sands of Starlink terminals" into the country to orchestrate the unrest. This has been reported by media outlets such as the *Wall Street Journal*.³

The Gulf states, which hosted radar sites for the US Army, are currently experiencing just how quickly one can become a military target if one permits the deployment of military infrastructure – or infrastructure that can be used for military purposes as well as civilian ones.

The importance of infrastructure such as Starlink is also underlined by a US law known as the "Cloud Act". This stipulates,⁴ that in the event of war, all Starlink data becomes the property of the US.⁵

The fact that Leuk, in neutral Switzerland, would become a priority target in the event of war therefore also raises questions about neutrality.

And, of course, about the safety of the residents living there; whilst the Starlink antennas are not being erected in a residential area, who knows exactly how targets will be identified in the event of war?

Obstruction by municipality of Leuk and Starlink

Last year, the municipality of Leuk did not comply with a request from this author to inspect the planning application. They said one would have to visit the town hall. When this was done, access was refused on the grounds that the planning application deadline had already passed. It therefore seems that the only way to gain a proper insight into the exact nature of the project is via the Freedom of Information Act.

* Remo Massat is publisher and editor-in-chief of the *Walliser Zeitung*, the online newspaper for the Valais, based in Leukerbad.

Like the local council, the same with Starlink: what's the easiest way to attract negative press? You refuse to disclose what you're planning or what the project entails. You don't even speak to the press. No Swiss media outlet was able to reach Starlink's press office.

Leuk's "big ears" are operated by *Signalhorn AG*. There are currently 70 antennas, up to thirty metres high. A further 40 are to be added for Starlink.

Leuk recently upgraded

It is interesting to note that Leuk was only recently upgraded. In connection with the *expansion of radio intelligence*, the federal government speaks of "investments in maintaining the systems operational capability".⁶ To this end, these systems must keep pace with technical developments in communications. An increasing number of satellite-based communication options are becoming available. These, in turn, entail a greater need for antennas to be able to intercept the same volume of communications relevant to intelligence gathering. This means that if Starlink were also "stationed" there and Leuk were to become a military target, Swiss intelligence gathering would also be affected.

The Business Audit Delegation and the *Independent Supervisory Authority for Radio Reconnaissance* are kept continuously informed of search terms and the development of reconnaissance findings, and review these. No public communication takes place on this matter.

Avoiding speculation – safeguarding independence in Leuk

To avoid speculation, political initiatives at federal level are primarily called for. For it seems more than justified to put appropriate questions to the relevant federal authorities: Furthermore,

the question arises as to whether the Starlink project represents yet another – and so far largely unnoticed – piece of the jigsaw in Switzerland's *creeping accession to NATO*.⁷

- What is the status of the independence of Swiss surveillance facilities from the Starlink project in Leuk? Or are the two even being conflated?
- Can Swiss wireless and satellite surveillance facilities receive or analyse Starlink signals?
- Is there perhaps even some form of cooperation or technical link between state surveillance by Switzerland and Starlink (as a private, yet US-dominated company dependent on US taxpayers' money)?

Source: <https://sichtweisenschweiz.ch/gesellschaft/elon-musk-und-die-starlink-antennen-von-leuk-leuk-wuerde-zum-militaerischen-ziel/>, 2 June 2026.

(An abridged version of the article appeared in the *Walliser Zeitung* on 15 May 2026.⁸

(Translation Swiss Standpoint)

Also read in the *Walliser Zeitung*: "Petition against Starlink antennas in Leuk. Already over 10,000 signatures"⁹)

¹ <https://www.srf.ch/news/international/ukraine/ukrainische-gelaendegewinne-starlink-sperre-fuer-russland-das-sind-die-folgen-an-der-front>

² <https://www.dw.com/de/starlink-wie-ein-satellitensystem-kriege-pr%C3%A4gt/video-72564775>

³ <https://www.wsj.com/world/middle-east/u-s-smuggled-thousands-of-starlink-terminals-into-iran-after-protest-crackdown-69a8c74f>

⁴ <https://t3n.de/news/cloud-act-erklaert-1713593/>

⁵ <https://foreignpolicy.com/2026/03/20/starlink-spacex-musk-geopolitics-war-ukraine-russia-iran/>

⁶ <https://www.parlament.ch/de/ratsbetrieb/suche-curia-vista/geschaeft?AffairId=20155346>

⁷ https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mAP_g7zyXYw

⁸ <https://walliser-zeitung.ch/elon-musk-und-die-starlink-antennen-von-leuk/>

⁹ <https://walliser-zeitung.ch/petition-starlink-leuk/>