



New plans for Active Reserves

(4 August) The SVK Armed Forces are planning to train 330 Active Reserves personnel next year. Provided that they meet the Terms and Conditions of Active Reserves Service under current legislation, those interested can, depending on where they live, contact the Army Recruitment Teams in Slovakia's regional capitals no later than 25 September 2020. For more information on the application process and the points of contact, please go to www.mosr.sk.

Announcing that changes will be made to the Active Reserves in the future, Defence Minister Jaroslav Naď said: "We are aware that this project has its shortfalls, especially with overall interest being low. Looking at the Czech Republic's model and the success of its Army, we know that things can be done differently. Therefore, we are planning to put forward legislative amendments in order to assist the Slovak Armed Forces in building the Active Reserves and thus support Slovakia's readiness to defend itself, if required."

Throughout 2021, Active Reserves soldiers will undertake training for a variety of Reserve roles required by the SVK Defence Staff, Army HQ Trenčín, HQ 1st Mech Bde Topoľčany, HQ 2nd Mech Bde Prešov, Training and Mobilisation Manning Base Martin, 21st Mech Bn Trebišov, 5th SOF Regt Žilina, Eng Bn Sereď, CBRN Bn Rožňava and MP Trenčín.

The training of Active Reserves personnel will be aimed at developing and enhancing their skills across military trades, including those in the field of artillery, communications and information systems, logistics, CBRN, military management and training, military medicine, special operations, engineer support, and others. For example, the reservists assigned to the SVK Military Police Reserve will undergo training for military movements, public order enforcement, personal security and the security of military installations.

The Active Reserves soldiers will receive a motivational contribution of €600 for each calendar year, provided that they undergo at least 75% of the regular training required. Under current legislation, they are also entitled to a commensurate amount of rank-based military pay for the training period. As part of the Employer Support Payment (ESP) Scheme, the MOD will reimburse the reservists' salaries to their employers while on training and exercises, and so will the lost business income to the self-employed reservists. The Ministry of Defence will also refund the social payments and health insurance premiums to their employers during the training period.

This week Regina Radio's Full Field Kit, live on Fri at 21.05 with a rebroadcast at 00.30 on Sat, will focus on why to undertake the Active Reserves training and there will be interviews with the reservists who have been through the training. Please, send your suggestions and opinions to plnapolna@mod.gov.sk.

Joint training of police instructors at Liptovská Mara Reservoir

(6 August) The Liptovská Mara Reservoir hosted a practical training with instructional and methodological issues for rope and parachute training instructors the first week of August. Lt Col Marián Pogány, of the Police Corps Presidium, explained that the training had brought together representatives of all stand-by units of the SVK Police Corps, firefighters, and members of the Police Special Intervention Units, the Mountain Rescue Service, the Police River Section and the SVK Military Police.

The training of mixed teams covered working at heights while hanging down from the helicopter, extracting soldiers with their harness clipped to a single rope, rescuing and carrying injured persons on the rope beneath the helicopter, and conducting rescue operations over the water in cooperation with rescue boats. A Bell 429 helicopter and an Mi-171 helicopter used in the training were provided by the Ministry of Interior.



- During an unveiling ceremony at the Michal Strenk Military Museum in Stará Ľubovňa on 1 Aug 2020, Defence Minister Jaroslav Naď unveiled a **memorial plaque** dedicated to the SVK Armed Forces personnel who have made the ultimate sacrifice in the line of duty on missions and operations abroad. The plaque was blessed by the Bishop's Vicars from the Ordinariate of the SVK Armed Forces and Armed Corps.

- **Announcement of promotions.** Chief of Defence Gen Daniel Zmeko promoted Lt Col Marián Ivan, Lt Col Dalibor Vaľo and Lt Col Pavol Šebík to the rank of Colonel, with effect from 5 Aug 2020.

- On the night of 8 Aug 2020, a **fire broke out in the retirement home** in Zemianske Kostolány with tragic consequences. Members of the SVK Armed Forces were among those offering assistance. Soldiers of the National EOD and CBRN Centre evacuated the residents and provided them with temporary accommodation at a military facility.

- On 4 Aug 2020, Stuttgart was the venue of a **Change of Command (COC) ceremony** with U.S. Special Operations Command Europe (SOCEUR) Commander Kirk W. Smith passing the command to Major General David H. Tabor and Command Sgt. Maj. Bruce W. Holmes replacing Navy Command Master Chief Peter C. Musselman as CSEL for SOCEUR. SVK Special Operations Forces Command (SOCOM) was represented by SOCOM Deputy Commander Col Pavel Švelka and CSEL for SOCOM Sgt Maj Martin Boháčik.

- The 5th Special Forces Regiment Žilina and the National Transfusion Service Žilina are hosting the **12th "Gabčík Drop of Blood"** event in the Žilina hospital on 10-14 and 17-21 Aug 2020. The blood drive is longer than usual due to shortages of blood throughout the summer months. Those interested can make a prior arrangement on 041 700 11 83.

- An exhibition titled "**Legionaries: Our Heroes of the Great War 1914-18**" is being held in the lobby of the Central Exhibition – Museum Branch Svidník, Museum of Military History Piešťany, SVK Institute of Military History (VHÚ). The author of the exhibition is Director of VHÚ Col Miroslav Čaplovič. The 14 panels portray the history of the Czechoslovak Legion as it emerged and developed during WW1, as well as depicting 12 prominent Slovak personalities whose work was closely associated with the Legion's operations.

- Drivers are advised by the MOD to drive carefully as there will be **Allied road movements** involving US, CZE, HRV and POL troops across Slovakia from 10 to 16 Aug 2020. Over the same period, there will be several SVK Army trip convoys on the following routes: Nováky – TC Lešť, Zemianske Kostolány – Michalovce and back, Nováky – Sklené, Nitra – Zemianske Kostolány and back, Rašov – VTSÚ Záhorie, and Zemianske Kostolány – Martin.

SVK SOF personnel continue serving in Afghanistan despite coronavirus

(6 August) Despite the worsened epidemiological situation in the region and a reduction in the number of serving personnel, the Special Operations Forces (SOF) Task Force has been continually performing assigned operational tasks in Afghanistan. The decision to temporarily bring down the number of deployed troops follows from the Resolute Support (RS) Commander's requirement to minimise the risk of spreading the new coronavirus. RS medical facilities are primarily focused on trauma surgery, whereas it is expected that allied medical facilities in



the country could be disproportionately overwhelmed by the infectious disease and this could make the situation a lot more complicated. As well as reducing the personnel levels, other measures in place include observing social distancing, washing hands, and using personal protective equipment (PPE). Thanks to this, the number of COVID-positive coalition soldiers is low. Irrespective of the existing obstacles, the SVK SOF team continues to train, assist and advise an Afghan SOF unit to help build the Afghan Special Operations Forces to be capable of combating terrorism and restoring peace in the country.

New cadets enter AOS

(3 August) 156 cadets entered the General Milan Rastislav Štefánik Armed Forces Academy (AOS) in Liptovský Mikuláš. Over the 2020/2021 academic term, they will study at the Faculty of Military Medicine and the Faculty of Aviation, Technical University of Košice. Alongside their academic studies, they will also undertake the AOS-delivered Military Programme. On Day 1, the cadets completed all their in-processing and were issued stores for training. They will now undergo a 7-week basic military training (BMT) course to develop basic military knowledge and practical skills required of Preparatory State Service (PSS) soldiers.



Support to museum employees

(9 August) After a break caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, soldiers have resumed their technical support to the Museum of Military History. Members of the 12th Mechanised Battalion Nitra repainted the 9P129 Missile Launcher (9K79 Tochka Mobile Missile Launch System) and the RM-70/85 Multiple Launch Rocket System (MLRS) at the Museum of Military History in Piešťany. The restored collection items will enrich the Museum's permanent exhibition.

Officer course shortened

(3 August) The General M. R. Štefánik Armed Forces Academy opened the 23rd Officer Course for College Graduates, one specially designed for medical professionals. The short version of the course aims to provide initial military education for future lieutenants, 1st lieutenants and captains. It is being attended by 15 college graduates. On completing the 4-week course and meeting the programme requirements, they will be promoted to the rank of Lieutenant.