



Soldiers back Slovakia

(9 November) As part of Op Shared Responsibility aimed at mass population screening for COVID-19, the Slovak Armed Forces have so far tested SVK citizens in three phases to break chains of transmission. In Slovakia's first mass Covid testing pilot in Orava and Bardejov (23-25 Oct 2020), 140,976 people were tested for coronavirus, of which 5,599 (3.97%) were diagnosed positive. In Phase 2 (31 Nov-1 Oct 2020), 3,625,332 people were tested, with 38,359 positive cases, equating to 1.06% of all people tested. In the last phase (7-8 Oct 2020), 2,044,855 people turned out for a test, of which 13,509 (0.66%) tested positive.

As part of Op Shared Responsibility, a total of 5,811,163 tests were performed as of today, with 57,467 positive cases. While in the "red" high risk districts 1,750,179 residents were tested and 25,811 positive cases were identified two weeks ago, last weekend the number of all people tested rose to 1,837,464 and the number of positive cases plunged to 11,477. In other words, incidence rates dropped from 1.47% to 0.62%, i.e. by nearly 58%. The testing in Orava and Bardejov, where all three phases of testing were completed, had even a deeper impact, with Námestovo and Bardejov districts reporting 88% and 74% drops in positive cases, respectively.

Defence Minister Jaroslav Nad said: "The Slovak Armed Forces backed Slovakia again. In a matter of days they managed to prepare the largest logistical operation in the history of Slovakia. I am immensely proud of all soldiers for their unbelievable performance. Equally important, I am thankful to all those who contributed to the success of this operation side by side with the Armed Forces – to all police officers, firefighters, rescuers, Financial Administration Authority staff, volunteers and particularly medical professionals, without whom this would be impossible." He gave special thanks to local authorities. Instrumental to the success of the operation was the public's supportive and responsible approach for which he thanked the citizens of Slovakia.

The greatest deployment of personnel and equipment was evident in the second phase of the country-wide testing, as 40,000 soldiers, police officers, firefighters, rescuers, medical personnel, members of the Financial Administration Authority, local authorities and volunteers were committed to the operation. The entire operation cost a huge number of quality work hours by all those involved. The Slovak Armed Forces covered over 1,000,000km and transported around 6,000 tonnes of material. These are expected to rise, since the logistical part of the operation is still underway. 4,698 pieces of vehicles and equipment owned by all parties involved supported the operation last weekend alone.

As the head of the MOD noted, the outcome of Slovakia's country-wide testing is an excellent start line for the continued shared responsibility of us all.



MOD to continue negotiations on delivery of 3D radars with 5 countries

(4 November) The Ministry of Defence will continue negotiations on the delivery of 3D radars with only five countries which have been shortlisted by the tender evaluation panel (TEP) from the MOD. This means that the MOD will request additional information only from the Governments of France, Hungary, Israel, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, and the United States of America. Through the request to the bidders to supplement the tender documentation submitted, the MOD wants to find out more about the possibilities and terms and conditions for equipment procurement and get more practical information on all aspects of the SVK defence industry's involvement in the delivery and operation of the radars.

Price estimates will be of great value to the evaluation panel as well. The deadline for submission of additional information is 30 calendar days following the date of receipt of such request. Once all the information has been obtained, the bids will be re-evaluated and ordered by TEP according to the order of advantage and handed over to the Defence Minister who will present them to the SVK Government. If any of the countries is approved by the SVK Government, the Defence Minister will be given a mandate to enter negotiations on the contract with the winning bidder.



■ Defence State Secretary Marian Majer and British Ambassador Nigel Baker along with his colleagues paused to remember the five-member crew of Wellington Bomber MF 458 'A' of 40 Squadron RAF which was shot down by a German artillery ship anchored at Čunovo. No one survived the crash.

■ Based on the decision of the Commandant of the M. R. Štefánik Armed Forces Academy Liptovský Mikuláš, classes for 2nd-year – 5th-year cadets were cancelled from 3 to 9 November to allow them to join Op Shared Responsibility and this period may be extended. As part of the operation, the cadets supported the mass population testing across Slovakia. While 22 service personnel, teachers and commanders of the Academy were deployed to test sites in Liptovský Mikuláš and Ružomberok districts, 61 cadets were on the ground helping in other districts and areas.

■ Military members of the Institute of Military History joined the mass testing efforts as commanders of test sites. Several volunteers from among the Institute's civilian employees supported the operation.

■ The Slovak Armed Forces Academy hosted a graduation ceremony for graduates of the International Staff Officers Course (ISOC). Starting on 21 September, ISOC was attended by 11 officers from the SVK Armed Forces and the Indiana National Guard (USA). They were later joined by students from ISOC 22, which was suspended in March 2020 due to the pandemic. A total of 20 course participants acquired expertise in planning and conducting military operations in the full spectrum of conflicts in English in line with NATO standards and successfully graduated from the course.

■ The MOD has issued a traffic warning to motorists as three Allied road movements by US and Polish troops are scheduled to take place across Slovakia from 9 to 15 Nov 2020. The MOD stresses that the military transits have been approved in line with SVK Public Health Authority-issued guidelines. Over the same period, the SVK Armed Forces will conduct convoy movements from Koliňanský vrch to Hlohovec and from Prešov to Michalovce and back, and also scheduled is a SVK Armed Forces rail movement from Vlkanová to Zemianske Kostoľany.

Regina Radio's next Full Field Kit, live on Fri at 21.05 with a rebroadcast at 00.30 on Sat, will focus on Veterans Day (11 November 2020). Please, forward your suggestions and opinions to plnapolna@mod.gov.sk.

Winners of PhotoAttack and Gallery MIL 2020 announced

(4 November) The Defence-wide PhotoAttack and Gallery MIL 2020 Competitive Displays, organised by the Educational and Cultural Activities Section of the SVK Armed Forces Personnel Office, the Garrison Clubs and the Cultural and Educational Centre Zvolen (SKOČ), have turned the 11th page of their history. A total of 75 authors from 22 military units, 27 members of hobby groups at garrison clubs, 5 military pensioners, 13 family members and 13 civilian employees participated in the competition with 245 submissions. In the PhotoAttack Display, the first prize winner in the Armed Forces through Camera Lens category was Lt Col (Rtd) Peter Sobek, of the Trenčín-based MOD Inspectorate unit, for his photo titled "Patrol" (pictured here). First prize in the Pandemic Through the Eyes of Photographers category went to Pte Denisa Faze-



kasová, of the Mechanised Battalion Trebišov, for her photo called "Behind the Soldier's Glass". In the Open category, PFC Miroslav Zjana, of the Presidential Guard of Honour, came first with his photo called "Bar The Classic I".

Dangerous relaxation in forests

(5 November) Military districts are visited increasingly by members of the public who wander through military forests. For this reason, Military Police warns that trespassing on firing ranges puts the lives and health of the public at risk. In the past, live firing had to be halted because there were several sightings of trespassers wandering off paths to the impact areas where projectiles fell. Military Police emphasises that there has been a ban on access to the military districts or any of their parts since the state of emergency was declared in line with Act No. 281/1997 Coll. on Military Districts. As a priority, military policemen are on patrol at times and in areas officially closed to the public due to security reasons, such as live firing and trials of explosive ordnance and munitions, etc.



Testing and Military Police

(8 November) As part of Phase 1 and Phase 2 of Op Shared Responsibility, Military Police participated actively in performing tasks associated with the mass COVID-19 testing pilot in Slovakia. Using their capabilities, Military Police provided support to Regional Points of Command (RPC), assigned personnel to test sites across Slovakia, provided mobile patrols, escorted military vehicles transporting material and equipment for testing.

Chaplains on frontline

(5 November) Among those deployed to support Op Shared Responsibility were members of the Central Office of Ecumenical and Pastoral Service (EPS) in the Slovak Armed Forces and Armed Corps. Chaplain General of EPS Col Viktor Sabo was a test site commander in Bratislava's Devínska Nová Ves; Director of the EPS Office Maj Vladimír Varga worked as a spiritual service coordinator; Dean Maj Ondrej Rišian was a test site commander in Považská Bystrica, and Cpt Peter Dragijský was a coordinator for test sites in Zlaté Moravce. In addition, a total of 18 military chaplains of the Catholic Vicariate were deployed across Slovakia, with two of them on standby as reserve chaplains.

The Gallery MIL Display's Painting & Sculpture category saw Mariana Petriková, of the SVK Armed Forces Personnel Office Liptovský Mikuláš, as the winner for her piece titled "Havoc", Peter Čech, of the ISTAR Battalion Prešov, triumphed in the Applied Arts category, and 12-year-old Timea Čatlochová, of the SVK Armed Forces Personnel Office, took first place with her piece "Painted Veil" in the Children's Works category. The prize-giving ceremony was not held due to the ongoing pandemic. The award-winning and category-leading entries were on display at the Garrison Club Trenčín.