

March 2017

Veteran Support 2016

Annual Report – Summary

by Vice Chairman Jan Flemming Hansen



The Chairman has the floor ...

“A veteran is a person who, as an individual or in a unit, has been on at least one international mission for more than 28 consecutive days under the Ministry of Defense. The person is a veteran, regardless of whether he or she is still in the Armed Forces or has become a civilian.”

(The official definition of a veteran)

"Veterans and their relatives must be supported when needed."

The Veteran Support has done this since 2001 ...

On January 1st 2016, the Veteran Support changed its name from **“Comrade Support”** to **“Veteran Support”**, to emphasize that the **veteran** is at the heart of the Veteran Support work.

The Veteran support, who is part of Denmark’s Veterans (formerly The Blue Barrettes), has once again shown its worth by being the only veteran organization nationwide, and exclusively run by volunteer veterans under the motto

Veterans support Veterans

The approx. 90 volunteers in the Veteran Support derive from all over the country, ensuring that the support is close to the veterans who need it. The many activities and offers of the Veteran Support also cover the entire country in co-operation with Denmark’s Veterans 19 Local Clubs, the Municipal Veteran Coordinators, Veteran Homes, Veteran Cafes and other veteran actors.

The Veteran Support funds the start of Veteran Cafes, and several of the volunteers in the Veteran Support are volunteers in a Veteran Café too.

By nature, the Veteran Support has a close cooperation with the Veteran Centre in Ringsted, and the head of the Veteran Centre is chairperson of the Veteran Support Steering Committee. The Veteran Support budget must be submitted to the Veteran Centre and the audited accounts of the Veteran Support must be submitted to the Ministry of Defense's Internal Audit via the Veteran Centre.

Several actors are entering the veteran field, but the Veteran Support remains the only organization that uses only veterans, which is crucial in the relationship with the challenged veteran seeking support and assistance in a difficult time. The trust of the

volunteers from the Veteran Support is immediately - "We speak the same language and we understand each other from the start" - thus a crucial barrier is broken from the outset, and the dialogue is kept on the veteran's premise.

The Veteran Support activities and support are for all veterans and their relatives, whether they have been sent out by the Armed Forces, The Danish Emergency Management Agency, the Police, or as healthcare personnel or Emergency Aid drivers.

The Balkan veterans are still those having the hardest time and the Veteran Support supports them, among other things, by being the only organization organizing reunion trips to the former mission areas in Bosnia and Croatia.

In addition, there are activities for veterans and their families, and other activities that are only for challenged veterans. Some of these activities are carried out at the Veteran Support's own activity- and course facility (Camp Frøslev), located in The Frøslev Camp in Sønderjylland, as a neighbor to the UN Museum, which tells the history of the veterans.

The seriousness and professionalism that characterizes the Veteran Support has also in 2016 had a positive impact on the many veterans who have received assistance and support from the Veteran Support.

The Veteran Support is constantly evolving and 2016 is no exception. Activities have been increased with Motorcycle rides (without back marks) for veterans and relatives and Adventure Activities in Denmark, Norway and Sweden have been introduced for the first time.

In 2016, the Veteran Support has carried out activities, lasting for one or more days, for **2,100 veterans**. In total, the Veteran Support had direct contact with **2,649 veterans and their relatives**. More than **16,000** have visited the Veteran Support website and there has been opportunities for contact to more than **200,000** in connection with the events the Information Branch has participated in throughout the country.

It is a fact, that a large part of the activities in 2016 could only be implemented because, - in addition to the \$ 2.5 million received from the Government, - the Veteran Support has received additional funds from the Veteran Centre and private foundations.

This fact implies that the level of the Veteran Support activities will be significantly reduced if these external funds are left out.

The Veteran Support will therefore work for allocation of more funds from the Government.

I hereby thank all the volunteers in the Veteran Support, as well as all our supporters, who help us with financial resources and / or hot hands, as well as our collaborators inside and outside the Armed Forces.

Niels Hartvig Andersen
Chairman, Veteran Support
President, Denmark's Veterans

VETERAN SUPPORT 2016

Summary

This summary of The Veteran Support Annual Report 2016, gives a brief overview over the results obtained in 2016.

In the **Veteran Support Annual Meeting 2016**, 51 volunteers participated (approx. 50% of all enlisted). Vice Chief of Defence (Lieutenant General Per Ludvigsen) and Commanding Officer, Veteran Centre (Colonel Jette Albinus) gave speeches at the meeting.

At the meeting, the volunteers were informed about the 2017 budget and activities.

The Telephone Line 80 60 80 30 has in 2016 been managed by 19 operators (two on duty 24/7/365). In 2016 there has been **220 calls** regarding support to veterans and relatives, which is less than in 2015. The Veteran Centre 24/7 telephone line now takes more calls from the veterans.

There has been an increase in calls to 80 60 80 30 from relatives.

The Information Branch divide its activities into different groups.

Briefings ("Before Mission", "During Mission" and "After Mission"), the Website, Facebook and INFO-events all over the country.

In 2016 **27 briefings** were conducted for **992 relatives and 1120 soldiers/veterans**. There have been **16.487 visits on the Website (45 pr. day)**. Facebook (*Veteranstøtten*) has **1853 followers** and **each month** Facebook reaches more than **20.000**, and get approx. **6.000** likes/reactions.

The Information Branch has participated in **37 INFO-events**, where approx. **200.000 guests** had the opportunity to get into a dialogue with the volunteers from the Veteran Support, or get INFO material (i.e. flyers) telling about Veteran Support different offers and activities.

The Activity Branch has in 2016 carried out 7 own activities, including trips to Bosnia, Croatia and Norway (Bæreia) and a Family Summer Camp.

In addition to that, Activity Branch has given financial support to 51 activities, including Reunions for veterans and relatives, activities in Denmark's Veterans local clubs, and financial start help to Veteran Cafés.

1.261 veterans and 564 relatives has participated in the activities, lasting for 1 to 9 days.

The Adventure Branch (new) has in 2016 carried out four activities in Denmark, Norway and Sweden, lasting for 5 to 8 days.

30 veterans and 3 relatives has participated in the activities.

The Sports Branch has in 2016 carried out, or has given financial support to, 14 activities, including a team to Nijmegen March (100 years Jubilee), and VETCAMP on Club La Santa (Lanzarote) for veterans with PTSD. Krogager Foundation funds VETCAMP.

366 veterans have participated in the activities.

The Social Branch has in 2016 given support to **125 veterans and relatives**.

Especially two veterans suicide and a veteran killing his parents, challenged the Social Branch, due to an intense media review, that stigmatized the veterans and made relatives and colleagues uncertain to the veterans.

The Social Branch tasks include Contact Support to the authorities; support to the veterans, making everyday life easier; and financial advice to the veterans.

Camp Frøslev, the Veteran Support Activity- and Course Facility at the Frøslev Camp in Sønderjylland. In 2016, there has been **1750** overnight stays.

In 2016, Camp Frøslev has been used for Veteran Support courses, for the Veteran Support Annual Meeting and for the Family Summer Camp.

In addition to that, Camp Frøslev has been used for reunions for veterans and relatives.

The Education Branch has carried out two Introductory Courses and a Mind-Fullness Course. 70 have participated in the courses.

At the Introductory Courses, also volunteers from Veteran Cafés participated in gaining knowledge of the behavior of challenged veterans.

Challenges in i 2016.

Economy.

An increasing part of the Authorities, veterans and relatives, acknowledge the work and results of The Veteran Support, resulting in an increased need for more money for the various branches. In 2016, the activity level has been possible, only because of additional funds given by the Veteran Centre for the Family Summer Camp and for the Adventure Branch activities. Funds from foundations has financed VETCAMP and reunions.

The Veteran Support predicts a significant deterioration of The Veteran Support´s ability to support veterans and relatives, unless the economic foundation is strengthened.

The Target Group.

There is still a challenge to reach the big "silent" group of veterans who need support and help but who do not have the power to seek out for the support/help themselves. However, - The greater visibility of the Veteran Support on (i.e.) Veteran Cafés and Veteran Homes, has resulted in an increased number of requests from veterans who have not previously been contacted.

Related to the activities, there are still challenges to reach the younger veterans. However, it should be emphasized that Adventure Activities appeals to this target group.

Vision 2017.

In January 2017, the Presidency of the Veteran Support will conduct a Vision Seminar, where the Veteran Support Vision and Mission will be defined.

In addition, the first step will be taken to create:

- Veteran Support´s Communication Strategy, as well as
- Veteran Support´s strategic areas of action.

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