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| See Distribution | Our Reference: FTC-G7-SH16    Date: 31 March 2016 |

**EXERCISE SPARTAN HIKE 2016 – POST EXERCISE REPORT**

References:

A. 2015DIN07-127. Army Alpine and Nordic Exercises 2016.

B. 2015DIN07-122. Army European Winter Activity Instruction.

C. FTC/G7/SH16 – Admin Instruction dated 29 Sep 15.

**General**

1. Exercise SPARTAN HIKE 2016 (SH16) is the Regional, Regular and Reserve Army Ski Championships that took place in Serre Chevalier, France during the period 10-20 Jan 16. The Championships were a great success with increased registration in both the Alpine and Nordic discipline; alpine continued this year with the availability of a second hill.

2. The number of competitors taking part in SH16 were:

1. Total SH16 Competitors 512 (Regular 482 – Reserve 30)
2. Alpine Competitors 220 (Regular 205 – Reserve 15)
3. Nordic Competitors 292 (Regular 277 – Reserve 15)

Results

3. Full results are available at [www.awsa.org.uk](http://www.awsa.org.uk) the main results were as follows:

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| **Category** | **Unit** |
| Alpine Combination – Ladies Winners | OUOTC |
| Alpine Combination - Reserve Army Winners | OUOTC A Team |
| Alpine Combination – Regular Army Winners | 1 Regt RLC |
| Alpine Combination – Regular Army Winners | 9 Regt RLC |
| Nordic Biathlon Relay – Army Reserve – First UOTC | Not Competed. |
| Nordic Biathlon Relay – Army Reserve Winners | 154 (Scottish) Regt RLC |
| Nordic Biathlon Relay – Regular Army – Ladies Winners | 9 Regiment RLC |
| Nordic Biathlon Relay – Regular Army - Winners | 17 Port & Maritime Regt RLC |
| Military Patrol Race – Army Reserve – First UOTC | Not Competed. |
| Military Patrol Race – Army Reserve – Winners | 154 (Scottish) Regt RLC |
| Military Patrol Race – Regular Army - Winners | 17 Port & Maritime Regt RLC |
| Nordic Team Combination – Army Reserve – First UOTC | Not Competed |
| Nordic Team Combination – Army Reserve – Winners | 154 (Scottish) Regt RLC |
| Nordic Team Combination – Regular Army – Ladies Winners | Not Competed. |
| Nordic Team Combination – Regular Army – Maj Unit Winners | 9 Regt RLC |
| Nordic Team Combination – Regular Army - Champions | 17 Port & Maritime Regt RLC |
| Nordic Team Combination – Male and Female - Champions | 9 Regt RLC |
| Unit Ski Combination – Army Reserve Champions | Not Competed |
| Unit Ski Combination – Regular Army Champions | 1 Regt RLC |

**Exercise Administration**

4. **SH DIN.** Details concerning the exercise are annually produced in a DIN (Ref A) which provides the minimum information required to begin the process of planning for the competition. The DIN is produced early in the Trg year and the DIN number published on the AWSA website. It is anticipated that the SH17 DIN will be published in May and no later than Jun. The main contents of the SH DIN are covered during the SH team captains’ meeting in Sep. It is essential that team captains’ who are unable to attend the meeting read through this carefully as the contents are detailed with deadlines that must be adhered to.

5. **Army European Winter Activity Instruction (AEWAI)** The SH DIN is published in conjunction with the requirements of the AEWAI DIN (Ref B).

6. **SH Team Captains’ Meeting.** The SH team captains’ meeting takes place in Sep. Team captains’ of all participating units are required to attend the meeting; this allows the Ex Controller and the teams to confirm the details already submitted. At the meeting the SH Admin Instruction (Ref C) is made available to all team captains’ and a verbal brief by key personnel given to include (but not exhaustive): Ex Controller, Chiefs’ of Race Nordic and Alpine, Insurance Reps and Equipment providers. The SH17 Team Captains meeting will take place in Tidworth Garrison Theatre on **Wed 28 Sep 16**; full details will be published on the AWSA website in due course. Relevant guest speakers are welcome to attend and should contact the Ex Controller in advance.

7. **AWSA Website.** The SH page of the AWSA website is available at [www.awsa.org.uk](http://www.awsa.org.uk) . This facility remains invaluable to teams as it provides essential information including links to other relevant sites. It is also the only real source of information for teams whilst training abroad. All results and photographs from SH16 are available on the website to download. Teams/individuals should check the site regularly; particularly when they are out of camp on events/training prior to SH as any important information or last minute changes will be published on this site.

8. **SH Arrival/Booking in.** All teams and Individuals were required to book into resort at the Race Office on Sun 10 Jan 16 between 0800 – 1500hrs; this booking in process is lengthy but essential. This year the process was helped due to team captains’ sending in information required to [spartanhike@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:spartanhike@yahoo.co.uk) this process works and there will be more to aid in the booking in procedure for 2017. It is essential that team captains’ arrive prepared, with the correct documentation. Failure to do so will result in them being put to the back of the queue, avoiding delays to those who have their admin in order.

9. **Clearances.** There were no reported problems concerning Staff Clearance, DIPCLEAR or Transit Clearance relating to SH16. The current system works well but team captains’ must pay particular attention to the lead time required; which in some cases can be up to eight weeks. The SH team captains’ meeting takes place on 28 Sep 16 to allow enough time for units and individuals to submit their applications. Full clearance procedures can be found at Ref B.

**Transport**

10. **Exercise Officials’ Vehicles.** Each year to date there is a requirement to provide vehicles to transport the officials and Ex equipment to and from location in France. This year nine AWD vehicles and two Vans complete with snow chains and European Vehicle packs were required. The Ex Controller looked into the use of a coach to transport Officials to Serre Chevalier for SH16 but was too expensive and further the Coach Companies had little appetite to actually do the job. This year the Ex Controller cut both the stops at hotels on the outward and return journeys to save money.

**Medical and Duty Holding**

11. **Injury Reporting.** One serious injury on SH16 resulted in a soldier being airlifted off the mountain. Other minor injuries were covered by personal insurance. It is made clear in the SH Admin Instruction that it is the responsibility of all individuals and Team Captains to report any injuries that occur during SH. The Race Office Manager is well versed in accident and incident procedures and assists team captains’ with the process. This year the process was much improved with the Duty Holders being the Unit CO’s which meant that all Adjutants were informed of any accidents injuries.

12. **Backup.** All AF 510 reports are copied and kept by the Ex Controller. Additionally the Exercise Duty Occurrence Book (DOB) was in place which each Chief of Race annotated as an accident on their particular event.

**Participation Criteria**

13. **SH16 Participation.** SH16 was initially oversubscribed with entries for the Nordic competitions.

1. **SH Alpine.** All personnel who entered SH Alpine were accommodated. Indeed

several teams dropped out at the last minute.

1. **SH Nordic.** It was decided at the AWSA Seeding Meeting that there would be extra

funding given for thirty more competitors. This was taken up but again there were several last minute drop outs which took our numbers down to the original three hundred. Unfortunately this resulted in seven apartments being empty for the duration of the Ex. After the Ex Controller contacted the CO’s directly it was discovered that the CoC were not in the loop regarding their teams exit from the competition; this is a problem and needs to be addressed at the next AWSA Committee Meeting.

1. **Late withdrawals from SH16.** Attached to this PXR is a list of the units which dropped

out late and too late for other units/teams to enter. This must be addressed by the AWSA Committee and a solution found to curtail late withdrawals.

14. Clearly many Units/Team Captains had their admin in order and entries were in on time; others were still trying to enter as late as Dec 15 and even Jan 16; this is unacceptable and causes a lot of unnecessary work for the Ex Controller, Race Office Manager and Daniela who deals with all the accommodation in Serre Chevalier. Ensure entries are in on time for SH17 as it may well come down to a first come first served policy.

15. **SH17 Participation.** SH17 has the capacity to take 260 competitors for Alpine and 300/330 competitors for Nordic, this is non negotiable as funding is set aside for accommodation for this number.

16. **Future SH and PIPEDOWN (PD) Distribution.** Once all entries were in the AWSA Committee held a seeding meeting in order to ensure that units/teams were distributed fairly between SH and PD. This is imperative to ensure that all the teams get a fair chance of qualifying for the Army Finals.

**Funding**

17. **Unit Funding.** SH is an individual military training exercise. Units rely on authorisation for funding based on the details contained in the AEWAI; units then apply to their Fmn HQ using the 3CR/2CR process.

18. **Ex Funding.** In addition to the public funding grant allocated by the AWSA, funding is sourced from the ASCB, HQ FTC and entry fees; without this additional funding the Ex could not take place. A full record of expenditure for SH16 is available from the AWSA.

19. **Competitor/Unit Costs.** The AEWAI authorises the cost of facility charges and equipment to unit budgets but this is subject to affordability. The following costs are not covered by Ex funding:

1. **SH17.** The entry fee will remain at £25. The Alpine lift pass for SH17 will be provided

with Public Money.

1. **AWSA Membership.** 441 AWSA Memberships were collected from individuals at

registration, this was in addition to entry fees. Only 71 individuals were already paid up AWSA members, to take the AWSA fees from the SH entry fee would be unfair to those personnel/units who have their administration in order and paid in advance. Also there is no benefit to paying their membership early as the unit actually saves money by waiting to pay at registration.

**Armoury, Weapons and Duty**

20. **Centralised Armoury.** The centralised armoury was collocated with the Race Office which ensured that there were always more personnel than just the guard around. This works extremely well and it is strongly recommended for future exercises.

21. **Guard.** The guard consisted of three JNCO personnel, they worked on a two nights on, one night off and one day on two days off. This will change slightly for SH17 as more assistance is required in the Race Office, so the day shift will alter to: 1 day guard, 1 day clerical assistance, 1 day off. In total 210+ SA80s were kept in the centralised armoury for the duration of the exercise. Again this worked well and it affected the chance for the guard to get some down time and personal skiing in.

22. **Duty Field Officer (DFO).** Those Officials holding the rank of Lt Col and Major completed this duty.

23. **Duty Orderly Officer (DOO).** Those Officials holding the rank of Captain and Warrant Officer completed this duty. Daily tasks included armoury checks, silent hour check on the guard and being on call should there be any problems with soldiers in resort. An initial meeting with the Gendarmerie Major ensured that they were happy with our security and what they should do should they have any problems with soldiers.

24. **Duty Clerk.** This year due to the addition of some key officials (SQMS, MT Clerk, 2 x Clerks) it was possible to have a daily Duty Clerk to support the running of the Race Office out of normal working hours should it be required by the DFO or DOO.

25. **Duty Driver.** This duty was another new addition for SH16 to support both the DFO or DOO should they require transport in order to carry out their duties. All personnel not required for DFO, DOO or Duty Clerk were required for Duty Driver.

26. **Daily** **Duty Timings.** After SH15 it was decided that it was impracticable to have officials on duty for 24 hour periods. SH16 saw officials on duty signing on at 1700hrs and signing off at 0800hrs the following morning. All duties during the hours of 0800 and 1700hrs were carried out by the Race Office Staff. This works very well and will be carried forward to SH17.

27. **Armourer.** The armourer for SH16 was allocated by DSG Donnington who also doubled up as part of the Range Team/Official.

28. **Biathlon Rifles.** All units are reminded that rifles are to be returned via unit QMs by **NLT 31 Mar 16**, in order to ensure that all weapons receive a full service and are ready for issue next year. There are **no** exceptions to this requirement. Any bills for deficiencies/damages will be raised and issued through the military system.

**Terrorist Threat**

29. Due to the terrorist attacks on Paris in 2015 it was deemed that SH16 would require some way of dealing with an attack in and around the Serre Chevalier Resort should the unfortunate happen.

30. **Ex Lockdown.** The Ex Controller devised Ex Lockdown which could be easily put into action should a terrorist attack happen during SH16. In short the Race Office would have been transformed into an Ops Room with the Ex Director taking Command of the situation. All Team Captains would have been contacted to ensure that they knew the whereabouts of the rest of their team and then stay in that location until notified that the threat had gone or been dealt with.

31. **Lessons Learnt.** A better way of contacting the Team Captains is required. The use of ‘Whats App’ could be a way as Ex Snow Lion used the App very effectively to communicate with all team captains. It was also noted that the Race Office would require more mobile telephones in order to carry out such tasks.

**General.**

32. **Team Administration and Discipline.** In general the execution and conduct of the teams was of a high standard; well done to you all for keeping the good name of the Army intact. Team Captains are once again reminded that SH is a military exercise and choosing to ignore rules and regulations put in place to ensure our continued safety and the good name of the Armed Forces will result in disciplinary action being taken against them. You are all reminded that units could be RTU’d from the exercise should they choose to flaunt with the rules and regulations.

33. **Officials.** SH relies on officials who continue to volunteer their services year after year. We whole heartedly thank you for your time, expertise and the motivation and passion that you give to both the competitors and the competition in general. SH is always on the lookout for new officials, no previous experience is required just a passion to see our soldiers and officers competing in sport. Anyone interested should contact the undersigned in the first instance. Details are also available at Ref A.

**Summary**

34. SH16 was a great success; the lack of snow early in the season had a big impact on both the Alpine and Nordic venues. The depth of snow for Alpine was very poor which meant that the majority of racing was held in Monetier and restrained to just one slope, fortunately several good falls of snow during the Ex ensured that we moved venue back to the Clot Gautier for the last two days for some excellent Downhill events. Nordic was also affected and again all skiing was in Monetier for the majority of time but again the snow fall during the Ex ensured that we were able to use the range for the Biathlon events. Participation in SH remains impressive with a very good spectrum of competitors truly embracing the ‘One Army concept’.

*Original Signed*

R M YOUNG

Maj

For GOC