

## **CS, Denmark**

The overriding topic for Europe now is the coronavirus-pandemic. Of course, the outbreak of COVID-19 has also had a great impact on the Danish Defense personnel.

On March 11. 2020, the Danish government decided to take several serious measures in the attempt to minimize the further spread of the coronavirus by sending home all non-essential public-sector employees and having them work from at home to the widest extent possible.

For the Danish Defense, this meant sending a big part of the personnel home. However, soldiers still carry out critical and operational tasks, including the guards at the Royal Residences and the strategic reserve, which is designated to support the police.

Because of the current situation Danish Military Organisations including the Central Association of Permanent Defence Personnel, CS, accepted temporary changes in e.g. guard duties, vacation days involved, and requirements for rotation during international service. As well as retention of selected staff with special tasks. E.g. conscripts who are part of the Emergency Management or guarding the royal residencies, and Search and Rescue teams from the Navy and the Airforce.

From both the Danish Defense and professional organizations such as CS, there has also been a great focus on the employees who must be sent to international service or returned from there. We are very aware of whether there should be a quarantine period after returning home and when the soldiers arrive at the mission, and here we also look at the local rules that apply in the country where the soldiers are sent to e.g. Afghanistan, Iraq and Mali.

In the context of the entire Covid-19 situation, we at CS have been keenly aware of the importance of close and informative communication between us and our members. We have chosen to use our digital platforms as much as possible for direct communication, where we have been able to bring the latest updates on agreements, rights, consequences and opportunities.

Our professional staff have been -and are available via mails and phone calls, and CS is also in close dialogue with the defense management. We have also sent out several information via direct mail (CS Newsletter) to our union representatives, so that they have the best opportunity to answer the questions members may have locally. CS has also drafted several questions and answers posted on our website and sent to our union representatives. This very intense communication has meant that CS has received great support and understanding from our members for the agreements and decisions CS has made in relation to the whole situation.

- We are all very aware that we are in a completely unique and unfamiliar situation that requires special care, action and cooperation across organizations, employer, past routines and tasks. But at the same time, it is also important for CS that we do not compromise on the health and safety of our members, and that together we come through this difficult time. Denmark is in a very special situation, and of course we would like to help the community get started again, says Jesper Korsgaard Hansen, Chairman of the Central Association of Permanent Defence Personnel.