

The Royal Engineers Association

(Registered under the Charities Act 1992)

Patron: HER MAJESTY THE QUEEN



All correspondence to:

The Controller
RE Association
Brompton Bks
CHATHAM
Kent
ME4 4UG

Telephone: 01634 822407
Fax: 01634 822394
Website: www.reahq.org.uk
Email: info@reahq.org.uk

REA/A/1/3

29 November 2011

Chairman REA
Controller REA
All Deputy Group Directors

MINUTES OF THE 18th MEETING OF THE RECRUITING COMMITTEE HELD AT THE UNION JACK CLUB, LONDON, ON THURSDAY 20th OCTOBER 2011

Present

Mr P Lund
Lt Col (Retd) J Rawlings
Lt Col (Retd) J McLennan
Lt Col (Retd) J Hawley
Maj (Retd) R Macgregor MBE
Maj (Retd) P Bain
Mr E Lowbridge

Chairman and London Group
East Anglia Group
HQ REA
North West Group
Scotland & NI Group
South East Group
North Midlands Group

In Attendance

Lt Col (Retd) N A Jordan

D Con and Secretary

Apologies

Maj (Retd) B Henderson
Mr G Scarborough
Lt Col (Retd) F Holman OBE
Mr J Viney
Mr A Dixon

South Wales Group
Central Southern Group
South Midlands Group
North East Group
South West Group

1. The Chairman welcomed members to the 18th meeting and thanked those present for their support. He noted that apologies had been received from those listed above. He advised the Cttee that he would have to leave the meeting early in order to attend a planning meeting for the Festival of Remembrance. The Controller agreed to take over the chair at the appropriate time

ITEM 1 – TO CONFIRM THE MINUTES OF THE 17th MEETING

2. The Cttee agreed that the Minutes of the 17th meeting were a true record of the proceedings. The Chairman signed the Minutes.

ITEM 2 – MATTERS ARISING FROM THE 17th MEETING

3. Paragraph 12. The Controller updated the meeting regarding voluntary contributions from TA personnel in lieu of Payroll Giving (DPS). He said that a system was now in place whereby RETA personnel could make contribution to the RE Central Charitable Trust (RECTT) and thereby benefit from the activities supported by the RECTT. These included sports, adventure trg and Life Membership of the REA. The D Con advised Cttee members that a People Policy Note (PPN 11.01) had been issued by HQ EinC(A) that provided full details of the scheme. He added that he would provide copies of this PPN 11.01 to all Cttee Members.

Note: PPN 11.01 emailed to all Cttee members on 25 October 2011

4. Maj Macgregor said he was still prepared to visit Chilwell to discuss the possibility of signing up RE TA personnel to the DPS. The D Con said that he hoped that RE TA units would be reacting in a positive manner to the PPN 11.01 scheme whilst in barracks in the UK, and that trying to sign up RETA personnel during the mobilisation phase would create difficulties. The Chairman agreed with the D Con. He asked that all members with connections to RE TA units remind their TA Gp Directors of the PPN 11.01 scheme and encourage them to 'sell' the DPS idea to unit members.

5. Paragraph 12 – The D Con wrote to all RCMOs on 22 March 2011 asking for their assistance; a Welcome Pack was included. All but three had responded positively and follow up action on these three units by the Regt Col had taken place. All RE personnel leaving the Corps on Discharge or Termination should now be completing Membership Update or Membership Application documentation as part of this process.

6. Paragraph 16 – Bookmark initiative; completed. The D Con said that the second tranche of bookmarks had been procured and distr. No further action.

7. Paragraph 19 – It was considered that the existing Awareness CD needed updating and some comments had been received from members. However, due to other initiatives to be considered at this meeting and the possibility of funding them, the Chairman considered it appropriate that the update of the Awareness CD be considered in the Financial Year 2012.

8. Paragraph 21 – The 500 CD's containing the approved advert had been received. The covering letter had not yet been finalised but the Controller said he would ensure this was finalised without further delay.

Action: Controller

9. Paragraph 22 - Lt Col J Hawley (North West Gp) said that he was unable to secure a donated poster from Chip Wood. He explained that Chip Wood was no longer a freelance artist but self-employed and contracted to provide all his work to a third party. No further action.

10. Paragraph 26 – Maj R Macgregor said he was yet to make enquiries regarding the carrying of free advertising by Scottish football clubs in their match programmes. He said it was still work in progress.

Action: Maj R Macgregor (Scotland & NI Gp)

11. Paragraph 27 – The Chairman said that laser imaging was not quite as expensive as he had expected. To keep costs down, it would be necessary to ‘share’ a projection site. The biggest problem would be finding a suitable venue for projection, one that would provide exposure of the REA message to a well-suited audience. He said it was still work in progress.

Action: Chairman

12. Paragraph 28 – Major R Macgregor said that he had made contact with the organiser of the Edinburgh Tattoo. He said he would be discussing the possibility of laser projection with him at a later date. Still work in progress.

Action: Maj R Macgregor

13. The Deputy Controller had been in contact with Maj Chris Fowke who is involved with organising the Sapper Rugby Bar at Twickenham for the Army v Navy match. The D Con said he had asked about the possibility of the REA having some sort of publicity on the wrist straps that must be worn by all those attending the Sapper Bar. As yet there was no definitive way ahead. Still work in progress.

Action: D Con

14. Paragraph 30 – It was proposed that an additional £10K be requested in the 2012 budget to meet the expected costs of 2012 Recruiting and Centenary initiatives. The Chairman asked the Controller if an increase in the Recruiting budget had been successful. The Controller replied that extra money would be made available for Centenary events but not specifically for the Recruiting Cttee.

ITEM 3 – BUDGET REPORT

15. The D Con presented the budget report, a copy of which is at Annex A. Other than T&S claims for the current Cttee meeting and charges for the hire of the meeting room, there were no other known commitments against the budget. The Budget Report was accepted.

Proposed – Mr E Lowbridge (North Midlands Gp)

Seconded – Lt Col J McLennan (Controller REA)

ITEM 4 – CONTACT WITH THE SERVING SOLDIER

16. The D Con wrote to all RCMOs on 22 March 2011 asking for their assistance; a copy of the letter is at Annex B. In addition to those listed on the Distribution, the staffs dealing with discharges and terminations within 1 and 3 RSME Regiments has also been contacted. The majority of units listed have replied in a positive manner. To date HQ REA has received 33 membership applications or updates from units. The Controller said that it was early days yet but the process seemed to be the best way ahead for maintaining contact with those leaving the Corps.

17. The D Con said that the REA presence on Facebook was proving very popular.

ITEM 5 – RECRUITING INITIATIVES

18. Ted Lowbridge (North Midlands) suggested that beer mats could be produced to carry the REA message. The idea was well supported by Cttee members. There was much discussion regarding the graphics and whether or not there should be some cooperation with Shepherd & Neame, the brewers of Sapper Ale. It was agreed that the following proposal be tabled.

“To produce a quantity of beer mats with a Sapper Ale design on one side and the ‘free’ REA advert on the other. Cost not to exceed £750.

Proposer: Lt Col J Hawley (North West Gp)
Seconded: Maj P Bain (Central Southern Gp)
Carried

Action: Controller

19. Distribution of the beer mats will include regular RE units, TA centres, TRBL clubs, messes and pubs.

Note: The Regt Col has negotiated with Shepherd and Neame on our behalf and they have agreed to produce 50K beer mats at no cost. The design on one side will be an adapted colour version of the REA 'free' advert; the other will be a Sapper Ale graphic.

20. Maj R Macgregor put forward an idea suggested by CO 71 Engr Regt (V). The CO had visited an RAF base and saw, attached to the perimeter fence by the exit, a large banner prompting its readers to join an RAF organisation. He thought that a similar REA advertising banner could be produced. The advert would be aimed more at the serving soldier if shown inside a base, although if it was placed outside the base then the public, and hopefully former sappers, would be the audience. There was plenty of support for this idea and much discussion about the distribution of such a banner. The Controller suggested that as a minimum, a banner for each group area (11) would be useful. In an ideal world the banners could be passed around units within the group area; members agreed with this.

21. It was proposed that:
"A minimum of 11 banners be procured at a cost not to exceed £1000. More banners should be procured to bring the total cost to £1000"

Proposed: Maj R Macgregor (Scotland & NI Gp)
Seconded: Lt Col J Hawley (North West Gp)
Carried

Action: D Con

22. Mr Peter Lund excused himself in order to attend a security meeting for the RBL annual Festival of Remembrance. The Chair was handed over to Lt Col J McLennan.

23. Ted Lowbridge suggested that the telephone number on the REA Information Card be deleted from future print orders, leaving a space for branches to enter their own contact number. There was some disagreement on this. It was pointed out that:

- The telephone number was a dedicated line with answerphone available for use 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.
- The Card was part of a national recruiting initiative, not a local branch initiative.

24. It was also thought that writing a phone number on the Card would project a less than professional appearance, and that some branches would not take the time to write legibly their contact number on 100's of Cards. It was agreed that the Card would remain in its present form.

25. Maj R Macgregor suggested that the REA might take advantage of the 2012 National Armed Forces Day to be held in Plymouth. The D Con said he would contact the South West Group Secretary and ask if they are planning to do anything, and if not, then ask him to encourage some of the South West branches, with help from the Regt, to run an REA recruiting stand at the event location.

Action: D Con

ITEM 6 – ANY OTHER BUSINESS

26. Maj B Henderson (South Wales) had written to the D Con to request a change in the start time of the Recruiting Meeting from 1130 hrs to 1200 hrs or later. He said that without staying in London the night before, he would find it difficult to make the current meeting start time. The Cttee discussed the impact a later time would have on those attending the meeting. The Chairman said that many of those attending the meeting would be constrained by return journey train times. There was agreement on this. It was generally accepted that a start time of 1200 hrs should be adopted to assist those who found it difficult to arrive for a start time of 1130 hrs.

27. Maj R Macgregor (Scotland & NI) asked whether the REA should be involved in the Army Rumour Service (commonly known as ARRSE). The D Con advised that although a member of Army Rumour Service he did not have the time to monitor the site for REA matters that might benefit from his attention.

ITEM 7 - DATE OF NEXT MEETING

28. The date of the next meeting will be 8 March 2012. The meeting will be held in the Lawrence Room, Union Jack Club, London commencing at 1200 hrs. Coffee and tea will be available from 1130 hrs.

29 November 2011

Secretary/Deputy Controller

Minutes Approved

Date

Chairman

Annex:

- A. Budget Report 2011
- B. Letter to RCMOs

Recruiting Budget for January – September 2011

Expenditure

Item	Amount	Remarks	
Travel Expenses	£482.79		
Meeting Room	£78.80		
Bookmarks	£594.00	Second tranche	
Welcome Envelopes	£878.40		
CD Replication for Advert	£468.00		
Total Expenditure	£2501.99		A

Income

Item	Amount	Remarks	
Recruiting Budget for 2011	£5000.00		
Total Income	£5000.00		B

Balance Remaining at end September 2011 (B-A)	£2498.01
------------------------------------------------------	-----------------

From: Lieutenant Colonel (Retd) N A Jordan - Deputy Controller

The Royal Engineers Association

(Registered under the Charities Act 1992 and a charity registered in Scotland)

Patron: HER MAJESTY THE QUEEN



All correspondence to:

The Controller
RE Association
Brompton Bks
CHATHAM
Kent
ME4 4UG
Telephone: 01634 822407
Fax: 01634 822394
Web site: www.reahq.org.uk
Email: info@reahq.org.uk

REA/A/1/3

All Corps RCMO's

23 March 2011

ACTIVATING REA MEMBERSHIP FOR THOSE LEAVING THE CORPS

Background

For the last 9 years, we at HQ REA have been searching for ways to contact all ranks leaving the Corps on Termination or Discharge in order that they may activate their Life Membership of the REA, and that we can obtain a long term civilian address to maintain contact; we have had very limited success.

Currently, we are advised only of the military address of those leaving the Corps up to six months before they leave. Using this contact information, we have been sending out mailshots inviting addressees to activate their membership or update their contact details. This has produced very limited responses for a number of reasons; I suspect that chief among the reasons is that REA membership activation is not seen as the crocodile nearest the Termination/Discharge canoe. We need to find another way of reaching all ranks that are leaving the Corps and encourage them to be part of the wider family of the Corps, the REA.

With this in mind, I believe an opportunity has arisen. It is understood that Termination/Discharge paperwork for those leaving the Corps is handled at unit level by the RCMO; it would appear advantageous for RCMO's to process REA membership activation at the same time. To this end, I conducted a straw poll with three RCMO's to discover whether or not they had the will and the time to provide this assistance; all were very positive and indicated that they would be most willing to process REA membership applications.

For the vast majority of the Corps, membership of the REA is free; this is due to their contributions to the Day's Pay Scheme (DPS). Those who have never given to the DPS will need to pay a membership fee of £36, but that is something HQ REA will deal with.

Requirement

I am writing to you all to explain exactly what would be involved in providing this assistance to the REA, and then to ask you if you would be willing to assist.

The enclosed folder contains a number of items, some of which I will refer to in this letter:

- Flag A – REA Membership Application Form
- Flag B – REA Membership Update Form
- Flag C – Welcome to the REA Envelope containing:
 - Welcome letter from the Controller REA
 - REA Membership Application Form
 - REA Membership Update Form
 - REA Information Flyer
 - REA Lapel Badge
 - REA Contact Card

Essentially, what we are seeking is:

- Completion of the REA Membership Form (Flag A) with the applicant providing a civilian address.
- or
- Completion of the REA Membership Update Form (Flag B) with the applicant providing a civilian address.
- and
- The completed Membership Form and a passport sized photo sent to HQ REA by the RCMO.
- or
- The completed Membership Update Form sent to HQ REA by the RCMO

Key to this process is that completion of the Membership Application Form or Update Form should occur at the same time Termination/Discharge documentation is carried out – hopefully in the presence of the RCMO. If the ‘leaver’ is allowed to take the Forms away for completion, they are unlikely to see the light of day again and we return to square one.

Suggested Procedure

- RCMO gives the ‘REA Welcome’ envelope to the ‘leaver’.
- RCMO determines whether or not the ‘leaver’ has already activated REA membership

How?

- If the ‘leaver’ has an REA photo ID Card then they have already activated their membership and there is no need for a Membership Application Form to be completed. The ‘leaver’ should then be asked to complete an REA Membership Update Form (Flag B).
- If the ‘leaver’ does not have an REA photo ID Card then a Membership Application Form should be completed.
- RCMO oversees completion of the appropriate Form ensuring that a civilian contact address, and not a military one, is provided.
- RCMO sends the completed REA Membership Application Form, with a passport sized photo of the applicant, to HQ REA.

or

- RCMO send the completed Membership Update Form to HQ REA. No photo is needed for Update Forms.

Document Support

HQ REA will provide the necessary documents to RCMO's by post. This will include a stock of filled 'Welcome to the REA' envelopes. Any other REA documentation identified by the RCMO as useful will be considered and provided by HQ REA. There is no requirement for RCMO's to be involved in any financial transactions whatsoever.

Finally

Seen in isolation, what I have proposed seems quite simple to put in place, but I am very aware of the already considerable amount of work that falls to your office. However, I would ask that you consider my request and let me know ASAP whether or not you are able to assist the REA.

With tongue firmly in cheek, may I suggest that if you personally have not activated your REA Life Membership, you take advantage of this opportunity to do so in order that you might discover how little effort is required to complete the process?

If you have any queries I will be only too happy to discuss them with you; a telephone call would probably be best. Alternatively, you can email me at the following address:

deputycontroller@rhgre.co.uk

Thank you for your anticipated support, I look forward to hearing from you soon.

Distribution:

Removed for Sy reasons

Enclosure:

1. REA Documents Folder (only on snail mail version)