

ST. JOHN ASSOCIATION AND BRIGADE
2020 ANNUAL REPORT (in brief)

I. Our Identity

We are in Cyprus since 1926 and operate under the Law on Charitable Institutions 104(I) 2017 and on the basis of our new Constitution of 2003. As a movement we aim at the encouragement of every humanitarian and charity project for the mitigation of human suffering and the promotion of the overall health of the public without any discrimination, social, racial or other. This is why our logo is "In the Service of Humanity".

The Cyprus St. John Association and Brigade (hereinafter the Brigade) is affiliated with the Order of St. John which along with Priories and Associations, presents itself in 42 countries all over the world; also it is a member of the european organisation Johanniter International (JOIN) based in Brussels. Members of JOIN are 16 national voluntary organisations from an equal number of European countries as well as the Jerusalem Eye Hospital.

II. Our Organizational Structure

The authority that defines the objectives, modus operandi, and generally any matter relating to the Order is the Executive Committee, which is composed of six (6) Commissioners with the right to appoint up to four (4) additional non-voting members. The Executive Committee for the year under review as follow:

Mr. Panos Koutourousis
Mr. Andreas Chimarides
Dr. George Pantelas
Mr. Andreas Skotinos
Dr. Andreas Tanos
Dr Panos Constantinides

The following were appointed as Members of the Committee:

Dr. Anna Nouska (till 4 June, 2020)
Mr. George Florides
Dr. Petros Matsas
Mrs E. Georgakaki (as from 30 January, 2020)

Along with the Executive Committee there are two collective bodies: *The Advisory Body*, which addresses broader policy issues and which performs an essential role in the selection process of the members of the Steering Committee, and the *Education Committee*, which addresses issues affecting the educational activities of the Order.

Ladies Christiana Nicodemou Gregoriou and Skevi Thoukididou (till March 2020) were the Administrative Staff.

III. Our Contribution

The coronavirus pandemic had indelible marks on the Brigade and more profoundly on its activities. The negative repercussions were not only envisaged on the training and voluntary activities but were extended on its finances as well. The period March to May and December of 2020 presented virtually no activities.

The Executive Committee had only 4, compare to 7 for 2019, meetings in the year under review, whilst one which was scheduled for December was cancelled. Main topics dealtwith were:

- the in-depth examination of the legal proposals of the Ministry of Health regarding first aid and defibrillation, and subsequently the submission of our views; to this end we let the Ministry know the people who will participate in the relevant working group;
- the development and constant updating of the protocols adopted as a result of the pandemic; these protocols are fully observed when training courses were in place;
- the adoption of a plan along with the Cyprus Licencing Authority, the Deputy Ministry of Tourism, the Cyprus Chamber of Commerce and Industry, the Hermes Airport Authority and the Cyprus Police the aim being to organise crash courses for the Professional Taxi Drivers. Among the subjects to be taught is first aid and the Brigade was to provide the needed input at no cost; unfortunately this activity has been postponed, again as a direct consequence of the coronavirus.
- the opening of an account with the Hellenic Bank.
- the approval of the Annual Report and the Audited Accounts for 2019. It is noted that our auditors are as from 2019 the International Audit Firm BakerTilly.

The negative effects of the pandemic have been very profound on the training activities of the Brigade. Compared to 2019 there has been a reduction in the number of people trained by 38,94 %, i.e. from 1592 to 972; also the courses organised were down to 126 from 170, i.e. a reduction of 25,3 %. Reading through these figures somebody can conclude the lower average number of trainees in per course.

A second feature which must be identified is that the greatest reductions were observed in those courses for which there exist legal provision i.e. the Emergency First Aid at Work, with or without Defibrillation, the Automated External Defibrillator and the First Aid at Work; this is a clear sign of the unfavourable consequence the pandemic had on the economic activity of the country.

The district activities presented as well a downward trend. Two Districts, Paphos and Famagusta presented no activity at all, whilst Larnaca for the first time outnumbered Limassol in terms of number of courses organised; 34 compared to 26; at the same time however Limassol exceeded Larnaca regarding people

trained, 229 vis-à-vis 215. A silent feature in this respect is the limited teaching space that is available in Larnaca, which combined with the spatial prerequisites of the pandemic, led to the initiation of courses with lower numbers of trainees.

The same gloomy picture appears with respect to the Independent Brigades where a reduction is observed in (i) the number of people trained in first aid, 2511 down to 1045, and (ii) the courses organised, from 234 to 105. The greatest reductions were observed in the case of the Cyprus Police Force and the Electricity Authority of Cyprus. Exception to the above is the S.B.A Police where a marginal increase was presented. It is interesting note that there have been cases where no training activity at all was observed although detailed preparatory measures have been adopted.

The (i) drop of the number of students of the Private Secondary Schools attending first aid (from 174 to 44), (ii) cancellation of an upgrading seminar intended for first aid instructors, and (iii) abandonment at the last minute of an ab-initio course for new instructors concludes the unpleasant picture of the Brigade's activities.

IV. We and the Environment

It was imperative that the pandemic would have negative effects on our **Relations** with the **Public**, especially as regards new activities that had seem developed by the District Committees. Such activities included the delivery of lectures and the organisation of courses on first aid for the general public free of charge, the planting of trees on areas designated by the Forest Department, the helping out of persons in need, strengthening the cooperation with certain Municipalities, visiting hospitals during Christmas and hand out goodies to children accommodated there and finally strengthening the ties with the Government Department for Blood Donation. Albeit the above, the Limassol District Committee organised its annual carnival party whilst that of Larnaca had its annual blood donation campaign with great success. Nicosia seems to follow suit regarding blood donation.

On the field of **International Relations**, the Annual General Meeting of JOIN which was going to be organised in Limassol, was cancelled, again the reason being the pandemic instead a tele-conference was organised; the Brigade was represented by Mr Koutourousis.

Our contacts with the **International Office and the St. John Ambulance** continued on a productive and fruitful basis, whilst five (5) of our members have been accepted at the ranks of the Order, two of them directly as Officers this being due to their long and substantive contributions towards achieving the objectives of the Brigade.

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