

## **Christmas Hampers Overview**

The gift of a hamper or cheque to Airborne veterans and widows was a long-established tradition of the Airborne Forces Security Fund. Support Our Paras continues this tradition.

Hampers are purchased from Festival Foods Ltd based in Leeds. Festival Foods' hampers are delivered in a sturdy cardboard box by Parcel Forces or by their own delivery drivers anywhere in GB and Northern Ireland. The Channel Islands are a problem due to Customs declarations and clearing customs, so a cheque is recommended. We have never chosen a wicker basket or wicker hamper. The value of the hamper is currently £85 and £60 for the smaller hamper for the Chelsea pensions. These hampers are bespoke to us, and we can have more or less what food items we want. The price paid includes delivery. A few days before delivery, a recipient receives a postcard from Festival Foods saying a hamper is due to be delivered. Each hamper includes a Christmas card from Support Our Paras (supplied in advance by Natalie to Festival Foods). Festival Foods provide a good service, and their admin is excellent. There are occasionally problems of non-delivery or a lost hamper. Other Corps and Regiments use Festival Foods including the SAS Regimental Association.

## **August**

1. Festival Foods contacts RHQ to see if we would like contents quotes for the prices agreed by Support Our Paras trustees. This is currently £85 and £60 for the smaller hamper for the Chelsea pensions. The hampers are bespoke to us, and we can have more or less what food items we want. In past years the contents have varied between:

More basic items that several meals could be made from, and

Less basic goods and more Christmas treats.

**Action** – Agree contents of Hampers with Festival Foods

**By whom** – PRA Secretary

## **September**

1. Support our Paras' CEO writes (see letter) via the PRA to all PRA branch secretaries asking for their hamper nominations. We usually say 3 nominations per branch but are not too strict as it would be very difficult to choose one veteran over another. The recipient does not have to be in financial difficulties, just someone who the PRA committee/branch secretary feels would benefit from a hamper. Eligibility being the recipient must have proven Airborne service or a dependant of his, which usually means his widow/widowed partner. Requests for sons and daughters of deceased veterans, RAF veterans and friend of a PRA branch are all declined.

**Action** – Letter distributed to Exec Committee

**By whom** – PRA Secretary

**Deadline** – 15 November

2. In addition to PRA branches, nominations for hampers are made by the Welfare Team (Lisa and Laura), Haig Housing, Blind Veterans UK, and PRA HQ. Hampers are also sent to our Airborne veterans living in self-contained studio apartments in Stoll (Sir Oswald Stoll Mansions in the Fulham Road, London).

For those who are living in a residential care home, or where a hamper would not be appropriate a cheque can be given. Contact is made to military homes including; Royal Star, Garter Home, Queen Alexandra Hospital Home, Broughton House, Scottish Veterans Residencies to see if they have any PARA Regt or Airborne veterans.

**Action** – Contact the Welfare Team and military care homes to request names of PARA Regt/Airborne veterans

**By whom** – SOP Finance Team

**Deadline** – 15 November

### **October/November**

1. To raise funds towards the cost of the hampers Support Our Paras have previously ran a campaign on their website. The PRA has promoted the campaign via their website and in their newsletter.

**Action** – Run a promotional campaign on social media to raise funds.

**By whom** – SOP Head of Fundraising

### **Early November**

1. Support Our Paras sends each Airborne veteran in RHC a mini hamper of sweets, cake, biscuits etc. to the value of £60. This is allowed by the Trustees of the Royal Hospital. RHC is contacted prior to their visit from PRA in December to check the number of PARA Regt and Airborne veterans for the cash gift and mini hampers.

**Action** – Contact RHC to request names and number of PARA Regt Veterans

**By whom** – SOP Finance Team

**Deadline** - 15 November

**Action** - Purchase diary and calendar from the Airborne Shop for the RHC Pensioners

**By whom** – PRA Secretary

**Deadline** - 15 November

### **End of November**

1. Name and addresses for hampers are checked to ensure the nominee meets our criteria and their details are added to SCRM if they do not already appear. The names and addresses are then emailed (password protected) in list form to our designated contact Sophie Gidley at Festival Foods. We have a data sharing agreement with Festival Foods. A copy of the hamper lists is sent to the Finance Team so that the Festival Foods' invoices can be checked.

**Action** – Nominees names checked and once agreed sent to Festival Foods.

**By whom** – PRA Secretary, RHQ Para, SOP Finance Team

**Deadline** – 29 November

2. Once received the names provided by care homes for cheques are checked to ensure the nominee meets our criteria and their details are added to SCRM if they do not already appear. If the veteran qualifies a cheque and Christmas card is written and sent to the appropriate care home.

**Action** – Nominees names checked and once agreed cheques written and sent accompanied by a Christmas card.

**By whom** – PRA Secretary, RHQ Para, SOP Finance Team

**Deadline** - 29 November

3. Each hamper includes a Christmas card from Support Our Paras, this must be supplied in advance to Festival Foods. Once the deadline of 15 November is reached, and names are verified the Christmas cards must be written.

**Action** – Christmas cards written and posted to Festival Foods

**By whom** – SOP Admin

**Deadline** – 29 November

## **December**

1. RHC Pensioners receive a £25 gift card, Support Our Paras Christmas card, calendar and diary along with a smaller Hamper to the value of £60. For the PARA Regt veterans this makes the gift up to £85.

**Action** - Visit RHC to distribute £25 gift card, Support Our Paras Christmas card, calendar and diary to Chelsea Pensioners.

**By whom** – PRA Secretary

2. Hampers are distributed by Parcel Force or via PRA branches to those nominated.

**Deadline** - Mid December