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### **Sporting Activities of the Czech Armed Forces and their marketing potentials**

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Sporting activities of the armed forces are organised within “selective physical education”. This is, together with “compulsory physical education”, one part of a complex system of “service physical education”.

Selective physical education is characterised by its optionality and its “selectiveness” rests on the opportunity of each and every serviceman/woman to participate in such competition that suits him/her best.

The system of competitions consists of the following groups:

1. **ACR (Armed Forces of the Czech Republic) Championships**, sporting events in disciplines announced by ACR commands as preliminaries, i.e. starting at basic unit level through individual command levels to the ACR Championship. Participation in the next higher round is conditioned by victory in the previous rounds.
  - a. **Military Games – ACR Cups**, summer or winter military games, organised biennially (“Olympics”) – e.g. volleyball, tennis, five-a-side football, swimming, beach volleyball, down-hill and cross-country skiing etc.
  - b. **ACR Championships** – organised annually, aeronautical and army pentathlon, tennis of couples, football – over 35 years of age, service weapon shooting.
2. **International WINTER SURVIVAL and International SUMMER SURVIVAL** are competitions in which the competitors demonstrate, in particular, their professional skills gained in their day-to-day military training, military climbing, overcoming of natural and man-made obstacles, survival in field, orientation in terrain, long-distance marches with heavy burdens, swimming in natural streams in clothes with/without gear etc. These competitions are attended also by invited international competitors.
3. **ACR Open Championships** – organised annually, PE specialists may apply for participation of those competitors who want to do sport and to demonstrate their skills directly, i.e. without having to participate in championships of junior commands. E.g. climbing marathon on JAKUB Trainer, volleyball of mixed teams, rowing on CONCEPT Trainer, ice hockey, sport climbing etc.
4. **Competitions that are not announced by ACR commands** – are organised in individual garrisons based on their respective resources (sports fields either their own or contracted), traditions and interest of their servicemen/women.

The content and importance of some competitions and championships go beyond the ACR framework and, therefore, they are focussed rather on promotion of the military among the public (WINTER and SUMMER SURVIVAL). They are advertised in military and civilian press and on TV.

To financially cover all these competitions, ACR employ PE funds. No civilian funds are taken advantage of. Principally, the activities can be divided into:

**Activities of Military Nature**

- Basically, no marketing is employed (not possible).
- Some events that are attractive for media (such as Winter Survival or international NATO exercise) may make use of certain marketing potential.

**Activities of Military Top Level Sport (sport representation)**

- Within the defence department there is a lot of top level athletes who are positively accepted by media and the military takes advantage of this fact to promote the armed forces among the civilian public.
- International CISM competitions organised in the Czech Republic may be used as a marketing product, however they are not quite interesting for the media.
- A good marketing event is the announcement of the best military athlete of the Czech Republic or of some attractive sport disciplines (e.g. athletics) where military athletes rank among the best and can be seen in uniforms.