

**The Swedish Women's Voluntary
Defence Organisation (Svenska Lottakåren)**

is a non-party political, voluntary defence organisation that recruits and trains women to serve in civil emergencies and in Sweden's military defence. Every year "Lottas" perform roles in national and international operations. The Swedish Women's Voluntary Defence Organisation is the only female defence organisation in Sweden and is organized in over 100 local corps.



THE SWEDISH WOMEN'S VOLUNTARY DEFENCE ORGANISATION:

BEING A STAFF OFFICER



Box 2240 | SE 103 16 Stockholm
E-mail: info@svenskalottakaren.se | www.svenskalottakaren.se



The attraction of voluntary work

Carrying out voluntary work is part of a long-standing tradition in Sweden. Popular movements are deeply rooted in Swedish society and have been part of Sweden's infrastructure since the nineteenth century. Sweden's 200,000 voluntary organisations have approximately 32 million members. Around half of all Swedes carry out voluntary work, of which roughly the same number are women as men. The proportion of people involved in voluntary work has remained stable over the years. However, the proportion of women is increasing. The staff officer role which is attracting growing interest among volunteers is board membership. One explanation for this could be that working as a volunteer board member is viewed positively, and can be a useful extra on a CV.

New demands

Many organisations in Sweden are losing members, but this is by no means true of them all. Organisations in the areas of "identity and interests", "economics and ownership", "humanitarianism, peace and the environment" are growing. Our attitude to the way we want to become involved in organisations has also changed quite a lot in a short time.

People's interest in voluntary work is increasing, as long as the work is something that suits them at that particular phase of their lives. People are no longer lifetime members of organisations. Instead they pick and choose depending on what is going on in their lives and their personal interests. We used to join organisations because those around us expected us to. This is no longer the case. Today, expectations from a global and international perspective are involved to a greater extent when we are choosing which organisations to join.

A modern Swedish Women's Voluntary Defence Organisation rises to the challenge

"Lottas" are now facing more challenges and more opportunities. There are three key areas of change that demand new ways of thinking: the continued development of the Swedish Armed Forces, changes in voluntary organisations themselves and in commitment to voluntary work, and developments in the field of crisis management. We have risen to these challenges and are working to develop our organisation, our future role in society and the content of our training. This is where we need you – as a Lotta or as a committed coach and staff officer in the corps.

Training courses which coach groups and develop individuals

Staff officers are vital to the Swedish Women's Voluntary Defence Organisation. There are a range of roles open to staff officers, e.g. working as a project leader on a youth project, starting up a project developing activities for the corps or getting involved in corps management.

To be able to lead your corps' work, you'll need to be well equipped. You must have what it takes to manage the activities you and your corps want to carry out whilst exercising democratic leadership.

For this reason, the Swedish Women's Voluntary Defence Organisation provides thorough training courses solely for staff officers. These courses focus on democracy and human rights, your own personal leadership, the way you work in a group and how your group can best tackle the challenges your corps has to face. Not all courses are held each year, but they are all run at regular intervals.

Become a member of the Swedish Women's Voluntary Defence Organisation

Women of all ages who are registered in Sweden are welcome to join the Swedish Women's Voluntary Defence Organisation as member. As a member you have access to activities arranged by your local corps and courses open to all members.

Read more about our staff officer training at www.svenskalottakaren.se.