

Tattoo gives away £1 million to charity



The Royal Edinburgh Military Tattoo is itself a charity but they also give away some of their income to other charities. This year the total donation is the biggest yet as they have donated £1 million to charities in the UK, Australia and New Zealand.

This is double the amount donated last year and means that since the charity was set up in 1950 it has donated £9 million.

Half of the money will go to eleven UK-based Services and Arts beneficiaries, including: ABF – The Soldiers' Charity, The Royal Navy and Royal Marines Charity, The RAF Benevolent Fund, The Royal Commonwealth Ex-Services League, Combat Stress, Seafarers UK and the Venture Trust. An additional £500,000 will go to seven charitable causes in Australia and New Zealand.

The Tattoo had a record-breaking run in Wellington and Melbourne earlier this year. Over 34 days the 460,000 tickets sold brought visitors from more than 90 countries to see the military spectacle. The organisers say that the economic impact of the three shows in Scotland, New Zealand and Australia is more than £127 million.

Brigadier David Allfrey, Chief Executive and Producer of The Royal Edinburgh Military Tattoo, said: "We are delighted that our international audience continue to enjoy the Show both at home in Edinburgh and abroad. We strive each year to remain properly authentic – true to the values and standards of our individual and collective heritage and culture – while also looking to innovate in the production and in how we operate as

a business and as a charity. Although we have made sizeable and sustained charitable donations over many years, most people do not appreciate this important part of our business; it is one of our principal 'reasons for being'. The aim each year is to deliver the best Tattoo that we can and, if we can make a surplus, it is a huge privilege to be able to support those serving and retired of the Armed Forces and the Arts.

"Being able to contribute to the welfare of the men and women of our Armed Forces is incredibly important to us. The annual award of donations creates a real buzz amongst our Trustees and across the staff. This year has been particularly rewarding as we have also been able to make grants in Australia and New Zealand.

"Recent audience broadcast figures indicate the Edinburgh Tattoo was viewed by 194 million people at its peak, cementing its position and reach as a global events brand which is delivering exceptional results through music and pageantry to bring people together to celebrate their individual identities and differences."

Lord Thurso, VisitScotland Chairman, added: "We are incredibly lucky to have The Royal Edinburgh Military Tattoo in Scotland; every year it impresses us by bringing together people from all over the world, giving them the opportunity to showcase their talents and traditions on one of Scotland's best loved stages. It's a great feat for the Tattoo to now show its gratitude by offering some truly worthwhile charities this return and I am certain each individual who benefits will be extremely thankful."

Sue Freeth, Chief Executive of Combat Stress, said: "The Tattoo has been a generous supporter since 2000, donating more than £90,000 to support the vital work we deliver to veterans with mental health conditions including Post Traumatic Stress Disorder. During their treatment, these veterans have access to teams of clinical professionals, including psychiatrists,

psychologists and therapists and given the tools they need to recover and go on to lead fulfilled lives. We're enormously grateful."

2016 UK-based recipients include:

- ABF The Soldiers' Charity
- The Royal Navy and Marines Charity
- The Royal Air Force Benevolent Fund
- Army in Scotland Trust
- Edinburgh International Festival
- Seafarers UK
- Combat Stress
- The Royal Lyceum Theatre Company
- Royal Commonwealth Ex-Services League
- Venture Trust.

Recipients for 2016 donations in Australia and New Zealand represent the tri-service contribution to the Tattoo event, including veteran, benevolent and welfare organisations.