

Flashlight



The Newsletter of the Ministry of Defence Guard Service

Issue 40

MGS HQ Roadshows in the Regions



Summer 2011

MGS HQ Roadshows in the Regions



During a busy week in June, a small team from MGS HQ (David Wray, Marc Shreeve, Trevor McKinnon and John Bills) travelled round the country to give briefings to each Regions' managers. The briefings concluded with a Q&A session, and that material, along with the slides, will be available on the MGS Intranet.

The key message of the sessions was that the Department continues to be in difficult times, and there remains much uncertainty about the way ahead; but it is vital that everyone in the MGS continues to deliver the best professional service possible in the circumstances.

David gave a broad view of what is happening in the Department in regard to the appetite for security risk and, in particular, the possible implications for guarding. He explained his work for Director Business Resilience (DBR) and outlined the potential impact of PR11 measures on the MGS. The Department

continues to be in severe financial difficulties and the MDPGA must play its part in finding savings.

At the time of the Roadshow, consultation with Trade Unions on PR11 proposals was imminent, and David explained the consultation process. David also spoke about possible further measures in the PR12 years and beyond, emphasising that there will be a requirement to find further savings. He challenged the audience not to be an ostrich, hoping all of the changes will go away, but to face reality and positively engage in the process. Finally, David made it clear that there will remain a need for security within the MOD and a large unarmed guarding requirement.

Marc Shreeve's theme for his presentation was that despite all that is going on in the background, it is very much business as usual for the MGS. He stated that not only must the MGS continue to meet tasking as best as possible but it must continue to drive standards upwards in order to add value for the customer. He outlined various initiatives that are ongoing such as minimum staffing, CSO4 post mapping and the draft Operations Manual and the need to keep looking forward.

John Bills gave some guidance on how to construct a roster that meets the minimum staffing requirement even if that varies across the week, but also complies with both the Working Time Regulations and the Health and Safety Executive guidance on rostering. The intention is to provide a better work-life

balance for the MGS as well as a roster that is as healthy as possible.

Trevor McKinnon continued the improving standards theme by talking about the Continuous Improvement Programme. He outlined the successes, particularly of the Well Being audits, and the work that is needed to build on those successes. Finally he spoke about the new e-par system and asked for feedback where it can be clearly demonstrated that the new e-par is causing significant extra work.

The Roadshow presentations and the Q&A sessions that followed covered a lot of ground, of which the foregoing is a flavour. Just to remind readers again, the Q&A list, in which there are some more detailed questions and answers, will be published on the MGS website.





The Princess Royal commencing her tour of RAF Fylingdales accompanied by The Station Commander, Wg.Cdr.Martin Johnson, and the Station Security Officer, Sqn.Ldr.Ian Wright.



MGS Group Manager Adrian Cross is presented to HRH The Princess Royal.

RAF Fylingdales Welcomed The Princess Royal

By Adrian Cross,
Group Manager

RAF Fylingdales welcomed Royalty on Wednesday 9th March 2011. Her Royal Highness The Princess Royal formally opened the Station's new combined mess, which has been built to the highest standards of energy conservation.

Princess Anne arrived in the Queen's helicopter and after undertaking a grand tour of the early warning station, in lovely spring weather, met 100 of the Station's personnel before officially opening the new mess.

Babs is on the move!

By Simon Ruddick, CSO2

In December 2010 following a recent success with her D Band passport, Babs (Mrs Marie Harding) departs from the Foxhill Area Office to start her new appointment as the Group Manager for Flying Fox and PPA Warminster Road (Region 5 Area 1a).

Babs has served the Foxhill Area Office for 4 years and in that time she was involved in many projects. As my Admin Support Officer she was an absolute gem ensuring all administration was complete and processed on time. This former Land Lady has never been shy of hard work. Her "will do" attitude has also enabled her to support Mr Vic Christopher MBE with training related matters, her in depth knowledge of the subject that will now serve her well in the new post!



We all wish her well in her new appointment and we are very confident that she will carry on where she left off. She is also armed with her new and very expensive pen set which will help her map out her very bright future as a Group Manager!

Divisional Commander's Award for Fylingdales MGS



The winter conditions proved a test of MGS ingenuity.

In February 2011 Chief Superintendent R.J. Phillips N.E. Divisional commander presented a 'Divisional Commander's Commendation' to MDP/MGS staff at RAF Fylingdales, the citation reads:

'In recognition of the resilience and professionalism displayed during December 2010 to ensure that the security operation at RAF Fylingdales continued despite adverse weather conditions and the determination to transport key RAF personnel MDP / MGS Officers to and from duty to continue the support to the RAF Station Commander.'

This showed MGS Officers' dedication and determination to report for duty, often staying in emergency accommodation on Station. The Station Commander stated: "that ensuring essential staff were transported to and from the Station was a mission saver".



Adrian Cross, MGS Group Manager, receiving the award, on behalf of the MGS, from Chief Superintendent Phillips assisted by Region 2 MGS Regional Manager Mike Cairns.

A posting to a site of National Historical Importance

By Andrew Sargent
Kineton, Region 3

On a chilly day, that day being the 23rd October 1642 two enormous armies faced each other in the fields between Kineton and Edgehill in Warwickshire. Descending the great slope of Edgehill was the army of Charles Stuart the King of England, Scotland and Ireland, facing him were the forces of Parliament under the overall command of Robert Devereaux the Earl of Essex. What happened next was the first great pitched battle of the English Civil War, involving Cavalry, Infantry, Dragoons and Artillery. By the end of the day as the light began to fade both sides claimed a victory, but tactically it was a draw. James 2nd who was the Duke of York at the time estimated that 1500 were slain, upwards of 2000 wounded: Edgehill

was the first of many battles and campaigns that would tear the country apart in the mid 17th century.

On the 6th April 2010 I moved from 48 Sig Sqn Birmingham to JSCS Kineton, I took up the post of CS05 gate staff working at the various gates around the establishment. Whilst off duty during the summer months I can be found at various locations around the country re-enacting in re-created battles and skirmishes of the English Civil War with the Sealed Knot Society. At present I command a musket company of the Sir John Gells Regiment the Army of Parliament, however I still find it rather eerie when working at the Edgehill Sub



Depot, as this is the site where in 1642 Sir James Ramsey's left wing of the Parliament army had been crushed by the Cavalry charge of prince Rupert of the Rhine, the Kings nephew.

Every October as near to the 23rd as possible, the Sealed Knot Society are allowed access to Edgehill depot to pay their respects at a monument erected at the battle site. Here they lay wreathes and take part in a memorial service to remember the fallen.



The life-saving exploits of MGS Guard Tony Burgess, from Netheravon, have earned him a community award.

Nominated by Lt Col Chris Gosling, Tony won The Community Challenge Shield 2011 at the Tidworth Community Area Awards ceremony at The Wellington Academy, Tidworth in May.

Mr Burgess's interest in becoming a NHS First Responder began almost two years ago when he went to the assistance of a woman who had been savagely attacked by a dog near the entrance to Airfield Camp and had suffered a brutal head wound.

Quickly assessing the situation, he removed the animal and provided first aid whilst keeping her calm until an ambulance arrived to remove her to a hospital. Realising that if trained correctly, he could provide a potentially life saving service to the community, Tony undertook NHS First Responder training in his own time, often having to apply for leave from his job as a member of the MOD Guard Service and always at great personal expense.

To further qualify him and broaden his medical knowledge and abilities Tony also works voluntary shifts with the Wiltshire Ambulance Service.

Shortly after passing his First Responder course, Tony's first task was to attend to a young girl at Avon Valley College Durrington who had had a serious epileptic fit and was in danger of swallowing her tongue.

Being the first to arrive on the scene, Tony took charge of the situation and treated the casualty until the arrival of the paramedics. This was followed a while later by a call to the village public house where it was reported that a customer was feeling unwell. On arrival Tony diagnosed a heart attack, administered first aid, whilst providing information over the telephone to the emergency services ensuing that when the paramedics arrived they were fully briefed on the patient's condition. This action undoubtedly saved the man's life.

Tony Burgess Gets Community Award

Since then he has attended numerous medical emergencies and life threatening incidents of which some sadly have been quite traumatic and have not necessarily had the outcome one would have wished for.

Tony's own daughter has one very special reason to be thankful to her father. Towards the end of her pregnancy and in the early hours of the morning she unexpectedly went into what became a particularly difficult labour.

Tony was soon on the scene and remained throughout the birth to provide assistance to the mid-wife.

Although Tony has attended countless medical emergencies, there is one that stands out and amplifies his commitment to the local community and his desire to help those in need: On sick leave having just had quite a complicated hernia operation, Tony was returning home when he came across a very serious road traffic accident in which one vehicle had been severely damaged.

On assessing the situation and calling the emergency services, he realised that there was a woman trapped in the rear of the vehicle with an obvious neck injury which could result in paralysis if not isolated and treated correctly.

With total disregard for his own safety or personal discomfort from his operation, he climbed into the rear of the vehicle to provide first aid and comfort the injured passenger. He remained in the rear of the car providing reassurance while the emergency services removed the roof to extricate the injured woman.

It was only when the casualty had left the scene in the ambulance that Tony realised that his own wounds had opened and that he now required hospital treatment.

In his nomination citation, Lt Col Gosling commented: "Throughout, Tony has always demonstrated the highest degree of professionalism and care.....cool and calm, he treats everyone with respect and courtesy.

"For the last eighteen months since being qualified as a First Responder, Tony has sacrificed much of his own personal life in order to provide a rapid response to anyone in need of medical assistance within his area of responsibility. For every incident he attends there are many others where he has been stood down en-route.

"However, undeterred he selflessly waits for the next call whenever or wherever that might be. He is undoubtedly a pillar of the community. He asks for no reward or praise for his actions and is a worthy contender for this award."

Obituaries

Alan Matthews

It is with deepest regret that we have to announce the passing of Alan Matthews, Alan passed away unexpectedly on the 09th April 2011. Alan was a CSO4 within the MGS serving at the Minerva House complex at Swindon.

Alan joined the MOD as, in his words, "a real security guard", pre MGS, following his service in the RAF in which he served within the Motor Transport department, eventually reaching the dizzy heights of a HGV1 Driving Instructor.

Alan had many interests, one of his main passions was his love for the Belgian Shepherd Rescue association, Alan and his wife Sandra kept two beautiful Belgian Shepherd dogs and a Collie. The latter they would present at various dog shows.

Another passion Alan had was his cars and he was an active member of the "Volvo Performance Club" which has a website on which members of the club have posted some very nice comments about him.

Alan was a very straightforward individual who would, when making a comment, frequently "shoot from the hip" and I think it was his honesty that earned him much deserved respect from his work colleagues and staff alike. To coin a phrase, with Alan "you got exactly what it said on the tin".

Alan will be greatly missed by all who knew him, and our sincere condolences go to his wife Sandra. Allow me if you will to close on a jocular comment that was heard at Alan's funeral when someone said: "He could be a grumpy sod sometimes" to which the reply was "Yes he could, but he was our grumpy sod". Enough said.

John Diamond

Friends and colleagues at RNAD Coulport were shocked and saddened to learn of the sudden death of John Diamond on 27 June 2011.

John was a true 'Diamond Geezer', one of the nicest people you could meet and his tragic death at age 41 has stunned everyone who knew him.

John served with the MGS since Dec 1992, but it won't be the years of service he will be remembered for, nor his smart appearance or professional performance but he will be remembered for his good humour, his good company, and the good times he enjoyed with the members of his shift.

Most of all he will be remembered as a dedicated family man and our thoughts and condolences are with his four children and his wife, Anne Marie.



by
Clive Parfitt,
Group Manager

Richard Clive Casemore

On Sunday 13th March 2011, Richard Clive Casemore a dear friend and MGS colleague at DE&S Foxhill and the surrounding Bath sites, passed away following a long stay in hospital.

Richard joined the MGS at Foxhill on 2nd March 1998 and quickly became one of the strong characters with his wicked sense of humour, which was so sharp it was sometimes a Health & Safety issue!

Outside of work Richard was always on his Pig Farm tending all his animals, but never arrived at work in his wellies, Richard took great pride in the MGS uniform and always turned himself out to the highest standard.

Richard was a larger than life character who will be sorely missed by his family friends and work colleagues.

It was an honour to have worked with you and a real privilege to have known you. Richard will never be forgotten and our memories will be cherished forever.

Christopher Hodgson

By Brian Cropper, Blandford Group Manager

It is with profound sadness that we report the sudden death of Christopher Hodgson (Kit) from a heart attack on 4 June 2011. A much loved and respected colleague Kit had served with the MGS since its inception. His love of dogs fitted him perfectly for the role of a dog handler within the service, where his pride in his canine partners was apparent. Kit had served at Gibraltar Barracks Aldershot Garrison before moving to Blandford in 1994. He was a popular and loyal officer whose interest and curiosity led to him being a well read and knowledgeable individual. Kit is and will continue to be sadly missed by his colleagues in the MGS and all at Blandford camp. We extend deepest sympathies to his partner Jill, their two children and the wider family.

Operational Assurance Programme Coordinator (OAPC)

By Jonathan Baxter-Pye, CSO5,
JSCS Ashchurch Region 5

Since joining the MGS 5 years ago from HM Prison Service it has always been of interest to me to undertake additional tasks to supplement the day to day duties required merely to add a greater scope.

Therefore when the opportunity to act as OAPC for the unit arose and I was offered the position, I accepted gladly.

The position oversees the procedures and implementation of uniformity of documentation procedures within the unit and respective group as a whole. It is anticipated that eventually there will be uniform procedures throughout all areas and the five regions. The position is the first one established in the country here in Region 5.

In order to function, I am granted delegated authority in relation to the role. It will be the intention of the OAPC to audit a selected unit within the appropriate group and to note compliances and non compliances with procedures. Supervisors and managers are also requested to give full support and assistance to the audit, which will check that all units comply with NSI Gold Standard on a nationally recognisable system.

The main function is to assist the Group Managers with internal audits. Any Group Manager can call his OAPC to carry



out an audit at any time to ensure that there is full compliance.

The OAPCs of Region 5, Area 1b, hold meetings at different units once a quarter to ensure that they are 'On the ball' so to speak, and then discuss anything that was raised with their respective Group Manager.

It will be challenging work and I anticipate it to be a steep learning curve and will take time to coordinate fully but I am optimistic it shall prove worthwhile to the MGS in a higher rate of operational efficiency and in delivering a first class service to the customer.



Managers' Course June 20-24

Back row: Su Green, Jacqueline Bastable, John Hynd, Ann Kinnish, Paddy Brennan, Andy Cross.

Front row: Ailsa Scotland, Jan Davoren, Karen Christian, Marc Shreeve, Mo Anderson, Lil McGarrity.

Doggie Dorchester

By John Forster-Heatlie



On 18 May 2011, JSCS Ashchurch played host to a number of dignitaries on the Official Opening of the new Ashchurch Dog Section. The ribbon was cut by Lt Col Brett Duxbury, Ashchurch Head of Establishment, who declared the Kennel Complex, well and truly open. Before cutting the ribbon Lt Col Duxbury gave a very nice speech in praising the dogs and their handlers and emphasised the excellent work that the dogs do at Ashchurch.

The opening ceremony was attended by members of the MGS, DSG, Station Services, Defence Estates, Debut Services and a few of the contractors that had worked on the complex.

There is a long story attached to the kennel complex, that dates back to the floods of 2007, when the original position of the kennels were in a hollow, which resulted in the kennels being under four feet of water and the dogs having to be moved out into the sheds and the use of air transportable kennels being used to house them. George James (Kennel Manager) drew up some plans for the conversion of the old depot MGS lodge. This was discussed with the depot and at that time the project could not go ahead due to lack of funds and the possibility of the depot closing.

In May 2010, I was informed that the kennel complex had been given the green light. It was a rush to get the plans put through Debut and full drawings made and authorised. Meetings with Debut and Fred Humphries all went to plan and building commenced in October 2010, with a completion due for March 2011. Sadly by that time of the year the weather had changed and by the time it came to lay the concrete base for the kennels, we were under four feet of snow.

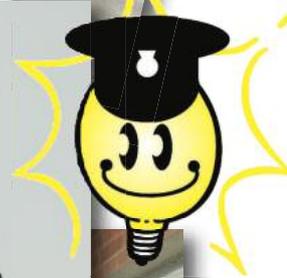
Hanson Contractor's then had a problem with the setting of the concrete base, which had to be lifted and re-laid. While the concrete saga was going on, Beard contractors were refurbishing the inside of the building.

The Kennel manager and I had a trip to Colerne, and with thanks to Rich Morgan, we had a good look over the new kennels there and received a few good tips from them on other things that we needed to order, which did not come as standard.

By December, we had temperatures down to minus 20 and this again gave problems to the concrete. In March, Broxap delivered and installed the kennels and completed the wiring, we then had a visit by the Dog Evaluation officer and on his inspection, we discovered that the concrete in the kennel open areas was turning to powder when rubbed. This had to be addressed by laying a 2 part epoxy resin, another delay.

March 23rd all systems good to go, but then another delay by the water company over problems with





the outside taps. Another four-week delay until a solution was found for that.

Finally on 4 May 2011 it was all systems go for the dogs to move into the "DOGGIE DORCHESTER" as it has been nicknamed by the depot staff. The dogs moved in on 5 May, they had been watching the complex grow and had been told by their handlers that this was their new home, as they were going past on patrols.

Since the move, reports coming back from the handlers are very positive in as

much as the dogs appear to be more contented and relaxed.

On behalf of the dogs and staff, we would like to pass on our thanks to all of those involved in the construction, and the DOGGIE DORCHESTER will be open for any visits.

Sandy MacCormick OBE



Sandy MacCormick, former head of MGS, was recognised in the New Year's Honours List and was awarded the OBE. He collected his award at Buckingham Palace on 28 June 2011. He is shown here accompanied by his wife Dawn and his two children Charlotte and Tom.





transported back in time. Quite often I get the same feeling myself, I'm sure I'm not alone in this experience – it seems to be an MGS thing! Prior to its closing and whilst having lunch in the Mess with Sandy MacCormick, Retired, he mentioned that he had been stationed in Tidworth as the Royal Marine liaison officer and had frequently had occasion to visit Tedworth House and sample its excellent fare.

I am pleased that the MGS will be able to maintain a foot on the ground at Tidworth House and play a part in a very commendable enterprise in the safe guarding of these brave men and women during their rehabilitation for integration back to a "normal way of life". After all they have served their country in those far flung parts of the world we constantly see on our television screens these days, sustaining debilitating injuries on the front line.

In fact during World War 2 the American President, FDR Roosevelt's, wife served hamburgers to the wounded American GIs who were housed there when it was a war time nursing home. Maybe Kate and Wills will be spotted in the local Tesco's stocking up for future BBQs, which might take place there, who knows!

I, and previous Group Managers, have for many, many years tried and failed to get the facilities for the MGS working there improved only to be told "No Money". I am glad to report to those of you who have visited the area, as well as those who work there, that we are overjoyed that we can finally say farewell to the "Box" which was the previous access control point and we now have more "Gucci" surroundings as befits the working in 21st as opposed to the 19th Century.

Personnel Recovery and Assessment Centre (Tidworth) – formerly known as Tedworth House Officer's Mess Tidworth

By JM Love MGS Group Manager



Help for Heroes (H4H) has taken over the historic Tedworth House in the

garrison town of Tidworth, Wiltshire and work has begun to turn the house into a recovery and assessment Centre for wounded Servicemen and women. The keys were handed over on the 18 February 2011 in a brief ceremony and work began immediately on the race to prepare the house to receive its first occupants in July.

In the first phase, 29 residents are due to move into purpose built, disabled friendly demountable buildings on the old tennis courts and will take part in their recovery training in the renovated house. By the spring of 2012, a new north wing, designed by classical architects Quinlan and Francis Terry, will

increase the capacity to 50 residents in superb adaptive accommodation as well as providing several rooms and flats for visiting families. There will be many more day residents using the house as it becomes a 'One Stop Welfare Shop'.

Tedworth House's Historic Link with the army began in 1897 when they bought the house along with 6618 acres and it became the centre of the new Tidworth garrison, although it retained its old spelling of the name. It was variously the residence for the local general, an Officers' Club and finally in 1978, an Officer's mess.

Tedworth House, previously guarded by the 'Grey Ghosts' who were then absorbed into the MGS, after its formation in October 1992, and are now, in 2011, part of the MDPGA carrying out the guarding tasks within Tidworth, Netheravon & Bulford Garrison on Salisbury Plain which is now the Biggest Military garrison in the UK with over 9,000 soldiers stationed there.

I personally have many fond memories of Tedworth House as this was where I started my career with the MOD in 1992 as a CSO5. The grandiose splendour of the house when there were the annual summer balls or Christmas parties made it more than just reminiscent of the 19th century and you felt you had been



Getting to know you

Continuing our regular look at individual MGS team members

NAME: Jacqueline Bastable
JOB TITLE Trainer
LOCATION Wethersfield



Where were you born?

Limavady, Northern Ireland.

Tell us about Your family?

I have 4 brothers and 4 sisters. My youngest brother, who is 38, is great and he works for the Ambulance Service in Northern Ireland. We had a big family get together in June, as my eldest sister is 60!

Where did you Spend your Last holiday?

Malta.

Where would You like to Travel in future?

Eastern and Oriental Express.

What is your favourite book?

The David Pelzer Trilogy.

Do you have a favourite quote or saying?

Build that bridge and get over it!

When you get the chance, how do you like to spend your free time?

Go for long walks in the countryside.

During your career, what would you consider as the most interesting job, and why?

When I was an Army Learning Centre Manager in Shackleton Barracks I worked with military, civil servants and dependants. This was a very rewarding job and I met lots of interesting people and had two brilliant members of staff, Heather and Kelly.

If your house was on fire and you could save one thing, what would it be?

A picture of me and my mum.

If you could invite two personalities to dinner, one male and one female (dead/alive, real or fictitious) who would you invite and why?

The male would have to be Jason Statham and the female would be Adele. Adele could sing in the background while I stare into Jason Statham's gorgeous Brown eyes.

Suppose I gave you £100,000 to spend on whatever you wanted what would you buy?

I would buy my brother's house as this was the house I grew up in and had so many happy memories.

What talent would you like to have?

I would like to be able to sing as I love music.

What do you most enjoy about your job?

The people I work with are fab and have made me so welcome and the craic is great. I'm learning the job at the moment but feel that it will be very rewarding once I get started.

“The people I work with are fab and have made me so welcome and the craic is great.”



Upavon MGS Roundway Down Walk

By John Mc Connell
BEM, CSO5

Mary Hutchings suggested it would be a good idea for some members at the Trenchard Lines Upavon MGS to go on a Team Building Exercise and that it would be a physical and demanding walk along the Roundway Down in the Devizes Area in Wiltshire.

John Dewar, Ian Terry and I volunteered to join Mary on the walk. We then all questioned Mary about the area she had chosen and she informed us that the battle of Roundway Down was fought on 13 July 1643, during the First English Civil war. A royal cavalry force under Lord Wilmot won a crushing victory over the Parliamentarians under Sir William Waller, who were besieging Devizes in central Wiltshire, which was defended by Lord Hopton.

Roundway Down and Oliver's castle are about 1.5 km (1 mile) north of Devizes and now form part of the North Wessex Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. It sounded interesting and we all agreed on a date for the walk.

On 7 September 2010 we arrived at Mary's house in Devizes and from there we travelled a short distance by car to the start of our walk or dander as they call it from where I come from in Northern Ireland. We were also accompanied by Mary's dog Pippa and John Dewar's dog Poppy.

The weather was in our favour, blue sky and beautiful

sunshine and off we went on our walk into the hilly terrain. I was not sure if we were properly equipped as everyone was carrying the bare essentials but I had my ruck sack with my emergency rations and spare items of clothing. As we progressed on the walk into the wooded area I could see John Dewar's eyes light up when we approached some blackthorn bushes.

John is renowned for making a good bottle of sloe gin and in this particular area there were thousands of sloes which is the dark fruit from the blackthorn Bushes. About an hour into our walk we came across a wooden bench on the footpath and as it was lovely weather and the sun shining down on us we decided to have a few minutes' rest.

This is where I opened my rucksack and to the surprise of everyone I produced a refreshing snack for all including a can of diet coke to wash it down. We continued on our walk and after about another one and a half hours we reached the end and then got into our transport and drove back to Mary Hutchings house and she made us a very welcome cup of tea and biscuits.

We all thoroughly enjoyed our walk and we put the world to rights on our way round and John Dewar has now found a location for replenishing his sloe supplies.

We returned to the Roundway Down on 11 November and our aim was to visit Roundway Hill and Covert. The weather situation was not good, strong winds and plenty of rain, however my expert weather man John Dewar assured me it would brighten up early afternoon (how wrong that statement was).

Once again we all met up at Mary Hutchings' house and it was decided that we would start our walk from there. Mary planned the route and we had no idea what terrain we would be travelling over. However after about twenty minutes things got much clearer and Ian Terry reckoned it was a stitch up job and asked between gasps when was it likely we would find a hill going downwards.

As we progressed things got easier but

the weather got worse and the visibility was poor. About three hours later we eventually reached the Roundway Hill and Covert and we could just about see the Millennium White Horse which is a feature built into the hillside.

Within the Roundway Covert woods are grassy areas where chalk-loving plants grow and wild insects, including butterflies, grasshoppers and bees, can be found. There are panoramic views extending from the vale of Pewsey to the east, and the northern edge of Salisbury Plain to the Avon valley and woodlands of the Bowood and estates to the north.

It was now snack time and we had no shelter from the bad weather but we all had a can of coke and a penguin (John D does not like the pink wrapping?) and

then continued with our walk and this is where I nearly had a heart attack when I saw a cap fly past me in the strong wind and Ian Terry following it down the hillside, glad to report Ian did eventually retrieve his cap.

After completing 8.6 miles we eventually arrived back in the village of Heddington. We made a visit to St Andrew's Church Memorial Garden and left a small Royal British Legion Cross as a mark of our respect to all the men and woman who died in all conflicts around the world.

We then returned to Mary Hutchings' house for a well earned hot drink and snack.



Message from the Editor

The Editor takes it for granted that any material received has been cleared through the relevant management chain and also that no information received is classified or commercial in confidence.

Deadline for the next issue of

Flashlight is **11th November 2011**. All articles must be in electronic format and all pictures must be in jpeg format in the highest possible resolution, not embedded within the article.

Please send entries to Mrs Annita McKay, Editor Flashlight, Rm 107 Bldg 1070, MGS HQ, MDPGA, Wethersfield, Braintree, Essex, CM7 4AZ, or email me on MDP-HQ MGS CUST AND RES FOCUS MNGR, or annita.mckay776@mdpqa.mod.uk.

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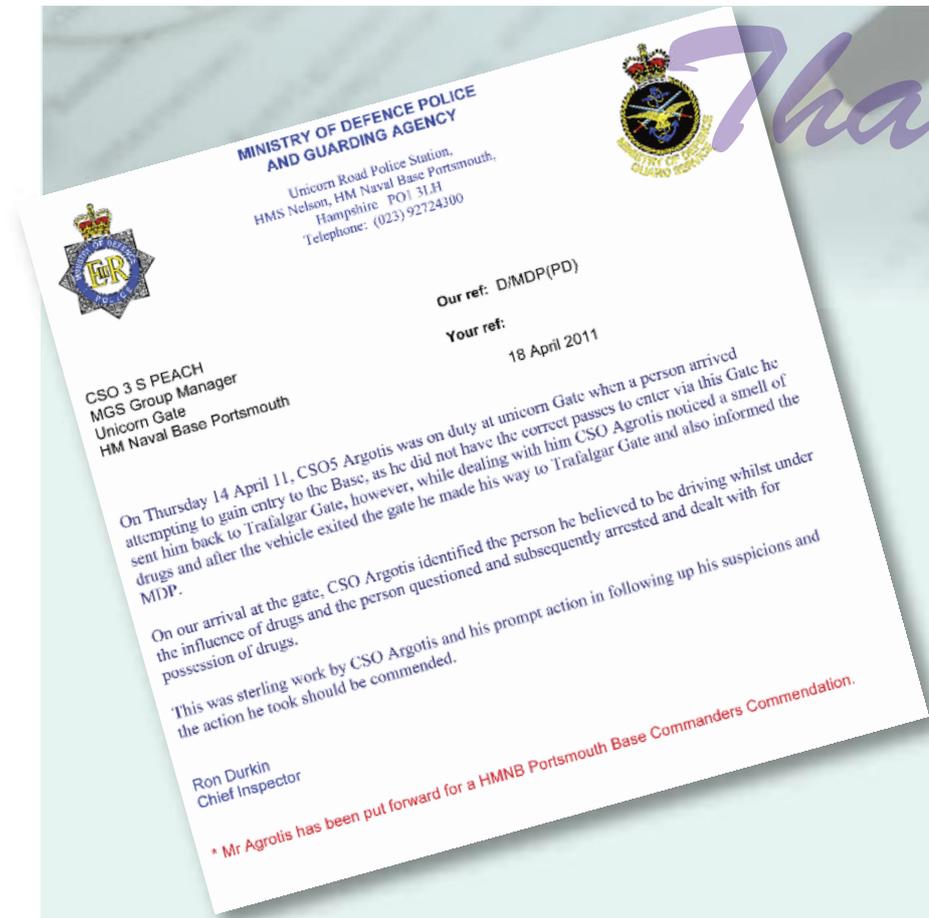
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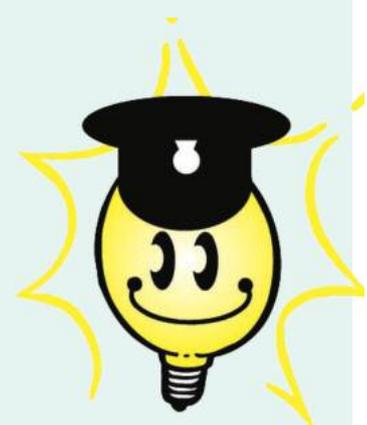
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Thank you



Letter from Martin Burke, CSO5:

Dear Editor

Recently our establishment HMNB Portsmouth, has decided to enforce the MGS mandatory instruction 037/10 (uniform). This came as quite a shock for myself and my fellow guards. Believing we had been in the correct uniform all along (TML black machine washable trousers) which had been locally issued from 2006. After reading the instructions, I honestly don't think the MGS management board appreciates what certain sites working conditions are like. We spend up to ten and a half hours standing basically in a main road, and after our shift our uniform is covered in daily grime and exhaust fumes contaminating the clothing (which is not a problem with our issued TML but with the dry clean only trousers we are now required to wear this is a major concern) Also at our site the customers requirements are for 24/7 car searching which means due to staffing constraints, anyone is liable to do this at a drop off a hat. It seems strange that the uniform for the MDP at our site is TML trousers but we can not wear them, bringing uniformity as a agency into disrepute.

Is there no way a rethink or amendment of this issue can be sought or special dispensation for more active sites be allowed. And on a more lighter note, TML trousers I believe are a third off the price of standard uniform trousers meaning by raising this issue do I qualify for a GEMS award?

Thank you for taking the time to read this and I hope you appreciate my concerns.

Response from John Bills Senior Operations Manager:

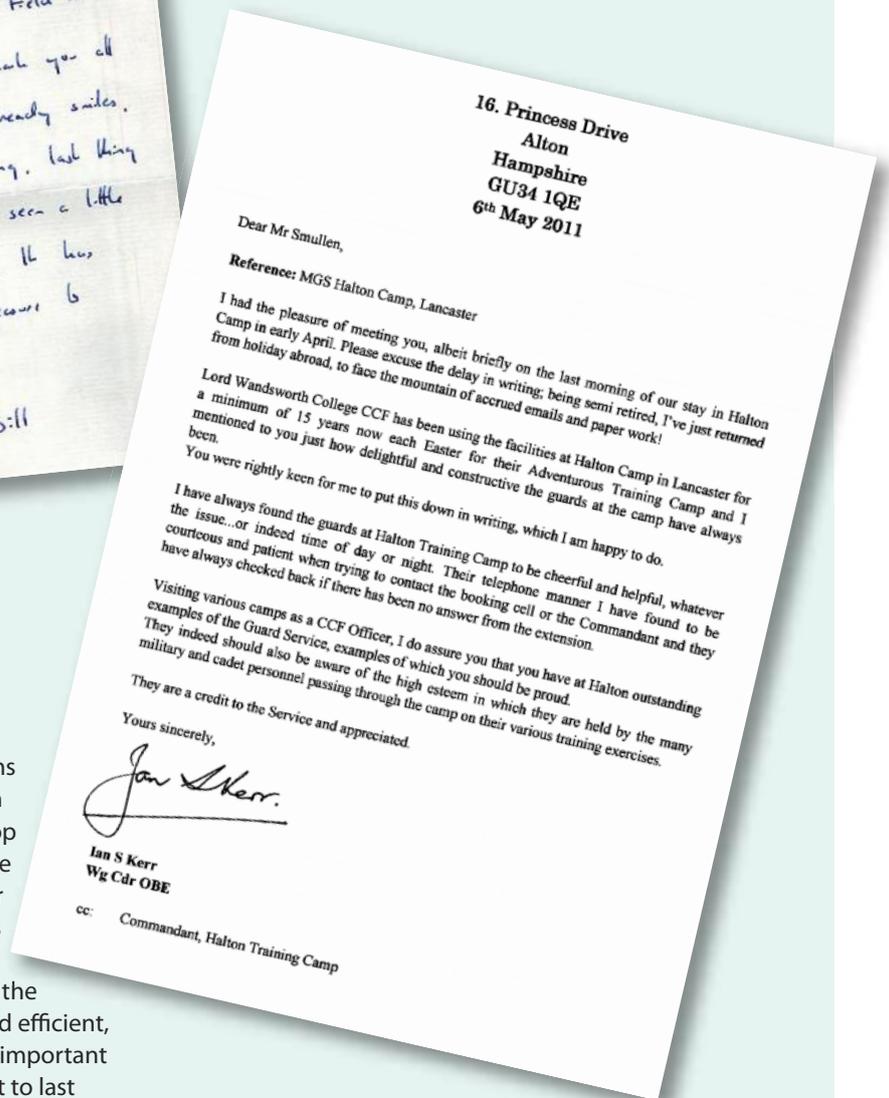
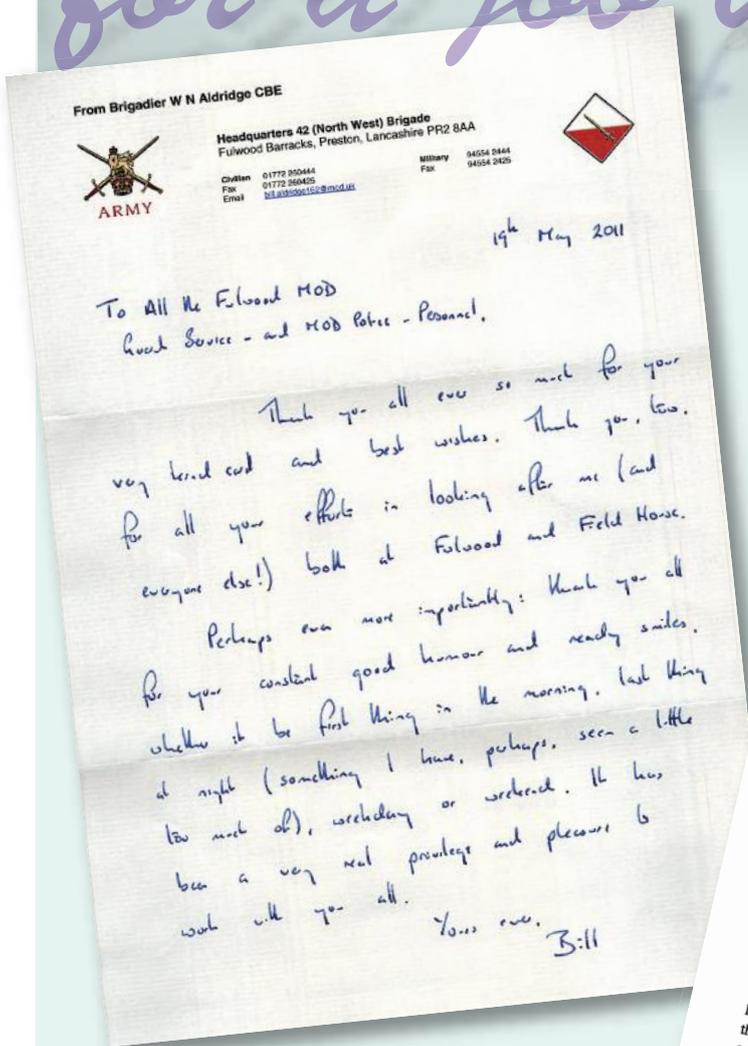
Martin,

Thank you for your letter raising your opinion on wearing the correct uniform. For your information I am a member of the MGS Management Board and it appears that you are not aware that I started MGS career as a CSO5 in 1992 and have worked at every grade in the MGS, as have approximately one third of the members of the management board. During my career I have carried out almost all of the tasks that a MGS officer is required to undertake, including searching. Furthermore, throughout that time I have worn the standard issue woollen dry clean trousers and never found them to be a problem.

I also visited HMNB Portsmouth very recently and visited all the posts that the MGS cover, although it was plain to see that it is a very busy establishment I did not see a post that would be classed as a dirty duty task. I do however bow to your superior knowledge of your tasks and I suggest that as you may have to go onto searching at the drop of a hat that you still wear the correct uniform and utilise overalls for searching as required, which would negate the need of a special dispensation.

With regard to what the MDP wear; they have similar uniform to all other police services and are shortly changing to the national police uniform, which for obvious reasons we can not wear. Moreover, there has never been any intention to have an agency uniform because of different requirements. Finally on a lighter note, I have some bad news for you, which is, this suggestion will not be put forward to the GEMS scheme.

for a job well done



From: Sue Johnson, CTLB Head of Security, Safety and Business Continuity

I wanted to write to thank you and your teams for your assistance during recent events which created a lot of extra effort, in particular the Top 200 event which involved the PM and DPM; the visits of the US President and other very senior visitors in the same week and weekend events such as Trooping the Colour and other urgent meetings which arose at this time. In all cases the response from the MDP and MGS was calm and efficient, presenting a very professional image to these important visitors. Most of these events were also subject to last minute changes but all went off extremely smoothly in large part due to the support and 'can-do' approach which your people provided on the day and in the run up.

We are constantly faced with resource challenges which put tremendous pressures on all our staff and it is against that background that I am pleased from a customer perspective to thank you for your teams' performance.

Mission statement and Key Priorities



An overview from the Chief

The MOD Police and Guarding Agency has a new sharper Mission Statement and a set of Key Priorities based on what we bring to Defence.

Chief Constable Steve Love – the Agency’s Chief Executive – explains the thinking behind the Agency Management Board’s new approach to defining the organisation’s role within the Department.

“We decided that it is the right time to be even clearer to our customers and the Department about what we bring to the party.

“This is important because, when I’m engaging with the MOD’s senior management and with our customers I need our Mission Statement and Key Priorities to give them a clearer message about ‘This is what we are here for, this is what we bring to Defence, this is what we do.’

“So we have kept the Mission Statement simple – shorter than what existed before and much clearer.

“It is also important to note that we now have the words ‘safety’ and ‘response’ as well as ‘security’ in our Mission. That is because we provide safety and response as well as security.

“Under the heading ‘What we bring to Defence’ in the Mission Statement, we have written down the four things that we bring to Defence: Secure and

uninterrupted operation of the nuclear deterrent; our contribution to the Afghan effort; Protection of Defence people, materiel, estate and Response.

“When I am telling people who we are and what we do, in my first minute I can use the Mission Statement to get over very clearly, who we are and what we do. That is important, especially now.”

Under each of the four headings within the Mission Statement are brief explanations of what we mean by them, he added.

“The final statement, about our repayment tasks, is in there because we believe it is important to stress that there are also important things that we do, with MOD approval, for the benefit of the nation as a whole.

“Having established what it is that we bring to Defence, we then need to show how that Mission Statement plays into our Key Priorities.

“After several years with the same seven to nine key targets being refreshed annually, we decided that the time had come to refresh and re-think some of our targets which sometimes in the past have not fully reflected our overall performance.

“Our eight Key Priorities now reflect exactly what we should be doing : match fit operational delivery, on budget, while we see through the PR11 transition and reorganisation. Some of these priorities will have numerical targets. Others we will report on using a “narrative report” which means that we will say what we are doing without trying artificially to create a bureaucratic statistical process.”

“The reality of the budget situation is that there are some of these targets that we simply cannot achieve in 2011/12. However, these are Priorities that are designed to sustain us to 2015. Our budget resources, footprint and taskings will be brought back into balance over the PR11 (2011-2014) period. I am confident that these new sharper priorities are now exactly what we need.”

MDPGA Mission Statement

What we are here for

We are here to support the UK’s defence by providing specialist policing services and accredited guarding : security, safety and response

What we bring to Defence

1. Secure and uninterrupted operation of the nuclear deterrent
 - (a) nuclear security and defensive armed nuclear policing.
 - (b) nuclear weapons movements and escort.
2. Afghan effort
 - (a) police capacity-building in Afghanistan;
 - (b) looking after service families back home;
 - (c) attacking theft of military materiel.
3. Protection of Defence people, materiel and estate
 - (a) armed policing of critical sites and strategic assets;
 - (b) unarmed security guarding;
 - (c) fraud and corruption prevention, investigation and asset recovery;
 - (d) security and data loss investigation.
4. Response
 - (a) nuclear guard force;
 - (b) major incident response and surge.
 - (c) public order and protest

We also support the US visiting forces and wider government on a repayment basis and with MoD approval, e.g. critical national infrastructure, overseas police capacity building.

MDPGA Key Priorities 2011/12

KEY PRIORITY 1 –

To support the secure and uninterrupted operation of the UK's nuclear deterrent

- a. To retain substantial assurance from the DE&S Strategic Weapons Project Team (SWPT) and DE&S Principal Security Advisor (PSyA) quality assurance inspection process.
- b. To have delivered at least 98% of MDP and MGS agreed UK customer tasks at nuclear sites.

KEY PRIORITY 2 –

To support the Defence Main Effort in Afghanistan

- a. To have achieved 100% of HMG/MOD approved requirements for Afghanistan National Police capacity building.
- b. To have 100% of all Defence Community Police Officers (DCPO) positions occupied.
- c. To assist the MOD in the detection and recovery of military materiel theft (Narrative Report)

KEY PRIORITY 3 –

To ensure the protection of Defence people, assets, information and estate

- a. To have delivered at least 95% of MDP and MGS agreed UK customer tasks at non-nuclear sites including MOD Trading Funds.
- b. To assist the MOD in preventing and detecting fraud and corruption, and any subsequent recovery of losses (Narrative Report).
- c. To assist the MOD in the investigation of security and data loss (Narrative Report).

KEY PRIORITY 4 –

To provide a response to Defence major incidents

- a. To have passed the annual Nuclear Guard Force assessment.
- b. To provide a police operational and major incident surge capability that meets the Department's Statement of Requirement (Narrative Report).
- c. To achieve the MDP Public Order Standard.

KEY PRIORITY 5 –

To meet the security requirements of all non-MOD repayment customers

To have delivered 100% of MDP and MGS agreed UK customer tasks at non-MOD payment sites.

KEY PRIORITY 6 –

To maintain MDP and MGS operational and professional standards

To have met and maintained 100% of MDP and MGS accreditation and compliance for:

- a. MDPNet accreditation
- b. NPIA Firearms Training Licence
- c. MDP Level 2 Investigation Programme
- d. ACPO accreditation for Police Dog Training Instructors
- e. Information Assurance Maturity Model Level 3
- f. National Crime Recording Standards/Scottish Crime Recording Standards
- g. National Standard for Incident Recording
- h. Diversity through incorporation into the MOD's new Equality Act framework

External MGS accreditations for:

- a. The National Security Industry Gold Standard
- b. Security Industry Authority Standard

KEY PRIORITY 7 –

To ensure that the Agency Transition programme is on track

- a. To have achieved 100% of agreed Agency transition programme milestones for 2011/12.
- b. To have achieved a 'Your Say' engagement score that exceeds that of the CTLB parent unit.

KEY PRIORITY 8 –

To ensure that the MPDGA delivers on budget

To deliver specified outputs within 1% of authorised control total.



Life In The Fast Lane – Or In My Case The Quiet Lane

By Mike Brailey CSO 2

I am hard of hearing. My hearing problems started a few years after I joined the MGS in 1993 and have now reached the level where I find it difficult to hear even with my hearing aid. Having said that there are many people worse off than me, I make the most of what hearing I do have to enjoy life to the full. Thankfully my hearing problems do not effect my golf swing, those who know me would say “what golf swing” – I’m sure I play a major part in keeping the British Golf Ball industry in business.

People are never quite sure what terms to use in this politically correct society:

People who are deaf

A term to describe people with all degrees of hearing loss

Hard of Hearing

*Mild to severe hearing loss, used when hearing lost gradually
(That’s me!)*

Deaf Community

Profound hearing loss, 1st language is British Sign Language (BSL)

Am I on my own with my hearing problem? Sadly no.

There are 9M people in the UK with hearing difficulties, that’s 1 in 7. Another 4M would benefit from using a hearing aid – know anyone who has the TV up too loud?

Does it get worse when you get older?
Yes.

42% of over 50’s and 70% of over 70’s have some form of hearing loss.

As we are dealing with facts and figures now is a good time to mention Tinnitus (noises i.e. ringing in the ear)

470,000 adults suffer severe effects

2.3M have difficulty sleeping

In light of that there’s a good chance that something like 500 MGS officers could have some form of hearing loss and may find certain aspects of their job

more demanding and stressful. i.e. working in busy reception areas and answering the phone.

Deafness is a very anti social disability it’s also a hidden disability. We all see the white stick, but do you see the hearing aid? Often we are our own worse enemy in trying to hide our disability. Vanity plays a big part in this. Question why do people buy varifocal lens glasses? To disguise the fact that we are getting older and need bifocal glasses (I did that).

How do we know if someone has a hearing problem?

Sometimes they will tell you, but normally when someone ignores you or keeps asking you to repeat everything two or three times you realise they are deaf.

What can you do to help?

Realise that hard of hearing people are not slow they just appear to be (they just cannot hear everything that’s said).

The group are talking of going to Reading, so I say when is the Wedding? They laugh, look at me and wonder what planet I’m on. Does this ring bells with any of you?

Don’t shout or speak slowly but do speak up and speak clearly.

When watching the football and a player is fouled and he mouths off, we can all often work out what he is saying (****), we all lip read to a degree. I go to lip reading classes and find it very helpful. Face the person so we can watch your lips, it is a big help.

Be patient and be prepared to repeat, if necessary try using a different word. Everyone is used to ‘pardon’ and will happily repeat the first time, but at the second or third ‘pardon’ it starts to become tiresome. Trust me its 10 ten times worse this side of the hearing aid.

A few years ago as part of a security exercise I was staying in a hotel (we still had T&S in those days). At breakfast the team was moaning about the 2am fire false alarm gathering in the car park. Needless to say I slept through it, it was amusing for a few seconds until I remembered that I do not like my meat

cooked well done, especially when it’s me!! I now inform reception that I have a hearing problem when I book in.

I would be very surprised if any of you reading this did not either have some form of hearing problem or knew of someone who does.

If you think you may have a problem hearing try the RNID telephone hearing check, only takes a few minutes. It is 5p a minute from a B T landline - 0844 800 3838. You will be asked to indicate what a series of 3 numbers are, against a background of white noise. It will give you a good indication if you do have a problem. If you do, don’t put it off any longer, forget vanity, don’t worry about other people. Look after yourself and get down to your doctor. A hearing aid will make ALL the difference, without mine I would be unable to work or socialise at all.

If you are one of those with a hearing problem, speak to your Line Manager. There is a range of equipment available which can assist you i.e. amplified telephones and inductive loop systems. The Deaf Aware Line Manager Aide Memoire gives all the details of how to obtain.

I am one of the few to be able to admit to using a vibrator in bed !! A vibrating pillow alarm clock – yes I know, no excuse for sleeping in. Google search RNID will lead you to a huge web site and all things relating to hearing, including a shop where all types of equipment can be purchased.

The lucky ones with good hearing, please be patient and helpful when speaking with people with hearing problems we are not slow, we are trying very hard to understand the conversation (it’s very tiring !!). It’s not funny, I do try to smile with everyone when it happens to me but sometimes I’m just tired and I let my feeling show.

There are many types of disability, many are far worse than mine. Did you know that there are 23,000 Deaf Blind people in UK?

Your sympathy we do not want, your understanding would be very much appreciated.

MGS Deaf Aware

Aide Memoire for Line Managers to assist staff with hearing difficulties



Facts and Figures

There are 9m people in the UK with hearing problems, 1 in 7

42% of over 50's have some form of hearing loss

It is estimated that a further 4m people would benefit from a hearing aid

With 3,500 officers in the MGS 500 could have some form of hearing loss.

These officers may be having difficulties carrying out their duties, they would benefit from specialist hearing equipment.

Line Manager Actions

1. Officer seeks help regarding carrying out their duties due to hearing problems.
2. Contact Access to Work (ATW) to either:
 - a. Arrange a work place assessment, in severe cases.
 - b. Agree the need for specialist equipment, a requirement for the PPPA 148 form.
3. If required, specialist advice and assistance for disabled staff is available from the MDPGA Disability Support Forum (DSF).
4. Complete a PPPA 148 form. Application for Specialist Equipment, Training Services for Civilian Staff with Disabilities. On completion, this is sent to your Budget Manager.
5. In Region 5 a MGS Funding approval V3 form must also be completed, this indicates Budget and Regional Manager Authority has been granted, for audit trail.
6. Do not order any equipment until funding approval has been authorised.
7. Be aware that VAT exemption can be used for any staff issued with NHS Hearing Aids
8. If mobile phones are required, be aware that Mod Security regulations prohibit the use of blue tooth inductive loop systems, so hard wire loop systems must be used.

Available Help

Access to Work (ATW)

9. This is a government department within the Job Centre's. They provide assistance and funding to enable disabled staff to effectively continue to work. If necessary they will provide an Access to Work Advisor to provide help and assistance to ensure any work related problems are overcome (this applies to all disabilities not only hearing).
10. There are 3 contact centres in UK:
 - a. London for SE England
London
East of England

Jobcentre Plus
Access to Work Operational Support Unit
Nine Elms Lane
London
SW95 9BH Tel: 020 8426 3110
 - b. Cardiff for SW England
Wales
West Midlands
East Midlands

Jobcentre Plus
Access to Work Operational Support Unit
Alexandra House
377 Cowbridge Road East
Cardiff
CF5 1WU Tel: 02920 423291
 - c. Glasgow for Scotland
North West England
North East England

Jobcentre Plus
Access to Work Operational Support Unit
Annie'sland JCP
Baird St
Glasgow
G90 8AN Tel: 0141 950 5327
11. Due to recent changes the funding thresholds have increased. For large companies funding assistance is now only available for sums over £1,000 at which time ATW will pay 80% on any further costs up to £10,000.
12. It is unlikely therefore that ATW will provide funding support; this will be provided by the department. ATW will provide assistance and authority for the procurement of the necessary support equipment.
Google search: Access to Work

MDPGA Support Groups

13. The MDPGA has a support group for disabled staff the Disability Support Forum (DSF)
Contact details are shown on the MGS Web Site, Diversity, Support Groups. The present Chairperson is:
John Garrett Tel: 02392 543514
The DSF provides help and assistance for all disabled staff within the agency.

Procurement Of Equipment

Local Health Authority

14. Contact your local Health Authority; some have facilities available for the deaf. Exeter has "Soundbase" This is a department where the staff can demonstrate a full range of hearing equipment which can be used and if necessary signed out for a week's trial (at no cost).

RNID

15. The RNID has a Web Site which gives good advice on all aspects of hearing loss. One part of the site is the RNID Shop. This is recommended as a source for any required hearing assisted telephones or any other required equipment.

16. A full range of hearing assisted telephones is available for mild to severe hearing loss. These have a button to switch between normal use and assisted use so can be used by all staff.

Google search: RNID Shop

Dave "Topsy" Turner

Dave Turner, otherwise known as "Topsy" served for many years in the Royal Navy before finishing his time at HMS Gannet. He quickly swapped the blue of the Navy for the grey of the Civil Service and became a Gannet based Patrolman in 1985 before transferring like the rest of us to the, then newly formed MGS, in 1992.

Like many of his ex-service colleagues he soon realised the benefits of joining a Trade Union and didn't wait to be asked before becoming a member and a brother. During his career as a security officer he became an avid and active crusader for workers rights and entitlements and set about furnishing himself with as much information and knowledge as possible. By utilising all of the sources available he kept himself constantly up to date with all that was happening, not only with the development of the MGS in particular, but throughout the whole of the MOD estate in general. His knowledge and understanding of the MOD Manuals was second to none and he quickly became the man with all the answers.

The term barrack-room lawyer is often used in a disparaging and demeaning manner but not



when applied to Topsy. In this capacity, he was an invaluable member of the team who through discussion and instruction resolved a number of potentially explosive situations without the need for confrontation or unreasonable argument.

Topsy retired in the summer of 2010 and was duly awarded the Imperial Service Medal for his many years of service. He was a popular and respected member of HMS Gannet's complement and I'm sure I speak for us all when wishing him a long and fruitful retirement.



RNAS Yeovilton says farewell to a colleague and friend.

By George Hardstaff

Mr Trevor Leonard Chapman, Trev to his friends and colleagues, leaves the MGS after 25 years 136 days service as an MGS officer at RNAS Yeovilton.

Trevor retired recently due to health problems but he was invited back to Yeovilton to receive his Imperial Service Medal which was presented by Mr Marc Shreeve MGS B1 Ops.

Trevor began his employment at the Air Station in June 1985, joining the security section later that year. He was incorporated into the MGS at its formation in 1992. Trevor stayed with us until ill health took its toll and forced his retirement in September 2010.

The Air Station Staff, his MGS colleagues and friends wish Trevor well in his retirement.



The medal presentation was attended by:

(Front row left to right)

Mrs Kathryn Malough (Region 5 Manager),

Mike Brailey (Area 3(E) Manager),

Mr Marc Shreeve (MGS B1 Ops).

Mr Trevor Chapman,

George Hardstaff (Yeovilton MGS Gp Manager) and

Mrs Pam Willis (Area 3(E) Admin).

(Back row left to right)

Sue Fox, Mr Derek Beaumont,

Cmd. D Stembridge RN (RNAS XO),

Lt Kris Hind RN (Yeovilton ESyO)

S/Sgt Ali Frazer MPGS (PI Cmdr)

Sgt Neil Rutter MPGS. (PI Sgt)



Policy Update

Flashlight Issue 40



CSO4 Post-Mapping

The extended consultation period on implementation of the CSO4 post-mapping proposals ended on 24 June 2011. A response has been received from the joint Trade Unions and a reply has recently been provided. The main issue is that the Trade Unions do not believe that they have enough information to understand the practical issues of implementing the garrison concept.

Minimum Staffing

Consultation has completed on the proposal to implement minimum staffing on Bank/Privilege holidays, weekends and nights across the MGS, where appropriate. Regional Managers have been asked to produce implementation plans for L1 and L2 sites initially. Formal consultation will take place, at a local level, if it is proposed to change any rosters.

Operations Manual

Discussions have commenced with Trade Unions on the draft Operations Manual. These discussions have been very positive but there are a few issues that need to be resolved. Management met with Trade Unions on 4 July 2011 with a view to resolving those issues.

Flexible Rostering Agreement

The 1996 agreement is wholly out of date and does not meet the requirements of a modern MGS. Interim discussions are to take place with Trade Unions shortly to revitalise and update the agreement.



NSI Gold FAQ's

1. Why has the MGS pursued NSI Gold?

Answer: It is a requirement of the MOD that any security company that wishes to bid for MOD contracts must hold ISO 9001 (NSI Gold), it is therefore very important that we hold the award to enable us to compete and bid on a level playing field for further MOD contracts should the opportunity arise.

2. Does NSI Gold add value or improve the way the MGS operate?

Answer: Yes, the NSI Gold award shows that we have achieved ISO 9001 which is a Quality Management System designed to ensure that all management procedures and processes are clearly defined in the Quality Manual. These laid down processes and procedures are to be followed by all our managers to ensure that every manager in the organisation operates in the same manner.

3. In the current financial climate, can the MGS justify paying for an external award?

Answer: Yes, for the reasons mentioned at question 1; with the possible prospect of outsourcing security, more establishments that we do not currently guard may be requesting civilian security and holding the award gives us the opportunity to bid for further contracts should they arise.

4. What is the difference between NSI Gold and Silver?

Answer: Obtaining the NSI Silver award means that we conform to British Standard 7499, the Static guarding and mobile patrol service Code of practice, which is the practical side. NSI Gold verifies that we have achieved the standards required for obtaining ISO 9001, which is a Quality management system.

5. Is SIA training linked to NSI Gold?

Answer: The simple answer to this question is no, the SIA and NSI are not linked at all. A private sector security company such as G4S would have to evidence to the NSI that all their staff are trained and licensed by the SIA, but that is the only link.

6. Why don't we join the SIA Approved Contractor Scheme (ACS)?

Answer: As we are an in house organisation we are not required to be licensed by law, and the ACS is for private companies to enable them to utilise a certain number of unlicensed staff until they are fully trained and licensed. However, the MGS can utilise unlicensed staff as they are not legally required to hold the license, therefore there would be no point in joining the ACS scheme.

7. Do we need all the MGS Forms to comply with NSI Gold?

Answer: MGS Forms are 'quality documents' that must be standard across the organisation. However, in line with the MGS's commitment to continuing improvement and process review, the need for all MGS forms will be reviewed. There must be a balance between reducing process and ensuring that we continue to comply with the requirements of the NSI Gold standard.



- **Peace of mind** for both you and your member of staff that the issue is being managed effectively.
- Builds **confidence** in your line management skills and helps you identify any developmental needs.
- Helps maintain **effectiveness** in achieving objectives – dealing with problems that may, if left unaddressed, impact upon an individual's performance.
- Builds a **better team** – successful management of a difficult situation benefits everyone involved and will lead to more confident handling of challenging situations that may arise in the future.

Where can I get further help and support?

- **The Guide to Managing People** (available on the PPPA People Services Portal)
- **Elearning products** (available via the DLP)
 1. Difficult Interactions (code V430)
 2. Making Your Team Effective (code V369)
 3. Managing people V1.1 (code VR078)
 4. Assert Yourself (code V326)
- **Learning workshops** (available by contacting Defence Academy)
 1. Having that Conversation (code T064)
 2. Coaching Skills for Managers (code R004)
 3. Assertiveness (code T004)

If you have any queries on policies or processes you should check the guidance on the People Portal or discuss them with your line manager. If you still need advice contact the **People Pay & Pensions Agency**

Service Centre on:
Mil: 93345 7772
Civ: 0800 345 7772

Or email at:
peopleservices@pppa.mod.uk

For further details on learning opportunities, please contact:

Defence Academy

www.da.mod.uk/cmt

01793 314485
96161 4485

How To Guide



Managing Difficult Conversations

Introduction

Line managers are key to effectively managing, supporting and developing people and may sometimes experience difficult conversations with staff. This guide aims to provide line managers with practical guidance to help them through this process.

So what's this all about?

Various situations may arise where it will be necessary to have a difficult conversation with a member of staff.

These might include:

- Conflict between team members.
- Ill health impacting on behaviour at work or absence.
- A member of staff experiencing a traumatic life event e.g. bereavement.
- Breaking disappointing news to staff e.g. that they have not been awarded a bonus.
- Staff not gaining promotion, resulting in poor motivation.
- Staff not performing tasks effectively to the agreed standard.
- Differences of opinion or style in management of work.

These situations can pose real challenges and as a line manager you may not feel confident about dealing with them.

I have a difficult situation on my hands – what can I do?

Be proactive – arrange an early meeting with your member of staff to discuss the situation, this will help build confidence

and show your willingness to address issues rather than leaving them to fester. By doing so, you will maximise the possibility of a successful outcome whilst potentially reducing the number of Employment Tribunals (ET) that can occur as a result of problems being “swept under the carpet”. Discuss the situation with your own line manager so you have support to deal with the situation.

Managing Difficult Conversations

Consider what information you might need before going into the meeting. Familiarize yourself with the Personnel policies (available via the PPPA People Portal) and identify what help is available to support the specific situation.

These may include:

- Special Paid and Unpaid Leave to deal with an emergency
- Other colleagues who are affected or able to help whilst maintaining confidences.
- Seeking further advice from the PPPA.

Be prepared. Consider the situation from the member of staff's point of view. How can you best support them and how can this be achieved?

Raise the subject – difficult situations are often associated with feelings of anger, sadness, confusion, anxiety, resentment and frustration. One of the first and most important parts of managing a difficult situation is to give someone the chance to “vent”. Active listening, showing concern and empathy with what is being said,

and acknowledging the member of staff's feelings will go a long way to managing the situation successfully. Build a complete picture of the issue by encouraging them to talk.

Reflect – it is important to listen to what your member of staff has to say, then summarise and reflect back. As well as building trust, this helps you get an accurate understanding on which to base further decisions.

Manage expectations – explain what you as a line manager can do to help and what is not going to be possible. Ask what ideas they have to resolve the situation, and how this takes into account the needs of the business as well as their own. Keep a record of what actions you agree so you are both clear about each others responsibilities.

Agree what will happen next – at the end of the meeting, briefly summarise what has been discussed and what needs to happen next. This could be contacting other parties to help, or simply arranging a further meeting after an agreed period of time to check progress.

What will all this achieve?

- **Clarity** for both you and your member of staff on the impact of the difficult situation to the individual and the business, and the next steps.
- Improved **trust and confidence** in you as a line manager.
- **Early addressing** of the issue makes it more likely it will be resolved, and minimises the possibility of formal action (grievances).