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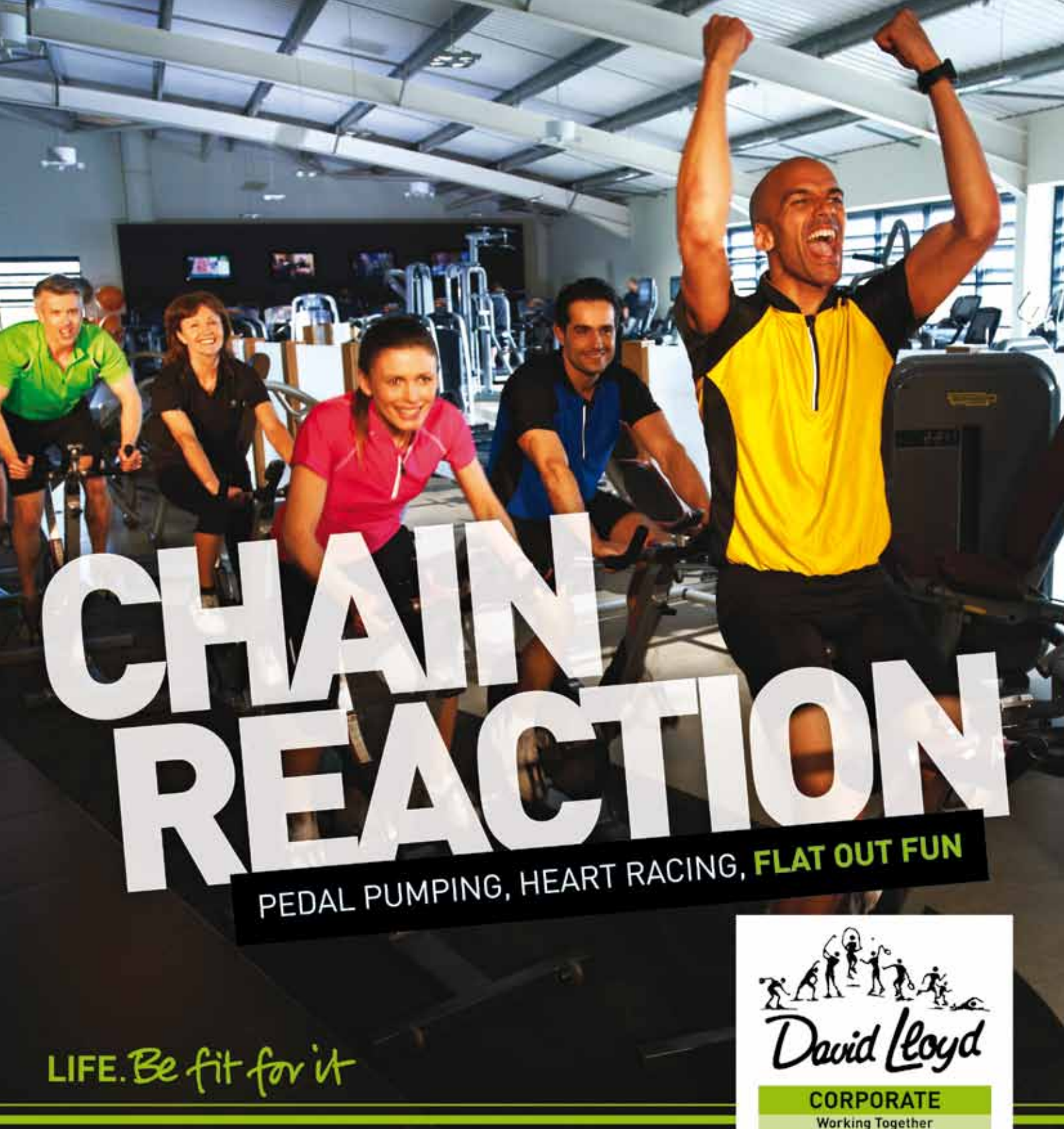
DefenceFocus

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SCOTLAND FOR THE BRAVE

We go north to look at Europe's
biggest military exercise this year



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NAVIGATOR

**AFGHANISTAN:
A BRIGHTER FUTURE
FOR THE PEOPLE
OF HELMAND P18**



Picture: Senior Aircraftman Neil Chapman

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Picture: Corporal Mike O'Neill



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EDITOR'S NOTE

DefenceFocus

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FIONA SIMPSON



No one likes to be ignored. We all want to feel as though we have got our two-penneth in and had our voices heard, even if the things we want aren't always acted upon. And it's also vital that the people who are

doing the jobs day-in, day-out get their chance to tell the top bods what they think. How else can we make things better, fix the things that are broken and share things that work really well?

And it was in the spirit of the front line talking to the top of the shop that the single Service command warrant officers raised the concerns of their troops to the Chief of the Defence Staff at a recent meeting. There's a lot to talk about at the moment (I suppose there always is) and with the word

"transformation" being attached to everything in defence, there are clearly lots of changes about. You can find out what they passed on to him on page 14.

And talking about sharing, up in Scotland in the last few weeks you couldn't move for the military as personnel from dozens of countries took to the sea, air and land as part of Exercise Joint Warrior. The mega training exercise, Europe's largest, tested their combat skills in a joint environment. It also saw further collaborations with French colleagues, training together in readiness for deploying on joint operations around the world. You can read Ian Carr's report on the thrills, spills, whys and wherefores of the exercise on pages 8 to 11.

And that's probably how we can make things work better in Defence - being heard, discussing, working together, making plans (and then testing them out) and building relationships with colleagues across the business. It's all about communication, really.

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IN MEMORIAM

DEATHS ON OPERATIONS - 6 APRIL TO 6 MAY 2013



Corporal William Thomas Savage

Corporal William Thomas Savage, from 2nd Battalion The Royal Regiment of Scotland (2 SCOTS), was killed in Afghanistan on Tuesday 30 April 2013.

Corporal Savage was travelling as part of a patrol in the Nahr-e Saraj district when his vehicle was struck by an improvised explosive device (IED). He was evacuated by air to the military hospital at Camp Bastion where it was confirmed that had been killed in action along with his colleagues Fusilier Samuel Flint, also from 2 SCOTS, and Private Robert Hetherington, from 7th

Battalion The Royal Regiment of Scotland.

Corporal Savage, from Irvine, enlisted into the Army in April 2003. He deployed on his third tour of Afghanistan in March 2013. Lieutenant Robin Hold, 1 Platoon Commander, B Company, 2 SCOTS, said: "Corporal Savage possessed the ability to inspire those under his command due to his competence and professionalism as a soldier and through his confident personality." He was a rising star in the battalion with an extremely bright future ahead of him.

He leaves behind his wife, Lyndsey, who is expecting their first child.



Fusilier Samuel Flint

Fusilier Samuel Flint, from 2nd Battalion The Royal Regiment of Scotland (2 SCOTS), was killed in Afghanistan on Tuesday 30 April 2013.

Fusilier Flint was part of a patrol travelling between Forward Operating Base Ouellette and Patrol Base Lashkar Gah Durai when his vehicle was struck by an IED.

At Camp Bastion, it was confirmed that he had been killed in action along with his colleagues Corporal William Thomas Savage, also from 2 SCOTS, and Private Robert Hetherington, from 7th Battalion The Royal Regiment of

Scotland.

Fusilier Flint, from Blackpool, joined the British Army in November 2011. Following his recruit training he joined 2nd Battalion The Royal Regiment of Scotland and deployed to Afghanistan in March 2013.

Fusilier Flint was a vastly impressive infantry soldier and it was clear that he had an extremely promising future ahead of him.

In a statement his family said: "The whole family is completely devastated. Everyone should know that Sam loved his job and made his whole family and everyone that knew him very proud."



Private Robert Murray Hetherington

Private Robert Murray Hetherington, from 7th Battalion The Royal Regiment of Scotland (7 SCOTS), was killed in Afghanistan on Tuesday 30 April 2013.

Private Hetherington was travelling in a vehicle on patrol in the Nahr-e Saraj district when it was struck by an IED.

At Camp Bastion, it was confirmed that he had been killed in action along with his colleagues from 2nd Battalion The Royal Regiment of Scotland Corporal William Thomas Savage and Fusilier Samuel Flint.

Born in the USA, Private

Hetherington was raised and educated in Scotland. He enlisted in the Territorial Army in October 2006 and deployed to Afghanistan for the second time in March 2013. He was an extremely dedicated soldier with ambitions to attend the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst following his deployment.

Warrant Officer Class 2 Stevie Main, Company Sergeant Major, B Company, 2nd Battalion The Royal Regiment of Scotland, said: "Private Hetherington was a reservist of pure quality. Very confident, with outstanding ability and enthusiastic in everything he did. His willingness to learn was second-to none."

BIG PICTURE

UAE STATE VISIT TO THE UK

HUNDREDS OF SOLDIERS HONOURED THE ARRIVAL OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED ARAB EMIRATES AT WINDSOR CASTLE





JOINT WARRIOR

Down and out: Royal Marines from 42

Commando conduct aerial assaults from a Royal Navy Sea

King helicopter on Barry Buddon training area

LAND, SEA AND

THIS YEAR, JOINT WARRIOR, EUROPE'S BIGGEST MILITARY EXERCISE, RANGED WIDER AND FURTHER, TESTING ALLIED COMBAT SKILLS. REPORT: IAN CARR

It happens twice-a-year. But this was the big one. The UK-led Exercise Joint Warrior is Europe's largest military exercise. It involves more than 40 warships, 40 fixed wing aircraft, 30 helicopters and more than 12,000 personnel, including 5,250 from the UK, the rest hailing from America, Canada and eight European partners. Over two weeks in April, allied forces were tested to the extreme and their combat skills enhanced.

This massive exercise serves a number of purposes. UK troops get to train in a truly joint environment. There is also the international element where Nato and allied forces can practise working together as a force for the common good in a volatile and complex situation, which could all too easily boil up into an international crisis.

Then, within all of that, there is

the chance for our troops to revisit and rehearse contingency combat capabilities after more than a decade of fighting in Afghanistan and Iraq.

And if that wasn't enough, the extra bang for the buck came as Joint Warrior was used to prepare and validate the readiness of the 2nd Battalion The Parachute Regiment (2 Para) Battle Group who will be taking over the role of the UK's Air Assault Task Force in May. This is their final training opportunity before that happens. Afterwards, the unit's airborne infantry, bolstered by artillery, engineers, medics and logisticians from 16 Air Assault Brigade, will be ready to deploy anywhere in the world at short notice to conduct the full range of military operations.

Oh yes, and there's more. This year's Joint Warrior was the perfect proving

ground, after a year's effort, to showcase the UK-French initiative to develop the Combined Joint Expeditionary Force, which was launched in 2010.

As a part of Joint Warrior, French troops from the 11e Brigade Parachutiste deployed with 2 Para on an exercise scenario in West Freugh six miles inland from Stranraer.

Colonel "Jacko" Jackson, Deputy Commander 16 Air Assault Brigade remarked: "Joint Warrior has given us the opportunity to demonstrate that as a bi-national land component with our sister French brigade, we have rapidly developed a credible and progressively validated capability with them."

French Colonel Bruno Helluy added: "During one year 16 Air Assault Brigade and 11e Brigade Parachutiste have worked together to be able to do this kind of intervention. This exercise demonstrates that we can plan and conduct operations together, both airborne and air assault."

Although there is scope for Exercise Joint Warrior to range across the whole of the UK, incorporating the surrounding



British and French troops prove their joint worth

Picture: Corporal Obi Igbo



Royal Marines from 42 Commando ready for an assault ashore from HMS Illustrious

Picture: PO(Phot) Ray Jones

spectrum of requirement, is not an easy job. Never mind the basic elements of operating in air, land and sea, the scenarios must be meaningful and challenging and incorporate a tactical and strategic level, both for individual units and collectively.

Just some of the capabilities tested during the exercise were counter-terrorism, ISTAR (intelligence, surveillance, target acquisition and reconnaissance), logistics, maritime patrols, mine countermeasures, ground-based air defence, conflict crisis and civilian evacuations.

JTEPS's mission is to "provide a joint, multi-threat environment in which UK, Nato and allied units and their staffs may undertake collective and pre-deployment training in tactical formations in preparation for employment in a Combined Joint Task Force". So Joint Warrior must reflect that. Even a quick glimpse at the list of assets coming together gives you some idea of how hard it must be to draw up a menu to satisfy everyone's appetite.

Another important element is establishing a context from which the various scenarios can escalate and develop.

Major Adamson paints the picture for the land-based campaign. "For several months tensions have been rising between the ethnically complex countries of Pestonia (the good guys) and Dragonia (the enemy). Within Pestonia exists the Galloway enclave where two Dragonian freedom organisations are threatening the peace.

During the exercise, the situation escalates and eventually spills over into fully armed conflict. Well that's the socio-political backdrop. It's a dynamic situation,

and one which tests the troops' tenacity and flexibility.

So, for a fortnight, in a range of situations and scenarios, allied forces' hard and soft skills were put to the test. Royal Marines fought their way across beaches with Viking vehicles rumbling ashore disgorging from HMS *Bulwark's* landing craft, with air support provided by Apache attack helicopters. Or they penetrated miles in land carried to their targets by Chinook and Sea King helicopters to attack critical positions, supported by HMS *Diamond* and HMS *Westminster*.

French and English paratroopers dropped from the skies from C-130s or leapt from Chinook helicopters. And in the skies a spectrum of aircraft including RAF Typhoons and French Rafals plied their trade.

Was it all worth it? Commanding officers from all the Services assure us that it was. Perhaps the sentiments expressed by Wing Commander Mike Baulkwill, officer commanding 6 Squadron who flew sorties from their base at RAF Leuchars, could be taken to sum it up, for all the Services.

"The missions on Joint Warrior range from close air support, protecting troops on the ground, right through to defensive counter-air where we defend airspace or points of interest such as naval assets. We touch on every skill during the exercise and my pilots are expected to perform in all disciplines of air power. Joint Warrior brings together our pilots and our engineers with their French equivalents. It is about making sure that when we go and do this for real we can get it right first time." **DF**

seas and airspace, usually, and certainly this year, the scenarios were concentrated in Scotland and across parts of the north of England. This year, for the first time, the area of activities pushed south as far as Spadeadam on the Cumbria-Northumbrian border. "The reason we've included Spadeadam," said Joint Tactical Exercise Planning Staff's (JTEPS) Major Richard Adamson, "is because we wanted to test how contingent forces were able to operate at considerable reach. Normally these forces go no further than the Galloway Forest, about 60 miles inland, but this year they will have to stretch their communications and logistics route for well over 100 miles."

The maritime elements traditionally range around the north west coast of Scotland as this area offers the chance to move around freely in both shallow and deep waters.

Putting all this together, and co-ordinating things once they are under way, is the responsibility of the JTEPS. Producing training narratives, with all the necessary components, to satisfy such a

Picture: PO(Phot) Sean Clea



RAF Regiment forward air controllers guide a Typhoon from 6 Squadron onto target at Cape Wrath

DOWN TIME

GETTING STUCK IN THE SCOTTISH MUD OR LOST IN A FOREST IS WHEN THE LEARNING STARTS, WRITES IAN CARR

If the idea was to give troops a different battlespace with a different flavour of combat challenge after more than a decade in the sands of central Helmand province, then the seas around Scotland and the heather, bogs and forests of West Freugh (pronounced Fruke by the locals) were only too willing to oblige.

Swap sweltering heat for south western Scottish rain, carried on gusts of Galloway wind, and the experience couldn't be more different.

As part of the land element of Europe's biggest military exercise, Joint Warrior, British and French paratroopers under the command of 16 Air Assault Brigade, would leap from C-130 Hercules aircraft onto Braid Fell, the high ground above Stranraer. They would then march six miles across bog and heather to Castle Gregory to meet with French colleagues. Their objectives, to relieve "locally entitled

civilians" who had gathered at Castle Gregory in the hope of being evacuated from the escalating danger and to capture and hold Castle Kennedy Airfield.

In four waves, 129 French from 11e Brigade Parachutiste and 79 British from 2nd Battalion The Parachute Regiment (2 Para) would jump onto the drop zone, which had been held secure for the last 48 hours by a small group of Para Pathfinders. Meanwhile, another stick of 2 Paras and French soldiers would arrive by Chinook to seize West Freugh airfield, with C-130s arriving later to deliver more troops and kit.

And that is what happened, more or less. Thanks to the low clouds and strong cross winds blowing in from the sea, the timings and the sequence didn't stick to the original plan. But that's war for you, and that's exactly what the war gamers who design and run these exercises tend to hope for – those unexpected things that

will test the troops' ability to improvise and overcome.

"The scale of this whole exercise, with 1,000 assaulting troops over an area of about 20 square kilometres, with kit and vehicles, means that things won't happen as we plan them, and that's brilliant," said Lieutenant Colonel Rupert Whitelegge of the Field Training Unit, the man in the control room with the God's eye view of what's going on. "Getting the right people with the right equipment to the right place at the right time depends on the situation, which can't be controlled. It's a challenge

Drop zone: British and French troops train to deploy together on operations around the world



Grounded: 2 Para drop in on Braid Fell above Stranraer

Pictures: Mark Owens

because this is a big beast. Whatever you do there's going to be people all over the place – troops packing their kit, trying to find their vehicles, which may break down or get bogged in. If that happens they just have to get to where they are going any way they can, and hope that they can marry up with the vehicles later on. Then you have to change the plan and deal with the complexities of that. It means dealing with no-fly situations, going from an aviation plan either for insertion of troops or equipment to no-fly plans.

"It's something you can't replicate on a computer, which is why we come here."

The need for troops to improvise their way out of sticky situations, and overcome obstacles, often literally, to get the job done is one of the things Lieutenant Colonel Whitelegge relishes about Joint Warrior. And it's why, twice-a-year, this is the place to be. "You can't do this anywhere else," he said. "We couldn't do this on Salisbury Plain because we are too familiar with it, and it's too close to camp. There, if you forget something, you can always nip back

presents further problems. "These areas can be pretty nasty with sharp tree trunks exposed, which is difficult to move through, and navigation can be a problem," said Major Richard Adamson of Exercise Control. "The maps aren't always accurate, where they show dark green forests which have actually been deforested, the guys may become disorientated."

To make matters worse, or better, depending on whether you are out on the ground or in the control room, the troops will face opposing forces. For the period of the exercise the enemy, around 200 in strength, was provided from 5th Battalion The Royal Regiment of Scotland (5 Scots) and the Royal Irish Regiment, who adjusted their fighting tactics to suit each situation.

Attached to each individual soldier, including the enemy, and a number of civilians (120 of them provided by Serco) are a series of sensors linked to a GPS. Known as Tactical Engagement Simulation vests, details of individuals' positions can be tracked by exercise

training that comes first."

Just as in the real situation, the troops must make use of everything they can to gain advantage and that includes intelligence.

Local "civilians" may prove useful sources of information about enemy movements, weapons dumps and supply lines. Or they may be responsible for moving or harbouring explosives for the enemy forces. It's up to the allied forces to find out.

Captain Daniel Reed, an Intelligence officer with 5 Scots went through last year's Joint Warrior exercise. This year he is here as an observer as 5 Scots will be handing over responsibility to 16 Air Assault Brigade's 2 Para for the next 18 months as the British Army's high readiness rapid reaction force.

"I found the training phenomenal last year, and it just keeps getting better," he said. "It tests you at every level. You gather intelligence just as you would for real, and you have to filter it and test it, and when you are sure, use it in the best way you can."



Eyes on: a French Army soldier guards the road to Castle Kennedy Airfield



Ground force: the French Army arrives in Dumfries and Galloway

for it. Here we are 411 miles away, so if you've forgotten something, bad luck!"

Also Salisbury Plain may be big, but it's not 115 miles across. And then there's the terrain. "Here we have an amazing variety, hills, mountains, forests, all sorts of buildings at our disposal," said Lieutenant Colonel Whitelegge. "Like the disused ammunition factory at Eddingham Castle and of course the extraordinary weather which can chop and change. I know it sounds very infantry, but when it can take you an hour to go a kilometre, it makes a big difference to your plans."

The nature of the terrain tests basic soldiering skills as well. Moving through thick forestry constrains troops to tracks, which they might otherwise prefer to avoid. Where the trees have been harvested

observers on the ground through laptops, and be fed into the Exercise Command Centre for after-action review. "We can use the information to draw lessons for individuals and units," said Major Adamson. Another advantage is that the sensors respond to lasers on the soldiers' weapons so there can be no tiresome arguments about whether or not "you missed me" in this huge game of laser quest.

With all this information Lieutenant Colonel Whitelegge can instigate, or authorise, enemy forces to veer away from the original plan to put further pressure on the friendly forces. "I've been called Spielberg more than once this week," said Lieutenant Colonel Whitelegge. "But it's always the benefit to

Then, a few hundred feet above Braid Fell, buffeted by the wind, a string of mushroom shaped canopies emerge from the back of the rumbling C-130s. Tumbling over the heather and the babies' heads (the tussocks of grass and reeds) the soldiers land and straight away gather their 'chutes, bundling them into bags. Stealthily, a few hundred metres away, the Pathfinders gather up the drop zone markers and melt away.

If this was the real thing, the soldiers would now bury their parachutes. Instead, like a column of worker ants, other soldiers emerge to collect them and cart them off in trailers behind army quad bikes, to be used again.

On Exercise Joint Warrior, there is a plan for everything. **DF**

SHIP TO SHORE

IN HIS FIRST MONTH AS THE ROYAL NAVY'S FIRST SEA LORD, ADMIRAL SIR GEORGE ZAMBELLAS TALKS TO *DEFENCE FOCUS* ABOUT HIS VISION FOR THE FUTURE OF THE SERVICE AND THE CHANGING RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN LAND AND SEA



First Sea Lord Admiral
Sir George Zambellas

Picture: Mark Rawlings

DF: Congratulations on your new post. How have your first few weeks been?

GZ: Thank you. It's been busy, but the leadership and business challenge is exactly what I expected for a Service that does sea, land and air in a single and complex profession.

DF: What do you want to achieve in your new role?

GZ: I'm ambitious for Defence and for the Navy. I want to unlock the authority and potential of the Navy, after so many years focused on land-centric campaigns.

DF: Where do you see the challenges for the Navy?

GZ: We must constantly push the boundaries of what we offer. The Royal Navy has always operated across oceans and in key international straits. That's a given. But my view is that the Service must now also feel the heat ashore, and as a matter of routine.

It is in the vicinity of the world's shoreline that people and politics meet, and therefore where the opportunities to prevent crises and respond to the unforeseen are most likely to be on offer.

So, we must learn from our Iraq, Afghanistan and Libya experiences to better understand the maritime's principal flank – the land, with its human terrain, its politics and its cultural characteristics and so on.

I think the Navy's challenge, and Defence's challenge for that matter, is to adjust the perception of the relationship between the land and the sea, such that it is seen as a continuum. Doing so will allow us to, for instance, optimise our intelligence and surveillance apparatus, which will enable us to deliver better – if not more enduring – security outcomes. So, one of my key aims is to get Defence and the Navy to also move closer to the shore, first intellectually and then intuitively.

A more immediate and practical challenge is making sure we retain the right people, military and civilian, in a very competitive market place. The Navy is highly technical and skilled – militarily, commercially and financially – and the battlespace highly complex and nuanced too, so retaining key people is paramount.

Our challenge is to develop a dexterity that ensures the ambitions of our people can be realised.

DF: What recent successes has the Royal Navy had?

GZ: Plenty. Let me give you just four. First, the strategic deterrent submarine HMS *Victorious's* recent return which marked the successful completion of the 100th Trident patrol. The Prime Minister enjoyed meeting her.

“ We must constantly push the boundaries of what we offer ”

Second, the Navy's constant commitment to maritime security with allies and regional partners in the Middle East, where we currently have well over a thousand sailors and marines and nine platforms including four mine clearance vessels, a hydrographic survey ship and the Type 45 destroyer HMS *Dragon* which has just arrived in theatre.

Third, wherever the Navy is operating around the world, it is the contribution that it makes to defence engagement, by extending the hand of friendship through operations and exercises, that I'm particularly proud of.

Take HMS *Kent* which last month, at the start of her seven-month deployment to the Gulf, visited Libya as the first RN frigate to be invited to Tripoli in 40 years, where she hosted a series of events to assist the Libyan Ministry of Defence and Ministry of Interior in their efforts to rebuild essential security structures. All that, for me, constitutes success.

And our fleet is at sea 70 per cent of the time. Find me another Navy that achieves that.

Fourth, and I could give you more, 40 Commando's contribution in Afghanistan. We're getting the Brigade back to sea as the lead capability in the Response Force Task Group and the UK Joint Expeditionary Force.

DF: What are the priorities for the Royal Navy?

GZ: My top two priorities are the replacement of the strategic deterrent and arrival of the carriers. Getting both right is a must, and we will.

As far as the replacement of the deterrent is concerned, it is no mean feat to operate the current boats while at the same time designing and introducing the successor, with what I call 'perfect capacity'.

The other priority is managing the arrival of the carriers in a way that ensures that we get the most from them, alongside the Air Force and Army, for Defence and for the nation. The capability is a huge investment, and I am determined that Defence does all it can to ensure we all maximise the return on that investment.

DF: What does the new Defence Operating Model mean for the Royal Navy?

GZ: In a word, it means opportunity. I have always believed that the Services, like all people, work best when they are given the mandate to get on with the job. Clear responsibility, unambiguous intent and an appetite to deliver real value for money are at the heart of the Levene philosophy and of Transforming Defence.

The Navy thrives on mission command, and I see the new Defence Operating Model as an opportunity to put the same creativity we see on operations into the management of Defence.

DF: Do you have any key messages for personnel during this time of change?

GZ: I'll say what I always say. That is, take the opportunity you have been given to get the most from our kit. And for those in leadership positions, take the opportunity you have been given to get the most from the first-class people around you.

But I would also say, take risk and be innovative. Don't look back and say "damn it, we could have been smarter, braver, and done more".

DF: How does the future look for the Royal Navy?

GZ: It looks good, more useable and more relevant, to Defence, to NATO and to the nation.

The future around 2020 is better defined because the investment made in many of our platforms is already committed.

Yet, while 2020 is exciting, for me, the future beyond that to 2040 is the real opportunity. We will transition from seeing our future in terms of platforms to seeing it in terms of connected systems, across Defence and Whitehall, and internationally.

The challenge is to make conflict less likely, by investing and thinking smarter, and the Royal Navy is uniquely shaped to support that. **DF**

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Warrant Officers give CDS the low-down from the front line



BIG ISSUES WITH THE BOSS

KEEN TO KNOW WHAT FRONT LINE TROOPS ARE THINKING, THE CHIEF OF THE DEFENCE STAFF MEETS HIS COMMAND WARRANT OFFICERS TO FIND OUT. REPORT BY IAN CARR

Improve, adapt and overcome' has become a well-used military maxim. And currently there are plenty of changes taking place to which members of our Armed Forces might apply that kind of thinking.

At the career level, troops are looking at issues such as the new employment model, training, rebasing and accommodation, and posing the question 'is this good for me and my family?' And, at what might be called 'the mess tin level', there are also changes to pay, pensions and allowances to mull over.

Knowing that uncertainty can be the enemy of morale, and being the sort of leader that he is, CDS General Sir David Richards wanted to know what issues were most concerning military personnel. So last year he set up a series of meetings with his single Service command warrant officers (SWOs) to hear it from the horses' mouths.

And, being the breed of people that they are, the SWOs were only too keen to oblige. And then feed back to the troops the views from the top.

The most recent of these, the fourth,

was held in April in Main Building.

And this conversation matters to CDS. "I value these meetings greatly," he said. "They are a unique opportunity to get the raw detail on the current issues which are causing our people most angst in the here and now and how we are dealing with issues discussed at our previous meetings. For me it is clear – people matter most."

The chance to speak to the very top of the shop matters a lot to the WOs as well. As W01 Corps RSM Alistair McGill Royal Marines said: "It matters because there is an element at the top end of the chain of command that wants to hear the coal face opinions. And the important thing in the four of us coming together is that we have the same issues; there is a commonality about the things that concern us."

W01 Chris Burrows, 2nd Battalion The Parachute Regiment (2 Para), agrees and adds that when CDS sits on the Service Boards it's good that he can compare the views he hears from his most senior officers with those from the boys and girls in the barrack rooms. "What we tell him isn't our personal opinions. It's not staffed by chain

of command or diluted by any one-stars, it's how the lads and lasses really feel," said W01 Burrows.

Yet, however valuable they find it, they only have an hour of CDS's precious time. So it mustn't be squandered. But that's OK. These seasoned campaigners know how to make best use of an asset. "We don't want to waste his time so we stick to the big ticket items. Generally that means tri-Service issues, but we will go into single Service ones if it has an impact on us all," said W01 McGill.

"We don't go into individual issues; we are looking for the themes of what soldiers, sailors and airmen and women are feeling," said the Chief of the Air Staff's Warrant Officer, WO Graeme Spark, "things that, with the best will in the world, commissioned officers are not going to be able to tap into."

So what are these big ticket items? Some are not surprising: the swelling of the numbers of reserves, the Future Armed Forces Pension Scheme, implications of the next Strategic Defence and Security Review (SDSR). Others may seem small at first

glance, but can go to the heart of the Armed Forces experience, impacting on morale, and even recruitment and retention. "Some think 'pay as you dine' is a small issue," said WO Spark, "but it's really part of a bigger picture – Catering, Retail and Leisure. The whole mess ethos is wrapped up within catering. Making sure that these services don't suffer is a big factor in keeping people in the Services."

But not all issues impact on each Service at the same time or in the same way. Redundancies are one example of this variance. The RAF were the first to manage reductions, whereas the Army are still going through it.

Sharing experiences helps to take some of the heat out of the situation. "The RAF and the Navy started going through this before us," said WO1 Burrows. "It was really useful to hear about what happened and what was done about it before we began to face the situation."

WO1 Terry Casey (RN) said: "Two-and-a-half years ago when we'd just come out from the SDSR, the questions were all 'Sir, will I have a job next year? Sir, next year will I have a pension? Sir, will I ever have a pay rise again?' Now those issues haven't gone away, but now we've dealt with the tough decisions, they have gone off the boil. The issues we all face are much more internal now."

One of those issues is the requirement to increase the numbers of reservists. Again, it affects each Service, but in a different way, and the discussions with CDS reflect that. For the Royal Navy and the Royal Marines the issues are mostly about if reservists are being used in the most effective way. For the Army, it is more about numbers and training, and integration. "Speaking for my own cap badge, 2 Para, we have come under 16 Air Assault Brigade and the transition has been extremely good. How it's going to be felt across the Army with the extra 30,000 we will be getting we are yet to see," said WO1 Burrows.

While eager not to cover the same ground twice, the forum is useful for returning to problems and asking 'have we done enough on this?' But the WOs are always keen to canvas CDS on his views of the future.

As the Armed Forces are nearing the end of more than a decade of campaigning in Iraq and Afghanistan, what is in store for the military? WO1 McGill steps up to the plate. "For a whole cohort in the military, the corporals and the senior non-commissioned officers, they may have known nothing else, and we have to get back to contingent operations and prepare for that within each of our fighting arms. It's also very important to have a challenge.



Picture: Staff Sergeant Mark Nesbit RLC

Reservist soldiers from 6th Battalion The Rifles on Exercise Leopard Star 2012 in Germany

That's why people join up, and if they don't get that, they are bright people and they have the capability to earn money outside."

WO Spark takes up the theme: "None of us join up to get rich, but we did join for a reason. A bit of it was serving your country, some of it's about self-development, and having a long and enjoyable career. We need to provide that scope for the future."

And what was CDS's view? "He agreed," said WO1 Burrows, "as do all the Service Chiefs. He said we must provide training, including adventurous training, and opportunities to keep people excited."

There's a lot to talk about in a short space of time. But at least the WOs know

as they get back to meeting the troops that thanks to these meetings they are better informed. And they need to be. "I think that the young men and women that join up today are generally brighter individuals than they used to be," said WO1 McGill.

"Twenty or thirty years ago it wasn't the sort of environment where you could openly ask questions. You did as you were told. Today, quite rightly, they demand more. They have questions and they want to know the answers. This allows us to do that. Now we make sure they get good feedback. And this meeting means we can say 'and this is from CDS'. It really doesn't get any better than that!" **DP**



Picture: Corporal Steve Bain

Personnel of all ranks and Services in the dining facilities at Camp Bastion, Afghanistan

POLARIS 50 YEARS ON

IN 1963 THE US AND THE UK SIGNED THE POLARIS SALES AGREEMENT. IN 2013 WE REPORT HOW ITS LEGACY CONTINUES TO SUPPORT THE SPECIAL RELATIONSHIP



6 April 1963 was a landmark in Britain's defence policy when the Polaris Sales Agreement (PSA) was signed between the US and the UK, kick-starting the UK Polaris programme. It paved the way for our first

submarine-launched nuclear weapons system deployed on HMS *Resolution* in 1968.

From 1969 onwards, a UK armed nuclear submarine has silently patrolled the oceans, undetected by friend or foe,

every hour of every day, delivering the UK's Continuous At Sea Deterrence (CASD).

The 50th anniversary of Polaris was marked by a formal dinner in London on 25 April hosted by Minister for Defence Equipment, Support and Technology Philip Dunne for senior UK and US military and civilian personnel involved with Polaris and its successor, Trident.

Mr Dunne spoke of the mutual warmth and respect that accompanied the anniversary and the unique partnership that has enabled Britain to maintain a viable and affordable nuclear deterrent since the Cold War.

During the Second World War, Britain and the US were at the forefront of the race to build the first nuclear weapon and back in 1963, with the Cold War well underway, it made sense both politically and financially to pool resources.

Mr Dunne said: "The rapid pace from signing the agreement to the first Polaris patrol in just five years was very impressive. And it repaid our leaders' faith in the ingenuity of our scientists, the innovativeness of our defence industries, and the bravery and commitment of our Service personnel."

He continued: "It is difficult to predict the future, both in terms of nations' capabilities and intent, and it is hard to say what the world would look like without the foundation we have laid. But what I can say for certain is that the agreement continues to guarantee our nations' defence and to underwrite our shared values of freedom and democracy."

The UK Polaris programme comprised four *Resolution* Class

submarines and, under the PSA, Britain bought US Polaris missiles and the associated launcher, fire control and navigation sub-systems.

Nearly 20 years later in 1980, Margaret Thatcher agreed with President Reagan to amend the agreement, and Polaris was replaced by Trident – the UK's current nuclear deterrent – which has been maintained by successive governments ever since.

Beyond the allies' shared science, technology and cooperation, it is the agreement that formed the bedrock of the UK's national deterrence strategy and operations up to the present day.

The Chief Strategic Systems Executive (CSSE), Rear Admiral Mark Beverstock, is the UK project officer, implementing the PSA and providing the programme that delivers CASD on behalf of the First Sea Lord.

Admiral Beverstock heads up a small UK team based at MOD Abbey Wood, Bristol. Under the PSA, both nations appoint a project officer to carry out their country's will and place a small, integrated staff in each other's homeland, so CSSE deploys a small staff in Washington. There are also dedicated project teams based in Abbey Wood that deliver the major supporting programmes across the submarine platform and strategic weapon system programmes, including the replacement of the *Vanguard* Class submarines.

Today, the UK's nuclear weapons system consists of three components: submarines, missiles and warheads. Britain has its own capability of four *Vanguard* Class submarines that were built in Barrow-in-Furness, Cumbria, and operate from HM Naval Base Clyde, Faslane, Scotland. They carry warheads designed and manufactured in the Atomic Weapons Establishment based at Aldermaston, Berkshire.

However, the ageing *Vanguard* Class submarines are due to leave service from 2028 and there are few defence issues that provoke as much controversy as the national need for a nuclear deterrent.

In the coalition government agreement it is stated that 'we will maintain Britain's nuclear deterrent, and have agreed that the renewal of Trident will be scrutinised to ensure value for money'.

Two studies followed this. The Trident Value For Money Study was undertaken as part of the 2010 Strategic Defence and Security Review. In addition, the Cabinet Office was tasked with conducting the Trident Alternative Study, reporting to Treasury Chief Secretary

Danny Alexander. This study will be made public later this year. In March, David Cameron visited the Royal Navy's *Vanguard* Class submarines on the Clyde when he threw his own weight behind a nuclear sea deterrent as "simply, the best insurance policy you can have".

Back in 1963, the dangers of the Cold War gave a heightened appreciation of the existential global threat, but in Scotland, Mr Cameron was determined that lessons of history must not be forgotten.

He said: "We need our nuclear deterrent as much today as we did when a previous British government embarked on it, over six decades ago. Of course, the world has changed dramatically. The Soviet Union no longer exists. But the nuclear threat has not gone away. In terms of uncertainty and potential risk it has, if anything, increased."

Although public opinion differs sharply on whether and how to replace Trident, Rear Admiral Beverstock's deputy, Captain John Stanley-Whyte, agrees that the PSA was key in sparking the special relationship and that the nuclear deterrent remains a cornerstone of the US-UK partnership.


He said: "It's one of the most significant and tangible policies between the UK and US, particularly given the sensitive nature of the capability. I can't think of two other nations that cooperate at that level in this field."

As with any relationship, Captain Stanley-Whyte attributes its success to a range of factors – people, cooperation, shared science and expertise. He also believes that the legacy of the 50th anniversary resonates today because of the palpable closeness between the two nuclear communities.

In fact, he says, many personnel have been employed on the PSA for more than 30 years, which must make it easier when discussing highly complex and sensitive policy issues.

However, like any golden wedding, Captain Stanley-Whyte concedes that there has been the odd bump along the remarkable journey but that the golden thread of their joint professionalism, cooperation, collaboration and shared goal of global security has always held.

Captain Stanley-Whyte reflects on the extraordinary longevity and success of the PSA for both the UK and US deterrent in the nuclear arena.

He said: "The past 50 years of the PSA has been a benchmark of cooperation and success in delivering the Polaris and Trident programmes and we are looking forward to continued cooperation in the future." 



NUCLEAR STORY

1956

UK introduces its first operational nuclear deterrent, the Blue Danube free-fall bomb, carried by V bombers

1958

The Mutual Defence Agreement signed between the UK and the US. Cornerstone of US/UK cooperation on defence

1961

The UK's first thermonuclear weapon, Yellow Sun Mk 2, an air-launched weapon is introduced

1969

Blue Steel (1962-69) – first UK nuclear missile launched from a V bomber

1963

Polaris Sales Agreement signed between the US and the UK

1968

Polaris submarine-launched ballistic system in service

1969

Start of the longest-running UK military operation, Continuous At Sea Deterrence, recently given the specific operational name Op Relentless

1980

Decision to buy Trident C4 missile system to replace Polaris. In 1982 the D-5 variant was procured instead

1994 onwards

Four UK designed and built *Vanguard* Class submarines replace *Resolution* Class subs

2006

Government decision to retain Trident as the UK's nuclear deterrent and to replace the *Vanguard* Class submarines

2016

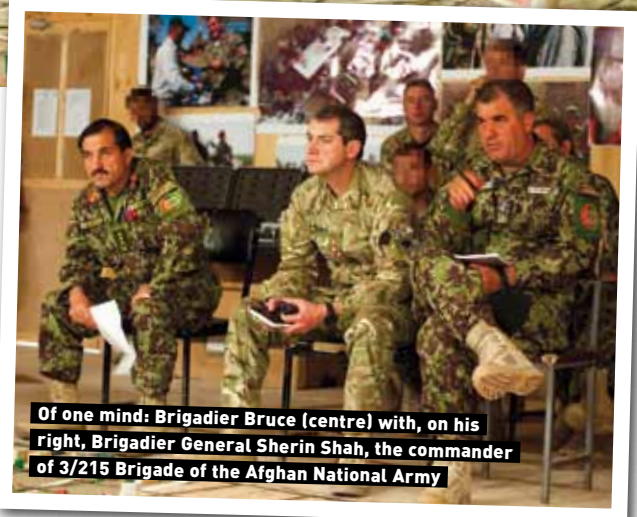
Government make a decision on how to replace the *Vanguard* Class submarines





Mapped out: the Afghan National Army take the lead in planning military operations

CHANGE IN HELMAND PROVINCE



Of one mind: Brigadier Bruce (centre) with, on his right, Brigadier General Sherin Shah, the commander of 3/215 Brigade of the Afghan National Army

Picture: Corporal Jamie Peters RLC

AS THE DRAWDOWN OF UK TROOPS IN HELMAND GETS EVER NEARER, THE AFGHAN NATIONAL ARMY WILL BE READY SAYS NATO'S ISAF DEPUTY COMMANDER. REPORT: IAN CARR

Change is blowing through Helmand province. It is not just the change that can be seen in the number of schools now open in the province, nor in the economic improvements being enjoyed by its urban population. It is not even just the increasing freedom of movement that Afghan citizens have as their own security forces incrementally take responsibility for their countrymen's safety. It is however an important change in that it speaks of the progress being made there, perhaps even more eloquently than the statistics about the numbers of ISAF patrol bases

being closed or handed over to the Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF), or the fact that 40 per cent of Afghans now have mobile phones or that thanks to a fibre optic link there are 4m subscribers to the internet. This change is in the way that the UK military talk about their Afghan colleagues. And it was clearly apparent during ISAF Deputy Commander Lieutenant General Nick Carter and Brigadier Bob General's briefing to the media in MOD Main Building. Also at the briefing were Lieutenant Colonel Matt Jackson, commanding officer (CO) of 40 Commando RM and Lieutenant Colonel Ben Wrench, CO 1st Battalion Scots Guards. Never disrespectful, but always grittily

honest, two years ago these briefings would talk about the natural courage and determination of the soldiers of the Afghan National Army. But this would be balanced by observations that basic soldiering skills and military discipline were as yet lacking. As these things improved, the talk was of developing leadership skills, organisational infrastructures and capabilities such as logistics. Even six months ago, reports would tend to focus on the pace of progress being made by the ANSF, the nature of the Nato role becoming one of partnering and mentoring as the Afghans increasingly took the lead in planning and executing their own operations. That narrative continues,

and the role is now described as training, supporting and assisting, only offering combat support on a limited basis when asked for it.

Lieutenant General Carter said: "It is absolutely the case that the Afghans will be ready to assume the responsibility for the security need at most end 2013 and secure their population during the election in 2014. We are also confident that they will be able to assume complete responsibility by the end of 2014, because their capability has come on significantly in the last year or so. If I was talking to you a year ago I would only be able to report that of their 25 brigades only one of them would have been graded effective or independent. I am now able to report that some 20 of their brigades are capable of acting independently or are effective with advisers."

But, significantly, how that relationship is expressed has changed. When Brigadier Bruce, Commander Task Force Helmand and 4 Mechanized Brigade for the last phase of UK operations in Afghanistan (Herrick 17) referred to the ANSF, it was with a clear conviction that they were talking about an organisation of fellow professional soldiers. Professionals who had in common the same set of values - national pride, esprit de corps, determination and a will to win.

In answer to media questions about whether the ANSF would be ready to cope on their own by the end of 2014, all three senior officers regularly began their replies with comments such as "do not underestimate the ANSF's level of national pride", "do not underestimate the ANSF's determination to win".

With a good deal of respect and admiration for his Afghan colleagues, Brigadier Bruce said this: "Without exception, their reaction to setbacks and knocks, including when they suffer casualties, is to stiffen their resolve, even after a really tough fight. They don't give up lightly."

Even with the Taliban recently announcing the new fighting season with a massive roadside bomb which caused the deaths of three British troops, the view remains resolute.

The Brigadier described the ANSF as a sophisticated force who can take the germ of an idea, plan it out, rehearse it and carry it out. They can sustain it, recover their forces and respond to threats. It was because of all these qualities that he believed by 2014 the situation in Helmand province would be such that the Taliban would not be able to regain a foothold, nor would the citizens be prepared to let them.

Brigadier Bruce paid tribute to those British troops who had served in Afghanistan before him and said: "The



Growing a new future: a farmer stands with his children at a farm in Lashkar Gah, Helmand province

Picture: Senior Aircraftman Neil Chapman



School's in: education is on the upturn in Helmand province

Picture: Corporal Gary Kendall RLC

development of the ANSF is sustainable because successive British Task Forces have focused on training the Afghan trainers and now, increasingly, Afghan trainers are instructing their own people."

So with the performance of the ANSF going well, the Brigadier said that the time was right during Herrick 17 to develop the process of redeploying troops and equipment to the UK home base. "I took over on 10 October and the Task Force occupied 37 bases," said Brigadier Bruce. "When I handed over, it occupied 12. In six months we either closed or handed over to the ANSF 25 bases. Many people predicted that this would be a messy affair. That we would close or transfer these bases under pressure from the insurgents. Actually nothing could have been further from the truth. We didn't have to delay a single base closure or transfer by as much as five minutes in response to anything the insurgents had to offer."

This he said changed fundamentally the profile in the way that security is provided in central Helmand. "People could leave their compounds and see that they were being protected by their own security forces with international forces in support, and of course the insurgents could also see that was the case."




Air support: some capabilities are still provided by ISAF

Picture: Corporal Jamie Peters RLC

Of course, the ANSF is still a developing institution and in certain areas such as air casualty evacuation, fire support and target acquisition they still rely on ISAF capability. Over the next year these capabilities will be built up and equipment will be issued to fill those gaps. And until the drawdown of Nato forces at the end of 2014 combat capabilities will be maintained for the ANSF to call on if they need them.

The Brigadier finished his briefing by paying tribute to the men and women who had served under his command. He said: "For a British commander commanding such a powerful team of professionals was a hugely humbling experience.

"The professionalism of the British troops and their bravery is astonishing. They can, and at times they have had to, fight like lions. But they can also switch their focus instantaneously and go from fighting to showing tremendous restraint and judgement and compassion. I am hugely proud of them and all that they have achieved." 

ARMED FORCES DAY



Nottingham will be the host city for this year's Armed Forces Day

Picture: Corporal G Moreno RLC

ARMED FORCES DAY

PREPARATIONS ARE IN FULL SWING AHEAD OF ARMED FORCES DAY ON 29 JUNE REPORTS LORRAINE MCBRIDE

The fifth Armed Forces Day (AFD) is gearing up to be the biggest and best yet. This year Nottingham has been chosen to host the national event on Saturday 29 June, when organisers hope to top the 60,000-strong crowds that turned out in Plymouth last year.

The aim of AFD is to honour the contribution of Armed Forces past and present. It also gives the nation an opportunity to show their support and thank the men and women who serve.

With weeks to go, people are getting involved across the UK. Major David Falconer is masterminding AFD in the strategic marketing communications team in MOD's Directorate of Media and Communication and he's confident that AFD has become a firm fixture in the national calendar. The celebrations also complement the ethos of the Armed Forces Community Covenant to encourage towns to support troops locally.

He said: "Military operations take place across the world, they're so high-profile, it's helped promote Armed Forces Day tremendously, so when it comes to celebrating, people know there's a good reason why – because these guys are deployed 365-days-a-year."

The curtain-raiser in Nottingham

is on 28 June when a military parachute display team drops in during the interval at the Nottinghamshire - Leicestershire cricket match at Trent Bridge. There will also be a day of celebrations at the city's Victoria Embankment, including a parade, a drumhead service, a Red Arrows and Typhoon flypast and dynamic displays by Royal Marines commandos featuring helicopters and 'lots of bangs'.

Throughout the UK, the day will be marked with hundreds of family-themed events ranging from parades and pageants to aerial displays and performances.

In London, the Royal Artillery Barracks in Woolwich is hosting one of the UK's largest AFD events. Attractions include historical re-enactments, walk-round entertainers, animal displays, fairground rides, stunt car shows and birds of prey demonstrations.

In Wigan, activities centre on a parade through the town centre and a military vehicle display. Manchester's 'big thank you' will comprise an afternoon of live music, dancing, and a veterans' parade.


Sport will also play its part: on 18 May, the FA Legends take on the Combined Services Legends. Then at Wimbledon, the military stewards take a bow before a sell-out crowd on Men's Final Day.

After nine months in the making, Major Falconer says that with momentum growing, the team is harnessing the power of social media to push AFD, which has already garnered 1.2m Facebook followers.

AFD always draws celebrity supporters and this year is no exception with Carol Vorderman, Andy Murray and David Beckham expected to tweet support. Among the VIPs will be royalty and politicians, though, at this stage, names are being kept under wraps.

National Express is supporting AFD. The UK's largest coach operator currently offers a travel discount for all serving personnel with 60 per cent off journeys booked online, enabling people to take advantage of affordable travel to the event. While clothing companies, fast food restaurants, sports firms and Thorpe Park will also run special offers for troops and their families.

Organisers are also keen to encourage people to hold their own events. Major Falconer said: "I expect Nottingham to lead the way for the UK in supporting Armed Forces Day. I hope that everyone joins in!"

Visit www.armedforcesday.org.uk or Facebook. 



ARMED FORCES DAY

SHOW YOUR SUPPORT

SATURDAY 29 JUNE 2013



As a nation we owe a debt of gratitude to the men and women of the Armed Forces. We recognise their courage on operations and steadfast devotion to duty. I am very grateful for your support throughout the year. Armed Forces Day offers an annual opportunity to highlight the work of our community: our Service men and women, both Regular and Reservist, veterans and cadets and, perhaps most of all, the families who support them throughout so well.

This is the fifth Armed Forces Day and I am delighted that the primary event will be held in Nottingham. The event on Saturday 29 June will provide a focus for the nation's celebrations while hundreds of other events will be taking place up and down the UK with local communities and individuals showing their support for the Armed Forces. I would urge you to visit armedforcesday.org.uk and find out what is happening near you to get involved. Those personnel in the Royal Navy, Army and Royal Air Force who are engaged in operations overseas, often in difficult and dangerous conditions, are always grateful to have such clear evidence of the esteem in which they are held.

The Armed Forces make an outstanding contribution to this country and deserve our recognition and support. On operations at home and overseas, they work to protect the security, independence and interests of our country 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. Armed Forces Day is a chance to say thank you to them.

General Sir David Richards, Chief of the Defence Staff



www.armedforcesday.org.uk



www.facebook.com/armedforcesday



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BONUS FROM THE BANKERS

AS PART OF THE ARMED FORCES COVENANT, SERVICE CHARITIES HAVE BENEFITED FROM THE FINES LEVIED ON BANKS FOR TRYING TO MANIPULATE THE LIBOR INTEREST RATES. REPORT BY LEIGH HAMILTON

There was much hoopla in the media last year about how banks had been incredibly misbehaved by trying to manipulate the London Interbank Offered Rate (LIBOR) interest rate.

These banks have now been penalised with hefty fines which are now being shared across various government departments, including the Ministry of Defence. It is now down to MOD to decide who is most worthy of a slice of the cash.

Of the fines, £35 million has been earmarked by Chancellor George Osborne for MOD for use in supporting the Armed Forces community. The decision to provide such a large amount of funding displays the importance of the Armed Forces Covenant.

The Covenant sets out the relationship between the nation, the state and the Armed Forces. It recognises a national, moral obligation to members of the Armed Forces and their families, and it establishes how they should expect to be treated.

From the first tranche of LIBOR funding, charities including the Royal Navy and Royal Marines Children's Fund, the RAF Widows Association, the Army Families Federation, the Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen and Families Association (SSAFA) and Combat Stress have benefited.

Programmes supporting military families and providing help for those struggling with mental health problems are at the forefront of the winning bids.

After submitting short, written pitches outlining why they should have the funding, the charities' proposals were then judged by the Covenant Reference Group within MOD. Having met their requirements, a further pitch was required containing much more detail relating to budgeting and sustainability. Finally, the shortlisted projects were run past the ministerial board who chose the winning bids.

FUNDING FOR FAMILIES

It's a fiercely fought process and, for some, a disappointing one if their funding isn't given the green light.

For SSAFA, not all of their initial 16 bids were successful. Emerging from the process with four successful bids however has proven to be well worth the effort. The charity, which provides lifelong support to members of the Armed Forces and their families, received over £2.2 million to fund four projects. This amount of money is a very big step in the right direction according to SSAFA's Director of Fundraising, Claire

Hoather: "This funding is absolutely critical. Everything that SSAFA does we have to get funding for. We're able to run these projects now we have the money and it gives them credibility for further funding in the future. We can now show other funders that the Covenant Reference Group has faith in it."

The largest chunk of the charity's LIBOR funding (£1.1 million) is going to create regional support groups for families dealing with the loss or injury of a loved one. There are currently groups run by the charity in major cities across the UK, but the benefits of having more accessible support sessions can be invaluable. Claire explained: "It's all about making it easier for the families that need the help and about building a support network so that people in the same region can meet up and support each other."

"The cost of bringing people to a central hub, whether that's Birmingham, Edinburgh or London, is quite significant. We have branches of SSAFA in every single county in the country. Where we have SSAFA people, we can facilitate these support groups."

In addition to the regional support groups, SSAFA received LIBOR money to fund a mentoring service which enables the charity to continue working with the Army Recovery Capability to help injured Service personnel transition into civilian life.

SHORT BREAKS FOR SERVICE KIDS

Another of SSAFA's successful bids has secured LIBOR funding for five short breaks for Service children with additional needs or disabilities. Claire said: "There will be three short breaks for the children

and two breaks for their carers. Service families can move around a lot, so SSAFA's presence allows the children to lock into our service wherever they are. If they're in Germany they will know about our breaks or if they're in Warminster they'll know about them too."

The charity also received funding to train SSAFA staff in how to spot the early signs of mental health problems in veterans.

"SSAFA is a primary healthcare deliverer to MOD in Germany and the RAF from a social work point of view. This is about our professional staff being trained in mental health first aid and spotting issues before they arise.

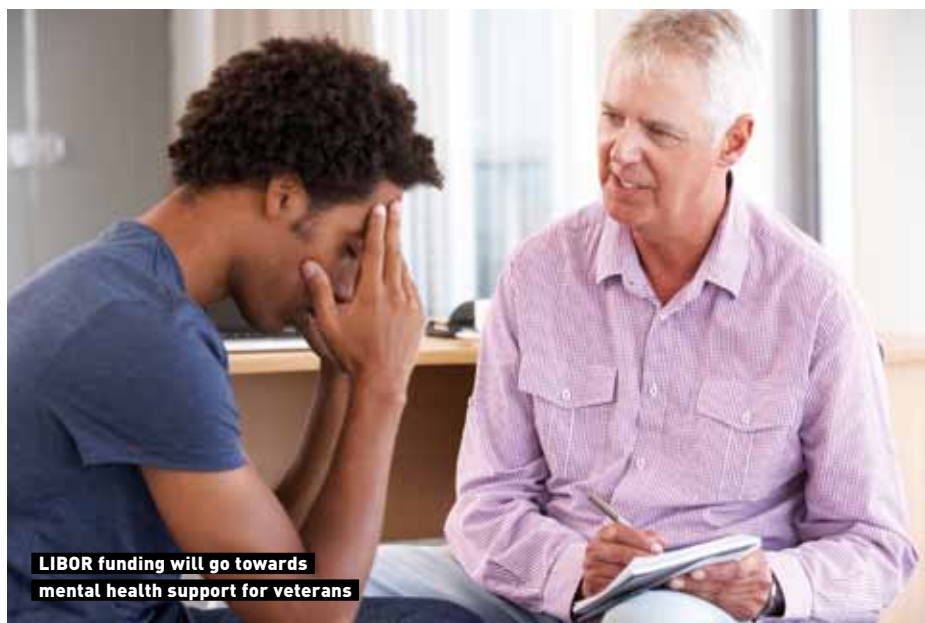
"This will be on top of their normal jobs. We will train them to be able to see the early signs of any mental health issues and then forward that person on in the right way.

"Because we've got our fingers in the bigger pie, this is about us being part of the process. Within the sector there are experts in mental health, such as our colleagues at Combat Stress, so this is very much about how we can help."

MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORT

Combat Stress is another charity to benefit from LIBOR funding. The veterans' mental health charity won two bids; one for cash to support former Service personnel with alcohol or drug problems brought on by mental health issues. The other is to continue running a 24-hour telephone helpline designed to provide a stigma-free first approach for help with mental health issues across the UK.

The former bid has resulted in the charity receiving £2 million to recruit



LIBOR funding will go towards mental health support for veterans

Picture: Sergeant Ian Forsyth RLC



Alcohol and drug problems are often signs of deeper issues

experienced community psychiatric nurses trained in addiction management to Combat Stress' community outreach teams. The funding will carry the project for three years and will meet the needs of veterans who are unable to engage in regular NHS treatment for their mental health needs, due to problems with alcohol or drug misuse.

Director of Medical Services at Combat Stress, Dr Walter Busuttill, explained: "The majority of veterans who have drug and alcohol problems haven't got those problems as a primary issue. In many cases their primary issue is a mental health problem that underlines the whole thing.

"What we are finding is that we'll have various people having a detox on the NHS, either in the community or else in a hospital bed, which is very expensive. By the time they're detoxed, there is no plan for them to follow a pathway and be properly assessed so their mental health issues will be addressed."

Dr Busuttill explained that at the moment what tends to happen is that Combat Stress' 14 normal community outreach teams are expected to deal with very difficult patients who keep popping up and disappearing.

He said: "These individuals are very difficult to manage and co-ordinate and it takes a long time to get these people sorted out. This can often be to the detriment of other patients who are more ready to engage, come in through our outreach teams and end up in our mainstream services. An alcohol case manager will take on that workload and manage the individual."

Dr Busuttill believes that having a dedicated team with case managers to lead veterans through the often complicated maze of clinical assessments and detoxing will ensure that they are

treated for the right thing.

"If we identify any veteran with a drug and alcohol problem within the community, the plan would be to case manage them, to get them detoxed and then to signpost them to whatever clinical service they need.

"The case manager will have a clinical input and a signposting input, but, most importantly, will make sure the services that the individual needs are properly co-ordinated."

The LIBOR funding will be used to recruit a part-time consultant psychiatrist, eight community psychiatric nurses and three administration staff.

It is hoped that the new case management system will be in place later this year, with the roll-out to begin north of the border.

"We're setting up a service first in Scotland because that is where the teams are more advanced," said Dr Busuttill. "They are working in conjunction with local drug and alcohol services and the community teams. We hope that the service will be starting to run towards the end of the year there and then we'll roll out to the other areas."

CONTINUING PROGRESS

Although the LIBOR money will fund this project for three years, Dr Busuttill is still pushing for additional help from the NHS.

"It's extremely important that we start to set up bespoke alcohol case management first and then eventually a full alcohol pathway.

"As part of that pathway I would like to have maybe three dedicated NHS beds for veterans requiring alcohol detoxification. Combat Stress wouldn't be running these beds, but they would be located in an empathic environment for people who are scared to get detoxed."

With funding for two projects in the bag, Dr Busuttill believes the future is looking very positive: "I'm very, very pleased that we've got this money and it will make a big difference to a very vulnerable number of veterans who find it very difficult to engage and cannot engage without a real lot of TLC." DF

■ For more information about SSAFA visit www.ssafa.org.uk and for more information about Combat Stress visit www.combatstress.org.uk

The next Armed Forces LIBOR fund panel will meet in early June - the MOD deadline for applications was 3 May 2013. For further information about the Armed Forces Covenant and the LIBOR fund visit www.gov.uk/the-armed-forces-covenant

LIBOR FUNDING TRANCHE 1

■ Fisher House Project at Queen Elizabeth Hospital Birmingham

£993,600

■ uk4u Thanks!

£90,000

■ Royal Navy and Royal Marines Children's Fund

£25,000

■ Felix Fund

£65,000

■ RAF Widows Association

£5,000

■ Tickets for Troops

£160,000

■ Combat Stress

£2,000,000

■ Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen and Families Association (SSAFA) Short Breaks

£207,500

■ SSAFA Support Groups

£1,100,000

■ SSAFA Mental Health First Aid

£547,000

■ Combat Stress 24-hour telephone helpline

£200,000

■ SSAFA Health, Wellbeing and Transition

£350,000

■ National Memorial Arboretum

£625,000

■ Army Families Federation

£238,000

■ Naval Families Federation

£343,500

■ RAF Families Federation

£235,000

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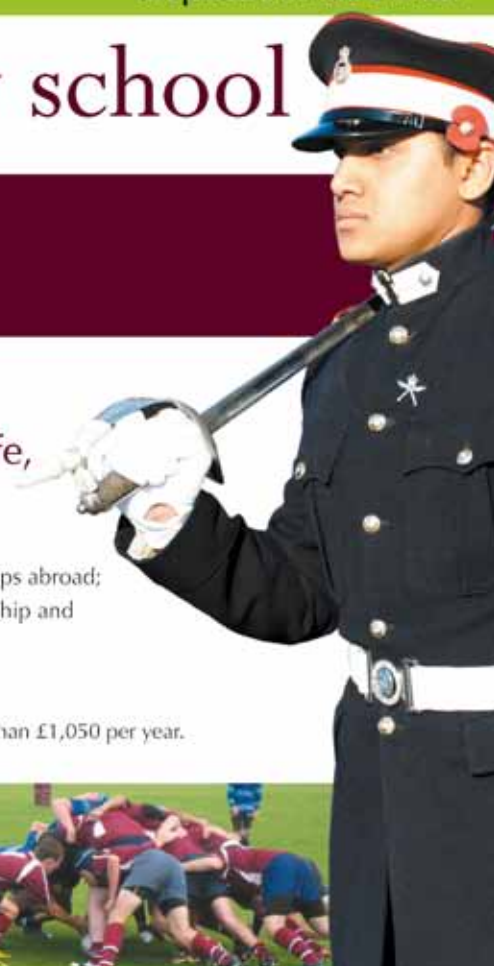
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* Our fees are reviewed annually

GORDON PASSMORE'S career in the Armed Forces began when he was just 16 and he joined the Local Defence Volunteers, later to become the Home Guard, in 1939. However, it was 18 months later, on 7 December 1941, the day the Empire of Japan attacked Pearl Harbour, that Mr Passmore was called up to begin training as a telegraphist air gunner in the Fleet Air Arm.



ITALY STAR

From my basic training I was posted to an advanced training squadron at Machrihanish near Campbeltown on the Mull of Kintyre.

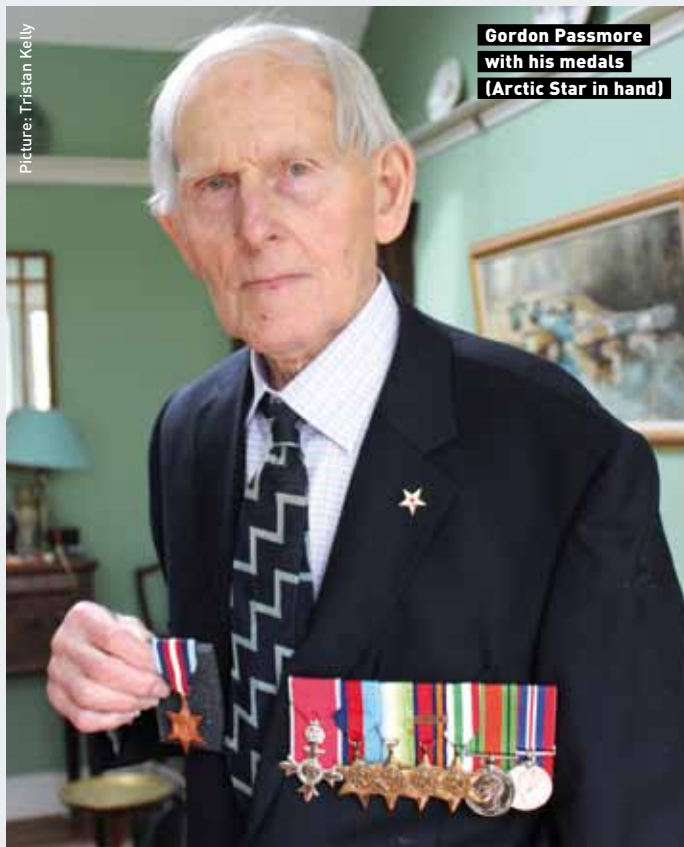
At that stage in the war Malta was under siege and a handful of Fairey Swordfish (a bomber biplane), under Lieutenant Commander Bibby, were playing havoc with Rommel's supply convoys.

The Luftwaffe had complete air cover but they were taking off and landing at night with no airfield lights which meant the Luftwaffe were unable to touch them.

It needed experienced pilots to do it and we replicated this in Scotland – but somebody forgot that the weather was rather different and it was a pretty dangerous pastime!

Then I had to get out to Malta. I went on a battleship to Gibraltar but by the time we got there in early 1943 the US First Army had moved on and I didn't get to Malta. We then had a different job, and for the whole of the summer of 1943 I was based in Gibraltar.

What we were doing was very important; the Strait of Gibraltar is the pinch point for getting into the Mediterranean and we were doing anti-submarine patrols day and night to stop U-boats attacking the massive convoys – and I can't get across how large these convoys were, they stretched as far as the eye could see. They were coming in from America in preparation for the invasion of Sicily and Italy.



Picture: Tristan Kelly

Gordon Passmore with his medals (Arctic Star in hand)

MY MEDALS

Although Gordon Passmore left the Fleet Air Arm in 1945, with six medals for service around the world, it was only in March that he received his last – the Arctic Star. Here he talks about how all were earned. Interview by Tristan Kelly.

Gibraltar was a very interesting place as we saw very high powered people come and go on their way to North Africa including King George VI, Churchill – people like that.



ATLANTIC STAR

In due course in early 1944 we went to Northern Ireland to board a brand new carrier called HMS *Campania*, which was an adapted freighter.

We would have had 10 or 12 Swordfish and half-a-dozen Wildcat fighters on board. We had a new role then; we were going to strike out in the west of Ireland and the north of the UK.

Initially we went out into the Atlantic as the U-boats would hide out there in the middle where nobody could get them.

In the early days of HMS *Campania* we went into the ops room and they pulled back the map and the commander said "there, gentlemen, are the positions of most of the U-boats in the North Atlantic" and there were dots everywhere!

We thought 'how the hell did they know that?' The reason was they were very lonely at night and had to get up to charge their batteries and natter on the shortwave radio which we could pick up. In reality of course it was Bletchley Park, but we didn't know that.

We moved around a lot and were actually brought in for D-Day. I dropped four depth charges on a submerging U-boat outside Brest on D-Day in the morning – the main thing was to keep their heads down.

But for years I didn't realise we had taken part in D-Day at all but it was all hands to the pump.

My first major incident in a plane was my penultimate flight in a Swordfish in July 1944, which was again a night search, west of Ireland somewhere. We didn't find anything, as usual, and had just touched down on the deck when a great gust of wind blew us over the side!

Fortunately we landed up in the gun pit just below deck so they had lashings on us in no time. Luckily nobody in the deck crew was hurt.



ARCTIC STAR

After that we went back to north-west Ireland and the route to Russia.

We didn't sit in the middle of the convoys because if we needed to take off we needed to move the carrier around into the wind, which was a major operation and you needed some elbow room – and the Germans were waiting for us of course. So we had a bit more of a free rein.

Generally speaking the aircraft never went into Murmansk as what is the point of an aircraft carrier sealed off in port? The convoys to Russia were awful.

Forget the Germans, the weather was just dreadful and of course it was in the dark most of the time. The cold and the infernal noise of the elements is what I remember.



BURMA STAR

In the late summer of 1944 they brought out a new radar and a Mark III Swordfish with a big bulbous nose and the

telegraphist air gunner was omitted from the cockpit altogether. So I was sent to Scotland again for training in Fairey Barracudas.

I was then posted to HMS *Implacable* – our largest aircraft carrier based in Scapa Flow. She was one of six large aircraft carriers and four had already got to Ceylon (Sri Lanka) and the other one, I believe, was being repaired in Norfolk Navy Yard in America.

The only reason our carrier was held behind was that the German battleship *Tirpitz* was holed up in a Norwegian fjord and was perceived to be a real menace. If she had broken out she would have played havoc with our convoys.

I didn't have a go myself but earlier our Barracudas dropped two or three bombs on the *Tirpitz* - but they had virtually bounced off. However, on 12 November 1944 the RAF finally hit her and that did the trick.

So with the threat of the *Tirpitz* now gone the Admiralty decided we would have to go and join all the other big carriers in the Indian Ocean. We then had to do a conversion to Grumman Avengers – the American torpedo bombers, which were pretty good aeroplanes.

Sometime in the early spring of 1945 we made our way via the Suez Canal to Trincomalee in Ceylon and I nearly bought it twice in a few days training there – though not through enemy action.



PACIFIC CLASP

We then went to Australia, first to Fremantle and then around to Sydney.

We arrived on 8 May 1945 which was Victory in Europe Day. But there wasn't much celebration on board the ship as we had the nasty bit still to do. We were to invade the Japanese mainland – fortunately we never had to do it.

We went around through the Coral Sea to an anchorage

200 miles north of New Guinea called Manus, which the Americans had captured earlier. And from there they decided to blood *Implacable* by having her raid a Japanese anchorage called Truk Atoll, which we did.

They wanted us to do a softening raid so that at dawn the whole squadron could go in. The instructions were that they would send two aircraft off every two hours during the night which would keep the defences awake.

The aim was to make them use up as much fuel and ammunition as possible as they wouldn't get replenished.

The carrier was probably 50 miles from the target, with a destroyer at the half-way point.

Well, I was just sitting there thinking this must be the last run when all of a sudden there was this almighty crash. I thought we had hit another aircraft because you need to remember that all throughout the war I flew looking backwards.

But we had been hit by anti-aircraft fire and the plane went straight into the sea at 200mph.

The plane sank and then came back up because there was air in it. I took the panel off and I was out. The New Zealand observer had smashed his face in a bit on the radar and the pilot was all right but he had gone



**Gordon Passmore
in a Fairey Barracuda
off the Norwegian
coast in 1944**

© Gordon Passmore

down further so when he came back up he was half-drowned. I didn't even have a bruise.

The practice was they would not despatch a destroyer to save three aircrew – they were not going to jeopardise her.

Luckily it was warm water because in the Atlantic the danger is the elements more than anything.

The destroyer was 20 miles away and we guessed that the Japanese would just wait until the morning. We knew they would kill us but it was the method of killing, the torture, that we really feared.

So we recovered the emergency rations and flares. You were not supposed to set off flares but I decided to set off one every hour.

It was seen either by a returning aircraft or the destroyer so they knew someone was alive.

Fortunately we had Admiral Sir Philip Vian on board the *Implacable* and suddenly they realised that the Japanese didn't have any night fighters so they wouldn't be sending anybody at night.

So Admiral Vian had had a good supper and authorised the destroyer to come and pick us up – now how lucky can you be?

Anyway, a couple of weeks later we bombed the other target and a few weeks after that we joined the main force which was the American Third Fleet off Japan and that would have been mid-July 1945.

We were up there until the war finished on 14 August 1945.



**Gordon Passmore's Fairey Swordfish
after being blown off the deck
while landing on HMS Campania in July 1944**

© Gordon Passmore

LOOK OUT FOR GOUT

GOUT CAN AFFECT ANYONE AT ANY AGE BUT WHAT CAN YOU DO TO TREAT IT? PLENTY!



By Surgeon
Commander Nick
Imm, a GP at
Navy Command HQ,
HMS *Excellent*.

Hello from Whale Island in Portsmouth. Do you suffer from time to time with sore, painful joints? Perhaps you are among the many people who have gout.

Gout is common. It affects about one in 200 adults - and men are more likely to get it than women. It often runs in families and can occur at any age. It's also linked to other common conditions such as diabetes and psoriasis.

It's a painful inflammation of one or more of your joints. The base of the big toe is most often affected but it can occur in any joint - knee, elbow or wrist, for example. The joint gets red, swollen and extremely tender to touch. It can be debilitating and prevent you walking if your foot's affected.

So what causes gout? It happens when there is too much uric acid in the blood. This chemical is produced in the body and is removed by the kidneys. If the level becomes too high it can settle as crystals in the joints, causing irritation.

If gout is suspected, your doctor will want to take a blood test to check the uric acid level. Sometimes, fluid is removed from a swollen joint to examine for crystals under a microscope.

As well as settling in the joints, uric acid crystals can appear under the skin, building up over several years into little white pimples and lumps called tophi. These are usually painless but can be removed if they're uncomfortable.

It's important to treat gout because,

as well as being very painful, repeated attacks can damage your joints. Fortunately, the treatment is easy and works well. Sudden attacks are usually treated with anti-inflammatory tablets which relieve the pain and swelling. The earlier you start treatment for an attack the better.

During an attack you should rest the joint and stay well hydrated. An ice pack wrapped in a towel and applied for 15 minutes at a time can also help.

If you have several attacks of gout, your doctor may suggest you take regular preventive treatment. These tablets aim to keep the uric acid level normal in the blood and need to be taken every day. Many people who take regular preventive treatment get no further attacks at all.

People with gout are more likely to get high blood pressure later on so it's a good idea to get this checked regularly as well.

Special diets used to be prescribed for gout sufferers but, with effective treatment, most people can eat almost anything. It's probably a good idea to give liver, sweetbreads and kidneys a miss and avoid excesses of alcohol.

If you're overweight try to lose a few pounds as this will reduce the level of uric acid in the blood and put less pressure on your joints. Finally, do discuss any other medication you take with your doctor or pharmacist as some tablets can make gout worse.

Fortunately, the majority of people with gout are treated very successfully and live completely normal lives.

Stay healthy and I'll see you next month. 

■ This is intended as general advice only. If you have any medical concerns please see your medic or GP.



VITAL NUMBERS

THERE ARE PEOPLE OUT THERE READY TO HELP YOU

RN Benevolent Trust: Grants, advice and income supplements for veterans. Call 0239 2690112 or email rnbt@rnbt.org.uk.

RN Association: Comradeship for all serving and ex-Service members of the RN, RM, QARNNS, WRNS, Reserves, RFA and RNXS. royal-naval-association.co.uk

Royal Marines Benevolent Fund: Relieves hardship among serving and former Marines and dependents. royalmarines.charities@charity.vfree.com or call 02392 547201.

ABF The Soldiers Charity: Support to soldiers and veterans. www.soldierscharity.org or call 0845 241 4820.

RAF Benevolent Fund: Help for RAF personnel past and present. rafbf.org or call 0800 1692942.

The Charity for Civil Servants: Helps anyone who has worked for the Civil Service and their dependents. Advice about support and financial help. csbf.org.uk or call 0800 056 2424.

Army Welfare Service: HQ AWS has relocated to Upavon. Confidential support for soldiers and families. army.mod.uk/welfare-support/family/default.aspx or call (UK) 01980 615975.

RAF Association (RAFA): Comradeship and care for current and former RAF members. rafa.org.uk/welfare.asp.

HIVE: Tri-Service information covering issues like education and health. 167 offices. hive.mod.uk.

Royal British Legion: Charity providing financial, social and emotional support to vets and serving, and dependents. www.britishlegion.org.uk or call 08457 725 725.

SSAFA Forces Help: Supports serving personnel, veterans and the families of both. Practical and financial assistance and emotional support. ssafa.org.uk or call 0845 1300 975.

Harassment, bullying or discrimination: JSP 763, The MOD Harassment Complaints Procedures, is a guide for Services and civilians. Contact the Defence Business Services on 0800 345 7772 (+441225 829572 from overseas) or em: PeopleServices@pppa.mod.uk.

Matters of conscience and whistleblowing under the Public Interest Disclosure Act. Call 0800 3457772. Select option four.

Service Personnel and Veterans Agency: Pay, pensions and personnel support for the Services and veterans, including the JPA system, and Joint Casualty and Compassionate Centre: 0800 0853600: 0800 1692277 or veterans-uk.info

MOD Occupational Welfare Service: Confidential advice on work and personal issues. Call 0800 345 7047

Service Complaints Commissioner: To make a complaint or seek advice, email: contact@oscc.gsi.gov.uk

Naval Personal & Family Service and Royal Marines Welfare: NPFS & RMW have three main offices in the UK, where the serving person's next of kin resides determines which office to contact.
Eastern area office - HMS Nelson - Tel: 023 92 722 712 - after hours 023 92 726 159.
Western area office - HMS Drake - Tel: 01752 555 041 - after hours 01752 555 220.
Northern area office - Helensburgh - Tel: 01436 672 798 - after hours 01436 674 321 (Ext 4005)
RM Welfare - 01752 836 395 (via duty officer, guardroom RM Stonehouse).

“ Gout is common. It affects about one in 200 adults ”

SUDOKU

	3					5	2	
	1		9			8		
8		7		2		1		
			7	9				5
			3	8				
4			5		2			
		5		7		6		3
		8			4		5	
	4	6					7	

Fill in the grid so that every row, every column and every 3x3 box contains the numbers 1 to 9

3	4	7	2	9	1	8	5	6
9	6	2	5	3	8	4	1	7
5	8	1	4	7	6	3	2	9
2	9	3	8	6	7	5	4	1
1	5	6	3	4	2	7	9	8
8	7	4	9	1	5	2	6	3
7	3	9	6	2	4	1	8	5
6	2	8	1	5	3	9	7	4
4	1	5	7	8	9	6	3	2

Solution to the March 2013 puzzle

CHESS



Compiled by: Carl Portman

Garry Kasparov once said that tactics are the means and strategy is the end with regard to chess. Indeed there are many books about chess strategy, but as Nigel Short wisely opined at the London Candidates, "forget strategy".

It is the tactical aspect of chess that we should all strive to improve. For certain, tactical manoeuvres at club-level win and lose games regardless of the overall strategy. Tactics are the key to gaining more points, folks, so get better at them.

Tactical positions must be practised and your brain has to be conditioned to look for tactical possibilities in any position. This includes pins, forks, decoys, deflections, overloading and removing key defenders.

One has to be able to calculate many moves ahead, not just the next move. The good news is this can be learned, with training. Much like crosswords or Sudoku, the practitioners invariably improve the more they do it.

I recommend therefore that the next book you purchase is one on tactics.

This month's position contains the theme of 'overload' in chess. This occurs



when a piece has more than one duty such as the black bishop here guarding a number of critical squares and trying to support a pawn push.

It is white to play and checkmate in three moves with best play. The sender of the first correct answer drawn will win a copy of the official tournament programme from the fourth London Chess Classic.

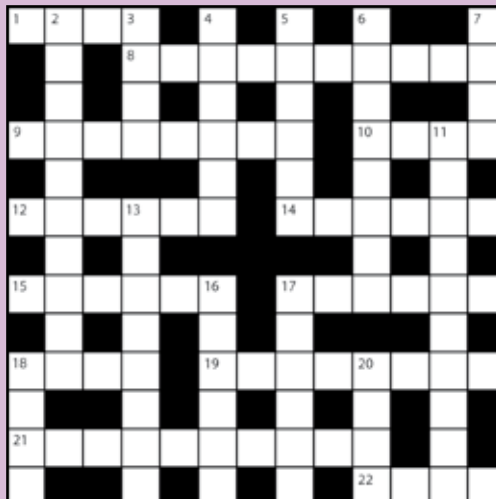
Send your answers to me at carl.portman@hotmail.co.uk please.

The answer to April's problem was that I continued with 1...Rxa2+ 2.Kb1 Rb8+ 3.Kc1 Ra1+ (I will also accept the better 3...Qa3+) 4.Kc2 Rb2+ 5.Kd3 Rd2 mate. Winner was regular reader Jerry Hendy from DE&S in Abbey Wood.

TOPICAL CROSSWORD

ACROSS

- Woodwind instrument with a double-reed mouthpiece (4)
- Neil Armstrong, Buzz Aldrin and Yuri Gagarin (10)
- Minute cell in the blood of vertebrates (8)
- Top _____, the BBC's motoring programme (4)
- Type of apple (6)
- Australian golfer, an inspiration to 2013 US Masters champion Adam Scott (6)
- Money received on a regular basis (6)
- Starchy plant tuber (6)
- Male star of the movies *Pretty Woman* and *Chicago* (4)
- See 6 Down
- Group whose hits include *Love Me Do* and *A Hard Day's Night* (3,7)
- A loving hit single for Prince in 1986? (4)



DOWN

- Intense brightness of light (10)
- _____ of *Eden*, a John Steinbeck novel (4)
- Soviet leader during the Second World War (6)
- US city rocked by explosions in April 2013 (6)
- And 19 Across. Iron Lady who died in April 2013 (8,8)
- Title for an emperor of Russia before

1917 (4)

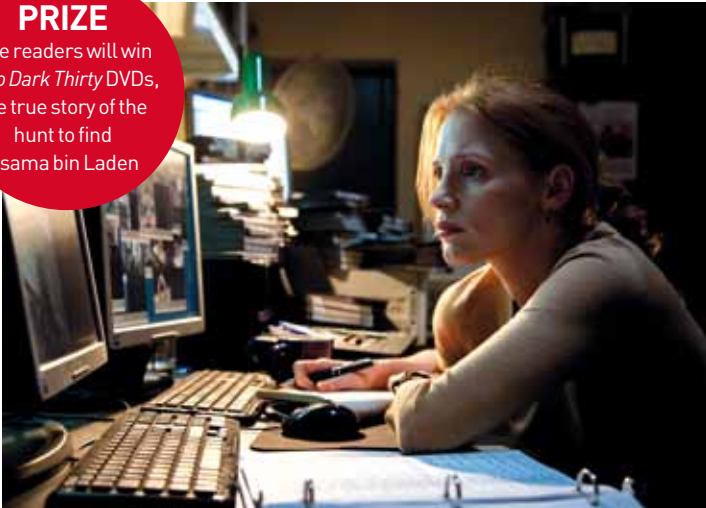
- Suites of rooms in a building (10)
- "A stitch in time saves nine" and "ignorance is bliss" (8)
- Ricky Gervais comedy with appearances by Kate Winslet and Robert De Niro (6)
- Gems found in oysters (6)
- Number of people at a football match (4)
- Large barrel used for storing wine (4)

SOLUTION (NO PEEKING)

- Across**
- Platlet 10. Gear
 - Pippin 14. Norman
 - Income 17. Potato
 - Gere 19. Thatcher
 - The Beatles 22. Kiss
- Down**
- Brilliance 3. East
 - Stalin 5. Boston
 - Margaret 7. Tsar
 - Apartments 13. Proverbs
 - Extras 17. Pearls
 - Gate 20. Cask

PRIZE

Five readers will win *Zero Dark Thirty* DVDs, the true story of the hunt to find Osama bin Laden



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The story of the hunt to find the world's most dangerous fugitive on Blu-ray™ and DVD

For a decade, an elite team of intelligence and military operatives worked in secret across the globe, devoting themselves to a single goal: to find and eliminate Osama bin Laden. The critically acclaimed

action thriller *Zero Dark Thirty* brings together an all-star cast lead by rising star Jessica Chastain. The story of history's hunt for bin Laden is released on Blu-ray™ and DVD on 10 June and *Defence Focus* has five

copies of the DVD to give away.

Zero Dark Thirty features an acclaimed cast including, in addition to Jessica Chastain, Mark Strong, Kyle Chandler, Jason Clarke, Joel Edgerton and Chris Pratt.

The hunt for Osama bin Laden preoccupied the world and two American presidential administrations for more than a decade. In the end, it took a small, dedicated team of CIA operatives to track him down.

Every aspect of their mission was shrouded in secrecy and many of the most significant parts of the intelligence operation are brought to the screen for the first time in this gripping film.

The account of the pursuit takes you inside the hubs of power and to the front lines of this historic mission, culminating in the special operations assault on a mysterious, suburban Pakistani compound. This adrenalin-fuelled action thriller is unmissable.

TO WIN

Email your name, address and phone number to dmc-newsdesk@mod.uk by 17 June. Include *Zero Dark Thirty* in the subject line.

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Meet the Mio Cyclo™ 300E: the weatherproof biking computer preloaded with cycle routes and road maps covering the whole of the British Isles and 22 western European

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PRIZE

One reader will win a Mio Cyclo™ 300E that covers the British Isles





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