

RAFALO UPDATE – SEPTEMBER 2015

This is the latest edition of the RAFALO Update, which includes information on changes to the Service. If you have anything you wish me to cover, please advise in the usual way via Adrian.morris941@mod.uk

SENIOR APPOINTMENTS LIST

Air Commodore A D Huggett to be Director of Management at Joint Forces Command, Brunssum with effect from 20 November 2015 in succession to Brigadier General T Møller.

Air Commodore W J Millington to be United Kingdom National Military Representative at Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe in August 2016 in succession to Brigadier W N Aldridge CBE.

Wing Commander A Dickens OBE to be promoted Group Captain and to be Officer Commanding No 6 Flying Training School, Royal Air Force Cranwell with effect from 7 September 2015. This is a new post.

GENERAL

EQUIPMENT AND MANPOWER

The Defence Budget and SDSR. On 8 Jul 15 the Chancellor made a major announcement on Defence spending as part of the budget in which the Government has committed to the Defence budget rising by 0.5% in real terms every year from 2016/17 to 2020/21. In addition the Chancellor announced that an additional £1.5 Bn per year will be available to the Armed Forces and security and intelligence agencies by 2020/21 and that we will meet the NATO pledge to spend 2% of GDP on defence every year of this decade. This is good news and a stable baseline against which we can plan.

The Spending Review and Strategic Defence and Security Review (SDSR) will continue. In the Spending Review, we will need to demonstrate that we are identifying every opportunity to be efficient and innovative; we are now able to re-invest the efficiencies we generate into the new capabilities and resilience we need to face the challenges of the future. The SDSR will decide where best to place these resources.

Air Platform Spares Contract Award. Selex ES has been awarded a contract worth in excess of £20M by DE&S's Defence Air Commodities Team to provide a spares availability service covering 15 air platform types stationed at over 45 operating bases. Data analysis software and real-time inventory management processes provide a computer modelling system that will predict precisely when and where spares will be needed ensuring they are readily available whilst at the same time minimising stock levels.

Puma Radar contract. Selex has won a £19M contract to provide an ongoing radar warning system for the RAF's fleet of 24 Puma helicopters helping future proof the platform's protection capabilities. The SG200-D Radar Warning Receiver detects and identifies emitters in high density and complex radar environments. The contract also includes additional sets for spares and training and several sets of 'A-kit' equipment – the antennas and cockpit control equipment needed to quickly install the full system as a helicopter switches over from training to operational environments.

Chinook Synthetic Training Equipment. Defence Equipment and Support (DE&S) has signed two contracts worth a total of £80 million to provide new world-class synthetic training equipment for the Royal Air Force and Royal Navy. A £51 million contract with Lockheed Martin UK will support Chinook Mk 6 training and a £29 million contract has been awarded to AgustaWestland to provide Merlin Mk 4/4a aircrew Synthetic Training Devices. The simulators will be housed at military bases in Somerset and Hampshire with the two contracts providing around 130 jobs. The

equipment will give a realistic representation of the operating environments the crews will fly in and will enable them to practice manoeuvres and procedures safely and repeatedly to enhance their learning. The Chinook Mk 6 synthetic training service will be housed in a purpose-built facility at RAF Odiham in Hampshire and will include two flight deck device simulators, a rear crew training device and a suite of computer based training facilities. The Merlin Synthetic Training Devices will be delivered from 2017 and installed in existing buildings at the aircraft Main Operating Base at RNAS Yeovilton

Chinook Project JULIUS. The Capability Director at Joint Helicopter Command (JHC) formally declared achievement of the Full Operating Capability (FOC) for the Chinook Project JULIUS cockpit upgrade, some six months in advance of its planned date and within budget. Project JULIUS modifies the Mk2/Mk3 Chinook helicopters to Mk4/5 configurations by installing integrated “glass cockpit” displays and associated systems, addressing safety risks associated with legacy aircraft configurations.

Op AD ASTRA - RAF100 Events. We are now just three years away from the RAF Centenary in 2018. CAS is keen to mark the milestone in an appropriate way and has tasked the Air Staff to manage and coordinate the RAF100 programme, now known as Op AD ASTRA. The 1 April 2018 will be marked by a service at St Clement Danes Church in central London with a reception to follow at an appropriate venue. On the preceding evening, a RAF100 themed concert will be held at the Royal Albert Hall organised by the RIAT committee. Major ceremonial events will be held in London in the week commencing 9 July 2018. A service will be held at Westminster Abbey on the morning of 10 July 2018, followed by a parade of up to 1500 uniformed personnel. The Parade will march up the Mall to form up at Buckingham Palace where Her Majesty the Queen will take the salute. There will then be a major flypast of RAF aircraft with the potential to include elements of other Air Arms in a supporting role. The ceremonial event will be followed by a reception in the grounds of Buckingham Palace on the afternoon of 10 July 18

RAF Association’s Storybook Wings Goes Digital. The Royal Air Forces Association is delighted to announce that stories recorded by parents for their little ones to enjoy while they are working away can now be sent digitally. This not only speeds up delivery (as we don’t have to wait for the postman) but also means you can download the stories direct to your devices making them more transportable and not requiring a CD player. We can still supply them in CD format, so parents now get a choice. Please contact your HIVE to arrange to make a recording or get in touch with the Storybook Team at storybookwings@rafa.org.uk to find out more. For more on the project visit www.rafa.org.uk/storybook

RAF Families Continuous Attitude Survey (RAF FAMCAS) Report 2015. The RAF FAMCAS report has been released and is available at <http://www.raf.mod.uk/community/>. The tri-Service report is at: [Tri Svc FAMCAS Report \(Internet\)](#)

- **Areas of Satisfaction in 2015.** Compared to RAF FamCAS 2014, overall levels of satisfaction with many areas relating to Service life are largely unchanged. RAF spouses responded positively about: their sense of pride in the Service; the SP’s job security; knowing other military families; RAF provided facilities; and family income/allowances.
 - **Impact of RAF lifestyle on family.** Many RAF spouses reported that the SP was able to take annual leave at a time which suited their family; a source of discontent in 2014. They also perceived themselves to be well supported by the RAF, and the number of RAF spouses who knew where to access welfare support from the Service increased significantly this year.
 - **Accommodation.** Most respondents owned a home or were currently saving to buy one, although over half of respondents were living in SFA/SSFA. In keeping with previous years, RAF families continued to report high levels of satisfaction with aspects of SFA/SSFA including: the overall standard; value for money; security; and the allocation process for SFA/SSFA.

- **Children's education.** Most RAF families with children did not experience any significant issues with their children's schooling. Respondents reported being able to access childcare without difficulty, and were satisfied with the quality, cost and opening hours of local childcare facilities.
- **Assignments and operational tours.** RAF families were satisfied with the amount of notice given to the SP before an assignment, and satisfied with most of the information provided to Service families by their new duty station. In relation to operational tours, RAF spouses continue to report satisfaction with the support received before, during and after the SP's deployment.
- **Areas of Dissatisfaction in 2015.** RAF spouses were less positive about the amount of separation from the SP; the effect of Service life on their own career; and the impact of Service life on their children.
 - **Accommodation.** Respondents were negative about the frequency of house moves and the prospects of buying/renting their own home. Despite being satisfied with other aspects of SFA/SSFA, RAF spouses were dissatisfied with responses to requests for maintenance/ repairs and the quality of maintenance/repair work.
 - **Continuity of own career.** The survey results indicate that many RAF spouses continue to experience difficulties in relation to their own employment, including having to leave civilian jobs due to Service reasons. Many spouses reported experiencing difficulties with finding employment; including those who have accompanied the SP on an overseas tour.

No 6 Flying Training School (FTS) to Reform. No 6 FTS will be re-formed on 7 Sep 15 to command and administer the UAS organisation. The UAS Mission is to: **Attract talent to Regular and Reserve RAF service and educate selected undergraduates on the role of Air Power, in delivering the nation's defence**

3 FTS, the HQ of which sits at RAFC Cranwell, currently consists of Elementary Flying Training (EFT) Squadrons for all three Services, 115(R) Sqn (CFS Tutor Sqn), 14 UAS and 12 AEF; along with MEPT provided by 45(R) Sqn. The HQ elements of the UAS and AEF are located within 3FTS under the command of Comdt RAFC Cranwell. Following the introduction of the RAFC Cranwell based MFTS elements for EFT and MEPT, 3 FTS will no longer be the DDH for UAS and AEF.

There are currently five FTS within the RAF structure:

Defence Helicopter Flying School (DHFS). Located at RAF Shawbury.

1 FTS. Located at RAF Linton-on-Ouse.

2 FTS. Located at RAF Syerston encompassing all ACO gliding.

3 FTS. EFT and MEPT based at RAFC Cranwell, and numerous locations around the UK currently covering UAS/AEF flying.

4 FTS. Located at RAF Valley.

While 5 FTS is next sequentially, that unit was last based at RAF Oakington and closed in 1974; it was then subsumed into 6 FTS. The next most recent operational FTS was No 6 based at RAF Finningley which closed in 1995, but elements of 6 FTS moved initially to RAFC Cranwell before 6 FTS disbanded. Fittingly for the UAS and AEF construct, 6 FTS was not solely focussed on pilot training but trained personnel for all aircrew specialisations as well as conducting basic

airman aircrew training, FD, AT and other activities, and Finningley was home to Yorkshire UAS and 9 AEF.

Following consultation with the Air Historical Branch and RAF Heritage it has been deemed that 6 FTS is the most appropriate unit to reform.

Yours, In friendship

Ady Morris