DECADE ON OPS

Air Force marks 10 years of C-130 operations in the MEAO

WHAT IT’S ALL ABOUT: C-130
Hercules captain FLTLT Mitch Beck, left, and co-pilot FLTLT Jerome Appleby guide their aircraft onto the sealed runway at Multinational Base Tarin Kot in southern Afghanistan during an Operation Slipper mission in October 2011. FLTLT Appleby is currently deployed with the C-130 detachment in the MEAO. Image digitally altered. Photo: LS Paul Berry

CAF looks at priorities

Radar wings celebrate

Cope North coverage
I would like to acknowledge the extraordinary efforts of the air operations and intelligence staff and of course the maintenance staff and the air load teams,” he said.

“Maintenance, load preparation and aircraft loading took hours and hours to make the tasks happen.”

“As the Australian presence in Iraq drew down, the presence of Afghanistan ramped up and the C-130’s mission of ‘flying important people and stuff to difficult places on time’ continued.”

Prime ministers, Defence ministers, CDF, Service Chiefs, as well as Australian celebrities such as Kylie Minogue, Tom Gleeson, Angry Anderson and Mick Molloy, are just a few of the important people to have flown in the C-130s.”

He said the C-130 detachment had consistently proven its worth since arriving 10 years ago.

“The C-130 motto ‘Mission First, Safety Always’ certainly rings true here in the MEAO,” he said.

“Back home in Australia, CAF AIRMSHL Geoff Brown thanked the efforts of more than a thousand Air Force personnel who had been involved with the deployment.

“The high standard of the C-130 detachment is the result of a dedicated team of aircrew and maintenance personnel, possessed with a deep knowledge of their aircraft and environment, and a willingness to get the job done,” AIRMSHL Brown said.

“Since the arrival of the first two 36SQN C-130Hs on February 11, 2003, this detachment has flown more than 28,700 flying hours and 4630 missions, comprising 16,000 sorties,” AIRMSHL Brown said.

“Over 27 rotations, our C-130 Hercules workforce have carried 219,900 passengers and more than 43,000 tonnes of cargo, along with more than 2800 aeromedical evacuation patients.”

“The success of this deployment could not be guaranteed without the support of the entire Air Force team — whether it is from our air load teams or intelligence personnel, from logistics to health services to administrative support.”

CAF said the deployment in 2003 set an exceptional record.

“Accounting for only 3 per cent of the total coalition C-130s in theatre, our Hercules carried 16 per cent of the total C-130 loads, and achieved a mission success rate in excess of 98 per cent,” he said.
Going strong

W2 Andrew Hetherington

FOR 10 years, Australia’s C-130 Hercules aircraft and the crews who operate them have safely transported ADF and coalition personnel and cargo around the MEAO.

The first MEAO C-130 detachment rotation began in February 11, 2003.

This year, Rotation 27 continues to provide the backbone of the ADF’s airlift capability into and out of Afghanistan.

The CO of Rotation 27, SQNLDR Ben Poxon, said it was humbling being in command of the detachment on the 10th anniversary.

“As I look back I’m proud of everyone in the detachment and the Air Force’s focus on mission first, safety always,” he said. “As of January 27, 2003, the detachment has accumulated some impressive figures hauling cargo and personnel.

As of January 27, Australian C-130s had moved 95 million pounds of cargo and more than 220,000 personnel in theatres,” SQNLDR Poxon said.

“This achievement was completed in 4638 missions and we are due to tick over 10 million pounds of cargo carried later this year.”

The C-130 detachment is now the only permanently based Air Force flying unit located at Al Minhad Air Base in the United Arab Emirates, as the AP-3C Orion detachment ceased MEAO operations late last year.

SQNLDR Poxon said while both units had different roles to play, it was great to be part of the ADF’s airlift capability and to have the usual weekly tasks to keep us busy until we go home in several months.”

I’m proud of everyone in the detachment and the Air Force’s focus on mission first, safety always.

– SQNLDR Ben Poxon, CO Rotation 27

Looking back at 10 years in the MEAO

W2 Andrew Hetherington

THREE members of Rotation 27 were among some of the first to deploy to the MEAO in 2003.

Detachment XO SQNLDR Andrew Colledge was on the first C-130 rotation to the MEAO in 2003.

“I got a phone call in February 2003 and was asked if I knew how to operate the map-making system we used at the time,” he said. “I was asked to deploy to Qatar in late February. The camp was called Camp Snoopy and we lived in tents.”

SQNLDR Colledge said the most memorable moment for him, as a C-130 pilot, was when he was tasked to plan the first C-130H mission into Baghdad.

“I think it was from Qatar to Kuwait, to Tallil into Baghad,” he said. “I didn’t go on the mission but I was proud to have been asked to do the job and my best mate became the navigator on the mission aircraft.

“I knew how to operate the map-making system and we were light on the ground for personnel, so I did the planning.”

Detachment senior loadmaster WOFF Dave Ebert deployed to the MEAO as a loadmaster in 2003 on the second C-130 rotation. He said they were based in Qatar and coalition aircraft took off from the base 24 hours a day.

“We were living 10 to a tent and it was hard to get sleep,” WOFF Ebert said. “Morale was high and it was what we’d all been training for. The crew I was on had a lot of firsts during the tour – we were the first Australian aircrew to travel to Kirkuk and Mosul in northern Iraq.”

He remembers one mission when they took fresh rations to US personnel who had been eating ready-to-eat meals for three or four months.

“After we offloaded they were quick to put on a barbecue,” WOFF Ebert said. “We had enough time during our stop to eat with them, which was a surprise.

“The other first for us then was we conducted the first aeromedical evacuation by an Australian aircrew. We transported a US aeromedical evacuation crew and three of their wounded personnel!”

C-130 avionics technician SGT Alex Woodward was also on the second C-130 deployment to the MEAO in 2003, based in Qatar. He is now back on his fourth deployment to the MEAO.

“On my first rotation I can still remember being on board a C-130 flying low-level above Baghdad in June 2003,” he said.

“Back then the aircraft had a glass bubble built into the top of the roof as an escape hatch and I was sitting up there looking outside the aircraft. I was there to see if any surface-to-air missiles or anything else was fired at us. I could see Baghdad and I remember thinking how lush and green it was there.”

Since the first C-130 aircraft took off on a MEAO mission in 2003, the detachment has accumulated some impressive figures hauling cargo and personnel.

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A myList of tasks have been car-
ried out on the C-130s, from count-
less engine and propeller changes to com-
plete scheduled services.

One of the prevailing issues has
been dust, according to WOFF Ian
Upton, who served as Warrant Officer

“We needed to introduce preven-
tative maintenance to clean components
earlier than when we might have done
during a scheduled R1 servicing,”
WOFF Upton said.

“We called it a ‘Desert Servicing’,
and it’s actually been introduced to
the extra routine maintenance around
the engines and the air-conditioning
systems.”

Responsibility for sustaining the
deployed effort from Australia falls
to several organisations - 375SQN,
84WG, and the Defence Materiel
Organisation’s Air Lift Systems
Program Office (ALSPO).

OC ALSPO GPCAPT Andrew
Doyle said short-notice and long-term
programs had helped sustain the fleet
in the MEAO.

“On several occasions, ALSPO
has provided short-notice engineering
analysis where a C-130 has sustained
some damage, and helped them return
to flight,” GPCAPT Doyle said.

“In longer programs, we have
worked with the operators and with
industry to improve reliability and
availability for the fleet.

“A great example was a series of
improvements initiated by an ALSPO
‘Tiger Team’ for the Rolls Royce
AE2100 turboprop, which solved some
persistent problems and improved
mission success for deployed C-130Js
between 2009 and 2011.”

The C-130 fleet has also been
shaped by the MEAO deployment
through a series of upgrades.
In 2003, only four C-130Hs car-
rried the necessary self-protection
equipment to face Iraq’s complicated
Integrated Air Defence System.

 Destruction of the system dur-
ing Operation Falconer allowed the
integration of the C-130 into the MEAO
but the enduring nature of the deployment
soon required the remaining
C-130Hs to be upgraded.

Self-protection systems were fitted
to the C-130J and tested between 2003
and 2004, allowing them to safely
operate in the MEAO.

With the J-models now car-
rying Air Force’s C-130 legacy,
the fleet is currently receiving a
Radar Warning Receiver system.

Still going strong: Above, a
ground crew look on as a C-130
powers up its engines for the start
of a mission in Iraq in August 2005;
below, a C-130 crew prepare their
aircraft for take-off as a US C-130
flies overhead in Iraq in April 2003.

Photos: Robert Nyffenegger and Darren Hilder

WO2 Andrew Hetherington

IT’S not just aircrew and ground
crew who keep the C-130s flying
in the MEAO, as LACW Karen
Conway can attest.

As one of two supply opera-
tors working with the C-130
detachment at Al Minhad
Air Base in the United Arab
Emirates, her job is to mainly
support the C-130 technicians
with aircraft parts.

“Once the technicians
request an aircraft part, we then
either go to our stock in our
warehouse or order it from
Australia if we don’t have it,” she
said.

“We don’t always supply
parts – we also send repairable
components back to Australia
so they can be reused. We also
source tools and other items
locally for the unit, such as a gas
fitting for our barbecue, which
we used on Australia Day.”

What they do is important
because “if the technicians don’t
get their parts, then the aircraft
doesn’t fly.”

“It feels excellent being here
as part of the detachment on
the 10th anniversary. I feel
proud and so does my family,” LACW
Conway said.

“I’m glad I came here.”

Happy to help: Supply operator LACW Karen
Conway with an aircraft part in the warehouse at Al Minhad Air Base
in the United Arab Emirates. Photo: WO2 Andrew Hetherington

Supplying the goods in MEAO

Still going strong: Above, a
ground crew look on as a C-130
powers up its engines for the start
of a mission in Iraq in August 2005;
below, a C-130 crew prepare their
aircraft for take-off as a US C-130
flies overhead in Iraq in April 2003.

Photos: Robert Nyffenegger and Darren Hilder
The year of innovation

Living the Air Force Values will help us face the challenges ahead in 2013, says CAF

Our Air Force is one of the best in the world because it is comprised of dedicated, proficient and committed people. Our engineering, logistics, support and aircrew roles are performed to the highest standard, whether working in Air Force or external enablers like the DMO.

Our professionalism and commitment to achieving outcomes – regardless of the challenges that may need to be overcome – is something that I am proud of. The proficiency and professionalism of our entire team determines the success of our Air Force. Our professional mastery is unquestioned.

Our Air Force is respected by the Australian community not only for the capability we deliver, but also for the way we deliver it. Our individual behaviours reflect on our reputation as an organisation, and our reputation in our communities.

The New Horizon program I introduced last September presents us the opportunity to re-evaluate our individual behaviours and our Air Force culture for the decades ahead. As part of this program, I will release the Air Force Leadership Companion later this year. This, with our shared values, will see our continued focus on building an inclusive, effective and respected Air Force and I look forward to visiting directorates within Canberra.

In 2013, we will need to continue to work collaboratively, meeting specific workplace objectives so that broader capability outcomes can be achieved.

I hope to travel to a number of bases again this year and to visit directorates within Canberra. It is a privilege for me to personally meet members of our Air Force and I look forward to visiting as many of you as possible in 2013, as we work through our priorities together.

My main priorities this year

➤ Maintaining and sustaining our tempo for Operations Slipper and Resolute.
➤ Supporting short-notice humanitarian and disaster relief efforts.
➤ Maintaining our focus on improving our Workplace Health and Safety outcomes.
➤ Continuing to improve productivity and reduce the cost of Air Force through reform.
➤ Exploring the full operational capability of the E-7A Wedgetail.
➤ Exploiting our full Vigilare capability.
➤ Continuing to build our ISR capabilities, including improving the capability of the E-7A Wedgetail.
➤ Consolidating the F/A-18F Super Hornet capability.
➤ Completing the planning for the introduction of the C-27J and EA-18G Growler capability.
➤ Continuing to improve and reform fixed and expeditionary air base operations.
➤ Refining and implementing initiatives associated with workplace diversity.

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**ADF ward closing in Sydney**

The ADF ward at St Vincent’s Hospital in Darlinghurst, Sydney, will close on March 31 when the five-year lease at the hospital ends.

The expiry of the lease will not reduce health care entitlements for ADF members, according to Commander Joint Health Command RADM Robyn Walker.

“Service personnel will continue to be hospitalised according to their medical needs,” RADM Walker said.

“The closure of the ADF ward is not expected to have an impact on waiting times. Defence health policy determines acceptable waiting times and this is monitored by local health staff.”

Defence has 14 healthcare facilities providing medical services to ADF members in Sydney. ADF members will continue to access inpatient health services at Holsworthy and RAAF Base Richmond.

The lease with St Vincent's was not renegotiated. Joint Health Command is exploring options for the establishment of new inpatient arrangements to supplement facilities at Holsworthy and Richmond.

The closure of the ADF ward is not related to the contract with Medibank Health Solutions. This was a matter between Defence and St Vincent’s Hospital.

More than 5500 ADF members have been admitted for health care since the ward opened on March 31, 2008.

For further details, visit http://tranet.et.deffence.gov.au/ADF/Health/WGC

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**Building on our ties**

CAF AIRMSHL Geoff Brown hosted his Turkish counterpart, General Mehmet Erten, Commander of the Turkish Air Force (TurAF), during his visit to Canberra earlier this month.

Accompanied by his wife, Mrs Muninever Erten, General Erten was in Canberra from February 11-13 where he was met by an Honorary Guard.

At Air Force Headquarters he held discussions with CAF on capability, strategic initiatives and areas of mutual interest between the RAAF and TurAF.

Turkey is not only a JSF partner nation, but also operates other platforms that are similar to some capabilities in the Permanent Air Force.

General Erten also met with CDF GEN David Hurley at Russell Offices and toured Headquarters Joint Operations Command, including the Air Operations Centre.

Accompanied by CAF, General Erten laid a wreath at the Keimel Ataturk Memorial on Anzac Parade and visited the Australian War Memorial where he laid a wreath at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier, toured the Anzac Hall and the aircraft displays.

General Erten also visited RAAF Base Williamtown on February 14, touring Air Combat Group and Surveillance and Response Group Headquarters, where he was briefed on current activities, including Wedgetail operations.

Turkey is awaiting delivery of four E-7A Peace Eagle aircraft from Boeing – similar to the Wedgetail. He also visited the F/A-18 simulator on base.

---

**CPL Nick Wiseman**

The quick actions of an Air Force firefighter during his Christmas break almost certainly saved a key building from fire, in catastrophic conditions at Wagga on January 8.

The immediate response from LAC Chris Adams has been described as being crucial to the protection of RAAF Base Wagga and its staff and resulted in him being awarded a CAF Gold Commendation.

Posted to RAAF Base Williamtown, LAC Adams was working at the Wagga base during the school holidays as an Australian Air Force Cadet instructor.

He said due to the bushfires, he needed to find out about road closures near Tarcutta as he had cadets due to arrive on base from that direction so he visited the base fire section for an update.

“After leaving the fire section I thought I saw smoke but initially dismissed it due to the thick smoke in the air from the nearby bushfires,” he said.

“After getting into my car I realised something was definitely up and ran to find a spot fire near Building 83.”

Knowing action needed to be taken, he ran into the accommodation office, which was housed within the building, raised the alarm, grabbed a fire extinguisher and headed back outside.

By this time the fire had moved into a 2.5m high hedge and progressed along the front of the large modified hangar – which also housed RAAF College Headquarters, the clothing store and warehouse – engulfing a barbecue and its gas bottle.

LAC Adams said even though he knew the extinguisher would have limited effect it was better than nothing.

“After discharging the bottle I ran to the clothing store to evacuate the staff and by the time I returned the on-base fires had arrived,” he said.

---

**Build a career from your own base**

**Burning ambition began with cadets**

At the time of the fire at RAAF Base Wagga, LAC Adams was spending some of his Christmas break assisting with Australian Air Force Cadet (AAFC) promotion courses as an adult instructor.

“Taking on the role of Detachment Executive Instructor he found himself in a similar role to what a Squadron Warrant Officer would undertake,” he said.

“I had a bit of a luck of the ordinary for an LAC to be doing this type of work but he had been able to develop the skills and knowledge from his role in the Permanent Air Force.”

The cadets gave me so much and I love being able to challenge both myself and the kids now as an instructor,” he said.

Making it to CFOPF rank during his time in the cadets, he said he hoped to once again wear that rank – but in the Permanent Air Force.

“I loved my time in the cadets,” he said. “It would be nice to rise to that rank again one day and I look forward to a long career in the Air Force.”

---

**Lucky escape**

A view of the north side of Building 83, a modified hangar which was scorched after a spot fire ignited a hedge at the front of the building and then spread into the eaves.

“It was a lucky escape,” Acting Detachment Executive Instructor CPL N.Wiseman said.

The immediate response from LAC Adams has been described as being crucial to the protection of RAAF Base Wagga and its staff.

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THREE of the Air Force's oldest serving wings celebrated their 70th anniversaries in traditional style at RAAF Base Williamtown on February 8.

During World War II, 41, 42 and 44WGs were formed between December 1942 and February 1943 as radar wings.

NSW Governor Professor Marie Bashir was the reviewing officer for a combined base parade to mark the historic occasion, attended by CAF AIRMSHL Geoff Brown and hundreds of current and former serving members.

Despite the scorching heat, the parade was run with flawless precision – the result of a short but intense rehearsal program led by 26SQN Warrant Officer Disciplinary Dave Tompkins.

Host Officer and Commander Surveillance and Response Group, AIRCDRE Stephen Osborne, said it was a special day.

"There is a great deal of history associated with all three wings and I felt very privileged to be a part of the event," he said.

41WG was formed in New Guinea on February 26, 1943, and was involved in a number of major battles including Milne Bay and Port Moresby.

42WG was formed on February 1, 1943, at Townsville and 44WG was formed on December 14, 1942, at Adelaide River.

OC 41WG GPCAPT Richard Pizzuto said the combined 70th anniversaries provided a unique opportunity to celebrate the wings' rich histories.

"All three wings remain affiliated with radar. 41WG operates ground-based radars, including the Jindalee over-the-horizon radar system, 42WG operates the new E-7A Wedgetail aircraft, and 44WG is home to the Air Force's Joint Battlefield Airspace Control capability."

"The wings are the oldest serving RAAF wings in existence, but they operate some of the newest capabilities in the Air Force today."

Following the parade, a family open day featured static displays from all three wings including an E-7A Wedgetail aircraft, Tactical Air Defence Radar System and the Tactical Air Operations Tower.

41WG logistics officer FLTLT James Grigson said it was rewarding to see it all come together on the day.

"We put a lot of work into this event over the last few months, and I was proud to be a part of this significant event, which was appreciated by the current and former wing personnel and families," he said.

A dining-in night was held at the Williamtown Officers' Mess that evening.

GPCAPT Pizzuto said the combined parade, family day and dining-in was a great way to celebrate the wings' long and illustrious histories.

"It also provided an opportunity for Air Force to display its rich heritage and build esprit de corps between the generations," he said.

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Triumph for teamwork

Exercise Cope North wraps up in Guam

FTLT Cath Friend

AIR Force’s biggest exercise of the year so far has wrapped up at Andersen Air Force Base in Guam.

Seven 3SQN Hornets, a 2SQN Wedgetail, a 33Sqn KC-30A and a 36Sqn C-130J have all returned to their home bases, along with more than 230 personnel who deployed with the RAAF contingent to participate in Exercise Cope North Guam 2013.

The large-force employment and air combat exercise began on February 4 and ended on February 15.

The exercise provided an opportunity for the RAAF to enhance its tactical skills and joint operational capability alongside military aircraft from the US Air Force and Japanese Air Self-Defense Force.

Australia, Japan and the US share a number of common interests, including areas such as humanitarian assistance and disaster relief.

Trilateral cooperation between the countries aims to promote regional stability and further strengthen ties.

In the first week of the exercise, a simulated humanitarian and disaster relief scenario was played out on the fictitious island of Guastala.

The island was directly impacted by a Category 4 Typhoon, reporting sustained winds of up to 196km/h.

The Guastalians reported catastrophic damage, with early estimates of 250 fatalities and over 900 residents sustaining injuries.

More than 60 per cent of buildings on the island had either collapsed or been seriously damaged, with the main port destroyed and all utilities offline.

Additionally, a volcanic eruption occurred on a neighbouring island of Tinian.

More from the exercise in the next edition.

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FTLT Cath Friend

WHEN personnel are given a weekend off during an exercise they usually take the opportunity to explore the region and relax after a hard week of work, but 200 members of Exercise Cope North took the time to give back to the local community of Dededo in Guam.

Located only 10 minutes from Andersen Air Force Base, Dededo is the most populated village in the US Territory of Guam.

It grew into a major village after WWII when the US Navy constructed housing for local people displaced by the war and for workers coming from off-island to help Guam’s development.

Community Service Day is a tradition of Cope North and this year the forces concentrated their efforts at five different locations, working to give much-needed help from painting elementary schools to planting trees at the local veterans park.

Forty members were assigned to a homeless shelter where they were tasked with giving the entire outside a fresh coat of paint.

CO 3Sqn WGCDR Tim Alsop said it was like the television show Backyard Blitz, where they walked in and gave the venue a total makeover.

“What an amazing day,” he said.

After a morning of hard work, the community leaders of Dededo cooked a barbecue lunch with the tunes of live music in the background.

SQNLDR Keely Cotter, of 81WG, said she really enjoyed participating.

“All three nations working together was a lot of hard work but fun and it was all to support the local community,” she said.

LEAD BY EXAMPLE: CO 3Sqn WGCDR Tim Alsop adds a splash of colour to the San Jose Homeless Shelter in the Dededo community.
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Key link to enemy

FLTLT Cath Friend

LINK 16 was the tactical data link that provided information to both C2 and non-C2 platforms about the disposition of friendly assets and enemy assets during Exercise Cope North Guam.

SqnLdr Kurt Simmill, of Headquarters Joint Operations Command, said Link 16 enabled all assets within the exercise to maintain situational awareness to a much higher level.

“It also meant the commanders could provide their command and control to the assets within Cope North,” he said.

“This was done by providing an accurate picture of the blue and red forces to the range control officers so they could ensure the best possible training was achieved during the exercise.”

“Without Link 16 there was no other way to get such an accurate picture.”

The RAAF Hornets and Wedgetail had this capability, alongside the F-15 and E-3 from the US Air Force, EA-18G Growlers from the US Navy and the F-15 and E-2 from the Japanese Air Self-Defense Force.

“This meant that they could help communicate back into the information hub, but the platforms without Link 16 could still be seen by the controllers,” SqnLdr Simmill said.

The Link 16 team consisted of four RAAF personnel, 16 US Air Force personnel and two civilians.
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44WG introduces in-house software changes, resulting in reduction to support costs

NUMBER 44 Wing has successfully introduced a new process to make operational software changes to the Australian Defence Air Traffic System (ADATS) that drastically reduces processing times and could potentially save Defence more than $1 million.

By adding the responsibility for making operational software changes to the 44WG ADATS Adaptation Data System (AADS) Cell duties, essential software changes can be made efficiently and professionally by an existing Air Force team, reducing the cost of contractor support.

Air Force provides Air Base Air Traffic Services at 11 sites across Australia. At each of these sites, portions of the ADATS software need to be adapted to meet local requirements. Some of the important changes that need to be made are to the ADATS communications switch which controls the external agencies that the joint battlefield airspace controllers are able to call.

Traditionally, these changes to the ADATS communications switch have been made using contractor support, but last year, SQNLDR Martin Lankshear, Staff Officer for Air Force Improvement at Headquarters 44WG, instigated an investigation with the AADS Cell to scope making some of the changes in-house.

“44WG had looked at the possibility of making these changes before without success, however, I thought that we would try again under the AFI Continuous Improvement banner,” SQNLDR Lankshear said.

Within 44WG, the AADS Cell had already been established to manage the configuration of the data processing and display system for the ADATS Radar and were approached about taking on the task of making the changes to the Switch Adaptation Data as well.

OC 44WG GPCAPT Stephen Edgeley said the staff within the AADS Cell were highly trained individuals that provided the wing with an extremely specialised service.

“Being able to make greater use of the capability they provide enhances 44WG’s ability to support air operations and makes better use of our resources,” he said.

Ground Telecommunications System Program Office staff, HQ 44WG personnel and the AADS Cell worked hard to seek a solution that both increased operational effectiveness and reduced costs while maintaining the required quality of the ADATS data.

“This is a great example of what can be achieved in the spirit of cooperation between agencies to foster the culture of continuous improvement within Air Force,” GPCAPT Edgeley said.

Air Force Improvement
February 28, 2013

This is a great example of what can be achieved in the spirit of cooperation between agencies to foster the culture of continuous improvement within Air Force. – GPCAPT Stephen Edgeley

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WHEN 36SQN was deployed to Iraq in February 2003, few believed it would last more than a year. AIRCDRE John Samulski, then CO of 36SQN, said he had "never been more certain" that "this footprint is going to last for ever". He was wrong - the air crew from 36SQN, led by then CO of 36SQN, AIRCDRE John Samulski, would deploy the C-130H as part of international efforts to help the Iraqi people.

On February 8, 2003, C-130H A97-009 one of the last A97s, touched down at Al Asad Air Base (AAAB) in Iraq. It was the first C-130H to land in the Middle East since the Second World War, and the final run of a long and distinguished career. The aircraft had been in service for 38 years, and had flown over 30,000 hours.

On February 11, the first C-130H arrived at base in the Middle East. 36SQN personnel set up new bases in the Middle East. A97-009 arrived at Al Asad on February 12, 2003.

During the war, Al Asad's twin-runway airfield served as a key logistics hub for Coalition forces. A97-009 and -012 left RAAF Base Richmond for the MEAO deployment to Iraq would be the beginning of a long-term commitment to the Middle East.

In 2002, many at 36SQN were wondering if the C-130H would be used in the Middle East. However, the A97s were airlifting cargo between Australia and the region, and the aircraft were flown to the MEAO with the knowledge that the aircraft would be deployed to Iraq. A97-009, -010 and -012 were deployed to Iraq, and the A97s were used for a variety of missions.

One of the first AMEs: The Australian Special Forces were a key player in the MEAO mission. The Special Forces were used for a variety of missions, including the capture of Saddam Hussein. The Special Forces were also used for a variety of other missions, including the capture of other high-value targets.

The first C-130H to land in Al Asad in Iraq was the last A97 to leave the RAAF. The aircraft was flown to Al Asad on February 8, 2003, and the aircraft was flown to Al Asad on February 11, 2003.

On February 11, the first C-130H arrived at base in the Middle East. 36SQN personnel set up new bases in the Middle East. A97-009 arrived at Al Asad on February 12, 2003.

In March 2003, Operation Bastille was conducted with Australia's Special Forces in western Iraq. Two aircraft, A97-010, joined the 36SQN members who were deployed to Iraq.

On April 4, the ground-war reached Baghdad, and on the night of April 12 a C-130H took off for Baghdad International Airport. After two weeks of flying over deserts, the crew members were going to the heart of the battle.

On April 14, the first C-130H was deployed to Baghdad to support Australian Special Forces deployments in the MEAO. Australian Special Forces built a reputation for seemingly being everywhere at once. In addition, the RAF was deployed to support the Special Forces.

The crew members were afraid that it would be all over by the time they arrived. However, they were able to land safely, and the aircraft was flown to Baghdad.

On April 11, Australian Special Forces were captured at Al Asad Air Base. 1600km west of Baghdad.

During the war, Al Asad's twin-runway became a key logistics hub for Coalition forces. A97-010 was used for a variety of missions, including the capture of Saddam Hussein. The Special Forces were used for a variety of other missions, including the capture of other high-value targets.

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Tribute to Magpies

CAF AIRMSHL Geoff Brown has recommended a new book honouring the RAAF crew of a Canberra bomber which was missing in action for almost four decades.

CAF was among the guest list at the official launch of Magpies in Vietnam on February 4 in Canberra.

Also joining the book’s author, retired GPCAPT Doug Hurst, was VCDF AIRMSHL Mark Binskin, former Chief of Air Staff, retired AIRMSHL Errol McCormack, National President of the RAAF Association, retired AVM Brent Espeland, and His Excellency Mr Michael Bryce, who is patron of the 75SQN Association.

Magpies in Vietnam details the discovery and later recovery of the RAAF crew of a 2SQN Canberra bomber which went missing during the Vietnam War.

On November 3, 1970, the bombsite of a 39-year mystery which saw two RAAF crew disappear without a trace during a night bombing mission in central Vietnam.

The fate of the aircraft and its crew – pilot FLGOFF Mike Herbert and navigator PLTOFF Bob Carver – remained a mystery for 39 years until April 2009.

Under Operation Magpie Return, an ADF team discovered the aircraft crash site in rugged terrain near the border with Laos.

The crew’s remains were repatriated to Australia in August 2009, marked by a special ceremony at RAAF Base Richmond attended by family, friends and Vietnam veterans.

During their time in Vietnam, crews from 2SQN used the radio callsign “Magpie”, reflecting the magpie lark on the squadron’s badge.

CAF said FLGOFF Herbert and PLTOFF Carver were the last two missing servicemen to return from Vietnam, so Magpies in Vietnam detailed an important part of Air Force history.

“I am proud to commend this book which honours the dedicated RAAF crew on board the Canberra, the significant role they played in Vietnam, and the solving of a 39-year mystery which saw two great men finally laid to rest,” he said.

“The Magpies made a significant impact in Air Force history and this book is also a tribute to them.”

Magpies in Vietnam is available from selected Canberra book shops.

IMPRESSIVE GUEST LIST:

Above, retired GPCAPT Doug Hurst at the official launch of his book, Magpies in Vietnam, and inset, from left, CAF AIRMSHL Geoff Brown, retired CAF AIRMSHL Errol McCormack, retired AIRMSHL David Evans, Mr Hurst, His Excellency Mr Michael Bryce and VCDF AIRMSHL Mark Binskin with copies of the book.

Photos: David McLennan

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NAVY HEALTH

Watching the Brits

A JOINT terminal attack controller (J Tac) instructor from 4SQN got the chance to see how the British do it first-hand and will now use that knowledge to help improve his own unit’s courses.

From late October to mid-December last year, FLTLT Andrew Kloeden observed the UK basic training course run by the R AF’s Joint Forward Air Control Training and Standards Unit (JFACTSU) at RAF Leeming.

FLTLT Kloeden said the purpose of the trip was to gain an appreciation of close air support techniques in use by a major coalition partner and compare course material and teaching methods.

“The Australian and UK courses were very similar in construct and content,” he said.

Being accredited school houses under the US Joint Close Air Support Action Plan Memorandum of Agreement ensures standardisation across participating countries.

“There are variations, of course, and 4SQN will review learning points to help improve the Australian J Tac course.”

JFACTSU runs five basic courses a year, graduating about 95 students, as well as concurrent tactical air control party and forward air control air courses.

After the seven-week basic course, certified J Tac’s complete a further six-month period of training at parent units. The time is used to consolidate and develop advanced skills in a job-specific environmental and usually two to three times before returning to their primary role.

FLTLT Kloeden said a unit with such a high tempo and student output required a large number of staff.

“JFACTSU benefits from having up to 12 instructors with most having deployed on numerous occasions before their J Tac career and on average three to four times as a J Tac in Iraq and Afghanistan,” he said.

“JFACTSU also has four aircrew posted to the unit who fly most sorties for the course, which improves consistency and allows for thorough debriefing from both the ground and air.”
Both friends and scholars

CPL Aaron Curran

HARVARD, Oxford, Yale and Cambridge are centres of learning that conjure up thoughts of excellence and achievement available to only a select few.

FLTLTs Alexander Barbaro and Cavin Wilson are among those select few after being awarded 2013 John Monash Scholarships to go to Oxford University to complete studies in their chosen fields.

FLTL Barbaro, an engineering officer from Headquarters Air Command at RAAF Base Glenbrook, is set to do three years study as a Doctor of Philosophy in Engineering.

He was with No. 1 Combat Communications Squadron (ICCS) last year when he applied for the award and now follows in the footsteps of FLTL Chris Lowe, who won the 2012 scholarship while at ICCS.

FLTL Barbaro said his studies would specialise in ultra-wideband (UWB) communications.

“Effective use of the electromagnetic spectrum is becoming increasingly important,” he said.

“UWB communications have the potential to be applied extensively within Defence and the wider community. In particular, the unique characteristics of UWB communications make it very useful to wireless communications and radar.”

Joining FLTL Barbaro at Oxford will be FLTL Wilson, a watchkeeper at Headquarters Joint Operations Command (HQJOC), who will study a Master of Public Economics, focusing on public economics, for two years.

“I am genuinely humbled by the opportunity to realise a childhood dream and study at Oxford,” FLTL Wilson said.

“This is something I’ve wanted to do for a long time and it will be a true honour to represent the RAAF in the UK. My dad couldn’t be more proud.”

The two flight lieutenants’ relationship is not just confined to the scholarship – they had gone through ADFA together and are both active members of Soldier On, a charity supporting veterans wounded on operations, raising funds and instituting programs.

“We did ADFA, officer training and were even in the squash club together,” FLTL Barbaro said.

“And also Soldier On. The General Sir John Monash Foundation requires scholars to have an active involvement in their communities. I think Australians really appreciate the work Soldier On is doing for wounded veterans.”

FLTL Wilson agreed, saying that he believed the panel took their consideration.

“But also the fact that we were serving officers with overseas experience,” FLTL Wilson said.

FLTL Wilson was deployed to the MEAO in 2010 as OIC Joint Movements Control Office Gulf States and OIC JMCO Afghanistan, while FLTL Barbaro deployed with Force Communications Unit 6 in 2011 as Kandahar Airfield Nodal Commander.

With their academic, military and charity backgrounds, FLTLs Barbaro and Wilson had an impressive CV to present to the panel that awarded the scholarships.

“The application process was fairly rigorous,” FLTL Barbaro said.

“We had to submit an application which included several written pieces and academic transcripts. We then sat state and national selection panels.”

The General Sir John Monash Foundation each year awards prestigious postgraduate scholarships to enable outstanding graduates to study abroad.

Scholars are selected on the basis of their demonstrated and potential leadership, contribution to their fields of endeavour and to the Australian and global community. For more information, visit http://www.monashawards.org/

New smartphone app

Air Force has launched its first official smartphone app. The free app, designed and developed internally by Air Force staff, is available now from the Apple App store.

Staff Officer for Community Engagement SQMNDR Nikki Frost believes the app will help the community remain connected to Air Force events and information any time.

“This app is a first for Air Force and aims to make it easier for the community, aviation fans, our personnel and their families to stay connected with the Air Force and our activities. Information about RAAF flying activities will be particularly useful at the upcoming Australian International Airshow at Avalon.

“The app can be updated in real-time so airshow attendees won’t miss a minute of RAAF flypasts and displays.”

The app features include:

➤ the latest Air Force News edition;

➤ aircraft specifications and images;

➤ details of upcoming flypasts and displays by the Air Force Band;

➤ downloadable wallpapers so users can personalise their phone with an Air Force flavour.

To download the app, go to http://rafapp. RAAFPhoneApp

IN BRIEF

Lord Howe Island rescue

A 3650N C-130J and a medical team from 7 Air Airlift Wing based in Evatt Squadron at RAAF Base Richmond evacuated an injured man from Lord Howe Island to Sydney on February 21. The assistance followed a request from the NSW State Emergency Operations Centre, as poor weather in Lord Howe Island prevented efforts to safely dispatch a civilian aeromedical transport aircraft. The patient sustained a serious injury and required urgent treatment at a Sydney area hospital.

MOU signed with DVA

DEFENCE and the Department of Veterans Affairs have come together to pledge closer cooperation and improved support services for current and former ADF members, with a new Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) signed in Canberra on February 6. The MOU has been developed to better coordinate the delivery of care and support services and establishes effective governance arrangements designed to ensure that the support arrangements remain effective. It also introduces the concept of the ‘Support Continuum’, the structure of systems that extends across Defence and Veterans’ Affairs to deliver the seamless care and support needed for eligible servicemen and women and their dependants. A copy of the MOU can be found at: http://www. defence.gov.au/headers/documents/ SWIP_MOU.pdf.

F-16s at Williamtown

US Air Force F-16 jets arrived at RAAF Base Williamtown on February 17 to participate in the RAAF’s Fighter Combat Instructors’ Course. Joining the F-16s in supporting the course are F/A-18 Hornets and F/A-18F Super Hornets from 81 and 82WGgs, an E-7A Wedgetail from 2SDN and a KC-30A tanker from 33SQN. The biennial five-month course, which is due to finish on June 28, graduates fast-jet pilots, air combat officers and weapons systems officers capable of tactics development, operation, validation and instruction.

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Geospatial Organisation (DIGO) and had a fabulous time both professionally and personally,” she said.

“To top it off I took four weeks annual leave to go travelling up the east coast of Australia to Cairns. I did the back-packer thing making new friends, having adventures and clocking up thousands of miles in a campervan, which was just amazing.”

After seeing Australia, CPL Bullough took the big step of telling her family that she was moving to Australia and then submitted her application for lateral transfer to the RAAF.

“My family have always been very supportive of my life’s choices,” she said. “However, they do miss me dearly but they know that it’s what I’ve wanted from an early age. On the plus side they are planning to visit in the near future for a cheap holiday.”

CPL Bullough served 10 years in the RAF, including operational service in Kuwait, Qatar and Afghanistan, which has prepared her well for the challenges she faces here – holding an important senior Core Target Material checking position at 468SQN and deploying to Afghanistan later this year.

Although living and working thousands of kilometres from home, she still has daily contact with all things British – including three other members at 468SQN who are ex-British Army and RAF, creating “a little Britain” in the halls of DIGO.

SHOW OF SUPPORT: Defence Special Needs Support Group founder Margaret Fisk with her son Brendan.

in 1994 and securing funding from the ADF, the group grew quickly.

The group was established in 1993 to help special needs ADF families with advice and support in new posting locations.

Mrs Fisk said after she moved to Adelaide in 1993 and had difficulty finding services in the new area, it was obvious something had to be done.

“We had a young child with multiple disabilities,” she said.

“With extended waiting lists it was almost impossible to attend our events during helping families transition to new posting locations.

As the group grew, it expanded into providing support and services for new posting locations.

Mrs Fisk and her husband founded the group, meeting with similar families to exchange information on areas where they had lived.

By sharing this information these families could start contacting services in their new posting locations as soon as a posting order was raised, increasing their chances of getting access to important services and treatment.

The information-sharing service remains one of the group’s biggest assets, expanding into posting plans with information available for almost every posting location in Australia.

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LEUT Peter Croce

AN Air Force clerk and an information manager have enjoyed their roles in helping to move ADF personnel and relevant documentation home smoothly from Operation Astute in Timor-Leste.

CPL Brett Lewis, of RAAF Base Wagga, is playing a pivotal role in coordinating the return of personnel as part of the transition plan that involves all Australian troops departing Timor-Leste early this year.

“My main role is personnel tracking and this requires me to liaise with several different departments to achieve the best movement plan for deployed personnel,” he said.

I also deal with any other personnel administration and during the first half of my deployment I was also given the role of weapons instructor for my section.”

He said the deployment had been a highlight of his 10-year Air Force career. “I’ve had the chance to meet a lot of fantastic people over the past seven months, both Defence and civilian, and many have shown me new ways of looking at life as well as those who are passionate about their jobs,” he said.

“He said he enjoyed his first operational deployment, being kept busy with the requirements of securing all personnel and many have shown me new ways of looking at life as well as those who are passionate about their jobs,” he said.

“At the Anzac walk through the back streets of Dili we have people coming up and thanking us. It is a pleasure to talk to the local community and listen to the stories they have to share about the ADF from previous years.”

FLTLT Kharn Tatam – who recently returned home to Australia – was in Dili as the information manager bringing ADF documents and information back to Australia for archive purposes.

“I deployed to Timor-Leste as the officer in charge of the Information Management Cell and managed a team of highly competent clerks to sort all records generated since the start of the International Stabilisation Force in 2006,” he said.

“The team worked in very hot and humid conditions in a hangar to ensure the information is accurate and up to date, for legal and historical reasons.

“I worked in an office that used to be a toilet, complete with the tiles on the wall – the team got plenty of laughs out of it and said it was a fair trade-off for the air conditioning!”

ON TOP OF THE ADMIN: Above, CPL Brett Lewis, who is coordinating the return of personnel in Timor-Leste; right, FLTLT Kharn Tatam, the head of the Information Management cell on Operation Astute. Photos: AB Lee-Anne Mack

LTCOL Phil Pyke

A RESERVIST airfield engineer is putting his skills to good use in the MEAO as Chief Engineer of Headquarters Joint Task Force 633.

Wg Cdr Terry McLennan has been deployed since August last year and is responsible for ADF facilities and infrastructure across the Middle East and Afghanistan. His responsibilities cover maintenance of base facilities, minor new works, hard-standing areas, as well as capital and infrastructure works across locations in the United Arab Emirates, Iraq and Afghanistan.

“I also have technical control over the engineers based under the Provincial Reconstruction Team (PRT) in Tarin Kot,” he said.

“They are undertaking projects such as reconstructing 14km of road in Uruzgan, rebuilding the Radio and Television Afghanistan building in Tarin Kot after an insurgent attack, and developing a solid waste management site for Tarin Kot.”

It is his third deployment to the MEAO, with previous deployments with Reconstruction Task Forces 2 and 3 in Afghanistan during 2007 and 2008.

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Image © Australian Department of Defence
READY FOR AVALON: 1SQN ACO FLGOFF
Matthew Bleach will be part of the Super Hornet team to travel to Avalon for the 2013 Australian International Airshow.

Photo: LACW Jessica de Rouw

LOADING UP IN MEAO:
Air Force Air Load Team members LACW Shan Origliasso and CPL Paul Cox, above, and LAC Alex Parsons, below, prepare to load stores on to a C-130J at Multinational Base Tarin Kot in Afghanistan, while left, air cargo specialist CPL Aaron Beavington packs cargo on to the aircraft.

Photos: LS Andrew Dakin

ANALYSING:
LAC Justin Strecker, a GIA from 462SQN, examines imagery taken from aerial platforms during the Joint Air Intelligence Surveillance and Reconnaissance Exploitation Environment trials.

Photo: LACW Nicci Freeman

COMMUNICATING WITH RICHMOND:
Above, CPL Nathan Abberton, of 1CCS, shows a portable radio to Chief Information Officer Dr Peter Lawrence during his visit to RAAF Base Richmond.

Photo: LAC David Said

READY TO RESPOND:
Left, RAAF Base Wagga Health Services medical officer FLGOFF Liz Gill with a RAAF ambulance.

Photo: LAC David Said
AN AMENDMENT to PACMAN affects all members in living-in accommodation comes into force on March 14.

From that date members of all ranks who live in will be subject to the provisions of a licence to live in. 

Head People Policy and Culture Richard Oliver describes the licence to live in as an accommodation benefit in which the mutual rights and responsibilities of both members and Defence are clarified.

The licence to live in gives members the right to a lockable room, where feasible, that is suitable for their rank and situation, the right to use the room and facilities free from unreasonable interference by Defence.

Members agree to take care of the property, to not intention-ally cause any damage, to not disrupt other members and to not let any other person live in the room. 

Rules provide for the maintenance and repair of the living-in accommodation in a timely manner. 

Licence to live in provides for disciplinary action should there be concerns about the licenced member’s behaviour or in living-in accommodation. 

Defence commits to the maintenance and repair of the living-in accommodation and in the most serious cases, a commanding officer will take care of their living-in accommodation. 

There are consequences for the licence to live in.

If members do not keep the licence to live in conditions, all members living in on March 14 onwards will be required to sign a room condition report under their licence to live in. 

An ADF member establishes a licence to live in when they have met certain conditions. 

When the member is allocated a room, in addition to signing for the room key, where applicable, they also sign to acknowledge that they will take care of their living-in accommodation. 

This means that their room is to remain in the same condition during their occupancy, allowing for fair wear and tear. To make sure it is clear what state the room is in, the member completes a room condition report by signing and returning it to the accommodation manager. 

These reports are for the member if they break the licence to live in conditions.

If the member’s room is entered by individuals and teams to strengthen Defence’s security culture and honour and celebrate outstanding achievements in security by those working for Defence.

The winners will be announced and presented with their awards at an official ceremony at Russell Offices in Canberra on March 28.

During any period in which a commanding officer has revoked a member’s licence to live in, the member is not eligible for any accommodation assistance from Defence. This includes rent allowance and access to a service residence. 

Disciplinary action can also be taken.

As part of the implementation of the new licence to live in requirements, all members living in on March 14 will be deemed to have a licence to live in. If they have not yet signed a room condition report, they are required to do so as soon as practicable after that date.

Members occupying living-in accommodation from March 14 onwards will be required to sign a room condition report under their licence to live in.

Any member absent on deployment or leave, without a signed room condition report, is required to sign the room condition report when they re-occupy their living-in accommodation.


The determination amending Chapter 2 Part 3 will be incorporated into the PACMAN on March 14.

Chapter 7, Part 3 will be incorporated into the Defence. This includes rent allowance and access to a service residence. 

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The determination amending Chapter 2 Part 3 will be incorporated into the PACMAN on March 14. Until then, see section 58B Amending Determination 2012D2 of September 17, 2012.

Security specialists in line for awards

Air Force has featured strongly among the 13 finalists chosen for the Defence Excellence in Security Awards.

The Deputy Secretary Intelligence and Security, Steve Meekin, announced the finalists on February 6 from nominations across Australia and all areas of the Defence workforce and Defence Industry Security Program companies.

“This year’s success has continued with the calibre of the nominations continuing to be outstanding and reflecting the excellent work being done in security across Defence.

“The high quality of the nominations provided significant challenges to the judging panel when it came to determining the finalists, he said.

Mr Meekin said the nominations continue to demonstrate the effort made by individuals and teams to strengthen Defence’s security culture and honour and celebrate outstanding achievements in security by those working for Defence.

The winners will be announced and presented with their awards at an official ceremony at Russell Offices in Canberra on March 28.

The Director of Relocations and Housing, Alan Mc Clelland, has reminded personnel applying for the Defence Home Ownership Assistance Scheme (DHOAS) to complete the Subsidy Authorisation Request Form within three months of settlement.

“Once members draw down a DHOAS loan with a home loan provider, they’re therefore eligible for subsidy payments until the form was submitted.

If members are deployed immediately after establishing a DHOAS loan and are unable to submit a declaration form prior to their deployment, they should notify DVA before they deploy,” he said.

If members consider that they are unable to satisfy all subsidy conditions required to commence payments, they are advised to request DVA.

DVA can be contacted on 1300 434 627 or email dhos@defence.gov.au.

Don’t forget to fill out form after settlement

Security specialists in line for awards

The Deputy Secretary Intelligence and Security, Steve Meekin, announced the finalists on February 6 from nominations across Australia and all areas of the Defence workforce and Defence Industry Security Program companies.

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During any period in which a commanding officer has revoked a member’s licence to live in, the member is not eligible for any accommodation assistance from Defence. This includes rent allowance and access to a service residence. 

Disciplinary action can also be taken.

As part of the implementation of the new licence to live in requirements, all members living in on March 14 will be deemed to have a licence to live in. If they have not yet signed a room condition report, they are required to do so as soon as practicable after that date.

Members occupying living-in accommodation from March 14 onwards will be required to sign a room condition report under their licence to live in.

Any member absent on deployment or leave, without a signed room condition report, is required to sign the room condition report when they re-occupy their living-in accommodation.


The determination amending Chapter 2 Part 3 will be incorporated into the PACMAN on March 14. Until then, see section 58B Amending Determination 2012D2 of September 17, 2012.

LICENCED PREMISES: Licences to live in will be beginning issued from March 14, requiring members who occupy LIA to sign an agreement to follow rules and maintain the condition of the property.

Photo: CPL Aaron Curran

IN THE RUNNING

Outstanding performance by a security specialist

- FLTLT Troy Murphy, 29SGN
- SGT Ewan Eadie, 1SGN
- Rachel Hinterholz, Navy Recruit School

Deputy Secretary award for outstanding leadership in security

- Tony Harvey, Directorate of Security Operations, Defence Security Authority
- SJNLRD John Cox, 396 Expeditionary Combat Support Wing

Outstanding contribution to security by a team

- Electronic Systems Division, BAE Systems
- Directorate of Cyber Security Operations, Information and Communications Technology Operations Division, Chief Information Officer Group
- Information Security and Assurance Branch, Chief Information Officer Group

Outstanding industry security innovation

- Andrew Jordan, Ross Human Operations
- Jason Brown, Thales Australia and New Zealand
- Terry Fakingham, CEA Technologies

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Home Truth: Personnel applying for DHOAS are being reminded to complete a subsidy authorisation request form within three months of settlement.

Photo: CPL Aaron Curran
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Mobile app designed directly for ADF and veterans will help people with PTSD manage their symptoms

A NEW mobile phone application has been developed to help current and former members to identify and manage mental health symptoms associated with post-traumatic stress.

Launched on February 18 by Warren Snowdon, the Defence Science and Personnel Minister and Veterans’ Affairs Minister, the application was unveiled to troops at Robertson Barracks in Darwin.

The application is called PTSD Coach Australia and was developed to help veterans, current serving members and their families identify the signs of post traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and encourage them to seek help.

From the results of the 2010 ADF Mental Health Prevalence and Wellbeing Study, Defence estimates that 8 per cent (or almost 2500) of the approximately 51,000 serving personnel could be expected to have a diagnosis of PTSD.

“A priority for this government is ensuring that a range of mental health services and support are available for veterans of all ages, young and old, and that these services are tailored to their needs and the needs of their families,” Mr Snowdon said.

“PTSD Coach Australia provides them with education about PTSD, information about self-assessment and professional care, and tools to manage the stresses of daily life with PTSD.”

Based on an app first developed in 2011 for US veterans, PTSD Coach Australia comprises tools for relaxation, positive self-talk, anger management, tracking symptoms, direct links to support and a scheduler to help users manage their self-care, health appointments and other activities.

PTSD Coach Australia was not designed as a stand-alone treatment or self-diagnosis app, but as part of a toolkit to assist people in managing PTSD.

“A clinicians’ guide on integrating PTSD Coach Australia into treatment is available on the Department of Veterans’ Affairs ‘At Ease’ website,” Mr Snowdon said at the launch.

“This app doesn’t replace clinical assessment and treatment by a qualified mental health clinician but supports it.”

PTSD Coach Australia was developed by the Australian Centre for Posttraumatic Mental Health for the Department of Veterans’ Affairs and the ADF and is available for Apple and Android devices. To download the app visit the App Store, Google Play or the At Ease website www.at-ease.dva.gov.au

MORE HELP

ADF personnel requiring further support and treatment can contact local Defence Health Facility or call 1800/IMSCICK (after hours (1800) 467 425).

Mental Health All Hours Support Line 1800 628 036 is a confidential telephone service for ADF members and their families available 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Services that can be accessed include psychology, medical, social work and chaplains.

ADF personnel who have deployed are eligible to self refer to the Veterans and Veterans Families Counselling Service on 1800 011 046. It provides counselling and group programs to veterans, peacekeepers and eligible family members and is a free call, open 24/7.

HELP IS AT HAND: Personnel use the new post traumatic stress disorder application launched by the Department of Veterans’ Affairs at Robertson Barracks in Darwin.

Photo: LS Jo Dilorenzo

THE FACTS

GIVEN the nature of military service and the increased likelihood of exposure to trauma, it is not surprising that the rate of PTSD in the ADF is higher than the general public – 8.3 per cent instead of 5.2 per cent.

But the PTSD Coach Australia app can help you learn about and manage symptoms that commonly occur after trauma.

■ Reliable information on PTSD and treatments that work.
■ Tools for screening and tracking your symptoms.
■ A scheduler that allows you to manage all your self-care, health appointments and activities.
■ Convenient, easy-to-use skills to help you handle stress symptoms.
■ Direct links to support and help.
■ Designed specifically for ex and current ADF personnel.
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Titanic Gumi Race at Wagga

SGT Mathew Kean

RAAF Base Wagga fielded an impressive armada of vessels in the now famous Wagga Wagga Gumi Race – a community event held on February 17.

The name Gumi (Goom-i) is a Pidgin English word for ‘rubber’ in Bilong Tani or inner tube. The idea came from a Central Lions Club member who had spent some time in Papua New Guinea, where they conducted a Gumi Race down mountain rivers.

TheADF trainees and staff had constructed their vessels in the relative secrecy of the base’s hobby hangar.

Air Force staff fielded a Hercules aircraft vessel named Skyfall 007 and the Air Force trainees named their catamaran Titanic – which lived up to its name, sinking during the race.

However, a dedicated airman rescued what he could from the Titanic and swam almost the entire 7km length of the river to the finish line. Upon arriving at the beach somewhat exhausted, a little girl asked why they had not simply given up 7km back. In true form, the reply came, “we are the Air Force and we never ever give up”.

Navy took second place, with Army a close third and Skyfall 007 in fourth position. The Hercules proved popular with the crowds, though, being selected as the best boat in show after the race.

TO AN athlete it can be ironic to win one of the toughest physical competitions around but end up with one of the most fragile trophies.

That is what LACW Brimlea Smyth experienced when she took out the Female Advanced Individual category in the Queanbeyan CrossFit Judgement Day 2013 competition held on February 2.

LACW Smyth, a clerk at 3SQN, took home a glass trophy and a sense of achievement after some tough competition in a field with a range of competitors including elite CrossFitters.

After doing three workouts of varying movements, skills rounds and repetitions, LACW Smyth faced a fourth and final round – all the while carrying a lower back injury incurred earlier that day.

“In the final workout of the day (WOD) I was up against two extremely elite CrossFitters,” LACW Smyth said.

“As I had no opportunity during the final WOD to see how the other two athletes were progressing, I had no idea if I was going to win so I just decided to just go all out.”

“It was very tough,” she said.

Although LACW Smyth has only been focusing on CrossFit for just over a year, she has gained a lot of experience in that time.

“Last year I was fortunate to make Regionals, then the World Games are next. The addictive nature of CrossFit, its environment and group mentality is one of the main reasons I took up the sport,” she said.

“It ended up substituting all the other sports and fitness training I was into.”

Next month LACW Smyth is hoping to compete in the Open competition and make the top 40.

“If I make that I will then progress to the Regionals in Wollongong and hopefully make the top 10.”

Although, if she goes one better and makes it into the top three at Regionals, then the World Games are next. And despite the physical nature of the sport, that fragile glass trophy remains in one piece.

CPL Aaron Curran

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- BSB40807 Certificate IV in Frontline Management
- BSB40207 Certificate IV in Business
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CrossFit is described as ‘a regimen of constantly varied, functional movements performed at high intensity in a communal environment that leads to health and fitness – a drawcard that LACW Smyth could not resist.”

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And despite the physical nature of the sport, that fragile glass trophy remains in one piece.

“IT gave me great experience coming into Queanbeyan.”

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JUDGED THE BEST: LACW Brimlea Smyth, a clerk from 34SQN at Defence Establishment Fairbairn, doing a CrossFit manoeuvre called the pistol squat. She won the Female Advanced Individual category in the CrossFit Queanbeyan Judgement Day competition on February 2.

Photo: CPL Aaron Curran

LACW Brimlea Smyth only took up CrossFit a year ago but is now taking on the best after latest victory

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