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MAGAZINES MOVING TO DIGITAL ONLY

From the Editor:

As you may be aware the New Zealand Defence Force (NZDF), like many public sector agencies and private businesses, is facing challenging times financially, and operating within tight constraints. A process has begun to reprioritise the Defence Force's budget to keep ships, aircraft, equipment and personnel ready to respond where needed.

While sharing the work the NZDF is tasked with remains a key priority for Defence Public Affairs, increased cost pressures means we are having a rethink in what we do in order to tell our story.

Therefore from October we will no longer publish a printed magazine. The monthly editions of *Air Force News* will be digital only, published online at our website nzdf.mil.nz, and available as downloadable PDF files or as viewable online magazines.

Across the media, print versions are reducing or disappearing. Most people access material online now, and we are no different.

We know this is a big change for many of you, and we thank you for your understanding. *Air Force News* has been running since 2000; its predecessor was *Contact*, first published in December 1940.

Readers will be able to access service magazines via www.nzdf.mil.nz/air-force-news. Followers of the Royal New Zealand Air Force on social media will see posts of the latest magazines and links to the digital magazine on the website. And if you would like a pdf issue to be emailed to you, please let me know at airforcenews@nzdf.mil.nz.

I hope you enjoy our front and back covers of this issue. The front includes some of my favourite covers from my time as editor and the back cover pays homage to the magazines that began the rich tradition of sharing stories from our Air Force.

Rebecca Quilliam

Air Force News Editor



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First Word



B | DEPUTY CHIEF OF AIR FORCE
Y | AIR COMMODORE D.J. HUNT

“It’s not just about resilience in the deployed location; it’s tested at home, ensuring we deliver our ‘business as usual’ outputs without those who are deployed and support our whānau. So for those who did pick up the slack thank you, your efforts are appreciated.”

I have been fortunate enough to have just returned from four days of visiting our Air Force contingent working in Darwin as part of Exercise Pitch Black 2024. Unfortunately I wasn’t able to visit the contingent at Royal Australian Air Force (RAAF) Base Amberley but you can read all about the exercise and the Amberley detachment further in the magazine.

Exercises or readiness training activities (RTAs) are an essential part of proving our readiness. They are where we put our knowledge, skills and experience to the test and prove to ourselves, and our partners we are up to the task of delivering Military Air Operations.

The environments we conduct RTAs in is just as important. This is how we show our resilience in the face of environments that differ from New Zealand climatically, perhaps working longer and different shifts as well as displaying our ability to project and support not just operations but also our people. RTAs are where curveballs are thrown and where we learn to deal with them.

Our contribution to Pitch Black was in the combat support arena rather than with a flying element and this provided a valuable test for us. Combat support is the foundation or bedrock on which Air Power is delivered and we need to remember that if we are going to deliver a combat effective force.

RTAs are also about our partners, working alongside them and testing ourselves to see how we stack up. For me it also meant formally engaging with leaders from Australia, Fiji, France, Germany, Japan, Malaysia, Papua New Guinea, Singapore and Spain.

These relationships, at both the tactical, operational and senior level, lay the foundations for future operations together as well as providing a level of personal friendship that can be called upon in the future. Being able to reach out and use these relationships is often key to smoothing wrinkles and enabling operations.

So how did we do at Pitch Black? Well our team knocked it out of the park.

As I engaged with people on the exercise the feedback was impressive. Our aviation refuellers were an integral part and were noted as having skills that others were learning from. Our security forces, air movements, firefighters and logistics teams were able to embed under the RAAF teams and proved they were interchangeable.

The team contributing to the space element led the Joint Commercial Operations (JCO) area, not by rank but through their knowledge and experience. The medics were able to learn from partner nations, proving our agility and the trust we place in them.

Plan Astra and the Joint Guidance Statement between ourselves and the RAAF talks about being ready, resilient as well as building through interoperability to interchangeability. Key to this is proving we can take our knowledge, skills and experience and apply it in a combat like setting. But the real key to making this happen is attitude, the way you approach the conduct of your roles and tasks.

And this is where the team at Pitch Black excelled and why I came away fizzing and excited having seen what was being achieved. Bravo Zulu team and keep swinging for the fences!

A FISHER MISSION



B | SENIOR COMMUNICATIONS ADVISOR
Y | JO PRIESTLEY

The Air Force has four “small but mighty” King Air 350s in its fleet at Base Ohakea and they have been flexing their muscles on maritime surveillance around the country.

RIES N





Two of the aircraft, modified with an electro-optic and infra-red camera, and surveillance radar sensor suite have been taking on the role since the retirement of the P-3K2 Orions last year, with the latest mission off the coast of Westport.

Squadron Leader (SQNLDR) Craig Clark, the Operations Flight Commander at No. 42 Squadron, was the tactical co-ordinator for this mission.

After a crew briefing that covered the mission brief, weather, and “ditching plan” in case of engine failure (a very low risk), we set off to the King Air on the tarmac. Lifejackets donned and, unable to stand upright in the small compartment, we slithered into our seats and strapped into our four-point harness.

From Ohakea we climbed to a cruising altitude of 22,000 feet where turbulent weather and a bit of ice was replaced by smooth flying and blue skies. It wasn’t long before we passed over the stunning snow-capped Kaikoura ranges on our way south to Westport.

When patrolling the King Air can fly at low speeds tucking itself under the cloud layer – as low as 250 feet when necessary. It can fly for about 3.5 hours making it perfect for patrolling around the coast of New Zealand out to 100 nautical miles, or for investigating a particular vessel or small groups of vessels at a greater distance.

SQNLDR Clark says the King Air is a more cost-effective alternative to the P-8A Poseidon for coastal patrolling as it’s a much smaller plane and uses less fuel and fewer crew needed to operate it.

“It frees up the P-8A to do other operations – it has bigger fish to fry.”

After descending to 2,000 feet off the coast of Westport we began patrolling on station – a predetermined search area – and began investigating fishing vessels, dropping at times to 300 feet.

The radar and camera are fitted below the belly of the plane and once engaged the camera sits lower than the aircraft’s wheels. The drag on the plane could be felt as the camera swivelled to capture its target.

With its ability to fly low and slow it can patrol close to the coast and take high quality video and imagery. This ability has proven invaluable in maritime surveillance. Together, the Defence Force and Ministry for Primary Industries (MPI) monitor vessels operating within New Zealand’s Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) – one of the largest in the world at 1.7 million square kilometres.

Fisheries New Zealand Director of Fisheries Compliance, Steve Ham said being able to use Defence Force aviation for deep sea offshore patrols is critical to our work in ensuring the sustainability of our fishing resources.

“Our ongoing working relationship with Defence Force, which includes joint sea patrols aboard their surveillance airplanes or navy patrol vessels, is vital to ensuring New Zealand legislation is being followed.”

The role of the air warfare specialist is to locate vessels using radar and pass that intelligence on to the air warfare officer to decide whether to look more closely at the vessel.



SQNLDR Clark says the video of the vessel actively fishing, along with the vessel name and serial number are sent to MPI for them to look at and follow up, if necessary.

Interestingly, the first vessel picked up by radar was NIWA's RV Tangaroa, New Zealand's only ice strengthened and dynamically positioned deep-water research vessel. Equipped for ocean science, exploration and marine engineering, Tangaroa provides a sophisticated environmental survey and ocean science platform throughout the South Pacific, Southern Ocean and Antarctica.

Four vessels were located during the patrol mission. The speck on the horizon that could barely be seen with the naked eye were startlingly clear using the cameras. Once we dropped to about 300 feet and were flying closer, it was very easy to watch people in slicks throwing bycatch overboard and handling the nets. Some species of fish were also discernible.

SQNLDR Clark said the vessels located during this mission (with the exception of the Tangaroa) were all stern trawlers - fishing vessels that drag huge nets through the water to catch fish.

"They all appeared to be trawling at the time that we saw them, so we flew past them to see what they were doing, whether they were conducting fishing activity and things like did they have the correct bird mitigation devices in place to reduce harm if birds hit the lines.

"We conducted several passes of the vessels at altitude and at low level to get the names of vessels, registration numbers and any activity on board and signs of fishing. This video is then given to MPI for them to look at."

The King Air aircraft is also used for the multi-engine training Air Force pilots need after becoming proficient on the single engine aircraft the T-6C Texan. It also provides training for air warfare officers using airborne consoles and a mission management system installed in the KA350 cabin.

Military aviators also receive training on the sensor suite – the on-board electro-optic and infra-red camera and a single array multi-mode surveillance radar.

Training on the King Air also promotes the transfer of skills to other aircraft (such as the P-8A) of crew integration, multi-engine handling, organisational awareness, advanced training, international operations, captaincy and surveillance.

LEFT
L-R FLTLT Hamish Quinn,
SQNLDR Craig Clark, SGT Daniel Wilks

MIDDLE
SQNLDR Clark coordinates the mission
from the rear of the aircraft cabin

TOP RIGHT
FLTLTs Day and Quinn consult on
next steps in the mission as they
approach the area of operation

BOTTOM RIGHT
SGT Wilks analyses the information provided
by the sensors



Operating in the Middle East

B | FLIGHT LIEUTENANT
Y | L

The maritime operation run out of the Middle East contributes Defence Force personnel to the multi-national Combined Maritime Forces (CMF) partnership. The roles are varied with some working at the operational and strategic level in CMF Headquarters, while others are farmed out to individual task forces with more tactical missions.

This deployment is a unique experience where some Air Force personnel get to experience working in the maritime domain. The operation is where maritime surface assets take the front seat and much of what air can offer is about enabling those surface assets to do their jobs effectively.

I work in the headquarters for Combined Task Force (CTF) 150. We work as a tasking agency, communicating directly with ships on the water to facilitate their tracking and seizure of smuggled goods that are used as funding for organised crime, and non-state actors.

We are essentially trying to track often ramshackle dhows, many of which look very similar, and guide the ships to ones assessed to be smugglers, among the many hundreds at any given time, across thousands of square miles of ocean. Easier said than done.

One of the first things an aviator may notice, is that things happen much slower than we might be used to. We are not tasking a flight, which can get to a location and return within hours, we are tasking a ship that will get there in a day, and needs another day to get back before re-supplying at a port.

Port visits cannot necessarily be moved easily due to many factors, which often creates hard timings for ships to work within. An inefficient course of action wastes two days of time instead of two hours, and the time of 30-50 sailors depending on the ship, instead of a small brick of aircrew.

While “flexibility is the key to airpower”, working closely with the other domains brings to light many of the factors that show why flexing air operations around other operations is simpler than trying to do the reverse.

Aviators are used to highly decentralised command and efficient decision-making chains. In order to have that flexibility mentioned above we often need lower-level commanders to have the authority to make decisions so we can get aircraft on-task sooner.

Parts of our mission involved decisions that needed to be made quickly, such as boardings, with the goal being to getting permissions to the ships as quickly as possible. It was often the aviators on the deployment from both New Zealand and Australia who would identify where these decision making chains could be more efficient.



Empowering a Flight Lieutenant to speak directly to the Group Captain equivalent could be more efficient than have that same information go from Flight Lieutenant – Squadron Leader – Wing Commander – Group Captain. Ultimately we arrived at a happy place where the right decisions had checks and balances and others were decentralised.

On the other side of the coin, it could be all too easy to sit in a headquarters, questioning decisions or limitations from ships to the headquarters, however I quickly learned that it's best to always give the benefit of the doubt and trust to Operations Officer or Commanding Officer of the ship in question.

They are in charge of a large body of personnel, have multiple departments reporting to them and have a large complex machine to operate that has 'live' serviceability rather than serviceability that gets determined pre-flight. The moment you doubt the Operations Officer or Commanding Officer you are not just doubting them, you are also doubting the engineers, the boarding team, the navigators, and everyone else in the crew.

I would often advocate on behalf of the ship when speaking to my own command, especially in situations where ships may give you an uncomfortable truth that a contact of interest was not where you thought it was, or was not what you thought it was such as when that dodgy weapons smuggler turns out to just have a lot of rice on board.

So bite the bullet, accept your edgy warfighting nickname is now just the "Uncle Ben's cereal killer", brush off the disappointment, laugh about it, and get to planning the next task with full credit to the ship for a successful boarding and search.

At the time of writing this, my rotation of CTF 150 seized about 7,000kg of narcotics and contributed to a notable seizure of advanced conventional weapons.

I've been lucky in my career to work a lot with Army also and I often catch myself wishing we could embrace some of their perspective in air, while also wishing at times they could adopt some of ours.

“It is a uniquely rewarding experience that can set you up well to understand maritime perspectives in a joint environment.”

All that said, it's still fun to call a chart a map just to get a rise out of someone, and I will continue to play dumb when my Navy friends refer to things by some niche naval term even if I know what it is, while welcoming the inevitable quips from them when a supporting aircraft is unserviceable or cites weather as a reason it can't fly.

Embracing the value of our differences is what makes us work together, but being able to laugh at them is what makes us stick together. That's a great quote that will unfortunately never be attributed to me as I write it anonymously from deployment.

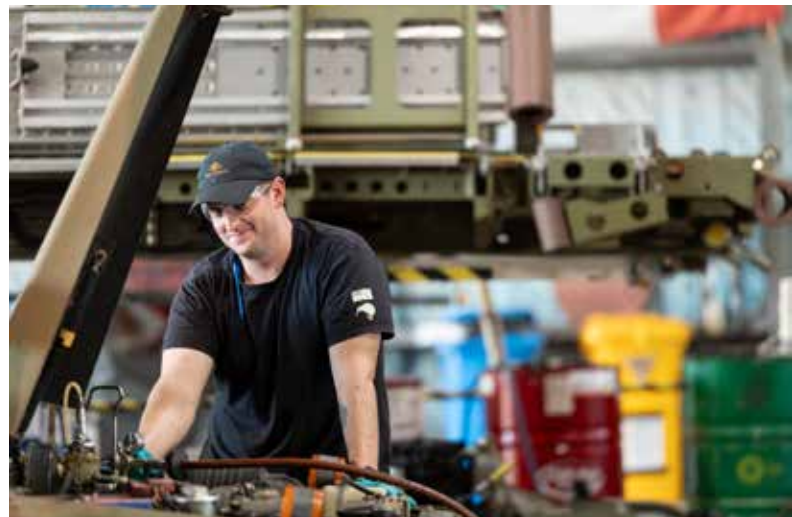
INTEROPERABILITY ON SHOW IN AUSSIE

WORDS | REBECCA QUILLIAM
PHOTOS | CPL RACHEL PUGH

From state-of-the-art fighter jets neutralising would-be enemies to collective problem-solving about simulated aerial threats, Exercise Pitch Black recently wrapped up in Australia with a large Royal New Zealand Air Force contingent involved.







Exercise Pitch Black is the Royal Australian Air Force's (RAAF) premier flying exercise held in northern Australia every two years with this latest iteration being the largest since its establishment in 1981. The Defence Force contingent numbered nearly 70 personnel, who were embedded within the Australian Defence Force.

Overall, more than 4,400 personnel from 20 nations attended over the course of the three-week exercise, with more than 140 aircraft taking part.

These include United States Air Force F-22A and the RAAF's F-35A Lightning II fighter jets, as well as combat aircraft from France, Germany, India, Indonesia, Italy, Japan, Malaysia, Philippines, South Korea, Singapore, Spain, Thailand and the United Kingdom.

Other aircraft include refuelling tankers, surveillance and air mobility aircraft. It's also the first time an aircraft carrier – the Italian Navy's 244 metre-long carrier *Cavour* – has been embedded at the exercise, operating in the Timor Sea.

The NZDF contributed a significant supporting role to the exercise across aircraft refuelling, space, security forces and military working dogs, military police, logistics and intelligence personnel, medics, chefs, ground support equipment technicians, an air load team, firefighters, public affairs, and personnel based in air operations headquarters.

Northern Australia has one of the largest military training airspaces in the world, providing the opportunity to conduct exercises on a scale and complexity that is difficult to achieve elsewhere. The total airspace for the exercise is almost the size of Great Britain.

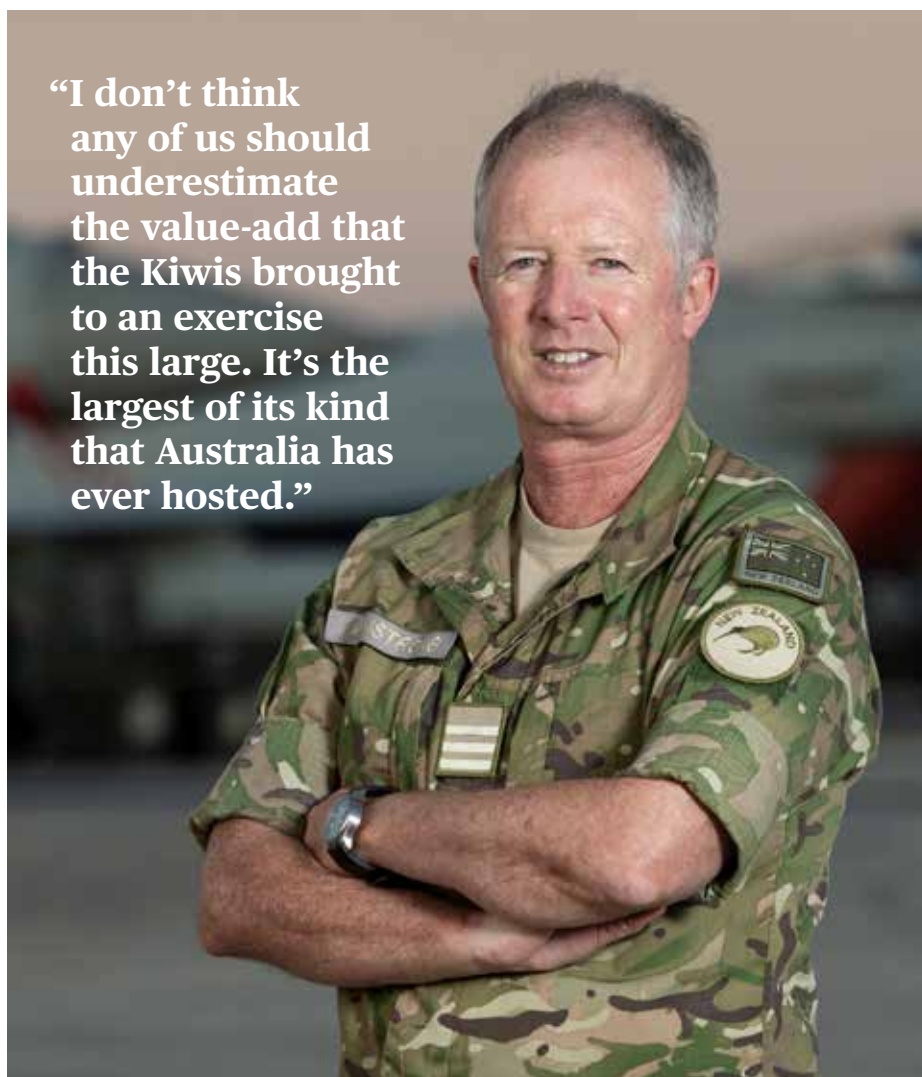
This year marks the 40th anniversary of the Defence Force's first attendance at Exercise Pitch Black in 1984 and the Detachment Commander Wing Commander (WGCDR) Andy Armstrong said it was still incredibly valuable for the Defence Force to participate.

"What I saw was a high level of cohesion between the Australian Defence Force and the New Zealand Defence Force. Because we are so interoperable and because we've been working so long together, once embedded within the Australian Defence Force we can become combat-effective really quickly."

It had been a "stellar performance" from the New Zealand contingent, with lots of positive feedback coming in from the Australian military, he said.

During the exercise the air component was flying 100–160 sorties a day.

“I don’t think any of us should underestimate the value-add that the Kiwis brought to an exercise this large. It’s the largest of its kind that Australia has ever hosted.”



“I don’t think any of us should underestimate the value-add that the Kiwis brought to an exercise this large. It’s the largest of its kind that Australia has ever hosted.

“The key benefit for our combat-support system was integrating with the Australians in the exercise. It’s a multi-national effort, but the significant thing for us is to work alongside the Australians in such a large-scale exercise.”

The skills practised by our personnel lend themselves to real-world situations around peace and security in the south-west Pacific and across the Indo-Pacific region, WGCDR Armstrong said.

“The focus that the team aimed towards was the highest professional standards they could possibly achieve. The sheer scale of this exercise meant we had to do everything to a very high standard.”

The Officer Commanding Exercise, the RAAF’s Air Commodore Pete Robinson, said the New Zealand Defence Force’s contribution was essential.

“The New Zealand Defence Force has been part of the fabric of Pitch Black since 1984, making them one of our longest running partners at this exercise,” he said.

“Embedded personnel from New Zealand worked with Australians and other nations at RAAF Bases Darwin and Amberley, and their contributions were essential to the success of Exercise Pitch Black 24.”

Exercise Pitch Black featured a range of realistic, simulated threats and involved combat aircraft flying various offensive counter air scenarios.

Supporting activities like air-to-air refuelling, intelligence surveillance and reconnaissance flights also formed part of the programme.

BY THE NUMBERS

GROUND SUPPORT EQUIPMENT

1,380,000L

FUEL RECEIVED

900,000

OUT TO REFUELLERS

15

SERVICES

4

TRAINEES



SECURITY FORCES:

2500+km

BASE PATROLLED

500+km

FLIGHT LINE PATROLLED

9000+

PATS TO MILITARY WORKING DOGS



REFUELLERS:

363

REFUELS

3,104,019L

FUEL DELIVERED



AIR MOVEMENTS

304

AIRCRAFT

1023

PASSENGERS IN

926+

PASSENGERS OUT



TOP LEFT:
Security Forces operator AC Jack Scelly oversees a flightline during night flying

TOP RIGHT:
RAF Eurofighter Typhoons

BOTTOM LEFT:
LAC Jodie Dunwell refuels an Indonesian F-16

BOTTOM RIGHT:
GSE technicians work in the No. 13 Squadron at RAAF Darwin



AUSTRALIAN EXERCISE AN EASY FIT

Working alongside Australians in the major multi-national Exercise Pitch Black felt like being at home for Leading Aircraftman Marno Boshoff.

Even though it was his first exercise in Australia, the ground support equipment technician from Nelson said working alongside personnel from the Royal Australian Air Force (RAAF) was a comfortable fit.

“New Zealanders fit in really well on the exercise. The two countries have that relationship and working with the Australians just felt like home. It feels like you’ve known those guys forever and you just fit in with them.”

Leading Aircraftman (LAC) Boshoff’s main role was maintaining a number of specialist vehicles and ground equipment.

Being part of the exercise was “absolutely breath-taking”, he said.

“We saw how all the other countries do different things. We do the same job but it was good to see how differently they work and how professionally everybody conducts themselves in their own unique way.”

LAC Boshoff’s own work was recognised, receiving a commendation from the Officer Commanding Exercise, the RAAF’s Air Commodore Pete Robinson, for outstanding performance.

“It took me by surprise,” he said.

Born in South Africa, LAC Boshoff moved with his family to Whanganui when he was five-years-old. He lived there for seven years before the family moved to Nelson, where he attended Waimea College.

Now posted to Base Ohakea, he said he was inspired to join the Air Force in 2020, almost straight out of high school, by his grandfather, who was in the South African Air Force, first as a radio technician, then as a pilot.

“I felt a strong pull to follow in his footsteps after hearing about his dedication and crucial role he played. Joining the Air Force as a ground support equipment technician felt like a way for me to carry on his legacy.”

Joining the Air Force was one of the best decisions he has made, LAC Boshoff said.

“I like to meet new people and make new relationships. A big thing for me is that I’ve made a lot of friends – some are more like family now. You make those lifelong friendships in the service.”



INTERNATIONAL EXERCISE HIGHLIGHT FOR MEDIC

Leading Aircraftman Maggie McLean's career highlight was taking part in one of the largest flying exercises to be held in the Southern hemisphere, Exercise Pitch Black.

The Air Force Medic was recognised for her work by receiving an Officer Conducting the Exercise award, something she said she was honoured to receive.

Nelson-born LAC McLean and her colleague Sergeant Nadia Currie, were in charge of the Darwin crew.

"We set up a medical room for primary healthcare and saw anyone who needed to be seen. We also did some training sessions with the other militaries, which did presentations on their aeromedical capabilities. It was great hearing about what they do and why they do it."

The exercise also gave LAC McLean an opportunity to spend time with Australian colleagues and watch other Air Forces' jets on the flight line.

"Our Anzac partners were really accommodating. The Aussies were great with communications and if we needed anything they were happy to help us out. There weren't too many challenges we faced," she said.

"It was my first overseas trip, so it was a good learning experience finding out how those exercises are put together, particularly when you're working with other countries and using the other medical units.

"I love interacting and working with other militaries and their medical teams. I also love to travel so being able to explore different areas of the world while representing our nation and looking after our troops is a big dream."

LAC McLean was inspired to join the Air Force after attending a Defence Careers Experience week in Burnham in her final year of school.

"I decided going the military route was what I wanted to pursue. I had been an active person my whole life and the thought of having a career where I could serve my country while being paid to stay fit, continue my education, play sport and travel, appealed to me a lot more than the university lifestyle.

"After a gap year travelling, I joined the Defence Force as a medic and am still loving it more than four years on.

"One of the coolest New Zealand exercises I've covered was a No. 3 Squadron exercise qualifying helicopter loadmasters on the door machine gun. I got to spend the day flying around in the back of the NH90 in the Waiouru Military Training Area, watching them shoot the machine guns attached to the doors.

"The scenery was beautiful and we finished the day flying past Mount Ruapehu at sunset which was incredible."

Submarine hunting



WORDS | REBECCA QUILLIAM
PHOTOS | CPL MADDY BUTCHER

Hawaii recently played host to the Rim of the Pacific (RIMPAC) exercise, one of the largest maritime exercises in the world. A No. 5 Squadron P-8A Poseidon and its crew joined the international event.

It was the first RIMPAC the Poseidon had taken part in since joining the Air Force fleet. The Royal New Zealand Navy also sent a crew on HMNZS Aotearoa.

The Defence Force contributed about 250 personnel to the exercise including the Poseidon's crew, an air detachment, Aotearoa's crew, operational divers from HMNZS Matataua, medical personnel, a dental team and other New Zealand Defence Force personnel operating in various headquarters and supporting units.

The biennial multi-national combined exercise, hosted by the United States Navy, focused on all aspects of maritime-based warfare disciplines. It involves nearly 30 nations, 40 surface ships, three submarines, 150 aircraft and 25,000 personnel.

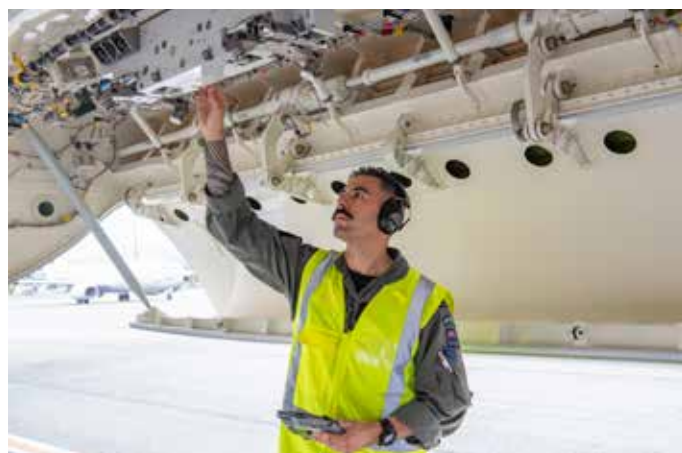
Air warfare specialist Corporal (CPL) Ben Kingston-Smith took part in nine missions on the exercise. He specialises in acoustics and spent much of his time tracking submarines.

"The first flights we did were in aid of testing equipment for electronic warfare. The rest were submarine warfare flights, operating around other nations' ships and our role was to track submarines.

"We were really successful in that role."

The idea was for the maritime aircraft to keep constant coverage of the submarines and pass information to other Air Forces, he said.

"There would be a long period of time – around 16 hours – in which multiple vessels were coming in. The first plane would come in and track the submarine and they would do a hot-hand over to us and we would pick up where they left off.



We would then do the same for the next plane.

“There was a lot of communication with aircraft during handovers for deconfliction of flight paths and hand over the relevant information.”

The crew was receiving briefs from the American operations officers who were putting together the exercise packages for them, CPL Kingston-Smith said.

“I had such a great time. It was an excellent exercise.”

The team was working closest with the Americans, Canadians, Indians and British, he said.

It was a vital exercise for working with our partner nations, CPL Kingston-Smith said.

“We get far more beneficial training in terms of being able to work with real ships and submarines in a large maritime environment. Getting to work with the real deal make a huge difference for our training.

“Another big part is interacting with other crews and where we can swap how we perform tasks and learning from other countries.”

“It was such a good opportunity for us to get that training that we can’t get at home.”

TOP

The P-8A and its crew at Pearl Harbor, Hawaii

MIDDLE

P-8A Poseidon at RIMPAC

RIGHT

SQNLDR John Maviava conducts pre-flight checks on the P-8A

Age no barrier for recruit course graduate



WORDS | LAURA JARVIS
PHOTOS | CPL SEAN SPIVEY

Aircraftman Pam Paterson's 44th birthday will be a hard one to forget. "It was amazing to wear the uniform and show my family and friends how far I've come."

While many spend their birthdays with family and friends, Aircraftman (AC) Paterson was slogging it out on one of the hardest parts of the Air Force recruit course at Base Woodbourne.

Nicknamed "the longest day", the exercise pushes recruits to the limits; tackling physical and mental training on minimal sleep to build endurance, team work and resilience. She was the oldest recruit to take on the challenge.

"It was a highlight to complete that on my 44th birthday, getting through the experience with everyone; having a laugh and a cry all at the same time," AC Paterson said.

She showed enough grit over the longest day and the recruit course to be awarded this year's Andrea McNabb Perseverance Cup, which is awarded to the recruit that best demonstrates the ability to overcome challenges and persevere in the face of adversity.

She will now turn her training to the logistics trade, to start her aviation career.

The Air Force and its aircraft have been in the background for much of AC Paterson's life – she grew up in Greenhithe, near Base Auckland, and attended Sunderland Kindergarten, which was in the old married quarters in Hobsonville.

But it wasn't until recently that she was inspired to enlist.

She had been working in logistics for a small manufacturing company when the spark was a conversation with a work colleague about their son's journey through training.

"I want to serve my country and be a part of something special. I want to show my kids what can be achieved by working hard and making a difference when called upon to help others, no matter the situation," she said.

"I want to be challenged, tested and rewarded for my efforts. Most of all I want to provide for my whānau and hope they will follow in my footsteps and serve their country."

Air Force recruits go through a 12-week course, learning military drill, weapon training, and field skills.

"The hardest part I have found is the physical side. I have to remember I'm not the same person I was in my 20s, some things have changed," AC Paterson said.

"I try my hardest to keep up to the best of my ability and that's all that I can do."

And while she may be the oldest recruit on the course, she is looking forward to sharing her wisdom with the next generation.

"I would like to become a sergeant to help guide the younger members coming through the service," she said.

"You can make the job work for you as long as you're prepared to work for it. Building resilience and knowing how to get back up after knockdowns."

Dream come true for new aircraft technician



WORDS | LAURA JARVIS
PHOTOS | CPL SEAN SPIVEY

For Aircraftman Warren Bignoux, growing up on the small island of Mauritius, 2,000km off the east coast of Africa was “like paradise on earth”.

“Sandy beaches, tropical weather, coconut trees, everything you could dream of,” he said.

While the beach was never far away for Aircraftman (AC) Bignoux, neither was the airport and living next to it sparked a lifelong passion that has led him to the Royal New Zealand Air Force (RNZAF) as an aircraft technician.

He has recently completed the recruit course at Base Woodbourne and will move to trade training, hoping to work with the P-8A Poseidon or incoming C-130J Hercules.

“From a very young age, I saw airplanes landing and taking off from home. I was fascinated by the fact that such a huge machine could fly, so I started researching about the physics of aerodynamics,” he said.

“I then progressively became so deeply involved that every weekend after lunch, I would jump on my mountain bike and ride through the fields to get to the airport.

“Living in Mauritius can be very competitive, as people always push themselves to excellence especially at the academic level.”

AC Bignoux moved to New Zealand when he was 19 to pursue his dream of becoming an aircraft engineer.

“I chose New Zealand primarily for my trade training qualifications but ultimately the quality of life over here was the pivotal factor,” he said.

“Nature played a big role in my decision as well, seeing farm animals everywhere, famous landmarks and the culture.”

After arriving in New Zealand, he spent two years studying at Air New Zealand Aviation Institute, while working part time as a cleaner to support himself.

“Being one of the best airlines in the world, it set a high standard for me for what to expect in the aviation industry,” he said.

“Working alongside aircraft maintenance engineers as part of my on the job training was the cherry on top. Having a chance to assist work on the Air New Zealand airliners and also being able to get inside a brand new A321 NEO before its first commercial flight was a great experience.”

He got a taste for Air Force, working on a C-130(H) from the United States Air Force and a Boeing 757 from the RNZAF.

AC Bignoux initially found it hard to find work in his dream field without a New Zealand residency, working as a maintenance engineer in a factory post study.

“After hard work and commitment, I got my residency that enabled me to join the Air Force,” he said.

Graduating from the recruit course, he will soon get to put his knowledge into practise, making his dream of being an aircraft engineer a reality.

“I have enjoyed meeting new people and making new friends along the way, sharing the same experience with them which will forever be engraved in my life,” he said.

“I can’t wait to get stuck right into my trade training, as I know that will be fun and I can get my hands dirty. I am looking forward to working in a team environment where everybody cares for each other and who are willing to push each other to their best.”



Man with a plan

WORDS | LAURA JARVIS
PHOTO | CPL SEAN SPIVEY

With 43 years of service in the Air Force and a second career in emergency management, Wing Commander Bill Rowling is someone you want to have on your team.

He is one of the many Defence Force uniformed and civilian staff who volunteers their time to support local communities.

After moving to Blenheim in 2022, Wing Commander (WGCDR) Rowling has served as a reserve, sharing his time and expertise between Base Woodbourne and the Marlborough Civil Defence Emergency Management Team.

When the Interislander Aratere ferry grounded in June, WGCDR Rowling jumped into action as the Marlborough Civil Defence and Emergency Management (CDEM) Incident Management Team's operational planner.

This role is part of the Coordinated Incident Management System (CIMS); a framework used by agencies and organisations with set roles and responsibilities ensuring a structured response to events and disasters of any scale.

"From an operational planning perspective, the event was relatively straightforward. The priorities were the preservation of life, protection of infrastructure – the ship – and protection of the environment including marine and land-based wildlife," said WGCDR Rowling.

"Where the complexity of the operation came in was the tactical execution of the plan, which required several specialist agencies providing subject matter expert advice and action.

"It should not be underestimated the level of involvement and commitment made by a large number of national and regional agencies and individuals to bring about the successful resolution to this event."

WGCDR Rowling moved into the emergency management space as part of his planned transition to his life after service.

"For many personnel leaving the New Zealand Defence Force, we have to re-invent ourselves into an alternate career stream," he said.

LEFT
WGCDR Rowling

MIDDLE
AC Rowling preparing a sidewinder missile launcher on an A4-K Skyhawk, 1980

RIGHT
WGCDR Rowling with his son AC James Rowling, Anzac Day 2024



“The first indication I had for a post-Defence career focussed in emergency management was when I entered the national CIMS training stream in 2013.”

Over the next several years, he built on his training through positions with the New Zealand Coastguard and Air Force Bases Auckland and Ohakea.

“In 2017 I was posted to Ohakea as the Director of Operational Airworthiness, which had a secondary duty as the role of Controller within the Base Ohakea Emergency Operations Centre,” he said.

“My training paid dividends as I was controller in two live aircraft incidents. While we got through the response with no serious injuries or fatalities, both incidents were not textbook examples of emergency management and highlighted the difference between slow-time scripted training exercises to fast-paced dynamic events.”

Following end of service transition training with the National Emergency Management Agency and Marlborough CDEM, he moved to Blenheim. Here he joined the reserves, continuing his passion for emergency management and the CIMS structure.

“I rewrote the base’s Standing Orders for Incident Management, aligning them with current base personnel and infrastructure, and CIMS. Following on from that I am now implementing those incident management plans in terms of readiness, response and resilience,” he said.

“The difference between Woodbourne and its sister bases, Auckland and Ohakea, is that by virtue of its smaller size in a smaller region, the base is more connected to the community and faces different challenges.

“Base Woodbourne is often called on to support community responses to the prevalent floods and fires throughout Marlborough, Tasman and Westcoast Civil Defence regions.”

While WGCDR Rowling considers emergency management his second career, he has always had connections from the very beginning of his service.

“I was a member of the Air Force Base Woodbourne Search and Rescue team in the early 1980s as a young adventure-seeking armoureder.

The majority of his Air Force career has been centred on the P-3K2 Orion and the Airborne Surveillance and Response Force (ASRF).

Remustering from armoureder to air ordnanceman on the P-3K2, he progressed through to air electronics operator and, after commissioning in 1995, an air electronics officer/air warfare officer.

“I deployed on numerous search and rescues, maritime and border resource protection, and military air operations. This was interspersed with four operational deployments, the first to Timor-Leste in 2001, followed by three deployments to the Middle East.”

WGCDR Rowling is undoubtedly a wealth of knowledge and is now focussing on passing this on.

“Recovery is often overlooked as an incident response winds down and we shift our focus to the next crocodile closest to the boat. Each phase – risk reduction, readiness, response and recovery – holds equal importance to any event.

“In a lot of responses I have been part of, I have found that individual readiness for an event or emergency is low. This mainly surrounds having a plan for individuals and their whānau to be self-reliant for a period of three to seven days in the case of an emergency, which sees main supply lines or utilities cut off. These plans should include individual grab bags, contact lists, reserves of food, water and medication, lighting and cooking methods.”

“In an emergency, communication and situational awareness are key to any response, ensuring information is being passed to the right people at the right time – just like any military operation.”

Interoperability importance

B | DEPUTY CHIEF OF AIR FORCE
Y | AIR COMMODORE D.J. HUNT



“We aim to deepen interoperability between common systems and platforms, to provide technical and ground-based support in each other’s countries, with an additional aim for aircrew interchangeability within four years.”

This statement is an extract from the Joint Guidance Statement recently signed by our Chief of Air Force (CAF) and his Royal Australian Air Force (RAAF) counterpart. The short story around intent is very clear – our two Air Forces must continue to deepen our already close relationship to better prepare for the challenges presented in a world of increasing complexity and uncertainty. This is also true in regard to working with all of our closest partners.

The Air Force has long recognised the importance of interoperability, having been an active member of the Five Eye Air Force Interoperability Council (AFIC) since the mid-1960s. AFIC’s purpose, simply, is to enhance interoperability between member nations, and currently has eight capability-focussed working groups in specific areas ranging from Aerospace Medicine through to Counter-UAS (uncrewed aerial system).

So, what is actually meant by “interoperability” and “interchangeability”? Avoiding formal definitions, perhaps at a high level the difference is obvious; fundamentally, interoperability is two organisations able to work together, share information through technology and systems, and operate effectively as a joint or combined team.

Interchangeability suggests a higher standard that includes all of that plus the ability to seamlessly exchange individual people, equipment, doctrine and/or systems between trusted partners.

Both concepts operate through multiple dimensions; technical (equipment, hardware and systems), procedural (standards, procedures and doctrine), human (training and culture), and information.



“NATO notes that interoperability doesn’t necessarily require common military equipment. What it considers important is that equipment can share common facilities and can interact, connect and communicate, exchange data and services with other equipment.”

Examples of interoperability would be providing a P-8A Poseidon into a coalition Intelligence, Surveillance, Reconnaissance (ISR) mission with a mix of different ISR assets, or deploying a Force Protection detachment.

Interchangeability could see our P-8A aircrew seamlessly replace an RAAF P-8A aircrew in the same roles with no (or very little) notice, or provide our C-130J Hercules maintenance personnel into an RAAF unit where they are immediately effective with no need for additional training/credentialing.

Exercise Pitch Black 24 has recently provided exactly this opportunity for quite a few ground trades, including aviation refuellers, military police, security force, medics, and intelligence personnel. Read their stories, talk with them, and then make your own!

To meet CAF’s guidance to deepen interoperability, and move towards interchangeability, I encourage you to actively seek out opportunities where you can put into practise working with our partners, “test” our interoperability, and bring to light areas that we are doing well and those that need further development.

TOP

CPL Rikki Rawleigh and patrol dog McClane assist RAAF Security Forces at Ex Pitch Black

MIDDLE

RNZAF and RAAF personnel during an EX Pitch Black open day

RIGHT

Supply technician LAC Abby Owens supports No. 13 Squadron supply teams at Ex Pitch Black

Recognition for going above and beyond

B | SENIOR COMMUNICATIONS ADVISOR
Y | DAVID WILLIAMS

Air Force medic Corporal Tessa Black has been awarded a Defence Meritorious Service Medal (DMSM) for her work during a busy 2023, which started with the devastating Cyclone Gabrielle.

Two DMSMs and four Chief of Defence Force (CDF) Commendations across the services and civilian staff were awarded recently.

“These awards recognise our people who have gone above and beyond what is normally asked of them,” said Chief of Defence Force Air Marshal Tony Davies.

“They provide exceptional service in the areas of operations, strategic relationships, safety in training, scientific leadership, and search and rescue operations.”

Corporal (CPL) Black was aboard the first NH90 helicopter sent to survey Cyclone Gabrielle’s impact on her home province of Hawke’s Bay which quickly became a rescue mission for stranded members of the public who were threatened by rapidly rising flood waters.

On the first day she winched eight people and their dogs to safety and over the following days was involved in the rescues of a further 70 victims caught in the flood waters, silt and slash.

“We train quite a lot with winching and moving around the aircraft. That training is so valuable and when something happens it’s just second nature.”

The rest of 2023 was no less demanding, with CPL Black being on call for 138 days and participating in 80 per cent of Defence Force responses to emergency requests for assistance.

These included rescuing a hunter with a broken femur, and a trumper with a dislocated shoulder. She was also involved in a medical evacuation from Antarctica.

CPL Black enlisted in the Air Force straight from high school in 2014. She was named Air Force medic of the year in 2021 and part of the team that helped evacuate people from Kabul before the Taliban’s takeover.

“I’m very lucky that I’ve been in the right place at the right time and been able to go on those trips.”

Meanwhile, the NZ Army’s Lieutenant Colonel Sean McCulloch was also awarded a DMSM for his work reviewing training accidents and the Army as a system – a highly complicated piece of work that has resulted in the risks associated with Army training being notably reduced.

Since the end of 2021 he also developed the Army’s “Capstone Orders”, which provide a critical mechanism to better integrate with New Zealand’s military partners, as well as assisting the Army’s senior leadership to re-establish and enhance critical relationships with partner nations.

The four CDF Commendations covered personnel working internationally and on safety and weapons systems.

The Navy’s Commander Sarah Bamfield was awarded a CDF Commendation for her work as the Defence Adviser to the Fiji, Kiribati and Tuvalu over a three-year period.

Commander Bamfield’s positive influence among female leaders in Fiji was also widely acknowledged.

The NZ Army’s Captain Joshua Rohorua earned a CDF Commendation after he was deployed at short notice to Europe last year to help with the coordination of military resources to Ukraine.

Captain Isaac Stuckey was awarded a CDF Commendation for developing the new way the New Zealand Army conducts live firing by night.

This project was in addition to Captain Stuckey and his team’s normal responsibilities and he took a substantial amount of the project on himself to allow his team to focus on delivery of their routine courses.

Defence Science and Technology’s Timothy Raybould was awarded a CDF Commendation for his work with the successful introduction of new defensive capabilities to the Royal New Zealand Navy frigates.

Dr Raybould not only proved the ship’s combat system in its own self defence, he also proved it in advanced defence of other high-value escorted ships.

“I think we were so busy trying to rescue everybody I didn’t think about being scared.”

- Corporal Tessa Black



The right people at the right time: The RNZAF mission to Rwanda

B | AIR FORCE MUSEUM OF NEW ZEALAND
Y | RESEARCH CURATOR SIMON MOODY,



In July 1994 the Air Force was at the forefront of the rescue effort during one of the worst humanitarian disasters of the 20th century. They were the right people at the right time, and the C-130(H) Hercules was the aircraft that got the job done.

In April of that year, the Rwandan Government, dominated by the majority Hutu tribe began a brutal genocidal campaign against its opponents, in particular, the smaller Tutsi tribe, killing about half a million people. The Tutsis fought back in the form of the Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF). The RPF defeated the Government forces and about two million Hutus fled over the border to neighbouring countries to avoid retribution by the RPF.

The humanitarian crisis deepened as thousands started to suffer from hunger and disease.

The United Nations' refugee agency UNHCR was tasked with providing relief. The New Zealand Government committed to providing money and a C-130(H) Hercules to assist in transporting aid to the struggling refugees through the auspices of the UNHCR.

The 36-strong detachment, led by Wing Commander (WGCDR) Graham Lintott, flew out of New Zealand on July 25 in Hercules NZ7002, captained by Squadron Leader Chris Mehlhopt.

The Hercules arrived in Nairobi three days later before proceeding to Entebbe airport in Uganda to begin operations on the newly named Operation Reforge.

The Air Force team consisted of two full aircrews, loadmasters, maintenance personnel, security staff, a medic, a communications operator and an administration team.

Their tented camp was set up in the shelter of a wrecked airliner, destroyed in the famous hijacking at Entebbe in 1976. Work began almost immediately, on August 4 with flights to Goma in Zaire (now the Democratic Republic of Congo), where many of the refugees were concentrated. There was little order at Goma with locals using the runway as a road and children playing close by.



With almost 2,000 people dying each day in the camps, time was of the essence and the crews and ground staff worked long hours and made frequent flights into Goma and other airfields.

Flights into Bukavu proved easier and were as vital, given nearly 400,000 people were sheltering around the town. The Air Force aid to Bukavu was especially timely, as WGCDR Lintott reported: "Our flight was the first food they'd had delivered in a week, so they were pretty desperate and pleased to see us."

To increase the speed of delivery, pallets were delivered in a combat off-loading manner, by gently pushing them off the loading ramp onto the ground as the aircraft moved along the ground.

All of this was done many thousands of kilometres from home. The types of cargo carried included beans, corn soya/mash, cooking oil, biscuits and six British Land Rovers with a communications team.



On 20 September 1994, nearly two months after deployment, members of the team returned home to Base Auckland and their families. Remarkably, the C-130(H) had delivered 3.5 million pounds of freight for refugee relief in just two months, as well as carrying over 250 passengers.

This was the highest total of any participant in the relief operation and amounted to a pound of freight for each member of the New Zealand population at that time. NZ7002 had also flown 10 per cent of the allotted hours for the C-130(H) annually, in other words, five times as many as it would have done in the same period normally.

The legacy of Operation Reforge was the sheer number of lives saved. As Group Captain Bruce Ferguson, the Base Commander at Whenuapai put it: "We were the right people there at the right time."

WERE YOU PART OF THE OPERATION REFORGE TEAM IN 1994?

Do you have any memories or items you collected? If so, the Museum Research Team would love to hear from you. Please contact us at research@airforcemuseum.co.nz

LEFT

Hercules on the tarmac at Goma, Zaire

MIDDLE

The squadron used a wrecked airliner as a strategic windbreak at their base in Entebbe Airport. Uganda.

RIGHT

Hercules on the tarmac at Goma, Zaire with local children.

Leading the Youth

WORDS | REBECCA QUILLIAM
PHOTOS | LAC ANDY JENKINS

The Defence Force's tri-service Youth Development Unit offers courses to hundreds of young people every year. It's co-ordinated through the Ministry of Social Development for young people seeking jobs or training to upskill themselves for future employment.



The unit's instructors say the role is hugely rewarding and they recommend other Defence Force personnel take on the challenge. We wanted to know first-hand what the job entails and so we spoke with Corporal Tania Rangitawa, who had just finished a five-week course with trainees.

You've just finished a course that culminated in an exercise in Kaipara. What did that involve?

The field training exercise was the third and final consolidation exercise, of all the skills and tools the trainees had been taught for the past six weeks. It was where the trainees could enhance their self-discipline, co-operation, trust, confidence, resilience and respect, as well as developing an appreciation for the outdoors and healthy recreational options.

Trainees also conducted field craft activities, including; navigating the area using maps and grid references, being self-sufficient by packing, carrying and rationing all of their own gear and supplies, constructing improvised shelters using the natural resources, gaining physical conditioning through pack marching the terrain (to gain an idea of what the body is physically capable of under unusual conditions), and performing in front of crowds through speeches and skits.

The trainees are observed on their ability to lead, work as a team, communicate effectively, meet timings, manage health and hygiene, and manage their own living space.



How did the trainees cope with all that?

As we had a diverse group of trainees, their individual experiences varied. However, for a large number of them the outdoors were what they were used to and they thrived in that environment. It provided them with an opportunity to stand out and use their prior knowledge to upskill the other trainees. The exercise was designed to challenge the trainees, however as they had been exposed to the activities before, they found enjoyment in achieving tasks from lessons learnt.

Why did you want to take on the instructor role in Youth Development Unit?

I had heard about it through word of mouth. I was encouraged by my boss to go out there and give myself a new challenge. At first my response was "Nah, I'm too shy, I have no idea how to deal with youth who have many different diverse backgrounds". In the end I decided to take up a new challenge in my career and applied for the role as a Youth Development Instructor.

What's the best thing about your role?

The best part of the role for me is, seeing the growth of the individuals from the moment they march in, to the day they march out. It is selfish but gratifying to know, I had a hand in guiding them toward a better path to gaining employment or ongoing training in the future. Although the Limited Service Volunteer courses are mentally and physically challenging it is also very rewarding.

What are some of your biggest challenges?

One of the biggest challenges I have found is, trying to get the trainees to see the big picture. First of all I noticed a lot of the trainees lack confidence, trust and security when they first arrive on course.

But if we can encourage and motivate them enough and show they are able to get through the initial phase of breaking old habits and starting new routines, the course will give them the tools, skills and experiences to undertake and endure many of life's challenges.

How long have you been an instructor for?

I have been an instructor for over 12 years and still loving it and passionate about empowering and training youth for future employment and or ongoing training. As mentioned before so much for being shy, and now still at the unit.

What would you recommend about the role to others?

I have found many benefits in this role, however, I would recommend this job to anyone who would like a new challenge in their career and be ready for a very adventurous ride – the trainees can make your course very interesting and rewarding!

What is Qualifying Operational Service?



Qualifying Operational Service (QOS) is a term used to describe service that has been carried out in areas that have been assessed as having environmental or operational risks to Defence Force personnel that is significantly greater than those of peacetime activities.

It recognises service that goes above and beyond the normal duties of military personnel and exposes them to significant risk of harm.

Typically QOS would include deployments to war zones, peacekeeping missions, and international disaster relief operations, but not all, as there still needs to be the significant risk of harm.

After a decision to deploy Defence Force personnel has been made, the Chief of Defence Force (CDF) reports to the Minister for Veterans about the threat level of that deployment. CDF assesses the operational and environmental threats and if the threshold for a significant risk of harm is met or exceeded, then the CDF will recommend that the Minister makes a qualifying service declaration on that deployment.

If the Minister for Veterans agrees then he or she will declare the deployment as Qualifying Operational Service. Those who deployed on an operation that has a Qualifying Operational Service declaration, will get QOS.

While serving in the Defence Force, all primary health and wellbeing support is provided. However after leaving the Defence Force, ex-service personnel with QOS are automatically eligible for some support from Veterans' Affairs, and have the ability to apply for additional support if they have or develop a health condition that can be attributed to their service on that deployment.

The Veterans' Support Act 2014 allows for deployments to have their threat status reviewed if new information about threats on a deployment becomes available.

All Qualifying Operational Service declarations are published on the Veterans' Affairs website, but we have made it easy for you to check your eligibility for support and whether you have Qualifying Operational Service because we have created an online Eligibility Tool for you to work through.

If you have QOS and a medical practitioner's confirms specific conditions which may be related to your qualifying deployment then you can make a claim to Veterans' Affairs for support.

To be eligible for support from Veterans' Affairs you need to be serving or have served, and you need qualifying service.

You can check your eligibility on the Veterans' Affairs website, <https://www.veteransaffairs.mil.nz/eligibility/check-your-eligibility/>



Strong showing in basketball tournament

B | OIC RNZAF BASKETBALL
Y | SQUADRON LEADER NATHAN BARRACK

This year's inter-service basketball tournament ran recently and was hosted by the Royal New Zealand Navy.

The week began with New Zealand Army and Air Force welcomed to the Navy Marae following a weekend training camp.

The tournament for both men, and women, was a hard fought affair. The women's teams all walked away from day one with one win, and one loss. Ultimately, the Army women came out on top against the Navy in the final.

The men's competition saw Army as the team to beat, going undefeated throughout the tournament, defeating the Air Force in the final. The Air Force men put up a valiant challenge in the final, with the game being decided in the final minutes.

The tournament for the Air Force saw the introduction of multiple rookies to both sides. For the men's team, Pilot Officer Cam Talbot, Aircraftman (AC) Toby Bland, AC Connor Darroch, and AC Sam Marshall all making their debuts.

For the women, Corporal Milly Bayfield, Leading Aircraftman Shekereih Ward, and AC Kelsey Mauer hit the court in their first inter-service competition. For many of the debutants, it was their first experience of inter-services sport in any code.

The week demonstrated the strong competition between services, as well as the comradery we all share as a defence force.

All three services showed grit, and fierce competitiveness on the court, while maintaining respect and admiration off it.

This year's competition saw a strong showing of Air Force personnel selected for Defence Force representation. Warrant Officer Justin Tamehana was named men's head coach, and six Air Force players were named for the men's team, including all four services rookies.

Five players were named for the women's team, with Squadron Leader Mary Robertson named assistant coach. Overall, the tournament proved and highlighted the benefits of Defence Force sport, as well as showcasing the bright future of Air Force basketball.

AIR FORCE

In Concert



**Sunday 10 November,
2:30 pm**
**Michael Fowler Centre,
Wellington**

With guest choir { **supertonic** }

Tickets from Ticketmaster. Book Now!
*Booking fees apply.

Notices

1976 AIRMAN CADET 50 YEAR REUNION

Calling for registrations to attend the reunion and take up the opportunity catch up with old mates or reconnect with those you lost touch with.

The organising committee needs your contact details to send you regular updates.

When: January 15-18, 2026

Where: Base Woodbourne

Register: 1976sprogreunion@gmail.com

Facebook: 76Sprogs 50 Year Reunion

NO. 75 SQUADRON ASSOCIATION OF NEW ZEALAND BIENNIAL REUNION

October 18-20, 2024

Celebrating the history of the squadron from:

- 75 (Home) RFC, 1916-1919
- 75 (Bomber) RAF, 1937-1940
- 75 (NZ) RAF, 1940-1945
- 75 (RNZAF), 1946-2001

The itinerary includes a weekend at Classic Flyers in Tauranga.

For more information, email the secretary:
reunions@75squadron-raf-rnzaf.com

NO. 23 ACS/5 CET 60TH ANNIVERSARY REUNION

**Wigram and Surrounds
9/10 January 2026**

Less than 18 months to go now, and this will probably be the last hurrah.

Contact any of the following for more information:

Gary Danvers: garydanvers@gmail.com

Dave Bryant: davebryant4@icloud.com

Barry Lennox: btr.lennox@gmail.com

See <https://sites.google.com/view/23-intake-airman-cadet-school-/home/60th-anniversary-reunion>

Defence members; Better loan and banking options for you!

- Special first home loans to get into your first home faster
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Check out the **Defence Loans and Banking package** through the Police Credit Union scan; the QR code or go to policecu.org.nz/nzdf-pcu/



Criteria apply, see the Defence PCU pages for more details at policecu.org.nz/nzdf-pcu/

B | CORPORAL
Y | SEAN SPIVEY

This was my first outdoor Air Force graduation to photograph, so I knew there was going to be a fly-over, I just didn't know what to expect! My aim was to set up so that I would capture the Hercules flying over the aviators, and I just had to hope it would come over on a nice line.

This is potentially the last time a C-130(H) will fly over the parade, so a little special in that regard as well.





