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MAGAZINE OF THE BRITISH ARMY

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"Another of Mr Higginbottom's ex-Service whizz-kids. I gather our next 'treat' is a bonding weekend under canvas... where's it all going to end, Harry?"

● Battlefield to boardroom – page 54

## Army still looking after its people

HOW well do we take care of each other in the British Army community? Depending on who you ask – and when – the answer to this question is likely to vary.

A soldier bemoaning suspension of the accommodation modernisation programme (page 9) would undoubtedly contradict personnel undertaking the Service's top quality training exercises (pages 28-29, 40-41) or a recipient of some of the latest protective clothing (page 13).

Similarly, if you are one of those people facing redundancy against your wishes this month (page 7), I suspect that no amount of public enthusing about the Armed Forces Covenant is likely to have you singing the praises of those helping to implement it.

While acknowledging that our attitudes alter at different times during our career, it is notable that the support on offer does not.

Thankfully, not once during this wearying Strategic Defence and Security Review have I heard talk of losing our Service's padres (page 51) or of the health promotion team's latest well-being campaign (page 15) getting cancelled to save money.

Some things, it seems, are just too important to meddle with – and not only front-line operations in Afghanistan and Libya.

As personnel know all too well, a significant amount of our Force's support network is funded and run by those outside the Ministry of Defence.

So as the Government purse strings keep on tightening, I suspect the charitable sector of our community, and the millions of people supporting it, will become even more crucial to troop welfare.

How fantastic it has been to read about the gang of volunteers giving up their spare time to run holidays for bereaved families (pages 56-57).

And what an inspiration the fund-raising efforts of solo singer Laura Wright are at a time when her music career is just taking off (pages 88-89).

Even when it could be argued that Servicemen and women should be looking after number one, this appears to go against the grain.

In an organisation that finds it seemingly impossible to adopt the selfish attitude of putting oneself first – even during the hard times – personnel are instead determined to look after each other.

For example, staff at the British Army's adventurous training centre in the Canadian Rockies are as keen to reward troops for their commitment as they are to teach them new skills (pages 47-49).

And officers coping with ever-increasing workloads are still dedicating time to encouraging soldiers to join a life-saving blood donor register (pages 58-59) and to raising money for a host of good causes (page 20).

It works then, doesn't it? If we take care of each other – including those within and moving over to the civilian world (pages 52-53) – then we've

pretty much got it covered.

How much the rioting youth of London could learn from your "personal presence, social skills and ability to appreciate other team members", as ex-soldier and leadership guru Jonathan Perks puts it in his interview (page 54) this month.

From creating exciting iPhone apps (page 18), to cutting it in the boardroom and sports fields (pages 94-95), personnel are showing there's plenty of life to be had outside the Armed Forces, and a strong, unselfish community helping to underpin such ambitions.

Enjoy the issue. – Sarah Goldthorpe, Editor ■

**'How much the rioting youth of London could learn from you all'**

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# THE **informer**...

BRITISH TROOPS' GLOBAL INTELLIGENCE ASSET

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Picture: Sgt Rupert Fiere, RLC

**Facing up to the future:** The opening tranche of Service job losses has included personnel from across most ranks of the Army, from private to brigadier

## First round of Army redundancies under way

**A**LMOST 1,000 soldiers have been made compulsorily redundant this month, in the opening round of reductions under the Strategic Defence and Security Review.

Troops were due to discover their fate on September 1, with around 930 set to leave including some 600 volunteers.

Last month, the head of Army manning told *Soldier* that personnel would be given the news face-to-face wherever possible.

"Something like redundancy is far too important to hear about via a letter or email," Brig Richard Nugee said.

Soldiers whose applications to leave were approved will exit the Service before the end of February 2012. All others will go by August that year.

"All those selected for redundancy are entitled to apply for transfer into areas of the Army or the other two Services which remain in shortage," added Brig Nugee.

Although such opportunities may be limited, the Military Provost Guard Service currently has more than 300 vacancies to fill.

"Soldiers and officers who were selected in the first phase are strongly encouraged to apply to join the Territorial Army where they can continue to serve as a member of the Reserves," Brig Nugee added.

"Those who apply to join the TA before their actual discharge will be eligible for a reduced training commitment as well as a three-year respite from mobilisation."

The first tranche of redundancies has affected nearly all ranks of the Service, from private to brigadier.

Not all those who applied to leave were accepted.

"This is because we have tried to avoid making soldiers redundant who we might need for operational reasons. We also needed to protect certain cap

badges or ranks to preserve structural balance," the manning chief explained.

"Applicants not selected for the first phase of the scheme will have opportunity to apply for the next round if they are eligible."

An announcement by Defence Secretary Dr Liam Fox on July 18 revealed that further reductions would be made to Regular personnel in coming years.

How this will impact on the current programme is not yet known, but Brig Nugee said some of the original exemptions from redundancy were now being reviewed.

For information about how to appeal decisions, or any other help, call the redundancy cell on 0141 224 3071 or visit the career section of Armynet.

The publication of fields for the second phase has been delayed until early 2012. The application opening date will be put back accordingly.





**In action:** LCpl Michael Eve and Cpl Leah Burchett (both 1 Medical Regiment) treat a simulated combat casualty during Op Herrick pre-deployment training

# Combat medics dissect future challenge

**P**ERSONNEL from 1 Medical Regiment have completed an arduous series of exercises in Germany as part of preparations for their upcoming Op Herrick tour.

The unit spent two weeks honing their skills in serials designed to pull together a year of preparation work.

The examination included using night vision goggles to treat soldiers in pitch-

black conditions, casualty evacuations via helicopter and learning crucial mental and dental healthcare skills.

Professional amputee actors from the UK were also on hand to provide a more realistic training environment.

Cpl Leah Burchett, who serves with The Queen's Royal Hussars and was attached to 1 Med Regt for the exercise, said: "These serials have been extremely

realistic, bringing everything we have learned together.

"We have been working in similar teams to those we will be part of on operations. It is good to know we can work individually and collectively.

"We have had access to a lot of different doctors who have a huge amount of experience, which has been a real bonus."

## NEWS IN BRIEF

### CONFIDENCE IN ENTIRETY

■ **SOLDIERS** must learn to operate in a difficult financial climate, the Commander-in-Chief Land Forces has insisted.

In a video message to personnel, Gen Sir Nick Parker explained the Service should "have a little chip in the back of our minds about austerity".

"We need to be able to work in really tough circumstances," he added. "Getting the foot in the door of a security challenge will require us to be able to operate on very minimal support."

Updating troops on the progress of Operation Entirety, the senior officer said the current deadline for transition in Afghanistan was "entirely reasonable".

He added: "I am very confident we are developing a force that will be able to do its job in that time frame."

## Listen up to danger, troops urged

**GROWING** numbers of soldiers are suffering hearing damage.

In an Army briefing note, troops have been warned that the current high operational tempo, combined with intensive live-firing exercises, means the long-standing health risk remains.

And commanders have been urged to ensure they play their part by making sure troops are safeguarded when operating the machinery, helicopters or armoured vehicles that can cause the damage.

"The wearing of appropriate hearing protection, taking into account the weapon characteristics and tactical environment, must be balanced against the need to maintain situational awareness," the notice explained.

"This decision cannot be prejudged and

is the local commander's to make."

As well as equipment, damage can also be triggered by sudden noises from IEDs and other weapons.

The majority of cases are the result of soldiers not wearing protection such as moulded ear pieces or plugs, despite the fact the technology available to the British Army is the best in the world.

The briefing warned the impact of such hearing loss could range from "a change of employment or deployment category" to more severe cases that result in medical discharge and long-term disability.

Two years ago a DVD called *Listen to Sense* was distributed to Service units. It warned of the dangers of excess noise.

A campaign under the same name will be launched next month.





# UK's top soldier answers troop angst

**T**HE head of the British Army has responded to troops' concerns over various aspects of Service life.

After visiting a number of Regular and TA units to run feedback sessions, the Chief of the General Staff's briefing team has revealed the topics getting Servicemen and women talking.

Many reported frustration with the Service's housing information service, which some say is difficult to contact for help. This has resulted in some being given accommodation long distances from where they work.

Personnel were also critical of assignment orders being issued too late to secure housing and school places ahead of family moves.

Responding to the feedback, Gen Sir Peter Wall said he understood the accommodation issues faced by troops.

"This is a long-running issue which continues to be unsatisfactory in some areas," he said. "We need to keep up the pressure on delivering a service which is fit for purpose. I am following closely the positive initiatives being undertaken by the new Defence Infrastructure Organisation to ensure this is improved."

Other views reported included:

- surprise at the high tempo of Army life after returning from operations;
- praise for high-quality kit and equipment provided to troops;
- concern over pension changes and a request for more detail;
- disappointment with cuts to the local overseas allowance;
- apprehension about the first phase of redundancies and any further changes;
- sadness at a cut to the enhanced commanding officers' public fund.



Picture: Sgt Andy Malthouse

**Listening:** Gen Sir Peter Wall joins TA personnel on a uniform to work day in London earlier this year

CGS paid tribute to those responsible for providing high-quality kit to the front line.

"We will have to continue to work hard to ensure that our core equipment is similarly resourced," he said.

He added that he understood soldiers' worries over being made redundant (page 7).

"In particular the impact on units, individuals and our families is an immediate concern," he said. "I have therefore directed that we need to work quickly to make a revised transformation plan which will be communicated to members of the Army as soon as possible."

A review of the commanding officers' public fund is now under way in light of the feedback. Gen Wall acknowledged the resource was highly valued by personnel, saying it would be retained in full "if it can possibly be afforded".

The briefing team is set to continue visits to units and will present feedback to CGS every four months. He has assured personnel he will act on their views, which will be reported regularly in future editions of *Soldier*.

The full report can be viewed on DII at <http://defenceintranet.diiweb.r.mil.uk/DefenceIntranet/Library/Army/ArmyOfficialPublications/G1/CgsBriefingTeamFeedback.htm>

## NEWS IN BRIEF

### AFGHAN ACCOUNTABILITY

■ THE FULL cost of military operations in Afghanistan must be published, the Defence Select Committee has said.

In a report into the Ministry of Defence's main estimates for 2011 to 2012, the MPs stated that additional costs of the ongoing campaign such as cancelled training and equipment wear and tear needed to be revealed.

Chairman of the committee, James Arbuthnot, said: "The MoD is publishing a great deal of information which we are grateful for but we find it frustrating that in some instances the department appears to be unable or unwilling to provide the kind of detailed information we ask for, notably in respect of the total cost of operations and the detail of savings proposed."

"This [lack of facts] prevents proper parliamentary scrutiny."

## Halt to Service housing upgrades

THE programme to improve some of the Army's worst living accommodation will be stopped for three years, the MoD has said.

From April 2013, renovation projects will halt in a bid to save money and protect front-line operations.

The decision means that around 2,400 upgrades that would normally have been completed will no longer go ahead.

Funding for single living accommodation will also be cut – with several thousand fewer bed spaces being provided than previously planned.

In a briefing to staff, the department described the decision as "difficult".

Despite the renovation freeze, it said it would target its efforts on the most pressing housing problems.

Julie McCarthy, Chief Executive of the Army Families Federation and a resident

of Service family accommodation herself, called the housing announcement "disappointing but unsurprising".

"My concern is that, without sustained upgrade projects, the defence estate will deteriorate to an even more unacceptable level," she said.

"This is hardly proof of the Government's commitment to the Armed Forces Covenant."

"The only good news is that the core works programme – for new kitchens and bathrooms – will continue."

Routine maintenance and safety checks will be preserved during the three years, as will minor work such as special needs adaptations and carpet replacement.

The decision follows a target for the Defence Infrastructure Organisation, which oversees estate services, to save £1.2 billion in the next four years.





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“ THE SENSE OF ACHIEVEMENT YOU GET WHEN THE KIDS ARE SMILING AND FORGETTING ABOUT ANYTHING ELSE THAT’S GOING ON IS JUST GREAT ”

– CPL MICHELLE GIBBS GIVES A THUMBS UP TO FAMILY ACTIVITY BREAKS, PAGES 56-57



Picture: Mike Weston

**Uplifting experience:** An Army Air Corps Apache in flight during Exercise Pashtun Jaguar as Joint Helicopter Force personnel prepare for ops over Helmand

## Jaguar sharpens claws of Afghan-bound aircrew

**B**RITISH helicopter crews have been preparing to play their part in the transition to Afghan-led security in Helmand province.

Lt Col James Anderson (AAC) will deploy to theatre this winter as commander of the Joint Helicopter Force (JHF), operating in support of the men and women of 20th Armoured Brigade (pages 28-29).

He led aircrew and headquarters staff as they gathered on Salisbury Plain for Exercise Pashtun Jaguar – the final mission rehearsal ahead of their tour.

“As we start to work even more closely with the Afghans, we’ll begin to see subtle changes in the battlespace that directly affect the way we operate the aircrafts and the types of areas we are needed to fly to,” the senior officer told *Soldier*.

Lt Col Anderson said there were two distinct types of assistance that JHF personnel would be providing for Helmand’s home-grown forces.

“Firstly there’s the development of the Afghan air capability, which is very much being led by the Americans,” he said. “And clearly there will also be a need for us to provide air support for the country until we withdraw.”

The training serials used to prepare JHF troops for Op Herrick were designed to replicate the transitional environment in

Helmand province.

“We have been role-playing working with partner agencies,” explained Lt Col Anderson.

“The training has got to be extremely robust and mirror the challenges we will find in southern Afghanistan because as soon as we get there we’ve got to hit the ground running.

“We need to be aware of what the mood is in theatre and how that is likely to change.”

He added: “One thing that I’ve picked up already is that people who were out there six months ago will notice a significant difference.”

Ex Pashtun Jaguar saw 440 personnel and the full range of rotary aircraft flying over Salisbury Plain in support of ground forces as they ran through Afghan-specific drills.

Col Neil Sexton, assistant director of operations for the UK’s Joint Helicopter Command, oversaw the Herrick-themed scenarios.

He explained that bringing together the field troops and aircrew was key to ensuring an intellectual understanding between the two.

“We’ve got to link what we do with training the chaps on the ground are doing to make sure they are receiving the air support they need,” he said.

“That could be Apache fires, casualty evacuations with the Chinooks or air

assault or trooping drills using any of the lift platforms, or surveillance capability with the Lynx.”

Apache pilot SSgt Andrew Broadhurst (AAC) was taking part in the exercise for the third time and said the serials were continually evolving to reflect the situation in theatre.

“There are more Afghan National Police on the ground now and they don’t always wear uniforms, so the people you see with weapons are not necessarily the bad guys anymore: it’s more of a challenge,” he explained.

Fellow Apache pilot Capt Charles Field (AAC) added that the strong focus on judgemental training, which prepares aircrew for the difficult decisions they must take about when to fire, had never been more important.

“I could be looking at a man going about his day job – but is he digging up a field to sow crops or is he placing an IED?,” the officer said.

“Specially-trained people have been acting out specific scenarios which come up time and time again so that when we do deploy to theatre we will be ready for those situations.”

Exercise planners ensured the simulated missions met the requirements of 20 Bde, who have relatively little experience of operating with air support.

“We’ve had to go in there a bit earlier, use study days, planning exercises and capability demonstrations and explanations, and make sure they understand what they can do with the helicopters and can plan how best to use them,” explained Col Sexton.

“The helicopter is not the be-all and end-all but used properly it will help them achieve their aim better.”



“ THE TRAINING HAS GOT TO BE EXTREMELY ROBUST AND MIRROR THE CHALLENGES WE WILL FIND IN AFGHANISTAN BECAUSE AS SOON AS WE GET THERE WE’VE GOT TO HIT THE GROUND RUNNING ”

– LT COL JAMES ANDERSON, JOINT HELICOPTER FORCE COMMANDER





“THE BEST STUFF IS THE UNPLANNED WORK – WHEN SOMEONE SIDLES UP AND SAYS ‘CAN I HAVE A WORD?’”  
– REV GARY SCOTT PREACHES THE PERKS OF A PADRE, PAGE 51

## NEWS IN BRIEF

### PENSION PRESENTATION

■ IMPLICATIONS of pension changes will be made clear to troops in a new presentation.

The Army is arranging talks at unit level to help Servicemen and women understand proposed alterations by the Government.

### MEDAL AMENDED

■ QUALIFYING time for the Accumulated Campaign Service Medal has been reduced from 36 to 24 months.

The change, which has been approved by the Queen, includes a revised ribbon for the decoration featuring two gold stripes instead of one.

Those who have already received the medal will get a new version recognising the updated criteria.

### HOUSING HAILS HEROES

■ NEW accommodation has been dedicated to two fallen British soldiers.

Lt Col Rupert Thorneloe (WG) and WO1 Darren Chant (Gren Gds) were both killed while on operations in Afghanistan in 2009.

Plaques bearing their names were unveiled at two new single-living blocks at Lille Barracks in Aldershot last month.

A portrait of WO1 Chant by artist Vivienne Francis was also revealed.

The children of the senior NCO are among those benefiting from the Family Activity Breaks initiative (pages 56-57).

Pictures: Cpl Steve Wood, RLC



**Committed:** Personnel from 19 Lt Bde have been a regular feature on ops in recent years

# Farewell to 19 Light Brigade

**M**IXED reactions have met the news that 19 Light Brigade is to be disbanded, its commander has told *Soldier*.

From March 2013 the formation will cease to exist, as the Army's six deployable brigades are reformed into five multi-role variants.

Brig Stuart Skeates said his priority was to support troops to ensure they can be posted elsewhere in the Service.

"This announcement was made with a degree of sadness and there has been a broad mix of reactions," he explained.

"Clearly a number of people are concerned about the future because of the wider announcements too.

"But we are working hard to find alternative postings throughout the rest of the Army for those affected.

"I am absolutely clear we need to look after our soldiers and their families

through this process," the commander added. "That is my central concern at this time."

19 Lt Bde was chosen for disbandment as it does not contain the armoured or mechanised elements required of the new multi-role brigades.

The unit is supporting mission-specific training for the next three deployments on Op Herrick (pages 28-29) and the decision will not affect this work.

Brig Skeates added: "The brigade has deployed on operations in Iraq and Afghanistan over the last six years and it has a hard-earned reputation.

"All those affected by this decision are totally committed to providing the best possible training for those due to deploy to Helmand province and people are naturally optimistic and looking forward."

# Service flexing to face future

THE MoD has announced various other changes to the British Army's organisational structure, brought about by the Strategic Defence and Security Review.

The personnel and support function will be overhauled, with 2nd, 4th and 5th Division headquarters set to disband and be replaced with a single two-star command. Savings at the regional brigade level will be made through

organisational changes and trade unions are now being consulted as a part of the process.

The future officer structure is also facing transformation.

Length of validity of an Army officer selection board pass has been cut from seven to five years.

Other alterations include an increase in career length for those who commission from 2012, rising from 34 to 35 years.

Picture: Cpl Chris Halton, RLC



### ARTILLERY ACCLIMATIZE

■ BRITISH troops have been getting used to the heat and lack of sleep they will experience while living in forward operating bases in Afghanistan as part of a training exercise in Cyprus.

With temperatures hitting the mid-30s during the day, the dusty, arid conditions helped to prepare soldiers from 9 Battery, 12 Regiment, Royal Artillery for deployment to Helmand province.

Around 100 personnel were also tested by scenarios that mirror activities in theatre such as patrolling, setting up vehicle checkpoints and carrying out casualty evacuations.



“I DIDN'T KNOW WHAT TO EXPECT – I JUST WANTED TO PRODUCE A RACE WHERE EVERYTHING WENT SMOOTHLY AND I AM DELIGHTED TO WIN”

– MAJ LINDSEY COURAGE REFLECTS ON TRIATHLON TRIUMPH, PAGES 94-95

# New winter wardrobe

**S**OLDIERS heading to Helmand province next month will be kitted out with a new combat uniform and the latest phase of a ground-breaking pelvic protection system.

Troops from 20th Armoured Brigade will wear redesigned, tougher and more comfortable clothing that better fits with their body armour.

Changes include Velcro fasteners to replace buttons and repositioning of pockets for easier access.

Other new items in the black bag issued to Herrick-bound personnel will include anti-bacterial socks to reduce the risk of foot infections, a lightweight sweat-wicking scarf and gloves to guard against hot surfaces.

Lt Col Matthew Tresidder (RE) from the Defence Clothing Team told *Soldier* the upgraded kit was a direct result of feedback from theatre.

“We are looking to give soldiers the best equipment that technology and developments can provide, based on what medics and the guys in the field say they need,” he said.

Many troops got their first glimpse of the items at a display for media during 20 Bde’s pre-deployment exercise on Salisbury Plain (pages 28-29).

Also on show was the final part of a three-piece pelvic protection system, which has been sent to Afghanistan ahead of Op Herrick 15.

Personnel deploying to theatre will be given knee-length shorts that can be worn on top of combat trousers to help guard against the effects of improvised explosive devices (IEDs).

It will boost the existing protective kit, which includes ballistic silk underpants and a layer of detachable pelvic body armour, nicknamed the “combat

codpiece” by troops.

Defence Equipment and Support programme manager Philip Tulitt said 4,000 pairs of shorts would be delivered as an urgent operational requirement.

The MoD has spent £2.8 million in total on 12,000 batches to cover the next three deployments.

“It is designed to improve recovery rates by lessening the extent of the damage and, most importantly, reducing the traumatic and psychological effects of injuries and improving their quality of life thereafter,” said Tulitt.

All troops on the ground will be issued with tiers one and two – the underwear and pelvic guard – but only those operating in the most high-risk environments will be required to wear three items.

“The third tier is typically for the Vallon men and guys doing counter-IED work – those going up front with the hand-held metal detectors,” explained Tulitt.

“It provides the same level of protection as tier two but with greater coverage on the inside and top of the legs and thighs and the buttocks area.

“Normally just a couple of members of a patrol or multiple will wear it and it is designed to be donned only when entering highest-threat areas, so it would probably be worn for up to an hour at a time rather than all day.”

He added: “The three components will give commanders the flexibility to decide how and when the protective system is used and what is most appropriate for their personnel at a particular time.”



Picture: Graeme Main

**Updated:** Kit will help protect troops from IEDs

## Bowman system to deliver battlespace boost

AN upgrade to the personal radio system used by British troops in theatre is set to improve battlefield communications.

The latest version of the Bowman combat information platform increases commanders’ situational awareness and it will be fully functional when Operation Herrick 15 begins next month.

Yeoman of Signals WO2 Ian Shaw has been implementing the new technology across 12th Mechanized Brigade over the past year.

He told *Soldier* the key advance was to the system’s data-handling capability, which is most obvious on the computer terminals manned by troops in operations rooms.

“Brigade HQs can see all their battalions, companies and platoons projected onto a laptop screen and viewed on a map as they move

around the area of operations,” he explained.

Commanders can track individual radios right down to section level.

“The man in a patrol with a portable radio carried around on his back now has a unique signature, as would a logistics convoy out on the ground,” said WO2 Shaw.

“Before, you could send limited chat messages and basic emails but now users will have the ability to pass that information to multiple computers. It dramatically increases situational awareness.”

Areas of operations can be superimposed on maps from section up to brigade level, with boundaries marked on the charts to show where different units are based.

Company commander Maj Kev Taffe (1 Mercian) said his men were getting to grips

with the new system in advance of any future deployment to Afghanistan.

“The main difference is being able to see your men on the screen, knowing where the guys are as well as having more reliable and safer comms,” he said.

“There have been a few teething problems at first but we should soon have those ironed out.

“It is all about making it second nature at this stage of development.

“The more we put into mastering the basics the more it will help us when we’re doing complex operations in future.”

General Dynamics UK, the company behind the improved Bowman system, has been awarded a £110-million contract by the MoD to deliver further upgrades and in-service support to the Armed Forces over the next two years.



# SUPPORT NETWORK

Help is available

## Medical Officers / GPs

If individuals have concerns regarding their mental health they should speak to their MO/GP who can get them the help that they require (just as they would for a physical injury).

## Reserves Mental Health Programme

This offers assessment and treatment and can either be accessed through GPs or by calling 0800 032 6258.

## TRiM Practitioner

TRiM is a non-medical intervention that is peer delivered. TRiM practitioners are able to listen to you and offer practical advice and assistance. Every major unit in the British Army has a number of TRiM practitioners available to provide support.

## Army Welfare Service (AWS)

The AWS provides a professional and confidential welfare support to all service personnel and their families, wherever they are located. The AWS has 3 main tasks: Community Support, Personal Support and HIVE information services.  
T 01980 615957 or 01980 615977  
E LF-AWS-welfareinformationservice@mod.uk

## Department of Community Mental Health (DCMH)

There are 15 military DCMH facilities across the UK and a further 4 in Germany which provide out-patient mental healthcare. Referral is through the MO/GP.

## Padres

Regardless of faith, chaplaincy support is available to all service personnel and their families. Discussions are confidential and outside of the CoC. Contact your unit Padre or email: [epadre@armymail.mod.uk](mailto:epadre@armymail.mod.uk)

## Unit Welfare Officer

The main task of the Unit Welfare Officer is to help service personnel and their families with advice and assist in solving problems.

## Chain of Command

It is the CoC responsibility to ensure that simple support is provided, reasonable adjustments to work are made and to create an ethos where stress related illness is recognised and accepted without prejudice. The CoC should also keep an eye on their personnel and sign post to professional help where necessary.





# Soldier helps shatter mental health stigma

**A** CAMPAIGN encouraging British troops to talk openly about mental illness has won support from across the ranks.

In June's *Soldier* the Service launched "Don't bottle it up", a publicity drive to reassure personnel that asking for help is not a sign of weakness or damaging to careers.

The Army's health promotion team said the coverage, along with television and radio adverts, had given Servicemen and women confidence to seek help more quickly, but that further encouragement was still needed.

One unit, 33 Engineer Regiment (EOD), held an awareness day for those due to deploy on Op Herrick 15.

SSgt Vicky Charnock (R Signals, pictured right), who opened up to her colleagues after reading *Soldier*, attended the event to explain her own battle with depression in 2009.

The Servicewoman, who was diagnosed after experiencing poor concentration, tearfulness and anxiety attacks, said: "Talking about my illness was a little bit nerve-racking but I feel I have done my bit to help the issue.

"There have not been any comebacks and no one has treated me any differently – if anything I have had people congratulating me for standing

up and doing it."

SSgt Charnock approached her unit welfare officer for help. She was later prescribed medication and attended weekly sessions with a psychiatric nurse.

"I was taught some coping mechanisms to deal with my anxiety and I began to improve," the Servicewoman added.

"So many people suffer with depression and the Army system for helping works, but the problem is that because of associated stigma people won't get assistance in the first place.

"You don't have to go to *Soldier* magazine, just be a bit more open with your colleagues."



## NEWS IN BRIEF

### MET OFFICE MOVE

■ AFTER a tenure of nearly 50 years, responsibility for the Met Office has been transferred from the Ministry of Defence to the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills. A MoD statement said weather services provided to the Armed Forces would be unaffected.

### WIRELESS ON THE WARDS

■ WOUNDED soldiers in Birmingham's Queen Elizabeth Hospital can now listen to the British Forces Broadcasting Service after its radio station extended its signal to cover the site.

### COMPANIES CATALOGUED

■ A WEBSITE set up by two Army wives is helping to promote independent businesses run by Forces families.

Kate Inch and Victoria O'Bree launched [followtheflag.com](http://followtheflag.com) after discovering first-hand the difficulty partners of serving soldiers have maintaining a career.

The directory, which registered more than 100 traders in its first month, allows visitors to search companies by name or type.

"We have met many talented, resourceful people running excellent enterprises and offering highly-skilled niche services," Inch said. "This website will help promote them to customers from both inside and outside the Forces community."

Profit from Follow The Flag is being donated to various military causes including ABF The Soldiers' Charity.

### UNIVERSITY CHALLENGE

■ A STUDIOUS senior NCO who laboured over his books in four different war zones and from a hospital bed has graduated with an Open University degree.

CSgt Robert Giles (IG) achieved a BA (honours) in politics and philosophy after

studying for ten years in Northern Ireland, Kosovo, Iraq and southern Afghanistan.

He even worked during treatment at a Birmingham hospital after being shot in the chest during operations in Iraq back in 2003.

"Trying to learn and work at the same time has been my biggest challenge but the Open University's support was

outstanding," said the 40-year-old graduate, who has since recovered from his injuries.

CSgt Giles is now embarking on a masters degree in philosophy.



# Boomerang ensures rapid return

**A NEW shot detection system is helping to protect British troops from small-arms fire.**

The Boomerang III has been introduced to patrol bases and checkpoints in southern Afghanistan to alert soldiers to the source of incoming rounds.

The equipment locates enemy positions on a high-tech display, allowing personnel to return accurate fire or move to safety.

Capt George Shipman (RA) has been using the system in Helmand province for more than a month.

"Usually it would take us maybe ten seconds to identify a firing point using optics but the Boomerang speeds that up considerably," he said.

"We've used it on a number of occasions where checkpoints have been engaged and it's helped us to identify exactly where that firing point was."

Hundreds of the systems, made by Raytheon BBN Technologies and tested by the Infantry Trials and Development Unit, have been bought by the MoD under a £20-million contract.



# SOME OF OUR HEROES NEED A LITTLE MORE SUPPORT

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TOM GREENWOOD, 1ST BATTALION,  
PARACHUTE REGIMENT.

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## IN MEMORIAM



**MNE JAMES WRIGHT (22)**  
42 COMMANDO,  
ROYAL MARINES  
KIA AUGUST 6 – AFGHANISTAN

A SPIRITED and passionate Royal Marine who was renowned for his cheerfulness and indefatigable loyalty was killed while on operations in Helmand province.

Mne James Wright was part of a patrol that became engaged by insurgent forces in the Shpazh Gerebian area of Nad-e Ali district.

After being pinned down for several hours, the group managed to extract back to their base at Check Point Kamibai. The position then came under attack and the 22-year-old was wounded by a grenade.

He was transferred to the hospital at Camp Bastion but later died of his injuries.

Mne Wright passed fit for duty in July 2010 and was carving a very successful career. Before

deploying to Afghanistan he participated in a number of exercises and adventures, including climbing Ben Nevis in Scotland.

Lt Col Ewen Murchison, CO of 42 Cdo, said: "Time and again Mne Wright has displayed considerable courage, inner strength and physical robustness whilst taking the fight to the enemy. In doing so he has upheld the finest traditions of the Royal Marines."

"His personal contribution during what has been a demanding operational tour has been both extraordinary and humbling; Mne Wright was a true bootneck, a warrior and a consummate professional."

Mne Garry Timbs added: "He was an all-round decent bloke and a constant source of morale."



**LT DANIEL CLACK (24)**  
1ST BATTALION,  
THE RIFLES  
KIA AUGUST 12 – AFGHANISTAN

AN immensely popular platoon commander who led his men with distinction was killed while on patrol in Helmand province.

Lt Daniel Clack, of 1st Battalion, The Rifles, was guiding his multiple through the village of Dactran when he was struck by an improvised explosive device.

The 24-year-old was engaged in a mission to meet local people and discuss a shura that was due to be held the following day. Five other members of his patrol were injured in the blast.

Lt Clack joined the Army in 2009 and commissioned from the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst into The Rifles a year later.

He was known as a soldier of great integrity who was driven by a desire to do the right thing.

Lt Col James de la Billiere, commanding officer of 1 Rifles, said: "Lt Clack was, like many officers of his generation, completely committed to both his men and to achieving success across the battlefield."

"His soldiers quite evidently adored him and they showed him loyalty and respect in a way that is reserved for only the very few and the very best."

Maj Bill Eden added: "No-one met Lt Clack whose lives were not touched by his warmth and passion."

The keen sportsman represented Sandhurst and his battalion at rugby.

He leaves his mother Sue, father Martin, brother James and fiancée Amy.

## Monument marks decades of British sacrifice

**A** NEW memorial pays tribute to UK Servicemen and women who died while serving in Belize.

As the number of personnel deployed to the tiny central American country is scaled down in line with the Strategic Defence and Security Review, tributes within and around the British Army Training Support Unit Belize (BATSUB) have been united on a single monument.

It is hoped this will mean it can be properly taken care of once the jungle training facility has closed.

Commander of the Belize Defence Force, Brig Dario Tapia, unveiled the memorial, which includes a roll of honour of the fallen.

Maj John Frear (Yorks), second in command at the facility, said: "Wreaths are laid on graves of those buried here before repatriation or at a number of specific memorials dotted around the country marking the spot where they lost their lives."

"Each year on Remembrance Day, the unit's staff and members of The Royal British Legion have also ensured they are properly remembered."

Thousands of troops have been

stationed in Belize during the past 60 years and 59 have lost their lives there.

Soldiers were initially deployed on active duty as part of British Forces Belize, helping to deter the threat from neighbouring Guatemala.

But personnel have been based at BATSUB since 1994.

Current staff and former serving members from the British Legion were present at the ceremony.

"It's almost the end of the present era of British Forces involvement in this country," said Maj Frear.

"No one will ever forget their time here, neither will those who didn't live to make the journey home ever be forgotten."

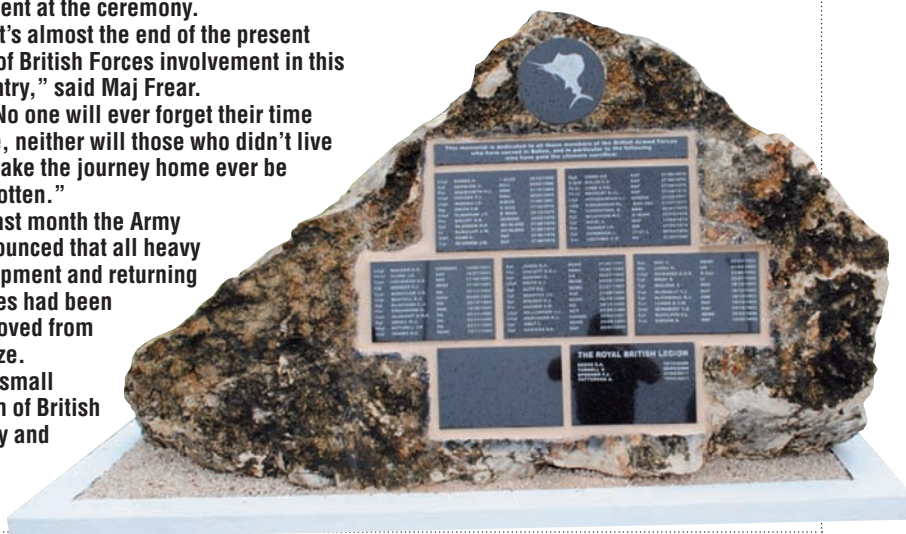
Last month the Army announced that all heavy equipment and returning stores had been removed from Belize.

A small team of British Army and

Belizean personnel will remain to maintain the site.

● A CAMPAIGN has been launched to protect thousands of UK war memorials from theft by using forensic technology.

In Memoriam 2014 is being funded by SmartWater Foundation, a not-for-profit company, which will work alongside the War Memorials Trust.







Picture: Graeme Main

# Allies unite in support of Service charity

**T**ICKETS have gone on sale for this year's British Military Tournament, which will tell the story of the "special relationship" between the UK and America.

The two hour live-action spectacle will take place from December 2-4 at Earls Court in central London and is set to showcase both the ceremonial and operational roles of the nation's Armed Forces.

US Army personnel and American Civil War re-enactors will join British Servicemen and women for the event.

Mixing old with new, the bill features the Musical Drive of The King's Troop, Royal Horse Artillery and a field gun run competition alongside demonstrations of current operations in Helmand province.

Creative director Christopher Joll told *Soldier* that visitors could expect much more than scarlet tunics and historic battles.

"I'm desperately keen to make sure people understand that the boys and girls in King's Troop may be prancing around in pretty

uniforms today, but they could be in Afghanistan tomorrow," said the former Life Guards officer.

Last year's tournament attracted around 52,000 visitors and raised more than £320,000 for ABF The Soldiers' Charity.

An extra day has been added to the 2011 run and it is hoped that more than 70,000 tickets will be sold. For full details and to book your tickets visit [www.britishmilitarytournament.com](http://www.britishmilitarytournament.com) or phone 0870 903 9033.

## Medic app-lies himself

AN ENTREPRENEURIAL Reservist has used his military skills to create two successful smartphone applications.

Designed for medical students by 2nd Lt Grant Milne (RAMC), the "apps" act as textbooks and allow trainees to revise and test themselves on the move.

The officer, who is set to become a Service doctor next year after he completes a clinical medicine course at University College London, has founded a company called One 2 One Medicine Ltd to sell the software. The firm also runs a tuition scheme for school pupils.

2nd Lt Milne told *Soldier* his Army background had given him the confidence necessary to become a businessman and present his ideas to industry experts.

"The values and standards expected in military training played an influential role in the development of my personality

and outlook towards my academic work, as well as my personal life," he said.

"Selfless commitment, discipline, determination and drive are a handful of the values the British Army teach – unsurprisingly they correlate with the attitudes and dedication needed to launch one's own concept."

The idea for his company came to the medic during his training.

"As a student I understand the problems we can have, from not knowing exactly what is required to get into university to not having the right textbooks when you need them," he said.

"I realised there was nothing portable that provided feedback so I decided to rectify that."

2nd Lt Milne gained his medical cadetship with the RAMC shortly after completing the Territorial Army commissioning course in his second year of university.

The 23-year-old is currently developing a further six apps, a process which has seen him engage with some of the top medical minds from across London.

"The aim is to improve the nation's health by providing focused tools and advice to future doctors and, in years to come, to the general public," added the officer.

● Battlefield to boardroom – page 54



## Memories of Minden

**TROOPS** marked the 252nd anniversary of the Battle of Minden with a traditional rose-giving ceremony at the British Army headquarters in Andover.

Commander-in-Chief Land Forces Gen Sir Nick Parker presented flowers to representatives of the units that formed the original Minden regiments.

The conflict saw a 43,000-strong Anglo-Hanoverian army defeat a French force of 60,000 during the Seven Years' War in 1759.



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**“THE BEST THING ABOUT IT IS THE FACT YOU ARE WITH 300 OTHER PEOPLE WHO ARE DOING THE RACE FOR THE SAME REASON”**

– LAURA WRIGHT ON THE ROYAL BRITISH LEGION'S PEDAL TO PARIS, PAGE 88

## Well-heeled troops

WATERPROOF socks boasting bacteria-beating fibres are being issued to troops deploying to Afghanistan this winter.

Made from an antimicrobial material based on the technology used in medical dressings, the underwear will help keep soldiers' feet clean and protect them from infection while they wade through water-filled ditches and streams.

Col Stephen James from the Defence Clothing Team described the socks as a "real asset" for British troops.

"They are warm and offer complete protection against the wet, which is essential when the tactical situation doesn't allow a pause to change into dry socks after wading," he said.

"They will greatly help our forces to focus on the job in hand."

The knee-length socks, which were sourced by the MoD under a £1.6 million four-year deal with Norfolk-based company SealSkinz, are also warmer than conventional designs.

They use a technology that combines a waterproof breathable membrane with a close-fitting thermal sock.

An inner layer of high-wicking, antimicrobial merino wool provides comfort and warmth and an outer cover of nylon and elastane adds durability, low absorption and fast drying.

Andrew Dahl, managing director of SealSkinz, said the socks were the result of significant development work and were a unique product.



● **Afghan attire – page 13**



Picture: Steve Dock

**Packed with flavour: Judges sample a meal during the field catering and military skills challenge**

## Signal chefs roast rivals

**S**ERVICE personnel put their speed, talent and imagination in the kitchen to the test during a hotly-contested culinary challenge.

Soldiers from 3rd (UK) Division Headquarters and Signal Regiment out cooked rivals from 29 other teams – seven of them civilian – to win this year's 3rd and 4th Division Field Catering Competition at Carter Barracks in Bulford.

The two-day event aimed to enhance the military chefs' field cookery skills and techniques using ration packs and fresh food.

Winning team captain Cpl John Heard, who was promoted to sergeant on the final day of the challenge, said: "I don't think it has sunk in yet because 3 Div has never won this competition

before now, so it's a big thing.

"Getting just 20 minutes to prepare a menu with a box of 30 to 40 rations was hard but our team worked extremely well together."

Those competing faced two timed scenarios which required them to serve up a choice of main courses and desserts and Afghan-style finger food for 20 people.

Teams were judged on hygiene, food preparation, menu, timing, health and safety and use of materials.

Before they started cooking, the military chefs built their own kitchen using equipment including tents, tables, firewood and water.

They were also put through their paces with a navigation exercise and march and shoot competition.

### LEAGUE OF GENTLEMEN

	SWAG	FORCE FOR GOOD	QUIDS IN
1	<b>£14,000</b>	<b>RECORD RALLY</b> A total of 355 drivers gathered to smash the Guinness World Record for the longest Land Rover convoy as part of a weekend of events at the Heritage Motor Centre near Warwick	Help for Heroes
2	<b>£6,200</b>	<b>PENSIONER PULL</b> Former para David Page pulled a trolley carrying two rucksacks from John O'Groats to Land's End. The 72-year-old took 55 days to complete the trek, collecting donations from people he passed along the way	Help for Heroes
3	<b>£4,000</b>	<b>DELIGHTFUL DINNER</b> The Royal Scots Club in Edinburgh hosted a black tie supper and evening of entertainment	Combat Stress
4	<b>£985.55</b>	<b>CARDIFF CLOSURE</b> Following the death of its president, members of the 157 All Ranks Club announced its disbandment and donated remaining funds to charity	The Royal British Legion

■ **INTERNET** buffs were unfazed by *Soldier HQ's* attempt to baffle readers with August's spine line competition.

(Mark) Zuckerberg, (Jack) Dorsey, (Tom) Anderson and (Caterina) Fake were founders of the increasingly-popular social networking websites Facebook, Twitter, Myspace and Flickr.

This month we are giving away a handy host of outdoor equipment including a Crusader mess tin, stainless steel multi-tool and a waterproof notebook.

To stand a chance of winning, tell us what links the words on the side of this month's issue.

Answers to the usual address or email [comps@soldiermagazine.co.uk](mailto:comps@soldiermagazine.co.uk) by September 30.

Winners will be drawn at random and the usual rules apply.

Get thinking...

**WIN**





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Microlite - £154.95



Altberg Jungle  
Boots - £134.95



Bates Falcon  
- £84.95



Disciple DZS  
Airborne Webbing  
- £99.95



Disciple Double  
Stacker Ammo  
- £15.95



Disciple M49  
Kangaroo Ammo  
- £15.95



Disciple 606  
Pouch  
- £15.95



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# Spirit of cricket cements forces bond

**S**OLDIERS from the Indian Army went head-to-head with their British counterparts in a Twenty20 cricket match during a welcome break from their training on Salisbury Plain.

The contest saw players from 3 Bihar Battalion locking horns with a scratch side from 19 Light Brigade Headquarters and 209 Signal Squadron at Larkhill, with the hosts securing a hard-fought victory.

Maj Julian Diamond (RA) led the charge with a superb innings of 53 as the hosts posted 142-8 from their allocated overs.

But their opponents, like the Indian national side, struggled on English soil as they slipped to defeat.

The battalion was in the UK for four weeks to take part in Exercise Ajeya Warrior, a joint training programme aimed at forging a closer working relationship between the two forces.

After mastering British weapon systems and communications equipment during the initial stages of their trip, the visitors went on to carry out platoon- and company-level serials.

“This was an opportunity for them to learn about how we conduct operations, both currently and in the future,” explained Brig Stuart Skeates.

“It also gave us the chance to see how they go about their business.

“The Indians are very experienced and have been involved in operations in Nagaland and Kashmir.

“There are a number of noticeable differences in the way they conduct counter-insurgency operations and I think we have learnt a lot from each other.”



Picture: Graeme Main

**Howzat:** Cricketers from 3 Bihar Battalion claim a key wicket against HQ 19 Light Brigade at Larkhill

Capt Tom Beazley (Rifles), skipper of the home side, added: “They have been really impressive. They have come here with a positive attitude and want to learn as much as possible.

“Cricket is a good way to cement that

friendship and provide them with a taste of Englishness.”

A company from 4th Battalion, The Rifles travelled to Asia last year and the return trip was the first time Indian troops had trained in the UK since 2008.

## Volunteers urged to play supporting role

RESERVISTS have been urged to support Regular personnel as they learn their fate in this month's redundancy announcement.

In a letter to commanders, the deputy commander of the Army Reserves, The Duke of Westminster, urged officers to do “all in their power” to help colleagues move over to civilian life.

Maj Gen Gerald Grosvenor also told staff that the Future Reserves 2020 report, which sets out significant future growth of the Territorial Army, could be the “biggest reform since Haldane created the force more than 100 years ago”.

“I welcome all that it brings in terms of resources, opportunities and challenges that six months ago we would have thought impossible,” the UK's most senior TA officer added.

## Long lost medal returned



A TERRITORIAL Army soldier has been reunited with a precious decoration some 17 years after it went missing.

Bdr Kimberley Lee (RA) received the Northern Ireland General Service Medal after completing his Op Banner tour as a Regular with 47 Field Regiment, Royal Artillery.

But when the Serviceman moved units soon after, his award never reached him.

Almost two decades later, the medal appeared on auction website eBay and was spotted by a fellow soldier who telephoned Bdr Lee.

“I was very shocked when I got the call,” the Reservist told *Soldier*.

“But I informed the seller and within half an hour he had taken it to a police station.

“It was such a relief. I thought finding it was a lost cause.”



● Bdr Kimberley Lee







## THE BIGGER PICTURE

PARATROOPERS from 2nd Battalion, The Parachute Regiment jumped from US aircraft onto the Yavoriv training area in Ukraine as part of Exercise Rapid Trident. The British personnel launched themselves at 2,200 feet alongside hundreds of “sky soldier” colleagues from other nations before exiting the mock-battlefield at speed – earning coveted foreign wings badges in the process. Picture: Steve Dock







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Report: Sharon Kean  
Pictures Graeme Main

**M**ENTORING Afghan troops and police has been part of British soldiers' mission in Helmand for some time.

But it is only in recent months, with the process of transferring responsibility for security in the province to home-grown forces under way, that the quality of their teaching has been put to the test.

This examination will be in full swing when the men and women of 20th Armoured Brigade arrive in theatre next month for a tour that will span a pivotal period in Afghanistan's history.

"Ours will be the first task force to go into Helmand province while transition of security is becoming a reality, not just something we are talking about," said Brig Patrick Sanders.

Speaking as the units under his charge massed on Salisbury Plain for a final training exercise, the commander of 20 Bde told *Soldier* the focus of the forthcoming deployment would be on how best to support the mentoring programme's graduates.

"The biggest challenge for us is going to be how we really effect and accelerate transition and the tempo and momentum of that," he said.

"There's no doubt that in some areas the Afghans are not only ready but actually really want to take control themselves – Lashkar Gah is a really good example.

"But in other areas that are more rural and outlying then it's a bit more difficult to lift our blokes off the ground and get them replaced in a short period of time."

**"In 25 years in the Army I have never been better trained for operations"**

Ensuring Helmand command units are capable of organising Afghan forces will be an essential part of the handover process and a key objective during the

brigade's impending six-month tour, the brigadier added.


"That system of operational control centres needs to be capable of coordinating all the security forces," he explained. "There's a bit more work to be done there, without making it too glitzy – because it won't be glitzy after 2014, it will be functional.

"Another challenge will be working out how you give a checkpoint in an isolated rural area to Afghan local police and then continue to mentor and monitor them in a systematic and controlled way.

"We have been training so we can

# TRAINING





manage that evolution.

"It's no longer about us taking ground and keeping it, but about handing over, bit by bit, areas to the locals – checkpoints and pieces of land."

Brig Sanders said that his formation's training on Salisbury Plain – Exercise Pashtun Dagger – was the culmination of a year of preparation ahead of Op Herrick 15.

"In 25 years in the Army I have never been better trained for operations," he said.

"The package is state-of-the-art and the crucial bit is the Afghan element – we are increasingly using Afghans as a backdrop.

"This is not just about practising tactics and use of our own equipment and vehicles. It's also about practising partnered and mentored operations with the Afghan National Security Forces, working with cross-government stabilisation resources and engaging with the local population in a culturally-sensitive way."

Rfn Gavin Winwood (5 Rifles) said this precise focus had helped to prepare him for the winter tour.

"It's been beneficial to learn about the ground in Afghanistan, how the people there work and how we should treat them, the respect we should give them.

"We've been working with Afghan nationals on exercises and will carry that on in

Helmand and hopefully give their national army chance to take control."

During the summer, home-grown officers that will work alongside 20 Bde in theatre – Chief of Police Gen Hakim Angar and Commander of the Afghan National Army's 3/215 Brigade Brig Gen Sheren Shah – visited the UK to train with Brig Sanders and his headquarters team.

"20th Armoured Brigade are completely ready," said Brig Gen Shah.

"I'm confident that the things they have learnt in training will be put into practice in a productive way in Afghanistan and that it will convey a positive message to the people of Helmand province that their safety is being ensured."

Brig Sanders pointed to this as a key aspect of his brigade's preparations, revealing that both visitors had stayed with him during their UK trip.

"It was really important because for the first time we were working with the partners that we are actually going to be supporting, learning

how they do business, what their priorities are," he said.

"Relationships in this business are really important, so that helped a lot."

With 20 Bde's thorough pre-deployment education complete, its personnel now face the challenge of imparting their knowledge to the Afghan National Security Forces in Helmand province.

Helping yesterday's students become tomorrow's peacekeepers is set to be a key feature of Op Herrick 15 and those on the tour know that attaining top marks could represent a significant step towards British drawdown. ■

# FOR TRANSITION

## Brigade seeks to build mentoring momentum



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**Teamwork:** Ground liason officer Capt Mick Welborn (9/12 L) relays pre-mission intelligence to a Tornado pilot



# SAVING LIVES IN LIBYA

**ARMY SPECIALIST  
GIVES ESSENTIAL SUPPORT  
TO NORTH AFRICA MISSION**





**Report: Joe Clapson**  
**Pictures: Steve Dock**

**W**ITH political events in Libya moving quicker than ever, the British Army is playing a vital – if uncelebrated – role supporting Nato's intensifying airborne operation over the troubled country.

Royal Air Force fast jets have dominated the airspace on Op Unified Protector in a bid to end Col Muammar Gaddafi's reign of tyranny and what the United Nations has deemed "crimes against humanity".

But specialist Army knowledge and strike expertise is also ensuring lives are saved and that forces loyal to the "mad dog" are pushed backwards.

Capt Mick Welborn (9th/12th Royal Lancers) is the ground liaison officer (GLO) at the Gioia Del Colle airbase in Italy. It is his job to serve as the font of all ground-based tactical knowledge for aircrews operating over Libya.

Airmen manning the impressive attack and reconnaissance planes explained how their colleague provides an important link between air capability and awareness of

ground threats.

Flt Lt Mark Tolman, a Tornado weapons system operator, commented: "The GLO is awesome for explaining to us how the Libyans will be using their tanks."

Speaking to *Soldier* at the contingency operating base – from which UK forces typically send out 12 to 14 flights per day – Capt Welborn described his unique operational position.

"I am the only soldier attached to the RAF on the operation and I assess what the fast jets see and tell the crew what troops on the ground would do with what is there," he said.

"I brief the group that goes out, then they debrief us on what they actually see on missions, and 80 per cent of the time we get it right."

The lone Serviceman works with the RAF's 2 Sqn (Tornado) and 3 Sqn (Typhoon) to create a fighting unit.

"I am fortunate that I have an armoured background from when there was a Berlin Wall and a Soviet threat," said the veteran of the Gulf War, Op Telic and Op Herrick.

"Lo and behold the Libyans have got Soviet kit and tactics, so I can feed

in information about how they will be configured and used.

"There have been times where I have sprinted onto the runway to give crews a piece of last-minute information and it has been critical to the point that lives have been saved."

Army involvement has also been crucial overhead, with the formidable Apache helicopter working alongside the Tornados and Typhoons providing attack, surveillance, target acquisition and reconnaissance capabilities.

One recent offensive by the Army Air Corps asset caused devastation to valuable pro-regime targets.

Maj Gen Nick Pope, spokesman for UK operations in the country, said: "This was a sophisticated and highly effective raid by Apache crews deep inside Libya, some 40 miles inland, to hit Gaddafi's forces including military vehicles and large-scale communications equipment.

"Former regime forces continue to threaten Libyan civilians and while they do so the message is clear – that this is the sort of action they can expect to face from us and our coalition allies."





**Dangerous liaisons:** Capt Mick Welborn (9/12 L) goes to brief a pilot before a sortie over Libya



**Top, View data:** Images from surveillance assets feed into the knowledge bank

**Middle, Get ready:** An airframe emerges from its hardened shelter for a sortie

**Bottom, On its way:** A Typhoon F2 takes off from Gioia Del Colle airfield in Italy

Highlighting the requirement for the Army and RAF to link overhead, UK Air Component Commander, Air Cdr Gary Waterfall, added: "The Apaches are much closer to the action than the fast jets in order to differentiate between people on the ground.

"It makes total sense to have these machines there and we can support them.

"It's a perfect synergy; what they can't do we can and vice versa."

With no British troops patrolling the land, the vast majority of intelligence for the operation is gathered using cutting-edge equipment attached to the aircraft.

Detailed imagery is acquired through technology such as the reconnaissance airborne pod for Tornado (Raptor) and the precision targeting system, Lightning Pod III. Pictures are then passed to the intelligence cell for detailed analysis.

Flt Lt Rob Phayer (2 Sqn RAF) explained how pictures of pro-Gaddafi resources

have led to effective strike missions.

"We could see that one of the regime's platforms of choice was indirect fire using BM21 rockets which are completely unguided," he said.

**There have been times where I have sprinted onto the runway to give them last-minute information**

"One of the main reasons we are here is to take out equipment like that because they were being fired on Misrata, a city containing half a million people."

As a result of pressure from Nato's 17-nation coalition, sanctioned by United Nations Security Council Resolution 1973, Col Gaddafi's troops have been restricted with their offensive tactics.

Since the no-fly zone was implemented on March 23 there has been no activity from the Libyan Air Force.

However, Flt Lt Phayer emphasised that aircrews still faced considerable danger and Army input was invaluable in understanding the enemy strategy.

"There are significant threats that remain

in the country such as the ground-to-air missiles – Libya has a sophisticated air defence system," he said.

"Having a GLO is vital because he has the Army knowledge of what certain things on the ground will be used for and how they will be deployed."

At the beginning of the campaign the number of dedicated pro-Gaddafi soldiers was in the region of 100,000 but this has diminished to mostly conscripts.

"He is running out of options but this man will turn to more extreme and inhumane tactics to achieve his aims," added the RAF officer.

The UN has reported that 636,000 Libyans remain displaced from their homes and the number of deaths attributed to the tyrant leader's actions increases daily.

But armed with an arsenal of data, Capt Welborn is well-placed to give an assessment of the situation.

"When I look at the imagery and see that our guys are saving lives on the ground it is very difficult to suggest we should not be here," he explained.

"From the things we see, we know we are preventing people from being killed." ■





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# UNIFIED PROTECTORS

## SQUAD OF SPECIALISTS KEEP AIRCRAFT IN ACTION

Report: Joe Clapson  
Pictures: Steve Dock



**E**XPERT soldiers have set up a well-oiled operating base in Italy to ensure the dynamic air mission over Libya runs like clockwork.

Less than 30 Army personnel have transformed the Gioia Del Colle airbase into a hub of communications and command for the British contribution to Nato's Operation Unified Protector.

Speaking to *Soldier* as aircraft sorties were launched on Col Gaddafi's forces last month, Lt Alex Cave explained how his team from 22 Signals Regiment were assisting the international effort.

"We work within the tactical communication wing to ensure messages are passed to and from Gioia Del Colle," he said. "We set up a range of services such as the military messenger system JChat, email and telephones with a reach back to the UK."

A cluster of 13 communication specialists provides a 24-hour service, seven days a week, to ensure military chiefs can issue split-second orders without any glitches.

"It may be something of a cliché but here it is a case of 'no comms, no bombs'," he added.

"It's important that communications are completely in place to allow commanders to make crucial decisions without restrictions."

The signallers are also working with their Royal Engineer colleagues to transfer the Royal Air Force's power source from generators to the Italian national grid, to provide a more secure system.

SSgt Ryan Christey (RE) advises the airmen and the host nation on the camp's infrastructure and building works.

"If there's any problem our team of four guys will be deployed to fix it," the facilities manager said.

One urgent requirement of the Army contingent was to find protective shelter for ten Tornados worth hundreds of millions of pounds in order to keep them in fighting

order. This was achieved at speed.

"The aircraft needed to be off the hangar ramp because the heat makes the metal expand. The technicians also had to be able to work in the shade," said the senior non-commissioned officer.

"It needed to be done, so we did it. We build bespoke shelters for Nato aircraft all over the world – we work from a template and can put things up anywhere we are required to."

The Royal Engineers worked with airmen from 5001 Squadron and civilian contractors to construct the essential contingency operating base (COB) on the Italian site.

Explaining the importance of his team of electricians, plumbers and carpenters from 10 Field Squadron,

SSgt Christey said: "If we weren't out here then the COB operation would definitely have slowed down and might not have even happened."

"By keeping the aircraft in action and setting up essential air-conditioning in computer rooms, it enables the mission to go ahead."

Army personnel are not on the ground fighting in Libya, but as subject-matter specialists they are facilitating the air strikes to save civilian lives.

"Everyone on this operation has a role and all are as important as each other, from the Tornados flying over North Africa to what we are doing in Italy," added SSgt Christey. ■

**EVERYONE ON  
THIS OPERATION  
HAS A ROLE  
AND ALL ARE AS  
IMPORTANT AS  
EACH OTHER**

**Italian job:** Royal Engineers and signallers ensure operations over Libya run smoothly from their Gioia Del Colle base







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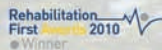
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# Eyes in the sky

Unmanned air systems  
cut front-line risk



**Ground watch:** A T-Hawk, also known as “the dustbin”, is launched by soldiers from 32 Regiment, Royal Artillery



**F**UTURISTIC flying technology and the legion of unsung heroes behind it are helping to save troops' lives in Afghanistan.

*Soldier* joined 32 Regiment, Royal Artillery in Larkhill as they trained with their unmanned air systems to discover what the state-of-the-art "eyes in the sky" bring to the intelligence table.

Commanding officer Lt Col Craig Palmer explained the impact his specialised unit has made so far in Helmand province.

"I have been struck by just how much of a central contribution unmanned air systems are playing on operations there," he said.

"There is no other regiment in the British Army which has been continuously deployed in the way we have. To be honest our personnel are unsung heroes."

The team has recently celebrated 50,000 flying hours of the Hermes 450 system.

By providing persistent surveillance and tracking, this superb aircraft allows soldiers on the ground to build up a rich and detailed picture of the pattern of life in areas of interest.

It was sent to theatre to meet an urgent operational requirement and is now hailed a MoD success story.

"We can fly this system for 14 hours then if appropriate hand over its intelligence to the strike assets," explained Lt Col Palmer. "It's doubtful that the rapid progress on Op Herrick would've happened without Hermes flying for 50,000 hours."

The T-Hawk – affectionately nicknamed "the dustbin" – is a new addition to the regiment's stable.

It provides a "hover and stare" capability and is used to locate improvised explosive devices using real-time video, which can be viewed on location by patrolling troops.

Its more streamlined brother Desert Hawk – which can soar up to 10,000 feet – is used to support coalition and Afghan ground units within the International Security Assistance Force's zone of operations.

Pictures gathered by all systems are monitored by expert image analysts who look for signs of insurgent activity or other immediate threats. They turn raw data into useable intelligence.

"We don't take the decision to make a strike but we provide the information which positively identifies the bad guys, which other Service personnel can then act on," said image analyst WO2 Maj Ian Jenkins (Int Corps).

The senior NCO added that it was common for the flyers to be called into action in theatre.

"Guys on the ground have a small terminal where they can look at live feeds from these assets in real time as full-motion videos. That is brilliant to

understand an area," he said.

"We might also go on surveillance a few days before an operation to get intelligence on patterns of life."

To capitalise on the valuable footage and images provided by the systems' cameras, an intelligence storage network has been developed across Helmand.

Units on Op Herrick can now tap into the picture database to prepare for manoeuvres into areas that might be a haven for insurgents and their explosives.

Bdr James Hall (RA), who has recently returned from theatre, said the hi-tech capability had dramatically altered battlefield procedure.

"On my first tour, unmanned air systems were just coming into their own but on my recent deployment it was a life-saving asset. Now people are really using them for what they were designed.

"Requests for them are increasing, especially from the lads on the ground who want the eye in the sky sent up before they move out."

Col Mark Thornhill, commander of 1 Artillery Brigade, described the backdrop to the devices' positive results.

"This is a major team effort that includes industry and people from Defence Equipment and Support working with us.

"Providing imagery from overhead allows us to prosecute targets as they appear. It is saving lives."

These flying surveyors may seem like the stuff of science fiction, but their life-saving capability is far from fabricated.

And while the British Army's work in Afghanistan moves towards transition, soldiers can feel safer knowing these eyes in the sky are keeping watch over them. ■

## Desert Hawk III

- Weight: 3.2kg
- Range 14km
- Endurance (time in the air): approximately one hour
- Hand-launched
- Skid recovery
- Day/night sensor capability
- Gyro-stabilised 360-degree sensor turret
- Roll-stabilised infra-red sensor payloads
- Automatic pre-flight planning
- In-flight control of optical and infra-red sensors

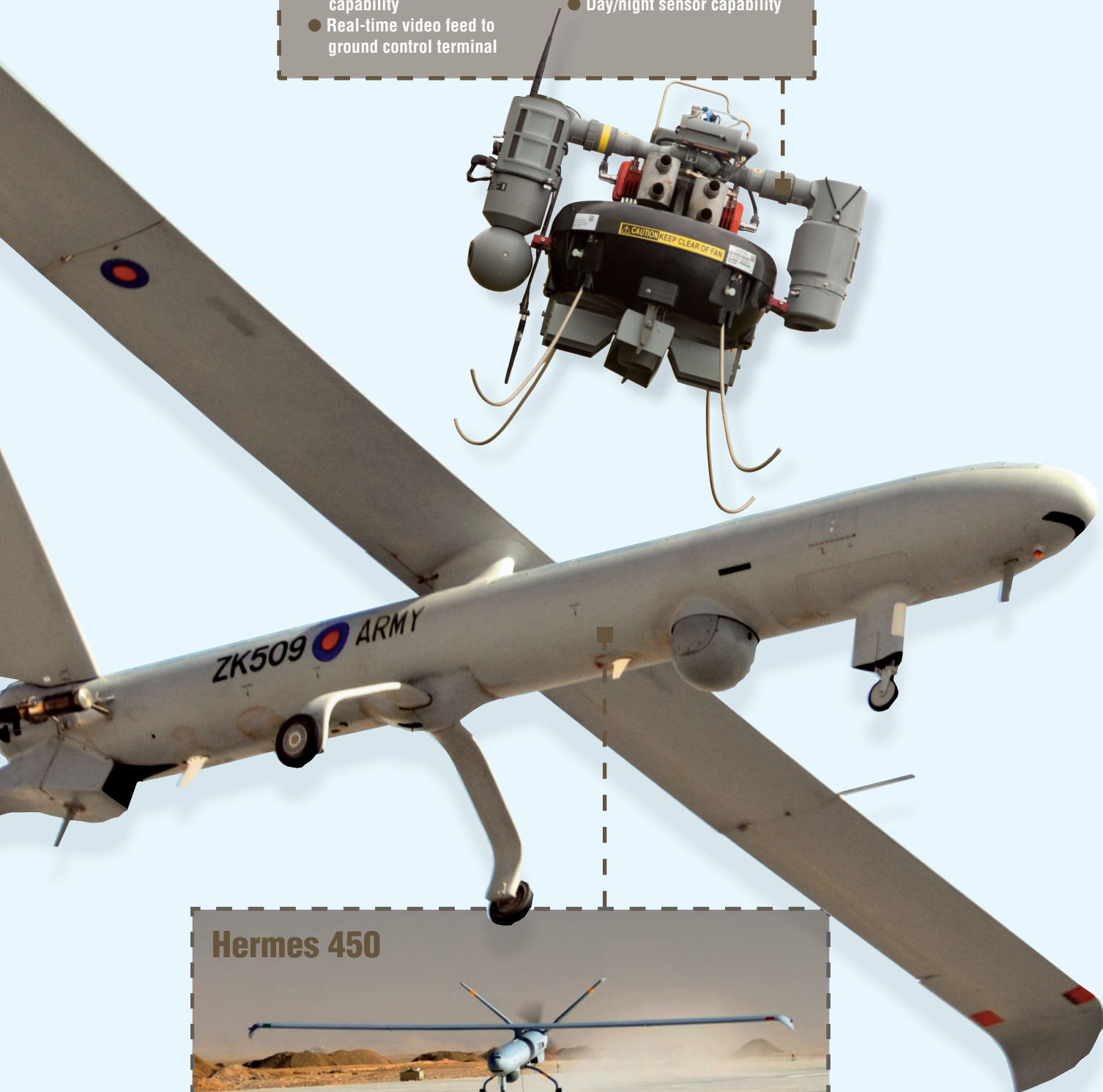
**Streamlined: A Desert Hawk being prepared for flight over Salisbury Plain**

Picture: Mike Weston



## T-Hawk

- Weight: 8.4kg
- Endurance (time in the air): 40 minutes
- Unique hover and stare capability
- Real-time video feed to ground control terminal
- Vertical take-off and landing capability
- Lightweight and portable
- Airborne within ten minutes
- Day/night sensor capability



## Hermes 450



- Weight: 450kg
- Range: 150km
- Maximum endurance (time in the air): 20 hours
- Supplies real-time surveillance data to ground forces
- Designed for tactical long endurance missions
- Day/night sensor capability
- Fully redundant avionics
- Fully-automatic flight control



# Dominating



**Fist fight:** Soldiers from 1 Mercian see through the dark during a training exercise near Catterick as they get to grips with new-issue kit



# the darkness

Report: Sharon Kean  
Pictures: Graeme Main

**E**NHANCED night-vision monoculars, laser range finders and infra-red weapon sights are some of the new items giving troops an after-dark advantage.

The high-tech gear, introduced as part of the Future Integrated Soldier Technology (FIST) package, is already proving its worth on British Army training grounds.

The equipment programme covers the development of all personal kit for the dismounted infantryman and focuses on merging systems to maximise effect.

Personnel from 1st Battalion, The Mercian Regiment invited *Soldier* along on a night exercise near their base in Catterick to show how they are getting to grips with some of the new gadgets.

"This kit turns night into day," said company sergeant major WO2 Wayne Glynn. "The thermal imaging is amazing, even if the bad weather comes in and you get mist, this cuts through it."

"The laser markers mean a commander doesn't even have to speak or use his radio to identify a target. It also helps you locate the enemy before they have even seen you."

He added: "It's a huge capability that makes our job much easier and will massively give us the upper hand over insurgents. We've always had night-vision kit but it's getting much better; the new stuff is pretty awesome and will be a massive help on operations."

With after-dark strikes proving to be a top tactic against the Taliban, as well as the possibility of unplanned casualty evacuation missions taking place outside daylight hours, the ability to operate at any time has never been more important.

"If we own the night then we put the enemy on the back foot straight away," WO2 Glynn told *Soldier*.

"What we found on our last tour [of Afghanistan] was that we would go out on reassurance patrols and everything would be fine until we withdrew at dusk."

"Then we would go back the next day and the locals would tell us that we should have stayed around as the insurgents came and were watching us."

"Now we've got that night capability we can just stay out and wait and watch."

Section commander LCpl Kevin McCarthy explained that the biggest improvements were to thermal imaging picture quality and the ability to measure target distances accurately with a new laser range finder.

And although the men of 1 Mercian are not due to deploy to Afghanistan any time soon, the fact they have the technology will be an added boost when they do return to Helmand province.

"We've been patrolling as a section, going over unfamiliar ground and getting used to the depth perception using a monocular rather than two eyes," explained LCpl McCarthy.

"It's about drilling it into the lads so they are ready to operate during the hours of darkness – we will definitely have the leading edge moving about after dusk."

WO2 Glynn added: "The big thing is getting the guys' confidence up."

"We've done a lot of night work in buildings and compounds to get them used to having the kit, so they don't have to

think about what switch does what and it becomes second nature like their weapon."

Company commander Maj Kev Taffe said the early issue of the FIST equipment would mean a step-change for troops' ability to fight after sundown.

"A lot of this technology we have seen before so the guys are familiar with it," he added. "But the difference is that last time it was thrown at them at the last minute. This time, they have the chance to play with it."

"We need to be able to carry out the full spectrum of operations at night but like learning any new skill, it takes time."

"Soldiers need to be confident with the kit, especially with what they face out there [in Afghanistan], so the more time we can get them training with it the better."

Although the majority of routine tasks and patrols on Op Herrick are carried out in the day when the population are active, this flexibility to operate at any time will give British forces a

distinct advantage.

"Infantry battalions are carrying out an increasing amount of night operations," said Maj Taffe. "It could be anything from reassuring the local population by being seen out and about after dark, through to trying to make the most of our capability during planned manoeuvres. Being able to catch people unawares is clearly to our benefit."

"And if you can do something at night then you can do it even better during daylight hours." ■

**"It's a huge capability that makes our job much easier and will massively give us the upper hand over insurgents"**





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# AIRBORNE SPECIALISTS

**SOLDIERS FROM 2 PARA DESCEND ON  
UKRAINE FOR MULTINATIONAL EXERCISE**







**Report: Joe Clapson**  
**Pictures: Steve Dock**

**M**ILITARY parachutists from around the globe have been pooling their power over the landscape of Europe's second largest country.

*Soldier* travelled to Ukraine to watch personnel from 2nd Battalion, The Parachute Regiment in action at the Yavoriv training area during Exercise Rapid Trident.

The US-led programme brought together 1,600 troops from Ukraine, Poland, Canada, Belarus, Moldova, Slovenia, Estonia, Lithuania and the UK in a bid to allow tactics and techniques to be shared.

The beginning of the airborne exercise saw more than 300 parachutists from the various nations jump from 1,800 to 2,200 feet over the vast surroundings.

Flying on American C130 aircraft, 75 soldiers from 2 Para launched themselves onto the drop zone in a covert manner.

They deployed alongside Ukrainian, American and Polish colleagues, resulting in a flock of chutes dominating the mock battlefield (pictured).

"I managed to land in a thorn bush, which wasn't great, but other than that it was a mega jump," said Pte Rich Adam (2 Para) after touching down.

"Although we only got back from Afghanistan six weeks ago, we put our names down for this exercise immediately because we wanted to get some more jumps done."

Drop zone safety officer SSgt Scott Frazier (US Army) outlined his experience of working with British "sky soldiers".

"We love exercising with the Parachute Regiment because they are well respected across the world," said the member of 2nd Battalion, 502nd Infantry Regiment.

"We have learnt a lot from 2 Para in the past and hold them in very high esteem."

While Exercise Rapid Trident

served to improve the way countries involved in Nato's Partnership for Peace programme work together, soldiers on the ground were also able to enhance their personal skills by learning from their overseas counterparts.

Pte Ashley Jones (2 Para) said: "Usually we drop from between 600 and 1,000 feet but here we're jumping from a lot higher which means we're in the air for much longer."

"It gives you more time to sort yourself out and think about what the next move is."

Pte Alan Nethery (2 Para) added: "This is not Afghan-based at all, it's more about working in an international environment with different languages."

"It's a bit of a break from hot deserts and pre-deployment training and is a great chance to work with foreign countries on something we love."

As well as honing their operational skydiving skills, the British soldiers conducted cordon search drills using expert techniques deployed and honed in Helmand province.

Members of the Polish Army watched the dynamic serial while UK Servicemen gave guidance through an interpreter.

Working with foreign equipment such as Ukraine-owned tanks, the soldiers also listened to tutorials from partner countries and shared their own knowledge in return.

Capt Arek Kwiek, a Polish company commander, said: "The meeting has been a really good opportunity to exchange our experiences with each other from both Iraq and Afghanistan."

"At squad level, the British go very deep into the details, which is impressive."

"It is very difficult to learn everything on one exercise so it would be good if we could spend more time training together like this."

The first and last UK airborne assault to take place since the Second World War was at El Gamil airfield in Egypt during the Suez

Crisis of 1956.

So, perhaps inevitably, this has led some quarters to question the future and value of this capability, particularly with the Strategic Defence and Security Review (SDSR) in mind. However, soldiers in the unit are fiercely keen to defend their function within the wider Armed Forces.

"There is always going to be a threat and you will always need troops who can get in behind enemy lines should that be required. That is what paratroopers are there to do," Pte Adam explained.

"Keeping our jump capability is so

important to what the British Army can offer."

A MoD spokesman explained the Government's stance on the issue, which acknowledges a likely cut to the number of parachutists within 16 Air Assault Brigade.

"The SDSR looked at reorganising the Army structure over the next ten years to enable it to best meet the challenges of 2020 and beyond," the spokesman said.

"It is likely that the majority of Parachute Regiment soldiers will remain fully trained to parachute, but this requirement for 16 Air Assault Brigade as a whole will be reduced."

Speculation that "para pay" – a monthly supplement of £180 for the 5,000 personnel who are trained to parachute – might also be reduced has been rife across the Service.

But the MoD spokesman offered reassurance that soldiers who remain fully trained in this area would continue to receive the extra money in their salaries.

British paratroopers might not be floating over the skies of Afghanistan today but, as attested by their international colleagues, they are a leading asset, on standby to drop into action whenever the military landscape may require it. ■

## ‘KEEPING OUR JUMP CAPABILITY IS SO IMPORTANT TO WHAT THE BRITISH ARMY CAN OFFER’

● Final word – page 106



## DROPZONE AT YAVORIV

Partners for peace: Paratroopers from 2 Para jumped from US aircraft onto the Yavoriv training area in Ukraine as part of Exercise Rapid Trident





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# Adrenallin RUSH

ROCKIES RISK-TAKING BREEDS TOP TROOPS





**Report: Sarah Goldthorpe**  
**Pictures: Graeme Main**

"IMAGINE how much civvies would pay for this," a Serviceman shouts from the back of my boat during a brief pause in a (frankly quite terrifying) day of high-octane white-water rafting.

The impressive vistas of the Kananaskis river in southern Canada may seem like the stuff of holiday brochures, but for UK troops on adventurous training placements at Trails End Camp its lessons are demanding and serious work.

Those feeling nervous or inexperienced about these powerful waters are afforded no special treatment as my team is instructed to paddle and jump through fast-flowing rapids.

Once outside the boat, troops have nothing but their own swimming strokes to get them back to the safety of the river's shore – if a possible face-to-face meeting with a bear can be considered safe, that is.

The skills developed by the 3,000 Servicemen and women sent into this adrenalin-fuelled environment every year ensure they become the physically and mentally resilient soldiers that are needed in today's British Army.

Maj Warren Hartwell (RAPTC), officer commanding the adventurous training centre, explains: "You see troops canoeing down a river and you think that the last time we used boats like that was in the Second World War, but this is a training medium to develop confidence, leadership and other skills.

"There are few places in the world where you can take a novice to do the sorts of things that we can do here. Class two or three waters, rock-climbing or a

**Ride 'em cowboy.** They might look calm in this photo but the horses at Trails End Camp are a challenge for troops to control



**Top and above, Fast flowing:** Brig Justin Maciejewski narrowly escapes a dip in the 2°C waters of the Kananaskis river during a day of rafting with fellow soldiers



choice of four different ski areas: you can guarantee that the experiences soldiers get here won't just be for the duration of their career, but will last for the rest of their life."

Troops are sent for week-long packages at Trails End Camp, usually either before or after training exercises at the British Army Training Unit Suffield (Batus), four hours down the road in Alberta.

Personnel choose which activity or challenge pursuit they want to spend their time learning – from climbing and mountain biking to skydiving, horse riding or kayaking.

The thing that all activities have in

common is exposure to risk; something I am all too aware of as my boat hurtles down the river.

Instructors here are trying to exploit aspects of training that are not present in competitive team sports – allowing individuals to challenge themselves in different environments, where weapons and tanks are of zero use.

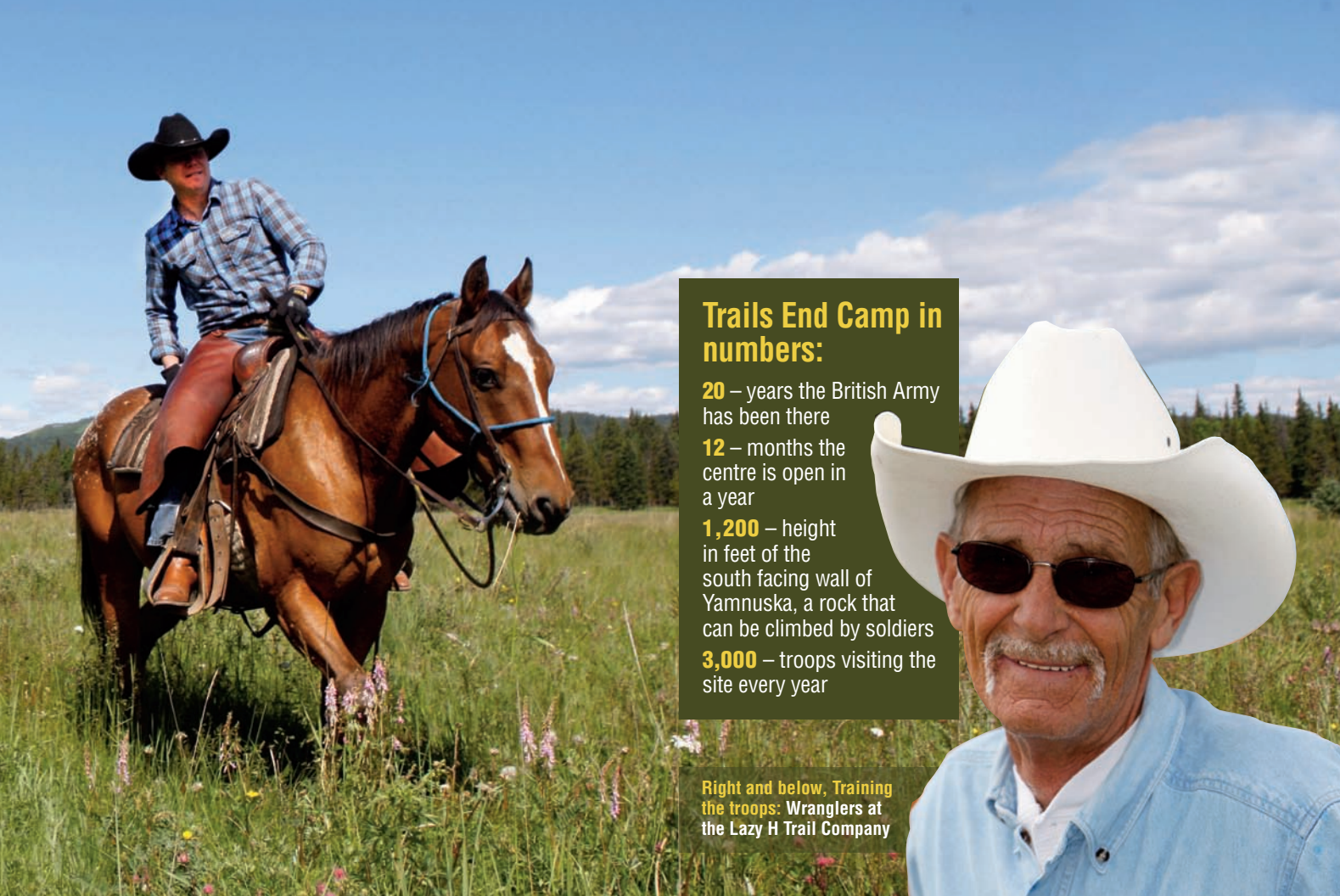
"We push troops to the limit here," Maj Hartwell adds.

"Batus is controlled but out here you are closer to life-threatening situations.

"When you are riding a horse along a trail, not knowing what wildlife to expect,







## Trails End Camp in numbers:

**20** – years the British Army has been there

**12** – months the centre is open in a year

**1,200** – height in feet of the south facing wall of Yamnуска, a rock that can be climbed by soldiers

**3,000** – troops visiting the site every year

**Right and below, Training the troops: Wranglers at the Lazy H Trail Company**



sitting in the saddle for six hours a day, it's tough.

"We have bears and cougars here and they will eat you."

During my visit, buzzwords such as "leadership", "cooperation", "teamwork" and "stamina" are bandied around the staff canteen with impressive regularity.

But aside from these personal development objectives, is the chance for troops to have their hard work and commitment rewarded by exploring the beautiful, snow-capped scenery.

Campfires, barbecues, evening strolls, bear sightings and bird watching are part and parcel of Trails End's wholesome experience.

Like my friend in the raft, this privilege does not escape many of the centre's uniformed visitors.

SSgt Mark Budd (KRH) has stayed there five times and considers himself

one of its biggest fans.

"I'd say it is probably the best thing I have ever done in my 15 years with the Army," he tells *Soldier*.

"You get to meet a lot of people from different units but it's the scenery that really gets you.

"You go to Batus and work hard for four weeks in one of the hardest exercises you will do as a battlegroup, but knowing that you will then be off to Trails End Camp is a great morale boost. "It's just what people need."

Coleman Blair is a wrangler at the Lazy H Trail Company where the tough horse-riding package is run.

With animals that kick, buck, bite and gallop out of control, this is certainly not The Pony Club.

"About 95 per cent of the guys we get here have never been near a horse before," Blair tells me.

"We teach them everything before we go out – how to avoid getting kicked and bitten, how to put the saddle on.

"Some of the soldiers think they are the toughest guys in the world but show some of them a horse and that changes.

"They learn that they are only as strong as their weakest rider."

Father Richard Blair adds: "British soldiers are real characters.

"They are a good bunch to work with and the general population here has high regard for them."

Blair senior says the centre is important for teaching soldiers to cope in environments where they are not in full control.

"You get a kid from Liverpool or Manchester and he's never seen this sort of stuff before," he said.

"I have seen soldiers shaking because they don't want to ride a horse

but when they come back from their trip you would think there are 20 John Waynes on stallions."

WO1 Chris Roberts (RAPTC), who this writer has almost forgiven for pretending a bear was chasing me, adds: "These guys have had a hard time and look forward to coming here.

"Of course you get some who really want to come, some who are dubious and some who don't want to come, but by the end of the week they are all glad they came.

"What better place to take on a challenge than in the Rockies?

"It might not be a holiday but these surroundings are priceless and we want soldiers to have fun while fulfilling the aims of adventurous training." ■





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***You've got nothing to lose  
and perhaps a lot to gain***



Report: Sharon Kean

UNITS bound for the battlefield do not just rely on modern kit and hi-tech weaponry.

They also require support of a more traditional and less technical kind – padres.

Like the Service's ever-evolving training packages, Royal Army Chaplains' Department ministers are playing a crucial role in the Afghanistan mission.

"Chaplaincy at the moment is probably seen in higher regard than it has been for decades," said Rev Mike Parker, the senior chaplain with 1 Mechanized Brigade.

"Commanders want to take their padres on operations because they recognise they are an asset."

With 11 years' experience of serving alongside soldiers in barracks, on training exercises and in theatre, Rev Parker is clear about the value of a chat with the chaplain.

"If we want to talk about people being our strategic edge then we need to provide them with personal contact," he said.

"Operations in Afghanistan are ongoing and the legacy of that campaign will be with us for some time, so it's important that we have robust and possibly even more help of this sort in the future."

As well as a kind ear, military ministers offer spiritual support, moral guidance and pastoral care to Servicemen and women regardless of their religion or beliefs.

And although they wear the British Army uniform and follow troops onto the battlefield, they are unarmed.

The highly dangerous role of sticking by their units through war and peace has seen four of them awarded the Victoria Cross and hundreds more the Military Cross.

Rev Gary Scott (pictured) will deploy with the Grenadier Guards to

Helmand province this winter on his first operational tour, having made the move from a civilian church just over a year ago.

The 50-year-old recently returned from a training exercise in Canada where he got his first taste of life as a minister in the field.

"One of the challenges is being available regardless; making sure I'm around the officers' mess, going to the canteen and to the hubs around the barracks," he told *Soldier*. "It's about people understanding who you are and knowing that if they need to have a word, they can feel comfortable doing so."

He added: "Once guys get out on deployment that's often when questions come up and more support is needed."

Padres are constantly on-call and have a special phone that can be contacted at any time of the day or night, seven days a week.

"Life is fairly busy – there are field services and church parades but I find that the best stuff is the unplanned work, when you're sitting down and someone sidles up and says

'can I have a word?'," he explained.

Those wanting to grab a chat with Rev Scott range from young guardsmen to senior officers.

"Commanders carry heavy responsibility and work very hard to support their blokes and they've not always got someone's ear to bend outside the chain of command," he explained. "The chaplain gives them an opportunity to talk about stuff they wouldn't otherwise have the chance to discuss."

He said that issues associated with welfare at war would probably make him busier in the event of the regiment deploying on Op Herrick.

"I would expect a few concerns to come up," said Rev Scott.

"It could be someone worrying while they are on stag in the middle of the night or being concerned about

things they will have to do in theatre.

"My job is to help people deal with some of the hard choices they have to make."

While a padre's role as a confidant is closely linked to the British Army's welfare package for troops, it is distinct – something that both chaplains were keen to make clear.

"Our role is the spiritual, moral and emotional welfare of troops, offering structure and guidance," explained Rev Scott.

As the Service evolves, changes such as an increased awareness of mental health problems inevitably affect the ministers' standing among personnel.

"In caring for people, we have an input into the difficulties in their lives such as relationship issues, anxiety and drink problems," added Rev Parker.

"Many of the reactions to those can be more explicit in theatre."

"When someone is showing signs of behaviour that are concerning, we might be asked to step in and talk to them."

It is clear these ministers are prepared to follow their soldiers through thick and thin. And as the latest crop of troops head off on another dangerous tour of southern Afghanistan, they can do so knowing that a willing ear is never far away. ■

**'MY JOB IS TO HELP PEOPLE DEAL WITH THE HARD CHOICES THEY HAVE TO MAKE'**



# PADRE PRESENCE

## CHAPLAINS PROVIDE SUPPORTIVE SHOULDER



**Wave rider:** Del Elesmore left the REME behind for a new life in Devon, which includes work as a surf instructor



**Report:** Richard Long  
**Picture:** Graeme Main

**W**ITH Service life characterised by rules, regulations and a strict military ethos, transition to the civilian world may come as a shock to the system for some personnel.

Job security and the safe knowledge of having a roof over one's head are suddenly replaced by the need to forge an alternative career and find a new home beyond the confines of Forces accommodation.

But help is at hand for soldiers facing these daunting decisions courtesy of the Army's resettlement package.

The programme is tailored to ensure candidates capitalise on the life experience and skills gained on the front line, in what has become an increasingly competitive job market.

Lt Col Chris Edwards (AGC (ETS)), part of the Army's resettlement team, told *Soldier* the process involves a three-pronged approach aimed at covering all aspects of transition.

Unit administration staff provide basic information early on before an individual

education and resettlement officer offers greater insight on two crucial fronts.

"The first stage provides serving members of the Armed Forces with advice and highlights the personal development opportunities such as A Levels, degrees and occupational training," the senior officer explained.

"The second part provides resettlement guidance which considers factors such as housing, welfare issues and briefs on what is available to them."

With this complete, troops can seek further direction from the Career Transition Partnership (CTP), an organisation that provides a wide range of training and employment opportunities.

"The CTP delivers workshops that are able to transfer military experience to the civilian world," Lt Col Edwards said.

"A junior soldier or young NCO may think they have no management skills but they have been on the front line operating expensive kit and commanding men in a challenging environment.

"They are shown a way of tailoring that for civvy street."

As well as helping with training and

interviews, the Army offers a period of resettlement time to personnel depending on length of service.

Lt Col Edwards added: "They can undertake work placement courses which may be of interest. They can also attend workshops with the CTP to help them write CVs and learn skills for future employment.

"There is a wide array of careers outside the Army.

"The guys in our team are aware of a whole range of possibilities and opportunities and have a good idea of where people should be heading."

*Soldier* spoke to two former Servicemen who have made a successful start to their new lives, to learn more about the options available outside the military.

Michael Takacs served for more than a decade in the Army but left this year to launch his own business – Eagle Eyes Security. The one-time corporal in the Household Cavalry Regiment is determined to excel in the venture, which is based in Windsor and aiming to spread nationwide.

"I did a tour of Afghanistan in 2009/10 and when I got back I decided I wanted to start my own business," he explained.





# SOLDIER TO CIVVY

## ARMY RESETTLEMENT PACKAGE HELPS TROOPS INTO CAREERS BEYOND THE FRONT LINE

"For the past 12 months I have been putting together research, registering the company and launching the website."

Takacs has been keen to maintain his link with the military and around 40 per cent of his staff are ex-Servicemen.

He will also be running training courses to help new employees gain the qualifications necessary to work in the industry.

"I did this off my own back and I was determined to get it up and running," he said. "I had taken orders for the past ten years and just wanted to be my own boss."

"The company's main focus now is to get the training departments operating fully. We are keen to get more former soldiers on board and hopefully we can incorporate their military qualifications into what we are doing here."

Having joined the Army as an apprentice

at 16, Del Elesmore served for 24 years before calling time on his military career.

The 42-year-old rose to the rank of captain in the Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers and now runs the

Blackcode vehicle re-mapping business with his brother, a fellow ex-Serviceman.

The duo took on the franchise in June and now operate across Devon and Cornwall.

"All modern cars have engines that are controlled by computers. We rewrite the programmes to make cars more powerful or more fuel-efficient,"

Elesmore explained.

As a lover of the great outdoors, he also used part of his resettlement package to gain the national lifeguard award and surf instructor qualifications. He now offers lessons in and around Bideford in Devon.

Elesmore added: "I was past my pension

point and I decided I wanted to do other things and live in my own house by the sea and become part of the community.

"The resettlement process was a pretty good package. Most people do not realise the spectrum of things that are out there."

"I talked about the courses I was interested in, found out where they were held and it went from there."

"I also did a small business start-up course. Being in the military since I was 16 meant I never really worked for anyone else. We had some good speakers who gave us a real insight into what is needed to start out on your own."

"The resettlement process is very good, so leavers need to make sure they plan what they want to do and get the most from it. It really can help you on your way to a new career or just a skill that you always wanted to learn."

With the well-trodden path from military to civilian life continuing at pace, the Army is playing its part in ensuring personnel excel outside the Service. And with a host of transferable skills at their disposal, former soldiers can certainly be the best at what they do. ■

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# Battlefield TO BOARDROOM

## Soldiers could lead way to brighter business future

Interview: Joe Clapson

**W**ITH most industries facing austerity and smaller workforces, former Army personnel could fill a "leadership vacuum" and guide firms towards a brighter future, according to an expert consultant.

Jonathan Perks, a management guru to captains of some of the largest blue-chip companies in the world, says the experience and quality of UK troops is just what the recession-hit marketplace needs.

In his new book, *Inspiring Leadership*, Perks draws on his 30 years' experience in the British Army and international business to conclude that there are more inspiring chiefs to be found in the military than anywhere in the corporate world.

"Wherever you are required to motivate and engage others, you need inspiring leadership," said the first-time author.

"In big companies the staff's lives have been pretty steady, working along day-to-day – not like having to respond quickly and decisively in the Army.

"Sometimes in the military there is no time to discuss what has to happen – it's a case of listening to a few ideas at speed and then acting fast."

During his service, Perks spent a decade in the Royal Signals and two years as a platoon commander in the Scots Guards. He also served as a leadership instructor at Sandhurst and assistant to the Chief of the General Staff.

In that time, the



writer says he learnt skills that are valuable in all areas of employment and not just those on the battlefield landscape.

He has since gone on to coach chief executives at firms including HSBC, KPMG, Goldman Sachs, McDonalds and BP.

"Simple things like being prepared to work hard and play hard but making sure you are there the next morning ready to work are key," added the former major.

"There are very capable people in business at the top of their game, but who want to be able to inspire and lead like Service commanders can.

"Integrity is also a hugely important thing in companies, as it is in the Army."

Perks was keen to emphasise that he was not suggesting soldiers should turn their backs on military life.

"I'm definitely not encouraging people to leave, because the Army made these good people," he explained.

"What I am saying is that there will come a time when Servicemen and women do leave the Forces and some are frightened about that prospect.

"But even in the current economic climate, soldiers and officers from across the military can do really well in business."

Aside from practical skills, Perks explained that strong values and behaviours of Forces personnel set them apart from civilians.

"Personal presence, social skills, the ability to appreciate other team members and a passion for the job are pivotal," he said.

"If you can engage people, they will be 30 per cent more productive without any extra pay."

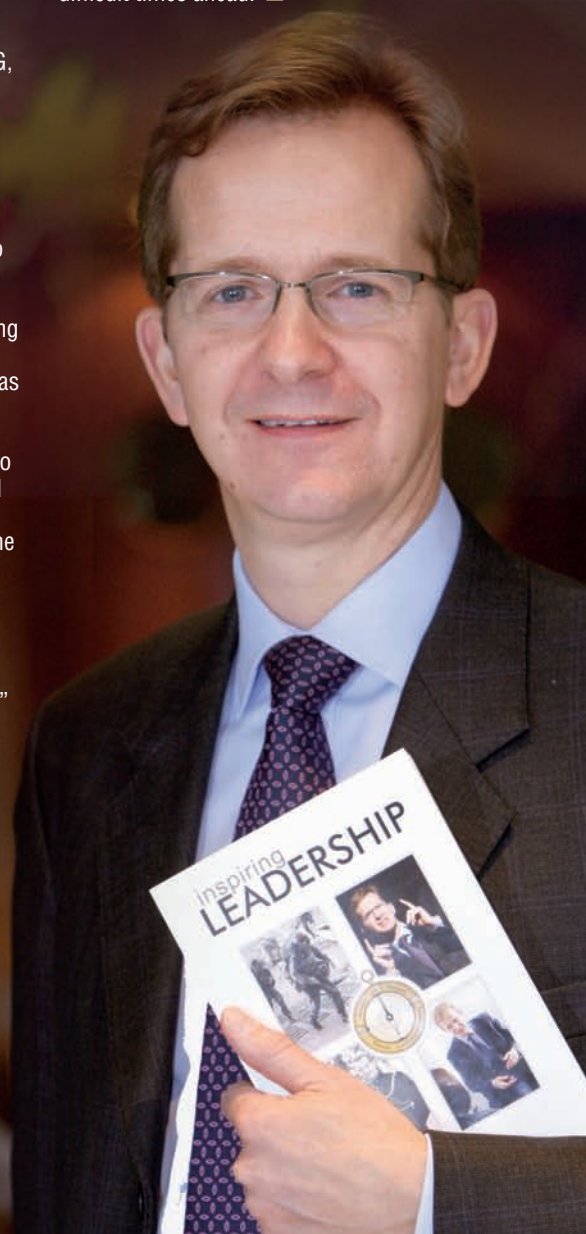
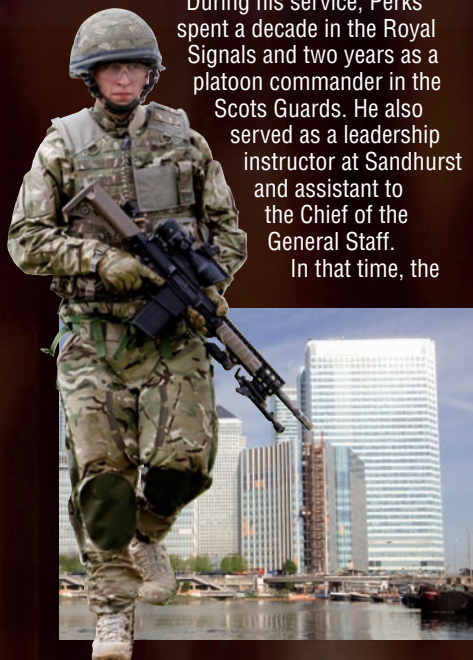
The sought-after mentor said that although operational theatres differ vastly to boardrooms, a switch from the former to the latter may not be

completely unfamiliar to ex-soldiers.

"In a good [Army] unit there will be a sense of being prepared to die for your colleagues," said Perks.

"In business that does not happen, but there are people willing to lose their career on a point of integrity. That also gains a lot of respect."

Britain's job market might be tough but military qualities such as trust, leadership and commitment could be just what is needed to sustain companies during the difficult times ahead. ■





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**Report: Sharon Kean**  
**Pictures: Steve Dock**

**C**HILDREN and adults building rafts and tackling climbing walls is a common sight at any outdoor activity centre.

And the 40-strong group of siblings, aunts, uncles, parents and grandparents trying their hand at archery, zip-lines, raft-building and horse riding on my visit to Coverack in Cornwall looked like any other.

But it was their common bond that set them apart – they are all related to people who have died while serving in the British Armed Forces.

Among them were several soldiers who have given up their annual leave to help coordinate

week-long getaways for bereaved members of the Service community. Family Activity Breaks (FAB) are run in partnership with the Youth Hostel Association and see some 45 groups

heading to either Cornwall or North Yorkshire over four weeks during the summer months.

The tri-Service welfare initiative was set up by Maj Belinda Forsythe (RMP) just over three years ago following a request from the Army Widows Association for more support, in particular for those with young children.

"We came up with a package of adventurous training activities for kids and parents such as canoeing, climbing and horse riding," the officer told *Soldier*.

"Then we developed the volunteer role for military personnel and MoD civil servants because we didn't just want to send people away, we wanted to reinforce the message that they are still part of the Armed Forces community and we haven't forgotten them."

Relatives on a FAB holiday have the chance to spend quality time with each other as well as with adults and children who have been through

similar experiences.

One of the biggest benefits is the boost they get from the peer group support network developed during the seven-day breaks.

"You have women who have been widowed for five years talking to those who have just lost someone," explained Maj Forsythe.

"It works – they make friends, keep in touch and help each other.

"Getting them together in the first place is a really important part of the FAB camps."

Many of those attending have lost loved ones on operations in Iraq or Afghanistan but there are others whose serving spouse, sibling or child has died in different circumstances.

"We're as open as possible," said Maj Forsythe. "And it doesn't matter if they turn up the day after it starts, we aim to fill all the places on a first-come first-served basis."

Among those present for one of this year's FAB camps in Cornwall were the children of WO1 Darren Chant, a Grenadier Guards regimental sergeant major who was killed along with four others in Helmand in 2009 when a rogue Afghan policeman opened fire at a patrol base (see page 12).

Connor (17), Adam (11) and 12-year-old Victoria Chant were on their second such trip and said it was more than a holiday.

"It's fun and you meet new friends who have



# Healing holidays

Troops give bereaved Forces families a boost



been through the same thing as you," Victoria explained. "It's good to be supported by people."

Conner added: "When I first came here I didn't expect any of this."

"It helps a lot because I don't think I could just go up to any person and try to talk to them about what I've been through."

"They don't know how it feels."

Maj Forsythe said that such glowing praise was typical of those who had attended one of the holidays, which cost just £50 per family and are funded by military charities that support FAB.

"Families say things like 'you've saved our lives – you've brought my children back to me'," she added.

"It's very rewarding and that's why so many of us spend our spare time doing it. We get a lot out of it."

Cpl Michelle Gibbs (Int Corps) heard about the initiative through a work colleague and volunteered for the first time last year.

"It makes you feel really good that you can give something back to those who have sacrificed themselves for everybody, by making sure their families and kids are not forgotten about," she told *Soldier*.

"I'd like to think that if I had a family in the future and anything happened to me then they would have this support."

She added: "It's such a worthwhile thing to do, the people are amazing and the sense of achievement you get when the kids are smiling and forgetting about anything else that's going on is just great."

For a project with no public funding that relies on those who give up their free time to help, one of the toughest challenges for Maj Forsythe is getting the message out.

"We try to use the chain of command, unit welfare officers, Army Widows Association groups and the visiting officer system to let people know we exist," she said.

Volunteers are recruited in a similar way and the scheme creator is always keen to attract more helpers, particularly men.

"Women tend to be natural volunteers but we need blokes to kick footballs around with the kids," she explained.

"We actively recruit men because many of the children will have lost their dad or older brother and as a result will lack male company."

Those who have signed up to help range from infantrymen to Army chefs, from junior and senior NCOs to officers, and hail from all

three Services. But despite their diverse military backgrounds the team members share a common bond, much like the bereaved families they are there to support.

All have given up their own time to help people in their hour of need, displaying an ethos that is typical of those in the Armed Forces. ■

● Anyone interested in volunteering on a FAB holiday, or who knows of a family that could benefit, can contact Capt Karen Tait on 01264 381298 or via email at [CGSArmyInsp-IndivTrg-SO3c@mod.uk](mailto:CGSArmyInsp-IndivTrg-SO3c@mod.uk). The dates for next year's camps will be announced on [www.fabcamps.org.uk](http://www.fabcamps.org.uk) in the coming weeks.



# BLOOD BROTHERS

## SOLDIERS ON STANDBY TO SAVE LIVES

**Report: Sharon Kean  
Pictures: Steve Dock**

**A**LL troops sign up to serve Queen and country when they join the British Army. But increasing numbers are stepping beyond the call of duty by offering to help doctors performing life-saving blood transplants.

Thousands of soldiers have added their names to a list of individuals who can be called upon to provide healthy bone marrow cells to patients battling cancers such as leukaemia.

The Anthony Nolan register was set up 35 years ago to create the widest possible pool of volunteers and there are currently 425,000 people on the list.

About 60 per cent of these are female, yet it is men between the ages of 18 and 30 who are required to provide 80 per cent of donations.

As a result of this discrepancy, the charity is on a mission to sign up more potential donors from its target demographic and Servicemen are proving to be a vital source.

"The culture in the Armed Forces means that troops don't question the idea of stepping up when they are needed," said Victoria Moffett, a spokesperson for the charity.

"Speaking to donor recruitment managers, I've heard that we get hundreds of volunteers when we visit barracks.

"And the profile of people in the Army makes them well-suited – they are younger and mostly male which fits with our need."

Donors can be men or women between the ages of 18 and 40, but doctors' first choice is always males below the age of 30 because they usually provide the most blood stem cells.

Capt Steve Higgs (REME), pictured below left, is one of those leading the charge to find more recruits within the ranks. The officer signed up

to the register as an 18-year-old Army apprentice in 1988 and subsequently received a call to arms in 2002.

Stationed in Fallingbommel in Germany at the time, he returned to the UK to donate some of his blood – an action that helped a young boy in his battle to beat cancer.

"I saw the opportunity to do something positive," he explained.

"There's no great impact on you, it's just like giving blood – you're healthy and your cells will replace themselves."

And contrary to popular belief, the procedure is not painful or invasive.

"The day after I had it done, I flew out to Canada for a month on the prairie with nothing more than a little piece of sticking plaster on my back," Capt Higgs added.

Based at the REME training school in Bordon, the officer is ideally positioned to spread the word to young craftsmen.

"I'm trying to introduce the idea to 100 per cent of the guys passing through here and give them the opportunity to sign up," he said.

During *Soldier's* visit to the centre, 50 recruits listened attentively as Capt Higgs explained the Anthony Nolan mission and how, by offering their cells, personnel may end up helping to treat someone with life-threatening cancer.

There was no shortage of volunteers when the forms were handed out at the end of the presentation and among those who registered were trainee armourers Cfn Scott O'Neill and Cfn David King.

"You can save someone's life by doing this so I'm happy to go on the list," said Cfn O'Neill.

"You know you're doing something good and you'd hope for someone to donate to you if you needed it."

Capt Higgs has recruited around 200 young Servicemen and women in the past few months and is hoping to hit a target of 1,000 by the end of the year.

"Typically between 70 and 80 per cent will volunteer and all I'm asking them for at this stage is some saliva," he said.

In 2010 Anthony Nolan added nearly 25,000 more people to its books, any of whom can now be called upon if their blood is matched to a cancer patient in need of a transplant.

Just one in 1,000 people are ever required to donate cells.

One of those to benefit from the register is Lt Col Dougie Allen (Scots DG), currently the commanding officer at the Armoured Fighting Vehicle Gunnery School in Lulworth.

The officer was diagnosed with a form of leukaemia in 2009 and, after failing to respond to treatment, was referred by his doctor for a bone marrow transplant.

"The Anthony Nolan register saved my life," Lt Col Allen said.

"It was through this charity that they found a donor for me.

"I thought leukaemia only affected old people but it doesn't, it can happen to young men too.

"I was only 38 and I was hoping to command my regiment but this happened before the selection process."

He added "I wish I could say thank you face-to-face with my donor.

"I've been extremely

fortunate but many people are not matched."

Since recovering, Lt Col Allen has made use of his contacts throughout the Army to spread the word about the charity's work and is doing his best to recruit more volunteers.

"Those who know about Anthony Nolan are extremely willing but a lot of people are unaware," he said.

"It requires a small medical procedure and you can actually save someone's life, not by giving money just by using your own body tissue.

"It would be great to have this as part of everyday life for soldiers." ■

“I THOUGHT  
LEUKAEMIA  
ONLY AFFECTED  
OLD PEOPLE  
BUT IT DOESN'T.  
IT CAN HAPPEN  
TO YOUNG MEN”



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WITH A BLOOD CANCER.

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BETWEEN 18 AND 40.

« BONE MARROW CELLS ONLY  
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THE BODY SO DONATIONS  
ARE MADE AS REQUIRED.





**Life savers:** Cfn Daniel Provis and Cfn Daniel Aston (both REME) provide saliva specimens while registering as blood stem cell donors

## JOIN THE MISSION

KAREN Archer is a donor recruitment manager for Anthony Nolan and has travelled to Army bases across the UK, Northern Ireland and Germany to sign up troops.

She is the main point of contact for units and regiments interested in getting involved and word is spreading fast.



"The lads are amazing as soon as they realise what you're doing," she told *Soldier*.

"Because we get the chance to speak to them as a group, we can tell them who we are, what

we do and they can relate to the stories of people like Lt Col Allen who is fit and back in command now because someone like them helped him.

"When soldiers see how easy it is and how worthwhile, they are so willing and so keen.

"It's an absolute pleasure to work with them."

● Anyone interested in setting up a recruitment session or finding out more about Anthony Nolan can contact Karen Archer on 07717 851522 or by email at [karen.archer@anthohnolan.org](mailto:karen.archer@anthohnolan.org)



« AFTER REGISTRATION VOLUNTEERS ARE ASKED FOR A SALIVA SAMPLE. IF MATCHED TO A PATIENT, THEY ARE GIVEN A BLOOD TEST AND HEALTHCHECK TO ENSURE THEY ARE SUITABLE BEFORE BEING INVITED TO A SPECIALIST CENTRE IN LONDON TO DONATE.

« THE PROCEDURE TAKES AROUND FOUR TO FIVE HOURS AND IS NOT PAINFUL. VOLUNTEERS ARE HOOKED UP TO A MACHINE THAT TAKES BLOOD FROM ONE ARM, FILTERS OUT THE BONE MARROW CELLS AND REPLACES IT VIA THE OTHER ARM.

« LAST YEAR THE CHARITY FOUND MATCHES FOR 937 PATIENTS.

« ALL EXPENSES ARE PAID FOR THOSE WHO DONATE - INCLUDING TRAVEL, HOTEL ROOMS AND ANY SALARY LOST.



Report: Joe Clapson

**A** TEAM of professionals has taken to the phones in a bid to combat bullying, harassment and discrimination within the British Army.

The aim is to encourage Service personnel of all ranks to tell someone if they feel they are being treated unfairly or if someone is acting inappropriately.

Col Mark Abraham explained that the confidential system was set up to stop soldiers fearing reprisals for reporting their problems to the chain of command.

"This was launched to give people confidence to speak out about issues that need resolving," he said.

"It is to help us look after our people.

"If you ask a question within your unit about being bullied then everyone knows you asked that question, but if you ring us it is all confidential."

The phones are manned from 0800 to 1800, Monday to Friday, with a secure answerphone operating when calls cannot be taken.

Staff can deal with problems such as homophobia, sexual harassment and racism.

"Most people who are being bullied or harassed just want it to stop and we don't just listen, we can help end it," said Col Abraham, who heads up the welfare initiative.

"Here, you will get a fair and honest answer from knowledgeable people with access to all faculties of the Army."

In the past it has been suggested that Servicemen and women would rather keep quiet about mistreatment than raise a grievance, because of concerns that their problem would not be resolved. But

according to Col Abraham, the telephone helpline will wield more effective powers.

"We have the authority to phone a commanding officer and say 'you will act on this'," he explained.

"We have also got the permission of Land Forces to say 'this needs to happen' and with this system there is no filling in forms."

Assembled at the start of this year, the team is already taking pride in dealing with callers' problems.

"We achieve vastly quicker results than the formal complaints process," added the senior officer. "If you go down that road it might take months before anything is resolved, but with this there is a very fast turnaround.

"And with the permission of the individual, the matter will be taken as high as it needs to go."

Hotline staff are currently taking time to explain to the chain of command how the system can help them as well as individual callers.

"All commanding officers have been written to and we encourage them to use this to get advice on how to handle things quickly," said Col Abraham.

The easy-to-use procedure is monitored by the Service Complaints Commission.

In a message to all soldiers, the officer added: "If you see people acting inappropriately, speak out – we want to hear about it so we can sort it.

"This is the way to get help if you are unable to speak to the chain of command.

It is confidential and no information will go anywhere without your consent." ■

**To speak to the bullying, harassment and discrimination team call 01264 381922 or military 94391 7922**

**Mum's the word:** Problems are only taken up with the chain of command with the caller's permission

# Call guys

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# TALKBACK

YOUR letters provide an insight into the issues at the top of soldiers' agendas . . . but please be brief. Emails (mail@soldiermagazine.co.uk) must include your name and location (although we won't publish them if you ask us not to). We reserve the right to accept or reject letters, and to edit for length, clarity or style. Before you write to us with a problem, you should first have tried to get an answer via your own chain of command.



## BRITISH, NOT ENGLISH

I WOULD just like to share my disgust at a letter in July's issue, "Moving north would be a costly option", which asked the chain of command to think twice about Scotland being considered as a possible location for troops returning from Germany.

During 17 years' service I have spent very little time actually serving on home soil and even when based in Scotland have had to attend courses in England or Wales.

I agree that travelling such distances can be quite costly – especially when allowances are being cut.

At the moment, 5 Scots are stationed in Canterbury and 4 Scots in Fallingbommel, one of the furthest camps from Scotland.

Did the writer of the aforementioned letter take into consideration the wee Jock who lives on the western isles or, for that matter, anywhere north of the border?

Did they ponder the cost and convenience to those personnel and their families of travelling to and from their place of service and home town?

It is attitudes like those expressed in the letter that fuel the argument some of my fellow countrymen have for independence.

Remember, this is the British not English Army and consequently it should be based in all parts of the UK and not just the south.

Is it possible that the writer in question is just unhappy because a move north would mean that they wouldn't be entitled to local overseas allowance for living in this foreign country they portray Scotland as being? – W02 Craig, 2 Scots in Edinburgh.

● Scot strikes back – page 69



Picture: Sgt Rupert Fene, RLC

**At equal risk:** Female soldiers such as medics (pictured) can find themselves in the thick of the action

## Time for Bryn to banish 'blokes'

As a serving member of the Armed Forces who has completed an operational tour of Iraq, I feel a bit disgruntled about Help For Heroes' slogan "it's about the blokes".

I understand that when the saying originated women serving in the military did not do so on the front line and it was therefore unheard of for them to be injured in the same manner as men.

However, this phrase is outdated. More and more female soldiers such as medics do serve and get wounded in combat.

I doubt I am alone in believing that the charity should rethink its slogan to apply to both genders.

Changing the word "blokes" to "troops" would work. – LCpl Cairney, 12th Mechanized Bde HQ and Sig Sqn.

**Bryn Parry, chief executive officer and co-founder of Help for Heroes, responds:**

The slogan "it's about the blokes" is not in any way meant to cause offence or isolate female personnel.

As a phrase, it is meant to be all-encompassing and reflect that in the Services your gender is irrelevant and women are just as capable as men in their roles – they are part of a team.

The slogan, inspired by a visit to Selly Oak Hospital where my wife Emma and I met some seriously injured Service personnel, comes from a speech I made at the charity's launch on September 30, 2007. The full quote reads: "It's about 'the blokes', the men and women of the Armed Forces."

We help many women in the military who are sick, wounded or injured in the line of duty.

We will of course take your view on-board and thank you for taking the time to let us know your thoughts.

## Loggie's lambast over heinous headline hiccup

I WISH to register my disdain over the headline for a *News in brief* article on page 13 of the July edition of *Soldier*.

Though I am a firm fan and avid reader of the magazine, I was annoyed to find that you had attributed a story about my regiment – 11 Explosive Ordnance Disposal Regiment, RLC – with the title "Sappers' bank job".

This mistake wouldn't have been so unacceptable had it not been placed above a story and photograph relating to W02 Iain Martin (RLC), pictured wearing RLC mess dress, who recently won the *Scottish Daily Record's* Forces Hero award.

I appreciate that mistakes are made, however,

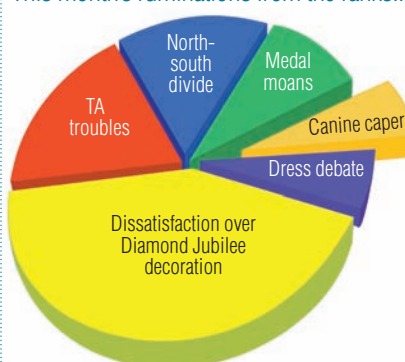
this oversight annoys and frustrates. – W01 (SSM) Simon Hall, 11 EOD Regt, RLC.

**The editor, wondering whether the pressures of deadline represent the civvy equivalent of the fog of war, types:** Thanks for logging your dissatisfaction with our moment of madness and apologies for any offence caused.

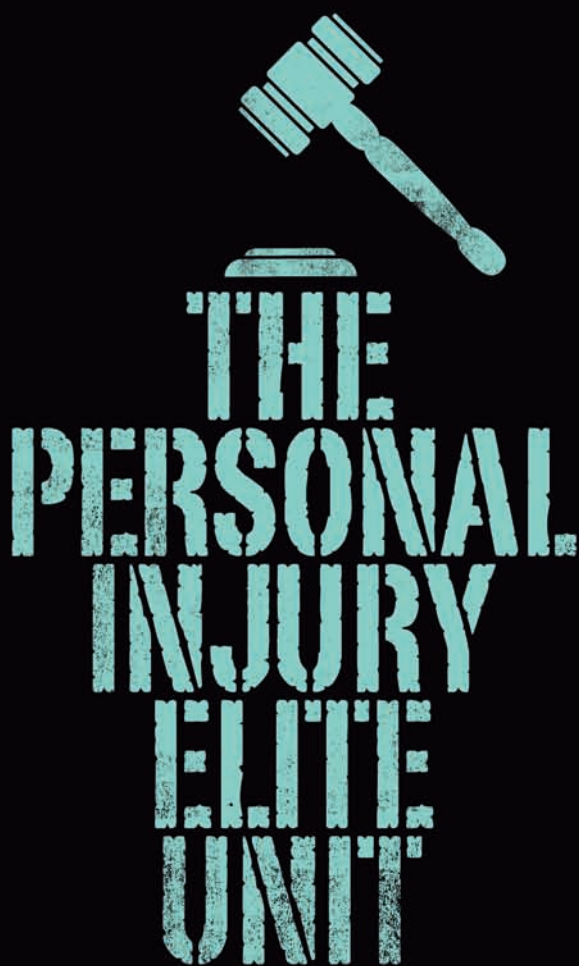
**Congratulations once again to W02 Iain Martin on his award – a hard-earned salute to all those, regardless of regiment, who selflessly take to the front line of the war against improvised explosive devices.**

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This month's ruminations from the ranks...







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# Please recognise Reserves



**Flashback:** The magazine as it looked in September 1959. The title first ran off the presses in Brussels on March 19, 1945 and was distributed free to the fighting men of the British Liberation Army in Europe.

## SOLDIER STALWART

I WRITE in reply to recent letters about non-Service personnel reading *Soldier*.

My grandfather was in the Royal Military Police, my father was in the Royal Artillery for 20 years and spent the war in Malta and my father-in-law was captured fighting a rearguard action near Dunkirk.

One of my uncles was a paratrooper and parachuted into occupied France in 1944 and another spent ten years in the Territorial Army as a sergeant.

I joined the Army Cadet Force aged 12 and – attached to the 4th Wiltshires and then the Royal Artillery – served for six years, eventually becoming a sergeant instructor.

After the war my father worked as a storeman at the School of Artillery in Larkhill and when the troops there heard that I was a cadet, they used to pass on a copy of *Soldier* to me.

When I married I placed a regular order with the newsagent and later began to subscribe directly through the magazine.

I am a civilian and have been reading *Soldier* since 1959, which possibly makes me one of your most loyal readers.

I have always read the title from cover to cover and am impressed with how the quality has improved over the years.

It's not surprising your product is considered the "best in-house magazine" in the UK.

I find it so sad these days to read the obituaries of the young men and women who have given their lives for their country and fellow countrymen. The courage of Service personnel is outstanding and I do hope the Government plays fair by them.

I didn't join the Army because I damaged my foot playing football as a teenager but I don't care what anyone thinks, I believe I earned my right to pick up the magazine.

I enjoy reading it and have every respect for the brave young people featured in it.

– David Piper, Isle of Wight.

As a Reservist I am pleased the Future Reserve 2020 (FR20) study highlights the value of the Territorial Army.

Although we are supposed to be "one Army" and our role on operations is appreciated, I believe there are some who still look down on us.

I'm not sure that some Regulars understand the sacrifices we make.

While not on guard, exercise or operations, they get to finish work on a Friday and enjoy their weekends. Reserves, however, finish the day job and give up their personal time to train. Furthermore, when on tour we have to make life-changing sacrifices. Whereas a Regular soldier's family expect their partner to deploy and know what that entails, for a Reservist's loved ones it is a huge wrench.

Going on operations is a Regular's occupation but we have to leave behind our day-to-day jobs and, in some cases, do so not knowing whether we will still be employed on our return. We do so because we want to go on operations, volunteer to do so and are proud to serve.

If you asked Regular soldiers in theatre whether they wanted to be there, how many would answer "no, but I have to be here because it's my job"?

FR20 highlights the commitment, drive and pride of volunteers and demonstrates that we should be shown the same respect as our full-time colleagues.

The TA is not a bunch of amateur part-timers but a group of dedicated guys and gals willing to make major sacrifices. Its personnel stand by the side of Regulars as equals not as back-ups. – Pte Taylor-O'Brien, 156 Transport Regiment RLC (V).



Picture: Sgt Rupert Freer, RLC

**Proud to serve:** Pte Robert Willis, an emergency medical technician and "part-time" soldier with 254 Medical Regiment, swapped the comfort of home for a role as a front-line medic with C Company, 2 Scots in Afghanistan

## Salute to selfless civil servant

I READ the article on the Return Stores Group, "Kit conveyor belt" (July), with more than a passing interest and was pleased to see justly-deserved credit being given to Capt Guy Thewlis (RLC) and his team for a job very well done – certainly the best yet.

I was, however, disappointed not to see mention of the contribution made by our civil servants and in particular Mrs Alison Lewis, without whom Op Silverstone would not be where it is now.

Mrs Lewis has driven the process to improve the handover of Dismounted Close Combat (DCC) equipment from its inception and through several turns of the handle she has made significant improvements to it.

If anyone is the antithesis of the stereotypical, unproductive civil servant we so often read or hear about in the media, Mrs Lewis is most definitely it.

As S02 DCC (Technical) in the equipment directorate at Land Forces she manages the ever-expanding arsenal of kit and does so selflessly; always with the front-line soldiers' best interests and final output in mind.



"Wow. The fifth bouquet this morning."

This is more often than not at the expense of her own time and quality of life.

She doesn't do this from behind a desk either. In addition to providing the continuity and corporate knowledge key to Op Silverstone planning, she is at every handover to provide immediate support and assistance either on technical process matters or simply to help check off serial numbers. – Name and address supplied.



# Left disillusioned by detachment decision

**A**S a soldier attached to 2nd Battalion, The Parachute Regiment I would like an explanation of the medals ceremony that was held earlier this year.

On returning from Op Herrick 13 I was relieved to get back to normality with family and friends following a very busy six-month period. After five weeks of post-operational tour leave, we – as is to be expected – went straight into parade rehearsals.

During the final run-through all attached personnel were told that they would be marching on to the parade square with 4th Battalion, The Parachute Regiment.

I have nothing but praise for those in the Territorial Army as their lives are just as much at risk as their full-time colleagues while on tour, but I was at a loss as to why Regular soldiers were grouped with a Reserve unit.

The late change – made on the day itself – caused confusion and allowed no time for practice. Consequently, a few families were in the wrong position and missed seeing loved ones receive their medals.

I fully understand that attached personnel are not paras – nor do we wish to be so – but this should not have stopped us from marching with our unit.

This decision was a kick in the teeth to all men and women who supported and even saved lives on Op Herrick 13. – Name and address supplied.

**Capt Nicholas Mys, adjutant of 2 Para, replies:** The battalion sincerely values the contribution of its attached arms; they are an essential part of the team at every level. Moreover, we simply cannot function without the expertise and specialist skill sets supplied by the quality



Picture: Cpl Rupert Friere, RLC

**Royal recognition:** The Prince of Wales presented Operational Service Medals to soldiers from 2nd, 3rd and 4th Battalions of The Parachute Regiment during a parade at Colchester's Merville Barracks

non-Infantry soldiers and officers that bolster our number.

Across the supporting elements, whether RAMC, REME, AGC (SPS), RLC chefs, drivers and logisticians or the AAC personnel who ran our various helicopter landing sites, the contribution during our most recent deployment was exceptional.

In response to the medals parade concern, I appreciate there were some last-minute changes.

This was purely down to the size of the parade square and, with the addition of 4 Para who were unable to attend the week

of rehearsals, some rebalancing was required to accommodate everyone.

I would like to point out that it was primarily Regular Parachute Regiment soldiers who were required to stand with the TA element, although non-Para personnel were too.

Attached arms were not singled out and most were spread amongst the rifle company elements from 2 and 3 Para, with whom they served on operations.

The grievance in this instance is unfortunate, but I hope this did not detract from what was a fantastic event.



## Time to tally op tours

IN terms of deployments since Op Telic, you would be hard pushed to find a formation with as much operational experience as 1 Artillery Brigade.

I know of junior NCOs and below who have spent up to two-and-a-half years of their life on tour, but at best they only have two medals.

I deployed on Op Herrick 11 with men who had previously completed two tours of Afghanistan and they have just one decoration on their chest.

Is there a case for introducing a numbered bar to the Operational Service Medal Afghanistan (pictured right) for those in this position? – Name and address supplied.

**Brig Mike Griffiths, DPS(A), responds:** The inclusion of numerals on British decorations has been reviewed on a number of occasions.

There is no precedent for the use of them, while repetition in the case of awards and distinctions is acknowledged by bars and rosettes. Specific operational tours have occasionally attracted a variety of clasps to the medal.

Repeat tours are recognised with the award of the Accumulated Campaign Service Medal (pictured left).

The qualifying period for this award was reduced from 36 to 24 months on July 1, 2011 (page 12).





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# Time to put muzzle on dog-eat-dog debate

**T**HE argument over dogs in the workplace has raged on the pages of *Soldier* for five months now and it's high time we brought it to a sensible and mature close.

Firstly, in order to prevent further speculation on the subject, the Army policy is outlined in the document *Chief Environment and Safety Officer (Army)/1001*, which is dated February 19, 2008 and clearly lays out the ground rules.

The *Talkback* debate has focused on the rights of the individual (the pet owner) versus those who have to work alongside a colleague's dog.

Let's cut to the chase. It is the responsibility of the former to canvas their working community before he or she introduces the hound to ensure all are happy with the idea.

If individuals do not take the opportunity to speak up then perhaps the issue is more a lack of moral courage; there are ways of raising objections that don't involve insult.

The standing order also states that objections must be managed pragmatically.

If there is a medical issue or a phobic reaction then mature and sensible measures should be looked at to separate the issue from the animal, with a complete ban being imposed in the event of all other options being discounted.

The policy is heavily focused, correctly, around the rights of non-dog owners affected by the animal's presence and

includes guidelines on vaccinations, registration and the reporting process and action if a hound becomes a problem.

For the education of non-pooch owners and in response to the rather facetious comment made by a petty officer colleague in August's issue, a dog is not the same as other pets.

Cats, terrapins and spiders can all take care of themselves to varying degrees.

A dog has an increased requirement for care that Service personnel are forced to manage (due to the nature of our chosen vocation) through greater personal involvement.

Sitters and alternative arrangements are expensive and have been proven to have adverse effects on a dog's behaviour in the long term.

I completely agree with Capt James Morgan, "Barking mad" (June); the vast majority of workplace hounds are well behaved, fully house-trained and are enjoyed by owners and colleagues alike.

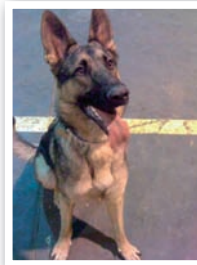
However, that happy 99 per cent are being blighted by the careless one per cent who are letting the side down by not taking the time to train, socialise, manage and clean up after their dog.

Within our workplace we have recently seen the departure of two of the most unhygienic and anti-social dogs I have ever come across, and their presence has been a two-year lumber that the rest of the department has borne with incredible tolerance. This sort of behaviour is the cause of all this friction and is not in line with policy or basic dog handling.

While I completely agree that it is the owner's personal decision to have a pet and that this choice should not be forcibly imposed upon others, surely we in the Service, of all places, can learn to live and play together like adults?

The family aspect has always been one of the greatest appeals of the military and I will challenge in the strongest manner possible all attempts to drag Service life any closer to the grey, faceless, health and safety litigation-obsessed civilian world that we have all complained of on many other occasions.

The Army has a standing order for this exact reason and it should be adhered to. So long as it is, dogs in the workplace can, and should, stand. Now let's get over it. – **Capt Mark Townend, Royal Artillery Trials and Development Unit.**



**Pooch on parade:** Sam, Capt Mark Townend's German shepherd

**“SURELY WE IN THE SERVICE, OF ALL PLACES, CAN LEARN TO LIVE AND PLAY TOGETHER LIKE ADULTS”**

## Counting the cost of entrance to the corporals' mess

**WHEN** I was made up to lance corporal eight years ago I was told that I had to fork out around £500 to buy mess dress.

My regiment at the time was 1st Battalion, The 22nd Cheshire Regiment. While I had to pay for the uniform out of my own money, senior NCOs and officers are given a grant to cover the cost.

I have been told that the reason for this is that corporals' messes are not officially recognised. If this is the case, why is the instruction to wear this form of dress for parades, functions and dinner nights on unit orders?

And if the mess doesn't exist, why do I pay a mess bill?

The unit's amalgamation in to The Mercian Regiment led to slight changes in uniform and, once again, I had to pay for items such as cuffs and a cummerbund myself.

While on the subject of clothing, the price for a stable belt was £15 after the initial issue. Now the cost has shot up to £24 and a rank slide is £6.

Why can we not exchange these pieces of equipment like we do other pieces of kit?

It is, after all, the battalion/Army that wants us to wear these things. – **Name and address supplied.**



Picture: Graeme Main

**Rebranding exercise:** Five units became one when The Mercian Regiment formed during a parade in Tamworth on September 1, 2007

**Brig Mike Griffiths, DPS(A), responds:**

Senior NCOs and officers are required to have mess dress in the same way they are required to have other forms of uniform.

As it is not an issued item of clothing, they are provided with a grant to assist with its purchase privately. The Army does not require junior NCOs to have mess dress, therefore no provision is made to

assist individuals with its procurement.

Some regiments, including The Mercian Regiment, have a tradition of junior NCOs wearing mess dress for certain functions – a custom which rightly recognises the importance of the corporals' mess within the chain of command and is designed in part to prepare them for stepping up into the senior messes.

When and if you promote to sergeant you will recover your costs by receiving the promotion grant.

As to the rights and wrongs of publishing on unit orders a requirement to wear mess kit, I suggest if you feel strongly on the matter you should refer it to your commanding officer.

Similarly, stable belts and rank slides – other than those which are issued – are also a regimental requirement, not an Army one.

While this may seem harsh in some respects, it is part of the membership of the "club" you have joined.

I cannot comment on the prices you are being charged but I'd hope that the President Regimental Institute and those in charge are doing all they can to minimise the cost of these items to their soldiers.





**Striking a chord of support for Scotland:** A band plays in front of the capital's iconic castle during this year's Royal Edinburgh Military Tattoo Picture: Mark Owens

## Scotsman strikes back at northern negativity

**H**AVING served in the Army for 15 years, I know first-hand that *Soldier* plays an important role in airing a voice without any backlash or discipline procedures from the chain of command.

I've always read the letters pages avidly – the occasional tongue-in-cheek statements from serving personnel make me laugh – and I'm glad to say they lift my morale at times.

That said, I have never once felt the need to reply to any reader's gripe as the answers provided normally point out the relevant rules and regulations.

However, that changed after reading the letter "Moving north would be a costly option" in July's issue.

One of the points made by the anonymous writer was regarding cost and journey times between Scotland and the south of England compared with travel from British Forces Germany to the south.

As a Scot who has always accepted that the needs of the Army come first, I have had the fortune to be posted all over the UK and Germany during my career. I have never once thought that my geographical location was determined by anything other than to meet operational requirements.

If the soldier in question thinks the cost of sailing over the Channel is cheaper than a no-frills flight from Edinburgh, Glasgow or Inverness to any London airport then I must have been stung each time I travelled back to the UK from Germany.

Speaking from experience, the expense of doing so is greater than getting from

Scotland to anywhere in England.

Another point made related to the lack of employment opportunities for spouses who have chosen to follow their husband or wife.

What planet is this soldier on?

My wife has always found a job wherever I have been based, whether in Inverness, Belfast, Warminster, Catterick or Germany.

Alternatively, the individual could opt to buy or rent a property in their preferred location and allow their partner to have a settled life in an area with so-called better job prospects.

With economic gloom gripping the whole of Europe, does the correspondent really think that basing decisions should be taken on the suitability of a location for

their spouse? Given that the asymmetric risk to the UK changes and evolves almost on a daily basis, the Army top brass have a difficult enough job balancing the threat under financial constraints without thinking about partners' employment prospects.

The letter writer also feels they are geographically qualified to determine where troops in Germany should return to and suggests Lincolnshire or central England as a suitable destination.

If this argument is based on pinpointing the middle of the UK, and not just the middle of England, then the flag will fall further north.

From Land's End to John O'Groats it is 837 miles by road. Taking this distance and halving it would undoubtedly be fairer to all soldiers, however, I can't imagine the Army's entire manpower taking up residence in Morecambe or Scarborough.

At present I am employed in an Army Careers Information Office (ACIO) and just about everyone who I have contact with expresses a wish to join the Armed Forces to see a bit more of the country and world.

They don't join up to serve so they can get home at weekends to take their family pet for a walk.

I have a feeling this will not be the only reply to the letter and while debate in society is a good thing, we do not serve in a democratic military.

Let the politicians and Army brass do their job and let us soldiers prepare for deployment. – **Sgt E Nichol, ACIO Kirkcaldy.**

● I SERVED in the Royal Signals for 28 years and 314 days and am now in the Military Provost Guard Service.

Throughout my career in uniform I have worked with Scottish, Welsh, Irish and of course English personnel and have never read such a load of rubbish as the letter titled "Moving north would be a costly option".

Having used phrases such as "our people" and "please the Scots", are you sure the author is a Serviceman or woman and not a member of the English National Front?

I realise we live in the free world and everyone has the right to express their views, but I feel this letter had racial undertones.

– **LCpl Norman Crook.**



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STORM - LOST AND LOW ON FUEL.

AND ME - 2 WEEKS  
OUT OF TRAINING.

THE STORM KNOCKED OUT  
HIS INSTRUMENTS AND  
HALF OF MY RADAR...

HE WAS HEADED FOR SOME RADIO  
MASTS - I HAD TO ACT QUICKLY.

I GOT HIM BACK ON COURSE.  
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# Details of Diamond medal deliver cutting blow

**WRITE** after reading the article on the announcement of the decoration to mark the monarch's 60 years on the throne and the letter from D N Pinder, "Don't deny veterans a diamond" (August).

I believe debate over the qualifying criteria for the Queen's Diamond Jubilee Medal (QDJM) is going to run for some time to come.

From my own perspective, I am of the opinion that the new award should be presented to veterans – either in entirety or to those with a record of service of at least 22 years or those in receipt of a medical or war pension.

To extend eligibility to some of those referenced in the article [Regulars and Reservists who have completed five full years of employment on February 6, 2012, living holders of the Victoria and George Crosses, members of the royal household, emergency services staff and the Prison Service] is inappropriate.

In my own case, I served for more than half of the 60 years Her Majesty has been on the throne – does that time count for nothing at all?

Like many other veterans, I missed out on both the silver and golden jubilee medals.

If the latest decoration is to be awarded to those on Reserve, who have completed a smidgen of service, then it should also be presented to veterans – even if it does mean having to pay for it. – **Victor Hunt, Belfast.**

● **AS I understand it those who have served five full years on February 6, 2012 will be eligible for the Queen's Diamond Jubilee Medal.**

**Just seven days before that date I will retire from the Armed Forces at the age of 41 having spent half my living days in service of Her Majesty.**

**Consequently, I will not qualify to**

**receive the award and therefore agree with the comments made by D N Pinder in August's issue.**

**Each and every Service person – current or retired – who has served the stipulated minimum five years prior to the jubilee should be awarded this once-in-a-lifetime decoration.**

**Missing out by a week after 22 years in uniform adds a sour note to an enjoyable career.**

– **Cpl Michael Edwards.**

● **I HAVE served Queen and country in Iraq and am currently on the front line in southern Afghanistan getting shot at and facing the deadly threat of improvised explosive devices.**

In March, at the end of a seven-month tour, my colleagues and I will return from theatre but many of us will not qualify for a Diamond Jubilee Medal.

How does this help keep morale high? No wonder there are people lining up to sign off.

On behalf of those of my colleagues who will not have served five years on February 6, 2012, I am pleading with the powers that be to reconsider the medal's qualifying criteria. – **Name and address supplied.**

● **I HAVE been a serving soldier for nearly 24 years and should still have around 18 months in uniform to go.**

Unfortunately, due to various medical



**“I AM NOT A MEDAL HUNTER OR BADGE COLLECTOR, BUT I AM PROUD TO HAVE SERVED FOR NEARLY QUARTER OF A CENTURY”**

problems sustained throughout my career, I am no longer fit for military service and am being medically retired from the Army sometime in the coming weeks.

As a result, I will not be eligible for a QDJM despite a lengthy Army career which has been challenging but rewarding and enjoyable.

It comes as a bit of a kick in the teeth that, through no fault of my own, I will be discharged and miss out.

I am not a medal hunter or badge collector, but I am proud to have served for nearly quarter of a century.

Being able to wear the new decoration alongside the others I have received while fighting for my Queen, country and its citizens would have added to that pride. – **Name and address supplied.**

● **I HAVE just read the rules published in regards to the eligibility for the issue of the Queen's Diamond Jubilee Medal. While I applaud the inclusive issue to all serving**

personnel with over five years service in February 2012, what about those who have left the military through injury?

I have served nearly 24 years and was invalided from the Army last month.

I am not bemoaning the fact that I will miss out, but feel it is unfair that being injured could cost personnel a medal.

– **Name and address supplied.**

## Married soldiers are poor relations in 'purple' partnership

HAVING perused Joint Service Publication 754, it is apparent that married members of the Army are being disadvantaged compared with their counterparts from the other Services.

The policy states that members of the Royal Navy and Royal Air Force, regardless of age, will receive accommodation free of charge if serving voluntarily separated from their spouses.

Members of the Army have to be over 37 to qualify. However, they may receive free accommodation if serving involuntarily separated.

I would be interested to hear from an authoritative voice as to why, in this ever increasingly purple world, there should be a distinction between the Forces. Is voluntary separation not the same for all, regardless of age or Service? Is it not the case that all should either pay or not? – **Name and address supplied.**

**Brig Mike Griffiths, DPS(A), responds:** Current Army policy is that you have to



**be over 37 to receive accommodation free of charge or be serving involuntarily separated if below that age.**

As the letter rightly points out, the Navy and RAF do have a different stance regarding Service personnel living in single accommodation.

The Army's position stems from its long-standing support of married accompanied service which reinforces operational

effectiveness. This is not discrimination but the Army choosing to be different as we are in many of our policies.

The over 37 rule has been reviewed several times in the last few years but there has been no change, largely due to the costs of implementing such a major revision, particularly the increased need for single living accommodation.

I will ensure that your views are factored into our work on the New Employment Model, which looks at how Army personnel will live and operate in the 2020 timescale.

Options are being considered for a tri-Service system which encourages home-ownership and compensates for mobility.

I appreciate that this will not help you in the immediate future but your concerns will be taken into account when deciding future policy changes.





## APPOINTMENTS

**Chief of Staff Headquarters Land Forces:**  
Brig D M Cullen (late RA) in October.

**Director General Capability (formerly Director General Land Warfare):** Maj Gen B Brealey (late RA) in November.

**Assistant Chief of Defence Staff (Strategy and Plans) MoD:** Maj Gen M W Poffley (late RLC) in November.

**Chief of Staff Joint Forces Command:** Maj Gen P D Jones (late RA) in November.

**Director General Change Programme, Headquarters Land Forces:**  
Maj Gen N A W Pope (late R Signals) in November.

**Chief of Staff Headquarters Allied Rapid Reaction Corps:** Brig J R Free (late RA) in April 2012.



## COMPS

**Spine line:** No winner for July issue.

**Resurrected winners:** Nicola Davock, St Helens, Merseyside; John Aspey, Wigan, Lancashire; Capt C Lucas, DISC Chicksands, Shefford; Lisa Ellison, Wellington, Somerset; Karina Braekkan, Lochwinnoch, Renfrewshire.



## DIARY

**September 17: Help for Heroes charity event.** A mixture of live music from bands plus DJ at The Boro Bar, Oundle Road, Woodston, Peterborough PE2 9PJ, from 1100 to 0100. Children welcome until 2100. Further details at [www.theborobar.co.uk](http://www.theborobar.co.uk)

**September 17: Salute Our Heroes concert.** An evening of military-themed music and entertainment at Gateshead's Sage organised by ABF The Soldiers' Charity. Tickets £20, concessions £15. To book contact the box office on 0191 443 4661.

**September 17-18: Salute to the 40s** returns to the Historic Dockyard, Chatham. Naval, military and Home Front re-enactors, wartime vehicles and lots more. Adult tickets £11, concessions £9.50. Book by calling 01634 823815 or email [groupsales@chdt.org.uk](mailto:groupsales@chdt.org.uk)

**September 24: Concert at Chelmsford Cathedral.** The Royal British Legion celebrates its 90th anniversary with soloists, choir and military band. Starts at 1930. Visit [www.britishlegion.org.uk/counties/essex](http://www.britishlegion.org.uk/counties/essex)

**December 2-4: British Military Tournament.** Tickets from £29.75, concessions available. Phone 0844 248 5026 or 0870 903 9033.



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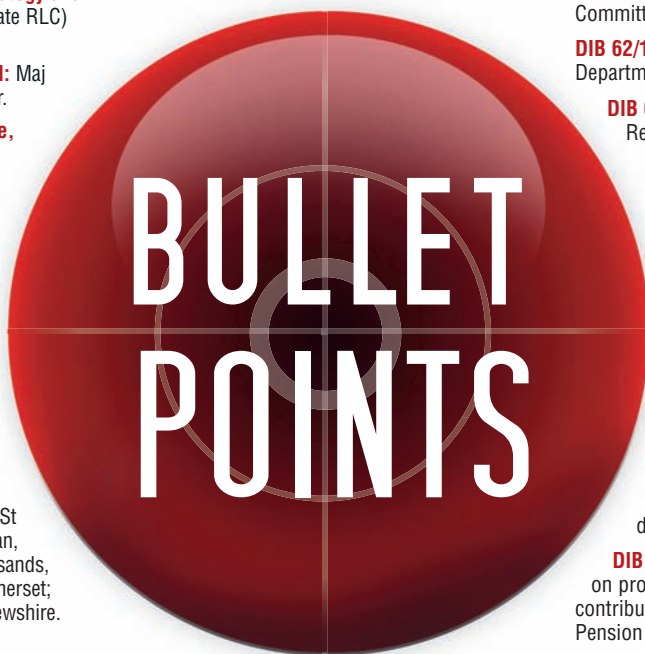
**Armed Forces' Christian Union:**  
01252 311221; [www.afcu.org.uk](http://www.afcu.org.uk)

**Armed Forces Humanist Association:**  
[www.armedforceshumanists.org.uk](http://www.armedforceshumanists.org.uk)

**ABF The Soldiers' Charity:**  
0845 241 4820

**Army Welfare Service:** 01980 615975;  
[www.army.mod.uk/welfare-support/welfare-support.aspx](http://www.army.mod.uk/welfare-support/welfare-support.aspx)

**Army Families Federation:** 01264 382324;  
mil 94391 2324; [www.aff.org.uk](http://www.aff.org.uk)



**British Limbless Ex-Service Men's Association:**  
0208 590 1124; [www.blesma.org](http://www.blesma.org)

**Career Transition Partnership:** 0207 766 8020

**Children's Education Advisory Service:**  
01980 618244; [enquiries@ceas.detsa.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@ceas.detsa.co.uk)

**Ex-Services Mental Welfare Society:**  
01372 841600; [www.combatstress.com](http://www.combatstress.com)

**Family Escort Service:** 0207 463 9249

**Forcesline:** UK – 0800 731 4880; Germany – 0800 1827 395; Cyprus – 080 91065; Falklands – #6111; from operational theatres – Paradigm Services \*201; from anywhere in the world (CSL operator will call back) – 0044 1980 630854.

**Forces Pension Society:** 0207 820 9988

**Joint Service Housing Advice Office:**  
01722 436575

**Medal Office:** 94561 3600 or 0141 224 3600

**Mutual Support (Multiple Sclerosis group):**  
[www.mutualsupport.org.uk](http://www.mutualsupport.org.uk)

**National Gulf Veterans' and Families' Association Office:** 24-hour helpline 0845 257 4853; [www.ngvfa.org.uk](http://www.ngvfa.org.uk)

**Regular Forces' Employment Association:** 0121 236 0058; [www.rfea.org.uk](http://www.rfea.org.uk)

**Royal British Legion:** 0845 7725 725

**RBL Industries Vocational Assessment Centre:**  
01622 795900; [www.rbli.co.uk](http://www.rbli.co.uk)

**St Dunstan's:** 0207 723 5021;  
[www.st-dunstans.org.uk](http://www.st-dunstans.org.uk)

**South Atlantic Medal Association:**  
01495 227577

**Service Personnel and Veterans Agency:**  
0800 169 2277 (from the UK); 0044 1253 866043 (from overseas)



## INTELLIGENCE

The following Army Briefing Notes, Defence Internal Briefs and Defence Information Notices can be found at [www.armynet.mod.uk](http://www.armynet.mod.uk)

**DIB 60/11:** Deployment of four additional RAF Tornado GR4s to Op Ellamy

**DIB 61/11:** House of Commons Defence Committee report on Afghanistan

**DIB 62/11:** Transfer of Met Office from MoD to Department for Business, Innovation and Skills

**DIB 63/11:** Publication of the Future Reserves 2020 report

**DIB 64/11:** PUS and CDS write to staff about the continuing transformation of the department

**DIB 65/11:** Defence transformation – basing and estates

**DIB 66/11:** Transition of security responsibility in Lashkar Gah

**DIB 67/11:** Public Administration Select Committee gives MoD positive report on plans for structural reform

**DIB 68/11:** 2nd PUS and VCDS write to all staff about transformation and defence reform

**DIB 69/11:** Launch of consultation on proposed increases to employee contributions to the Principal Civil Service Pension Scheme

**DIB 70/11:** PUS writes to staff about long-term plans for the MoD civilian workforce

**DIB 71/11:** Armed Forces redundancy programme – delay to announcement

**DIB 72/11:** Publication of the House of Commons Defence Committee report on the Strategic Defence and Security Review and the National Security Strategy

**DIB 73/11:** Pause in SFA upgrade and SLA modernisation programmes

**ABN 37/11:** Introduction of time limit for claiming rejoining bounty

**ABN 38/11:** The replacement of arms and G4 service directors with capability directors

**ABN 39/11:** Hearing protection

**ABN 40/11:** Update following Strategic Defence and Security Review three-month exercise

**ABN 41/11:** Disbandment of 19 Light Brigade

**ABN 42/11:** Changes to Army equality and diversity training

**ABN 43/11:** Project Avanti – restructuring personnel and support command – proposals

**ABN 44/11:** Army compulsory redundancy programme notification process

**ABN 45/11:** Future Armed Forces pension scheme update

**ABN 46/11:** The future officer structure

**ABN 47/11:** The future of Army Medical Services number two board

**ABN 48/11:** Drawdown of British Army Training Support Unit Belize

**DIN 2011DIN01-176:** Armed Forces community covenant grant scheme

**DIN 2011DIN01-175:** Extended special unpaid leave



**DIN 2011DIN01-174:** Naval Service redundancy programme – exit date for applicants

**DIN 2011DIN01-172:** Army compulsory redundancy – operational exclusion addendum

**DIN 2011DIN01-171:** Armed Forces Jewish community moral leadership course

**DIN 2011DIN01-170:** Formation of the Defence EOD and Search Branch

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**DIN 2011DIN01-167:** The Smallwood Electronic Warfare Trophy

**DIN 2011DIN01-166:** Amendment to Armed Forces terms of service – transfer to Reserves

**DIN 2011DIN01-165:** The future officer structure

**DIN 2011DIN01-164:** Changes to employee details passed to trade unions for recruitment

**DIN 2011DIN01-163:** The Sir Colin Terry Award for excellence in airworthiness

**DIN 2011DIN01-162:** United Kingdom Special Forces selection – medical standards

**DIN 2011DIN01-161:** Naval Service redundancy programme – extension to operational exclusions

**DIN 2011DIN01-160:** Support fund for schools with Service children

**DIN 2011DIN01-159:** Review of honorary Service appointments

**DIN 2011DIN01-158:** Amendment to Armed Forces terms of service – transfer to Reserves

**DIN 2011DIN01-157:** Registration of UK Armed Forces births, deaths and marriages – unmarried parents re-registration on birth certificates

**DIN 2011DIN03-027:** Procedures for defence visitors to Australia

**DIN 2011DIN03-026:** Science strategy – Annex B international research collaboration brief

**DIN 2011DIN03-025:** Contact with the media and communicating in public

**DIN 2011DIN03-024:** Authorisation of standard priority codes

**DIN 2011DIN04-115:** Declaration of obsolete – JR8060-1200 snow blade

**DIN 2011DIN04-114:** Declaration of obsolete – JR9231-3500 Puma roller medium single drum

**DIN 2011DIN04-113:** High-grade cryptographic devices

**DIN 2011DIN04-112:** Declaration of obsolescent – rocket hand-fired signal distress red No1 Mk1

**DIN 2011DIN04-111:** Declaration of obsolete – JR7186-3204 dump truck

**DIN 2011DIN04-110:** High-grade internet protocol order process

**DIN 2011DIN04-109:** Change to policy for in-flight escorting of unaccompanied minors on RAF AT and MoD-funded charter

**DIN 2011DIN04-108:** Extension of restrictions on class of travel

**DIN 2011DIN04-107:** Contractual arrangement for maintenance and repair of non-DII IT and audio-visual systems

**DIN 2011DIN04-106:** Release of JSP 800 volume two, fifth edition, version one

**DIN 2011DIN04-105:** Marine fuel supply arrangements for ports in the UK and overseas

**DIN 2011DIN04-104:** New protective rubber cap for multi-barrel grenade dischargers

**DIN 2011DIN04-103:** Signal kit pyrotechnic pistol No 1 Mk3 (red) – concession to remain installed until December 1, 2012

**DIN 2011DIN04-102:** The intention to declare unused batteries obsolescent or obsolete to cleanse stores

**DIN 2011DIN05-037:** Restructuring of the Army air accident investigation and engineering flight safety officer department

**DIN 2011DIN05-036:** JSP 441 – the defence records management policy and procedures, publication of version 4.2

**DIN 2011DIN05-035:** Transfer of Met Office from MoD to Department for Business, Innovation and Skills

**DIN 2011DIN05-034:** Creation of civilian, joint and single Service websites and registration of mod.uk domain names

**DIN 2011DIN05-033:** Defence rules on personal use of the MoD's official telephones

**DIN 2011DIN05-032:** Guidance for the retention of records beyond the statutory 30-year period

**DIN 2011DIN06-021:** JSP 950 leaflet 2-4-3 – management of concussion/mild traumatic brain injury on deployed operations

**DIN 2011DIN06-020:** New edition of JSP 390: military laser safety – volume one, policy

**DIN 2011DIN06-019:** Guidance for defence road safety week, November 21-25

**DIN 2011DIN06-018:** Management of Army adventurous training clothing and equipment

**DIN 2011DIN06-017:** Safety notice alert – potential electrical fault on Beko/LEC fridge freezers and Bosch/Neff/Siemens dishwashers

**DIN 2011DIN06-016:** Adoption of Issue 4 of JSP 430 – management of ship safety and environmental protection policy

**DIN 2011DIN07-133:** Army unit resettlement information staff training

**DIN 2011DIN07-132:** Joining instructions and training requirements for Royal Navy boardings covering ATCC coxons and XERES operators

**Continued on page 74.**

NO. 838

## JUST HOW OBSERVANT ARE YOU?

WIN  
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TEN details have been changed on this photograph of The Brazilian Marine Corps Martial Band performing at this year's Royal Edinburgh Military Tattoo.

Circle the differences in the left image and send the panel to **HOAY 838, Soldier**, Ordnance Road, Aldershot, Hampshire

GU11 2DU by September 30.

A photocopy is acceptable but only one entry per person may be submitted. First correct entry drawn after the closing date will win £100; the second and third will receive £25 gift vouchers.

The results will be announced in the

November issue.

**July's competition:** First correct entry drawn at random and winner of the £100 was **Cpl L R Beattie**, FS Aldergrove.

Runners-up **Mrs V Green**, Eltham, London and **Mrs A Ferguson**, 1 RSME, Chatham win a £25 gift voucher.





**DIN 2011DIN07-131:** Introduction of 22 SAS selection preparation courses

**DIN 2011DIN07-130:** Electronic counter measures – equipment manager case

**DIN 2011DIN07-129:** Tri-Service chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear training

**DIN 2011DIN07-128:** Ending of officer and warrant officer recruiting to the Defence EOD operator programme

**DIN 2011DIN07-127:** Royal Marines officers – career development

**DIN 2011DIN07-126:** Medical and dental fitness for Commando Training Centre

**DIN 2011DIN07-125:** Maths and English GCSE courses at NETS education centres

**DIN 2011DIN07-124:** Exercise Pipedown 2012

**DIN 2011DIN07-123:** Exercise Spartan Hike 2012 and UK Biathlon rifle hire

**DIN 2011DIN07-122:** Joint Services Command and Staff College – course dates for RAF officer professional military development

**DIN 2011DIN07-121:** Information operations training courses

**DIN 2011DIN07-120:** Joint and single Service security, language, intelligence, photographic and geo-spatial training courses

**DIN 2011DIN07-119:** Joining instructions for personnel attending HMS Raleigh

**DIN 2011DIN08-012:** Claims for loss of or damage to personal property

**DIN 2011DIN10-034:** Army sports lottery

**DIN 2011DIN10-033:** Exercise Snow Jack 2011 – Army snowboarding championships

**DIN 2011DIN10-032:** Tri-Service Boulderling League 2011/12

**DIN 2011DIN10-031:** RAF Sailing Association dinghy sailing championship (Brady Trophy)

**DIN 2011DIN10-030:** Merlin helicopter force cocktail party



## REUNIONS

**50th UK Military Hovercraft weekend:** Those who served with the Inter-Service Hovercraft Unit, 200 Hovercraft Sqn, Far East Det or 539 Assault Sqn RM are invited to Browndown, Gosport on September 10-12. Contact Brian Russell, 24 Jellicoe Avenue, Alverstoke, Gosport PO12 2PE, phone 02392 584371 or email [Brianatjellicoe@aol.com](mailto:Brianatjellicoe@aol.com)

**Ex-Army musicians:** Rally at Kneller Hall for a march past with serving CAMUS personnel and a reunion lunch on September 16. Starts at 1100. Details from Maj John Carter on 0208 744 8652 or [corpssec@hq.dcamus.mod.uk](mailto:corpssec@hq.dcamus.mod.uk)

**Royal Hampshire Regiment:** Annual reunion luncheon for all Territorial battalions on September 24 at Newburgh House, Winchester. Contact Maj Ian Taylor, 4 Cedar Wood Close, Fair Oak, Eastleigh, Hants SO50 7LN, 02380 694771 or [ian.p.b.taylor@btinternet.com](mailto:ian.p.b.taylor@btinternet.com)

**Welsh Guards Mortar Platoon:** Reunion at the United Services Mess, Wharton Street, Cardiff on September 30. Partners welcome. For further information email Keith Lewis at [rkl1wg@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:rkl1wg@yahoo.co.uk) or call Gareth on 01443 402189.

**Caldy Grange CCF:** 60th Anniversary on October 1, with a parade and black-tie dinner. Further information from Maj Adcock at [ccf@caldy.wirral.sch.uk](mailto:ccf@caldy.wirral.sch.uk)

**18 Regiment RA:** Reunion on October 8 at Charnwood Arms Hotel, Beveridge Lane, Bardon Hill, Coalville, Leicestershire LE69 1TB. Details from D Mathews on 02476 349167 or Peter Saunders on 01435 812731.

**Royal Horse Artillery:** Reunion dinner and AGM at The Artillery Centre, Larkhill on October 8-9. Contact Richard Whiteway, The Hideaway, 18 Immenstadt Drive, Wellington, Somerset TA21 9PT or phone 01823 665650 or email [rhaassn@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:rhaassn@hotmail.co.uk)

**Queen's School Rheindahlen Association:** Reunion event at the Holiday Inn, Telford on October 14-15. Phone 01934 418998 or visit [www.queenschoolrheindahlenassociation.co.uk](http://www.queenschoolrheindahlenassociation.co.uk)



## ROADSHOWS

The Army Presentation Team wants to hear from members of the public who would like a personal invitation to its hi-tech roadshow. The event starts with a drinks reception, is followed by a presentation and questions and culminates with refreshments. There will be a range of military personnel on-hand to answer any of your questions. Call 01276 417000 or email your name and address to [apt.mod@btinternet.com](mailto:apt.mod@btinternet.com) with the event you are interested in attending.

**September:** 13, Guildford; 14, Crawley; 15, Chatham. **October:** Guildford, Crawley, Weymouth (tbc).



## SEARCHLINE

Margit Stapper is looking for her former husband 24512657 **SSgt Mick Whitbread (RA)** (born July 6, 1963, Cowes, Isle of Wight). His daughter Roxanne would like to get in touch. Contact Margit on +49-177 2752948.

Debra Jones is looking for her daughter's godfather **Paul Bradbury** who was serving with The Coldstream Guards in Windsor in 2000. Contact by email at [debncj@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:debncj@hotmail.co.uk)

Edna Diana Bey (nee Costa) is looking for her father **William Henry McBride**, who served with the mountain infantrymen in Germany during the Second World War. Edna was born in 1947 in Traunstein, Bavaria to Therese Costa (born August 3, 1923). Her father would be 87-years-old. Contact Edna on 49 030 405 01 739 or at [edna-bey@hotmail.de](mailto:edna-bey@hotmail.de)

Former Serviceman Richard Hayes is looking for **letters or e-blueys** written to or received by loved ones during recent military campaigns, from Kosovo to Afghanistan, for a new book. Contact him on 07934 617307.

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Picture: Andrew Linnett

## Foreboding over Fox's foggy announcement

**T**HE rebasing statement by Defence Secretary Dr Liam Fox gave little detail about leaving Germany, admitting that "this means some uncertainties remain, particularly about time scales".

Lack of clarity around which units will be moving to Scotland, the East Midlands or even Northern Ireland has prompted many families to contact AFF staff to see if we have the answers. We don't.

Of course, such an incomplete announcement may be a good thing, allowing proper time and consideration to be given to thinking about where and when people should be moved.

But experience tells me this is something of a long-shot. It strikes me that political rather than practical reasoning lies behind these decisions.

Don't get me wrong, while I loved living in Germany I can see the rationale for moving everyone back to the UK. Basing there is a throwback to the Cold War. But exactly what will be spent on the whole project is unknown. The minister himself said that "detailed planning work, including the investment required to adapt sites, will now get under way". When pressed directly by both Jim Murphy MP (Lab) and Sir Menzies Campbell (Lib Dem) he failed to address the question in both instances.

That is plain wrong. How on earth can you make a plan and definite commitments about where to move 20,000 troops and their families without knowing how much you have to spend on the project and what your decision will cost?

Is this why the MoD is in the state it is? Oh, I like the look of that barracks – isn't

it pretty! Let's move there. How much is it? Don't know. Never mind, let's cut a few more allowances to pay for it.

The minister cited the New Employment Model when announcing his plans to Parliament. Quite how Kinloss, Leuchars and Kirknewton qualify as "urban centres" is difficult to see through the fog of Dr Fox's announcement, but a call to the Kinloss HIVE revealed there are not a huge number of employment opportunities for dependants in the area.

While housing here may be cheaper than on Salisbury Plain, if the rest of your family lives in Manchester would you really want to settle in Scotland long term?

I wonder if the Defence Secretary has truly considered the impact of these changes on various local settlements?

Kirknewton is a village of just 2,000 people.

It will double in size if the planned new barracks goes ahead. As the local website says, people bought property in the village because they liked the peace and quiet, its small size and sense of community.

As part of an Army community I like those things too – and Kirknewton sounds like a lovely place to be based – but adding 2,000 bodies into the equation (more if you include families) will completely change the dynamics of this area.

While the MoD has no idea yet what the cost of rebasing will be, have other government departments and the Scottish administration any grip on what the cost to them will be?

There will be greater demand for schools, doctors and public transport. There is also the possibility of gaps between the Royal Air Force leaving some of its sites and the Army moving in. What will happen to local services then?

On the other side of all this is the decision to replace thousands of Regular troops with Territorial Army personnel.

The announcement of £1.5 billion of funding for this will no doubt be welcomed by Reservists but there are many "ifs" and "buts" attached to it. The Regular Army will be reduced if the TA can fulfil required levels of recruitment. So is this a cynical

**‘Is this a cynical attempt to move well-trained soldiers into a Reservist role?’**

attempt by the Government to move all those well-trained soldiers it has just made redundant into an alternative Reservist role?

Theoretically then, this decision means that those 20,000 troops coming back from Germany don't actually need new barracks as we will lose around that number from the Regular Army through redundancy.

Does the Government really think that after the way it has gone about implementing the Strategic Defence and Security Review, and subsequent drastic cost-cutting measures, families will willingly see their soldier sign up to spend their weekends working for the organisation that abandoned them?

I only hope the Conservative-Liberal Democrat coalition really does wait for Reservist numbers to increase before making the proposed cuts to personnel. ■



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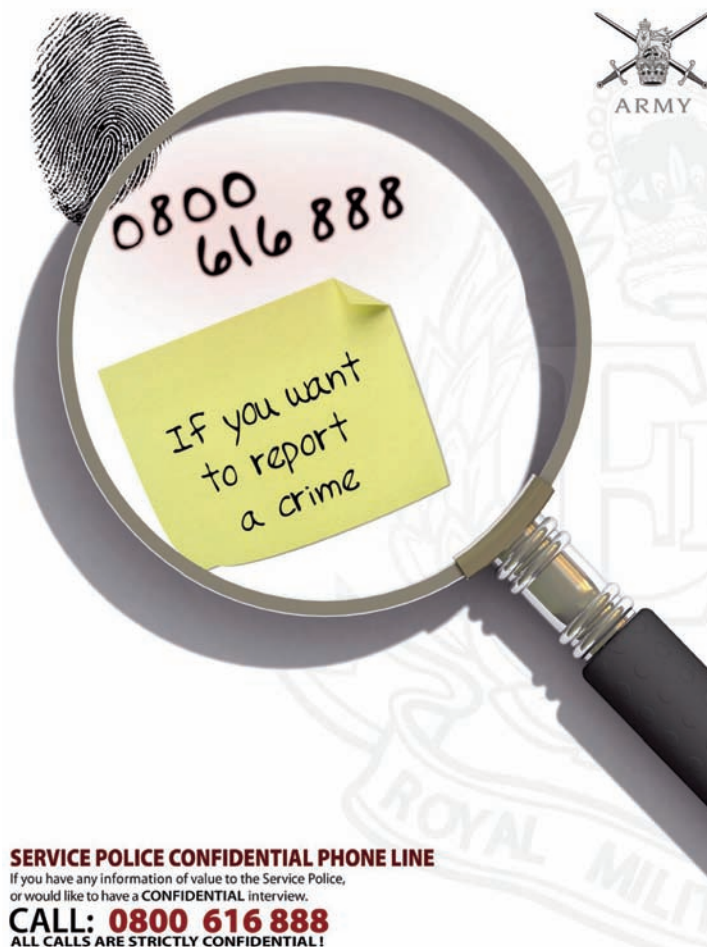


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**Graphic:** *The Veteran*, released by Revolver Entertainment and penned by a former soldier, is out now

# Combat comes home

Ex-para uses his experience of coping with conflict for debut screenwriting role

## Interview: Sharon Kean

**F**ORMER Special Forces man Robert Henry Craft is not the first ex-soldier to channel his operational experience into a film script.

But his help in penning *The Veteran* has resulted in a movie that brings the conflict in Afghanistan far closer to home than many of the other Helmand-themed titles doing the rounds.

It tells the story of war hero Robert Miller (played by Toby Kebbell) who returns to the UK rootless, restless and lacking the money and potent sense of purpose he had while serving with the Army.

Struggling to fit back into society, he is targeted for a secret surveillance role, monitoring suspected terrorists and drug barons in and around the London council estate that he used to call home.

"It's a harsh wake-up call to the realities that face many young military men when they hit civvy street," Craft told *Soldier*.

"And it carries the sinister message that Britain is home to a growing number of highly-trained ex-soldiers, who are short on cash, suffering unknowingly from Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) and vulnerable to the world of crime."

The one-time warrant officer explained that his first foray into film-making stemmed from a desire to draw attention to the issues some Service personnel face while trying to cope with the after-effects of serving on the front line, as well as a need to tame some of his own demons.

"After 24 years of being shot at and blown up, of losing many close friends in combat in Northern Ireland, the first Gulf War and other worldwide missions, writing has helped me," he said.

"PTSD affects many soldiers who are left emotionally battered and blasted by the campaigns in Afghanistan and Iraq and then when they leave the Service, are plunged into the even more disturbing world of the private security industry in those very same countries."

He added: "In that cold, hard, mercenary-like business, former troops often get more money but less support.

"They can get trapped in an aggressive environment detached from their emotions in their very own Hollywood action movie."

While *The Veteran* is a fictitious tale, its storyline is firmly rooted in reality, says Craft.

"I am not saying that all soldiers come out of the Army, go on the private security circuit and then decide to start a life of crime," he explained.

"But now even the youngest have seen active combat and it seems all too easy for a young man, struggling with his self-esteem and finances, to fall into the wrong company.

"The ones that leave at a young age are in my experience the people at most risk.

"They exit the Armed Forces without having grown up, without the maturity or skills to cope with the disappointments of civilian life.

"They enter this world often without decent jobs, family and the support of more mature Service personnel to enable them to talk openly."

Co-writing *The Veteran* has helped Craft to open up and exorcise some of his own demons but he hopes it will go further by helping to change the way Britain treats its real war heroes.

"I'm not trying to scare the nation into thinking that every soldier who leaves the Armed Forces is going to be a Michael Caine, *Harry Brown* character, cleaning up his street, or indeed, the Robert Miller of *The Veteran*," he said.

"I just think it's about time we thought more clearly of a way to reintroduce soldiers back into 'normal' life, to value them as individuals with skills and experience to share." ■

● *The Veteran* is out now on DVD

**From bullish black ops to sci-fi council estate wars, *Soldier* is giving away some of the latest DVD releases...**

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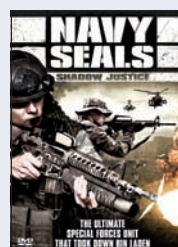
THE producers of *Shaun of the Dead* and *Hot Fuzz* are back with a fast, funny and frightening action movie that pits a teen gang against an invasion of savage alien monsters. A London housing estate becomes a sci-fi playground as one of its tower blocks turns into a fortress under siege. *Soldier* has teamed up with the people behind *Attack The Block* to give away five copies of the DVD, which is released on September 19. To be in with a chance of winning, tell us the name of the film that inspired the title *Shaun of the Dead*. Answers on a postcard to the usual address or by email to [comps@soldiermagazine.co.uk](mailto:comps@soldiermagazine.co.uk)



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### Win... Navy Seals: Shadow Justice

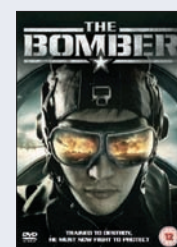
EMMY Award-winning director **Gordon Forbes** has spent six years filming US Navy Seals, members of the elite special forces unit credited with the assassination of Osama Bin Laden. In this four-part series Forbes lifts the lid on the force's training regime and weaponry, delving into their undercover world to show what it takes to be part of the black ops unit. We have five copies of *Navy Seals: Shadow Justice* to give away. To get your hands on one just tell us the name of the Seals team behind the high-profile mission mentioned above. Answers on a postcard to the usual address or by email to [comps@soldiermagazine.co.uk](mailto:comps@soldiermagazine.co.uk)



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### Win... The Bomber

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Home front: The gritty storylines played out in *The Veteran* are inspired by the real-life experiences of a former UK Special Forces soldier

### Win... Never Back Down 2

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### Win... Outside The Law

THIS post-Second World War story follows three brothers who are separated after losing their family home in Algeria. *Outside The Law* sees Messaoud (**Roschdy Zem**) join the French Army fighting in Indochina, Abdelkader (**Sami Bouajila**) become a leader of the Algerian independence movement in France and Said (**Jamel Debbouze**) move to Paris to make his fortune in the shady clubs and boxing halls of Pigalle. We have five copies of this Oscar-nominated film to give away to readers who can name Algeria's capital city. Answers on a postcard to the usual address or by email to [comps@soldiermagazine.co.uk](mailto:comps@soldiermagazine.co.uk)

**Closing date: September 30**



### Win... The Veteran

BAFTA nominee Toby Kebbell stars in *The Veteran*, a gritty, hard-hitting tale of a young soldier who returns from Afghanistan and struggles to fit back into civilian society. With a screenplay co-written by former para **Robert Henry Craft**, the film draws heavily on his own real-life experiences of trying to self-manage PTSD and reflects some of the issues facing young UK Service personnel who have seen front-line action. *Soldier* has five copies of *The Veteran* to give away. For your chance to win, tell us in which city the movie is set. Answers on a postcard to the usual address or by email to [comps@soldiermagazine.co.uk](mailto:comps@soldiermagazine.co.uk)

**Closing date: September 30**







**Top gear:** Developers Ubisoft are preparing for a busy end to 2012, with *Driver San Francisco* among its many releases

# Awesome arsenal

Developers prepare to fire superb array of titles in exciting climax to gaming year

**Preview: Richard Long**

**A**FTER a relatively quiet summer for the gaming fraternity, the autumn months promise to be action-packed with some of the biggest releases of the year.

Whether it be all-encompassing first-person shooters or ultra-realistic sporting simulators, it seems as though every box is being ticked.

Leading the charge once more will be the annual clash between footballing franchises *Fifa* and *Pro Evolution Soccer*.

Both titles are promising highly-polished offerings for the 2012 season, with a host of new and improved features aimed at firing them to the top of the league.

Electronic Arts launch their player impact engine in the latest instalment of *Fifa*, technology that allows on-field stars to be more resilient, fight for possession and recover from challenges with ease.

The game also boasts redesigned tactical defending and precision dribbling along with an infusion of pro-player intelligence, which boosts decision-making capabilities on the pitch.

In response, Konami are set to unveil a new teammate control system for the updated *Pro Evolution Soccer* to give extra impetus on the turf.

This advancement will allow gamers to control secondary players who will have the freedom to make runs in support of those on the ball.

For those who prefer to call the shots from the sidelines, developers Sports Interactive have scheduled a pre-Christmas release for *Football Manager 2012*.

The highly-addictive simulator includes improvements to the scouting system and match engine as well as significant changes to the way transfers and contracts are negotiated.

The world of motorsport will have a strong representation and *Soldier* has already carried an in-depth review of *Formula One 2011*, which hits stores at the end of this month.

Ubisoft will deliver a double dose of turbo-charged action courtesy of *Driver San Francisco* and *World Rally Championship 2*.

The former puts detective John Tanner in hot pursuit of mob boss Charles Jericho in a true car chase experience that features 200 miles of road network and 19 multiplayer modes.

And racers can sample more than 30 different models and 13 tracks when they take to the

road in the official game of the World Rally Championship, which also includes five special stages and four online options.

There is plenty to look forward to away from the sporting sphere and one of the most eagerly-anticipated games of 2011 is now looming brightly on the horizon.

*Call of Duty Modern Warfare 3* has been billed as the most epic adventure in the series to date and will delve into the murky world of special forces personnel.

The combat theme continues in *Battlefield 3*, which is out in late October and has been developed in association with former SAS operator and author Andy McNab.

Epic Games continue the trilogy theme in *Gears of War 3*, a title that has been created exclusively for the Xbox 360 and sees Delta Squad immersed in a battle with a new enemy that is intent on ending humanity.

Ezio Auditore is also set to make a return in *Assassin's Creed Revelations*, a story that takes the hero along a perilous path to Constantinople and the heart of the Ottoman Empire.

With a hectic few months ahead, *Soldier* will endeavour to carry full reviews of all these games and more. ■

**From cartel-crushing cops to a wizard's wavering spell, we check out this month's console offerings...**

## Call of Juarez – The Cartel all formats

SET within the clutches of a Mexican drug gang, *Call of Juarez – The Cartel* takes the narcotics war from the beautiful city of Los Angeles to the dormant and treacherous deserts across the border. With an arsenal of weapons and three battle-hardened characters to choose from the aim is to hunt down the villains one at a time. The cut scenes round up the story well but lack polish. But don't worry, the gameplay more than makes up for any flaws – you can have shoot-outs, car chases and fist fights in locations like clubs, highways and ship yards in what is a superb game that packs one almighty punch.



**Pte Ian Wade, London Regiment**

## Need For Speed: The Run for all formats

RECENT *Need for Speed* releases have seen the franchise heading off the track for entertainment, but it seems developers Electronic Arts couldn't resist a return to the open road. *The Run* centres on the familiar world of underground racing, where the stakes are high and the pitfalls deadly. It's you against hundreds of notorious drivers, weaving roads and the police in a race from San Francisco to New York. The pace is fast and frenetic but spend too much time concentrating on your opponents and you'll either career off road or smash into traffic. As a driving game this feels great, but it's also savage and unforgiving.



**David McDougall, JHQ Rheindahlen**

## Space Marine for all formats

THE futuristic *Space Marine* pits you against hordes of savage orks and dark forces of chaos in a bleak and war-torn universe. As a third-person action game this is not as fluid as similar titles but offers a decent experience with the inclusion of an online mode where opposing players can choose to side with mankind or the treacherous enemies. The marines range from tactical fighters to deadly close-combat specialists and you can kit your character out with a number of different perks and weapons along the way. Though possibly not a front-runner for 2011, *Space Marine* is certainly worth a look.



**David McDougall, JHQ Rheindahlen**





**Flying high:** Mob boss Charles Jericho goes on the run from the law in *Driver San Francisco*, one of a number of racing games due for release this autumn

### Agarest: Generations of War Zero

THIS fantasy role-player serves as the prequel to the 2007 *Generations of War* release that failed to hit any notable headlines. Although the story is different, the formula largely remains the same with a depressing cast of *Pokemon*-style characters leading the way. The strategy element to this PS3 game offers a welcome challenge but this brief highlight quickly becomes swamped by a tedious storyline and overly-long battle sequences. The enemy's artificial intelligence is non-existent at best, which adds to the annoyance, and the poor presentation makes this a fantasy experience worth avoiding.

**Richard Long, Soldier**



### Forza Motorsport 4 for Xbox 360

THE *Forza* series has long been the choice of any self-respecting motorsport enthusiast who happens to own an Xbox 360 and this fourth instalment is set to continue that trend. While the previous games were incredibly realistic with stunning locations and amazing cars, the developers have gone even further this time. The detail is unbelievable and professional racing drivers were drafted in to provide feedback on how each circuit feels, creating staggering results. Other bonuses include narration from *Top Gear*'s Jeremy Clarkson and the hilarious car football. Ignore this at your peril.

**David McDougall, JHQ Rheindahlen**



### Harry Potter for all formats

THE phenomenal box office success of the *Harry Potter* franchise has yet to be replicated in the console world. And judging by the evidence of this latest all-formats instalment, the trend is unlikely to change any time soon. Electronic Arts have struggled to find the right platform for the young wizard and opted for a third-person shooter in *The Deathly Hallows Part Two*. Unfortunately this approach lacks any kind of magic and the confused storytelling and monotonous combat sequences make this a dull and dreary affair. This is yet another inevitable movie tie-in that fails to cast a spell on its long-suffering audience.

**Richard Long, Soldier**







**Top of the pops:** Forces supporter Laura Wright saw her debut solo album *The Last Rose* peak at number one in the classical charts

# Legion's English rose

## Solo star juggles fledgling music career with support for Forces fund-raising

**Interview: Richard Long**

**W**ITH a congested schedule of live performances and promotion work for her debut solo album, it would be safe to assume that singer Laura Wright has little time for anything other than music.

But the 21-year-old is about to embark on a major fund-raising drive for The Royal British Legion as she joins a field of 300 cyclists on the annual Pedal to Paris.

The 300-mile charity challenge comes at a busy time for the artist, whose record *The Last Rose* reached number one in the classical charts and hit 24th spot in the mainstream top 40.

"I really did not expect it to do that well," she told *Soldier*.

"It features a selection of traditional folk songs from the British Isles that have been given brand new arrangements.

"It was a great opportunity for me to step out on my own and sing songs I have a connection with. My grandmother passed some of the music down to me so there is a strong family link there. I think it is an exciting album."

While such success came as a surprise for the one-time member of classical group All Angels, she has been determined to continue her backing for the Armed Forces.

"I have done a lot of work with the RBL through the Festival of Remembrance and other events," she explained.

"I am also a big sports fan and ran the London Marathon this year, so the Pedal to Paris is a great opportunity for me.

"I do not have a strong military background and have no real family links.

"I got involved with the charity when I started out with All Angels and I became a strong supporter of their work, it is something I have a great passion about.

"As a solo artist that has continued."

Wright has managed to fit her training around a string of live commitments and interviews and is now fully prepared for the event, which starts on September 1.

She said: "It sounds daunting but hopefully my training will pay off.

"I did a concert at Southwark Cathedral in June and the idea of taking part was mentioned then, before I knew it I had signed up.

"The best thing about this is the fact you are

with 300 other people who are doing the race for the same reason.

"Servicemen and women will be involved along with injured personnel who have come through the rehabilitation process. It is fantastic to be part of something like that."

Wright will lead the riders down the Avenue de la Grande Armée, then parade along the Champs Elysee before arriving at the Arc de Triomphe in the French capital, where the challenge finishes on September 4.

The group will then join a ceremony at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier.

But the association does not end there and the young star is already planning another Forces-inspired project.

"I am really hoping to go to Afghanistan early next year," she said. "That is something I have wanted to do for a while now.

"If you can go and support the troops in any way I think it is something you should do.

"I recently visited a military facility in Portsmouth and I was stunned by how much of a difference it makes when you go and speak to personnel. I want to do that in Helmand."

To sponsor the singer in the Pedal to Paris visit [www.justgiving.com/Laura-Wright3](http://www.justgiving.com/Laura-Wright3) ■

**From superstars of self-indulgent rap to flimsy French floor-fillers, we check out the best of the rest...**

### La Liberacion by CSS

THE 2006 self-titled debut from **Cansei De Ser Sexy** was a raucous breath of fresh air, but the Brazilian band's star has been slowly on the wane ever since. The follow-up offering *Donkey* was a hit-and-miss affair and *La Liberacion* continues the disappointing downward trend with a confused mix of reggae, grunge, pop and rock. *Hits Me Like a Rock* is one of the few highs and is rather good fun, but the trite lyrics of the underwhelming *You Can Have It All* and *Ruby Eyes* are almost embarrassing to listen to. The musical experimentation that blessed CSS's innovative first album is still present in patches but it is far too sporadic to make this an enjoyable and worthwhile record.



**Stephen Tyler, ex-Soldier**

### Last Smoke Before The Snowstorm

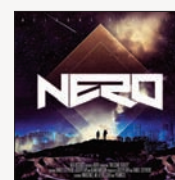
THIS debut release from **Benjamin Francis Leftwich** is reminiscent of the gentle folk rock of 70s star **Nick Drake**. The wistful songs have a melancholy feel and there is something very British about this title both in the sound and the content of the lyrics. This is the kind of thing I would usually enjoy, however, the singing is a distinct turn-off. Leftwich's voice is fragile and whispery which is fine to listen to for a couple of songs, but it really started to grate after a while. It is a shame because the music is well written and the guitar playing is very appealing. This is a good collection of songs and would be enjoyable to listen to – if only they were sung differently or by someone else.



**Pat Jordan, ex-RAMC**

### Welcome to Reality by Nero

AFTER building a healthy reputation as dance producers, London-based duo **Daniel Stephens** and **Joe Ray** have finally found time to release an album of their own. Boasting sweeping soundscapes and film-like scores, *Welcome to Reality* comes with high expectations. However, the long wait for its release has been far from worthwhile and the early optimism is swiftly crushed by the largely one-dimensional and monotonous music that follows. *Doomsday* provides some brief respite and the hit single *Promises* is a welcome mainstream distraction but on the whole this is somewhat of a disappointment when compared to the impressive work of contemporary acts such as **Pendulum**.



**Richard Long, Soldier**





**Force for good:** Laura Wright will be among a field of 300 cyclists who will take to the saddle for The Royal British Legion's Pedal to Paris this month

### Killer Sounds by Hard-Fi

HAVING stormed onto the scene with the 2005 release of *Stars of CCTV*, indie rockers **Hard-Fi** stalled somewhat with their below-par follow-up *Once Upon a Time in the West*.

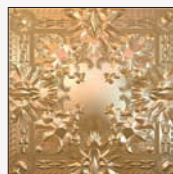


But instead of rushing back to the studio to set the record straight, the four-piece have taken a more considered approach for their return to the spotlight. *Killer Sounds* contains few surprises but that is not necessarily a bad thing as the band seeks to recapture its fan base. *Give It Up, Bring It On* and *Love Song* have an anthemic charm, while *Good for Nothing* improves with each listen courtesy of its intriguing beats and piano work. All in all this is a steady, but far from spectacular, third album.

**Joe Clapson, Soldier**

### Watch The Throne Jay Z and Kanye West

IT will come as no surprise to hear that an album made by two of music's biggest ego-maniacs is a self-congratulatory ode to how rich and successful **Jay Z** and **Kanye West** have become. From the title to the unashamedly-brash lyrics – "So many watches I need eight arms, one neck but got eight charms" brags Jay-Z on *Who's Gonna Stop Me* – this is 46 minutes of posturing and self-glorification. The duo show an awareness of something other than their shameful love of bling on *Made in America* and *Murder to Excellence*, but their raps are tired and have seen better days and it is hard to recommend this over the vast realms of more meaningful hip-hop on the market.



**Stephen Tyler, ex-Soldier**

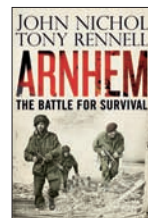
### Nothing But The Beat by David Guetta

THE **David Guetta** money-making machine shows no sign of crashing to a halt following the fifth album release from the ubiquitous DJ and producer. His relentless assault on the charts has been spearheaded by his knack of drafting in star turns to provide the vocals on his formulaic and lifeless tunes and this trend continues at pace on *Nothing But The Beat*. **Taio Cruz**, **Nicki Minaj** and **Snoop Doggy Dogg** are among the plethora of artists to appear on a record that fails to break any ground and is a mere repetition of what has gone before. A succession of hit singles are sure to follow but this is a safe offering that ultimately fails to set pulses racing.



**Richard Long, Soldier**





**Bridging the gap:** Published by Penguin and released this month, *Arnhem – The Battle For Survival* puts the spotlight on history's un hailed heroes

# Arnhem unabridged

John Nichol tells *Soldier* of his mission to reveal key campaign's untold chapters

**I**N September 1944 a shock force of British troops dropped from the skies into enemy-occupied Holland in what was hoped would be the decisive final battle of the Second World War.

It was the most daring of raids behind German lines – if all went well, the conflict would be over by Christmas.

When most think of Arnhem, they think of Sean Connery and Michael Caine in the film *A Bridge Too Far*. But, as I discovered during the research for my latest book, the actual crossing was just one dimension of a huge landscape of courage and sacrifice by both soldiers and civilians alike.

The military strategy back in 1944 was simple enough. In an effort to speed up the defeat of Hitler's retreating armies, 12,000 British and Polish airborne troops flew into Nazi-held Europe and descended from planes and gliders on the Dutch city of Arnhem to capture and defend its vital bridge over the Rhine.

That was the plan. But the mission went wrong. Reinforcements never arrived and the airborne forces were left isolated. What began as an audacious masterstroke became a desperate struggle for survival.

The actual battle at the bridge and the incredible courage of the Paras is well known and

rightly celebrated. But the perception of conflict is often very different from the reality as I know only too well from my own limited experiences during the first Gulf War in 1991.

After I was shot down in my Tornado and captured, my picture as a prisoner-of-war became an iconic image of that campaign. But there were another 45,000 personnel whose contribution to the deployment was far greater than mine.

So what of those countless others who also fought at Arnhem, in the heart of the action? The glider pilots, Dorsets, South Staffs, engineers and artillery to name just a few. And what of the bravery of the Dutch civilians who risked their own lives to treat our injured and dying?

It is these incredible, often forgotten stories I wanted to bring to the surface in *Arnhem – The Battle for Survival*.

Surrounded, outgunned and low on supplies, they fought for a week and more in the city and in Oosterbeek, a pretty village in wooded countryside nearby. Every street was a war zone, every stand of trees a fortress. Every inch was contested; casualties were enormous on both sides. But in this furnace a legend was forged – of bravery and endurance far beyond the simple call of duty.

I spoke to Peter Clarke, now 89 and a retired

solicitor. It was a leap of the imagination to see him as a young staff sergeant in the Glider Pilot Regiment fighting for his life and for those of his comrades as they huddled inside their diminishing redoubts.

There were long pauses in our conversation as he revisited the horrors and found himself as affected now as he was 67 years ago.

"Everything melded into one," he remembered. "There are no separate days, no separate nights. I don't remember morning or afternoon or evening. We were under constant attack. It was just a constant barrage of mortars, German charges, shooting, flames and fear."

Yes, Arnhem was an Allied defeat; in the end, as one anonymous paratrooper put it, "courage was not enough". But undefeated courage is what I discovered by speaking to the survivors – the bravery of the blood-soaked para who, when asked how he was, replied "except for shrapnel in my arm, a leg missing and a splitting headache, I think I'm okay".

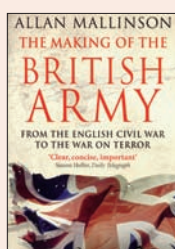
And it is the unbroken human spirit which I celebrate in this book – the mortar sergeant who, with a wry smile, declared to his mates on their way into captivity "look, chaps, we may have lost the battle but we did come in second". ■

**From a coming-of-age tale to our American cousins' covert ops, a flick through this month's literary releases...**

## The Making of the British Army

THIS is an excellent book that not only charts the history of the British Army with interesting detail and pithy fact, but explains how the organisation's unique culture evolved. The author, retired cavalry officer-turned-wordsmith **Allan Mallinson**, avoids getting bogged down in the minutiae of battles and campaigns and instead explains how the Service adapted and changed as a result of different wars, threats and the ever-shifting global political situation. The title is an outstanding analysis of the Army's development and culture which, from the history presented, gives an insight into the Force's future.

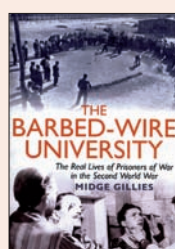
**Capt Neil Higgins, AGC (ETS)**



## The Barbed-Wire University by M Gillies

**MIDGE Gillies** has written this outstanding book as a tribute to British and Commonwealth prisoners of war; not those who dug escape tunnels but those who escaped captivity by using the experience to change their lives. It is the absorbing story of men who responded to the tedium of a German stalag or the brutality and starvation of a Japanese camp with ingenuity and creativity. They studied, learnt languages, painted, drafted books for later publication, played sport, gave concerts and took up crafts. The author tirelessly researched her subjects to produce this absorbing title – a timely act with fewer and fewer veterans still with us.

**Lt Col (Retd) Dawson Pratt, ex-R Signals**



## Sweating the Metal by Flt Lt Alex Duncan

THE bravery of the author – awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross – is not in question and neither is the vital work the Chinook fleet undertakes in theatre. The movement of supplies, personnel and wounded is a key task; one for which many soldiers on the ground have been, and will continue to be, very thankful. With that in mind, this should be a very good book, but it's not. Clearly written for a civilian audience, the tone of this first-hand account of operations in Afghanistan is set as such that it will jar with many soldiers. The author's evident bitterness at not being selected as a jet pilot forced me to stop reading.

**Capt Douglas Searle, RLC**





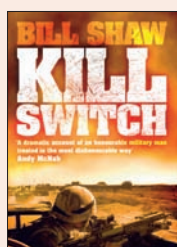


**"Every stand of trees a fortress":** Soldiers of the 1st Airborne Division man a defensive position close to the village of Oosterbeek on September 18, 1944

### Kill Switch by Bill Shaw

READING the start of this autobiographical account – which tells the story of an Army officer wrongfully arrested and jailed in Afghanistan after being accused of corruption – is akin to having a boastful CV land on your desk. The military experiences the author has chosen to highlight are littered with different ways of reiterating that he has always been held in high esteem throughout his life. That said, once you have ploughed through this seemingly endless list of achievements it is hard not to start to sympathise with the survival techniques required for Shaw's imprisonment in three of Afghanistan's most notorious jails.

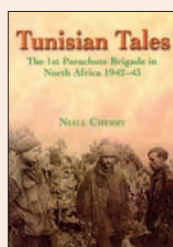
**OCdt Isabel Currie, London Regt**



### Tunisian Tales by Niall Cherry

SHORTLY after its establishment, Britain's first Parachute brigade was deployed to North Africa. This limited-edition title chronicles the hard-fought series of skirmishes in the mountains and red mud of Tunisia that followed. Out of respect for their aggression and fighting spirit, the men of the newly-formed 1st Parachute Brigade were christened the Red Devils by their battle-hardened opponents in the German Airborne. *Tunisian Tales* is packed with previously unpublished photographs, colour maps and detailed historical data. Penned by a former soldier, this new airborne history is of the highest quality.

**Maj Mike Peters, AAC**



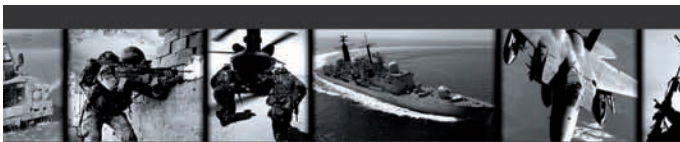
### Operation Dark Heart by Lt Col A Shaffer

INTERESTING, well paced and a bit annoying at times, *Operation Dark Heart* sheds light on the clandestine world of black ops in Afghanistan. Due to the nature and sensitivity of the details (or as a cunning ploy to add intrigue and mystery), some passages within the book have been blacked out, often resulting in incomprehensible sentences which distort the story and generally irritate. This gripe aside, the title – a number one best-seller in the US – falls into the generic "soldier's own story" category. While an enjoyable and good holiday read, **Lt Col Anthony Shaffer** hasn't broken the mould with this offering.

**Lt Neil Dickie, 105 Regt RA (V)**







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# SOLDIERSPORT

Picture: Graeme Main

**SMASHED:** TENNIS STARS STRUGGLE AT WIMBLEDON AS AIRMEN DOMINATE INTER-SERVICES SHOWDOWN

ALSO IN THIS MONTH'S ISSUE...



P94 **TRIATHLON**  
RUNAWAY SUCCESS FOR  
AWESOME ARMY



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PLAYERS TARGET WORLD  
AND OLYMPIC GLORY



P103 **VOLLEYBALL**  
LIFE'S A BEACH AT  
HORSE GUARDS PARADE



P104 **CRICKET**  
HEAVY RAIN DAMPENS  
REDS' TITLE HOPES





# Ahead of the field

Report: Richard Long  
Pictures: Graeme Main

**A**RM Y athletes produced a stunning display of fitness and endurance to dominate their Forces rivals at the Inter-Services triathlon championships.

A series of determined performances saw the men's and women's teams emerge victorious from a punishing event that consisted of a 1,500-metre swim followed by a 40-kilometre cycle race and a ten-kilometre run.

More than 100 competitors took to the start line in the picturesque grounds of Belvoir Castle in Leicestershire and the Army set the early pace in the water and then on the saddle.

Maj Lindsey Courage (R Signals) was the leading light in the women's competition, completing the course in 2hr 11min 27sec in what was her first race in three years.

"I really didn't know what to expect," the winner told *SoldierSport* after her triumphant return to action.

"I just wanted to produce a race where everything went smoothly and I am delighted to win.

"I'm not a great swimmer, running is my background, but everyone has their strengths and weaknesses. I normally finish the swim near the back and then have to chase the field and that is what happened here."

Maj Caroline Livesey (RE, pictured left) ensured the Army celebrated double success as she finished second in a time of 2hr 14min 13sec.

"I'm very pleased," she said. "I would have loved to win but Lindsey had a great race. The swim was horrible. When you have a mass start the guys are so aggressive and you get bashed around a lot.

"But it was a good bike course and

the conditions were perfect. I went as well as I could but we then faced a hideous uphill run. Lindsey came past me on the first lap and I just tried to stay as close as I could."

The women's team has shown significant improvements in recent times and Courage (pictured bottom right) was delighted to see new athletes, such as third-placed LBdr Sam Wilson (RA), emerge from the ranks.

She said: "The girls are now a lot stronger than when I left three years ago. When I last competed for the Army there was nothing like the depth we have now. It is encouraging to see."

WO2 Mark

Livesey (RAPTC) matched his wife's performance as he took the runners-up spot in a hard-fought men's race.

The Inter-Services showdown coincided

with his preparations for the European Half-Ironman Championships and he said the training regime had impacted on his standing in Leicestershire.

"I just did not have the speed for the run," he explained. "I am disappointed. In 15 years of competing in this sport I have never won this race.

"I could argue that I got my tactics wrong on the bike, when you take the lead the guys behind can set their pace and that is what they did. I wanted to win and expected to do so."

Livesey is one of the Army's elite athletes and also competes with a professional Ironman licence.

He finished 33rd in a field of more than 2,000 entrants at an event in Mexico earlier this year and was aiming for a place in the top 30 at the European championships last month.

"It is very tough and these guys are on top of their game," he said. "I do not want to embarrass myself.

"I am 38 now and I've probably got another couple of years in me. I am still

**'Army personnel have a lot of determination and the military ethos and discipline really help our competitors'**







**Pedal power:** After completing an energy-sapping swim, competitors took to the saddle for a 40-kilometre cycle stage in the Leicestershire countryside

improving, I have done one Ironman event and I want to get even better.”

The Army Triathlon Association is open to both Regular and Reserve soldiers, with more than 300 members signing on each year.

The organisation is keen for new athletes to join the fold and offers a host of training camps and competitions throughout the season.

“Triathlon has been the fastest growing sport in the UK for a few years now,” secretary Capt Lloyd Keenan (RAMC) told *SoldierSport*.

“For military personnel it requires a lot of discipline.

“You are not just training for a cross-country run or the bike; there are three events to focus on.

“They need to have that dedication to the sport and it is costly, but we try to

help out where we can.

“Having a base level of fitness is a good starting point. Army personnel have a lot of determination and the military ethos and discipline really help our competitors.”

With Service life providing the ideal grounding for the association’s athletes, the goal for each year is simple.

“Our main aim is to win the Inter-Services,” Keenan said.

“We have a very strong squad and have produced some consistent results throughout the season.

“We are always fighting against availability and operational tours but we now have a full group that is working really hard.”

For more information on the sport visit the Army Triathlon Association page on Armynet. ■



## Inter-Services triathlon triumph in numbers

# 40

**THE DISTANCE IN KILOMETRES OF THE CONTEST’S CYCLING LEG, WHICH WAS STAGED AFTER A 1,500-METRE SWIM**

# 38

**THE AGE OF ARMY STAR WO2 MARK LIVESEY, WHO ALSO HAS A PROFESSIONAL LICENCE TO COMPETE IN ELITE-LEVEL RACES**

# 3

**YEARS SINCE MAJ LINDSEY COURAGE’S LAST EVENT. THE OFFICER MADE A WINNING RETURN TO ACTION IN 2011**





Picture: Ryan Savage

**Pole position:** Rookie driver Tpr Martyn Copleston (2 RTR) keeps his grid rivals at bay during a keenly-contested Elise Trophy race at Donington Park

# Track star hits full throttle

**Report: Richard Long**

**R**ACE ace Tpr Martyn Copleston (2 RTR) has taken to the grid for his competitive debut behind the wheel in the Elise Trophy.

The 21-year-old, who was injured by an improvised explosive device in Afghanistan earlier this year, finished 20th in the individual standings and 21st in the Lotus Cup team event during two days of hard-fought action at Donington Park.

Copleston gained his race licence just days before the event and colleague Maj Jim Cameron (2 RTR), an experienced motorsport campaigner, was delighted with his performance.

"At the beginning of the week he was seven seconds off the pace, by the start of the race he was three seconds down and by the end he was right on the

gas, looking like he had been racing for years," the officer told *SoldierSport*.

"He loved it; he was really blown away and is now looking for other ways to continue his racing."

Cameron returns to the track at the end of this month for the Britcar 24-hour race at Silverstone.

He will be driving a Mazda MX5 as part of a four-strong team that includes Brig Mike Hickson, chairman of the Army Motorsport Association, and Will Browning, a former Royal Signals sergeant who now serves with the Metropolitan Police.

"The Britcar 24 is massive," Cameron said. "I have been bugging Mazda for a while about this – I wanted a seat and they have given me a car."

"The idea is to raise the profile of Forces charities through motorsport."

"This is way beyond anything I have

done before. I've done quite a bit of racing but the longest I've spent at the wheel is 45 minutes. With this we will be doing two-hour stints for 24 hours."

"It is a truly international event and people come from far and wide to compete in what is the biggest British endurance race."

"We just want to finish but to be competitive within our class would be truly fantastic."

The team will be supporting ABF The Soldiers' Charity, Help For Heroes, the Forces Children's Trust, children's charity Scotty's Little Soldiers and the Not Forgotten Association.

Organisers Britcar are running an exclusive offer of two tickets for £30 for the entire race weekend, which will be held from September 30 to October 2.

To take advantage of the deal visit [www.britcar24hr.co.uk/2for30](http://www.britcar24hr.co.uk/2for30) ■



Picture: Cpl Adrian Harlen, RLC

## Surfers seek surge in talent

THE Army Surf Riders Union is looking for female competitors to join its ranks ahead of a busy month of action.

The organisation hosts the Army championships at Chivenor on October 22 and 23 before staging a week-long training camp ahead of the Inter-Services competition in Newquay.

Secretary LCpl Kevin Pottage (MPGS) said: "The Royal Navy and Royal Air Force both have a women's team but the Army has struggled to get

one together and we need to put that right."

"We want any female surfers, regardless of experience, to come along and have a go. The more the merrier."

The Army event will feature shortboard, longboard and bodyboard competitions and will be used to select the team for the Inter-Services on October 29 and 30.

Anyone interested in taking part should contact Pottage on 01752 236130 or 07920 001527. ■



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# READY TO RUMBLE

Army judo stars in confident mood ahead of world championships and quest for Olympic qualification

Interviews: Richard Long  
Pictures: Graeme Main

**F**OR the Service's elite-level judo players, the road to the London Olympics has been given a distinct French flavour.

Capital city Paris provided the backdrop for the sport's world championships last month, an event that saw Tpr Emmanuel Nartey (1 RTR), LCpl Victor Ahiavor (1 RRF) and Sgt Abbas Salihu (RLC) continue their bid for a place at the greatest sporting spectacle on the planet.

The tournament is the biggest competition outside of the Games and a strong showing against their international rivals would almost guarantee qualification for 2012.

The dedicated trio were in action as this issue went to press but *SoldierSport* met them on the eve of

the contest to talk about their hopes for Paris and their Olympic goals.

Ghanaian Nartey has been a firm fixture on the judo scene for a number of years and the 73kg player believes his full-time training at the University of Bath will hold him in good stead for the world championships.

"I'm hoping for a top-four finish, I think that is a realistic goal," he explained. "This event sets the platform for what I can achieve over the coming year. Every single guy I will face at the Olympics will be there.

"The training is tough but it is paying off. When I look back at my performances five years ago I realise I have come a long way.

"People are now worried when they have to fight me and that shows the progress I have made."

Nartey is currently in the midst of a gruelling schedule that has seen him compete on an almost weekly basis for the past five months.

"If you want to go to the Olympics and compete at the top level these are the sacrifices you have to make," he said.

"The job is not done until you actually make it to the Games.

"My aim for 2012 is to reach the semi-finals and I will go from there. If I do not get to that stage it will be a disaster."

Compatriot Ahiavor (pictured left) heads to France in fine form having won a bronze medal at June's Kent International.

"It has given me confidence but judo is a difficult sport," said the 83kg star, who has been working closely with







SSgt Tony Richardson (RAPTC) and Maj Simon Childs (12 Mech Bde), manager of the Army Judo Association's elite training programme.

"You think it is easy but you can get knocked down at the drop of a hat, surprises are everywhere.

"The world championships are going to be really tough as everyone is trying to gain a spot at the Olympics.

"For me this is the last chance to qualify but picking up a medal would almost guarantee my place. I think that is a possibility.

"My form has been consistent this year and I am very confident. It would be my first Olympics, I have trained hard for it and I hope 2012 will be the best year of my career.

"A lot of guys have had three or four opportunities to reach that level and it has never happened for them, I will not let it go.

"Having the support of the Army and the excellent facilities in the UK, I have no excuse not to make it."

Nigerian Salihu suffered a serious injury in 2010 but has returned to full fitness for what could be the most important era of his sporting life.

"I had surgery on my shoulder and I was out for eight months," the NCO explained. "But I made my comeback at the Combined Services in October and have competed at the Belgian and British Opens, as well as the Paris Grand Slam.

"Belgium was the first big event for me and I won my opening three fights. I was very happy with my performance and I am getting stronger.

"The world championships will be very difficult and I am hoping for a good draw. My target is the quarter-finals, anything more will be a bonus.

"My place at the Games is still up in the air and I just have to keep competing and make sure I earn a spot on the direct qualification list.

"The Olympics is the ultimate dream, I am 29 now so this is my last opportunity. Being in the athletes' village, taking in the atmosphere will be fantastic. If I stay injury free I will keep fighting hard to see what happens.

"It is a realistic target. We have a very good training environment, the group is strong and we have an excellent support structure."

As well as being a full-time athlete, Salihu is working towards his European coaching qualifications.

He added: "It is something I want to do when I finish competing so I can go back to the Army and Combined Services and help athletes there.

"It is about giving something back to the military for the support they have given me." ■

**From left, London calling:** Sgt Abbas Salihu (RLC), Tpr Emmanuel Narthey (1 RTR) and LCpl Victor Ahiavor (1 RRF) hope a strong showing at the Judo World Championships will propel them towards qualification for the 2012 Olympics



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**Wonder of Wimbledon:** LCpl Lawrence Tere (RAMC) was the Army's star man as he triumphed over his Forces rivals to be crowned individual champion

# Army banished from court

**Report: Richard Long**  
**Pictures: Graeme Main**

**T**HE lush courts of Wimbledon proved to be an unhappy hunting ground for the Army tennis team as they crashed to a heavy defeat in this year's Inter-Services championships.

Number one seed LCpl Lawrence Tere (RAMC) was the lone shining light for the Reds as he celebrated individual success, but it was the Royal Air Force who dominated proceedings with a clean sweep in the men's, women's and veterans' competitions.

The Army headed to the tournament in confident mood and Tere gave them a perfect start with a straight sets win over Flt Lt Chris Evans.

An early break helped the former Davis Cup player race to a 5-1 lead before the RAF star found some form to win three straight games.

But Tere regained his composure to take the first set on his serve and then opened a 3-0 advantage in the second as Evans slipped to a 6-4, 6-4 defeat.

Speaking after his victory, Tere told *SoldierSport*: "The match went well. He made a few more errors and I didn't really force the issue too much.

"However, he played some good shots and I did not really focus at times, but I did enough to win."

The Army ace defeated the Royal Navy number one to complete his personal double but his teammates suffered mixed fortunes at SW19.

Maj Max Lytle (AAC) triumphed against his Senior Service opponent but lost to the RAF, while third seed WO2 Jamie Friend (RLC) was defeated in both his matches.

Men's captain Maj Roger Fawcus (RE) said limited success on the

opening day left his team with too much to do in the doubles.

"Our rivals had some strong pairings and we could not turn it around," the officer added.

"It is always very close and we were hoping to nick it but we did not expect the RAF to come through as they did."

The women suffered a similar fate as they tied with the Navy on five points behind the triumphant RAF squad.

Third seed SSgt Hilary Greig (CAMUS) was in stunning form for the Army as she claimed victory in both singles matches and then repeated the feat in the doubles competition.

"She has been a consistent match player for a number of years, she fights like a dog and never gives up," said Capt Cornel Oosthuizen (AGC (ETS), pictured left). "She was the only one to win all her matches and that is a reflection of the ability she has."

The team captain also praised newcomers Capt Natalie Denby (RAMC) and LCpl Hannah Bacon (AGC (SPS)) and believes the future of Army tennis is looking bright.

She said: "I am optimistic about the ability in our squad. We knew we had a lot of work to do and we have done that over the course of the season.

That showed at Wimbledon, but there is still room for improvement." ■





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**Smash hit:** International beach volleyball stars take to the court at the world-famous Horse Guards Parade during the highly-successful Olympic trial event

## Parade passes test in Games warm up

**H**ORSE Guards Parade has received a glowing endorsement ahead of next year's Olympic Games after a successful beach volleyball test event was staged at the iconic venue.

A total of 24 world-class teams were invited to the five-day tournament, with Brazilian pairing Liliane Maestrini and Angela Viera taking the overall crown.

British duo Lucy Boulton and Denise Johns were fourth, with compatriots Shauna Mullin and Zara Dampney finishing joint fifth.

More than 100 trucks delivered 2,274 tonnes of sand to the London landmark,

which was spectacularly transformed to create a match court, two warm-up areas and two training surfaces.

A temporary 1,500-seat stand was constructed for the event, but a 15,000-capacity arena will be installed ahead of next year's Games.

David Luckes, the head of sport competition at the London 2012 Organising Committee, said: "The atmosphere was fantastic.

"Athletes, spectators and volunteers all talked about the amazing setting and the great time they had.

"We successfully tested the field

of play (including the sand), results systems, lighting and sport presentation.

"Bringing beach volleyball in this format to London is a first for the capital, the fact it was in this iconic venue added to the appeal."

Viera said: "Everything was really nice and I would like to thank everyone who helped.

"We are so grateful to have an Olympic test event. It was pretty good, in fact it was perfect."

The athletes return to Horse Guards Parade for the Olympic competition on Saturday, July 28, 2012. ■

### SPORT SHORTS



Picture: Mark Roberts

■ **MARSKMAN** Maj Rupert Riley (RA) produced outstanding form at the Target Rifle National Championships to claim the prestigious Queen's Prize.

The officer finished second in a field of 1,000 competitors thanks to a score of 297 and 30 V bulls.

Brig John Barlow was the last serving soldier to win the event in 1938.

The Territorial Army has also been celebrating following victory in the short- and long-range matches at this year's Inter-Services competition.

■ **ARMY** powerlifters head to this month's Combined Services competition in fine form following a productive summer of muscle-flexing action.

The England team called two athletes into their squad for the World Single Lift Championships in the USA, where Capt Neil Thomas (AGC) triumphed in the senior and military categories and WO1 Dave Tempest (AGC) was runner-up in the bench press.

More than 50 athletes then entered the Army push and pull event in Chatham. ATpr Stacy Savage (9 AAC) won the women's competition and Sgt Shaun Arling (5 Regt RA) lifted the men's title.

Thomas, who is also chairman of the Army Powerlifting Union, said: "With the amount of new lifters coming through the future looks very good.

"The number of top-class athletes the Army now has should see us continue to dominate the other two Services for many years to come."



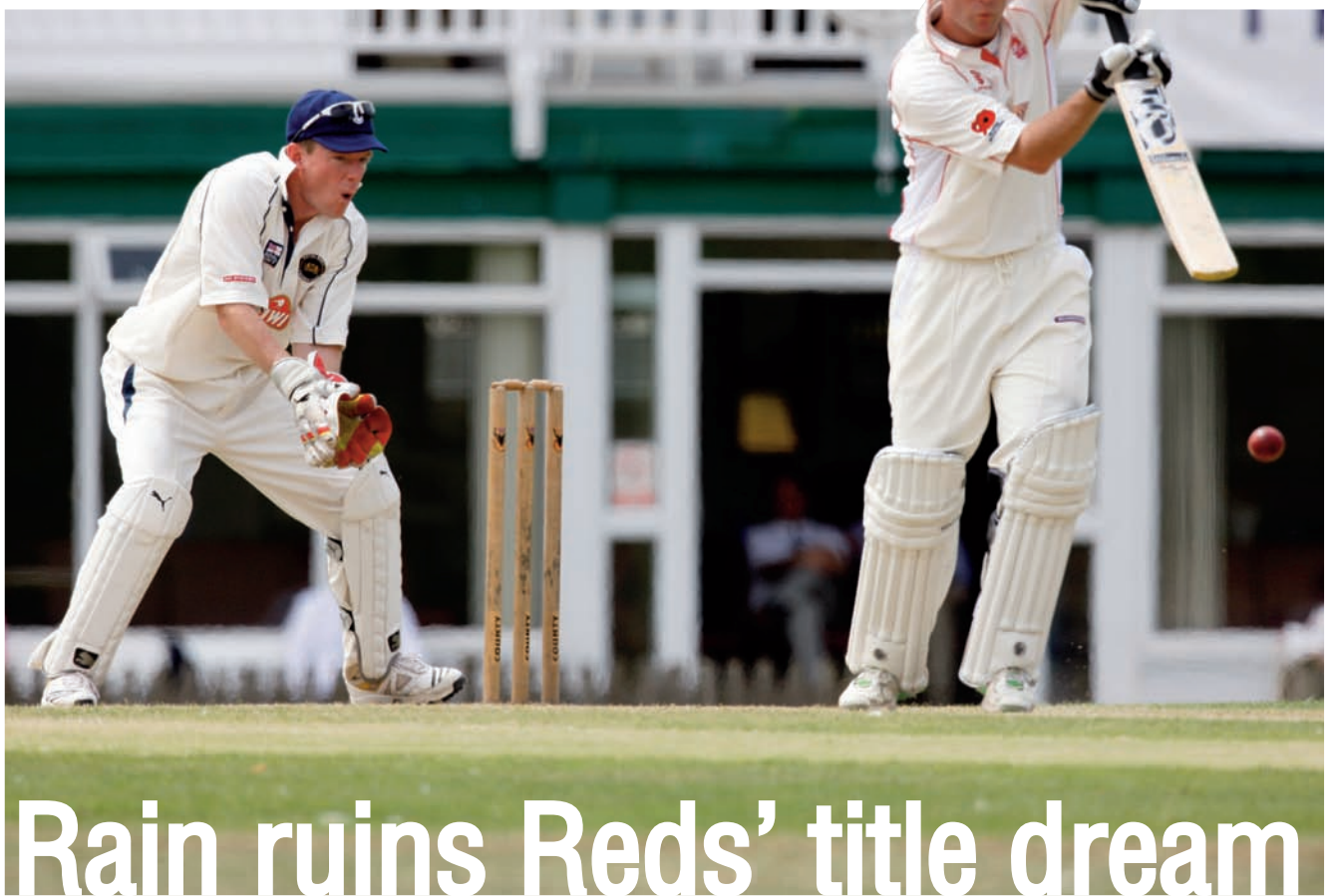
Picture: Graeme Main

■ **THE Army** has celebrated one of its best performances in the Inter-Services fencing championships.

OCdt Matt Narey (Loughborough UOTC) was the star of the show as he won the foil and epee competitions and also claimed the coveted master-at-arms title.

Capt Jamie Metcalfe (Yorks) and Capt Navine Rahman (Int Corps) secured victory in the sabre events, while OCdt Emma Byatt (Cambridge UOTC) continued her rapid rise in the sport by taking the women's foil and master-at-arms crowns.





# Rain ruins Reds' title dream

Service stars denied championship shot as washout hands crown to military rivals

**Report: Richard Long**  
**Pictures: Graeme Main**

**A** RMY cricketers saw their quest for Inter-Services glory washed away in the rain as heavy downpours gifted the Royal Air Force victory in this year's 50-over competition.

Having inflicted a thumping defeat on the Royal Navy in the tournament's opening fixture, the Reds were in confident mood as they prepared to lock horns with their rivals at Uxbridge.

But a summer deluge saw the final abandoned without a ball being bowled and the trophy was handed to the airmen courtesy of the superior run rate achieved in their own win against the Senior Service.

The outcome ended any hopes of silverware from a season that also saw the team suffer a crushing defeat against the RAF in the Twenty20 final.

The Army looked in fine form against the Navy and after winning the toss and batting first, they set about posting an imposing total on a friendly surface.

Openers Pte Brendan Varley (RAMC) and Lt James Hudson (RA) took full advantage of the early fielding restrictions to smash 68 runs from the first ten overs.

Varley struck a flurry of boundaries before being bowled for 42, leaving Hudson to pick up the pace.

The officer drilled a succession of wayward deliveries to the rope but fell

four runs short of his half-century.

Sgt Dan Webb (DSI, pictured above) and LCpl Jonathan Boynton (REME) capitalised on the solid start with a conservative 65-run stand.

Navy skipper ETWE Matthew Thompson broke the partnership when he bowled Boynton for 28 but Webb continued to dominate the opposition

on his way to a classy knock of 53.

Rfn Michael Lewis (2 Rifles) and Gnr Sherwin Govender (RA, pictured below) made useful contributions before a late onslaught from LCpl David Wade (R Signals) pushed the Army total to 294-8.

The right-hander cracked two fours and three booming sixes in an unbeaten 44 that ensured the momentum was firmly in the Army's favour at the interval.

Man-of-the-match Wade then took control with the ball and ripped through the opposition's top order to record figures of 3-32.

After stuttering to 57-4 from 17 overs the Navy crumbled to 213 all out, with Hudson claiming 2-30.

The Senior Service also struggled against the airmen and suffered a four-wicket defeat after being dismissed for a paltry 182.

Speaking at the end of the tournament, Army coach Lt Col Phil King (RLC) told *SoldierSport* his players

were frustrated at not being able to test themselves against a strong RAF side.

"We were in pretty good shape after our victory over the Navy," he said.

"They were all really up for it and it was a huge disappointment to sit and watch the rain come down.

"They knew they had not performed in the Twenty20 and wanted to prove







**Top, Main man:** Opener Lt James Hudson (RA) smashed a rapid-fire 46. **Howzat:** The Army celebrate as another Royal Navy wicket tumbles

they are better players than that.

"Brendan Varley is a new find for us and he proved what a talent he is. Dan Webb also batted very well but someone should have gone on to score a hundred. We could have got to 330 and that would have helped our run rate, which was crucial in the end."

King also found time to praise the returning Wade, who is now playing as a full-time professional with Gloucestershire County Cricket Club.

"He has been out injured but is now getting back into the swing of things," the coach said. "He bowled really well and has improved significantly from the player he was last year."

"He is also a much better batsman and that comes from working with the professionals. It makes a big difference and it has benefitted us as a team."

Despite seeing his side lose in both Inter-Services campaigns, King believes the foundations are now in place for an improved showing in 2012.

He added: "At the start of the season we said the benchmark was to win the Twenty20 and 50-over competitions and we have not done that."

"In terms of silverware we have come up short. But looking round the changing room we now have a young side with a lot of talented players coming through."

"We have had some hard lessons this year but we have learned from them and we will come back stronger." ■



**Back on track:** LCpl David Wade (R Signals) is targeting first-class success after an injury nightmare

## Gladiator ready for battle

Interview: Richard Long  
Picture: Graeme Main

**W**HEN fast bowler LCpl David Wade (R Signals) signed a two-year deal with County Championship side Gloucestershire, the Army star dreamed of being the scourge of batsmen across the country.

But instead of sending wickets tumbling, the 27-year-old has endured an injury-ravaged campaign that put his first-class hopes firmly on hold.

After spending the majority of the summer on the sidelines, Wade made a welcome return to the middle last month when he starred for the Army in their clash with the Royal Navy and took to the field with the Gladiators' 2nd XI.

"I tore my shoulder in the first warm-up match of the season and that ruled me out of action for about 12 weeks," he told *SoldierSport*.

"When I started playing again I had a relapse, so I had a long spell of rehabilitation. But I have been back playing for the last three or four weeks and it is going well."

"It has been very disappointing. I have a two-year contract so I have the winter and next season to get back on track. There is a lot of pressure on me now but hopefully I can push on."

Despite missing out on valuable

playing time, Wade feels he has benefitted from a professional set-up that has seen him training alongside established stars such as Jon Lewis and Sri Lanka's Muttiah Muralitharan – a bowler who claimed a world-record 800 test wickets.

"To say I've been in the same dressing room as one of the best players to ever play cricket is amazing," he said.

"He passed down a lot of advice and for the short time he was with us he was absolutely brilliant."

"Gloucestershire is a completely different environment and my game has really developed. These guys are vastly experienced and have been playing professionally for years, so it has been a great opportunity for me to learn more about the game."

With the season almost over Wade has vowed to work hard over the winter – which he hopes will include a tour to South Africa with the Royal Signals – and come back stronger next year.

"I am absolutely desperate for a place in the first team," he added.

"Gloucestershire have a lot of good youngsters coming through so it will be a tough challenge."

"I came into the game quite late at 27 and am nervously looking over my shoulder at 18- and 19-year-olds who are going to push me hard." ■



# final word



**What could be done to improve life in the British Army? We asked personnel from 2nd Battalion, The Parachute Regiment for their views**

INTERVIEWS: JOE CLAPSON  
PICTURES: STEVE DOCK



**Pte Luke Jones**

I would like to see free public transport for the Armed Forces such as train warrants. The longer you serve in the military the more allowances you should get – it costs some soldiers hundreds of pounds each week to get to and from work so they should be helped out. I also think people in specialist roles, such as Vallon men in Afghanistan, should get paid extra for the risks they sign up for.



**Pte Mathew Lockwood**

Military personnel should get free transport because it costs a lot to get home to families. Everything is actually pretty good for soldiers in terms of kit for Afghanistan but the webbing does end up falling apart, so if that could be fixed it would be good. I also agree with "Para pay" and don't think it should be taken away or altered because it's a vital part of what we work and train for.



**Pte Michael Bunce**

I think we could get a bit more money for being away on operational tours and I also believe we should get free transport or discounts for being in the Forces – it would just be a sign of respect from the country. It would be great to use the military identification card as formal ID. I can't really complain about the kit and there are no problems with our accommodation.



**Lt Shaun Clarke**

I would like to see information from the Government filtered down to soldiers more effectively and more integration between ministers and lower-level Forces personnel. There should be a way to give junior NCOs a voice because they are the people who know what is needed on the ground. Also, the UK shouldn't ask for tax from Servicemen and women while they're on operations.



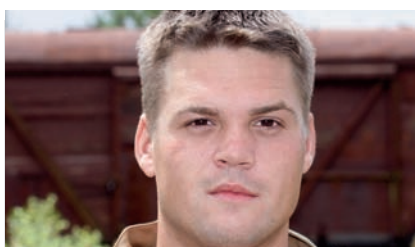
**Cpl John Healy**

Soldiers are the lowest paid civil servants yet take the highest risks. An increase in pay would be an immediate request. Apart from operations that you can't prepare ahead for, it would be nice to have a bit of forward-planning from those in charge. Sometimes exercises are sprung on personnel at very short notice when things have already been organised, such as holidays.



**LCpl Clive Webber**

There should be more money set aside for training and exercises and an increase in the operational allowance because for what we do, more is deserved. Discounting things for Service personnel – like they are for students – would also be much appreciated. If we could show our military identification to get ten per cent off something it would really boost morale.



**Pte Terry Little**

I would change the whole structure of the British Army, especially of officers and above. Often lads are just sent on exercises without any real explanation. I would come up with training packages that are worthwhile and actually mean something. At the moment it seems like things can be very random and most exercises tend to be a case of "hurry up and wait".



**Pte Thomas Wike**

I think it is unfair that students get discounts whereas members of the Forces don't get anything similar. We should be able to use our military ID cards everywhere to get money off things as those in the US Army do. They get treated with a lot more respect and receive extra privileges. I believe we have as much – if not more – right to discounts as undergraduates.



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