A high adrenalin exercise with the French Armed Forces of New Caledonia

PARA BREVET

AIRWORTHINESS IN THE RNZAF IN FRANCE WITH THE NH90

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Our mission
To carry out military air operations to advance
New Zealand’s security interests with professionalism,
integrity and teamwork.

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The annual Air Force Leadership Forum was held at Base Ohakea in mid June. The Forum was a great success and an important opportunity to refresh our thinking and direction.

I opened the forum by introducing the RNZAF’s new vision statement: New Zealand’s Air Force – ready, resilient and respected. This vision will guide us as we tackle the challenges ahead. It captures our identity and it describes our aspirations: to be responsive and agile in our operations, to endure and deal with adversity and to be trusted professionals.

This year’s theme for the Forum was ‘military air operations in the joint environment–our core business’. It was a deliberately chosen theme to hone in on our core business of flying operations.

My highest priority as CAF is delivering effective and safe military air operations underpinned by robust airworthiness and safety systems. A significant portion of the first day’s focus was around airworthiness, flying standards and safety. You can read about RNZAF airworthiness on page 8 of this issue.

As my ‘first word’ I’d like to start by saying I’m honoured to be selected as the Warrant Officer of the Air Force (WOAF). For the past 34 years, the Air Force has played a large part in my life and I feel greatly privileged to be given the opportunity to serve on the leadership team.

For a short account of myself I was born in New Plymouth, completing my education at Opunake High School before enlisting in the RNZAF in January 1977. Originally recruited in the Ground Radio trade, this had morphed into Avionics by the time I had started my 12-month recruit course. As an AVTECH, the majority of my career has been at Base Ohakea with a short posting to Woodbourne, 18 months of training at Wigram and a three year posting to Nowra, Australia. My current posting to Wellington is coming up to five years.

During my career, I have served on Nos. 2, 3, 14 and 75 Squadrons and deployed to the Solomon Islands as part of Operation Rata in 2004. There have been many highlights, including representing the RNZAF in tennis and rugby and New Zealand Combined Services at under 21 level rugby. From a military perspective, participation in the Return of the Unknown Warrior as a bearer was a huge honour and a defining experience in my military career.

The fact that the Air Force has held sway over me for the past 34 years is testament in part to the excitement, variety and satisfaction I have found in the many roles I have had during this time. However, this takes a back seat to the privilege of working alongside some of the smartest and most motivated people in the country.

Likeminded, with a common sense of purpose, our people continually deliver a top line, professional outcome. This is achieved through teamwork, cemented with camaraderie, a strong sense of mateship and a drive to realise the best possible outcome.

As the WOAF, I look forward to my engagement with our Air Force people, the wider Defence community, and the chance to make a positive difference.

RNZAF’s new vision statement:
New Zealand’s Air Force – ready, resilient and respected.
**SPECIAL HONOUR FOR SIR JERRY**

Former Chief of Defence Force of New Zealand Defence Force, Lieutenant General Sir Jerry Mateparae, was conferred Singapore’s highest military award, the Darjah Utama Bakti Cemerlang (Tentera) [Distinguished Service Order (Military)], by the President of Singapore S. R. Nathan.

The DSO (M) Award is one of the most senior in the Singaporean Honours System and is usually awarded only to heads of defence forces (or equivalents) of Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) nations and those with which Singapore has close military ties.

Sir Jerry is only the second New Zealand Officer to be awarded the DSO (M). The previous award was made to Air Marshal Sir Bruce Ferguson in 2006.

The medal was awarded to Sir Jerry for his outstanding contributions to forging excellent defence ties between the NZ Defence Force and the Singapore Armed Forces (SAF), and enhancing the close friendship between New Zealand and Singapore.

**PARADING THE QUEEN’S COLOUR**

On Friday 3 June, in great ceremonial tradition, the Queen’s Colour was handed over to RNZAF Base Ohakea by RNZAF Base Woodbourne.

The Queen’s Colour is rotated around each of the RNZAF bases biennially, and will be held by Base Ohakea for the next two years before being handed over to RNZAF Base Whenuapai in 2013.

The replacement Queen’s Colour has been used since 31 August 2004 when it was presented to the RNZAF by the then Governor-General and Commander-in-Chief Her Excellency the Honorable Dame Silvia Cartwright.

President of Singapore S. R. Nathan congratulates Lieutenant General Sir Jerry Mateparae with his Distinguished Service Order (Military) in Singapore.

Queen Elizabeth II presents her Colour to the RNZAF. The Colour Bearer is Flying officer M.F. McD. Palmer. With the Queen is Air Vice-Marshall D. V. Carnegie, Chief of the Air Staff.

The original Queen’s Colour was presented by Queen Elizabeth II on her Royal Tour of NZ at a ceremonial parade in Whenuapai on 28 December 1953.
After a career spanning 27 years in the RAF and RNZAF, WGCDr Peter Fitness is hanging up his uniform for a new civilian role as Defence Force Strategic Procurement Manager.

“The management of Defence supply chains and strategic sourcing is an area where Defence could potentially get significantly better value for money and where savings have been identified,” WGCDr Fitness says.

He takes up his new role on 1 August 2011 and will lead business improvement in the area of strategic sourcing for Defence Logistics Command.

WGCDr Fitness says he has thoroughly enjoyed his 27 years of service. As well as participating in service operational tours WGCDr Fitness has been a logistics specialist managing procurement and in-service support. He led business improvement activities in a UK Defence Logistics Organisation integrated project team that realised substantial financial savings through what is now termed category management. As well as uniformed tours, he spent three years seconded to IBM to develop the contract and order management modules of a logistics IT system. One of the highlights of his career was a three year tour as a logistics consultant to the Royal Saudi Air Force in Riyadh.

For the past 18 months WGCDr Fitness has been an Honorary Aide de Camp to New Zealand’s Governor-General. “You get to meet some brilliant people, it’s very humbling. I’ll miss it.”

He says his task here will be to embed procurement best practice across the NZ Defence Force. “We want to identify performance gaps and manage improvement plans to get the most value for the money we spend on outsourcing services and supplies.

“My vision is for a centre-led professional procurement organisation,” he says.

He’ll build a small team of six professional procurement specialists who will aim to influence the spend across Defence Logistics Command, Defence Shared Services, individual Services/Branches or third parties. “We don’t want to have a big team of people. This is about leadership, direction and mentoring; the budgets we are trying to save money from are right across Defence.

“Wherever they are working the two major goals for Defence procurement professionals are to satisfy customer requirements and to act as keepers of the public purse,” WGCDr Fitness says.

“As procurement professionals working in Defence we’ll need to change the way we work,” he says. “Concentrating on cutting the odd cent from each purchase we make will not deliver the order of savings the Defence Force requires.”

“There have been pockets of excellence throughout the NZDF. My aim is to build on this and develop the procurement staff into a professional community with knowledgeable and experienced leadership and governance.”

A series of physical challenges involving teams from the Navy, Air Force, Army and NZ Police tested the strength of the Forces during Men’s Health Week recently.

The event, held at Ngataringa Sports Complex, at Devonport, launched Men’s Health Week, an international preventive health campaign that ran from 13-19 June.

The series of challenges involved teams carrying each other in a fireman’s hold, running and carrying 10kg strength bags, a rowing machine relay, and running through thick mud.

Results for the challenge were Navy first, followed by Air Force, Army, and NZ Police.
Brief news

LET’S GO PINK!

The last week of June saw Base Woodbourne go all out for breast cancer fundraising with a lunch followed by a catwalk show.

Organised by Occupational Health Nurses from SAFEAIR and Directorate of Air Force Safety and Health (DASH), the catwalk show went down a treat, with half a dozen men performing wonderfully on stage! People voted for their favourite performer by putting a coin in respective collection boxes raising approximately $800.

And on a more serious note, the next day a speaker from the Cancer Society presented on the challenges of breast cancer.

IRREGULAR WARFARE SUMMIT

Recently, two NZ Defence Force personnel had the opportunity to attend an Irregular Warfare (IW) summit in Washington DC.

MAJ Josh Wineera, a teaching fellow at Massey University’s Centre for Defence and Security Studies, and SQNLDR Simon O’Neill from the RNZAF Air Power Development Centre (and ASIC National Programme Manager), attended the three day summit, which included representatives from the four US services and from Denmark, Israel, Saudi Arabia, Sweden and United Arab Emirates.

The summit offered an excellent opportunity to engage with the military, academic and IW communities, and establish networks.

SQNLDR O’Neill noted a number of recent initiatives and projects that could be of benefit to emerging air power doctrine developments in Australasia. Both officers emphasised the value of attending the summit was not just in what was gained on behalf of the NZ Defence Force and Massey University, but also in terms of contributing back into the wider coalition ‘team’.

A particular novelty for MAJ Wineera on day two of the summit was when he was asked across the table at lunch if he was ‘that Josh Wineera’. It turned out some papers he has published while at Massey University are being used as references in contractor-delivered pre-deployment training in the US Army. “It was like the old Steinlager ad”, said MAJ Wineera. “You know, they’re drinking our beer here—Wow— they’re reading my stuff there!”
On 10 June van loads of cadets gathered at the No. 22 Squadron (City of Upper Hutt) Air Training Corps (ATC) compound before sunrise, buzzing with excitement in anticipation of the weekend’s trip to Base Ohakea.

Our first appointment was a visit to the No. 3 Squadron hangar. Everyone was excited and dutifully listened to the pilots speak about the aircraft. But there was only one question on everyone’s mind – were we going to get a ride? Sure enough we were told we would get to go for a ride in the Huey.

Not fazed by the wet and cold weather, we enthusiastically divided in to groups to await our turn. Opting to keep the doors open even though it was very wet, the first group headed off followed by envious stares. For some it was their first time flying in an aircraft. We watched them take off and fly up out of sight; on their return those of us still on the ground watched the helicopter spiral back to the ground, causing extreme excitement in many and for most, a few nerves. It was great to see wet and cold cadets walking back to the hangar with huge grins on their faces.

After flying it was back to the barracks to get unpacked, tame the wet and windswept hair and get ready for our next visit. We jumped in the vans and headed to the new hangar for a tour through the building and a talk on the A109 and NH90 helicopters—both of which were interesting—but nothing beats getting to see the real thing up close! Cadets swarmed around the A109 wanting to be the first to sit in the pilot’s seat; others talked engines with the engineers.

Over the next two days we had presentations from Force Protection and Fire Fighters, and checked out training aircraft, the Tiger Moth and Harvard. In the evening we shared a movie night with No. 10 Squadron (City of Palmerston North) ATC. It was an excellent weekend, thoroughly enjoyed by all and we hope to return again next year.

We watched the helicopter spiral back to the ground, causing extreme excitement in many and for most, a few nerves.
**AIRWORTHINESS IN THE RNZAF**

**WHY, LIKE OTHER MILITARY FORCES, IS THE NZDF ITS OWN AIRWORTHINESS AUTHORITY? THE ANSWER, PUT SIMPLY, IS THAT WE HAVE TO USE MILITARY EQUIPMENT TO CONDUCT MILITARY AIR OPERATIONS….**

**AIRWORTHINESS AND THE RNZAF**

While the principles of military and civil airworthiness should be the same, the risks are different not just because the roles are different but because the NZDF relies on different equipment some of which is operating in an inherently more risky role and environment.

GPCAPT Andy Woods, NZDF Technical Airworthiness Authority (NZDF TAA) says “Our work is to operate military equipment in a military context with agility and flexibility. We are about operating in a varied maritime patrol, training, transport and rotary wing fleet with mission equipment, sensors and weapon systems unique to military aviation on land and at sea, in environments from the Tropics to the Antarctic. A significant part of our role is not simply how we comply with someone else’s regulations, but how we establish our own regulations in order to achieve operational outcomes, within acceptable levels of risk.”

**THE IMPORTANCE OF A ROBUST SYSTEM**

Operating airworthiness is all about having proficient persons in approved roles and environments operating aircraft to approved standards under a system of supervision and monitoring.

“Airworthiness is not something that looks after itself if left alone,” says WGCDDR John McWilliam, NZDF Operating Airworthiness Regulator (NZDF OAR). “Ultimately people decide how effective our airworthiness system is. It requires constant effort and constant vigilance by everyone. So the responsibility for airworthiness does not rest with a few delegated office holders. Airworthiness is inextricably linked to the operation of an aircraft.

So while individuals may or may not hold formally delegated authorities for airworthiness, all persons engaged in air operations either directly or indirectly hold responsibility that their actions meet applicable airworthiness standards,” says McWilliam.

“We need people to understand that regulation is about keeping people safe, not unduly restricting their ability to deliver military capability,” continues McWilliam.

The outcome of effective airworthiness management is that aircraft are operated in their intended roles and environments with acceptable risk to the lives of the aircrew, other NZDF members and the public.
THE NEW STRUCTURE

The new airworthiness structure was introduced in December last year and works as follows: the Chief of Air Force as the NZDF Airworthiness Authority (AA) heads the airworthiness framework under appointment from the Chief of Defence Force for RNZAF, New Zealand Army and RNZN aviation assets.

Responsibility for NZDF technical airworthiness is delegated to the NZDF TAA – Chief Engineer. Responsibility and authority for the safe operation of aircraft primarily rests with the NZDF OAR, the Air Component Commander as the NZDF Operating Airworthiness Authority (NZDF OAA) and the NZDF OAA’s delegates, Officers Commanding 485 and 488 Wings as NZDF Operating Airworthiness Authority Representatives (NZDF OAARs).

These structural changes have meant the NZDF TAA, Chief Engineer GPCAPT Andy Woods has been able to focus his team on technical airworthiness and regulation, with some real independence from delivery. “To support this change I’ve restructured the Directorate of Engineering and Technical Airworthiness to move resources where the greatest need exists,” says Woods.

ABOUT AIRWORTHINESS

Four components determine the airworthiness of an aircraft – design, construction, maintenance and operation. Technical airworthiness manages the first three – design, construction and maintenance while Operating Airworthiness manages the operating component.

Although managed separately, technical and operating airworthiness are inextricably linked and cannot be treated in isolation.

The NZDF defines airworthiness as ‘the suitability of an aircraft to be operated in flight in that it is designed to, and certified as meeting, approved standards; constructed by an approved organisation in accordance with approved standards; maintained by qualified persons in accordance with an approved system; and operated by qualified persons in accordance with approved instructions’.

In the earliest days of aviation, airworthiness regulation, where it existed at all, was driven by the military. Serious losses experienced by its maritime industry prompted British government initiatives in the 1800s to protect its citizenry. It did so by controlling risk through instituting seaworthiness rules that provided a considered and approved code of common standards and practices. When aircraft began to fly in the early 1900s, it was a natural progression to extend this initiative and establish airworthiness rules. Initially, aviation rules were focussed on protecting citizens on the ground, but as priorities changed, the rules were extended to protect passengers and aircrew.

At the level of a flying organisation, standards and limitations whether locally or externally developed may take a number of forms including flight manuals, standing orders, standard operating procedures and rules governing tactical operations aircrew training and proficiency, low flying, air displays, cargo carriage, the use of role equipment and others.

AN INDEPENDENT REGULATOR

WGCDR McWilliam started in the role of NZDF OAR in December 2010, when it was first established.

After serving in the RNZAF for 20 years as a pilot and in a range of instructing, operational and staff appointment roles, he finished as Commanding Officer of No. 3 Squadron. McWilliam spent the majority of his civilian career with the Aeromotive Group, which at the time, included Pacific Aerospace. He held numerous appointments including chief executive officer of Pacific Aerospace — and was also its chief test pilot.

McWilliam brings an extensive background in aircraft certification to the NZDF OAR role. He led the type certification...
Early morning on the flight line, as two Iroquois are prepared for flight.

CPL Dale, a Safety and Surface technician, checks aircrew clothing.
of the Pacific Aerospace 750XL with Civil Aviation Authority, (New Zealand), Federal Aviation Administration, (USA), European Aviation Safety Agency and Civil Aviation Safety Authority, (Australia). He was general manager of a CAA NZ Part 145 aircraft maintenance organisation.

“The point of having an independent regulator is to set and monitor independent minimum standards that promote the creation of a controlled operating environment while allowing operational commanders the latitude to exploit the capability of NZDF aircraft in support of national interests,” says McWilliam.

New standards for operating airworthiness titled Defence Force Standards for Operating Airworthiness is a significant piece of work McWilliam is finalising. It prescribes the Defence Force’s minimum operating airworthiness standards for all flying operations including parachute systems, unmanned aerial systems and synthetic training devices.

The systems and responsibilities outlined in these Standards are not only directed at key individuals but all those involved in operating aircraft. “We have to provide our personnel with a framework within which they can operate and make sound decisions, knowing as long as they operate within that framework, an operation should be safe with an acceptable level of risk. It’s about setting those minimum standards without telling people how to operate,” says McWilliam.

“Deciding how to operate is the responsibility of the NZDF OAA.” The NZDF OAA develops the orders, instructions and procedures for the conduct of operations that ensure compliance with the Standards. An example McWilliam uses is the following standard: all flights are to be appropriately authorised. It is up to the NZDF OAA to produce the detailed orders, instructions and procedures on how flights are to be appropriately authorised.

“My role goes well beyond standard setting. At the moment I am busy reviewing and endorsing activities associated with the introduction of the NH90, P-3K2, A109 and C-130. This independent review and general advice to the NZDF AA on all matters of operating airworthiness is essential for the integrity of an effective airworthiness system.”

An Iroquois being loaded into a Hercules, prior to deployment overseas.

LAC Tim Nepe checks fuel levels on exercise at RAAF Darwin in 2010.
STEP UP FOR PROJECT MANAGEMENT TRAINING

Professional PRINCE2 project management training will now be provided across the NZ Defence Force by new training provider ILX.

PRINCE2 is an internationally recognised methodology for managing projects that can be tailored to suit the size and complexity of any project.

“Our new PRINCE2 project management training provider, ILX will bring a variety of PRINCE2 training packages to the Defence Force starting from July this year,” says Project Manager Kathleen Mackie. “It’s a very valuable tool for managing projects in a consistent way.”

Military and civilian personnel in project roles will be able to receive PRINCE2 training targeted to their specific project role, for example, for project managers, governance board members (steering committees), project team managers and project team members, which will help personnel perform their project roles more effectively.

With this new approach to procuring project management training the Defence Force will realise an estimated $300,000 in savings for project management training for the 2011/12 financial year.

Training will be available via public or in-house courses with e-learning options for staff also being investigated. In-house training will be tailored to meet the Defence Force’s needs.

For more information about project management training contact TED@nzdf.mil.nz

COURSE NOMINATIONS MOVE TO CENTRAL PROCESSING

Some Air Force military training courses will be part of the mix of courses that use a new centralised service for processing nominations from July.

Five new personnel join the HR Service Centre Course Nominations and Enrolments team in the next month to look after nominations as they start to flow in from the Services.

The new team’s role is to receive the names of people nominated for individual training courses, and to process these nominations through to enrolment in liaison with Career Managers, other nominators and training providers. This includes checking pre-requisites for each nomination, processing waivers, withdrawals and where appropriate, arranging pre-screening.

It’s all part of the move to consolidate and centralise training support functions in order to free up schools and instructors to concentrate on instructing.

COURSE NOMINATION PILOT VALUABLE

The centralised course nomination process used by the HRSC Course Nominations and Enrolments team was trialled with seven training courses (two Air Force, three Navy, two Army) for three months using the Learning Management System (LMS) as a replacement for ATLAS. Subject matter expert Warrant Officer Joe Paurini says the trial was incredibly valuable.

“The trial found performance issues with LMS, which meant we reverted to using ATLAS for lodging nominations. That wasn’t what we’d expected but at least we found the issues during the trial,” says Joe.

He says the trial was a steep learning curve for everyone involved.

“The HRSC team was brand new. Along with the trial nominators and training providers we all learned a lot and worked through kinks in the process together, such as things like pre-requisites holding up enrolments, and determining whether schools would send joining instructions.”

The course nomination function in LMS is now being reviewed to determine what changes may need to be made to ensure it can meet the needs of the Defence Force. A decision on whether to proceed with it will be made in August.

MOVING WORK OVER TO THE HRSC

The new team in the HRSC will pick up course nomination admin work from the Services in phases – for the Air Force this involves some courses beginning 1 September 11.

Air Force Career Managers, schools and other nominators will be contacted directly regarding which courses are in the trial extension. All other courses are continuing with current processes until notified otherwise.
RECRUITING THE SMART WAY

A new Defence Recruiting organisation has changed the way recruitment is done by engaging in strategies that will deliver better quality candidates and a much better service for all three Services.

Director of Strategic Recruiting for Defence Recruitment CDR Nigel Philpott says “Within a year we’ve taken the best from the existing manual recruiting practices from five separate organisations and looked at how candidates would expect to be recruited in the future. We now have a single organisation with a consolidated and objective recruitment process. It uses state of the art software hosted on revolutionary cloud technology and a modern approach to attracting and engaging with candidates.”

The new organisation is supported by an externally hosted internet based IT system and centralised back office. The new civilian manned Prospect and Candidate Management Team enables candidates to apply and be tested online and for medical and security processes also to be managed online. It frees the Military recruiting field force from administration work so they can better engage with schools, the community and target audiences.

“Using this system means we can be more proactive with prospects inviting them to marketing events and tracking their interests to build a bank of potential recruits. Candidates will be more objectively assessed and better managed by a single contact person - from application through to attestation, which will provide a better and more informed experience for candidates and reduce the current high rate of attrition from the recruiting process,” says CDR Philpott.

Defence is shifting from expensive tactical advertising aimed at 17-24 year olds, to a more strategic engagement approach with a younger audience embracing online and social media. A new youth TV series, called Operation Hero, is scheduled to air on TV2 in August and will provide ‘a window into our world’. A new innovative Air Force campaign will be interactive and entirely on line.

“By engaging with people at a younger age we can build a known talent pool, ensure they take the right subjects at school and drive up candidate quality,” adds CDR Philpott.

As well as being a much smarter way to work and delivering better customer service, this new model will also deliver required savings of $3M per year in response to the Defence White Paper and Value for Money Review by reducing back office costs.

For more information about recruitment visit www.defencecareers.mil.nz or call 0800 1FORCE

TRANSITION TO HR SERVICE CENTRE COMPLETE

The majority of Defence personnel now receive their administration and pay support from the Defence Force HR Service Centre.

If they are not already, airmen and airwomen now need to do their basic HR administrative tasks, such as leave bookings, online using KEA. If they have an HR admin query they can’t resolve themselves they will be able to get information from the Military Admin and Pay site and help from HR Service Centre staff, by email or phone.

The link to the Military Admin and Pay site is on the Air Force Intranet home page and also under the Personnel tab. It can also be accessed via the Defence HR Service Centre Intranet and through the NZDF Human Resource Intranet.

Toni Janes, Defence Force HR Service Centre Director, says the phased transition over the last six months has worked well.

“Like any new centre, with new processes, we are in a transition phase so there are always going to be some issues,” she says.

“We recognise that we are starting from humble beginnings and it is an iterative process.”

Toni says demand has been greater than expected, but the team is managing well.

“It’s a new way of working for our staff, because they’re not just dealing with issues from one particular Service – we’re tri-Service and are dealing with inquiries from all three Services.”

There are 13 Air Force personnel working at the HR Service Centre providing help and support on HR admin and pay issues to personnel from all three Services, and advise their new Service Centre colleagues on any Air Force-specific issues that arise. Personnel on operational deployments continue to be supported by the Deployed Personnel Service Centre.

Toni says personnel had also adapted well to the new way of working with the majority using KEA and the MAP site in the first instance.

“Feedback we have received is that staff like the new way of working,” she says.

The change, part of the former Defence Transformation Programme, has seen the number of personnel undertaking HR admin and pay for Defence reduced from almost 300 to 92, and will result in a saving of nearly $50 million over five years.
HELICOPTER TRANSITION UNIT

By CPL Mel Barkla
Helicopter Transition Unit Forward Support Section
ESTABLISHING A FLIGHT STORE
FROM SCRATCH

EVER BEEN GIVEN a task and thought, “Wow, what an opportunity, this will be great!” and a few weeks later think, “Oh my... what have I got myself into? This is a big ask”. In August 2010, an area of the north east quadrant hanger at Ohakea had been ear-marked for the A109/NH90 Forward Support Section. At the time, it was 562m² of open space defined by concrete walls and under floor heating. My job was to transform it into a fully functional/operational flight store.

So how was a great open space going to magically turn into what we needed? Floor plans, rack layouts, size of stock, quantities of stock—the list continued.

In preparation, we took a look at the current warehousing issues to reduce the possibility of unanticipated issues down the track. Planning at this stage ensured we shouldn’t need to make big changes later.

So first things first. Emails went out to all key players of the forward support sections on the three bases. ‘If you could do it from scratch what would you have or do?’ From the responses received, we realised we had most things already covered by the plans and were on the right track.

As spares and aircraft were delayed due to import/export reasons, the setting up, ordering and allocations of what we had primarily identified all came in on time just as the big boxes containing the aircraft arrived from Italy.

Shortly after came the recommended spares provisioning list (RSPL) package (a package that contained two years worth of stock as predicted by AgustaWestland and Turbomecca), on a fully loaded Mainfreight truck. We were in our element. After months of prep, planning and organising, things were finally happening and we were about to set to work.

By the middle of March Directorate of Logistics Capability for Air (augmented by Logistics Support Section (LSS) Logistics Operators), were unpacking spares and checking in everything received from AgustaWestland and Turbomecca, on a fully loaded Mainfreight truck. We were in our element. After months of prep, planning and organising, things were finally happening and we were about to set to work.

By the middle of March Directorate of Logistics Capability for Air (augmented by Logistics Support Section (LSS) Logistics Operators), were unpacking spares and checking in everything received from AgustaWestland before handing over to LSS for rechecking and placing on the shelf.

Meanwhile, the Maintenance Crew had been given the go ahead to open their new ‘toys’ as well. So along with dealing with the spares package came the technicians’ requests.

Ever seen technicians get new toys? It’s like Christmas morning every day! They are always wanting to try this part out or always needing that tool to do it. So being the good suppliers we are, we found ourselves delving into pallets of stock to find the items they wanted.

This was a hard, mind-numbing task at times, but all 1,800 line items off the recommended spares provisioning list were finally at home on shelves come the end of May. It followed gruelling Systems Application Production (SAP) investigations to ensure all Material Masters, Equipment Records, Form Fit Function/Manufacturers Part Number sets and End Item Codes were correct. Not to mention the hundreds of photos taken.

As things started to even out with flying aircraft and the spares package sorted, the normal running of a Forward Support Section started to take place with reporting, demands and issues taking precedence. However, the setting up is not complete yet, as we await the NH90 spares from France before we start the processes all over again.

We take enjoyment from our new facilities, the under floor heating will be heaven in the coming winter months as thawing out will happen as soon as we enter the doors at 0745 hrs, not later the same morning. The Temperature Control Room, which houses the elastomeric items, is a safe haven after lunchtime circuit training. Light and door motion sensors are set for when you move about the hangar and the corridors still have that new smell.

On the downside, we are miles away from civilisation. It’s a 3km round trip to the mess/café or LSS HQ and, because of lack of windows, we have to venture outside to see if the sun is still shining or jerseys/jackets are needed before we go home for the day.

Had I bitten off more than I could chew? Luckily for me, I had an awesome team to assist with the ‘nitty gritty’ of what a new Forward Support Section needs. The personnel that have been posted to HTU FSS and/or transited through the section during its establishment and construction have impressed us with their professionalism, dedication and commitment.

THE FACTS

| Current facility storage capability | 327.78 m² |
| Line items | 1,800 |
| Overall length of the A109 (rotors turning) | 12.939 m |
| Height | 3.421 m |
| Maximum take off weight | 3,175 kg |
| Maximum cruise speed | 285 kph |
| Maximum range | 650 km |
| Maximum endurance | 3 hrs 30 min |
| Rescue winch | 270 kg or 2 people |
Project managing the NH90

By F/S Sean Trottm:
Ministry of Defence

BONJOUR DE L’ARMEE de l’air Kiwi en France. I’m a member of the Residential Project Team (RPT) based in France to support the NH90 acquisition. The team includes a number of RNZAF personnel who have been seconded to the Ministry of Defence (MoD) for provision of specialist knowledge, a consultant providing qualification expertise and a MoD representative.

We currently have two NH90s painted in RNZAF colours with our roundel on the side and “Ned” (the No. 3 Squadron Maori Warrior) on the tail.

Things are moving rapidly. We will be accepting our first tranche of spares very soon, and have already accepted some ground support equipment that was required for training.

The NH90 RPT is split loosely into two groups overseen by the MoD Project Manager, Mr Grant Isherwood. Grant is an ex-RNZAF Engineer, who has more recently been involved with engineering management at Air NZ.

WGCDR Pete Sutherland, SQNLDR Chris Andrew and Mr Luke Tamber are concentrating mainly on qualification of the New Zealand NH90 variant. This involves reviewing the mountain of documentation that is provided by industry to the Crown as substantiation that the design meets or exceeds the requirements detailed in the contract.

The ultimate goal of these efforts is to present a watertight case to the NZDF’s Operational Airworthiness Authority (OAA) and Technical Airworthiness Authority (TAA) in order for them to produce an RNZAF Special Flight Permit (SFP) for the New Zealand NH90 variant.

SQNLDR Hans Van Leeuwen, F/S Gav Hey and I are more concerned with the Integrated Logistics Support components of the acquisition. This includes training, publications, spares and quality assurance of aircraft on the assembly line. When something changes in the project there is a flow-on effect to other project outputs. It’s similar to herding cats but involves Excel spreadsheets. As aircraft and other project deliverables become ready for acceptance our roles will broaden to include acceptance of deliverables, ensuring they satisfy the contract and associated requirements and specification documentation.

We are looking forward to delivering the first NH90s to the Air Force later this year. I’m sure there will be some challenges to face: introducing an advanced platform like this into RNZAF service is no walk in the park, however the capabilities offered by the NH90 will be a quantum leap for us.
**Operational capability**

### Four months in Aix-En-Provence with the NH90

By SGT Nathan (Nathe) Trusler  
NH90 Avionics Residential Training Team (RTT)

**As I stand** looking at NH90 No. 31 on the production line, I am struck by its dimensions. The expansive nose supports two shelves of communication equipment across its width, and behind I can see a mass of cabling, no doubt for the multi-function displays that are to be installed into the instrument panel. The cyclic and collective sticks are in place but they are connected to foreign grey boxes instead of control rods. There are gaping holes where the windshields and crew doors will later be fitted, and on the roof two technicians appear dwarfed by the rotor head. Carbon fibre extends in every direction and everywhere you look there are switches, sensors, valves, vents and lines.

This is an imposing aircraft—it is tall, wide and very busy. It is a Friday afternoon and having just finished the first week of our theoretical training, the team have been looking forward to this production line visit for a long time.

Five of us make up the avionics contingent of the NH90 Resident Training Team (RTT). We departed from Palmerston North early in January to be welcomed at Marignane Airport (near Aix en Provence in France) by RTT Detachment Commander Sqn Ldr Chris Andrew and our Maintenance Supervisors Flt Lt Tina Frew and Flt Lt Glen Pleasants. After enjoying a particularly warm summer at home, the Mistral wind that blows down to the south from the Alps had us quickly reaching for jackets and beanies.

The NH90 purchase by the New Zealand Government includes a number of products beyond the aircraft themselves such as spares packages, support equipment, electronic publications and test equipment. One of the main logistics elements is the training of personnel to instil the necessary skills and knowledge required to operate the helicopter from day one. As such, the RTT is in France to complete formal systems courses that will result in an NH90 certificate being awarded by our primary training provider, Eurocopter Training Services (ETS).

Avionics training commenced with a 10 day harness workshop. This training was produced at the request of other operators who identified a need due to the new wiring technology on the NH90. The RNZAF NH90 avionics team were the first maintenance personnel to complete this course. We were introduced to the cables, terminations and connectors used, and their installations in the airframe. A practical element was included and allowed the opportunity to assemble a range of terminations and associated connectors, from micro-coaxial cables to alternator leads. During this time we were also able to visit the cable manufacturing plant where we could observe the entire loom construction process firsthand.

This was followed by our avionics systems theoretical training. Every system on the helicopter was covered during five weeks of intensive instruction and after-hours study.

Many components have multiple redundancies which are managed by the onboard maintenance and diagnostics system that monitors the status of almost every component on the helicopter in real time. This monitoring system has a huge amount of information available to the crew and maintenance personnel. A strong emphasis is placed on understanding the design philosophy behind the systems so that personnel are able to understand how information is processed and displayed.

A break in our training schedule allowed us to begin development of staff training courses in fixing and flying the NH90. It also saw the arrival in the country of the seven aircraft technicians. Listening to them discuss their first impressions such as French road etiquette, exactly what a container of milk looks like and how to pronounce ‘beaucoup’, we realised just how much we had settled into the French way of life.

Then it was time for practical training. The practical phase was

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1 Eight NH90 aircraft have been purchased by the NZ Government. They will arrive in New Zealand later in the year, will eventually replace the Iroquois.

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A strong emphasis is placed on understanding the design philosophy behind the systems so that personnel are able to understand how information is processed and displayed.
**Operational capability**

conducted using an RNZAF aircraft from the production line to ensure systems and training relevancy.

The content of the thousands of pages delivered during theory training now make sense as we were able to locate and identify various items. Quizling by our instructors ensured we knew how components were integrated, and I was surprised from time to time as we recalled ‘those random bits of info’. We were able to operate and test systems throughout the aircraft either using the aircraft’s own built in tests and/or specific test equipment.

A couple of highlights along the way included observing an RNZAF aircrew simulator session and participating on a training flight along the coast from Monaco to Marignane Airport in NZ 3301. The opportunity to see the helicopter operating makes you realise just what it is capable of.

It hasn’t all been about work either and trips in between weekend study sessions to locations such as Avignon, Orange and Les Baux provided sights of castles, forts, ancient churches and Roman ruins. Aix-en-Provence itself is a beautiful city to live in and a meal with French wine outside one the many cafes lining the main street while watching life pass by, is a great way to spend a couple of hours. The temperature is now steady in the low twenties, the trees are green and street festivals are under way.

The aircrew and aircraft folk will remain for several more months before returning; however, for the avionics team our time here is now coming to an end. As we prepare to leave we have a clear idea of the scale of work in front of us.

While a popular holiday destination, there has been a real focus on the team to get the most out of our training here. We have been given six months to learn as much as we can from the experts, the manufacturer and any other operators we might cross paths with to help us bring the NH90 into operation in New Zealand. So far, we have worked with some very knowledgeable and professional people, making the course and initial preparations for introduction somewhat smoother. Still, there is a long road ahead and many hurdles to jump but the team is well aware of the issues that have to be dealt with.

To date, the team has completed various ground, simulator and flying phases. The first two pilots were recently qualified on type with the remaining four soon to follow.

As far as the machine goes, I can only comment from a pilot’s perspective – it’s a dream. Big, fast, smooth and surprisingly nimble compared to other helicopters I’ve flown. The NH90 shows how far helicopter design has come since our Sioux and Huey fleets were built.

It’s easy to forget you’re flying an 11-ton helicopter. The flight control system utilizes multiple computers and wires (otherwise known as ‘Fly By Wire’) instead of the traditional bell cranks, cables and control rods used by older aircraft in the RNZAF fleet.

We are now getting to grips with some of the more advanced mission systems featured on the machine. The reality of what we will be able to do with it is now becoming apparent and it is obvious what a huge leap in capability the NH90 is going to be for the RNZAF.

We’ve all been making the most of our weekends and time off when possible. The Provence community has been great and we’ve made many friends. The area is great for outdoor activities although the nature of our deployment and the emphasis on remaining fit and healthy has prevented us from participating in more ‘risky’ sports. Still, a few of us have involved ourselves with the local tennis and yoga clubs.

FLTLT Charles ‘Cheese’ Beetham and I have also trained alongside the Eurocopter rugby team who happen to be visiting NZ for the Rugby World Cup later this year and there is already talk of a game against an RNZAF team.

We have a few months left here in France before the majority of the team returns home. The first two aircraft will follow a few months later, giving the team a chance to ensure the house is in order before we begin the Operational Test and Evaluation in New Zealand. Until then, we will continue to remain grateful guests and of course make the most of the Provence sun.

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Aircrew training in Marignane, France

*By FLTLT Will Neill*

**NH90 Aircrew Residential Training Team (RTT)**

**IT WAS WITH** a mixture of excitement, anticipation and relief that we arrived in France for the commencement of our training onto the NH90 in January this year.

Eurocopter, home of the NH90 had been introduced to us as ‘Vogue Central’, so on arrival at its reception it didn’t me long to figure out why. The French are well known for taking pride in their appearance. I don’t think I could be blamed for saying it was easy to feel out of place in my blues, still I think it may have made a nice change for the employees there to see some men in uniform.

Our home for the next six months or so was to be Aix (pronounced Ex) en Provence. Its not a bad place – picture tree lined streets, big old buildings, alfresco dining and now that we’re coming into the summer months – summer frocks, and yes jandals (only worn by Kiwis, Aussies and the odd Swede though).

Located in Southern France the climate, beaches, and culture of Provence make it a popular location for many of Europe’s holidaymakers. Compared to the majority of exercise and operational areas the NZ Defence Force deploys to, we all felt we had lucked in.
**Operational capability**

**Air Movements play critical role for the City of Christchurch**

*By F/S Tony Francois  
Air Movements Christchurch*

**TUESDAY 22 FEBRUARY** started like any other day for the staff at Air Movements Christchurch (part of Expeditionary Support Squadron) and the NZDF contingent posted to Operation Antarctica. Operation Antarctica was in its final week and personnel were preparing to return to their parent units after a busy season working as part of the Harewood Terminal Team. Little did they know that they still had a significant contribution to make in the Christchurch area.

At 12:51 pm Christchurch was struck by a magnitude 6.3 earthquake and although it did not reach the 7.1 magnitude of the September earthquake it was quite apparent by its violent nature that this event had to have caused significant damage, the scale of which unfolded as the television news started to relay images of quake-ravaged Christchurch.

The initial action was to ascertain the safety of personnel and families and to assess the damage to the immediate infrastructure of the airport. As per the September earthquake, the airport and Air Movements was lucky to remain operational with only some superficial damage to the building. Services remained intact with power and water not being disrupted unlike the majority of the Christchurch area.

An air bridge was quickly established and a continuous stream of flights deployed specialist emergency personnel (Civil Defence, USAR, NZ Police, Disaster Victim Identification, St Johns and structural engineers), their equipment and aid supplies.

Outbound the aircraft primarily transported passengers comprising of rotated out emergency agency personnel and internally displaced people (the elderly, special needs patients and foreign visitors whose hotels were damaged), who could not be cared for in the Canterbury area.

On more than one occasion parking on the Antarctic apron was at a premium with more than 10 aircraft vying for spaces. Between 22 February and 26 March there were approximately 125 flights handled by the Christchurch Air Movements Team. Inbound saw just over 2,000 passengers and 1,400,000 lbs of baggage and freight deploy into Christchurch whilst about 4,800 passengers and 690,000 lbs of baggage and freight was loaded from Christchurch for various destinations domestically and internationally.

Being able to successfully support a 24/7 operation combined with the sheer volume of aircraft movements was made possible by extending the Harewood Terminal Team personnel and being augmented by additional Air Movements personnel who were already working from Christchurch as part of TACEX. Numbers were further bolstered by the deployment of a Force Protection Team (from the Expeditionary Support Squadron) which was tasked with the security of Air Movements Christchurch and screening of passengers to ensure they were eligible for transport.

Through displaying the attributes of teamwork, agility, and commitment, the additional personnel were instrumental to successfully supporting the air bridge of aid and personnel into and out of Christchurch.

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**Stretcher bound patients and elderly are loaded into the C-130.**  
**Members of one of the first NZ USAR teams to arrive in Christchurch await their baggage and equipment in AIRMOV CH before deploying into Christchurch city to commence operations.**

**Members of the NZDF (who were operating out of AIRMOV CH), USAR teams and civilians awaiting a flight observe the two minutes silence for the victims of the earthquake.**
By FGOFF Matt Nanda
Air Warfare Officer, No. 40 Squadron

SINCE MY LAST article in the February issue of Air Force News, Hercules Flight quickly assumed its humanitarian role in assisting with the 22 February Canterbury earthquake. It was an example of the versatility of our unit, with the disaster occurring in the middle of our twice-yearly Tactical Exercise (TACEX).

April and May were also busy months for Hercules Flight with the Parachute Training Support Unit performing Exercise Para Brevet and continuing rotations to and from the Middle East.

This month I am going to give an outline of what the Air Warfare Officer (AWO) trade does on the C-130.

The AWO is like a third pilot onboard the C-130, backing the pilots on all decisions made in-flight. Even though final decisions rest with the Pilot-in-Command, the AWO has the most input into the navigation of the aircraft.

In preparation for a task, the AWO will plan the route on airways across the sky using flight-planning software. From the software we confirm accurate fuel requirements, flight times and payload available. Diplomatic clearances will be requested to fly over other countries and routes checked to ensure the C-130 doesn’t over-fly politically sensitive nations.

Near departure date the AWO and the co-pilot assemble all the charts required for transit and destination phases of the flight. A final fuel load is given to the maintenance team so the C-130 can depart carrying the most economical amount of fuel, while covering for contingencies in case of bad weather and other surprises that may pop up in-flight.

In the air the AWO manages three major systems that keep the aircraft pointing in the right direction: the Inertial Navigation System (INS) that allows the aircraft to know its exact position in space and time via gyroscopes without any external inputs; the Global Positioning System (GPS) that allows the aircraft to know its exact location in space and time with the help of satellites; and the radar which allows the AWO to monitor any adverse weather systems ahead of the aircraft.

Fuel is also a primary concern for the AWO who monitors and graphs fuel consumption. The AWO is also responsible for maintaining a link with our military High Frequency radio communications flight following service, Air Force Auckland and keeping a Navigation Log.

The job becomes much more complicated when the C-130 is flying tactically, to and from Antarctica, or while conducting personnel parachute drops.

The AWO is a unique job and with the benefit of being in a position that enables us to take a step back from what is happening in a dynamic situation onboard, as we have the greatest Situational Awareness (SA) for what the crew are getting into.

In my next article I will delve into the role of the Flight Engineer onboard the C-130.

Between now and then the C-130 will have travelled away for Precision Red, (a tactical flying exercise in Australia), conducted more local parachuting and assisted with the Timor-Leste NZ Defence Force personnel rotations to Dili. If we have had you onboard lately, I trust you had a happy flight.
"The AWO is like a third pilot onboard the C-130, backing the pilots on all decisions made in-flight."
People and events

AVIONICS COURSE

In late May, 19 members of 11/01 Avionic Mechanics course completed their training in servicing of aircraft at Woodbourne. This training teaches the students the fundamentals of how to carry out basic servicing and replenishment procedures on aircraft. Another part of this training involves the students being assessed in their ability to safely marshal aircraft.

Training is carried out using the recently acquired Mitsubishi MU2 Sumo aircraft which are taxied around the apron under their own power at Woodbourne. This gives the students real life exposure to the sounds, smells and what they are likely to experience when they complete their training and are posted to an operational squadron.

AIR FORCE WINS AWARD

The RNZAF scooped the “Department of Labour best initiative to address a health hazard Award” at an Award ceremony recently.

The description for this Award was “an initiative in which a specific occupational health hazard has been identified and managed. This could include hazards such as airborne substances, infectious diseases, sprains and strains, hazardous substances, thermal comfort, and noise.”

The award was presented by the Chief Executive, Department of Labour Mr Christopher Blake at who said the judging panel was impressed with the comprehensive approach to the Management of Substances Hazardous to Health. This included occupational hygiene surveys and personal health monitoring and made good use of the skills of the Directorate of Air Force Safety and Health (DASH) team.

The Awards were attended by WGC Dr John Cummings, SQNLDR Tony Collins and SGT Derek Miller representing the RNZAF.

IN FRANCE WITH THE NH90

On 18 May the NH90 Residential Project Team and Residential Training Team were hosted by the City Hall Mayor’s Office at Aix en Provence in France as an official welcome to their city. The article was in the local paper the next day. It was Project Manager Grant Isherwood’s first opportunity to, in his own words, “use some rudimentary French” in the reply speech. “A good night, well attended by local dignitaries and business people including Eurocopter (Jean-Jacques Salvator, Laure Flasseur and Sylvain Goldberg),” said Grant.
Queen’s Birthday Honours

The release of the Queen’s Birthday Honours list in June saw two RNZAF personnel recognised for service to their respective lines of work.

NZ Distinguished Service Decoration (DSD)
Acting Warrant Officer Darren Smith
Royal New Zealand Air Force
Based at Ohakea

Acting Warrant Officer Smith serves as a helicopter crewman. On 25 April 2010, while serving in the rank of flight sergeant, he was one of the helicopter crewmen on the Iroquois formation tasked for ceremonial flypasts in the Wellington area.

As the formation was transiting south, it encountered adverse weather and became separated. One helicopter continued on to Wellington, another, with Flight Sergeant Smith on board, returned and landed at Paraparaumu, while the location of the remaining aircraft was unknown at this stage. At dawn, Flight Sergeant Smith’s aircraft returned to Pukerua Bay where he was offloaded to begin a ground search for the missing crew. After climbing up a rugged and steep hill, he located the wreckage of the crashed aircraft and discovered that there was one survivor. By this time a civilian rescue helicopter had arrived on the scene. He then prepared his badly injured colleague for extraction using unfamiliar equipment. Once this had been successfully completed with minimal further trauma, he remained at the site until the arrival of New Zealand Police.

The Distinguished Service Decoration (DSD) recognises distinguished military service by regular, territorial and reserve members of the New Zealand Defence Force, including command and leadership and service in an operational environment, or in support of operations.

Member of the New Zealand Order of Merit (MNZM)
Mrs Therese Ann Angelo
Director of the Air Force Museum

Mrs Angelo has worked for the Air Force Museum since 1987, as Research Officer, Collections Manager, and since July 2002, as the first civilian Director. She served on the Council of the Archives and Records Association of New Zealand for 10 years, including a term as President. From 2003 to 2007 she served on the Board of Museums Aotearoa, including two years as Chair, and has recently been re-elected to this position. Mrs Angelo was the first qualified workplace assessor for the new Certificate in Museum Practice. In 2010 she won the Museums Aotearoa Individual Achievement Award.

Mrs Angelo also holds a Chief of Air Force and Chief of Defence Force Commendation.
Alan Bennison
1918–2011

By Matthew O’Sullivan
Air Force Museum of New Zealand

MEMORING THE LAST NZ NON-PILOT
BATTLE OF BRITAIN VETERAN

ALAN BENNISON, NZ40601, was born in 1918 in Dunedin and volunteered for the Air Force in early 1939, but it was not until February 1940 that he was accepted for training as an Air Gunner. In an oral history interview in 2004, he recalled that as a young lad he remembered seeing aircraft from Wigram flying over his house in Ashburton and he ran outside to wave, often getting a wave in response.

After basic training near Levin he was posted to Ohakea, which was still under construction. In April 1940 he embarked for Britain via the Panama Canal and en-route he did his share of submarine watch. From Bermuda to England he sailed in convoy with several other ships for an uneventful journey and was the last convoy to sail into the Thames, before future convoys disembarked in the south of England.

He went to an Operational Training Unit near Gloucester, where he gained his Air Gunner’s badge. While he was there he remembered seeing a couple of German aircraft, intent on bombing his airfield, being shot down and crashing on the edge of the field. He and many others rushed across the runway (a definite no-no!) to the scene and began to souvenir items before the military police arrived on the scene.

After graduation, he was posted to No. 25 Squadron, flying Bristol Blenheim aircraft. He arrived at the Squadron at RAF North Weald, just north of London, in September 1940, at the height of the The Battle of Britain. No. 25 Squadron flew night patrol operations in the defence of London and while he was there, North Weald was bombed more than once. Late in 1940 his squadron was re-equipped with the very latest Bristol Beaufighter aircraft equipped with the then, very secret, radar. He re-trained as a radar operator followed by a navigation course to become a navigator/radar operator. He was posted to No. 89 Squadron and in November 1941 went with the squadron to Egypt where he flew in Beaufighters on night defence patrols and reconnaissance operations over the Mediterranean. The squadron moved frequently and operated from stations that were little more than airstrips in the desert, around Alexandria, near the Suez Canal, near Benghazi in Libya and as far west as Algiers in Tunisia.

He was posted to India in late 1942 but he fell ill with malaria and stayed in Egypt performing Operations Room duties after his convalescence. He returned to No. 89 Squadron for a short period before being posted to No. 46 Squadron in February 1943, also in the North Africa region and also flying Beaufighters. He completed his tour of duty late in 1943 and returned to England where he became an instructor at RAF Station Cranfield north of London, and it was here that he was commissioned an officer.

Alan was repatriated to New Zealand via New York and Panama in September 1944, where he was met at Lyttelton by his family, who were given a special petrol ration to drive up from Ashburton. He transferred to the Active Reserve in 1949 where he took part in annual courses, war-games and exercises. During his time with the Reserve, Alan was awarded the Air Efficiency Award in 1952, a clasp for the Award in 1959 and a second clasp in 1965. He is one of only three to have two bars for the Air Efficiency Award. He stayed on the Reserve until 1973.

Alan was always very proud of his service with No. 25 Squadron in the Battle of Britain and his time flying in the early short-nosed Blenheims. He was the last non-pilot Battle of Britain veteran and was a regular attendee at the Air Force Museum of New Zealand’s Anzac Day and Battle of Britain Day services. He died peacefully at his rest home on 30 April 2011, aged 93.

"In April 1940 he embarked for Britain via the Panama Canal and en-route he did his share of submarine watch."
Obituary

FLYING OFFICER GEOFF Fisken RNZAF, a WWII fighter ace, died on 11 June 2011 at Rotorua, aged 96.

Geoff was born in Gisborne in 1916. In his early years he worked on farms in the Wairarapa, where he also learned to fly—at age 14. In 1940 he volunteered for the Air Force and trained at Bell Block (New Plymouth) and Ohakea, where he qualified in January 1941 as a Sergeant-Pilot.

New Zealand had agreed to send pilots to the RAF squadrons forming in Singapore, as well as sending a complete squadron—No. 488. Geoff Fisken was posted to Kallang airfield, where No. 243 Squadron RAF had mostly Kiwi pilots.

On 8 December 1941 the Pacific War broke out. The Japanese bombed Singapore and landed in Malaya simultaneously with the attack on Pearl Harbour (across the date line). The Buffalo squadrons were immediately in action. Geoff described (in Buffaloes over Singapore) how the RAF aircraft were outnumbered 16 to one.

“It was like committing suicide trying to dogfight with a Zero. The only really good chance was if we managed to come out of a cloud and they were a few hundred feet below us. Dive in [the Buffalo built up speed quickly] and fire a three or four second burst and then get out of it. Otherwise there would be five or six more on your tail.

“For some reason they would never follow you down. But if they were strafing [at low level] and saw you coming into land they would have a go at you.”

Fisken was credited with shooting down four fighters and two bombers over Singapore, damaging others. But on 1 February 1942 his luck ran out. He shot down one Zero, but two others hit his aircraft; Geoff was badly wounded. He managed to land his fighter.

“They cut [the shrapnel] out, put on some sulphanimide, strapped it up and I was able to fly again.” But the RAF was overwhelmed; Geoff, along with other surviving aircrew, was withdrawn to Java. Singapore fell to the Japanese on 15 February 1942.

Geoff returned to New Zealand in March. Here, the survivors from Nos. 243 and 488 Squadrons formed No.14 Squadron, the first New Zealand squadron to be equipped with P-40 Kittyhawks. About this time Fisken was commissioned as a Pilot Officer and the squadron moved to Masterton.

In 1943 the Americans needed more fighter squadrons for their advance into the Central Solomons. In April 1943 No. 14 Squadron deployed to Espiritu Santo (Vanuatu) before flying on 11 June to ‘Fighter 2,’ an airstrip on Guadalcanal. Japanese air attacks were continuing and the RNZAF pilots were quickly involved. On 12 June, Geoff claimed two Zekes (Zeros).

On 4 July he claimed another two Zekes and a Betty bomber. Geoff’s three victories on American Independence Day were acknowledged with whisky from the Yanks.

“I put [the whisky] in tents for the boys”. Geoff also got to meet Admiral Nimitz, and in September 1943 he was awarded the DFC.

But by then Geoff’s fitness was deteriorating; he had previously contracted dengue fever while in Singapore and his wounds continued to trouble him. He was invalided out of the RNZAF in December 1943. Geoff Fisken’s total score is 11, six over Singapore and five over Guadalcanal in Kittyhawks, with up to five damaged or ‘probables’. He is the highest scoring Commonwealth fighter pilot against the Japanese.

After the war Geoff continued farming in the Wairarapa and later in the Bay of Plenty. He moved to Rotorua in 1980 and is survived by five sons and a daughter.

Sources:
Air Force Museum of New Zealand
Ian Brodie, NZ Fighter Pilots Museum
Buffaloes over Singapore by Brian Cull, Grub St, London 2003
Exercise Para Brevet 11
By F/S Garth Magnussen
Parachute Training and Support Unit

During the period 19-28 May, Parachute Training and Support Unit (PTSU) conducted Exercise Para Brevet 11 at RNZAF Base Auckland. The exercise involved the hosting of parachute qualified soldiers from the French Armed Forces of New Caledonia (FANC) to participate in static line and free fall descents.

The aim of the exercise was to develop an understanding of respective units’ training and operational parachuting capabilities in order to enhance the interoperability and familiarisation between participants.

The exercise involved numerous objectives that included parachute descents, equipment familiarisation and reciprocal parachute training. Over 250 parachute descents of various types were conducted from the French CASA 235 aircraft during the three day window including low level round parachuting, free fall descents by both forces’ personnel as well as tandem descents where non-para qualified FANC personnel had the opportunity to act as tandem passengers, an experience not normally available to the French soldier.

Although the flying programme maintained a high tempo throughout the exercise due mainly to good weather and excellent CASA aircraft support, the vast majority of the exercise aims were achieved thanks to the outstanding logistical support from Base Auckland - Air Movements, Transport, Catering, Accommodation and Base Operations. Without the support of all these external agencies, Exercise Para Brevet 11 would not have achieved the success it did.

This is the second consecutive year that Exercise Para Brevet has been conducted at Whenuapai and long may it continue. Future exercises will endeavour to develop further parachuting practices such as water descent techniques, as well as alternate drop zone procedures.

The exercise further enhanced the relationship between both defence forces in formal and informal environments, and as the world becomes perceptibly smaller by the continued forging of alliances, exercises such as Para Brevet can only improve the RNZAF operational capabilities in the Pacific.
MISSION KIWI CAN

The Defence Force’s nationwide charity event for 2011, Mission Kiwi Can, is on again this year, but with a twist.

This year Commanding Officers on bases, camps and ships have the discretion to allow units to run their own activities to raise funds to buy cans.

CDF, LT GEN Jones said, “In 2009 we donated 6,500 cans to local food banks and in 2010 over 8,827 cans were donated. This year we are aiming for 10,000 cans nationwide which will require a combined effort by all personnel.

“Food banks around the country have found that the demand for food parcels has increased exponentially over the last few years. Any food donated will make a huge difference to families in need, especially during the winter months.

“We know that many of you have given to charities collecting for the Christchurch earthquake and ask that you dig deep and help out others in our community that are not as fortunate as ourselves.

“Our involvement with charities is an important part of Defence working with the community, especially where we are able to support charitable organisations based in our local communities. It is also a way for us to showcase ourselves to the public as a hard working but caring organisation. I hope you will all support this initiative.”

Mission Kiwi Can will start on 4 July and the donated food will be handed over to local food banks on 15 July.

ANZAC MARATHONERS

By W/O Gary Clark
HR Service Centre

I have always been a bit of a jogger, clocking up 6-7 km three or four times a week. It was a chore and I rarely enjoyed it.

Roll back time 12 months to May 2010 and my deployment to the Sinai. I was conducting my handover with Navy W/O Vicki Ryan who happened to mention she had run the Dead Sea Half Marathon in Israel. Wow, I thought, that was awesome. I cast my mind back to my bucket list, and yes, running a full marathon was on it! Next thing Vicki and I are challenging each other to run a marathon back in NZ and we settle on ASIC’s Rotorua Marathon.

Fast forward six months and I return home, having learned an enormous amount about running and training from the Aussie Physical Training Instructors on the mission with us. Along the way we rope in Army CAPT Liz Barclay, Air Force SGT Joe Martin and a support crew of family and friends to give a tri-service feel to the event.

The night before the event we had a team dinner - home cooked roast meal and feijoas crumble (yeah we should have had pasta) - and then off to bed for a good night’s sleep.

Race day dawned a clear and chilly one but by start time it was a great day for running. The worries creep in - have we done the training, is our hydration right? Too late to worry as before we know it the starter canon goes off and we are away – Vicki (Navy), Liz (Army) and me (Air Force) in the full marathon and Joe (Air Force) in the half marathon. Aussie Maria, and New Zealanders Simon, Colleen, Boyd and Claire were our support crew.

Joe runs her half in 2.25 which was a fantastic effort, Vicki completed the full marathon in 4.28 followed by Liz in 4.29 and I, despite really bad back spasms, roll in a little later. I can tell you bad pain is not enough to stop you when you have completed all that training - motivation to finish overrides.

Our growing marathon team is heading to Auckland on 30 October to run the City of Auckland Marathon and then back to Rotorua in April 2012. Our team will run a marathon somewhere in NZ every year and every alternate year we will head to a state in Aussie and run as the ‘Anzac Marathorners’ running team which now includes three more Aussies.

INTERNATIONAL DEFENCE RUGBY

The International Defence Rugby Competition (IDRC) semi finals and final will be played in Auckland in October this year.

Visit www.irdc2011.com to find out more about the competition including participating teams and the draw.

ANZAC MARATHONERS

By W/O Gary Clark
HR Service Centre

I have always been a bit of a jogger, clocking up 6-7 km three or four times a week. It was a chore and I rarely enjoyed it.

Roll back time 12 months to May 2010 and my deployment to the Sinai. I was conducting my handover with Navy W/O Vicki Ryan who happened to mention she had run the Dead Sea Half Marathon in Israel. Wow, I thought, that was awesome. I cast my mind back to my bucket list, and yes, running a full marathon was on it! Next thing Vicki and I are challenging each other to run a marathon back in NZ and we settle on ASIC’s Rotorua Marathon.

Fast forward six months and I return home, having learned an enormous amount about running and training from the Aussie Physical Training Instructors on the mission with us. Along the way we rope in Army CAPT Liz Barclay, Air Force SGT Joe Martin and a support crew of family and friends to give a tri-service feel to the event.

The night before the event we had a team dinner - home cooked roast meal and feijoas crumble (yeah we should have had pasta) - and then off to bed for a good night’s sleep.

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The RNZAF Sports Awards 2010 were held at Defence House on Friday 20 May with trophies presented to the following personnel in recognition of their sporting achievements in 2010.

**The Flag Trophy**
RNZAF Sports Administrator of the Year
WGCDR Kelvin Read

**Nikki Carr Memorial Trophy**
RNZAF Under 23 Sportsperson of the Year
LAC Tomina Apiti

**Les Smith Memorial Trophy**
RNZAF Sportsperson of the Year
LAC Grete Nuralli

**141 Flight RNZAF Trophy**
Most Outstanding Achievement in sport by a RNZAF Sportsperson
AC Nikki Galpin

**RNZAF Gold Sports Badge**
Chief of Air Force, AVM Peter Stockwell presented the RNZAF Gold Sports Badge to MAJ Clayton Willocks, F/S Grant Winwood and W/O Steve McCutcheon in recognition of their consistent outstanding sporting achievement and long-standing service to RNZAF Sport.

**Other Awards Presented**
RNZAF Cup went to RNZAF Base Ohakea.
USAF Cup went to RNZAF Base Auckland.
RNZAF Sports Team of the Year went to RNZAF Women’s Cricket Team.

**NZDF Sports Awards**
RNZAF personnel picked up two significant awards at the NZDF Sports Awards at the Amora Hotel in Wellington on 15 June.

One of three NZDF Colour Awards was presented to WO Paul Davies. These awards are given in recognition of an individual’s commitment, team work and willingness to their sporting code and to the wider Defence Force.

The NZDF Sports Official of the Year went to WGCDR Kelvin Read who has had an active and full involvement in RNZAF sport, particularly in hockey and harriers.

At the start of the sporting year WGCDR Read was selected to play hockey for the Wellington Masters team at the National Masters tournament in Nelson. WGCDR Read was then selected into the NZ Masters hockey team to play in the Trans Tasman challenge in Sydney. The NZ Masters team won the Trans Tasman Hockey series two tests to one, with WGCDR Read being named player of the day for the last game of the series.

“One of the more pleasing aspects of NZDF sport over the last few years is the ever-growing range of sports that we are now involved in,” said CDF, LTGEN Rhys Jones.

“Our focus on sport flows through into a focus on physical wellbeing and general overall health. With increasing medical research and insights over the past 10 or 20 years we now understand the importance of physical fitness to health.”
WELCOME BACK
The RNZAF extends a warm welcome back to the following skilled personnel who have rejoined us recently.

**Base Auckland**
- FLTLT J McPhee, CHAP – 01/05/2011

FAREWELL
The RNZAF bids a fond farewell to the following.

**Base Auckland**
- F/S S C LARKE, SMEDIC – 01/05/2011
- CPL T.J WAINWRIGHT, AVTECH – 18/07/2011
- SgT C.J MCCARTHY, HCM – 18/07/2011
- SgT R.B MILNE, AWS – 18/07/2011
- CPL M.J JONES, CISTECH – 18/07/2011
- LAC A.G AKAI, LOGSPEC – 03/07/2011
- W/O D.A TRUE, AVTECH – 14/07/2011

**Base Ohakea**
- F/S W.e MccReADie, HCM – 12/07/2011

**Base Woodbourne**
- FLTLT C.D SEARLE, FPO – 18/07/2011

**Wellington**
- SgT R.L DAVIS, LOGSPEC – 04/07/2011
- Sgt L.M MUIR, CISTECH – 03/07/2011
- W/O P.C.P DAVIES, ACFTTECH – 03/07/2011
- SQNldr M.S PEARSON, PILOT – 14/07/2011

**ProMotions**
Congratulations to the following personnel for their well-deserved promotions.
- PLTOFF H.L. PRICE, AWO – 04/07/2011
- A/Sgt B.E. CORNES, AVTECH – 23/05/2011

REUNIONS

**18 Course RNZAF Boy Entrant School Reunion**
19-21 August 2011, Blenheim
50 years on and it’s time to get together again!
For more information contact:
Alan “Foxy” Hill, Reunion coordinator
Phone: (03) 579-1558
Email: jill.alan@paradise.net.nz

**No. 3 Squadron 70th Anniversary**
10 September 2011, Auckland
Expressions of interest are being sought from ex cadets and officers of No. 3 Squadron Air Training Corps to attend the Auckland Air Training Corps Wing Anniversary Parade up Queen Street and the 70th Anniversary Dinner on 10 September at the new MOTTAT Hangar.
For more information about the anniversary or to download a registration form visit:
http://www.3squadron.org.nz/

**Renwick School 150th Jubilee**
28-30 October 2011
Please register your interest to:
Jubilee@renwick.school.nz
or Angie Holdaway (03) 572 8092.

**19 Course RNZAF Boy Entrant School Reunion**
For more information or to register your interest and contact details email:
Graeme Munro: gmunro@xtra.co.nz
or Ian Young: ian.young@nzdf.mil.nz, or phone 09 417 7000 ext 7413 during work hours

**No. 29 Airmen Cadet School and No. 11 CET 40th Anniversary Reunion**
19 to 22 January 2012, Blenheim
For more information contact:
Murray Oakenfull (Oaky): oakys@xtra.co.nz
16b McCallum Street, Blenheim
or
John Forrest (Trees): chele.trees@xtra.co.nz
18 Glenroy Street, Blenheim
or
Jim Greenslade: j.greenslade@xtra.co.nz
18 MacKenzie St, Te Atatu South, Auckland

NOTICES

**Crossword # 18 solution**

Across
2. Chinook
4. Command
6. Ottawa
7. SPINS
9. Attack
11. Concept
14. Scout
16. Alert
18. GPCAPT
20. Armoured
21. Anti Aircraft

Down
1. Douhet
3. Intortus
5. Mission
8. Operational
10. Gaufrandia
12. C4ISR
13. Pinegar
15. CJOPS
17. Execute
19. Orbit
**Notices**

**EXPERIENCE TERMINAL VELOCITY OF 200 KM/H IN FREEFALL!**

Need an adrenaline kick-start to your day? Whenuapai Aviation Sports Club - Parachute Section have the solution... See Auckland city from a new dimension! We are offering High Altitude Tandem skydives to all serving NZDF personnel and their dependants for only $240.00.

To book your tandem skydive experience or for more information email:

SKYDIVECLUB@nzdf.mil.nz

or check out the website:

WWW.SKYDIVECLUB.CO.NZ

If riding in an airplane is flying, then riding on a boat is swimming. If you want to experience the element, then get out of the vehicle!
HAVE YOU ALWAYS WANTED TO?

The Air Force is recruiting. So now you can.

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