COMBAT OPS IN AFGHANISTAN

SQNLDR BEN PRYOR REPORTS

FIRE ENGINE TO CENTRAL PACIFIC

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

Air Force News is the official magazine of the Royal New Zealand Air Force (RNZAF) — established to inform, educate, and entertain its personnel and friends.

Published by
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Wellington, New Zealand

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Air Force News is governed by an Editorial Board. Views expressed in the Air Force News are not necessarily those of the RNZAF or the New Zealand Defence Force. Defence regulations over-ride all content in the Air Force News. Editorial contributions and ideas are welcomed. They can be emailed directly to the Editor and do not need to be forwarded through normal command chains.

Contributions need to include
• writer’s name, rank and unit
• photos provided separate from the text – at least 300dpi.

Contribution deadline for the September Issue
Friday 2 August

Contribution deadline for the October Issue
Friday 6 September

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ISSN 1175-2327

FLTLT Ben Pryor walks from his RAF Chinook helicopter on the flight-line at Camp Bastion, Helmand Province, Afghanistan, earlier this year. SqnLdr Pryor’s report on flying in Afghanistan is on page 6. Photo: RAF
As my ‘distinguished’ appearance indicates, I’ve been around for a while, and in that time I have become accustomed to having a pretty good knowledge of our people in blue. However, on returning after 5 ½ years outside Air, I have found at least one generation that I do not know at all; and I’m sure many of you are reciprocally challenged. I will work on the former as I come to grips with my new role; the latter I can deal with here.

I departed from OC 485WG at the end of 2007 to take up the role as the Defence Adviser in the New Zealand High Commission in Canberra. A little over three years later I returned in May 2011 to HQNZDF where I was working until five weeks ago as Assistant Chief Strategic Commitments and Intelligence. Although I have been very lucky to hold these two challenging and rewarding posts in the recent past, I’m feeling almost guilty about how much I am enjoying my new role as DCAF.

I have a lot to learn about an Air Force that has adapted greatly to new challenges in my absence, but underneath the outward signs of those changes I recognise the core of the organisation I know so well. That core is defined by dedication, good humour and resilience, a wish to get on and do the best regardless of the odds, and a professionalism that is impressive and deservedly enhances our reputation both within our country, and amongst the international community. All this is good work, and yet there are from time to time issues and events which have the potential to damage quickly and disproportionately what has taken all of us and our predecessors so long to build and nurture.

Those of you who know me well will expect a ‘war story’ at every opportunity, and I was thinking why should this article be the exception?

When I think back to my own Air Force beginnings at Wigram in this 1975, I remember vividly an Air Force training regime that was as deep as it was long; an environment in which we were exposed to a richness of professional development that covered all associated disciplines. One of the constantly recurring themes of that indoctrination was the importance of ‘standards’ in all our endeavours. Our training constantly reinforced our understanding of the essential nature of standards to our survival and professionalism in the unforgiving environment of military air operations. The importance of standards was encouraged and enforced by example, process, expectation, and leadership, and was embraced as they became second nature. And we quickly learned that by their very definition standards were not to be cast on and off like a fashion accessory.

In recent times our lives have become ever more complex, and as a consequence sometimes our focus has become blurred as the pressures of resource constraints, new and better ways of running our business and legislative compliance have all changed what was familiar and comfortable in the past.

However, no matter how much and how often things change or how challenging our modern military environment becomes, the old cornerstone of ‘standards’ is more essential now than ever, as we strive to be agile and professional whilst embracing new and challenging technologies, legislative obligations, and societal expectations. Whatever life may throw at us as an organisation, we must continue to exceed expectations by staying focussed on the high standards required for the professional delivery of military air operations—end of story.

Back to my opening remarks - I’m sure we will get to know each other well in the coming months and I look forward to reacquainting myself with you, the Bases and your various roles.
Each year, the Queen's Colour of the RNZAF is paraded in the week before the official Queen's Birthday; this year the Queen's Colour was paraded at RNZAF Base Auckland on 31 May, before being ceremonially lodged in the Officers' Mess. The Queen's Colour is lodged alternately at each Base; this year the Colour came to Base Auckland from Ohakea.
QUEEN'S BIRTHDAY HONOURS
—THE NEW ZEALAND DISTINGUISHED SERVICE DECORATION (DSD)

Sergeant Norriss has managed, on a voluntary basis and in his own time, the ‘In Loco Parentis’ (ILP) scheme at RNZAF Woodbourne since its inception in 1996. As Woodbourne is home for Air Force recruit and ground training, there are significant numbers of trainees posted in over any given period.

The aim of the ILP scheme is to provide young trainees with multiple experiences to explore their abilities, learn about teamwork in a variety of environments and sow the seeds of an active lifestyle. Activities over the years have included horse trekking, hunting, rock climbing, skiing, river rafting and sea kayaking.

As well as planning and coordinating the overall programme, he has utilised his expertise in the fields of sea kayaking, white-water rafting and river rafting to personally conduct and lead these activities.

Over the past twenty years, SGT Norriss has dedicated a great deal of time and effort to supporting and providing assistance to a number of civilian organisations. He has been a pivotal link between RNZAF Woodbourne and the local community and has been responsible for organising water based activity training for local schools, youth groups and cadet force units.

His interests also include softball and he held the role of administrator for Marlborough Softball for eighteen years until his retirement in 2008. He plays a significant role in the Woodbourne Search and Rescue team, not only by having taken part on numerous short notice rescue missions, but also by taking a lead in training team members and co-ordinating the acquisition of equipment.

Other recipients of note to the RNZAF:

TO BE A COMPANION OF THE QUEEN’S SERVICE ORDER:
Mr John Walter McKinnon, of Wellington;
former Secretary of Defence.

QUEEN’S SERVICE MEDAL:
Mr Charles Cooke, JP, of Mangawhai.
For services to the Royal New Zealand Returned and Services’ Association.
He is also one of our Honorary Air Liaison Officers

Mr Peter John Wheeler, of Auckland.
For services to Air Force veterans. Peter is President of the Bomber Command Association.

The five other NZDF recipients of the New Zealand Distinguished Service Decoration are:

LTCOL Robin Michael Hoult,
Royal New Zealand Infantry Regiment

LTCOL Stefan John Michie,
Royal New Zealand Infantry Regiment

MAJ Brent John Quin,
Royal New Zealand Armoured Corps

WOCSS James Ernest Harper,
Royal New Zealand Navy

PODR Scott Matthew Treleaven,
Royal New Zealand Navy
Since mid-2006, an RNZAF helicopter pilot has been seconded to the Royal Air Force on exchange and attached to No. 18 Squadron for a 3-year tour. SQNLDR Marcel Scott was the first and currently FLTLT Hamish Reichardt is away on this exchange. SQNLDR Ben Pryor describes some of his experiences.

CASUALTY EVACUATION IN AFGHANISTAN

Our exchange with No. 18 Sqn includes regular deployments to Afghanistan with the Chinook detachment of the UK Joint Helicopter Force, based in Camp Bastion, Helmand Province. When on detachment the provision of one Immediate Response Team (IRT) aircraft on permanent standby for Casualty Evacuation (CASEVAC) sorties is the highest priority. But the Chinook detachment also conducts the framework tasking and Deliberate Operations necessary to support the NATO counter-insurgency campaign.

For crews rostered onto IRT it can be some of the most dynamic and challenging flying that you could ever wish for, in some of the most hostile areas of Afghanistan.

A TYPICAL DAY ON THE IRT...

The ring of the Ops hotline phone punctuates the relative calmness of the IRT ready-room; everyone’s pulse rate quickens as we anticipate the news that there is another casualty somewhere in Helmand who needs to be recovered.

“We’ve got a shout!” is the inevitable call.

What follows is a classic ‘scramble’, as instantly most of the crew sprint out across the dispersal to the waiting IRT aircraft, while one crewman remains on the phone to quickly get any casualty information. A flight-line siren ensures everyone is aware the IRT is about to get airborne—engineers, armourers, medics and aircrew race to converge on the aircraft as it spins up, ensuring it gets away as quickly as possible.

Within minutes of the initial call the large twin-engine Chinook helicopter is off the ground, the cabin a hive of activity as the Medical Emergency Response Team (MERT) prepares itself for the casualties they will shortly receive. Often we depart with only the sketchiest of information, perhaps just the grid location and the number of casualties to be picked up...
The priority for us is then to try and gain any additional information over the radio from the Headquarters concerning the casualty. The ‘9-liner’ is the initial casualty incident report sent from the affected ground callsign. It is a formatted message with 9 lines of information, such as grid location, callsign, frequency, number of casualties, nationality of casualties, enemy activity in the area, etc.

Weapons checked, self-defence kit armed up, now just a few minutes to collect our thoughts and contemplate what may lie ahead of us.

Approaching the pick-up location our focus switches to co-ordination with a JTAC (Joint Terminal Attack Controller) who is stationed in a nearby patrol base, and who is responsible for all of the ‘Fires’ de-confliction in their area. Despite the priority given to CASEVAC aircraft, we still need to ensure we’re not going to fly blindly into an active mortar or artillery gun target-line, a fast jet ‘show of force’, or through other concurrent Ops that may be active nearby.

Quickly switching to the ground callsign we update all the available information, often relayed through an escorting Apache attack helicopter who will overwatch us in and out of the Emergency Helicopter Landing Site (EHLS).

We confirm the casualty status, best approach and departure directions, colour of marker smoke, and most importantly any enemy activity in the area. If the troops are still ‘in contact’ we may need further de-confliction from other gunships or close air support active overhead, or to co-ordinate with our partner USAF MH-60s if it is a mass casualty situation.

The proximity of Camp Bastion from the Green Zone means that we are sometimes on-scene within 10-15 minutes. The trade-off for such a rapid response is that it is often impossible to get a clear and accurate picture of the whole situation unraveling on the ground. Before running in, one of the most critical pieces of information we need to confirm is whether the EHLS is ‘clear and secure.’

That is a description that can often be fairly subjective. Ideally it means there is no enemy activity in the immediate area, a defensive cordon is established and the EHLS has been swept for mines or Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs). In reality it often may just mean a lull in the fighting, and a relatively benign pick-up could rapidly get very ‘kinetic’, particularly if an ambush has been set-up.

Each casualty callout therefore usually carries a moral dilemma—the certainty that the casualties may well die if we don’t pick them up, but in doing so we are putting 12 others and a vital aviation asset into harms way.

The MERT carried on the IRT Chinook is one of the most capable airborne trauma assets in theatre, and is in-effect taking the Emergency Room straight into the battlefield. Consisting of a core team of doctor, emergency nurse, and two paramedics, there are also four Force Protection troops who will assist securing the landing site and defending the aircraft, but who will then provide whatever assistance they can as the casualties are treated on the homeward leg.

Together they work to stabilize the casualties: administering anaesthetics, intubating, ventilating and resuscitating as required, while dealing with any areas of major trauma. These incredible lifesaving acts are all achieved while kneeling in the back of an aircraft that may be being thrown around relentlessly while we get ourselves into and out of situations of danger. Not to mention operating in minimal lighting at night, in sub-zero temperatures during winter or over +40°C in the height of summer. And often the medical personnel have little understanding of what is going on outside the aircraft, particularly when weapons are fired or flares deployed in self-defence.

The casualties we’re called to pick-up could literally be

“During the peak of one summer ‘fighting season’ our single IRT helicopter picked up over 300 casualties in one 10-week period.”
Multi-National Operations

anyone in theatre. Usually the highest priority is for ISAF troops (mainly UK, US, Danish and Estonian within Helmand Province), or Afghan National Security Forces, which together make up the largest proportion of the casualties. Tragically there are also many Afghan women and children who also get caught up in the conflict or are injured by IEDs.

We are also occasionally called on to pick up some of the Taliban casualties who are injured during attacks on coalition troops. In one instance this was an individual who lost both of his hands, and received severe blast injuries to his face, when the IED he was laying in the road prematurely exploded. Something of an ‘own goal’ situation, but nevertheless we still made every effort to get him to medical care.

Some 24-hour shifts pass relatively quietly, but on a bad day the IRT might have up to seven or eight callouts for separate incidents, at any time of day or night. Night callouts with zero illumination to a dusty site provide some of the most extreme environmental challenges, especially when the crew has had little sleep. Each incident could involve any number of casualties, not all combat related, and it was not uncommon to get re-tasked while airborne, to a subsequent incident somewhere else in the Area of Operations.

During the peak of one summer ‘fighting season’ our single IRT helicopter picked up over 300 casualties in one 10-week period. Sadly some of the casualties we picked up did not survive their wounds, and many more have been left with significant life-changing injuries, but such is the harsh and brutal reality of being involved in a war.

Another by-product of warfare is the numerous medical advances that are made out of necessity, and in this respect Afghanistan is no different. IEDs have become the Taliban’s weapon of choice throughout Afghanistan. In 2012 alone there were almost 15,000 IED-related incidents, and 60% of all coalition casualties are as a result of these indiscriminate and deadly weapons.

The catastrophic injuries resulting from IED detonations frequently lead to loss of limbs and uncontrolled bleeding that will result in death if not treated in minutes. The ‘Golden Hour’ of recovering an injured patient to primary medical care is being augmented with the ‘Platinum 10 minutes’, whereby combat medics on scene will try to apply a tourniquet to any affected limbs as soon as possible. Troops are even trained in self-application for the worst case scenario.

Other cutting-edge medical advancements include powders and specially coated bandages that can rapidly assist clotting, to stem blood loss. As well, the MERT carry enhanced plasma and blood products to replace those vital fluids.

From point-of-injury through to rehabilitation, the standard of medical care provided to injured UK soldiers in Afghanistan is considered to be second-to-none for deployed personnel. The number of soldiers who have survived life-threatening injuries is the best in recorded history and testament to the expertise and bravery of the medical staff, and the quality of the assets available for critical medical care.

One essential air-power element in this vital medical chain is undoubtedly the CASEVAC helicopter, and the IRT Chinook provides a tremendous capability.
The people of Chuuk State were delighted when an RNZAF C-130 Hercules landed on remote Weno Island with a large fire truck on board. The 7.7 tonne serviced appliance had been donated to Weno Island, part of Chuuk State in the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM) by the City of Christchurch Firefighters and the NZ Fire Service.

It took a cool 15 minutes for the Air Force crew to dismantle the aircraft seating, unload the pallet of equipment, and assemble the temporary ramp for the fire truck to disembark—a convincing demonstration of professionalism and teamwork. The fire truck was then driven carefully off the C-130 and onto the tarmac, in front of a crowd of locals and State officials. Behind the wheel was Fire Fighter Keith Norton as he prepared to hand the fire appliance over to Chuuk State.

The Chuuk Governor had asked New Zealand Fire Fighter Mr Keith Norton for help in sourcing a fire appliance, as there had been a series of serious fires in Chuuk, including the State Legislature Chambers and at a large tuna canning factory. The situation was becoming increasingly serious; the Island had been without a fire appliance for nearly two years and they were in desperate need of fire protection.

“We were able to lend a hand by transporting the fire truck in our C-130
International Assistance

aircraft,” explained the aircraft captain, FLTLT Matthew (Freddie) Ferris. There are limited ways to get a fire engine to Chuuk. The C-130 Hercules is probably the only aircraft that could do it because it has a cargo space big enough to take the fire truck, a solid ramp for disembarking, and it can land on a small airfield in a remote area.

“It’s been quite a journey, from sourcing a suitable fire truck, to physically getting it to the island. The Hercules was probably the only way of transporting such a large appliance to such a remote area,” said Keith Norton, who is one of the City of Christchurch firefighters. The keys were handed over at formal ceremony shortly after it was unloaded from the aircraft. “It has been my privilege to present the keys to this appliance for its use in all aspects of fire protection and safety on the island of Weno,” said Keith.

The Air Force crew and New Zealand media on the trip (TV One’s Seven Sharp and NZ Aviation News) were then treated to some warm and generous hospitality by Chuuk officials, which included a formal presentation to Mr Keith Norton and the captain of the C-130. FLTLT Ferris said, “We were only too happy to help. It has been a pleasure to help the NZ Fire Service to deliver the fire appliance to the people of Chuuk.”

“It’s been fantastic to see the smiles on their faces. It makes it all worthwhile,” said Mr Norton. The donated, fully serviced, fire truck was made possible by the efforts of the NZ Fire Service, City of Christchurch Firefighters, St Vincent de Paul, and the RNZAF.
The RNZAF C-130 Hercules has been undergoing an extensive and progressive life-extension upgrade. Three of our fleet of five Hercules have already been upgraded: NZ7004 and NZ7003 were delivered back to the RNZAF in 2010; NZ7001 was delivered on 22 February 2013. The remaining two, NZ 7002 and NZ7005, are at Woodbourne and are in the process of being upgraded.

The Life Extension Project (LEP) is one of the most comprehensive modernisation projects ever undertaken on the C-130, worldwide. It will enable better aircraft reliability and ensure compliance with air traffic control regulations around the world. As air traffic control becomes increasingly complex, and air traffic increases globally, entry to European, North American and Asian airspace requires advanced onboard communication and navigation systems, operated by highly trained aircrew.

“The upgraded C-130H(NZ) is a great leap forward. It provides the crew with a lot of situational awareness, which we didn’t have with the legacy aircraft,” said FLTLT ‘Freddy’ Ferris.

Significant structural changes include a centre wing refurbishment, major rewiring and new glass flight deck instrumentation, including replacement communication and navigation systems. The LEP is costing NZ$256 million and will extend the life of the aircraft to 2017. “These changes not only meet, but surpass our navigation needs,” said SQNLDR Dick Deihl.

The C-130 fleet is being managed throughout the upgrade programme to maximise aircraft availability and outputs. While the aircraft are being upgraded the crews are being trained to use the new equipment. Maintaining the capability while training can be a delicate balancing act, but it is working well.

The Operational Test and Evaluation (OT&E) process is critical to the success of the LEP. The new systems are tested to fully understand what each of the upgraded systems can achieve in the operational environment. This requires in-depth ‘characterisation’ of the systems and investigation of how they interact with one another and with other external systems. Appropriately controlled operational tasking is part of the OT&E process. Controlled operational tasking can in fact provide the ideal environment to conduct OT&E, as long as the risks have been clearly identified and are managed effectively.

“Once the OT&E phase is complete it will enable the aircraft to do more, and our Squadron to deliver more outputs,” said FLTLT Ferris.
Multi-National Exercise

Exercise ALAM HALFA was an NZ Army 1 Brigade tactical exercise conducted in Waiouru, Tararua and Wairarapa during May. The NZ Army and RNZAF were joined by soldiers from the Canadian, US and British armies, and Marines from the US Marine Corps, to fight within a scenario of insurgents trying to overthrow a government. The exercise was aimed at continued development of Joint Operations against an insurgent threat. A secondary aim was the roll-out of the Army’s new Tactical Area Network Environment, which is to enable a Commander to communicate with and monitor his assets real time.

No 3 Sqn deployed two UH-1H Iroquois and associated support personnel including Maintenance, Logistics, Communications, Intelligence, Armourers and Aviation Refuellers, into Tararua District. In addition, the A109 LUH Flight from Helicopter Transition Unit carried out a number of personnel flights in support of the exercise.

This type of training is bread and butter for No. 3 Sqn as the Army are our largest ‘user unit’. None-the-less, the chance to get out in the field, tool up, slap on some war paint, carry real troops and fly day and night in a tactical manner is both exciting and rewarding for all trades involved.

ALAM HALFA 13 was a ‘free play’ exercise in that its direction was shaped by the Commander’s decisions rather than conforming to a pre-planned scenario. The continually changing picture means priorities and the Commander’s intent are also continually changing. This makes for some challenging situations but also brings out the best in personnel involved and is as close to real time as you can get in an exercise scenario.

Initial tasking was mainly inserts of covert reconnaissance squads in the vicinity of Areas of Interest. These 4–5-man teams provided valuable intelligence back to the Commander which enabled him to best utilise the assets he had at any one time. The enemy in this case were small groups of insurgent fighters trying to sway diminutive rural communities...
into supporting their flight to disrupt the fragile friendly government. Their tactics centred around opportunist hit-and-run contacts and Improvised Explosive Device (IED) attacks on known vehicle routes. This simulated the typical hostile threat that may be encountered by our deployed personnel.

Further tasking saw our Hueys utilised to move recon teams, resupply of troops and support to a Forward Operating Base (FOB) following an IED attack, and as well, Casualty Evacuation (CASEVAC). CASEVAC was stood up whenever a large scale operation was being conducted by ground troops due to the increased threat of enemy contact.

Air support to the exercise culminated in a Direct Action (DA) being planned and executed on a known enemy location housing an insurgent training camp and weapons cache. The DA was conducted by two Iroquois inserting assault forces co-ordinated with a ground assault. The Huey then provided over-watch and a CASEVAC capability.

All-in-all ALAM HALFA was interesting, working in the field environment is always a challenge, but when we do this type of tactical flying we will be better placed as part of the future Joint Task Force.

The Army do know how to provide outstanding amenities, including hot meals and showers, in an isolated environment—depending on which Task Group you are attached to. One ‘highlight’ was moving our tented fortress 100m from one side of a recently cow-inhabited paddock to the other!

It is fair to say that Tararua and the Wairarapa are again safe for the citizens, in no small part thanks to the mighty ‘Sound of Freedom’ and the outstanding support provided to our flying operations!
Following-on from last month’s Air Force News, the RNZAF photographers also covered activities of the NH90 Flight, and other personnel who work in the HTU hangar.

The NH90 Flight

HELICOPTER TRANSITION UNIT

Among recent visitors to HTU were children from the Feilding Playcentre; SGT Rick Davies inspired the future aircrew.
The NH90 Flight personnel report that Phase 1 of the Operational Test and Evaluation process for the NH90, non-tactical passenger and cargo transport, is now complete. This phase was conducted in 2012 and resulted in the Interim Type Certificate issued earlier in 2013, allowing carriage of passengers and cargo in New Zealand.

Phase 2 is currently being conducted and will continue until the end of the year; this phase focuses on tactical operations with Army but also includes mountain flying and limited over-land SAR capability. This phase includes deployments to Waiouru (Tactical Operations), Woodbourne/Dip Flat (Mountain Flying) and Timaru (Ex SOUTHERN KATIPO 13).

Phase 3 is planned for the first half of next year and will be primarily focused on Special Operations. Further phases are planned, to include Ship Operations and Electronic Warfare operations, both of which are significant new capabilities from what was possible with the old Iroquois.

At the same time, NH90 Flight is undertaking taskings throughout NZ, while training is being carried out for both pilots and crewmen. The first Transition Course has been completed, graduating four pilots and four HCM, while the second Course commenced recently.
Earlier this year Pilot Training Squadron (PTS) took part in The New Zealand Air Safari. The triennial event is a relatively new one on the New Zealand aviation calendar, but it has grown quite large, with 30 teams taking part this year (and over 40 in previous years).

Teams are typically made up of local aero club pilots but that doesn’t preclude some of the more experienced pilots getting amongst it too. This year’s field included captains and first officers from the Air New Zealand, Brunei, and Qatar jet fleets as well as the odd Warbird pilot; we all came together over two weeks creating a great opportunity to meet like-minded people.

The event also encourages teams from around the globe to take part; the Safari is a unique way to showcase New Zealand. This time around teams from the USA, Australia, Qatar, and Brunei were amongst some of the internationals competing and enjoying our country from the air.

There are several aims for the Air Safari, the obvious ones being to promote general aviation around the country and to build experience amongst pilots by giving them the opportunity to exchange knowledge and advice in a more challenging environment than they are used to.

The other key aim however is to raise money to contribute towards developing general aviation within New Zealand. This year the proceeds went to the Young Eagles Foundation which provides scholarships to keen young individuals who would like to take up flying but would otherwise be constrained by the costs of doing so.

The format of the event is fairly simple; teams must complete one competition leg and one scenic leg each day for two weeks on a pre-planned navigation course. Teams collect points on the competition legs primarily by arriving overhead a designated point at a specified time, with teams earning maximum points for arriving overhead within 10 seconds.

Other methods for collecting points were to answer questions about each turn point on the route; i.e. what colour is the fence on the southern side of the road at turn point 3? Or, to identify locations throughout the course using a single photograph (this particular task in our low-wing aircraft proved quite difficult). The rules were also fairly simple, examples being that teams could not orbit at any point or fly slower than 80% of your stated cruise speed. Rules are strictly enforced, with safety being paramount—especially with 30 aircraft all trying to manoeuvre in the same airspace.

The course took the teams around the entire country, encompassing all types of terrain and flight environments that our country has to offer: mountain, rural, or cityscape, to coastal and bush. Each terrain type has its own unique...
difficulties to contend with while attempting to safely and accurately navigate to the next airfield.

**OUR AIR FORCE CONTINGENT**

We were split into two teams:

- the South Island team: SQNLDR Tim Costley, FLTLT Gareth Kemeys & FLTLT Kane Sanson,
- the North Island team: FLTLT Rod Olliff, FLTLT Russ Simons and me.

Whoever had selected the teams had conveniently split us between Fixed Wing Pilots and Rotary Pilots, which inevitably kicked off an internal competition as well!

The South Island team began the campaign from Masterton, after a one-day delay due to weather, by making their way down the South Island via Hokitika to Wanaka, then continuing on to Timaru via Taieri and finishing at New Plymouth via Kaikoura.

The North Island team then took the helm in New Plymouth on Day Five—with a narrow lead. The lead should have been larger but a timing glitch amongst the officials meant maximum points for the time on target were not given, and the lead was further cut down by the extremely good spotting techniques of the Waikato Aero Club team who were picking up points with ease in the ground observation phase of the competition.

Of interest, the Waikato team were also utilizing Air Force navigation techniques having being shown the procedures during the 2010 Air Safari by SQNLDR Matt Alcock. This was encouraging, in the sense that it was proof that the Air Force presence at the last event actively improved the flying abilities of some aero club pilots. However it also meant that they were managing to keep in touch with us, the leaders, in the time-on-target phase!

Having got a quick handover and brief, the North Island team made our way via Tauramanui to Hamilton. The difficulties of spotting the targets on the ground became apparent early on, as the photographs were all of red-roofed farmhouses in fields with fences around them. For those of you not from the Waikato every house is a red-roofed farmhouse in a field with a fence around it!

After Hamilton we were north-bound to Whenuapai where one of the few mistakes was made by an Air Safari aircraft, when it landed on the wrong runway with a P-3 on approach! From Whenuapai we made our way around Northland, almost as far as Kerikeri before turning back for Whitianga for the overnight. From there it was through Tauranga and onto Gisborne with the final competition day running via Hastings to Paraparaumu.

With the competition complete, all that remained was to head over to Motueka for the awards dinner and to unwind with the teams in some stunning wine country. The ceremony was held at Petite Fluer, a winery just outside of Motueka where a fantastic dinner was put on for all of the competitors. Following the speeches, the awards were announced; painfully for us Team Waikato had managed to pip us at the post to take top honours—having spotted more farmhouses than us! Nonetheless a great time was had by our RNZAF contingent.

The Air Force’s attendance at events like The New Zealand Air Safari is important, as it allows us the opportunities to not only pass on useful knowledge to help improve general aviators’ abilities, but also to give us the chance to interact and help remove some of the stigma of the ‘them and us’ attitude. At a personal level, attending the event also meant that for two weeks the instructors and I could remove ourselves from our local flying area and challenge ourselves and our abilities in a different environment.

I would highly recommend to anyone in the RNZAF to take part in The Air Safari in the future when the opportunity arises.
Friday 17 May was the last day that SQNLDR Anthony (Buddy) Budd would attend morning brief at Pilot Training Squadron, taking the chair as Officer Commanding PTS (OC PTS). Along with three other Qualified Flying Instructors (QFIs) also departing PTS, SQNLDR Budd completed his last day as OC PTS leading a formation of four CT 4-E Airtrainers in a final flight as his rite-of-passage.

Once back on the ground, the quartet taxied in and parked in a four point phalanx cross and awaited the traditional ‘last flight’ celebrations. Many well wishers had assembled—the Rescue Fire Service saluted with water; the Ohakea Combined Mess provided fluted champagne glasses and the traditional bubbles.

The day was then concluded, in a more civilised way, with a Change of Command event, to formalise the handover from SQNLDR Budd to SQNLDR Ben Stephens—the new OC PTS. Our format was a semi-formal luncheon which was held in the Ohakea Officers’ Mess. In attendance were a total of 50 Squadron personnel, engineering staff, and invited guests—including the wives of the two guests of honour, and OC488WG. Ohakea catering staff served a wonderful three course meal.

CO Flying Training, WGCDR Beaton, presided over the occasion. He reflected on SQNLDR Budd’s time at PTS and the legacy which would be left for SQNLDR Stephens to maintain. The change of command for any unit is a very important occasion and SQNLDR Stephens readily accepted his new command when the OC PTS Pennant was ceremonially handed over.

An impressive artwork hand-drawn by CPL Possum (from the Flying Clothing Bay at PTS) of a CT4-E Airtrainer flown by SQNLDR Budd during his Red Checkers’ days, was presented by COFT on behalf of the Squadron, acknowledging SQNLDR Budd’s leadership and contribution to Flying Training.

As well the luncheon was an opportunity to say farewell to, and recognise the input of, the QFIs: FLTLT’s Kemeys, Sanson and Walls, who were also leaving the Squadron.

A big thank you goes out to Mr Andy Joyce and his catering team at the Ohakea Officers Mess for providing a meal to match the occasion, and to the 13/01 Pilots Course for assisting with the many necessary arrangements required for the day. It was a great way to end another busy week at PTS.
They say that rainfall represents a blessing, in which case the change of command for No. 6 Sqn was thoroughly blessed—as Auckland turned on heavy rain for the Squadron’s ceremony. Over 40 Naval and Air Force personnel, who together make up the Squadron, paraded in front of three Seasprite helicopters while rain drummed on the hangar roof.

The Chief of Air Force and Chief of Navy were in attendance for the ceremony, along with friends and family of the outgoing and incoming Commanding Officers. The ceremony combined RNZAF and naval traditions and began as CDR James Tayler was ‘piped’ into the hangar to the shrill whistle of the traditional naval Bosun’s Call. CDR Tayler then undertook his last inspection of the Squadron personnel, before the formal handover ceremony began.

GPCAPT Kevin McEvoy, the OC of 485Wing, said that No. 6 Sqn was the exemplar of joint operational excellence, and pointed out that CDR James Tayler had 3½ years in command and had championed the Squadron and its people throughout this time.

The Chief of Navy remarked that ‘it is no secret that I am a big fan of naval aviation’—when he first joined the Navy it was the small ‘Wasp’ helicopter that operated from the frigates; today it is the ‘extraordinarily capable’ Seasprite.

CN noted that the new CO has the challenge of leading a unit that is in the forefront of tomorrow’s NZDF.

In his farewell remarks CDR Tayler said that he had, a long time back, heard that the Seasprite was described as ‘a lemon’, but he said, proudly, ‘We have proved them wrong’. It was in large part because of how well the Squadron has operated the current Seasprites, he commented, that the decision to purchase the more-capable SH-2G (I) version has been made.

On formally handing over command, CDR Tayler added a helicopter pilot’s twist to the naval tradition: instead of saying ‘You have the ship’ he said to CDR Brendon Clark, ‘You have control’—the command used in the cockpit when one pilot takes the controls from another.

On taking command, CDR Clark said that he recognised the importance of family and whanau to support the Squadron members, the need to be ‘can do’ for achieving their tasks—but within the bounds of air worthiness and safety—and that with the new SH-2G(I) acquisition project, that they would all be facing big challenges.

‘With the Squadron’s focus on standards and practices, No. 6 Sqn is now acknowledged as being at the forefront of positive change. Many ideas generated at No. 6 Sqn are now implemented right across the Air Force.

‘[While] going to sea comes naturally to sailors, the challenges for Air Force people thrust into the ship-board environment are immense. To your credit, every Flight has embraced the opportunity and kept the helicopters operating at sea, often under significantly trying conditions.

‘This is jointery at its best and everyone who is or has been involved with the operation of helicopters off RNZN ships, should be immensely proud of what you have achieved and what you have contributed to our Defence Force.”

The new Commanding Officer, CDR Brendon Clark presents CDR Tayler with a framed memento of his time in command.
When HMNZS TE MANA returned to Auckland on 13 June, CPL David Matthews was welcomed home by Melissa Hartwick.

A delegation from the Peoples’ Liberation Army (Air Force) of China visited NZ in mid-March and among other things were shown through the Helicopter Transition Unit at Ohakea, by WGCDR Shaun Sexton (standing, centre).

PLTOFF Emma Nichols is presented with her commissioning parchment by the CO 230 Sqn, WGCDR Glenn Gowthorpe.

CDR James Tayler with his son Daniel, who is trying to get his aircrew rest, at the No. 6 Sqn change of command ceremony (see also p.19).

Former HCM Ati Wynyard now works with the Auckland Rescue Helicopter; at the No. 6 Sqn change of command he talked with Seasprite pilot LT Alex Trotter.

MAJGEN Tim Keating, VCDF, and the NZDF Artist CAPT Matt Gaudie stand with Jamie Hawley of Christchurch, who was a prize winner for Operation Anzac Spirit school art competition. Jamie subsequently visited Ohakea as her prize (more of that visit next issue).

When HMNZS TE MANA returned to Auckland on 13 June, CPL David Matthews was welcomed home by Melissa Hartwick.
F/S Fabian McQueen is to undertake ‘The Ride to Conquer Cancer,’ a 200+km cycling journey to benefit the Cancer Society Auckland. He has to raise a minimum of $2,500 to be able to ride. 100% of the money goes immediately to the Cancer Society for research. To support Fabian, go to www.conquercancer.org.nz

Ex ROKKIWI has seen an RNZAF P-3K2 deploy to South Korea. Here, LT Song from the ROK Navy gives the NZ contingent a tour of the base.

A Seasprite helicopter from TE KAHĀ Flight of No 6 Sqn thrilled the pupils of Gulf Harbour Primary School at Whangaparaoa on 18 June. F/S Paul Hunter, Helicopter Crewman, the school Principal John Petrie, LT Benny Melville, Pilot and LT Hamish Liddy, Observer, addressed the students. Said one mother afterwards: “Pirates are so last month, Navy helicopters are now in at our house!”

CPL Mike Taylor (from No. 209 Sqn Air Movements) helped deliver a fire engine to Chuuk, Federated States of Micronesia (see feature, page 9). Here a crowd of local children join him in taking a close look at the fire engine.

CPL Alice-Rose Gent unloading the maintenance pack up for the No.5 Sqn P-3 in South Korea last month.

Children of the Feilding Playcentre try out an A109 helicopter during a visit to HTU in mid-March.
On Friday 14 June, the New Zealand Division of the Royal Aeronautical Society held its annual Awards Dinner, recognising excellence across all sectors of the NZ aviation world. Four of the awards were to people and one unit of the RNZAF.

**The Kestrel Trophy**

In 2012, the New Zealand Division of the Royal Aeronautical Society presented the RNZAF with a new trophy, the Kestrel Trophy. It was given to mark the RNZAF’s 75th anniversary and in recognition of the close association between the RNZAF and the Royal Aeronautical Society. It is to be awarded, annually, “to the RNZAF unit adjudged the most excellent”.

This year is the first time that the new trophy has been presented—the trophy was awarded to No. 40 Squadron. The RAeS citation stated:

- The contribution that No. 40 Sqn has provided to NZDF outputs and to the NZ government is extensive and varied. In the true spirit of ‘To the four winds’, No. 40 Sqn has been successful in maintaining a safe and effective role with of its fleet of aircraft. Over the past year, the Squadron has provided support in areas such as disaster relief, repatriation of personnel, VIP tasks in support of the ‘New Zealand Incorporated’, Operation ‘Ice Cube’ Antarctica support, operations in Timor-Leste and the Solomon Islands and normal exercise and NZDF support, while also training new crew and carrying out Operational Test and Evaluation of their upgraded aircraft.
- Of particular note this year, was the continued support for NZDF operations in Afghanistan, culminating in a successful withdrawal of the Provincial Reconstruction Team. In addition, the Squadron provided VIP support for the Prince of Wales’ Royal Tour throughout the country.
- No. 40 Sqn has contributed to NZDF outputs and more, overcoming the challenge of limited aircraft availability due to the continuing upgrade programmes. This has led to all personnel on the Squadron undertaking long hours both in NZ or when deployed, to provide the capability to meet the outcomes the NZ government has asked of it.
The Michael J Neville/Boeing Aeroplane Company Award was established as a memorial to Mike Neville, Company Solicitor at Air New Zealand Ltd, by a donation from The Boeing Airplane Company with whom Mr Neville had many dealings. The award is made to a young person employed in aviation in New Zealand who demonstrates excellence in work ethics, values, application and results, and has the intention of further study. The award takes the form of a special medal, a certificate and a monetary award.

This year the award goes to Leading Aircraftman Callum McPherson, for his exemplary work ethics, passion and highly professional manner in the Armament Trade.

Over the last 12 months LAC McPherson has been asked to take on additional technical and leadership responsibilities that would normally be assumed by a Corporal. He consistently provided dependable technical advice, accurate and effective forward thinking and a much-needed presence in the Ohakea Explosives Storage Area. He has also taken on the training and development of personnel posted into the Explosives Storage Section.

Callum carried out the repacking and preparation for transport of the explosives and associated equipment from the Air Combat Force Disposal Unit. His ability to conduct and co-ordinate multi-agency efforts in a professional manner, with short timelines has resulted in large savings for the RNZAF and the Aircraft Disposal Unit.

Callum has also pursued further education through extramural study, he has completed the National Certificate in Extractive Industries (Land Blasting Using Explosives) and he is planning to undertake further study through the Ohakea Adult Learning Institutes (Land Blasting using Explosives) and he is planning study, he has completed the National Certificate in Extractive Industries (Land Blasting Using Explosives) and he is planning further study through the Ohakea Adult Learning Institute in the field of Aviation Weapons and Explosive Ordnance Disposal.

LAC McPherson is highly respected by both his peers and his superiors for his commitment and devotion to duties and the people around him. He is a worthy recipient of this Award.

Recommended for this award by GPCAPT A J Woods, RNZAF Assistant Chief of Air Force, Strategy Management.

The Ian J Diamond Award is awarded to a young aviation professional wishing to embark on a course of higher academic study leading to a tertiary qualification in an aviation related subject and with the firm intention of participating in New Zealand aviation. The award consists of a monetary grant, a citation and a medal.

SGT Glenn (Jack) Russell joined the RNZAF in 2000 and completed the normal recruit, basic engineering, and avionics mechanic courses. After a period of on-job-training he began avionics technicians training then was selected to undertake the Air Forces Diploma Trainee Scheme.

He graduated from that scheme with the award for best performance in Diploma Electronics, and went onto complete a Bachelor in Engineering Technology at AUT, majoring in Networks and Communication. Later, he completed a Post-graduate Diploma in Engineering; this was achieved in a combination of study and work, balanced to ensure that his contributions to the RNZAF were not lost during his educational development.

Last year he was given approval to study towards his PhD. His study is looking into the use of imaging techniques to search for people in an Urban Search and Rescue situation, where, often, only a small part of an individual may be visible.

He has recently been successful in being selected for Engineering Officer and will be starting his Initial Officer Training Course later this year.

Throughout his career SGT Russell has been an asset to every unit he has served in. This award recognizes his consistent display of academic achievement, high professional standards within the RNZAF Avionics trade grouping and in acknowledgment of his aspiration to continually advance himself in skills and knowledge, while maintaining his contribution to the RNZAF.

SGT Russell was recommended for this award by GPCAPT I J Mower, RNZAF Chief Engineer, Technical Airworthiness Authority, RNZAF.

The George Watt Award for 2012 was presented to SQNLDR Michelle Thomson for her dedication and efforts in developing a more efficient process to ensure the RNZAF’s conformance with Service Bulletins and Airworthiness Directives.

Whilst working in the Boeing Technical Support cell, then FLTTLT Thomson became aware of the challenges in verifying the RNZAF’s conformance with Service Bulletins and Airworthiness Directives released by Boeing and the Federal Aviation Authority. The existing process had created a significant backlog of work so she initiated and led the development of a more efficient process.

She created the ‘Service Document Compliance’ process which was designed around requirements for the RNZAF’s Boeing 757; however, it soon became apparent that the process could be equally applied to most of the RNZAF’s aircraft fleet. As such, it is now utilised across the Air Force creating significant efficiency gains.

Through dedication and diligence, SQNLDR Thomson has made an enduring impact within the RNZAF Engineering branch. Michelle now works as the Certification Manager for the P-3K2 aircraft continuing to bring the aircraft into service and towards type certification.

Recommended for this award by GPCAPT I J Mower, RNZAF Chief Engineer, Technical Airworthiness Authority, RNZAF.
The NZDF Women’s Development Steering Group extended an invitation to 200 personnel to attend the second NZDF Women’s Development Forum (WDF) which was held at Trentham Racecourse on 6–7 June. Included in this were female representatives from the Navy, Army, Air Force and civilian staff.

For the first time since the inception of the NZDF WDF, thirty males were chosen to attend—to ostensibly ‘influence and educate’ our male colleagues. This meant males formed 15% of the Forum, which is remarkably similar to the representation of women in the NZDF. Obviously not done accidentally, that percentage representation did make for some interesting observations among us males of what our women must encounter.

My first observation was how uncomfortable it feels being in such a disparate environment. This was made patently obvious at the ‘Meet and Greet’ when groups of males formed, rather than engage with the women!

A later activity, of presenting our focus groups’ findings, had me experience what women might possibly feel when presenting predominately to the opposite sex. After 26 years of experience of presenting within the RNZAF, and as an extroverted personality who normally is comfortable speaking in public, I felt suddenly very conspicuous.

Both of these impressions were powerful, when viewed in the context that women in the NZDF face these basic challenges and more daily.

It’s important to remember, that female entrants come from our general population of which 51% are female, where equal representation is usual; they come to a military world where they do not have equal representation. If the women joining us come from tertiary institutions, they will have been used to forming 60% of the graduate population.

This is not a criticism of males, or of the organisation; just a realisation that we as a Defence Force are not attracting, or retaining, a high-performing segment of New Zealanders. Thus we in the NZDF are, on simple numbers, inhibiting diversity.

Those of us who have been deployed on operations will understand that our success has largely come from our diversity. Peoples of Timor-Leste, Bougainville and Papua New Guinea, and Afghanistan, for example, have witnessed men and women of the NZDF who have European, Māori, Pacific Island, Asian and Indian heritage. They have seen how well we work together, and we have experienced how these groups each bring different ideas to the table, enabling success.

Unfortunately the lack of diversity has caused suspicion when groups such as the WDF arise, an impression I have encountered since returning from this Forum when my counterparts ask about my time there.

To us males, you may be just as surprised that a majority of women feel the same way, not wanting to be identified for their difference but striving for acceptance and success based on their individual merit.

Having a WDF is about supporting our women to have an equal opportunity for success within the military, to meaningfully contribute to the success of the NZDF, and to promote the NZDF as a leading organisation worthy of the contribution women can bring. In achieving this, NZDF women want to meet or exceed existing justifiable standards in striving
Kim Schmack,
NZDF ANTI-HARASSMENT ADVISOR

• What does an AHA do?
The role of an AHA is to provide independent and confidential advice to personnel seeking help and support on a harassment or discrimination matter.

• The 0800 Anti-Harassment Helpline?
The 0800 helpline provides complete anonymity and is often the first touch point for personnel wanting to confirm if an incident constitutes harassment or discrimination. It is our role to empower the caller with the knowledge of the available options and to give them the confidence to seek the course of action that is right for them.

• Do you need any training for the role?
Yes an AHA is required to complete AHA training and refresher courses to keep them current.

• What attributes does it take to be an AHA?
First and foremost to be a good listener and remain neutral. You need to be able to step back and provide practical unbiased guidance and support. It is also important to follow up to ensure that any matters are resolved in a satisfactory manner for the caller or complainant.

• How did you get into the role?
When I was posted to HQ JFNZ in 2001 I completed AHA Training with my Manager who went on to become an 0800 Anti-Harassment Helpline Advisor. He found it a worthwhile and rewarding experience and encouraged me to take up the role.

• Are you ex-military?
If so, what did you do in the military? If not, what’s your background?
I am currently employed as a Business Analyst with CIS Branch and previous to this was an administrator in the RNZAF for a number of years.

• Where do you work from?
I work in the greater Wellington region. My current project requires me to be located in Freyberg Building Wellington City however I regularly spend time in Porirua and Trentham.

• Do you work regular hours? Are there AHA available around the clock?
Whist I work regular hours the 0800 phone is manned between 0800 to 2000 at night Monday to Friday. We are rostered on two weeks at a time every three months.

• Being an AHA would seem to be a difficult job. How do you handle the pressure/stress?
I don’t consider the AHA role as a difficult or stressful job. The key is to not become emotionally involved and ensure that you have the necessary resources on hand and your training is up to date.

• What’s the best advice you can offer someone who is being harassed or bullied?
If you have any concerns it is important to seek help quickly. There are many avenues available including the 0800 helpline or a local AHA. You are entitled to a work place that is a professional and safe environment, free from harassment, discrimination or bullying.

Of note the RNZAF has 55 trained AHAs available (as at 30 May) to support our personnel: • 12 in Ohakea, • 20 in Whenuapai, • 6 in Woodbourne • a few based in other sites.

for the best that their career may offer.
The WDF had organised some exceptional people to talk to the audience and give us inspiration. I consider myself richer for the whole experience.

In conclusion I leave you with a Whakatauki, a Māori proverb. (Perhaps this itself is an example of progress, for Māori have encountered similar acceptance issues):
Naku te rourou nau te rourou, ka ora ai te iwi.
With your basket and my basket, the people will live.
Co-operation and the combination of resources are tenets for success.
During the recent the NZ/US Partnership Forum in Washington DC, the RNZAF Band had the opportunity to work with and perform alongside the US Air Force Band. This was a great experience and a great honour for the RNZAF band members. Just visiting the well-appointed USAF Band facility at Bolling Air Force Base was eye-opening!

The combined musicians were led by Major Scott Guidry of the US Air Force Band and myself. We rehearsed the full group prior at the US Air Force Band rooms and then allowed the musicians some time to share and learn about one another’s jobs as military bandsmen. Even more time together was the bonus from an unexpected break-down by our bus, which meant we had to pile on to the US Air Force bus alongside the American musicians.

The combined band performed at the opening of the US-NZ Partnership Forum, held at the US Institute of Peace in Washington, DC [see AFNews 148]. We performed several marches, including the big band classic, In the Mood, the crowd-pleasing Those Magnificent Men and their Flying Machines, and we even got our American friends vocalising in the Māori Battalion March [which is sung to the tune of the Washington and Lee University football song].

The combined event was a hit with the musicians and those attending the evening alike, strengthening our ties through the shared language of music.

“In my estimation,” said Major Guidry after the concert, “nothing symbolizes friendship, commonality and shared purpose quite like musicians performing together.”
Our People

THE AIR FORCE PROMS
The RNZAF Band is now preparing for the Air Force Proms concert in September, which will also feature the RNZAF Māori Cultural Group Te Awhiorangi. The concert will include the numbers that Band and MCG performed together in Washington.

The Proms concert will also be the first big concert for our new Director of Music, FGOFF Simon Brew.

The RNZAF Band has its 2013 CD available:
Royal New Zealand Air Force Band
Cost: $20.00
Contact: Alistair Isdale
HQNZDF
Private Bag 39997
Wellington 5045

CIVIL SKILLS DATA BASE
By LTCOL David De Koning

PLEASE TELL US ABOUT YOUR OTHER HATS.

• Do you speak another language?
• Do you have transferable civilian skills?
• Do you have non-military qualifications?
• Is there anything about you that we need to know?

If you can answer yes to any of these questions we would like to know more about you. Please complete the Civil Skills Database to give us a full picture of your capabilities.

The NZDF knows you as Regular Force, Reserve Force or Defence Civilian. But at another time in your life you may have been a plumber, a programmer, a lawyer or an artist. You may speak other languages or have degrees in interesting fields of study. We would like to learn more about you, so we are asking that you complete the Civil Skills Database. This is your opportunity to tell us about your civil skills, qualifications and experience.

WHY YOU SHOULD COMPLETE THE CIVIL SKILLS DATABASE (CSD)?

You will find that if you fill in the new Database then you may be tasked according to your skills. You could be used in a variety of situations from civil defence to interpreting. If you wish, it could lead to being deployed. More importantly it allows you to be best placed in a tasking.

HOW DOES IT WORK?

Individual personnel are responsible for providing their own information to be entered on to the database. It is not compulsory and it is up to you how much information you provide. The process is simple:

1. Download a copy of the MD 1336 from the documents section of the intranet.
2. Fill out the information requested and rate the skills that you possess from 1 (beginners level) to 4 (professional or formal qualification level).
3. Send the completed MD 1336 to HRSC and they will load the data onto the Civil Skills Database (CSD)

The self-rating system means that you can be honest about your abilities and provide a realistic appraisal of your ability to perform the skills.

WHAT INFORMATION CAN I PUT INTO THE DATABASE?

We want records of both formal qualifications and self-claimed skills. If you have a degree in media studies we want to know who it was granted by and when, but if you were raised in a Tongan-speaking household and are fluent in the language but hold no formal qualification, we want to know about that too.

Just because you don't hold a formal qualification doesn't make you any less skilled or potentially valuable.

As the NZDF approaches its goal of Future 35, we want to be able to get the most out of all our people, and in times of emergency or crisis, it may be those extra skills you have that could be the ones we need. We appreciate your cooperation.
The national Directors of the Air and Space Interoperability Council (ASIC) met at RAAF Glenbrook, east of Sydney on the edge of the Blue Mountains, 6—8 May 2013. The RNZAF was represented by GPCAPT Kevin McEvoy, OC 485 Wing, supported by WGCDR Nigel Cooper, RNZAF representative to the ASIC Management Committee, and myself, RNZAF ASIC National Programme Manager. The National Directors meet annually to provide direction and guidance concerning the improvement of interoperability amongst the five ASIC member air forces; they review the ASIC programme of work and agree new projects.

The National Directors are all keen that ASIC is forward-thinking with its projects. In the present resource-constrained environment, it is essential that ASIC delivers the best possible outcomes efficiently. Our participating Air Forces lack the capacity to address all interoperability issues, so the ASIC effort must be prioritised against high-payoff projects that are achievable.

Further, the National Directors place high priority on developing a strategy for interoperability, that reflects the concerns of the Chiefs of the five Air Forces. An initial draft of the strategy is due by September 2013, with the aim of endorsement by the Chiefs by December.

The following priorities were established to guide the work of the ASIC Working Groups in 2013, pending approval of the ASIC strategy:

- Alternative Fuel Policy and Certification, which is critical in the face of the increasing use of alternate fuels by some member air forces.
- Mutual Airworthiness Recognition and Certification, which has the potential to make certification work more time and cost efficient.
- Simulators and Synthetic Training, which have the potential to reduce significantly the costs of mission rehearsal training and interoperability-related experimentation.

With these priorities in mind, the National Directors agreed five new projects (RNZAF Point of Contact):

- Aeromedical Evacuation (AE) Equipment Certification and Approval for the C-130 (WGCDR Peter Johnson, DAE).
- Hearing Protection (WGCDR Paul Nealis, DMed(F)).
- An Operational Risk Analysis of Aeromedical Evacuation (WGCDR Paul Nealis, DMed(F)).
- Air Deployed Operating Base Counter-CBRN Doctrine (SQNLDR Ivan Green, ADS(PP), HQ RNZAF).
- Tactical Aircraft Security (SQNLDR Peter Cain, OC FP, 209 SQN).

In 2013, WGCDR Cooper’s new-look ASIC website was activated at http://www.airstandards.org/.

The award recognises his initiative and indefatigable application in the concept, design and functionality of the revised ASIC website, resulting in the provision of a powerful and indispensable tool in effecting ASIC’s mandate, the efficient exchange of information and enhancing interoperability amongst the five Air Forces.

For almost 20 years, ASIC maintained a web-based information management system; the functionality of the web site proved increasingly unsuited to ASIC requirements in the 21st Century. User feedback and Management Committee concerns meant a more effective website solution was required urgently.

On his own initiative, WGCDR Cooper designed and championed a new website hosted by the NZDF. The password-controlled ASIC private website went active from the beginning of 2012. The new website provides a professional, welcoming and comprehensive ‘shop front’ for ASIC, at a significant cost saving.

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The National Directors also agreed to cancel 16 projects that are no longer relevant; in addition, all other projects are to be scrutinised in 2013 by the Working Groups—any recommendations for further cancellations will be presented at the National Directors’ Meeting in London in 2014.

By SQNLDR Robert Nash, ASIC National Programme Manager

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PACIFIC PARTNERSHIP is a large, multi-national humanitarian and disaster preparedness exercise currently underway in the South Pacific region. Military personnel and civilian specialists from the US, NZ, Australia, France, Canada, Japan, Malaysia and Singapore are deployed aboard USS PEARL HARBOR.

GPCAPT Darryn Webb is the Deputy Mission Commander; 17 other NZDF team members joined the ship in Samoa, including FLTLT Lara Blackmore and W/O Steve Hunn, key members of the medical detachment.

The ship was alongside in Apia, Samoa, for 10 days while the staff on board undertook tasks, training and relationship-building with Samoa’s government, health and educational authorities to provide supplies and support.

At Tonga, the ship was anchored off, using its LCM to deliver personnel ashore. As AFNews went to press the PEARL HARBOR was preparing for the next phase, and to be joined by HMSNzs CANTERBURY in the Solomon Islands.
In mid-April students of the Otematea Aviation Academy visited Base Auckland. It was the last day of their school term when they came to spend the day as guests of the RNZAF.

The aim of the Academy is to develop the students into sought-after young people when they leave school and apply for employment. The Academy works by introducing the students to aviation construction and maintenance and the rigorous application of aviation standards. The students meet once a week for three years to work on their projects.

As a result of the RNZAF attendance to the official opening of the Academy at the high school last year [see AFNews 144 January 2013] an invitation was made for the Academy group to visit the Base.

Paul Morrison, the Director, said:

“A full day was spent looking at almost every part of the Base. From the parachute section, to the weapon area, the No. 6 Squadron helicopters, to the main hangars where the C-130 Hercules and the P-3 Orion aircraft were undergoing service work.

“Each Academy member was given the opportunity to see the many career pathways available to them and had many opportunities to talk with RNZAF personnel about what was happening in each area. Our members were able to recognize work being carried out at the Base as being similar to what they are doing at the Academy, albeit on a very much different scale!

“One of the many highlights was the mid-day meal, after which two young Air Force personnel gave a most interesting talk about their careers so far. This stimulated a great number of in-depth questions from the group.

There was a very positive response from everyone to the information that was so freely shared by all the section leaders. A special thanks must go to W/O Mark Harwood, the Section Leaders and all the other Air Force staff we met, for they all made us feel so welcome.”

From my point of view, the enthusiasm and excitement of these students was clear. The next step in this continuing relationship with the school, is to organise a couple of smaller group visits who will stay on Base for a few days and embed themselves in the daily routine of some of our technical units and squadrons. The Aviation Academy has now received a further invitation which will see all twelve members spend a week on the Base as a pre-recruitment course and so gain further insights to Service life.
THE ORIGIN OF THE ACADEMY

By Paul Morrison, Director

At the start of 2002, when I was the Head of Technology at Otamatea High School, Maungaturoto, I asked eight students in Year 11 if they would like to join a new activity group for the next three years. All said ‘Yes’ even without knowing what it was they were entering into. That was the start of a journey that has spanned ten years and has given me the greatest sense of achievement in the whole of my teaching career.

I had purchased a set of plans from the USA for a replica Super Cub. For the next three years the group met on a Wednesday afternoons and worked on the construction of the wings, fuselage and tail group. This took place in a very small room attached to the engineering workshop. Every part of the aircraft had to be crafted by the students, from the seat to the complete undercarriage. I took three of the students to Flightline Aviation at Ardmore, and together we zero-timed the C-85-12 engine.

The completed aircraft was transported to Springhill Airfield, Wellsford, and the final assembly took place. A couple of taxi trials and after a full CAA inspection a certificate was issued for a Class 2 Microlight. The test flight was carried out in September 2011—and what an exciting time that was!

The start of the 2012-year has seen the completion of a new dedicated building on the school grounds and the start of a new aircraft building project—a CA-18 Cubflyer, PT-002, a wooden full-size replica of the Piper PA-18. It will also be a Class 2 Microlight.

The Academy has twelve students and is operating for a full day each week for the next three years. The level of excitement is very high and the support of family, friends and friends in Industry is amazing. The aim of our Academy is to develop the students into the most sought after young people ready for employment. It is proposed to start a second intake of students in two years time with an overlap of twelve months.

W/O PAUL BATES
—COMMAND WARRANT OFFICER, DIRECTORATE OF ENGINEERING AND TECHNICAL AIRWORTHINESS

An appropriate verb for the role of CWO DETA using our Air Power vernacular, is reach. Within the Directorate my role covers:

- Directorate of Aeronautical Engineering (DAE)
- Directorate of Technical Airworthiness Regulations (DTAR)
- Directorate of Project Engineering and Certification (DPEC) and
- Directorate of Continuing Airworthiness Management (DCAM)—both at Base Auckland and Base Ohakea.

Additionally I look into every facet of our Technical Airworthiness framework, which enables maintenance support of our military air operations.

The role is part of the new CWO framework implemented in 2012 and my position is to provide a strategic airman’s perspective to GPCAPT Ian Mower’s command team. GPCAPT Mower is the Technical Airworthiness Authority and the RNZAF Chief Engineer (TAA and CENG).

I enlisted in 1985 in the Aircraft trade and have worked on Nos. 3, 5, 40 and 75 Squadrons, in multiple logistic support elements, as well as having a DASH posting at 485 Wing. I continue to have an interest in Aviation Safety and remain involved with the RNZAF Mentoring Scheme.

Career highlights thus far have been Senior Maintenance Rating (SMR) onboard HMNZS TE KAHA with the first SH-2G deployed operationally in 2002/03 for Operation ENDURING FREEDOM and more recently as the No.5 Sqn Maintenance W/O.

I also had several roles with Auckland’s Big Night Out events organisation in the past (although lacking any real musical ability myself). It was great fun with some truly exceptional people to work alongside, both RNZAF personnel and some of NZ’s best artists.

I have attained two tertiary qualifications in management and business disciplines, plus a gained wide variety of service courses and qualifications.

My current programme of work includes the implementation of the Human Factors in Maintenance (HFIM) Strategy. Other work includes a supervision development framework and a strategic review of required technical trades competencies needed as we move toward Future 35.
This month it is 72 years since SGT Jimmy Ward RNZAF undertook an act of such determined courage in the air that he was awarded the Victoria Cross. His courage is remembered annually at the RNZAF Base Woodbourne W/Os and SNCO’s Mess, as well as in Whanganui, his home town, and by the No. 75 Sqn Association. But this year his courage was also highlighted by a Whangarei school girl, who won the prestigious ANZ RSA Cyril Bassett VC national speech competition with the following speech about Ward’s life, and what it means to her as a Kiwi teenager, today.

By Rachel Boyd, Whangarei

This year, 2013, I am considered a big kid: my 18th year of life, my 13th year of school. And now the adults around me are stepping back, giving me a backpack of responsibility, and letting me test my own wings.

I am terrified, and excited, for the decisions I’ll make—the ideas of university, or independent travel overseas, for example. But little do most of my peers experiencing the same as me realise is that just 74 years ago hundreds of men and women around the ages of 18 or 19 or even younger underwent huge responsibility changes too, but not quite with the same prospects as we do.

These young men and women weren’t deciding if their duvet spread matched their curtains, they were deciding whether or not to stand up and fight for New Zealand, in a country miles away from home, where life and death wasn’t a sure thing each day.

Before July 2nd, 1940, just under 2 km away from where we sit today [at the National War Memorial] James Allen Ward was about to make a decision that would affect the rest of his life. It was a Tuesday in Wellington when 21 year-old James left his teaching position at Wellington College and enlisted in the RNZAF. Growing up in Whanganui, James, nicknamed Jimmy, aspired to be a school teacher and never would have dreamed that his teaching career would be cut short in order for him to become a renowned pilot in WWII.

After five months of training, James, at 22 years of age, sailed off to Scotland. A further seven months into the war, James performed a selfless and courageous deed that saved the lives of half a dozen men on the same plane as he. It was the night of July 7th 1941, James co-piloted a bomber plane away from Munster, they were smoothly flying when suddenly an enemy plane shot at them from the right—with quick thinking the enemy plane was shot down and relief spread through the crew. However this relief was cut short as James realised that a fire had broken out near the starboard engine. Petrol was leaking from a split pipe, fuelling the flames. The fire was growing quickly and the crew made strenuous effort to put it out using extinguishers and even the left-over coffee in their flasks, but the hungry fire continued to eat its way toward the right wing, threatening to destroy it, and hence the entire bomber and its crew.

As the crew were preparing to abandon the aircraft, James stood up and bravely volunteered to climb outside and attempt to smother the flames. Risking his life for his crew, James at first refused to even take a safety parachute, in case the wind resistance was too much. He tied a rope around his waist, climbed out the narrow astro-hatch and began his journey toward the fire. The wind pressure was so immense he was forced to claw his way through the fabric, making hand and footholds where needed, James managed to climb two metres along the side of the plane, 13,000 feet above the ground, to the fire, which he smothered with a canvas cover. Then he made his perilous journey back toward the cockpit, knowing full well that the petrol leak could catch and send the fire toward him.
Rachel’s prize included joining the New Zealand official contingent attending the Anzac Day ceremonies at Gallipoli.

GALLIPOLI 2013

My time in Turkey was just simply amazing; who would have guessed that a girl from Whangarei like me would be sitting next to ambassadors and generals!

The Turkish people were so friendly, especially toward Kiwis, Australians (and any natural blondes!) even when they didn’t speak a word of English.

We had the opportunity to go through the historic battlefields—as I walked through the rows upon rows of graves we laid poppies, and mourned as we read the inscriptions; tears were frequent.

On the 24th we watched the very colourful Turkish commemorative service, before we went to ANZAC Cove to witness the reflection service. This service was the lead-up to our actual Dawn service. It was my moment to shine at 4am; in front of about 6000 people I spoke about what ANZAC meant to me.

I was, surprisingly, not nervous considering I had thousands of people listening to me live, and millions watching on TV ... the camera flashes were blinding. After, I felt very proud as many people stopped me, asking for photos and telling me how proud they were.

I feel so honoured to have represented NZ youth in commemorating our Anzacs. It is something impossible to forget and I will be forever grateful.

Before sailing for Britain, Sgt Fraser Barron and Sgt Ward walk out with Barron’s sister Patsy, in Auckland.

Rachel Boyd looks on as Sgt Rebecca Dymock lays poppies on her great great uncle Martin Perrson’s grave at Chunuk Bair.

We sit here today, in our beautiful country, as proud and loyal New Zealanders. We may be a small country but when our big brother Britain called for us in their time of need, every single New Zealander sacrificed their own needs in order to stand up and fight for our country. The war was heart-breaking and brutal, but it shaped our country’s heritage. And I can say that even three generations later, I am still moved to tears by it.

This year, 2013, I’m growing up. My 18th year of life. My 13th year of school. And this year I can say how thankful I am to those airmen, sailors and soldiers who made my future possible, abundant with potential opportunities. This year I am even prouder to call myself a New Zealander and I stand indebted to those men and women, those fallen, and those still standing proud today and I can truly say, “We will remember them”.

I am filled with gratitude to every single New Zealander who contributed in any war. No matter who they were, nothing they did was a small deed, they were all courageous and true heroes and my heart overflows with pride for them.

Our Heritage

At any moment. But, because of James, the bomber landed safely, and all those aboard walked off alive.

Imagine how you’d feel being aboard that plane, certain that it was going to explode, then making a safe landing, because of James. Imagine how thankful you and the rest of the crew would be to him. But Sergeant Ward just shrugged it off with the New Zealand attitude of ‘no biggie’.

Life went on for James until he was summoned to 10 Downing Street by Winston Churchill himself. The New Zealander was dumb-struck with awe and

stuttered through Churchill’s questions after he was awarded the highest military decoration— the Victoria Cross. He was a very shy man, and Churchill eventually broke the formalities and regarded James with some commiseration saying, “You must feel humble and awkward in my presence?”

James managed, “Yes, Sir”...

“Then you can imagine how humble and awkward I feel in yours,” replied Churchill.

Worthy of the highest honour, James Allen Ward left 10 Downing Street and rejoined his squadron, with gratitude under his belt and bashfulness in his smile. But just two months after James’ heroic deed, he was killed in action when his bomber was hit, caught fire, and crashed.

This noble man’s tragic death was just one of over 60 million in World War 2. As I sat researching about James Ward and many other war heroes, I came across a website that was a war death data-base; I typed in New Zealand and watched as thousands of names grew upon my screen. 19 years old, 20, 21, 25, 26, 29 ... and most of them killed before their 30th birthday. I sat in silence as tears rolled down my cheeks.

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I feel so honoured to have represented NZ youth in commemorating our Anzacs. It is something impossible to forget and I will be forever grateful.

Our Heritage
AN ALL-TOO-BRIEF
AIR FORCE CAREER

Jimmy Ward was born in Whanganui, attended Wanganui Technical College, trained as a teacher at the Wellington College of Education then taught, until enlisting in the RNZAF.
- RNZAF Station Taieri Course 3A, flying Tiger Moths.
- RNZAF Station Whiteman, No. 1 FTS, with Fairey Gordon biplanes and Airspeed Oxfords.
- Gained his Wings in December 1940
- Promoted to Sergeant Pilot in January 1941.
- On 29 January 1941 sailed overseas.
- March 1941: posted to No. 20 Operational Training Unit at Lossiemouth, Scotland. Converted to the Vickers Wellington.
- 22 June 1941 joined No. 75 (NZ) Sqn at RAF Feltwell. Jimmy Ward’s first 6 trips were as a Second Pilot, before he was cleared to command an aircraft. It was his sixth mission when the Wellington (AA-R) was hit and he won his VC.
On Ward’s 11th sortie, 15 September 1941—his fifth as crew captain—his bomber was hit by flak over Hamburg, caught fire and crashed; one of two bombers lost by No. 75 Sqn that night. Ward and two others of his crew were killed in action, but two of the crew survived and became prisoners of war. Jimmy Ward is buried at Commonwealth War Grave Cemetery Ohlsdorf, Hamburg.

The Victoria Cross was presented to James’ brother by the Governor-General at Government House, Wellington on 16 October 1942.

On 3 March 2006, Ward’s VC and other service medals which previously had been in the custody of the RNZAF, were returned to his family (in accordance with Ward’s will). The medals are now on display at the Auckland War Memorial Museum.
On 18 November 2004, the hall at Wellington College of Education was renamed the ‘Ward VC Hall’ (now part of Victoria University). The assembly hall at Wanganui City College (formerly Wanganui Technical College), is also named after him. On 14 May 2011, the community centre at RAF Feltwell was dedicated in his memory.

OBJECT OF THE MONTH
By Michelle Sim, Archives Technician

1982/075.8 - MENU AUTOGRAPHED BY SERGEANT JAMES ALLEN WARD VC

This menu was specially printed for a dinner held by No. 75 (NZ) Squadron at RAF Feltwell on 7 August 1941, to celebrate the approval of the award of the Victoria Cross to Sergeant James (“Jimmy”) Ward. The menu was souvenired by New Zealander SGT Allan Box DFM, the rear gunner in Ward’s crew on the night of his VC-winning act, 7/8 July 1941. SGT Box (19-years old) shot down the German Me110 night-fighter whose attack led to Ward’s bravery, and he was awarded the Distinguished Flying Medal for his efforts. The front of the menu is personally signed by J.A. Ward VC, while the reverse contains the autographs of his fellow crew members, including Box.
On 02 June in Auckland, 13 Bomber Command veterans were presented with the new Bomber Command Clasp, one of two new campaign awards, recognising service in WWII. Earlier this year, the UK Minister for Defence Personnel, Welfare and Veterans had announced that the Arctic Star and the Bomber Command Clasp were approved for veterans of those campaigns.

This decision followed an independent medal review in Britain and that those two very significant campaigns of WWII should be recognised. Her Majesty The Queen has approved the new awards.

The Arctic Star is based on the other WWII Campaign Stars, while the Bomber Command Clasp is to be worn on the ribbon of the 1939 – 45 Star, like the Battle of Britain Clasp.

The qualifying period for the Arctic Star is one day, one sortie or more, north of the Arctic Circle (66º 32’ N) recognising the particular severity of the conditions experienced by those who served in the Arctic between 3 September 1939 to 8 May 1945, inclusive. Whilst the primary intent is to recognise those who served on the Arctic Convoys, eligibility is extended to include all who served north of the Arctic Circle in WWII, including members of all three Services as well as the Merchant Navy who crewed the ships taking the vital supplies to Russia.

Aircrew of the Royal Air Force will be eligible if they landed north of the Arctic Circle or served in the air over this area. Note: this may include some Bomber Command crews as well as some from Coastal Command. Non-aircrew on operational service in the area, for example ground crew or those sailing with Catapult Aircraft Merchant (CAM) Ships are also eligible. Fleet Air Arm Personnel, not qualified by sea service may qualify under the conditions applying to the Royal Air Force.

Examples of air operations in the Arctic are: the Fleet Air Arm operations in Northern Norway and Greenland, the Narvik Raid, the Bomber Command and Coastal Command raids against the SCHARNHORST and TIRPITZ.

Foreign nationals commissioned or enlisted into British or the, then, Dominion Forces (e.g. RNZN, RNZAF) are eligible provided the individuals did not receive a similar award from their own Government.

The criteria for the Bomber Command Clasp generally requires prior qualification for the 1939 – 45 Star, to which it will be affixed, with the additional requirement to have flown at least one operational sortie with a Bomber Command operational unit.

A clasp for Bomber Command was deemed appropriate as aircrew had already received either the Aircrew Europe Star or the France and Germany Star.

The Clasp is granted to the aircrew of Bomber Command who served for at least sixty days, or completed a tour of operations, while posted to a Bomber Command operational unit and flew at least one operational sortie on a Bomber Command operational unit from the 3rd September, 1939, to the 8th May, 1945, inclusive.

Eligibility is extended to those members of Bomber Command aircrew who did not meet the qualifying criteria due to service being brought to an end by death, wounds or other disability due to service, service marked by a gallantry award or taken as a prisoner of war.

Foreign nationals commissioned or enlisted into British or the, then, Dominion Air Forces (e.g. RNZAF, RCAF, RAAF) are eligible provided the individuals did not receive a similar award from their own Government.
IRONMAN—MY FIRST TRIATHLON

By SGT Kate Staunton, Air Load Master, 40 Sqn

“Kate Staunton from Hobsonville, you are an Ironman! And you did it all by yourself!”

Those were the words yelled out by Mike Reilly—and backed up by Journey’s song Don’t Stop Believing—that met me at the finish line of my first ever Triathlon, the Taupo Ironman which took place last March [see also AFN 147 May].

My journey to that achievement was a challenging one. Eight months before, I was posted to the Boeing 757 Flight, to fill an Air Load Master vacancy. This in turn made it difficult to commit to smaller triathlon events to fully prepare for the Taupo one.

We then experienced the Hobsonville Tornado last December, which arrived the afternoon I was due to participate in a half Ironman. The tornado made our house (alongside many others in Hobsonville) uninhabitable, and caused me to seriously start doubting whether I should continue.

My coach, Jon Ackland at Performance Labs in Birkenhead, had tailored a training programme which enabled me to manage all the variables and keep on track. He and his team were so positive all the time, but slowly the pressures and expectations I felt began adding to my ‘Ironman demons’. I had to keep on track. I had to remember why I wanted to do this, and it was because I wanted to do this. It’s a tough mental game, the Ironman.

The event was unbelievable. The build-up, the opening night dinner, the speeches from the professional Ironmen, Taupo’s welcome, and the race set-up—I had never been to anything like it before!

To swim 3.8kms, then attack a 180km bike ride, followed by a 42.2km run seems pretty scary. I was alongside a great team of other Air Force personnel who, to me, were well-conditioned and inspirational. Intimidating? Might have been to a newbie, but the support and advice they gave me was wonderful; I am very thankful to every one of them!

One Ironman told me ‘I remember my first Ironman, I cried partway through when I saw my Mum and Dad; I was lucky to have my sister there to push me through and get me back on my way.’ A low point? This all seemed rather strange to me.

The magnitude of the event hadn’t quite hit me, until the morning when nearly 1400 of us made our way to the water. Of that number, 93% of us would finish the event, some nearly at midnight—what a day was ahead of us. The weather was exceptional—the lake was calm, the sun shone throughout and the night was still with starry skies.

You can’t think about the race all as one—you have to break it down. The support stations on the bike were 15kms apart, and every 2.5kms for the run. It was with only 15kms to go on the run that I began to realise the magnitude of what I had nearly achieved, but also when I had the realisation of how far I still had to go. That was my real ‘low point’. I finished in 14 hours 39 minutes, eighth in our RNZAF team. They say half the challenge of Ironman is getting to the start line. Mike Reilly told me “You did it all by yourself,” but there is no way in the world I would have made it to that finish line without the ongoing support and encouragement of my coach, my fellow Ironmen, Destry, my family and the ‘Ultimate Support Crew’. So a huge thank-you to everyone who made the day so special and rewarding.

For anyone contemplating doing an Ironman, I say ‘Go for it!’ If it scares you, go along and support the event first. Watch the last of those competitors come over the line close to midnight, but then being handed their medals by the likes of Bevan Docherty, Meredith Kessler or Terenzo Bozzone (previous winners and pros). In what other sport would you ever witness such sportsmanship—it’s outstanding and truly unforgettable.

Ironman was one of the most challenging, but rewarding, days of my life.
In early June, Ohakea hosted the annual Inter-Base basketball tournament with representative teams from Bases Auckland, Ohakea, Woodbourne, and from HQ in Wellington.

Pool play in the Women’s competition pool saw early success for the Ohakea Pirates, but on Day 2 the Auckland Vikings came storming back, and the Woodbourne Warlords also gave themselves a chance to get through to the finals.

In the end it was the Vikings and Pirates who made the final. A very close game throughout—the supporters from both sides make so much noise that it was impossible to hear the shot clock buzzer! In the final quarter Auckland managed to gain a 9-point lead, but Ohakea came storming back, so there was only a basket in it with a couple of minutes to go. Auckland dug deep with two quick baskets to secure the championship 44-39.

In the Men’s competition the Vikings from Auckland suffered an uncharacteristic loss in the semi-finals to the plucky Woodbourne Warlords.

This saw the Warlords pitted against the Ohakea Pirates for the final. Ohakea started fast and for most of the first three quarters they would creep out to a 5 point lead only to have Woodbourne close up on them again. Going into the fourth quarter, however, the Pirates poured on the intensity with their fitness, fastbreaks and strong defence. An unanswered run of three 3-pointers and a series of ‘fast breaks’ overwhelmed the brave Woodbourne effort—Ohakea claimed the Men’s championship 80-57.

Mention must go of the outstanding effort by Base Ohakea in their hosting of the tournament. Their decoration of the Base institute with a giant pirate ship, and the final night pirate banquet, complete with ‘parrot drumsticks’, added an extra element of fun with all bases adopting their own themes.

Congratulations to all the prize winners and to the personnel selected to represent the Air Force at the Inter-Service tournament which was to be held as AF News goes to press, at HMNZS PHILOMEL 02-04 July.

**INTER-BASE BASKETBALL 2013**

By WGC DR Jackie Ward, DPE, HQNZDF

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<td><strong>MVP</strong></td>
<td>CPL Scot Robinson - Ohakea</td>
<td>AC Kelly West - Ohakea</td>
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<td><strong>SPORTSMANSHIP TROPHY</strong></td>
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<td><strong>ROOKIE OF THE TOURNAMENT</strong></td>
<td>AC Jeremy Glasier - Ohakea</td>
<td>AC Nikki Mossman - Ohakea</td>
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<td><strong>MOST IMPROVED PLAYER</strong></td>
<td>CPL Aaron Smith - Auckland</td>
<td>LAC G. Ona - Woodbourne</td>
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**MEN’S SQUAD**

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**WOMEN’S SQUAD**

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Air Force News 37
The Wellington bomber was the most important British-built bomber of WWII—over 11,000 were built. The largely New Zealand-manned No 75 (NZ) Sqn was equipped with Wellingtons from 1939 – October 1942, until it re-equipped with 4-engined Stirlings.

The Wellington, however, is important to New Zealand as it was the aircraft ordered in 1938 to equip our NZ-based striking force. GPCAPT the hon Ralph Cochrane was the independent RNZAF’s first Chief of Air Staff, and he saw the Air Force’s role as:

- defence of NZ territory, including our outlying islands,
- protection of trade (shipping)
- defence of bases and lines of communication for the main British forces in the ‘Far East’ [i.e. lines of communication to Singapore] and,
- air assistance to the defence of the UK and its communications.

Thus Cochrane recommended an aircraft that could patrol out to sea and carry sufficient bombs to cripple an enemy surface raider, but also, if necessary, stage via Australia to Singapore, the Empire’s main base in the region.

He recommended New Zealand purchase 30 Wellingtons, then the latest and best of the new bombers. They were to equip two squadrons, one each at the new RNZAF stations of Whenuapai and Ohakea, with 6 aircraft to be held in reserve. The Government agreed and 30 Wellington Mk 1s were built for New Zealand during 1939. That purchase showed our government’s willingness to equip the RNZAF with first-class aircraft appropriate to our region.

RNZAF aircrew were sent to the UK to fly the new bombers to New Zealand, but the War broke out in September. Our government, recognising the immediacy of the Nazi threat to the UK, offered the New Zealand aircraft and crews for operations in the UK; they became the New Zealand Flight, then in April 1940 became the nucleus of No.75 (NZ) Squadron RAF.

Meanwhile the Wellington itself was quickly being improved; the Vickers gun turrets were replaced with better turrets and the tail turret adapted to hold four 0.303 machine guns. More powerful engines were installed and by 1942 the Mk III was in service; it quickly became the mainstay of Bomber Command.

Bomber Command’s last front-line Wellingtons were replaced during 1943, but the ‘Wimpey’ remained vital to the Operational Conversion Units. In the Mediterranean and in India and Burma the Wellington remained a first-line bomber until the end of the war. Meanwhile its use with Coastal Command had burgeoned, where the Wellington performed as a night torpedo bomber, an ASW aircraft, and as a magnetic minesweeper.

The Wellington’s intended replacement was unsuccessful, so Wellingtons remained in RAF service until 1953. Vickers’ first post-war civil airliner, the Viking, was based heavily on the Wellington.
## The Vickers Wellington Mk III: Tech Specs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Specification</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Crew</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Length</td>
<td>64.57ft (19.68m)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wing span</td>
<td>86.15ft (26.26m)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Height</td>
<td>16.40ft (5.00m)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Max weight</td>
<td>34,000lbs (15,422kg)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Powerplant</td>
<td>2 x Bristol Hercules XI radial engines, 1,500hp each</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Max speed</td>
<td>255mph (411kmh; 222kts)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Max Range</td>
<td>1,540 miles (2,478km)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ceiling</td>
<td>18,996ft (5,790m; 3.6 miles)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Armament Bombs</td>
<td>up to 4,500lbs (2045 Kg)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guns</td>
<td>8 x .303 (7.7mm) mg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2 in nose turret, 4 in rear turret &amp; 2 x beam guns</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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A Wellington Mk 1C of No. 425 Sqn RAF. Photo: Air Force Museum of NZ
STEP UP
AND SEE WHAT YOU CAN BE

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