Last month I had the privilege and pleasure of representing our Air Force at the bi-annual Senior Enlisted Leader International Summit (SELIS) at Joint Base Andrews in Washington DC. SELIS is hosted by the United States Air Force Chief Master Sergeant and is attended by international senior enlisted leaders. The event promotes building of relationships in the international community of enlisted Airmen and Airwomen.

With over 40 other Air Forces represented this year, there was an opportunity for me to reaffirm some existing international relationships, initiate some new ones and just as importantly, a chance to ‘compare notes’ with other Air Forces’ priorities and how well they were achieving them. Interestingly and reassuringly, the majority of priorities were very closely aligned with our four priorities - Delivering Military Air Operations, Safety, Reputation and People.

We are fortunate to have incredibly talented and enthusiastic people joining our Air Force who are seeking the chance to help us succeed and make a difference. Our training and education is world class! How do I know this? On the first day of the summit, Chief Master Sergeant of the United States Air Force, James Cody stated while addressing the Summit – “Now while you are here, you need to talk to our Kiwi partner Mark, about the fantastic training and development opportunities they are giving their enlisted folk. We have already borrowed some of their initiatives and have begun to embed them into our own programmes.” Not too bad for a relatively small Air Force by comparison!

One unanimous key takeaway at the end of the four-day engagement summit, was the enabling effect that Empowerment can have on an organisation. Empowerment is an important component of Leadership. Having the confidence in an individual or team to hold a greater degree of responsibility not only enhances their levels of knowledge and leadership experience but also fosters higher levels of trust, motivation and resilience. From our initial training and throughout our training continuum, empowerment is taught as one of the fundamental principles to leadership. We see great examples of high performing teams and individuals on operational deployments when the ‘going gets tough’ having to ‘step up’. Perhaps one of the catalysts is just empowerment?

CAF’s intent is that we are making decisions at the right level. We should constantly remind ourselves and evaluate whether we are actually doing so. We have great people throughout the organisation who want to make decisions and take action and assume ownership.

The challenge is to let them.
Bomb Training Goes Off with a Bang

Photos supplied by the Herald on Sunday
The Royal New Zealand Air Force successfully dropped Mark 82 depth bombs from a P-3K2 Orion in a training exercise to qualify air and ground crews at the Kaipara Air Weapons Range. The result was pretty spectacular.

The Mark 82 depth bomb is used by the RNZAF for anti-submarine warfare (ASW) in littoral (inshore) waters and complements the Mark 46 ASW torpedo also carried by the P-3K2 Orion.

ASW is just one of the roles undertaken by the RNZAF’s six-strong fleet of P-3K2 Orions, which form a critical part of the Air Force’s intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance, and combat capability.

This capability supports the Royal New Zealand Navy in military operations, and other government agencies, in preventing illegal fishing, piracy, and smuggling of drugs or people.

Chief of Air Force, Air Vice-Marshal Tony Davies noted that “it was a great demonstration of a weaponised Air Force able to deliver air power”.

The bombing camp was followed up by torpedo drops at RIMPAC 2016*, to ensure the Airborne Surveillance and Reconnaissance Force (ASRF) was fully trained across the range of weapons available to it.

P-3K2 crews, from No. 5 Squadron must be prepared to support a wide range of tasks at any given time. Air and ground personnel must therefore always keep their skills current.

Loading and releasing live weapons requires procedures to be followed precisely for the safety of all concerned, so training exercises such as these are a critical part of ensuring the RNZAF remains ready to respond not only to Humanitarian Aid and Disaster Relief missions, but also to combat-focused scenarios.

For more information
See pages 10 – 13 for full RIMPAC coverage.
RNZAF Air Transport Team
a Workhorse in the Middle East

By Luz Baguioro, Public Affairs Manager – Joint Forces New Zealand

Based on the numbers alone, it is clear that the 34-strong air transport team from the Royal New Zealand Air Force (RNZAF) deployed to support coalition operations in the Middle East is on a roll.

As of 22 July, the RNZAF team completed the equivalent of three months’ worth of flying in just six weeks, without missing a single mission.

Squadron Leader (SQNLDR) Rhys Evans, Commander Task Unit, said a C-130 Hercules aircraft and the 34-member detachment clocked about 120 flying hours on 15 missions to Iraq and Afghanistan since they deployed to the Middle East in early June. The air transport team has been operating as part of an Australian Defence Force (ADF) air mobility task group transporting freight and personnel in support of New Zealand, Australian and coalition operations in the region.

“We are currently flying about 23 hours per week and have carried out all the sorties assigned to us by the ADF Joint Task Force. The RNZAF C-130 is definitely holding its own alongside other aircraft operated by the task force and is a great asset,” SQNLDR Evans said.

“It has been a team effort getting the aircraft in the air. Both the air crew and support staff are doing the hard yards to ensure we successfully carry out our mission.”

Major General (MAJGEN) Tim Gall, the Commander Joint Forces New Zealand, said the high operational tempo reflected

…”It has been a team effort getting the aircraft in the air. Both the air crew and support staff are doing the hard yards to ensure we successfully carry out our mission.”

*Some personnel images are blurred for security reasons*
Operations

“\textbf{The 120 flying hours is equivalent to about three months’ worth of flying when the aircraft is conducting standard tasks back here in New Zealand. Completing this many hours in six weeks without missing a single mission is a great achievement. It’s wonderful to see the team perform so well on these operational missions.}”

34-strong team

- 3 months worth of flying completed in 6 weeks
- 120 hours flying on 15 missions
- that equals 23 hours of flying per week
- temperatures can range from 43°C to more than 60°C

Some of the members of the RNZAF detachment with other NZDF members in the region.

“\textbf{The 120 flying hours is equivalent to about three months’ worth of flying when the aircraft is conducting standard tasks back here in New Zealand. Completing this many hours in six weeks without missing a single mission is a great achievement. It’s wonderful to see the team perform so well on these operational missions.}”

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Some of the members of the RNZAF detachment with other NZDF members in the region.
Kiwis in the Middle East

It is awesome to be deployed overseas doing what I love and meeting people who share the same passion. My highlight so far has probably been the flying aspect of my role. It is a pretty unreal feeling to be marshalling on the ramp of the Herc with the engines turning and burning in the middle of the night. I cannot wait to see what the rest of my deployment will bring and I look forward to any challenges that lay ahead of me!“

LEADING AIRCRAFTMAN
Natalie Farrell

“I am part of the RNZAF contingent to the Middle East and am deployed as part of the Air Movements Load Team (ALT).

This is my first deployment overseas representing the RNZAF and also the NZDF. It is very humbling to have the opportunity to deploy overseas as an Air Movements Specialist and work alongside our coalition partners.

I am working with the Royal Australian Air Force (RAAF) and have been embedded into the RAAF’s Air Movements unit. Working with the RAAF ALT provides a diverse range of tasks and no two days are ever the same. My role varies from loading and unloading different aircraft, building palletised cargo loads, processing passenger movements, marshalling heavy vehicles and also facilitating VIP movements in and out of theatre. I have also had the opportunity to fly in and out of multiple theatres supporting operations in the Middle East Region with our C-130 Hercules.

The overall deployed lifestyle is great. It has taken a few weeks to settle into a solid routine and it has definitely taken some time to try and adjust to the heat, especially as we roll into the summer months. Kiwi lines is such an awesome place to call home and the fact that we have a pool in the backyard makes it even better. The wider base facilities are equally fantastic, the two gyms and multiple beach volleyball courts provide endless competition and banter amongst all nations.

FLIGHT LIEUTENANT
Timothy Leslie

“I am the co-pilot on the C-130H(NZ). This role includes extensive mission planning producing various tactical products after careful assessment of the airfields where we operate. The work involves working with all the crew on board the aircraft to successfully complete the mission that we have been tasked with.

The highlight for me on this deployment has been to put my training into use in an operational setting for the first time. After multiple training exercises in both New Zealand and the USA, it is good seeing that this training is appropriate and has prepared us well for this theatre.

However I have been missing my partner and family who are back in New Zealand. This has been made easier after receiving weekly post from family at home.”
An RNZAF C-130 Hercules was recently tasked on a flight to the Pacific to deliver over a tonne of flour to Niue in response to a flour shortage in the South Pacific island nation.

The emergency delivery, which was contingent to the Middle East by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade through the New Zealand High Commission in Niue, was welcome news for bakeries in Niue, as flour shipments were not due to arrive for another two weeks.

“We were told the local bakers had not been able to bake bread for at least a week because of a flour shortage. So they were very pleased when we arrived with an emergency supply,” aircraft captain Flight Lieutenant Alex Tredrea said.

“It is very rewarding to be able to help our Pacific neighbours in times of need, whether it is delivering medical supplies, humanitarian aid or just flour. We are pleased we have been able to help them out.”

Flour supplies in Niue had been short since late May due to shipping cancellations and delays. The shortage occurred just before the start of the peak tourist season, which runs from June to September.

The Hercules also delivered 10 tonnes of construction materials to Tonga, that were required for the multi-national humanitarian activity, Tropic Twilight, led by the NZDF.*

Another RNZAF Hercules aircraft on a training flight to the south-west Pacific also recently delivered about 2000kgs of emergency response kits from Rotary International to Fiji, and nearly 15,000kgs of humanitarian aid supplies from UNICEF to the Solomon Islands and Vanuatu.

The Hercules has traditionally been the workhorse of the RNZAF fleet. The strategic airlift aircraft has been deployed for humanitarian assistance and disaster relief missions to Asia and the Pacific. It also supports Antarctica New Zealand and the US Antarctic programmes, and marked the 50th year of airlift support flights to Antarctica last year.

A Hercules and a detachment of 34 personnel are currently deployed to support New Zealand, Australian and coalition operations in the Middle East.

For more information
*See p16 for more on Ex Tropic Twilight
An enemy submarine is being tracked and its position is pinpointed by sonar pings. The crew in a P-3K2 hustles to ensure they have an accurate hack on the submarine’s position as the plane banks sharply. Precision flying has the pilots bringing their aircraft down close to the waves. MK46 torpedoes are dropped and are right on target. Throw in two other aircraft and a ship all tracking the same target in the same area and you have a dynamic scenario faced by RNZAF crews at Exercise Rim of the Pacific (RIMPAC) 2016.

The live firing test took place off Hawaii during RIMPAC 2016 – the biggest international maritime exercise in the world.

The RNZN frigate HMNZS TE KAHA, her Seasprite helicopter and two P-3K2 Orions from RNZAF’s No. 5 Squadron were launching torpedoes at the target, a remote underwater vehicle playing the part of a submarine.

The Commanding Officer of No. 5 Squadron, Wing Commander DJ Hunt, said the test “pretty much went off without a hitch”.

“We had one torpedo that malfunctioned when it went into the water but we had put it in the right place.”

All in all three out of four were direct hits – which isn’t bad. The torpedo drop was the first by an RNZAF aircraft in over five years.

Anti-submarine warfare is a key part of the NZDF’s maritime combat capability and the exercise provided a good test of the combined skills of the ship, helicopter and the two Orions.

Orion pilot Flight Lieutenant Jonathan Pound said: “The sonar buoys have to be laid in a particular pattern to hunt a submarine. For us, this involved precision flying from 2000 feet to as low as 200 feet above the sea.

“It also included steep turns – a 60 degree angle of bank – which meant the Orion was essentially on its side and the crew was experiencing 2G, twice the force of gravity.”

WGCDR Hunt said the environment in the aircraft during the exercise was “challenging”.

“It’s all going pretty quick because tracking a subsurface contact is dynamic and fast paced.”

As well as the activity within the aircraft, there are also factors to take into consideration outside.

“There were three aircraft in the same area and you need to make sure you’re all safe and clear of each other. We’re dropping stores from the aircraft – be it torpedoes or sonar buoys – so you have to make sure you are clear of everyone before dropping.

“It’s a good training exercise from that point of view and tests the crews.”

The torpedoes do not carry any explosive charge and surface when they run out of fuel. They are then retrieved and reused again.

While the RNZAF can do the training at home, RIMPAC offers the opportunity for the work to be independently assessed by experienced international range operators, rather than having a self-assessment.

While the torpedo-firing was a major event at RIMPAC, the P-3K2s also have been interacting with real submarines, which “produced a different dynamic”, WGCDR Hunt said.

“When you play with a live submarine it has an idea on what you’re doing, so it reacts to your actions. Depending on the
tactics you are using the sub can change direction, depth and speed to try and evade you.”

Do the New Zealand crews feel like small fish in a big pond?
“Yes and no. Everyone’s here to do a similar role. When you go out for your mission, you prepare for that mission, you go out and spend five or six hours conducting mission and then back in to debrief and report your results – that’s the same for every nation – whether it be the US, Japanese, Australian or Canadian aircraft.”

The exercise was “as big as it gets for No. 5 Sqn”, WGCDR Hunt said.
“It provides us with training at the top end of our warfare roles and in terms of personnel and aircraft it is near the maximum output that is expected from No. 5 Sqn in terms of projection of air power. So from that point of view, it’s a big deal.”

Air Component Commander Air Commodore Darryn Webb said maintaining combat readiness in complex airspace with multiple surface and air assets was a fundamental requirement for No. 5 Sqn personnel.
“RIMPAC is specifically tailored to meet the requirements of each participating country, resulting in a diverse and changing programme to achieve training aims and objectives. The great thing about that approach is an ability to focus on areas that would otherwise not be available at the level of intensity or complexity necessary to develop our crews’ skills.” Activities such as anti-submarine warfare could be practiced in a simple one-on-one aircraft versus submarine scenario through to a mission involving multiple friendly ships, submarines and aircraft while avoiding commensurate opposition forces, he said.
“The scale of RIMPAC means that the capability of those opposition forces, for example aircraft carriers, makes this task both far more realistic and a lot more difficult.
“Perhaps the biggest benefit of RIMPAC is the calibrated air weapons range allowing crews to conduct live firing under controlled and measured conditions, with a full replay and assessment function,“ AIRCDRE Webb said.
“Both 5 Sqn crews have had the opportunity to conduct live firing and notably one torpedo launch was captured on photo and featured as the RIMPAC ‘shot of the day’, not bad when you consider how many assets and personnel there participating to choose from.
“And this rounds out the final key reason to send our folk to RIMPAC – interoperability remains a fundamental element to any exercise or operation. Working alongside our partners and allies further hones skills and allows all important relationships to be cultivated.”

Air Ordnance Specialist Sergeant Richy Vial launches a Sonobuoy from a P-3K2 Orion.

First tasking on Ex RIMPAC for a P-3K2 Orion at Marine Corps Base Hawaii
Our Collective Purpose

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There are 27 nations taking part in RIMPAC, contributing 45 ships, five submarines, more than 200 aircraft, and 25,000 personnel. The New Zealand Defence Force’s contribution is some 350 personnel across the three services of Navy, Army and Air Force.

Later in the exercise TE KAHA will also test a new capability within the NZDF – the launch of a Penguin anti-ship missile from the new-model Seasprite helicopter.

The RIMPAC amphibious task force is led by Royal New Zealand Navy Commodore (CDRE) Jim Gilmour.

“Roughly 70 per cent of the world is water, 80 per cent of the world’s population lives on or near a coast, and 90 per cent of international commerce moves by sea,” he said.

“Capable maritime forces help ensure stability and prosperity around the world, and RIMPAC helps participating nations develop these capabilities. Our role is to protect our interests at sea.”

Countries involved include forces from:
Australia, Brazil, Brunei, Canada, Chile, China, Colombia, Denmark, France, Germany, India, Indonesia, Italy, Japan, Malaysia, Mexico, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Peru, the Republic of Korea, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, Tonga, the United Kingdom, and the United States.

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<td>Commander, Coalition Task Force 176 (CTF 176)</td>
<td>Commander Amphibious Forces and Command Group – USS AMERICA</td>
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<td>RNZN</td>
<td>Frigate</td>
<td>HMNZS TE KAHA with embarked Seasprite helicopter</td>
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<td>Littoral Warfare Unit</td>
<td>Detachment including diving, search, survey and support elements</td>
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<td>NZ Army</td>
<td>1 Brigade*</td>
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<td>*For part of the exercise, personnel will be onboard HMAS CANBERRA</td>
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<td>RNZAF</td>
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<td>2 x P-3K2 Orion aircraft and support elements</td>
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Our Collective Purpose

Exercise RIMPAC was interrupted for crew on No. 5 Squadron’s P-3K2 as it was called on to help in the search for two people who went missing after their plane crashed off the Hawaiian coastline. The pair survived nearly 20 hours in the water – with their hope of being found never dimming.

David McMahon and his friend Sydnie Uemoto met with the crew of No. 5 Sqn nearly a week after their ordeal.

“It’s an absolute honour for us to come here and say thank you to those who helped rescue us,” Ms Uemoto said. “I can’t put into words what it means to me, to know these [people] put so much effort into rescuing me and David from a bad situation like that.”

The light aircraft the pair was in crashed into the sea about 40km north-west of Kona, the Big Island, just after 3pm on July 15.

The twin-engine aircraft was en route from Maui to Kona when the pilot reported an emergency and the aircraft disappeared from radar shortly afterwards.

The RNZAF Orion was diverted to the search from a RIMPAC flight to assist US Coast Guard and US Navy units. It took on the role of On-Scene Commander, running the search and directing the other assets.

Mr McMahon and Ms Uemoto were found the following day and winched to safety by a US Coast Guard helicopter. They had lifejackets on and were swimming to shore when found, suffering just minor injuries.

Mr McMahon said he never doubted that help was on the way. “We knew, with the RIMPAC exercise going on, that there were a lot of people available to help rescue us, and it gave us the courage to hang on until they found us.”

“I can’t explain my immense gratitude, knowing how much effort went into this rescue operation, so that Sydnie and I could make it back safe.”

Rick McMahon, David’s father, accompanied the survivors to the base and expressed his gratitude to the service members present.

“Each and every one of you here today are heroes for what you did,” he said. “Your unwavering dedication to duty and your efforts in finding and rescuing David and Sydnie from harm’s way is something neither myself nor my family will ever, ever forget. We are so incredibly grateful for everything you men and women do every day.”

Wing Commander DJ Hunt said that it was a great result and the Orion crew was delighted they had been able to help their US colleagues with the search.

“We spend a good number of flying hours each year on such missions and sometimes we don’t get the good news that we and those at home are hoping for,” he said.

“For the crew to be part of that is phenomenal. The US RCC know the best way to get a successful result is to throw a lot of assets at it early,” WGCDR Hunt said.

“The fact that the people were found alive was testament to them as well. They were well prepared, once they knew they were going to have to put the aircraft in the water they put their life jackets on and prepared themselves to open the door and get out of the aircraft as soon as it went under the water.

“So the fact that about 20 hours later they weren’t too worse for wear was pretty amazing really.”

Survivors of Kona Crash
Meet No. 5 SQN

INVoLVED IN THE SEArCH WERE:

- HC-130 Hercules airplane crews and MH-65 Dolphin helicopter crews from Air Station Barbers Point
- A Navy MH-60R helicopter crew from the USS Chung Hoon (DDG-93) and the crew of the ship
- The USCGC Galveston Island (WPB-1349)
- A Royal New Zealand air force P-3K2 Orion aeroplane crew
- HC-130 Hercules airplane crew from the 353rd Special Operations Group from Kadena Air Base, Japan
- Additional reporting, Petty Officer 2nd Class Jeffrey Troutman
A group of RNZAF Military Working Dogs and their New Zealand Police counterparts took to the skies at Base Auckland recently to get used to travelling with their feet off the ground.

The training for 2-year-old Chase, 18-month-old Koda and the two police dogs, Quid, 3, and Raja, 5, was to prepare them for airlifts into difficult terrain, Flight Commander, Security Forces Flight, Flight Lieutenant (FLT Lt) Andy Armstrong said.

“It ensures that they would not be unduly stressed by the situation.”

After a pre-flight safety brief each team was winched aboard No. 3 Squadron’s NH90 led by FLT Lt Craig Graham, and then winched off again.

Working dogs are used by NZ Police and the NZDF for various tasks such as search and rescue, tracking and security roles.

The training was vital to the RNZAF’s operational needs, and protective security requirements, FLT Lt Armstrong said.

“The military working dogs must be familiar with a variety of platforms that we use, including fixed wing and rotary wing aircraft.

“That way we have the capability to deploy dogs by any means.”

The environment is foreign to the dogs however, so they needed some preparation before going up in the NH90s, FLT Lt Armstrong said.

“Working around aircraft at a noisy airfield is a good start and there’s a gradual progression introducing the dogs to the airframe itself – whether it be fixed or rotary wing. Then there’s a gradual progression to having the dog inside the aircraft before winching.”

The training was a success for both the handlers and the dogs, he said.
“The military working dogs must be familiar with a variety of platforms that we use, including fixed wing and rotary wing aircraft.”

“There’s the human element and the canine element and both of them need to combine their talent and be familiar with military air operations. We can safely say that both handler and canine are competent in those sorts of procedures.”

Working with the police is always helpful in terms of sharing knowledge, FLTLT Armstrong said.

“We’re all similar practitioners, but apply our skills to different employment contexts. It’s good to work alongside those agencies as frequently as we can to share each others’ knowledge and experience.”

Leading Aircraftman Thomas Olsen, who attended with MWD Koda, a qualified working Belgian Malinois, said working with the Police K9 Handlers was a great opportunity. “Being able to exchange training ideas and experiences with different agencies is always a positive.”

The next training sessions for progression with the NH90 will look to winch in and winch out the MWDs and Handlers from greater heights and in more difficult terrain.

The MWD Unit thanked FLTLT Graham and his crew, and all the people who helped make the training day happen.
An 80-strong multinational task group led by the NZDF spent the first three weeks in July to undertake community projects aimed at improving water storage and sanitation in Tonga as part of Exercise Tropic Twilight.

About 40 personnel from the New Zealand Army and the Royal New Zealand Air Force worked alongside engineers from China, Tonga and the United States to install nine 10,000-litre water storage tanks at churches, the fire station and a city hall in Pangai, in Tonga’s Ha’apai island group.

The multinational task group also built a toilet block near the Pangai Ferry Terminal, a high-traffic location, Lieutenant Colonel (LTCOL) Josh Wineera, NZDF Task Force Commander and Senior National Officer, said.

“Our international partners and colleagues fully integrated with our NZDF personnel and we worked together to make tangible improvements to the local infrastructure. These projects will surely make a positive difference to the local community.”

Tongan officials said the newly installed water tanks would reduce the vulnerability of remote communities to the impact of drought.

“Tropic Twilight conducted a vast field of activities that would directly improve the resilience of communities in Ha’apai in addressing some water security issues and safety equipment shortages. It was also an opportune time to collaborate with partners to address health issues,” Tongan Deputy Prime Minister Siaosi Sovaleni said.

On the health front, medical personnel from New Zealand and Australia worked with Tongan medical staff to conduct environmental health tests to assess the risk of communicable diseases such as dengue and the zika virus to the local population.

Apart from improving community infrastructure, members of the multinational task force conducted outreach activities at primary and secondary schools in Lifuka.

“We explained to the children that what we are doing in Tonga isn’t just about building projects but also about building friendships and partnerships between all nations involved,” Lieutenant Aidan Bilbe from the Royal New Zealand Army Medical Corps said.

Major General (MAJGEN) Tim Gall, the Commander Joint Forces New Zealand, said activities undertaken as part of Tropic Twilight demonstrated New Zealand’s continuing commitment in the Pacific and marked a fresh opportunity to strengthen defence cooperation with Tonga and other international partners.

“Tropic Twilight started years ago as a military exercise to get our personnel ready to conduct humanitarian assistance and disaster relief operations. But it has since evolved into a major multinational activity and the projects we have been undertaking in recent years are making a positive and tangible difference to communities in the Pacific,” MAJGEN Gall said.

By Luz Baguio, Public Affairs Manager – Joint Forces New Zealand

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By Luz Baguio, Public Affairs Manager – Joint Forces New Zealand

NZDF brings Tropic Twilight to Tonga
Our Collective Purpose

Passion and Logistics; not two words you expect to find in the same sentence, and yet that is what comes through very clearly when talking to incoming Commanding Officer of Materiel Support Wing (MSW) Auckland / Woodbourne, Wing Commander (WGCDR) Susie Barns. She took over from outgoing CO WGCDR Nick McMillan at a Change of Command ceremony held recently at RNZAF Base Auckland.

Keeping the supply chains unbroken to the various and diverse fleets based at Whenuapai, as well as the Depot Level Maintenance in Woodbourne, makes MSW, as WGCDR Barns puts it, “a critical enabler to the operational platforms”. Having come up through the ranks of the supply trade, she has in many cases helped establish those chains as the RNZAF introduces its new platforms and capabilities into service, and knows first hand the importance of having dedicated and professional people to keep things moving. “I am lucky to be taking command of a highly motivated and adaptable team,” she said, and sees encouraging her personnel to make the most of the wonderful professional development opportunities the RNZAF provides as a key part of this.

The latter is a feature of her own career, having completed post-graduate study in Melbourne, graduating with a Post Graduate Diploma in Integrated Logistics Management. She also completed a Masters in Engineering. A personal professional highlight was a posting as the NZ Defence Staff Logistics Advisor in London from 2012-14.

WGCDR Barns brings to her new role a vision of three key things she wants to achieve. Firstly, to develop the communication between her units and the commanding officers of the force elements, so that each understands the others’ needs and limitations. Second, to produce positive stories about the role of logistical support, and lastly to emphasise the value it adds to the organisation as a whole. As she is fond of saying, “you can’t fly without supply”.

The Chief of Defence Force, Lieutenant General Tim Keating, has awarded a Chief of Defence Force’s Commendation to Air Force Sergeant (SGT) Nicholas Armstrong-Barrington. The award has been presented to SGT Armstrong-Barrington at a ceremony held at Whenuapai Air Force Base.

The Commendation was awarded for SGT Armstrong-Barrington’s work in support of anti-piracy operations around the Horn of Africa. He was responsible for setting up and supporting the Communications and Information Systems (CIS) infrastructure for last year’s deployment of the RNZAF’s Airborne Surveillance and Reconnaissance Force (ASRF) to the Middle East. The citation noted that “his skill and attention to detail ensured that the system he developed exceeded requirements and expectations, and represented the most sophisticated CIS architecture the New Zealand Defence Force has ever deployed”.

SGT Armstrong-Barrington says he has thoroughly enjoyed his Air Force career of over 13 years, which has seen him serve at Base Woodbourne in Blenheim, Wellington and Auckland. The deployment to the Middle East was one of the high points of his career, as he was heavily involved in the development and fine-tuning of the CIS backbone for the Mobile Tactical Operations Centre, used for the first time on this operation. As one of the first to put “boots on the ground” for the deployment, he said that it was “hugely satisfying to see the project through to the point where it was up and running”.

The ASRF comprises the RNZAF’s P-3K2 Orions of No 5 Squadron and support elements including CIS technicians like SGT Armstrong-Barrington from No. 230 (Mission Support) Squadron.
Once again, crowds turned out in force to welcome a large variety of aircraft from around the world, including from the RNZAF, to the Royal International Air Tattoo (RIAT), held at RAF Fairford, United Kingdom.

RIAT is, without question, the largest military airshow in the world and an opportunity to showcase the latest cutting edge technology in air warfare, including the Lockheed F35 Lightning that was making its debut on UK soil with a number of examples on display.

More than 230 aircraft, from 37 air arms in 24 countries participated in the Air Tattoo, which took place on a warm, largely sunny day. Among the many highlights were displays by the Lightning, The F-22 ‘Raptor’, a Polish MiG-29, an RAF Typhoon and Chinook, a French Rafale and the Turkish Air Force F-16 ‘Solo Turk’.

Flypasts included a unique formation of the Red Arrows, an F-35B and two RAF Typhoons giving a glimpse of the future of the UK’s defence capability.

The Pacific rim was represented magnificently this year by inclusion of the RNZAF’s B757, from No. 40 Squadron, as well as a RAAF KC30.

All-in-all, a magnificent weekend for the 153,000 attendees.
Big crowds flock to the first day of RIAT

PHOTO: Australian Defence Force

The Royal Air Force’s Red Arrows, the F-35 Lightning II and 2 Eurofighter Typhoons perform an historic flypast

PHOTO: Australian Defence Force

Flying display by F-35B Lightning II

PHOTO: Australian Defence Force

Flypast by the Italian Air Force Aerobatic Team

PHOTO: Australian Defence Force
Air Force Marae Update:
Te Turangawaewae O Te Tauaarangi

By Doug ‘Wal’ Wallace, Cultural Coordinator of the RNZAF Marae Project

WHAKAPAPA OF OUR MARAE
– GENEALOGICAL CONNECTIONS

Ko Taikorea te maunga
Ko Rangitikei te awa
Ko Pakapakatia te whenua
Ko Te Tauaarangi te marae-atea
Ko Ohakea te turangawaewae
Ko Te Ara Wheturangi a Kai te wharenui
Ko Te Houenuku a Hine te wharekai

Ko Taikorea te maunga
Ko Rangitikei te awa
Ko Pakapakatia te whenua
Ko Te Tauaarangi te marae-atea
Ko Ohakea te turangawaewae
Ko Te Ara Wheturangi a Kai te wharenui
Ko Te Houenuku a Hine te wharekai

HOW OHAKEA GOT ITS NAME AND ITS CONNECTION TO THE AIR FORCE MARAE

Looking down the hill from the Air Force Marae we see Tangimoana Road and a short distance on the other side of it flows the Rangitikei river. It is on this flat that a Māori village once stood under the reign of the great chief Tuariki of the Ngati Apa people. It is in the Rangitikei river that he came upon a baby taniwha that he kept as a pet and he named it Tutaeporoporo. He built a pool off the river for Tutaeporoporo to inhabit near where Marton stands today. When it got too big for his pool Tuariki placed Tutaeporoporo in the Rangitikei river which became his home.

Tuariki loved his pet and Tutaeporoporo loved his master. One day a war party from Whanganui came to Tuariki and through deception lured him into the open and killed him. They cooked his body for the trip home and the village site is now referred to by local iwi as Pakapakatia which means ‘cooked flesh’ in remembrance of Tuariki’s demise. Some time later his beloved pet came searching for him and catching the scent of cooked flesh he knew that his master had been slain. Tutaeporoporo followed the scent down the Rangitikei river, out to sea, up the coast and into the Whanganui river where he caught up with his master’s slayers and exacted revenge by killing and devouring them all. There he remained to become the dreaded taniwha of the Whanganui river killing all those who crossed his path.

According to local iwi Ngati Apa, Ohakea got its name from the deceptive act of the Whanganui war party that led to Tuariki’s death. ‘Oha’ is a term for a war party and ‘kēā’ means to deceive.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES OF THE AIR FORCE MARAE

In the last update I touched on the seven key Marae Principles that will guide Air Force Marae policy. In no particular order of importance they are:

1. WHANAUNGATANGA: One Team, One Family – An Iwi Philosophy
2. WHAKAPAPA: Historical Connections
3. MANAAKITANGA: Putting People First
4. MAHI TAHI: Working Together – A Shared Resource
5. TIKANGA RUA: Integrating Māori and RNZAF Culture
6. KAWA: Māori Cultural Protocols
7. MANA: Honour and Reputation

MANAAKITANGA:
Putting People First

The four key “pillars” to maintaining total wellbeing:

• Tinana (physical health)
• Hinengaro (emotional wellbeing)
• Whanau (family support)
• Wairua (spiritual enrichment)

Marae culture promotes physical wellbeing through supporting the likes of sports training camps and interservices as well as kapahaka and mau rakau (weaponry) training camps to name a few. Emotional wellbeing is supported through tikanga (custom) awareness training...
and te reo (language) development and is especially present in the support provided during tangihanga (funerals). Whanau support is intrinsic. The marae belongs to all its members including our dependants. As a place where spirituality is integral to all elements of a marae, we have the perfect place for spiritual reflection or personal meditation. It will be a place that embraces a total health approach (manaakitanga) for all who enter.

**MAHITAHi:**
*Working Together – A shared resource*

Marae are communal assets catering to a wide range of activities (and not just activities of a Māori cultural nature). Our Air Force is diverse and the marae will be an excellent supplement to Ohakea’s facilities. It can sleep 100 personnel, has dining facilities, an ablution block and is located in the midst of serenity. The Cadet Forces parade ground, Base sports fields and Gym are a stones throw away. It is away from the din of the operational side of Base, ideal for sports training camps, inter-Services, Cadet Force camps, team building exercises, meetings, seminars, conferences, classes, tikanga (customs) and te reo (language) programmes, kapa haka, welfare groups, Recruit induction, weddings, funerals, forums, receiving visiting dignitaries and civil emergency relief, to name but a small fraction of uses. If you can do it on base then you can probably do it even better here at the Marae! It belongs to us all as a resource to embrace and uphold with pride and team spirit.

**ALSO ON THE LOCAL FRONT...**

When the most recent Recruit Course arrived at Ground Training Wing for attestation they were welcomed by approx 120 trainees and staff performing the Air Force Hakas! What a sight to behold! At the opening of the Marae on October 8 we want as many of our people as possible joining together to shake the Earth in a mass performance of the Air Force Hakas! Learn it. Practice it. Then bring it! Let’s make history together! Piki Ake! Step up!
Recruits Help to Restore Former RNZAF Station

By Charlene Smart, Senior Communications Adviser (South), Defence Public Affairs

Nearly 50 RNZAF recruits have helped the Marlborough Garrison Society to restore some of the buildings that were once part of the World War II former RNZAF station, Omaka.

The R2/16 RNZAF Recruit Course includes recruits entering trades such as logistics, aircraft maintenance, aviation refuellers, avionic mechanics, fire fighters and intelligence specialists.

The recruits spent time preparing the ground for foundations, painting, clearing gutters and sanding weatherboards in preparation for painting.

In every recruit course each flight in induction training is given a name which reflects historical aircraft, bases, people or events that are significant and relevant to the RNZAF.

Command Recruit Training School Chief Instructor Flight Sergeant (F/S) Malcolm Walshe said it was decided to capture a local Marlborough perspective for R2/16 recruit course and the flights would be named Delta and Omaka.

“The RNZAF stations Delta and Omaka were busy and historic Marlborough RNZAF stations throughout World War II and something we, as instructional staff, wanted the trainees to learn more about. “In the early stages of this recruit course I saw something on social media about how the Garrison Society needed some help to restore the former Omaka buildings and surrounds and transform it into New Zealand’s only working World War II military camp.

“I knew immediately that I couldn’t let this opportunity slide especially since we have a link with a flight named Omaka. I contacted the society and offered our service,” he said.

The R2/16 Recruit Course will graduate on 12 August at RNZAF Base Woodbourne.

Recruits try their hands at erecting a 1941 World War 2 tent.

Recruits prepare foundations for the placements of Ex RNZAF Dip Flat huts and the inclusion of a number of replica wartime British Anderson Shelters.

AC Alexa Fraser painting a water tower.

An old RNZAF Station Omaka bicycle.
Knowing what your dream job is once you leave school isn’t always easy, but one Christchurch teenager has no doubts about her future – she wants to be an RNZAF pilot.

Lauren Humphries’ dream was reinforced recently when she met Air Force pilots who talked about their flying experiences.

The 15-year-old is a student of the Service IQ Aviation Flying Gateway programme. It is a ‘fly before you buy’ programme that allows school students in years 12 and 13 to get a taste of what it is like to be a pilot before committing to a formal programme of study.

Members of Ohakea’s No. 42 Squadron and No. 14 Squadron flew to Canterbury in a Beech King Air B200 and a T-6C Texan II for the afternoon and spoke with the students about their experiences.

Lauren said she did some initial flying, fell in love with it and then started seriously considering flying and a career in the military.

“I did my trial flight in fixed wing aircraft and a helicopter and after that really caught the flying bug and thought that maybe I would like to do something in aviation.

“My dream job is to be a pilot in the Air Force. I am doing fixed wing flying right now but really love rotary. I was really excited when I did my first rotary test. I would be happy to do either in the Air Force, I just love flying.”

Lauren, who attends Ao Tawhiti Unlimited Discovery School, where she is focused on her school work, still gets out and flies every week. She is currently working towards her private pilot’s licence and plans to join the RNZAF after she completes High School.
The July school holidays became a whole lot more exciting for a group of NZDF families who were flown in a Boeing 757 to the Air Force Museum in Wigram. The trip was particularly special for three kids who had never been on a plane before.

Desiree Wright arrived at the museum with three of her children, 5-year-old twins Ben and Tyler, and 3-year-old Grant Junior. The children’s father, Sergeant Grant Sutherland died three years ago and the Missing Wingman Trust arranged for the special family outing.

The youngsters had never been on a plane before the day’s event, but they all loved the experience, Mrs Wright said.

Tyler said he really enjoyed his flight. “It took off and went fast up into the sky into the clouds,” he explained.

Grant Junior said he would quite like to go on a little airplane for his next trip.

The family were part of a group of 112 Wellington-based NZDF personnel and their families who arrived at the RNZAF Air Movements terminal at Christchurch International Airport for a visit to the Air Force Museum.

Every school holidays, the RNZAF put on a flight like this from one of the Defence establishments around the country, to give both uniformed personnel and NZDF civilian employees an opportunity to come and visit their Museum.

For Flight Lieutenant Graham Hart, the visit was a trip down memory lane when he and his family spotted one of the retired Iroquois amongst the display.

“I was working on the Iroquois from 2006 until 2011. I was doing logistic support and deployed with them to East Timor in 2007 – 08.”

His son, 9-year-old Cameron, had been on an Iroquois once and was pretty pleased to see the helicopter again – “It’s awesome.”

FLT Lt Hart’s other son, Kadin, 11, said it was “pretty cool” being part of the trip to the museum.

“It’s just a new experience, coming to the museum.”

Squadron Leader Tim Costley brought his three daughters along.

His 7-year-old daughter Lucy said the museum was cool “because you could see all the old planes and what they used to look like when there were wars”.

Museum Communications officer Michelle Sim said it was fantastic to be able to share “what is really their museum with members of the RNZAF and members of the wider Defence Force”.

“Obviously we are so physically or geographically separate from the main defence hubs now, it is difficult to maintain that connection with them and to really press home that it is really their museum, that’s why we exist.

“It’s been 20 years since Wigram as a base closed, so that connection is also less well-known and a lot of people have no idea why the museum is in Christchurch as opposed to Auckland or Ohakea. So it’s great to be able to tell that story a bit more and keep the memory of Wigram alive as the spiritual home of the RNZAF.”
The custody of the RNZAF’s Queen’s Colour has formally been handed over to Base Woodbourne for safe keeping. The Queen’s Colour parade took place at the base in conjunction with the graduation of 16/01 Woodbourne Initial Officer Training Course.

Woodbourne Base Commander, Wing Commander (WGCDR) Mike Salvador said to hold the Queen’s Colour at Woodbourne was very special. “It is both an honour and a privilege to be entrusted with the responsibility to hold and parade the Queen’s Colour – this is the highest honour the Queen can bestow on our Service and we are extremely proud to display it to all,” he said.

There is also a link to Woodbourne which makes having the Colour at Woodbourne that much more special. “The Queen’s Colour was designed by Eve Witheridge (nee Snow) who was one of the original 99 British Women’s Auxiliary Air Force who were selected and sailed to New Zealand to work for the RNZAF in 1951. “Eve was a draughtsman, stationed at Woodbourne, and designed the Queen’s Colour. She was also on the parade when the Queen presented the Colour,” said WGCDR Salvador.

The RNZAF Queen’s Colour will be displayed at Base Woodbourne’s Officers Mess. Queen Elizabeth II presented her Colour to the RNZAF during her 1953-54 tour of New Zealand. The custody of the Queen’s Colour passes from base to base, every three years. The responsibility for its safe keeping and preservation is vested in the Air Base Wing Commander of the Base, who has custody of the colour.
Obituary

Battle of Britain
New Zealand pilot dies

By Retired RAF officer Graham Pitchfork

Squadron Leader Keith Lawrence, who has died aged 96, was one of the last surviving New Zealand-born Battle of Britain fighter pilots. But that historic battle was not the last for the tenacious pilots during World War II.

Born in Waitara, Lawrence was accepted by the Royal Air Force (RAF) on a Commonwealth recruiting scheme and left for the United Kingdom in January 1939. After completing his flying training he joined No. 234 Squadron in Yorkshire.

Lawrence was flying a Spitfire when he damaged a German bomber on July 8, 1940, the squadron’s first success. He went on to damage three more enemy aircraft including a Messerschmitt Bf 110, which later ditched in the English Channel. On September 7 the Luftwaffe made its first heavy daylight raid on London. Lawrence was scrambled and, after damaging a bomber, he chased a Messerschmitt Bf 109 to the coast and shot it down south of Folkestone.

When his squadron moved to Cornwall for a rest, he transferred to No. 603 Sqn and during the fierce fighting on September 15, Battle of Britain Day, he shot down another Bf 109 and damaged two others.

In October he joined a new unit forming at Gravesend in Kent, which specialised in making visual observations and reporting on in-coming enemy raids. On November 23 he damaged a Bf 110 fighter during a weather reconnaissance flight but four days later was attacked by a Bf 109. One wing of his Spitfire was blown off and Lawrence found himself falling with a useless right arm. He managed to deploy his parachute and landed in the sea. He was picked up by a minesweeper and taken to Ramsgate where he was admitted to hospital with a broken leg and dislocated arm.

After almost a year recovering from his injuries, Lawrence returned to his old unit but in February 1942 he left for Malta and joined No. 185 Sqn as a flight commander to fly Hurricanes. Flying intensively over the next four months he led many patrols when the island of Malta came under very heavy attack. Operating from Hal Far airfield he engaged large enemy bomber formations gaining his first success on March 23 when he shared in the destruction of a Junkers Ju 88 bomber. The German crew took to their dinghy after crashing into the sea. Scrambled on a daily basis to meet the attacks against Grand Harbour and the RAF airfields, Lawrence and his pilots

“For his service in Malta, Lawrence was awarded the DFC. The citation recorded his ‘great courage and outstanding keenness especially when the odds were great and when he was at his best’.”
had little respite. They also flew patrols to protect the vital re-supply convoys, which came under constant attack as they approached the island. Lawrence intercepted and damaged a number of enemy aircraft and on May 9 he shot down a Junkers 88 ‘Stuka’ dive-bomber over Valetta. The following day he accounted for another Stuka as it dive-bombed shipping in Grand Harbour.

After re-equipping with Spitfires, Lawrence took command of No. 185 Sqn and continued to lead formations during the fierce fighting until he was rested, returning to the UK in August.

For his service in Malta, Lawrence was awarded the DFC. The citation recorded his ‘great courage and outstanding keenness especially when the odds were great and when he was at his best’.

He became an instructor training fighter pilots before serving as a liaison officer with the USAAF fighter units based in East Anglia. In October 1943 he was posted to the Central Gunnery School to train as a gunnery instructor before returning to fighter training units to pass on his expertise.

Lawrence was keen ‘to do his bit to end the war’ and he volunteered for a third tour of operations. He joined No. 124 Sqn in early February 1945 flying Spitfires on dive-bombing attacks against V-2 rocket launching sites in Holland and on interdiction and bomber escort missions. By the end of the war he had flown a further 50 war sorties.

In August the squadron converted to the Gloster Meteor and Lawrence flew 56 sorties in the RAF’s first jet fighter before leaving for New Zealand in March 1946. He served with the RNZAF as an air traffic controller and returned to the UK in 1954 to run retail and commercial enterprises.

He retired aged 65 and settled in Devon where he flew with the Devon and Somerset Gliding Club for 18 years. In 2002 as part of the Queen’s Golden Jubilee celebrations the Battle of Britain Fighter Association nominated him for a flight in a Spitfire, which he was delighted to accept 57 years after his first flight in the iconic fighter.

On the 70th anniversary of the Battle of Britain in 2010, he was invited to represent ‘The Few’ in a short film sequence for the BBC at the Battle of Britain Memorial at Capel-le-Ferne on the Kent coast.

Keith Lawrence died on June 2. He married Kay Harte in July 1945 and she survives him with their three sons and two daughters.
New Zealand Troops Lead Bastille Day Parade

On an unseasonably chilly summer morning in Paris, regular and territorial units formed up on the famous cobbled street of the Champs-Elysees to represent New Zealand in one of the oldest and largest military parades in the world.

Regimental colours and banners representing New Zealand units that served in World War I were paraded by 86 NZDF personnel – the first time these flags have been paraded together outside of New Zealand.

New Zealand, and Australia, were invited to lead the parade as countries of honour on France’s national day. Lieutenant Colonel Eugene Whakahoe, was chosen by the Chief of Defence Force to wear the Ngā Tapuwae kahu huruhuru as the contingent commander.

LTCOL Whakahoe said the preparations for the parade were well-executed by French officials.

“Over 3000 military personnel rehearsed over six days at a camp outside Paris and the planning to accommodate and transport that many people was impressive to say the least,” LTCOL Whakahoe said.

A tri-service Māori warrior party in traditional dress and armed with taiaha scouted ahead of the NZDF contingent and received massive cheers from the crowds and from the official party which included President Hollande of France, Sir Peter Cosgrove, Governor-General of Australia, Prime Minister John Key and Air Vice-Marshal Kevin Short, Vice Chief of Defence Force. More than 200 vehicles, 241 mounted Republican Guards, 55 aircraft and 30 helicopters also took part in the parade.

“It was an honour to be invited to march in the parade representing New Zealand and the NZDF, LTCOL Whakahoe said.

“Parading these colours together on French soil in honour of those who served in World War I was a once in a lifetime experience.

“I am incredibly proud of how our personnel conducted themselves as ambassadors of our Defence Force and New Zealand,” he said.
Don’t stop asking: Is it safe?

Have you ever found yourself asking the question, “why am I doing this?” Not because you just can’t be bothered or that you would rather be at home, but because you feel uncomfortable with the possible consequences if ‘Murphy’ were to visit and the worst was to happen.

As military aviators we are exposed to various levels of risk every time we go flying. The level of risk will depend on the operation and it is something we are exposed to every day in various forms. Risk is not something we should take lightly, it must be calculated and it is not a one size fits all. Would you get into that helicopter on a training mission if the likelihood of a serious mechanical failure was high?

The very nature of the Defence Force is that we knowingly venture into harm’s way; at all times we must be prepared to deploy our people into tough situations and severe environments,” Chief of Defence Force, Lieutenant General Tim Keating said.

“This ability to put our people in such situations is based on a reassurance and understanding that we train to survive and that we manage risks in whatever activity we do.”

As we work towards one NZDF safety management system, we are changing the way we think about safety. We want a more robust and sophisticated approach than just hazard spotting; so we are focusing on the inherent risks we face as a Defence Force and how we can stop people from getting hurt.

Director of Safety, Susan D’Ath-Weston said safety risk management was not new to the Defence Force.

“We know you manage risk everyday and we’re not about to stop you from doing your job. “What we’re focused on is ensuring that it remains at the core of our professionalism. Keeping our people safe needs to be the foundation of all our planning and everything we do.”

While substantial responsibility is placed on commanders and managers to take all ‘reasonably practicable’ steps to manage health and safety, we all have a part to play and safety risk management can, and should, be undertaken by members of the Defence Force at all levels.

Safety doesn’t need to be complicated – what we’re asking is that you take the time to be S.A.F.E and ask yourself four questions.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>See</th>
<th>What could possibly cause harm?</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Assess</td>
<td>How likely and how bad would the harm be?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fix</td>
<td>How could you eliminate that harm? – If you can’t stop it, could you minimise it?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluate</td>
<td>Are the safety controls still working?</td>
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Ask these questions and you’ve undertaken a basic, but possibly lifesaving, risk management process – identifying, assessing, controlling and monitoring risk.

“We don’t expect everyone to be experts in risk management,” explains Ms D’Ath-Weston. “However, we do want all our people to understand what it is and how they can help keep themselves and their comrades safe.”

“Never be afraid to question something that could affect your safety or the safety of others.”
WorldSkills NZ is again on the search to find New Zealand’s top young trade professionals to compete at the WorldSkills International Competition to be hosted by Abu Dhabi in 2017.

NZDF is entering its own top tradespeople in a range of skills from aircraft maintenance through to cookery, restaurant service, automotive technology, carpentry and plumbing.

This month aircraft maintenance competitors from the civil industry and Air Force will challenge each other at a National Selection Competition in Woodbourne.

The winners from this competition then carry on to the WorldSkills NZ National Competition to be hosted by Wintec in September. The other NZDF trades will attend a regional or external trade competition or be selected internally for the nationals in September.

The best performers from the WorldSkills NZ National Competition will be eligible for selection to the Tool Blacks team which will represent New Zealand at the WorldSkills International Competition in 2017.

Selection for the international competition is not just about being the best in your trade, it also involves the ability to be an ambassador for New Zealand. During selection consideration is also given to a competitor’s attitude, behaviour, resilience and ability to cope with stress. The winners from the national competition will attend a team camp and be interviewed prior to being officially confirmed as the representative in their respective trades.

After selection the training and practice kicks in with a vengeance as the competition on the international stage is really intense and competitors need to excel in every aspect of the technical description for their trade.

As well as trade excellence, competitors must be able to deal with the highly stressful environment of competing in front of the world against other top tradespeople, in an unfamiliar environment and with unfamiliar judges who in all likelihood don’t speak English.

Competing at this level is not an easy ask for anyone and is similar in most respects to competing at the Olympics. WorldSkills has been unofficially dubbed the ‘Olympics of the Trades’.

Last year CPL Chris Robertson was selected to represent New Zealand, the NZDF and the aircraft maintenance trade as part of the Tool Blacks Team that competed in Brazil. He gained sixth place in a very competitive trade and was the second highest scorer within the NZ team. His performance was acknowledged by WorldSkills International with a Medallion of Excellence. Alongside his strong performance, Chris can also claim he has represented his country, employer and trade on an international stage which not many people will get to do in their lifetime.

So keep an eye out for our young trade champions in their workplaces who are striving to represent the NZDF and New Zealand on the international stage. Encourage and support them on their journey so they too can put their best performance forward.
Tough Guys for Charity

By ACs Anthony Gaskin and Jesse Golding

ACs Gaskin and Golding competed in the Tough Guy & Gal Challenge at Auckland’s Woodhill Equestrian Centre to raise money for the charity, Cure Kids. They got wet and dirty, but smiled through it all.

As the pre-race brief began, we slowly moved towards the start line, through the clusters of people who were also waiting for their race to begin.

The announcer began to count down the time before our run started, Golding and I began to brace ourselves, and we were at the front, seconds from starting. The crowd started to join in on the countdown, it was almost deafening.

The horn sounded and we were off, sprinting as fast as we could to the front of the group. The first obstacle was waist deep water, Golding and I both jumped in, not caring how wet we got – this was for charity. We powered through the next lot of water obstacles and ran along the mud, trying not to slip over. As we approached the next obstacle, we saw a lot of people backed up but that didn’t bother us. We jumped straight into the obstacle... waist deep mud. It made sense why people were backed up now, and in our gear it was a lot harder to crawl through the mud, not to mention it was a slight uphill as well.

We got separated but managed to get through the obstacle in a decent enough time, but caked with mud from the chest down.

After moving downhill as quickly as we could, without tripping, we moved through the next few water obstacles which got rid of the mud, making us lighter, thankfully! As always, with downhill, comes uphill and we climbed the slippery slope which had already had a few hundred competitors through. At the top was a crawl under barbed wire, finally we could put leopard crawls to use, although there was almost enough clearance to bear crawl through it.

The next obstacles were the wall climbs, three 6ft fences that competitors had to climb up and jump over. I myself jumped and grabbed onto the top rung, hauling myself up and over within a couple of seconds. Golding on the other hand, did a little more climbing.

Our final two obstacles involved water and electricity. The first of the two was chest deep water, about 10m long with a climb over a log, which was conveniently placed under cargo netting. I managed to get my boot caught in a loop of rope, forcing me to stop to untangle myself. Immediately after this was the final obstacle. Multiple metal rails that sat just above knee height, that we had to crawl under, with metal cables suspended from them that were supposedly electrified. Neither AC Golding nor I received a shock from these cables, perhaps we went through them too fast or they weren’t actually electric, but multiple other competitors complained of a shock.

We had a lot of fun running the event and it was a great opportunity for us to raise some money for Cure Kids. In the end, our total count for money raised was $931.99. We fell short of our goal of $1,000 but regardless of that, it still helps those who aren’t as fortunate when it comes to good health.
By Squadron Leader Matt Tristram, Directorate of Evaluation & Airworthiness (DE(A)(O))

On a fine but frosty morning, the singlet-clad RNZAF Harriers team lined up at Spa Park in Taupo for the annual North Island Cross Country Champs. The level of athletes at this event was once again outstanding, with some of New Zealand's elite runners in town to light up the course.

The track comprised rolling hills with one descent climb over each 3km lap and a handful of jumps for good measure. The Ladies raced over a 5km course, Masters Men over 6km, and the Senior Men over 9km. The Masters events were first out of the blocks, with all placing comfortably within the top 10 in their age groups for the North Island – notable results being FLTLT Jenna Beldock placing 4th, SGT Graham Anderson placing 5th and SGT Dave Walters and F/S Grant Ellis both placing 6th.

Pace over these fields was consistently strong, with race leaders typically running low three minute kilometre pace. Even I managed an average pace of 4min 14sec per kilometre which was only good enough to place 9th in the Male 40-44 category – such was the calibre of the field!

The Senior Women's and Men's races were the final events of the day, with both fields hosting some exceptional racing pedigree. CPL Jules Moulden, who was this year’s Interbase Champion, significantly improved her Taupo race time from 2015, placing 19th with an outstanding 4min 32sec per km average pace.

LAC Sam Durrant crossing a gate in the Senior Mens 9km race.
ACTIVE MULTISPORTS CLUBS AT WOODBOURNE, OHAKEA AND AUCKLAND – IT DOESN’T MATTER IF YOU’RE KEEN TO PLOD OR RACE, THE CLUBS CATER TO ALL LEVELS AND REGULARLY HEAD OUT FOR WEDNESDAY SPORTS AND PARTICIPATE IN LOCAL AND REGIONAL ORGANISED EVENTS.

FгоFF Dave Vernon covered the 9km Senior Men’s race with an average pace of 3min 45sec per km, placing 21st, and LAC Sam Durrant averaged 3min 55sec per km, placing 25th – the race winner stormed around the course in 28min 51sec (3min 21sec per km average).

Overall it was a successful weekend away racing against some of NZ’s best runners. Hopefully next year we can encourage a few more keen runners to come along… and I’m sure those of us that went this year will be keen to improve our times and placings.

Finally, if you are interested in trail running or any other Multisport discipline, please get in touch with one of the active Multisports Clubs at Woodbourne, Ohakea and Auckland – it doesn’t matter if you’re keen to plod or race, the clubs cater to all levels and regularly head out for Wednesday sports and participate in local and regional organised events.

THE TEAM:

- SQNLDR Matt Tristram (AK)
- SGT Graham Anderson (AK)
- FLTLT Jenna Beldock (AK)
- SGT Dave Walters (OH)
- FGOFF Dave Vernon (AK)
- CPL Jules Moulden (AK)
- F/S Grant Ellis (OH)
- LAC Sam Durrant (AK)
- F/S Phil Souster (AK)
As we walked out to the NH90 on the flight line at Queenstown Airport we were greeted by a frosty South Island morning with perfectly blue sky, low cloud and brilliant sunshine. All in all it made the backdrop of the Remarkables mountain range look, well, remarkable.

Photographer
CPL Amanda McErlieh
FIELD HUMINT

TRI-SERVICE SELECTION AND COURSE 2017

Selection: 3–7 October
Course: 2017
Location: Trentham Military Camp

For more information: http://org/l-smis/default.aspx | Email: FH.Recruiting@nzdf.mil.nz