Cleaning up an Environmental Disaster
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Our mission
The RNZAF will provide New Zealand with relevant, responsive and effective Air Power to meet its security interests. 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.

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New Zealand Government
First Word

Base Woodbourne –
The foundation of military air operations

The Air Force Leadership Forum was held at Base Ohakea recently and a few representatives from Base Woodbourne were fortunate enough to attend. Themed ‘Flightpath to Strategy 2025’, central to the forum was the release of the Chief of Air Force’s (CAF) Directive for 2019. His three priorities were confirmed as: ensuring we have a sustainable and affordable workforce who are suitably qualified and experienced, successfully introducing the new major capabilities, and, firming up our foundations to ensure we build resilience.

Woodbourne is integral to the achievement of CAF’s priorities. A couple of years ago an external communications plan was developed to address an identified need to update the way the base was perceived locally, nationally, and within our wider organisation. A number of proactive tactical measures has raised the profile of the base as the foundation of military air operations and the core of its most important capability – people.

Further, an internal communications plan was recently implemented for the base. The aim was to ensure more effective internal communication so Woodbourne folk remained connected to the vision and mission of our organisation, ensuring a clear understanding of the part they play in contributing to organisational success. It enables all, irrespective of tenure or rank, to connect with the unique mission of our base and feel empowered to make a positive contribution to its critical role in providing military air capability – as without Base Woodbourne, there is no Air Force.

This year has proven to be a year of practically and tactically living ‘Community, Nation, World’. Woodbourne personnel responded immediately to the request for assistance from Civil Defence Emergency Management and provided initial support in response to the Tasman fires. The Christchurch mosque shootings on March 15 also provided an opportunity for the Woodbourne community to respond to the heightened security requirements that this event invoked. These two events enabled our newest members of our Air Force the opportunity to respond in real time and gave them an appreciation of the work that we as a Defence Force are called upon for in times of need – we are a ‘Force for Good’, and have contributed to our local ‘community’ – the top of the South Island.

Some Woodbourne folk have just returned home from supporting Op Tidy Fox down south. They volunteered their services as part of a wider NZDF collective (see article on page 6) contributing to the greater good of our ‘nation’. And a number of Woodbourne personnel have deployed on operations this past year, contributing on the global stage and maintaining New Zealand’s commitment in helping to assure a more peaceful and secure ‘world’.

Coupled with all of this activity, Woodbourne has hosted and contributed to a number of significant exercises and activities this year, with a few more yet to come. Exercise Nocturnal Reach, Schools to Skies, and the Omaka Air show over Easter (which saw us host three RAAF F-18 Hornets), have kept Woodbourne folk on their toes!

The success of all of these events is without doubt predicated on willing and capable people, and Woodbourne has an abundance of those. As we head into the latter part of 2019, we have very clear direction on what we are required to achieve, and the base continues to be prepared, willing and able to contribute.
Tonnes of supplies dropped to Raoul Island

A C-130 Hercules has dropped 3.1 tonnes of food, mail and equipment to support the work of government agencies on Raoul Island.

Air Component Commander Air Commodore (AIRCDRE) Tim Walshe said the aircraft recently dropped supplies to support operations of the Department of Conservation (DOC), MetService and GNS Science on the remote island, which is 1100km north north-east of the North Island.

“Our Defence Force has supported the work of other government agencies in the Kermadecs for years. We recognise that their work is important for our country’s biosecurity and public safety, and for scientific advancement,” AIRCDRE Walshe said.

About 2.5 tonnes of the supplies consisted of cement, which will be used to install new equipment to improve safety with the weather balloon programme undertaken by DOC for MetService.

MetService network observations manager Steve Knowles said data received from the balloons contributed to global weather models and the tracking of tropical cyclones in the southwest Pacific.

The aircraft also dropped 570kg of equipment and supplies for DOC and 60kg of communications equipment for GNS Science.

C-130 co-pilot Flight Lieutenant Tristan Nysse said the heavy pallets were dropped from 1300-1600ft and the lighter ones from 300ft while the aircraft was travelling 140 to 150 knots per hour.

“Raoul Island’s drop zone poses particular challenges because it is small and bordered on both sides by a cliff and the sea,” he said.

For the six government staff who are currently based on Raoul Island, the NZDF is their main means of getting food, supplies or mail.

To support New Zealand government agencies operating in the Kermadecs, the NZDF sends a Royal New Zealand Navy vessel to conduct resupply missions to Raoul Island twice a year.

In addition, RNZAF aircraft on scheduled flights to the Pacific sometimes airdrop supplies.
The parachute material can be used as an emergency shelter for survival. Our aircrew are trained to use the sections of parachute in such a way as to make a survival shelter for protection from the elements.

“Even in favourable weather conditions, as we had, airdrops are technically complex, but given the location of the drop zone precision was more crucial than ever.”

-Flight Lieutenant Tristan Nysse
ENVIRONMENTAL DISASTER CLEAN UP
Air Force personnel joined in the effort to clean up an environmental disaster on the West Coast after heavy flooding washed 5500 tonnes of rubbish from a disused landfill across 1620ha of coastland and riverbeds.
Personnel have been on the ground, and air support from A109 helicopters and a Boeing 757 have been provided to the massive operation.

A deluge in March saw flooding spread enough rubbish to cover 3000 rugby fields across pristine land and water, much of which was within a UNESCO World Heritage area, National Park and marine reserve.

In early July the first wave of New Zealand Defence Force (NZDF) personnel arrived on the scene near Fox River to help mitigate the devastating environmental impact by removing the material that was choking plant life and contaminating the ground and waterways.

It was a daunting task that was concluded last month before the spring rains hit the area.

The Air Force played a significant role in the deployment. A Boeing 757 and C-130 Hercules delivered Navy, Army and Air Force personnel to Christchurch, where they were bussed to the affected area.

An A109 surveyed the area for the Department of Conservation (DOC) and flew people to the site.

Rear Admiral Jim Gilmour, the Commander Joint Forces New Zealand, said the aim of the A109’s survey was to assess the progress of the clean-up and how the Air Force helicopters could be best used to boost DOC’s efforts, particularly in the more difficult-to-access areas.

The helicopter reconnaissance also enabled DOC to share local knowledge of the access areas and hazards and suggest strategies for tackling those zones.

“Air logistics support is important for operations such as this, which covers a vast area and includes parts that are very remote,” Rear Admiral Gilmour said.
NZDF personnel and vehicles deployed to the affected areas, including parts of Westland Tai Poutini National Park, Te Wahipounamu – South West New Zealand World Heritage Area, Waiau Glacier Coast Marine Reserve and a mataitai reserve.

DOC Incident Controller Owen Kilgour said the NZDF support boosted the efforts of DOC.

DOC’s South Westland Operations Manager Wayne Costello said the rubbish, most of which was plastic, was entangled with washed-up logs or buried under rocks and silt along Fox River.

“We are very appreciative of the support from the NZDF to help clean up the rubbish alongside DOC staff and our volunteers.”

The NZDF personnel had worked hard alongside the volunteers, helping clean up the riverbed by picking up rubbish in their down time, Mr Costello said.

“I’ve been impressed by the work ethic, professionalism and support they’ve shown the team.” NZDF personnel led the clean-up of Zone 2, which ran from the confluence of Fox River and Cook River to the Tasman Sea, and Zone 3, which was about 60km long and ran along the coastline stretching from the mouth of the Karangarua River to North Okarito Lagoon.

“It’s awesome to be able to split up the tasks for zones 2 and 3 and know that the NZDF team would just get on and get it done. At the same time, the NZDF support of the volunteer operations in the field had been absolutely essential – getting the volunteers on-site, moving the portable toilets, picking up the 500-kilogram bags of rubbish. It was a great team effort,” Mr Costello said.

“NZDF support improved efficiencies throughout the operation. We were able to transport our fantastic volunteers to and from the site quicker, as well as collect any rubbish bags the volunteers fill.”

- Owen Kilgour,
  DOC Incident Controller
Air Force personnel were tasked to the operation for about a month and worked alongside personnel from the Navy, Army and NZDF civilians. Some of them tell Air Force News about the satisfaction of making an environmental difference.

Seeing the impact the sprawling rubbish had on the pristine environment of the West Coast left an indelible impression on the airmen who were deployed to help clean up the area.

“The work days start early and it’s really cold. The days feel long and you feel exhausted, but there is a lot of satisfaction and it is rewarding to know that by the end of the day we’ve made a real difference,” Safety and Surface Mechanic Aircraftman (AC) Jasmine Cochrane said.

Working alongside about 70 Defence Force personnel, AC Cochrane said spending the day picking up largely plastic rubbish made her think about reducing her own waste.

“It is quite devastating to see what we are putting on the planet. Some of the plants are trying to grow and you can see the plastic suffocating it. It’s really heart-breaking,” she said.

“There’re quite a lot of mixed emotions because on one hand you see the destructive effects of our waste but then you look around and see how many people are volunteering their time to clean up and they genuinely care.”

Aircraft Technician Sergeant (SGT) Ian Richards said some of the rubbish was difficult to see at first.

“What you could see looked like tops of rocks, but when you looked a little harder it was actually a plastic bag covered in silt.”

The team unearthed a wide mixture of debris, including metal items, car parts, tyres, gas bottles and a lot of plastics bags. One day they cleared 54ha of rubbish.

“We were finding items that had expiry dates of 1989 and the packet still looked like it could have been on the shelf – it’s quite disappointing that we’re disposing of these items that don’t degrade. We’re responsible for this. It was a realisation of how much we dispose,” SGT Richards said.

“In the supermarket the packaging is quite horrendous, when you know a lot of that is going to go into a landfill. I think my whole attitude towards waste disposal has changed and I look for more reusable options.”

The terrain the team worked on was a mix of semi-dry riverbeds and the river bank itself.
Access to the rubbish-strewn terrain often meant crossing or working around fast flowing streams and navigating quicksand-like silt, rocks, and large boulders.

Uprooted trees featured heavily in most zones with the worst being in the upper reaches of the Fox River.

Aircraft Technician AC Kate Te Wano said every day working on the rugged coast was different.

“Some days we would be taken by the A109s to a secluded beach somewhere and other days we would be with the infantry going through swamp.”

“I’m quite conscious of my plastic use, but going down there was absolutely shocking. The rubbish was everywhere, you’d see it under rocks, buried under sand and in the trees. You’d think you’d get it all and then you would turn around and there’d just be a new pile that you’d missed.

“You’d tear off a piece of rubbish that had been trapped underneath a log and it would break up into tiny pieces – it was really frustrating. But we got a lot of rubbish out of there and we would walk about 10km each day,” she said.

“However, it was really fulfilling to see all the fadges across the river, knowing that in one day, that was how much of a difference we had made.”

Allister Leach who works at Base Woodbourne as a Manager in Ground Support Equipment volunteered to help with the clean up because he grew up on the West Coast.

“I love the area. I was brought up in the bush and I appreciate the bush, so that’s why I was quite keen to get down there and get it back to its proper, pristine condition.

“I looked out one day and saw about 40 bales holding rubbish on the riverbed and it was quite pleasing to see most of the debris had been picked up.”

“It’s been great to work alongside not only the other forces but with civilians. We are all on the same side, keeping our planet clean, so it’s great to be doing it together.”

- Aircraftman Jasmine Cochrane
No. 5 Squadron crew arrived at Base Ohakea for a close up look at the P-8 last month. They had a number of flights scheduled on the aircraft, as well as a maritime exercise alongside the P-3 Orion, to show the visitors the type of work that is undertaken by the squadron.

United States Navy Patrol Squadron Five was on base for 10 days demonstrating the P-8’s capabilities.

The squadron’s Commanding Officer Commander (CDR) Carl White said the aircraft brought the “absolute best” avionics, communications, weapons systems and sensors.

“It allows a global spectrum – it’s pretty incredible. It is simply the best of the best when it comes to maritime patrol.

“Over the next few days we’re going to be showing off the P-8 and then we’re going to work with No. 5 Squadron to begin that interoperability between our two squadrons.

We’re going to work together on a couple of flights and we’re going to do some internal training between the two squadrons and enjoy seeing New Zealand,” CDR White said.

No. 5 Squadron’s Operational Flight Commander Squadron Leader (SQNLDR) Mark Chadwick said as well as studying the P-8, the team would be conducting Anti-Submarine Warfare training missions with the American crew.

“For us, in particular, it’s the ability for our crews to work with our coalition partners – we do that often through exercises and operations throughout the world, but again, these regular touch points are important for us to ensure that we not only operate safely but we also understand each other in that close coordinated environment, so we can do our job well.”

While the squadron was “immensely proud” of the P-3, they were excited to see the P-8’s level of automation and complexity, he said.

The Air Force has bought the “best of the best” maritime capability with its purchase of four P-8A Poseidon aircraft, the United States military says. And No. 5 Squadron aircrew were able to check it out for themselves during a recent visit by the US Navy, which demonstrated its advanced systems.
“The P-8 presents an opportunity for us to get where we need to be a lot faster and provide more time when we get there – which is particularly relevant for Search and Rescues, but additionally for the surveillance in the Pacific. It means we have an ability to spend longer on tasks.”

– Squadron Leader Mark Chadwick

The new aircraft also provided the opportunity for eight members of the squadron to travel to Navy Patrol Squadron Five’s base in Jacksonville, Florida in the United States, SQNLDR Chadwick said.

A crew of two pilots, two air warfare officers and four air warfare specialists will leave in January and stay for about two and a half years learning how to fly the aircraft and eventually train future RNZAF P-8 crews.

Base Ohakea Base Commander Group Captain (GPCAPT) Shaun Sexton said the Air Force and the base had 10 years of expertise in introducing other aircraft types into service.

“There is a lot of effort going on now to prepare the organisation for the new aircraft, ranging from new infrastructure work at Ohakea, starting in the next two or three months, through to preparing for the movement of about 200 people down from Auckland.”

The visit by the US Navy’s P-8 was an opportunity to test options for the Air Force’s future fleet’s permanent base from 2023, GPCAPT Sexton said.

“New Zealand is a maritime nation – we’ve got a a moat thousands of miles long around us. Our areas of interest are maritime in nature so it’s right and proper that we have a robust maritime patrol aircraft that can support our maintenance of that Search and Rescue region and the Exclusive Economic Zone.”
Fit to deploy

A new gym has been opened at RNZAF Base Auckland.

The new facility features a basketball court approved to international standards, seating for around 460 spectators, and weights room, sports exercise equipment and rehabilitation areas.

The building boasts sustainability features including 72 solar panels designed to provide 30 per cent of the gym’s daily electricity requirements as well as a grey water system.

The gym has an impressive 900m² main floor with telescopic bleacher seating for 318 spectators and a mezzanine area with another 150 gallery seats.

The facility also has an external climbing wall.

The main gym hall was the key driver for the design as it needed to have sufficient space for sports events with spectator seating.

**ALL THE THINGS:**

- There is a basketball court which has been approved to international standards
- About 610 m³ of concrete was used in the foundation
- The gym floor is approximately 900m² out of a total net floor area of about 2100m²
- There are 1350m² of activity spaces that include a weights room, sports hall, viewing gallery area and rehab areas.
- There is telescopic bleacher seating for 318 spectators
- A spectators gallery and mezzanine area can accommodate another 150 people
- There are 24 showers, 10 toilets, six offices and two rehabilitation spaces.
- 72 solar panels on the roof provide up to 30 percent of the facility’s daily electrical needs
- A 25,000 litre rainwater retention tank will help reduce peak drainage flows and provides all greywater requirements
Chance encounter sparks major rescue

A routine fisheries patrol by a P-3K2 Orion turned into a major rescue of 18 fishing vessel crew in the Pacific Ocean last month.

The P-3 had been completing a fisheries patrol in support of the Forum Fisheries Agency, about 400 nautical miles west of Tuvalu. By chance, the aircraft was in the area of a Chinese fishing vessel that had been seriously damaged by fire just the day before.

As a result of the fire, the vessel had no radio or serviceable life raft. The aircraft crew assessed it was at risk of sinking as a result of the damage sustained.

The P-3 dropped a Minimum Aid Delivery Device that included communications equipment, fresh water and lighting to the crew of the Jin Xiang 6, which enabled them to communicate, although there was still a language barrier to overcome. However, the ship's crew was able to relay that four of the 18 fishing crew had fallen overboard, but the fire was under control.

The vessel's sister ship, the Jin Xiang 7, was about 10 hours away from the Jin Xiang 6 when the P-3 requested it provide assistance.

Once the Jin Xiang 7 was steaming towards the vessel in distress the P-3 flew to Nauru in preparation for continuing the search at first light the next day.

A No.40 Squadron C-130 Hercules was placed on standby to provide assistance should the situation have deteriorated however it was later stood down by the Rescue Coordination Centre (RCC) after the sister ship was heading to the rendezvous.

That vessel rescued the 14 crew on board as well as finding three of the crew who had fallen overboard.

The following day the P-3 returned to the area and found the last of the crew who had fallen from the Jin Xiang 6, after being requested to assist by the RCC Fiji in coordination with RCC New Zealand.

Aircrew found the man clinging to a buoy after following the trail of debris from the damaged ship. By this stage he had been in the water for about 50 hours.

After finding the last crew member in the water, the P-3 crew dropped a life raft, which the man boarded. They also dropped a trail of marine smoke marker to alert the the Jin Xiang 7 to his position.

Captain Lim of Jin Xiang 7 later passed on his thanks from the crew and their families.

The captain of the P-3 involved in the search, Flight Lieutenant Ryan McRae said to be re-tasked on a Search and Rescue, or to assist a vessel in distress, was a very real outcome for a P-3 when they launched on a routine fisheries patrol.

“I am very proud of the crew for all playing their part in the Search and Rescue. We are all more than happy to have helped and very pleased with the outcome.”
A 50-year adventure

This month, Warren Dale marks 50 years of service with the RNZAF since starting out as an air quartermaster (the godparents of today’s air loadmasters) in 1969.

Warren admits to one significant break during his half century with the Air Force – from the dining-in on the last night of his uniformed service to starting again as a defence civilian in the Air Force Office of Strategy Management at 8am the next day, back in 2011.

He has had three distinct careers – 18 years travelling in aircrew and mobile air movements’ roles; 18 years in headquarter level air movements and operations positions; and another 14, so far, in planning and performance monitoring roles within Joint Forces New Zealand and the Air Staff in Wellington.

When Warren began his career, he was influenced by veterans of World War II, the Korean War and the Malayan Emergency in many trades.

“They were all military professionals willing to teach and mentor another generation with the ease, context, and confidence of their experience.”

Over the years, he put in more than 6000 flying hours as an air loadmaster aboard Bristol Freighters, Boeing 727s and C-130 Hercules.

“I’ve visited and enjoyed the cultures of about 25 countries both on duty and during long-range transport flights, including the USSR during the Russian winter. Some places we couldn’t land, so we airdropped supplies, including a decent sized bulldozer and a few cases of New Zealand apples for the children on Pitcairn Island and a cargo hold of native shrubs onto Pitt Island to help feed endangered birdlife.”

Warren also saw his fair share of deployments and secondments, including to the US Navy, for Antarctic logistics operations; New Zealand Force South East Asia; the United Nations, for duty on the Golan Heights; and the Department of Internal Affairs as Military Adviser during the simultaneous, post-APEC, visits to New Zealand by the Presidents of the United States, China and South Korea.

He credits his family for enabling him to achieve the successes in his career. “We had to work well together and well apart, if that makes sense. As a result, we grew and became more confident and resilient both individually and as a family together fond of fun, travel, and adventure.”

He also wanted to recognise his colleagues over the years.

“I realised early on that our core values can be distilled into one: Loyalty and loyalty ‘up, down and sideways’. I still benefit from the support, trust, knowledge and fun of my superiors, subordinates, and colleagues. It’s really remarkable when you come to know the extent of everyone’s skills, what they have done, and what they have to share from wherever they stand alongside us in the NZDF.”

“All the best parts of Service life are much as they were 50 years ago – including the C-130!”

- Warren Dale
“By the end I was tired - ready for a vacation. But very happy with the work done. It was an awesome trip - super satisfying and I definitely want to go back at some point and do some more of that sort of stuff.”

- Flying Officer Peter Lee

When Flying Officer (FGOFF) Peter Lee went on a recent holiday, there was no putting up his feet and relaxing.

Instead, he, his parents and six siblings, aged 9 to 26, packed their bags to help build an extension to a medical centre in Gabon, on the west coast of Africa.

“My family felt like doing something meaningful, so they started looking around in Africa to do a mission trip and do some impactful work,” the engineer from No. 40 Squadron said.

It was through his Godmother, who is a nurse and has worked in the continent that they heard about the opportunity to help in Gabon.

The family based themselves at a mission centre in the city of Mouila, the capital of the Ngounié region of Gabon and populated by about 20,000 people.

After a 30-odd hour trip and landing at Gabon’s capital, Libreville, they were driven about seven hours to their destination.

“Then we got straight into it. It was quite good because I’ve studied engineering and had a little experience working with motors and things like that, so they had me look at some engines that were having some issues, and then lots of manual labour,” FGOFF Lee said.

One of his sisters is studying nursing and another to be a dental assistant, so they worked in the medical clinic.

“The rest of us worked on building an extension to the clinic. It was a lot of stacking cinder blocks and mixing concrete by hand – it was pretty back breaking work, but really satisfying. We got quite a bit done while we were there.”

By the time he had left, they had poured the foundations for the first storey, built walls, a ceiling and had them reinforced ready for a second storey.

While Mouila has running water and electricity, it was a far cry from what FGOFF Lee was used to.

“The houses were ramshackle with corrugated iron roofs. A lot of the roads were dirt roads, and there’s no rubbish collection, so there is rubbish everywhere and stray dogs,” he said.

“The mission centre where we were staying was robbed, and one night we heard a gunshot. It turned out to be the caretaker at the school across the road scaring off another intruder. It was a world apart from what I’m used to.”

PHOTOS: Flying Officer Peter Lee, helping to build an extension of a medical centre in Mouila, Gabon
Photographs have always been a powerful publicity tool. The RNZAF employed photographers in World War II with the main aim of recruiting and publicity. After the war, they were used for recording modifications, copying documents, accident investigation, and photographing course groups as well as publicity and recruiting. This Kodak Graflex camera was used by the photographic trade from the 1950s through to the 1970s. It was smaller and easier to handle than the cumbersome tripod-mounted cameras that were previously used, and took 5x4 inch sheet film in removable cartridges. As technology moved on, it was superseded by smaller roll film cameras, until the arrival of today’s digital cameras.
Images of military life have been captured by photographers for decades. They have documented wars, Defence Force assets, its people and how they train. Evolving from cartridges to black and white film to the latest in digital technology, the images convey the extraordinary roles that make up the military.

NIKON D5 DIGITAL SINGLE-LENS REFLEX CAMERA

The photographic trade adopted digital cameras in the early 2000s, which allowed for fast processing of imagery and easy distribution. This capability was better suited to the demands of modern communication as the trade shifted towards a primary role of public affairs. The nature of NZDF activities requires the ability to photograph fast moving action scenes, often in challenging lighting and weather conditions. The Nikon D5 is a professional level camera that has a full-frame sensor, is extremely fast focussing, and has excellent low light performance thanks to an ultra-high ISO range. The camera chassis is constructed from magnesium alloy which is both dust and weather sealed to enable working in the harshest of environments.
Air Force Firefighters – Changes Behind the Visor

By Lorena Thomas

There have been some changes to Fire Flights recently. Our firefighters are now kitted out in the most up-to-date clothing, numbers have been increased and training courses increasing the Fire Trade capability are starting to show results.

“One of 16 new firefighters, Aircraftman Tanirose Tausie, has recently joined the Auckland Fire Flight.

“I’m loving what I’m doing so far and the team at the Fire Station have been very welcoming. Learning to drive a manual gear box has been a challenge but I feel I have now mastered it and I am looking forward to completing the Light 4 x 4 course in Burnham and then my Class 2 driver’s course.”

At Ohakea, Corporal John Cameron is one of the Trade’s Active Reservists who left the Air Force in 2013 to take up a position as an Emergency Management officer for Rio Tinto, Iron Ore mine in Australia.

He is now a career Firefighter with Fire and Emergency New Zealand, stationed at the Porirua Fire Station.

“Enlisting as an Air Force reservist firefighter has enabled me to continue training and widening my firefighting knowledge in aviation firefighting as well as catching up with long term friends that I haven’t seen since leaving. Since re-enlisting I am able to help and pass on my training and experiences and have a positive influence on training around the station.”

The Trade is continuing to provide firefighters to exercises and operations.

Base Woodbourne’s Deputy Shift Leader Corporal Gordon Munn said while on Exercise Pitch Black in Tindal, Australia he worked alongside Royal Australian Air Force firefighters providing fire cover and responding to multiple real-time emergencies with coalition aircraft.

“Earlier this year I was deployed alongside NZ Army Firefighters to Tasmania to assist local fire crews battling numerous bush fires across the island. We worked as part of a Remote Area Firefighting crew, utilising helicopters to access hard to reach zones.”

The Trade is also recruiting skilled civilian firefighters who, like Senior Firefighter Craig Stephens, are part of a growing Fire workforce. Craig joined the Woodbourne Fire Flight last year where he is using skills from his volunteer Firefighter role in Blenheim.

“It’s been a great opportunity to join the NZDF and become a professional firefighter this way, I’ve picked up a lot of new skills and really enjoy being part of the Woodbourne Fire team.”

For the majority of us it may never matter who our firefighters are, whether Regular Force, Reserve or civilian, new to the Trade or with or without deployed and operational experience, we just see motivated, resilient and skilled personnel who have trained hard and are always ready to keep us safe.

The Trade’s greatest value is the people behind the visor.
The squadron was included in a South Pacific SAR symposium, hosted by the United States Coastguard, at Barbers Point in Hawaii.

“There were delegates from a number of nations – all sorts of rescue coordination organisations, including government contractors and support organisations. Our involvement included giving the symposium attendees an appreciation of the assets that we use and what we’re capable of doing,” Air Warfare Officer Flight Lieutenant (FLTLT) John Brereton said.

Nations who attended the symposium included Australia, Cook Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Fiji, France, Marshall Islands, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Samoa and the United States.

“We conducted a demonstration flight, which involved some coordination with the French Navy, US Coastguard and the Australian Maritime Safety Authority. It was a great experience to fly with these aircraft, as we don’t often do coordinated operations with them,” FLTLT Brereton said.

Search and rescue accounts for about 10 per cent of the squadron’s flying, so it was beneficial to see other nations’ resources and confirm that the squadron was doing what was best practice, he said.

As part of the team’s demonstration flight they dropped two different survivor assistance stores to a ferry which was in simulated distress. They dropped a MADD pack (Minimum Assistance Delivery Device) and a Helibox – both of which could be used to drop survival supplies to survivors in the water or on land.

“New Zealand has been putting a lot of work into supporting and strengthening the SAR capabilities within numerous Pacific nations.

“It was great to be able to show them the aircraft, because these are the people who are going to be directly liaising with New Zealand’s Rescue Coordination Centre. They had the opportunity to see the assets that are actually responding and what capabilities we can bring to a SAR scenario.”

Typically No. 5 Squadron doesn’t spend that much time with the US Coastguard because the Orion is a Maritime Patrol Aircraft and we normally spend a lot more time with other nations’ navies.

“We’ve got a lot in common with the US Coastguard, so it was really great to strengthen ties with them,” FLTLT Brereton said.
Instruments are being tuned, uniforms are straightened, a guitar is strummed as last minute songs are being perfected – this is the gentle chaos before the curtain opens on the Air Force Band’s annual Wellington concert. *Air Force News* was invited backstage to chat with the musicians before the lights came up.

The programme had been in planning for months, Air Force Music Director Flight Lieutenant (FLTLT) David Gallaher said. The result was a broad spectrum of music from classical to pop, from symphonic to jazz, all designed to appeal to the wide range of the audience’s musical tastes.

Returning to the stage were vocalists Leading Aircraftmen Barbara Graham and Stephanie Paris and celebrated piper Flight Sergeant Murray Mansfield. The special guest vocalist was Chris Crowe, who has starred in Phantom of the Opera.

“The Air Force in Concert has morphed from what it used to be – Air Force Proms, which is very traditional, full of the Dambusters and Land of Hope and Glory and it was often the same repertoire,” FLTLT Gallaher said.

“In this concert we’re trying to show off different sections of the band because we are very fortunate to have some wonderful musicians at the moment. So utilising that strength as much as possible and picking pieces that really show them off is uppermost when choosing repertoire.”

The 65-member band is made up of New Zealand Defence Force Reservists, most of whom are active in Wellington’s buzzing music scene.

Military bands provide a service, and are called on to play at parades, at Government House, balls and funerals, FLTLT Gallaher said.

“There’s nothing like performing music to an audience to get a live reaction from all your hard work. It’s a way to showcase the band in public.”

There would be some pre-show nerves among the musicians, he said. “If you haven’t got nerves, you’re not going to have a good performance, you’ve got to have that positive energy to lift the performance and make sure everything’s fizzing.”

Bandmaster Sergeant (SGT) Ben Robertson said it had been a challenge to top last year’s concert programme but band director Flight Lieutenant David Gallaher had delivered the goods.
“This year’s concert will feature lots of different genres but every piece is a crowd pleaser,” he said.

“It’s a great chance to hear the finest wind and percussion players New Zealand has to offer,” SGT Robertson said.

Leading Aircraftman (LAC) Blair Latham plays the bass clarinet, tenor saxophone and guitar.

“For a musician here in town there are certain benefits from being in the band. I’m a jazz player by training so playing symphonic music is great – it’s quite different for me.”

Clarinet player Leading Aircraftman Leah Thomas said she was looking forward to surprising people with some of the songs that they were playing.

“We’ve got quite a diverse range and I’m quite excited to see what people think in terms of the range of the band and how fun it can be. It has a lot of good energy – I’m excited for people to hear that.

“I hope people enjoy it and it brightens their weekend. With it being winter it’s nice to go and experience live music instead of sitting at home.”

And based on the reaction of the crowd during the show, this year’s performance packed another punch.

Opening with the haunting vocals of LAC Graham singing Tarakihi with the Maori Culture Group, and finishing with all the singers and full band playing Toto’s Africa, the show was a stunner.

“When I’m playing, it’s like playing with family, so the nerves don’t get to me too badly.”

- Leading Aircraftman Leah Thomas
50th Apollo Anniversary – so what for the RNZAF?

How can you not be absorbed by the hysteria that surrounds missions to space? There is Elon Musk’s space travel, Amazon founder Jeff Bezos’ reusable rockets, NASA’s voyager (1&2) missions still transmitting in deep space, and Chinese lunar landers on the far side of the moon. We are firmly in the modern space race!
The Apollo missions into space 50 years ago were a huge accomplishment and benefited science, technology and humanity. This small step for man was, in fact, a giant leap for mankind.

Termed space spin offs – the following are some inventions specifically related to the 50-year-old Apollo missions that we use in today’s Air Force.

The technological advancement in microelectronics is probably the single biggest achievement to come out of the Apollo missions. The development of the integrated circuit revolutionised electronics and the integrated circuits created are used in almost all electronic equipment today – including in our aircraft.

Our firefighters have NASA to thank for a fire resistant suit that protected astronauts, following the 1967 Apollo fire. Along the same lines NASA produced a lightweight breathing system including facemask, frame, harnesses, and air bottle. Today, almost every manufacturer of breathing apparatus incorporates NASA technology.

The space blanket that is used in emergency situations as well as in Air Force survival kits has NASA to thank. NASA used the blanket to protect delicate instruments from space radiation without adding weight. The same material is used to reduce the noise associated with engine exhaust and as insulation for our homes and buildings.

Huge efficiencies in aircraft maintenance came about through the invention of cordless power tools and vacuums, created by Black & Decker to extract core samples from below the lunar regolith.

CAT scan/MRI/radiography – all of which were founded on the back of NASA technology to discover imperfections in space components and to enhance lunar imaging. This technology is used in the medical field but also aircraft structural testing.

Freeze dried food (to save weight) developed for Apollo astronauts are the same ones still used in today’s field rations (ration packs).

Flight simulation and the “joystick”. As seen in support of flying and maintenance training, advanced flight simulation alongside 3D graphics and virtual reality were developed to attempt to visualise space-based environments on earth. The joystick, as seen in many aircraft cockpits (including the T-6C Texan) and gaming has NASA to thank for its evolution. Used in the lunar rover, the joystick was developed to help astronauts control the moon buggy.

Without the goal of humans landing on the moon many of these inventions would not have been discovered when they did. Innovation and a must-do attitude through space discovery science bled across to multiple other fields and continues to do so today to make our lives easier. Although working in the space domain isn’t easy, it’s extremely interesting and there is so much more to learn. Will we ever see another Apollo sized project and the benefits to humanity that come from it?

GET INVOLVED!
If you’d like to get involved in the NZDF Space Capability please contact WGCDR Leigh Foster – Leigh.Foster@nzdf.mil.nz
Be your best self each day, create a reputation you can be proud of, and graduate having influenced everyone around you positively. These words shaped the legacy that 19/01 Initial Officer Training Course (IOTC) wanted to leave as they prepared to integrate into Air Force operations.

To consolidate their military skills and ensure they are ready to take the next step, trainees design and deliver their culminating exercise, which tests their leadership and ability to work together as a team while serving the community.

During the week-long exercise, the group donated their time and energy to a variety of organisations around the region. They cleaned and repainted 85 service gravestones at Omaka cemetery and carried out general maintenance and gardening for Mental Health Advocacy Service Marlborough CARE.

Further afield, they lent a hand to the Brook Waimarama Sanctuary in Nelson with track cutting and building steps. And with the assistance of a barge at Awaroa, they helped the Department of Conservation to move firewood from one hut to another further up the coast.

“Ex Aestimatio was a brilliant opportunity for us to practise and consolidate all the skills we learnt throughout our time on IOTC,” Pilot Officer (PLTOFF) Ali McKain said. Trainees learnt a lot about forward planning and thinking ahead, flexibility and the consideration of contingencies – all valuable skills that will serve them well in their future roles.

Importantly, it also reiterated the importance of teamwork. “Our achievements throughout the week reminded us just how much of a positive impact we can achieve through collaboration and hard work. Apart from being an amazing learning experience, it was also a lot of fun!” PLTOFF McKain said.

“Not only did it allow us to showcase our new found planning, coordination and leadership skills, it enabled us to give back and engage with the community in a meaningful way,” Pilot Officer (PLTOFF) Ali McKain said. Trainees learnt a lot about forward planning and thinking ahead, flexibility and the consideration of contingencies – all valuable skills that will serve them well in their future roles.

Importantly, it also reiterated the importance of teamwork. “Our achievements throughout the week reminded us just how much of a positive impact we can achieve through collaboration and hard work. Apart from being an amazing learning experience, it was also a lot of fun!” PLTOFF McKain said.
About 5,000 people flocked to a ‘Helicopter Fun Day’ at the Air Force Museum of New Zealand in the July school holidays. Both the RNZAF and civilian operators joined the Museum team in giving Christchurch locals a special insight into all things rotary during this free family event.

The programme included the opportunity to see all the Museum’s helicopters on display together, as well as a visiting A109 from No. 3 Squadron. Hundreds queued for the chance to sit inside one of the helicopters, or to get cammed-up with face paint and try on a helmet.

Drone flying demonstrations by COBi Digital also proved popular, as did the helicopter flights and ground display from the team at Christchurch Helicopters. In addition, more than 500 kids went on a helicopter-themed hunt around the Museum, which came with the added bonus of entering a draw to win a helicopter flight with Christchurch Helicopters, piloted by Richie McCaw.

It was fantastic to see the Museum buzzing with so many people having a great time and the feedback received after the event was overwhelmingly positive. It was also an excellent opportunity to showcase an element of our modern Air Force and for children and parents alike to engage directly with personnel.

Judging by the levels of fascination and excitement, we’re confident that more than a few seeds were sown for future careers in aviation and/or the military!

A big thank you to No. 3 Squadron, the team from Defence Careers Christchurch, and the personnel from Woodbourne who travelled down to help out on the day, all of whom contributed to a very successful event.
Mental Health Awareness Week runs from September 23–29. This is an important week for the New Zealand Defence Force. It’s a reminder for us to talk about mental wellbeing for our community and learn about how we can look after ourselves, our mates, and our families better. It’s also a great time to remind ourselves what support and resources are available to us here at NZDF.

We’ve seen huge improvements within the Force with people being more open to talking about mental wellbeing and seeking support when they need it – but we are still on a journey. It’s important for us to remember we are a subset of the broader New Zealand population and will experience similar rates of mental ill-health as the everyday New Zealander. We know the traits that make us successful as a fighting force (like being strong, self-reliant, and in control) can sometimes make it feel harder to ask for help, so it’s important that we have a plan in place to tackle this if we ever find ourselves not going so well.

The nature of our work and military lifestyle can place unique demands on us and our families, so it’s important that we are open with talking about our mental health and proactively look after ourselves to maintain our wellbeing, and seeking support when we need it.

We encourage everyone to get involved with the events at your camp or base this week and take time to explore your way to wellbeing.

What’s on during the week?
Keep an eye out on the ILP, NZDF official Facebook page and community group, and the health website during the week for the NZDF Mental Health Awareness Week Schedule and updates. Each camp and base will be hosting events and activities – check out the NZDF MHAW 2019 schedule to see what’s happening in your area. We’re also running the Health and Wellbeing survey – read on for more information!

Health and Wellbeing Survey
The NZDF will be running the Health and Wellbeing survey to coincide with Mental Health Awareness Week. The survey will run from 23 September to 6 October. It is part of our ongoing commitment to maximising the health and wellbeing of our people and continuation of our duty of care. In 2016, we undertook the first health and wellbeing survey in NZDF. This gave us useful insights about how our people were going and priority areas for focus. It’s a good time now to check in again to help shape areas for future action.

NZDF members, look out for an email invitation to the survey or for a paper copy delivered to your unit. You’ll also be able to pick up a copy from Health Centres and Libraries. The survey is confidential and we don’t ask for any personally identifying information, so NZDF members can feel confident in answering the survey honestly.
Our favourite ways to wellbeing

Everyone has their own unique ways for looking after their wellbeing. It’s important you find your own and know what works for you, and then incorporate them into your life as regularly as possible. Here are some of our favourites:

- Spend quality time with people who genuinely make you feel good
- Invest in other areas of your life outside of work so you aren’t defined just by your work
- Set yourself a goal to work towards and motivate you to keep going
- Have a plan about what you’d do if you’re not feeling okay – identify one or two safe people that you’d trust to talk to about your mental health
- Keep a list of your unique signs of stress and have a plan to tackle them as soon as you notice them appearing
- Explore ways to maintain your work/life balance – have a chat to your manager about managing your work demands and exploring flexible work options
- Try something new – whether it be a hobby, new activity, or meeting new people
- Schedule in time to exercise and to prepare a healthy meal – it’s much easier when it’s planned
- Take annual leave regularly. Time away from work can help put things in perspective
- Take time to have a good laugh with your mates and loved ones
- Take time away from your phone, technology and social media
- Look for opportunities to give back to the community and support others
- Take a moment to appreciate the good things in life that we can take for granted
- Give mindfulness meditation a go – it can help you stay in the moment and manage uncomfortable thoughts and feelings

Above: Mental Health Awareness Week image

Tools & Resources

Check out health.nzdf.mil.nz to find more information on the four domains of health and the tools below. You can find these resources online or at your nearest Defence Health Centre.
Air Force Harriers Finish Strongly

A team of Air Force Harrier runners recently competed in the North Island Cross Country Championship at Spa Park in Taupo.

The annual event attracts top runners from around the North Island and this year was no exception. Despite the cold conditions (including those of us from the lower North Island driving through falling snow on the Desert Road the afternoon prior), the weather was perfect for the event.

This year the team performed extremely well. Sergeant Laura Smidt-Robinson placed 4th in the 5km Senior Women’s event, nearly catching 3rd place at the finish.

Leading Aircraftman Isaac Murphy placed 6th in the 9km Senior Men’s event, holding an outstanding average pace of 3min 18 sec per km.

Flight Lieutenant Dave Vernon Placed 5th in his 6km Master Men’s category race, while recovering from recent illness and still maintaining a hot pace of 3min 41 sec per km.

THE FULL TEAM COMPRISED
SQNLDR Matt Tristram (WLG)
FLTLT Dave Vernon (WB)
SGT Graham Anderson (AK)
SGT Laura Smidt-Robinson (WB)
CPL John Glanville (AK)
LAC Sam Durrant (AK)
LAC Isaac Murphy (OH)
Mr Hartley Malcolm-Stevens (WB)

BLADDERS MATTER

Critical vulnerability

A characteristic or key element of a force that if destroyed, captured or neutralised will significantly undermine the fighting capability of the force and its centre of gravity.

Air Power in Action
Breaking Records at the Pacific Games

Sergeant (SGT) Brady Grant has represented New Zealand in the 2019 Pacific Games, held in Apia, Samoa recently. He not only made it into the finals in the 400m track event, but he also broke the New Zealand record for his age group.

“About 3,500 athletes from 24 countries competed in 26 sports in this year’s Games. After taking a couple of days to acclimatise to Samoa’s high temperatures, SGT Grant, 34, ran his first heat, coming third with a time of 49.22 seconds and qualifying for the final.

“I had the final the next day and ended up coming seventh but I had a faster time of 49.17 seconds and got a New Zealand age-group record at the same time,” he said.

Based at Ohakea, SGT Grant found Samoa’s stifling heat to be one of the biggest challenges, as he had been training in the Manawatu in hail and rain in temperatures reaching a miserable 3C or 4C.

“Going over there was a bit of a shock to the system – it was about 30C each day. You do your warm-up and you had to cool down before the race. It’s just one of those things you do – you just push through.”

The team stayed in the Olympic Village in Apia and had the New Zealand Olympic Committee look after them, SGT Grant said.

“‘We were socialising with weightlifters and taekwondo athletes. We were also meeting some ex-Olympians and people heading off to the next Olympics too.’

He had the opportunity to watch New Zealand weightlifter Laurel Hubbard, who won two gold medals in her events.

For the past three years SGT Grant has been competing in the New Zealand athletics circuit in the Open and Masters age groups.

“It got into it quite late, which is unfortunate because I’m doing alright. I like the fact that I can still fit it in with my family. I can train about an hour or two each day, which I can fit into my lunch break or at the end of work. Representing my country was a dream come true and something I’ve always wanted to do.”

The Air Force was able to offer SGT Grant sports representation leave to compete in the games, which he said was a “big bonus” working for the service.

“It was a good experience, there were a couple of people there who had been to the Olympics and have qualified for the Tokyo Olympics next year, so running alongside them was pretty cool.”

– SGT Brady Grant
Gliding On

A special wings parade was held in Trentham recently at 22 Squadron Air Training Corps (ATC).

Cadet Henry Hope-Cross had flown solo in a glider earlier this year and while that was an achievement in itself, Henry did it aged 13-years-old, making him one of only two cadets in ATC history to reach this milestone under the age of 14.

Cadet Hope-Cross said that he'd always been interested in flying and so he joined the Wellington Gliding club (who glide out in Greytown) in January 2017. He enjoyed that but decided to move to start gliding in Kaitoke for convenience.

Just gliding with the club wasn’t enough though and so he looked for more opportunities to go flying in other places. A little initiative and investigation later, he found 22 Squadron the Air Training Corps in Upper Hutt.

He found the idea of flying with the RNZAF more enticing than civilian flying, so to be able to get a taste of the RNZAF through Air Cadets was a great opportunity for him.

Cadet Hope-Cross said he can’t wait to turn 16 so that he can attend National Aviation Course Powered Flying and get his Power Flying wings. Eventually, when he’s old enough he wants to join the Air Force and fly the new P-8A Poseidons.
INFORMATION ENVIRONMENT POLICY CHANGE IS COMING

Like many other parts of NZDF, a major policy reform is taking place for the information environment.

The Joint Defence Services Policy Team, in collaboration with Communication, Information System, Chief Information Security Officer, Knowledge and Information Management Directorate and Security, is developing a brand new centralised set of information management policy rules for the information environment. The new policy framework is an ongoing programme of work and will be implemented in a phased approach.

This will consist of a single high-level Defence Force Orders (DFO), and subordinate Defence Force Instructions (DFIs) and Defence Force Manuals (DMs).

Under Phase 1, DFO 60: Management of the Information Environment is currently being developed. Material changes to the policies that must be followed will occur in a later phase.

In subsequent phases, DFIs will contain the technical rules, instructions and processes, and DMs will generically describe procedures, tactics or techniques, including standard operating procedures.

A new approvals regime is also coming. The regime will ensure that activities requiring approvals within scope of the information environment are subject to a clear process, regardless of whether the activity is documented in policy or not. Further work is underway to design the approvals regime.

Air Power Development Centre Quiz

1. To the nearest 100, how many DH82 Tiger Moths did the RNZAF operate between 1939 and 1945: 200, 300, or 400?
2. Northrop Grumman is developing a new heavy bomber for the USAF. What is its designation?
3. Who makes the JF-17 'Thunder' multi-role fighter aircraft?
4. Where is Kaipara Air Weapons Range located?
5. Who was the first NZ military aviator to die in combat?
6. What does NATO stand for?
7. What does it mean to have air parity?
8. Describe the task of an escort.
9. The South China Sea is one of three seas adjacent to China. Name one other sea.
10. What is an AESA?

Think you can stump our readers? Email quiz questions to APDC via ohapdc@nzdf.mil.nz
Working on the C-130 ramp is always a favourite opportunity for photographers to get up close to the action, this shot was taken over Raoul Island in the Kermadecs. The Air Force accurately delivered eight drops of supplies and equipment to the team working on the Island.

PETTY OFFICER
CHRIS WEISSENBORN
OUR VALUES GUIDE US.

INTEGRITY
Tū Māia

COURAGE
Tū Kaha

COMMITMENT
Tū Tika

COMRADESHP
Tū Tira