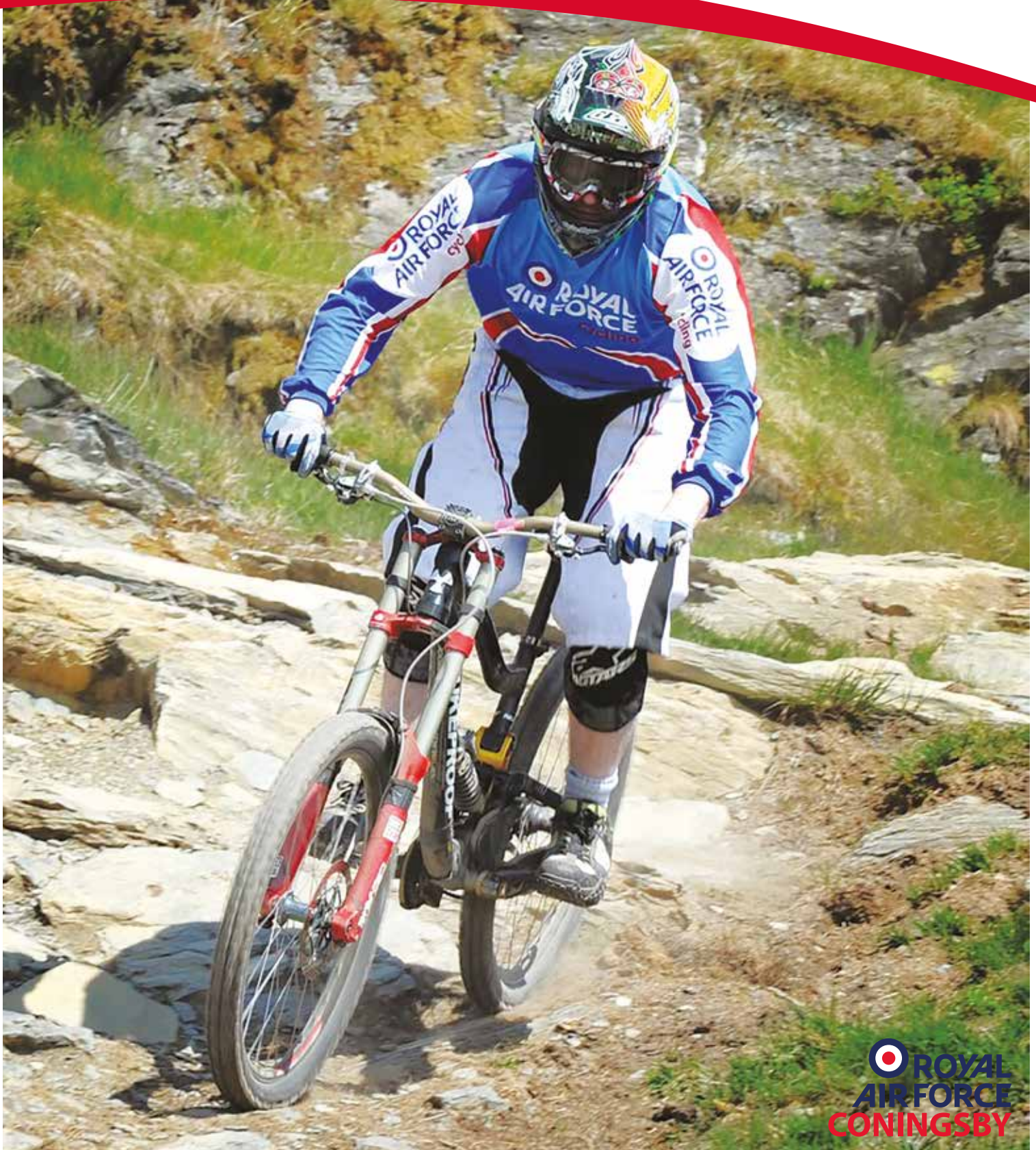
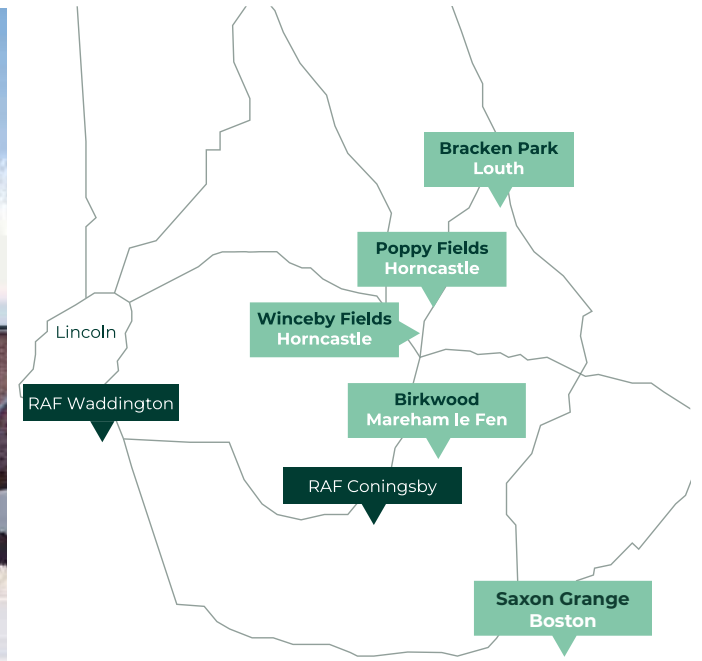


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# Stn Cdr's Foreword

Gp Capt O'Grady

**Welcome to the Autumn edition of our station magazine.**



**A**s ever, the past few months have been incredibly busy with RAF Coningsby Whole Force personnel continuing to work at pace, maintaining our operational edge both at home and overseas.

A significant highlight of the last few months was Exercise AGILE SHIELD, which successfully tested our ability to deploy and sustain Typhoon at dispersed locations — an essential skill we need to practice and master in the face of increasingly capable adversaries. This particular iteration was just the first of a series of Agile Combat Employment (ACE) events that will ensure we remain ready to fly, fight, and win should the need arise. Our Squadrons have also been engaged in a wide range of exercises all over the globe, from Exercises STORM and COBRA WARRIOR to PITCH BLACK and MAGIC CARPET, all in addition to fulfilling their operational commitments. The success of these commitments is only down to the professionalism and excellence of the people we have here at Coningsby. Additionally, the Typhoon Display Team and Battle of Britain Memorial Flight (BBMF) have both wrapped up outstanding display seasons, again showcasing our prowess and rich history to audiences both in the UK and internationally. We've also been privileged to host a number of VIP visits of late, reaffirming the strategic importance of RAF Coningsby's role in providing a crucial national defence capability. Thank you to all for facilitating

those visits and helping to showcase the amazing work that goes on here.

One of the standout events of the past few months was our first-ever Station Awards Night, the 'CAFTAS', bringing together hundreds of personnel from across the station including civil servants, industry partners, and the voluntary sector. The night was a resounding success, with the hangar beautifully transformed for the occasion. It was a fitting celebration of the talent, dedication, and teamwork that make RAF Coningsby what it is. The evening recognised outstanding contributions across a wide range of categories, from operational excellence to improving the quality of life on station, and was a testament to the collaborative spirit that drives our success. The atmosphere was electric, with the Typhoon flypast and opening addresses setting the tone for a night that truly showcased the best of what we do here at Coningsby.

Elsewhere, our personnel have been involved in a variety of enriching activities, some of which you'll find detailed throughout this magazine. These include the Civil Servant's Force Development Day at the National Memorial Arboretum, the Junior Ranks Pilot Scholarship Scheme, and the RAF Karate Team's recent trip to Japan to name a few. We also bid farewell to the C41 Squadron, the last of its kind at RAF Coningsby, marking the end of an era as we transition to a new model. Not to be overlooked, our Typhoon Display in North America celebrating the RCAF Centenary was a tremendous success, further strengthening our international bonds.

As always, I am immensely proud of all we've accomplished together. Your dedication and professionalism keep RAF Coningsby at the forefront of operational capability. Thank you, and I look forward to what the next quarter brings.'



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### 16 3(F) SQN OVERSEAS TRAINING FLIGHT

It has been yet again a busy period for 3(F) Sqn, not only in the air but also on the ground.

### 19 'WOULD YOU LIKE A COOKIE?'

I've become known as the 'Cookie Padre' here at RAF Coningsby, so, I wanted to take a moment with you to share why I do what I do. I'm going to get a bit vulnerable with you as I share why I give out cookies and what started it.

### 21 TYPHOON DISPLAY IN NORTH AMERICA TO CELEBRATE RCAF CENTENARY

The Typhoon Display Team (TDT) had an historic moment earlier this year when they displayed in the continent of North America for the very first time at the Spectacle Aérien de Bagotville (SAIB) in Canada.

### 22 FAREWELL TO RAF CONINGSBY'S C4I SQUADRON: THE LAST OF ITS KIND

As the sun sets on an era of dedicated service and unwavering commitment, RAF Coningsby bids farewell to its Command, Control, Communication, Computers, and Information (C4I) Squadron.

### 23 TYPHOON CYBERSPACE SQUADRON - MISSION ASSURANCE FLT

In February 24, we said a farewell to C4I Sqn and welcomed Typhoon Cyberspace Squadron (TCS), and the new Mission Assurance Flight (MAF) within.

### 24 THE 'CAFTAS'

Hundreds of people from Royal Air Force Coningsby gathered in a beautifully transformed hangar for the first 'CAFTAS' (Coningsby Awards for Talent, Achievement and Service) on Thursday 10th October.

### 27 Exercise AGILE SHIELD

From 2-6 September, RAF personnel and aircraft participated in Exercise AGILE SHIELD, a key event focused on enhancing the RAF's ability to deliver air power in a flexible and deterrent manner. The exercise aimed to test the RAF's capability to operate under heightened security, adapt to a dispersed operating posture, and assess the sustainability of operations at airbases in support of broader mission objectives.

### 29 THE JUNIOR RANK'S WELFARE FUND

The JRWF is here to provide funding for all Junior Ranks on station for AT, sports, hobbies, and education. We also organise all Junior Rank social events.

# CIVIL SERVANT'S FORCE DEVELOPMENT DAY TO NATIONAL MEMORIAL ARBORETUM

By: Chloe Devereux

On a wet a rainy Tuesday in July, an excited group of Civil Servants from various sections on station set off from Training and Development Flight on a grand adventure to the National Memorial Arboretum in Staffordshire. This was the first civilian-led Force Development day since before the Covid-19 pandemic and everyone was looking forward to it, we'd heard the café was going to be great!

By the time we arrived in Burton the weather was starting to improve, the rain had stopped and clouds were looking a little brighter. As a group, we approached the main entrance and were greeted by the lovely volunteer hosts. They gave us maps and a summary about the 150-acre park.

Whilst looking at the various memorials, we had some discussion topics instead of doing traditional stands, and everyone was encouraged to engage and contribute. We found that once the first person started the whole group all had interesting points, or personal experiences to add and explore with the team.

Our topics were focused on whether we felt pride for being a Civilian in Air and working at RAF Coningsby, and mental health both within the workplace and outside of it.

Whilst at the poignant 'Shot at Dawn' memorial, we explored whether we thought attitudes towards mental health had

changed over the last century. Although we are all more aware of how people are likely to be affected, do we really see mental health afforded the same compassion as say, a broken bone, or going into hospital for a procedure?

Our discussions were varied and once we got started we exhausted all avenues (we spent 40 minutes at one memorial – and we only had 3.5 hours at the Arboretum in total!). Once we had wrapped up our last chat it was a quick march to the onsite café for a well-deserved, and very late, lunch stop. We can confirm, the café lived up to expectations. We even managed a quick look around the gift shop before getting our transport back to base.

The whole day was a great success and helped us to explore

these topics outside of the workplace. It also allowed us to create bonds with each other and establish relationships with

people in different sections. Everyone enjoyed themselves and a second trip is planned for the autumn.



# CO-OPERATION BETWEEN NATIONS WAS TOP OF THE LIST ON EXERCISE PITCH BLACK AS LOGISTICS MOVERS FROM RAF CONINGSBY MENTORED MILITARY PERSONNEL FROM PAPUA NEW GUINEA.

By: Ed Palmer/Cpl Jo Vasey

**D**uring Exercise PITCH BLACK the Royal Air Force projected air power more than 9000 miles from home. Six Typhoons from XI (F) Squadron were accompanied by a Voyager tanker from RAF Brize Norton and scores of supporting personnel from across the Service.

Corporal Adam Cairns is an RAF Logistics Mover based at RAF Coningsby. RAF Movers are responsible for planning and executing the movement of RAF personnel and equipment by road, rail, air and sea.

The exercise is about training, and Logistics is a new branch in the Papuan armed forces. Adam and the detachment of movers from Coningsby were asked by the Royal Australian Air Force to show the Papuans how military equipment is safely returned home.

Adam said: "The RAAF asked us if we could help mentor them to show our processes and what we do to get the kit from Australia back to the UK. As a new branch in their military the Papuans were keen to see how other nations work."

On Pitch Black, the Coningsby team's job was to ensure the equipment had arrived ready for the exercise to start, loading aircraft and liaising with customs compliance teams to make sure the military equipment had the necessary clearances. During their time in Australia, the movements section integrated well with their

RAAF counterparts, offering assistance and guidance on their own working practices, whilst also offering on the job training to two personnel of the newly formed Papua New Guinea Air Force. The training consisted of an insight into UK marshalling signals including a walk-through talk-through, and time spent understanding the paperwork required to transport items via sea.

The team were able to enjoy some recreational activities which included swimming with saltwater crocodiles, a once in a lifetime experience! Furthermore, there was time to enjoy other wildlife that habited the nearby national parks.

Squadron Leader Philip Bishop is officer commanding Logistics Squadron at RAF Coningsby. He said: "The planning for Pitch Black doesn't just happen overnight. RAF Coningsby's Movers carry out meticulous planning months in advance to ensure that both the equipment and personnel arrive at precisely the right time for the exercise."

Adam joined the RAF in 2016; he has travelled around the world and been deployed to the Middle East, Asia, North America and Europe. He continued: "Pitch Black has been good but challenging, having very little



time to turn around all the kit from the end of the exercise to getting it ready for loading on Voyager, A400M, and C17. But everyone we have worked with has been helpful."

Wing Commander Nick Startup, Officer Commanding Base Support Wing at RAF Coningsby said: "Military effect

depends on logistics, and it speaks volumes about the quality of Coningsby's movers that they were chosen to mentor the Papuan personnel on Pitch Black. It's important that when you learn, you learn from the best, and that has certainly been the case here."



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Members of the community with a range of different skills and experiences come together to champion our schools and ensure they are the best that they can be. If you are passionate about ensuring the children in your community have the best life chances, we would love to hear from you!

When you join us, you'll be supported by our friendly and experienced team as you develop your knowledge about school governance so that you can play an important part in the future of your local school. You will also have access to a range of training opportunities and the latest information from sector specialists such as the National Governance Association and Confederation of School Trusts. Being a Governor involves visits to the school and attending Governing Body meetings, in addition to some training sessions and our annual conference where you can meet and get to know other Governors, Trustees and Members.

### We're Recruiting!

We are looking for volunteers to join the Governing Bodies at all of our schools. If you would like to find out more, get in touch with us: [governance@horncastleeducationtrust.org](mailto:governance@horncastleeducationtrust.org)



Don't just take our word for it...

"Being a Governor enables me to use my knowledge and skills whilst giving something back to the community."

"It's so rewarding to work with other volunteers and school staff, I love being able to help shape future opportunities for our children."

"My experience as a Governor enhanced my skills, I was able to include this when I applied for my latest job."

**We believe that every student whatever their background has the right to flourish, to achieve and to succeed and everything undertaken by Horncastle Education Trust should have this ambition at its heart.**



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At both Frithville and New York Primary Schools we know that children learn best when they are happy and secure. We work hard to create a safe, caring and nurturing environment which encourages the children, but also the staff and to thrive as a community.

In December 2018 both Primary Schools converted to academies and became part of the Horncastle Education Trust, along with Queen Elizabeth's Grammar School and Banovallum School, and then in December 2022, Huttoft Primary School joined our family of schools. We have a Local Governing Body over the two schools comprising of local authority representatives, teaching staff, parents and community governors from both schools. Both schools are improving schools and were graded as "Good" in our last Ofsted inspections in February and March 2017.

We believe that every child has an entitlement to a broad and balanced education. We are inclusive schools, which means that we receive children from all cultures and faiths and with a wide range of abilities and disabilities. We are committed to enabling all our children to achieve high standards of attainment and to reach their potential whatever their abilities.

The aim is to make the curriculum as child centred as possible, making learning stimulating and fun. We understand that all children are different and we try to find out how each child learns best. We believe the quality of learning is a direct result of the quality of teaching and constantly strive to improve. We have a commitment to working in partnership with parents, families and carers, and the collaborative schools in our cluster. Ours is a community school and we are developing a network of support for our families based here at the school.

We are mindful of the future and aim to prepare our children for the challenges of life yet to come. As well as equipping them with basic skills, we endeavour to develop in their personal qualities such as creativity, resourcefulness, independence and adaptability to enable them to become happy, successful and self-sufficient citizens of the 21st Century.





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Banovallum's relatively small size means we know our students and allow them to flourish as individuals. Our curriculum is geared towards serving the needs of the students and ensuring they receive as broad and balanced an education as possible. Delivering that curriculum, is a knowledgeable and specialist staff, committed to delivering the best all-round education for the students in their care and ensuring they can make their next steps with confidence.

Augmenting this personalised curriculum is a breadth of extra-curricular activities ranging from the Duke of Edinburgh's Award to the overseas scientific research of Operation Wallacea; the engineering of Project X and the public speaking and debates of our Law Society. We expect the students to lead on key aspects of school life and we have our Senior Prefect Team leading the School Council and our Anti-Bullying Ambassadors making a real difference to the life of the school.

The students are justifiably proud of the school and its environment which has seen a period of continuous refurbishment over the last few years, ensuring that lessons are carried out in modern, well-equipped classrooms.

Banovallum students are well-equipped to take their place in an ever changing, fast-moving modern world: confident, curious and eminently employable. Come and join our community.

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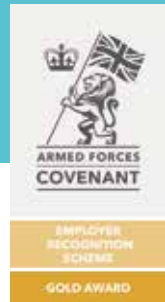
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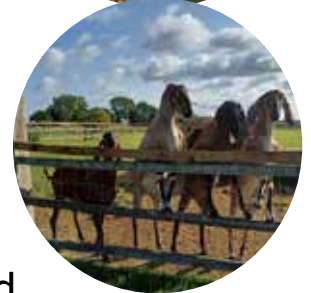
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# Junior Ranks Pilot Scholarship Scheme

By: AS1 La Porta



In conclusion, my experience with the JRPSS has been overwhelmingly positive and I could not recommend it enough for those keen to be introduced to the front seat of aviation. Whether you want to become a hobbyist pilot or are looking for a career change and wish to fly professionally, the scheme is the perfect jumping off point. I cannot thank everyone involved with JRPSS who made it possible for me to get my wings, helping me realize a lifelong dream.'

**A**S1 La Porta is one of the Junior Ranks Pilot Scholarship Scheme (JRPSS) scholars of 2024. JRPSS offers 15 hours of flying training towards either a Private Pilot License (PPL) or Light Aircraft Pilot License (LAPL), including the first exam, Air Law. This, with the 15 flying hours, enables you to fly solo and this is her story.

'In my first few lessons I learned about the primary and secondary effects of each flight control, how to maintain straight and level, ascend and descend, which then quickly escalated to recovering from a stall, how to fly a circuit and landing the aircraft all within the first 10 hours of the scheme.

Learning to fly is a transformative experience that has opened a world of possibilities and challenges. The scheme does not just give you the ability to take control of an aircraft but also enables growth and self-discovery. I cannot say it has been easy, there are many challenges to the training, and it takes a great deal of commitment, but the knowledge and confidence gained in such a short space of time is incomparable to anything I have experienced before.

In addition to flying, I volunteered at the RAF Sport Aircraft Aerobatic competition and had the unique opportunity to experience an aerobatic flight myself. The adrenaline rush and excitement

of performing loops, rolls and other manoeuvres in the sky are unmatched. Once I obtain my pilot's license, I am eager to explore aerobatic flying further.

I also had the chance to impart my experience of the scheme at Royal International Air Tattoo (RIAT), an awe-inspiring airshow that attracts aviation enthusiasts from around the globe. I had the privilege of meeting some very inspirational and passionate people from the aviation industry, who opened my eyes to the limitless possibilities of aviation.



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# RAF KARATE TEAM TRIP TO JAPAN

By: Cpl Ryan Williams

**A**s Project Officer for the RAF Karate Team's trip to Japan, I worked alongside other RAF Martial Arts Association members to put together a program that would develop everyone's karate but also allow us to experience the traditions and values of Japan.

Working in the Project Developers Team at the MSC, I'm grateful to my workplace for supporting my passion, not just allowing me to take part in this trip but also the time to train at sessions and compete throughout the year. This was an opportunity to represent the RAF on an international stage while building ties with our Japanese counterparts.

We began with the Japan Karate Shoto Federation World Cup, a showcase of high-level competitive fighting that drew practitioners from 37 nations. Watching our team captain compete on such a prestigious stage was a proud moment, highlighting the level of talent and dedication within the RAF Karate Team. The intensity of the competition was a reminder of the global nature

of karate, connecting people from around the world in the home of karate.

Training at the headquarters of the Japan Karate Association (JKA) and JKS was an unforgettable experience. These dojos, steeped in history, have been the training grounds for some of the most revered karateka in the world. However, the heat of the Japanese summer was challenging, being close to 40 degrees some days. Training with some of the best instructors each headquarters had to offer; many lessons were learned that could be brought back to the whole team.

While in Tokyo we were lucky enough to experience what Tokyo had to offer: From the neon lights of Shibuya to the serene gardens of the Meiji Shrine. We also managed a day trip to see the sites around Mt Fuji.

In Kyoto, we explored the rich cultural heritage of Japan. Nara Park, with its friendly deer and ancient temples, was a large contrast to Tokyo. Nijo Castle, and the Zen

gardens were both experiences everyone will remember.

Our visit to Hiroshima Peace Park was humbling. Walking through the park, reflecting on the events of August 6, 1945, and seeing the remnants of that day, was an experience that left us all in quiet contemplation. It was a powerful reminder of the importance of peace and the resilience of the human spirit.

One of the most enriching aspects of our trip was the defence engagement training with the Japanese Air Force karate team. We had a very warm welcome from their squad and got to train alongside them. This exchange of ideas and techniques was not only about martial arts but also about strengthening the ties between our two nations. We met with the airbase's 2\* station commander, who had learned a kata (pattern) especially for the event.

Representing the RAF in Japan allowed us to showcase our skills, learn from the very best, and immerse ourselves in a culture that is entirely different than our own.





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# 3(F) SQN OVERSEAS TRAINING FLIGHT

By: Flt Lt Will Eardley



## IT HAS BEEN YET AGAIN A BUSY PERIOD FOR 3(F) SQN, NOT ONLY IN THE AIR BUT ALSO ON THE GROUND.

The sqn recently celebrated the XO's 1000th hour on Typhoon and the departure (finally) of Sqn Ldr Gonzalez, the latter of whom will be sorely missed on both sqn and force.

During July, the sqn took part in an overseas training flight to Base Aérienne 116, Luxeuil, France. Home to the Cigognes (stalks) flying the M2000-5. The sqn sent six Typhoons from Thu – Mon, operating with minimal engineering support. The engineers and pilots once again excelled; initially sending the aircraft to service an Ex STORM WARRIOR VUL, hot pitting and continuing to Luxeuil where they were met by 12 groundcrew. Moreover, all aircraft came back fully serviceable with no faults at any time whilst operating in France.

Following the arrival in France, the remainder of Thursday was used to orientate themselves with the airbase, airspace and more importantly conduct a meet and greet with the French hosts and practice our French (which of

course the OC and XO excelled at...). The meet and greet also provided a great opportunity for aircrew, ASOS and engineers to learn about the roles of their French counterparts, current operations and how they execute in comparison to us.

Friday was planned as a joint training opportunity using the Typhoons to enable combat ready work up for the French. We flew a variety of missions in the local airspace including 2v2 BVR and 2v1 ACM. In a bid to change his mind, the sqn's newest member was given an opportunity to conduct 2v1 DACT following his recent proclamation and love for helo affil (much to the QWIs surprise). Those not taking part in flying used the time to look around a M2000-5 and repay the favour by showing French pilots and groundcrew around the Typhoons.

The weekend was used as welcome time to relax and enjoy the Burgundy region of France.

Monday was initially spent saying au revoir to the Cigognes before departing back to the UK. We did however leave them with a large box of Yorkshire tea, sqn beer and a signed print to show our appreciation and a taste of the UK!

The detachment was an excellent training opportunity for pilots and engineers to work with the lack of UK support; practicing for the upcoming ACEVAL. Additionally, the

exposure of operating with foreign nations, different aircraft types and procedures were invaluable for the sqn's newest members. But ultimately the partnerships forged during this detachment

strengthened the Anglo-French relations.

A special thanks to the JENGO for the team photo, who will not be terminating his contract and pursuing photography as a profession.







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**TEST DRIVE 2023 HYBRID ALL NEW ASTRA AND GRANDLAND!**

# 'WOULD YOU LIKE A COOKIE?'

By: Padre Chrissie Lacey

I've become known as the 'Cookie Padre' here at RAF Coningsby, so, I wanted to take a moment with you to share why I do what I do. I'm going to get a bit vulnerable with you as I share why I give out cookies and what started it.

I've never been a very outgoing person (honestly... I know you now can't shut me up!), in fact the thought of going into a crew room or up to a group of people got the butterflies proper going. But this was something that I felt convicted to do in my role as Padre, and something that is part of the role. It's important to meet people, get to know them and them to know you. We don't want to be strangers if you need to seek us out for support. But how to manage these butterflies that came from a feeling of insignificance and insecurity that I wasn't good enough for these amazing people that I wanted to serve (that's all of you lot reading this by the way).

I knew Padres before me had given out the 'morale-abo' and in the war it was cigarettes, so what could be my gift, how could I build the bridge? That's where the cookies came in. I enjoyed baking, had a



good cookie recipe and to be frank, I've just copied what a guy I've read a lot about, Jesus, did. He spent a lot of time either eating with people or providing food for them...so, I tried it.

The cookies, which started as a kind of shield to hide

behind...a gizzit to quell the butterflies...the cookies have become something so much more.

I love baking them because of where they are going. Buying the ingredients, choosing flavours, prepping the night before and turning my kitchen

into a cookie factory at 0430. And then, after loading up my bike, that's when the different butterflies arrive. Although there is still a hint of anxiety, it's overwhelmed with the joy of giving and hanging out with you, as I share the love.

People ask; 'how much does this cost you?' I'm not going to lie, I have no idea. I know it does have a cost, not just financially (even on the Padre rockstar wages), but also the sacrifice of time and stepping out of my comfort zone. But (and I've learnt about some big butts in the Bible) for me, you are worth it. The cookies have become a glimpse of grace, where love is shared unconditionally, and all of this stems from my faith. My faith, that's ingrained in me, that YOU are of immense value. If I can show you value with a simple cookie, that's an investment of love that's worth making. Because, despite my own battles with insignificance, I know no-one is insignificant, and if a cookie can help show that, then I'm always going roll up my sleeves, knock on doors, and share the love.



# WELFARE SUPPORT FOR DEPLOYING SERVICE PERSONNEL

By: Ann Parkinson

Notice to all Service Personnel going on Deployment – message from the RAF Coningsby People and Families Support Team – New Name, Same Great Support!



can be a **meal out**, a **trip** to zoos and activity centres. We also offer adult only activities such as **Well-being Days**.

For those families who live more than 35 miles away, we don't want them to miss out, so we offer an alternative closer to their homes. The family can then enjoy an activity or meal out together and we reimburse them. If the Serving Person 'opts in' we will send invitations to these monthly events

Additionally, we provide deployment resources for children (from toddlers to teens) and adult craft kits, available at the HIVE office before deployment.

**F**or those of you already familiar with the support we offer during deployments, you'll know about the services and resources available but for anyone who feels it might not be necessary, why not share this with your families and let them decide?

Our HIVE Information Officers are integrated into the RAF People and Families Support Team, providing welfare referral services and direct support to families while their loved ones are deployed. This includes spouses, partners, parents, children.

Units can draw down money from funds called the Families Welfare Grant (FWG) to support families whilst Service Personnel deploy on Operations. We ask our Service Personnel to nominate a family member whom we can support. We then send them a brief email explaining who we are, offer children's resources, which can be collected before they deploy, and explain what we can do for their families whilst they are away.

For those living locally we have FREE passes for Jump Inc Lincoln, Jubilee Park swimming Pool, Tattershall Farm Park, Tattershall Castle,



and we are looking at Season tickets for Lincoln Utd FC, which can be used as many times as the family wishes.

The best bit is we also organise a **FREE** deployed family's event monthly which

We're here to support your families with everything we have to offer. For detailed information on Deployment Support go to the RAF People and Families Support SharePoint site.

# TYPHOON DISPLAY IN NORTH AMERICA TO CELEBRATE RCAF CENTENARY

The Typhoon Display Team (TDT) had an historic moment earlier this year when they displayed in the continent of North America for the very first time at the Spectacle Aérien de Bagotville (SAIB) in Canada. Taking the opportunity to help the Royal Canadian Air Force (RCAF) celebrate their 100th Anniversary, TDT were proud to represent the RAF and foster those all-important NATO relationships.

With four transatlantic shuttle runs to make it all happen; an RCAF CC-150 (Airbus A310 in an Air-to-Air Refuelling fit) brought the display team, requisite cargo equipment and two Typhoons (via AAR) over the pond in the week preceding the show (22-23 June 2024); and then back again via CC-150T and Canadian Hercules! Showcasing great interoperability and cooperation between NATO allies.

The three UK Typhoon pilots were lucky enough to have a quick trip in the backseat of the RCAF CF-18 (Hornet) during Large Force Exercises with USAF assets (F-35As & B-52) and the practice for the CF-18 airshow 'Mass Attack'.

A 'Missing Man' formation was also integrated into the RCAF Mass Attack, and flown by RAF Exchange Officer Flt Lt Will Randle, as a

dedication to the late Sqn Ldr Mark Long, TDT Supervisor and previous Typhoon Display Pilot.

In total, 28 personnel from RAF Coningsby deployed to Bagotville, Canada; with 'Tornado' Eng Team headed up by Chief Tech Mark Wilson and over signed by FS Andy Good.

The early party of TDT personnel were even lucky enough to visit Quebec, where they visited the 'Van Doos' Museum to learn all about the Royal 22nd Regiment of Canada and their famous Goat mascot. Plenty of poutine was consumed over the 12-day trip and spirits were high for the first two full days of flying with stunning weather reaching 35oc – certainly a little too hot for a black flying suit and safety boots! The final day of flying unfortunately saw some biblical levels of rain – luckily us Brits were used to it, however we did have to save our American F-35 friends, as they had naively turned up without a tent or any shelter.

There were more than 150,000 spectators over the weekend, many of whom only spoke French – much to the PR Team's horror and bemusement! It was wonderful to meet so many trans-Atlantic Typhoon fans, with many telling us they had driven over 10 hours across America to join us in Canada.



**If you would like to volunteer for the Typhoon Display PR Team for the 2025 season, register your interest with Sgt Gaz Oldfield Gary.Oldfield204@mod.gov.uk.**



# FAREWELL TO RAF CONINGSBY'S C4I SQUADRON: THE LAST OF ITS KIND

By: WO Iain Cox

As the sun sets on an era of dedicated service and unwavering commitment, RAF Coningsby bids farewell to its Command, Control, Communication, Computers, and Information (C4I) Squadron. Though times have changed and technology has advanced, the Squadron has provided dedicated IT and communication support for the home of the QRA(S) and the Typhoon fleet ever since the welcoming of the RAF's first Squadron of Eurofighter Typhoon to RAF Coningsby in 2004.

Since then, the Squadron consisting of three flights and 1000's of Aviators over the decades having served there and provided effective and secure communications for RAF Coningsby. Now the last remaining C4I Sqn in the Royal Air Force, it is time to reminisce upon the Squadron's 20-year life, as it closes its doors, and evolves to adapt to new technologies and threats.

Originally led by Aerosystems (AS) Engineering Officers, the Squadron's main function has always been to support Air and Engineering Operations. Sqn Ldr Emily Flynn was the first Communications Electronics (CE) Engineering Officer to

take command, leading C4I Sqn in a new direction. Her leadership during her tenure enhanced the Squadrons ability to effectively and efficiently deliver critical Typhoon CIS support to the Typhoon Force in the UK, overseas deployments and significantly in a newly established enduring commitment in the Falkland Islands since 2009.

C4I Sqn personnel have been on call since the very start, providing 24-hour cover, 7 days a week and 365 days of the year for all essential Typhoon CIS engineering and defence communication requirements. A huge responsibility to maintain essential services to enable Defence Tasks.

In a role perhaps more typical of a C4I Sqn today, Information Support Flight (ISF) served as the backbone of RAF Coningsby's core networks. From maintaining MOSS, DII, and eventually MODNet capabilities in the IHUB, to building bespoke communications systems to deliver key operational needs in Operational Communications Section (OCS), ISF were always adapting. Vital cryptographic services were provided by the Cryptographic cell which have expanded in

complexity as modernised Cryptographic technology was introduced. In 2020 under Typhoon Force growth, the Cyber Protection Team (CPT) was formed, engaging threats from the new cyber domain. ISF personnel have been pivotal to ensure the Confidentiality, Integrity and Availability of RAF Coningsby's communications services.

Communications Flight were fundamental to successfully maintaining the units' Air Traffic Management Services, where the Ground Radio section worked to diligently maintain Ground Radio Installations and ensure compliance to aviation standards.

The DATO was integral to upholding RAF Coningsby telephony networks, allowing for efficient and effective communication and enabling future change programmes. With the station consistently changing and improving infrastructure, the Projects team ensured that the estates IT installations were completed and commissioned to industry standards, with significant projects such as 12 Sqn establishment, building of the new Typhoon

training facility and key improvements to the TACTC infrastructure.

In 2019, the Squadron underwent reorganisation as part of Project Marshall, which led to the disbandment of Comms Flight. Despite this, C4I Squadron continued its commitment to excellence, contributing consistent support to RAF Coningsby and its fleet of cutting-edge Typhoons and iconic BBMF aircraft. Over the subsequent years, change programmes saw further reduction of Sqn personnel as many functions were centralised. The Sqn still maintained the highest of standards and core ethos, ensuring the transformation was well supported and the needs of RAF Coningsby advocated.

Ground Support Systems Flight works closely with the Typhoon Sqns maintaining both the Engineering Support System which takes data off the Typhoon for the Engineering professions to maintain the aircraft. While the Mission Support Systems allow Pilots to electronically integrate mission planning and debriefing. Such an integral role in Typhoon has seen GSS Flight personnel deployed on every Typhoon operation, Op Ellamy in 2011, Op Shader from 2015, and



regularly on Op Biloxi, & Op Azotize. Additionally, GSS Flt personnel regularly deploy on the various exercises and Air Shows around the globe. As with the Typhoon, the supporting IT equipment has been regularly updated to keep pace with the increasing data requirements of the aircraft. With a new version of ESS, TyAMPA and SCEPTRE coming into service, this will ensure that Typhoon data is able to be efficiently and effectively exploited in the future.

Finally, in February 2024, RAF Coningsby transferred to the new Air Command and Control model and C4I Squadron was disbanded. Joining together forward Typhoon CIS support elements of C4I Sqn's at RAF Lossiemouth and Coningsby to create a Typhoon Cyberspace Squadron under the new Typhoon Air Wing and creating a Digital Support Flight under the Air Cyber Services Centre for airbase 2Gp requirements.

To commemorate the end of an era, a final bottom table event was organised by Sqn Ldr Sarah Bannon (OC C4I Sqn) and WO Iain Cox (WO C4I Sqn) at the Warrant Officers' and Sergeants' Mess, bringing together members of C4I Squadron, past and present. Old OCs and Warrant Officers graced the occasion as special guests, including now-Air Commodore Emily Flynn, honouring the squadron's legacy with reverence and camaraderie.

C4I Sqn proudly welcomed their industry partners, whose contributions have been invaluable to the Squadron's mission, and with whom friendships have been forged and maintained.

As the last toast was raised and memories were shared, RAF Coningsby, and so the Royal Air Force, said goodbye to C4I Squadron. Though the Squadron is no longer, its legacy of exceptional service and commitment will endure. The last of its kind.

# TYPHOON CYBERSPACE SQN - MISSION ASSURANCE FLT

By: FS Sean Reece

## In February 24, we said a farewell to C4I Sqn and welcomed Typhoon Cyberspace Squadron (TCS), and the new Mission Assurance Flight (MAF) within.

The Flt encompasses the Typhoon Cyber Protection Team (Ty-CPT), Operational Communications Section (OCS), and the Digital Encryption Team (Crypto Cell).

Operating across RAF Coningsby and RAF Lossiemouth, Mission Assurance Flight supports Typhoon Exercises and Operations by assuring the platforms Communication & Information Systems (CIS). This is achieved by protecting the CIS equipment from cyber threats, supporting the CIS requirements for deploying Squadrons, and providing Cryptographic Key for the integrity of the Typhoon's mission.

Ty-CPT plays a pivotal role in Typhoon Cyber Security. The team is responsible for Cyber Terrain Mapping, Incident Response, System Audits, and supporting Cyber Assurance under the Secure by Design framework.

Since their formation, they have worked closely with the Typhoon Security Assurance Officer, CAF HQ, RAF Police, and Industry Partners, making a substantial impact on the platform's overall security posture. To date, Ty-CPT has responded to ten serious cyber incidents, demonstrating their crucial role in maintaining platform security. Additionally, they have developed Cyber Incident Response Plans and Cyber Attack Recovery Plans, enhancing the Typhoon platform's rapid cyber response capability and influencing future developments. The team regularly address malware detection, privilege escalation, connection of unauthorised devices and SypOp breaches.

Ty-CPT have recently participated in Ex BAMBOO EAGLE, a cyber protection exercise designed to evaluate performance and test new defence measures against Red Teams. Following the completion of the exercise, the team received high praise from the Exercise organisers and AirCylSOC personnel for their leadership and initiative. Lessons Identified from this exercise led to a proposal presented to the Typhoon Cyber Steering Committee, who supported the team's recommendations, which has bolstered Typhoon's security measures.

Looking ahead, the team will be heavily involved in Defensive Network Monitoring and supporting the cyber element of ACE, further solidifying their role in the cyber defence of the Typhoon platform.

OCS serves as a one-stop shop for all deployable communication needs for Typhoon Exercises and Operations. They generate comprehensive communication plans and tailored Typhoon Force requirements. Although a small team, OCS play a pivotal role in the planning and

provision of communication equipment for all Typhoon operational requirements. OCS collaborate closely with external Force Elements to ensure seamless capability procurement and delivery. Recently, the team successfully supported GSS and Typhoon Force Elements ensuring Exercise Pitch Black and Agile Shield, going above and beyond to ensure mission success.

The Digital Encryption Team is crucial for ensuring Typhoon operates securely with pivotal encrypted systems for voice, navigation, radar and mission systems. Without their work, the aircraft and personnel on the ground would be unable to contribute to operational output in a secure manner.

The Crypto team create and distribute bespoke encryption packages to Force Elements, tailored to specific needs for Exercises and Operations. Early engagement with the team ensures that communications are established and maintained, allowing Typhoon to deliver Air and Engineering Operations both in the UK and abroad.



# RAF CONINGSBY RECOGNISES PERSONNEL IN FIRST AWARDS NIGHT

By: Ed Palmer – Deputy Media and communications officer

**Hundreds of people from Royal Air Force Coningsby gathered in a beautifully transformed hangar for the first 'CAFTAS' (Coningsby Awards for Talent, Achievement and Service) on Thursday 10th October.**

**N**ominees from the Royal Air Force, Civil Service, Industry, and the Voluntary Sector were recognised for their commitment, dedication and sacrifice. Categories included outstanding contribution to operations, collaborative working, championing heritage and ethos, and improving the quality of life in the workplace, to name but a few.

The evening began with a spectacular flypast from one of the Station's Typhoon aircraft, and opening addresses from the Station Commander, Group Captain Paul O'Grady, and the Typhoon Air Wing Commander, Group Captain Billy Cooper.

Twelve awards were made during the night, with categories covering almost every aspect of Station life.

The first industry award was won by Tracy Robinson of BAE Systems for her contributions to inspiring the next generation. Tracy's passion for education has expanded STEM activities for local schools, and she has implemented the Station's first BAE Systems work experience programme. This award was presented by the guest of honour, former Chief of the Air Staff, Air Chief Marshal Sir Michael Graydon.



A dozen RAF Coningsby Stewards delivered an immaculate front of house experience at the event.

One steward said:

***"My colleagues from Catering Flight have been incredible, what they've done in here is amazing, everything looks perfect. They call it the CAFTAS, but really does look just like an award ceremony you'd see on television."***

A commitment to collaborative working ensured that Work Services Flight won the first award of the evening. Flight Lieutenant Emily Child collected the award and said:

***"The collaborative working we do with the Station, Defence Infrastructure and VIVO has achieved so much this year. But it's the people that make it happen, how they work with us makes such a smooth-running environment, we just all get on with a professionalism that respects each other."***

RAF Coningsby's HIVE and Community Support Team took the Team of the Year award. Ben Rossi is the Community Development Officer at RAF Coningsby. He said:

***"Firstly, thank you to the team for everything they do to support service families and the community. They deserve this recognition; Whatever the issue, they are the first point of contact for service personnel and their families, and the community."***





The RAF Benevolent Fund Airplay Team won the Service to the Community award for the Youth Support Programme. The programme supports children from ages 5-16 with youth clubs and activities provided for service and non-service children alike.



The Station Commander concluded:

*"All the nominations and citations we received for tonight were of such a high standard, in some cases it was almost impossible to choose a clear winner. A life of service requires commitment and sacrifice so I'm delighted to be able to be able to recognise them for it."*

Group Captain O'Grady said:

*"So much complex planning and attention to detail has gone into this evening; a huge thanks to everyone who has made this happen, including our industry sponsors. Our people here deserve to know that regardless of which part of the Whole Force they work in, when they go the extra mile, it is not taken for granted. And so many people here go the extra mile."*





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# Exercise AGILE SHIELD

By: Flt Lt James Hodgson

From 2-6 September, RAF personnel and aircraft participated in Exercise AGILE SHIELD, a key event focused on enhancing the RAF's ability to deliver air power in a flexible and deterrent manner. The exercise aimed to test the RAF's capability to operate under heightened security, adapt to a dispersed operating posture, and assess the sustainability of operations at airbases in support of broader mission objectives.

The primary goals of AGILE SHIELD were to demonstrate the RAF's capacity for Agile Combat Employment (ACE) alongside allied forces, and to showcase a responsive and flexible command and control structure that could work in harmony with NATO. Additionally, it provided an opportunity to evaluate operations against NATO and national standards, identify capability gaps, and elicit areas for improvement. Importantly, the exercise sought to promote a cultural shift within the RAF, encouraging a more agile and proactive approach to problem-solving.

At RAF Coningsby, the mission for 3(F) Squadron was to deploy Typhoon aircraft, along with the necessary engineering and command and control elements, to RAF Cranwell. Cranwell, being an aerodrome not typically equipped to handle Typhoon

operations, was selected specifically to test the ability of both the personnel and infrastructure to support flying activity in an unfamiliar environment. Despite the relatively short distance between Coningsby and Cranwell, this task still tested not only the logistics and engineering enablers required to sustain operations at Cranwell, but also the ability to maintain concurrent flying operations back at Coningsby.

Ex AGILE SHIELD also served as a valuable opportunity for RAF Coningsby to further develop its ACE strategies. In addition to the main exercise, the station conducted self-directed tabletop exercises (TTXs) and Force Protection activities, all of which helped to refine our ACE plans and establish a solid foundation for future iterations. The entire station was engaged in this process, with Operational Mindset sessions delivered across the Whole Force to encourage a collective focus on ACE and the changing dynamic of warfare.

Overall, it was a highly productive and beneficial week for all involved, with a great deal learnt. The dedicated time allowed the station to concentrate fully on advancing its ACE capabilities, resulting in a clear appetite for an increased operational tempo in future exercises.



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# THE JUNIOR RANK'S WELFARE FUND

By: AS1 Daniel Smith

The JRWF is here to provide funding for all Junior Ranks on station for AT, sports, hobbies, and education. We also organise all Junior Rank social events. The committee will determine if they wish for the JRWF to contribute to your request. If you are a Junior Rank (JR) stationed at RAF Coningsby and are involved in any of the following activities, you will be able to receive some funding from JRWF including:

- RAF Sport
- Educational Courses
- Adventurous Training
- RAF Club & Hobbies

The funding is for new expenditure, rather than for costs that you have already incurred. If your request is outside of any of the published criteria you may still be eligible, just ask!

## Application Process:

1. Complete Bid Application Form with assistance from your section rep.
2. Submit bid to JRWF via Rep (include supporting quotes/documents).
3. JRWF Section Rep presents your bid at JRWF Committee Meeting.
4. Committee vote and approve bid (this will be recorded in the minutes).
5. Purchase your items (after confirming it has been approved).
6. Send receipt, showing date & time of purchase and if online your delivery address to the Treasurer. It can be paid by cash or direct to bank account (Treasurer will need these details)



**If you wish to join the JRWF committee, the meetings are held on the 1st Tuesday of every month at 1:30 pm in Heroes Bar.**

For some of you this may be your first experience of a committee meeting in the RAF. We discuss upcoming events and updates to the fund finances.

We then invite each Section Rep to present their bids. They have to briefly explain your bid to the committee. Committee members will ask questions

regarding the bid and then hold a vote. Bid proposers should attend the meeting if possible, to answer their questions.

All meetings are recorded by the Secretary, who will add the decision on your bid to the minutes for the records. All JRWF Committee minutes can be found on the JRWF SharePoint page.

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