

# AIR FORCE NEWS

High-risk  
medevac from  
Antarctica

Kiwis help  
in Bahamas  
SAR

Flying  
to the  
drop zone

#238

AUG | 21

A man with a large, dark beard and mustache is shown from the chest up, looking upwards and to the right. He is wearing a traditional Matariki cloak (haka) made of many layers of feathers, primarily in shades of blue, green, and white. The cloak has a wide white feathered collar. He is standing in a field of tall, dry grasses and reeds. The background is a dark, twilight sky with a crescent moon and some stars visible. The overall mood is contemplative and respectful.

Celebrating  
Matariki

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### OUR MISSION

The RNZAF will provide New Zealand with relevant, responsive and effective Air Power to meet its security interests.

### OUR VISION

An agile and adaptive Air Force with the versatility essential for NZDF operations.

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Rebecca Quilliam  
Email: [airforcenews@nzdf.mil.nz](mailto:airforcenews@nzdf.mil.nz)

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NZDefenceForce



# First Word



**B** | BASE OHAKEA BASE COMMANDER  
**Y** | GROUP CAPTAIN ROB SHEARER

**“It works because teamwork prevails. The literature tells us high performing teams believe in purpose, have a strong identity, know what success looks like, and strive to improve.”**

**K**ia ora tatou. Completing a four-peat of Ohakea aircraft types, I flew in a Texan last month. While the instructor in the front seat bashed the Ohakea circuit, I reflected on the bird’s eye view of the military airbase and its vital role in delivering airpower in New Zealand’s interests.

A Hercules on Exercise Tacex ran in through initials after dropping parachute loads at Raumai Air Weapons Range to the South. A King Air was being marshalled in by contractors outside No. 2 Hangar, while a Light Utility Helicopter (LUH) was dispatched and refuelled on the No. 3 Sqn Hangar apron.

Future Navy Seasprite crews walked out to the LUH for the instructional sortie. Outside No. 3 hangar, No. 40 Squadron ground crews and joint air load teams were dispatching and loading another C-130 for the next evolution.

Air traffic control cleared a Medium Utility Helicopter (MUH) from the South-East after a continuation sortie in the Tararua Ranges. I recalled my MUH flight, where I experienced first-hand the crews’ professionalism. In particular, the standard patter required between the helicopter loadmasters and pilots to safely and accurately position a helicopter in a forest clearing to winch Ohakea’s Command Warrant Officer to the ground and back up again.

The weather on that day was brilliant; during a national contingency response, it generally isn’t. Ex Tacex culminated early so No. 40 Squadron could evacuate an injured person from Antarctica, necessitating a unique night vision landing on the ice runway.

Instinctively I imagined all the teamwork behind these visible artefacts of air power to support and enable the execution of our mission.

Civilian contractors provide cleaning, catering, accommodation and facilities management. Defence personnel provide essential force protection, health, logistics, maintenance, administration, and rescue fire services, to name a few.

I could see Ohakea’s placement smack in the middle of a region bounded by the districts of Rangitikei and Manawatū, encompassing Ngāti Raukawa and Ngāti Apa iwi. The Air Force’s Tūrangawaewae extends manaakitanga (hospitality) and provides cultural learning to the Defence Force personnel and foreign visitors.

Weekly the base interacts with the community through school and other visits while trades such as physical training instructors assist Mayoral youth initiatives when not keeping us fit and engaged.

The base supports training courses, conferences, and embarkation and arrival for joint operations and readiness activities. Defence Public Affairs tell our stories while our whānau remain close and supportive.

The point of all this reflection and imagining is to acknowledge the military airbase as a critical and resilient capability that delivers benefits for the community, nation and, when required, a rules-based international order.

Each team member knows how other team members contribute to objectives, and they instinctively know what behaviour is acceptable. As we re-invest our efforts to cope with Op Protect, DARs alignment, the introduction of new capability, and new infrastructure – it is how we perform in teams and interact with other groups that will ultimately determine success.

## **Air Force carries out high-risk Antarctic medevac**

**During Antarctica's long, dark winter a C-130 crew landed the aircraft on ice, using night vision goggles and with limited depth perception to evacuate a patient from the United States' base, McMurdo Station. It wasn't a flight for the faint-hearted.**



PHOTO  
JEFF CAPPS





PHOTO  
KEVIN COLINDRES

**The aircraft, with 13 crew on board including two Defence Force medical personnel, left from Christchurch for Antarctica on the nearly 16-hour round trip in the middle of last month.**

It was the first time night vision technology had been used to land on the ice runway on the Phoenix airfield and the winter flight itself is only undertaken about once every five or ten years.

The patient, who is a member of the United States Antarctic Program, was not suffering from life-threatening injuries, but needed further medical treatment on arrival into New Zealand.

Air Component Commander Air Commodore Shaun Sexton said the Defence Force had been providing support to Antarctica New Zealand and the United States Antarctic Program for many years but missions like this occur infrequently.

“We were pleased to be able to assist our US partners when the call came to help with the medevac. The aircrew and supporting New Zealand and US personnel in both Antarctica and in New Zealand did an outstanding job to complete this difficult medevac,” he said.

Base Auckland Commander Group Captain Andy Scott said poor weather hampered initial flight planning for the Air Force team and it took a week before they were able to get to the frozen continent.

“Flying to Antarctica is one of the highest risk missions we fly due to the lack of divert airfields and inability to get down and back without refuelling. The crews therefore are highly trained to analyse the situation with regards to the weather, the airfield state and aircraft before making a decision to proceed past the point of safe return, which occurs about 90 minutes out from landing on these missions.”

Squadron Leader (SQNLDR) Rob Attrill, the Operational Flight Commander C-130 Hercules and navigator for the mission said landing the C-130 using night vision goggles is something the squadron trains for in New Zealand, but have never done in Antarctica.

“At this time of year they can put lights on the runway so they aided us when we were using the goggles, but it was still more challenging than going down there during the daylight.

“The depth perception down there wasn’t great because we would normally rely on the moon to make it better, but there was an overcast cloud layer of about 3,000ft which made depth perception particularly challenging,” SQNLDR Attrill said.

The crew performed a hot refuel, which meant leaving the engines running during the refuelling process.





“You can imagine if you left your car in -30°C or -40°C for a few hours it’s not going to like it, so it’s the same thing with the aircraft, keeping the engines running.

“We keep the aircraft warm and that avoids the issues with shutting down the aircraft and the engines getting cold. It’s just to keep the engine nice and warm in those extreme temperatures down in the Antarctic,” he said.

“We were delighted and privileged to be able to help out our Antarctic partners. For us it’s part of being a team down there and any way we can support our partners and friends is obviously a really important thing to do.”

It was a privilege to be part of such a professional and talented team and the number of people involved in the mission from the Defence Force was large, SQNLDR Attrill said.

“I’d particularly like to thank our No. 40 Squadron Maintenance Team, Christchurch Air Movements and Captain Dave Barber and Leading Aircraftman Kelly Sunnex, our in-flight Defence medical team who did a fantastic job looking after our patient heading North.”

The National Science Foundation said it was grateful for the assistance provided by the New Zealand Defence Force during the medical evacuation from McMurdo Station.

“Flights to Antarctica in the austral winter season are rare, and this rescue ensured that an individual with a serious medical condition was able to acquire medical care not available at McMurdo Station.”

The United States’ Chargé d’affaires, Acting Ambassador, Kevin Covert said with Scott Base and McMurdo Station so close to each other in Antarctica, it was like one big community.

“As this incident shows, it doesn’t matter what colour your passport is, but New Zealand’s Defence Force is there to help us when we need them and vice versa. We’re there as friends to help each other when we need each other.

“The New Zealand Defence Force is incredibly professional and capable – we can always count on them when we need them. They get the job done and they know what they’re doing. It’s great to have partners like that at a time of need on the ice.”

The United States’ Defense Attaché, Colonel Ian Murray said because of the rare amount of times an aircraft is needed during winter, the Royal New Zealand Air Force takes on those missions.

“For us it’s extremely important to have a professional, reliable force to depend on when we don’t have the assets available.”

**“This is probably one of the more complicated missions that we would see an aircraft with a C-130 crew have to do. We really appreciate the support the NZDF has given this American citizen to get off the ice and back to medical treatment.”**

**- United States’ Defense Attaché  
Colonel Ian Murray**

# Kiwis help in Bahamas search and rescue

B | FLIGHT LIEUTENANT  
Y | REECE TAMARIKI

**The New Zealand crew training with the P-8A Poseidon aircraft in Jacksonville, Florida, was recently involved in a dramatic rescue of a group of Haitians, including a baby, after their vessel capsized off of the coast of Grand Bahama.**

The No. 5 Squadron crew were on board two P-8As on a maritime intelligence, surveillance, reconnaissance (ISR) exercise with US Navy instructors, flying south west of Jacksonville, when the Maritime Channel 16 lit up with a distress call from the United States Coast Guard.

A 24ft vessel had capsized, eight survivors and two deceased had been recovered, but there were up to six more people in the water.

The P-8As were 80nm north of the search area, which was just 6nm off of Grand Bahama.

Both aircraft responded and proceeded south in preparation for an official request for assistance.

The Royal Bahamian Police and US Coast Guard were already on scene, and the regional Rescue Coordination Centre was made aware of the P-8As' positions and ability to assist. A search area was developed and the two aircraft were then requested to aid in the search.

In the United States, search and rescue is carried out by local police and Coast Guard so the US Navy crew had little to no experience in employing the aircraft in this way. No 5 Squadron hold a year-round, fast notice to move for this type of tasking.

The capsized vessel was found initially on radar and then visually. Once the drift was assessed, both aircraft commenced a visual search for survivors in the water, unaware exactly how many people, or what survival aids they might have had. That area of ocean was dead flat, and the visibility was fantastic, so the crew held a quiet confidence that if we flew overhead, they could spot survivors in the water.

The search and rescue was unlike most missions Air Force operators are used to, with a helicopter, three fixed-wing aircraft, a Coast Guard vessel and Bahamian Police boats all on scene to assist.

On board one of the aircraft Flight Sergeant Nick Rowe briefed the observers in the windows on their duties upon seeing anything in the water, and then controlled the sensors.







Flight Lieutenant Reece Tamariki coordinated the aircraft's search while the US Navy instructors focussed on communication and deconfliction with the other aircraft.

Upon completion of the tasked search area, and 45 minutes away from minimum gas, the aircraft were requested to return to base, refuel and head back to the search area.

Upon our return the duty office was working on the next available aircraft to return to the search.

The search was eventually called off with a number of people still missing.

The crew were sobered as a Haitian woman and a boy died, while the survivors were taken back to land for treatment. The event was a bleak reminder to the importance of the job No. 5 Squadron currently do with P-3K2 Orions, and will continue to do with the P-8A Poseidons.

The VP-30 students were thankful for the opportunity to see the P8 utilised on operations, and can take this experience forward on to their fleet squadrons.



## Flying into the drop zone

WORDS  
REBECCA QUILLIAM

PHOTOGRAPHY  
CPL RACHEL PUGH

**Evading surface-to-air missiles, flying low over unfamiliar terrain dropping pallets onto drop zones and flying in formation were all part of No. 40 Squadron's latest exercise in the lower North Island recently. The skills will put the team in good stead to support domestic, regional and global security situations.**







**The C-130 Hercules training activity provided crews with a range of flying training including over unfamiliar and challenging terrain and coordinating pallet drops into drop zones.**

**I**t tested the crew's proficiency in tactical flying and dropping loads so they can be ready to assist in resupply, humanitarian aid and disaster relief or search and rescue operations whenever required by the New Zealand Government.

The squadron worked alongside the New Zealand Army's 5 Movements Company, who constructed and prepared the loads; and 10 Transport Company, who recovered the pallets once they had fallen to the drop zones.

Detachment Commander Squadron Leader Rob Attrill said the flights were conducted out of Base Ohakea and involved some low-level flying around Northern Manawatu, Rangitikei and Whanganui.

"An important part of our training is being able to ensure our crews can operate effectively away from our home base at Whenuapai, so we run this exercise annually to hone their skills and keep their skills proficient," he said.

"The exercise supports airborne operations and further prepares us for overseas-based exercises with our partners, and ultimately operations in support of New Zealand interests."

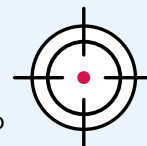
C-130 co-pilot Flight Lieutenant (FLTLT) Michael Crisford said the pallets dropped from the aircraft included high velocity heavy equipment, container delivery systems and light equipment.

"That's effectively loads that fall out of the back of the aircraft with a parachute and land safely on the drop zone. It's a way that we can deliver aid, ammunition, food – whatever is required for the situation."

The exercise was important because it helped the crew practice for time-pressure situations, which puts them at an advantage when they operate with other countries on an international scale, FLTLT Crisford said.



## SMOKY SAM FUN FACTS



The rockets can launch up to 600m (2,000ft)

On ignition, the rocket propellant inside burns between 900°C and 1,200°C

They are lightweight, made from polystyrene and cardboard



The exercise also incorporated a Smoky SAM (surface-to-air missile), which simulated a surface-to-air threat and put the crew in a position where they had to react to that threat and manoeuvre the aircraft away from it.

“The crew all keep a look out for them and if you’re the first to see it, you call it and let the rest of the crew know,” he said.

“Then you’re trying to work out what your escape is – where’s it coming from, what is it and then we have manoeuvres that we do to try to avoid it. We’ve also got defence mechanisms in the aircraft that detects it and if it is a missile the aircraft can deploy flares, which hopefully the missile will go to instead of the aircraft.

“We also endeavour to fly high for as long as possible before approaching an airfield as late as possible to avoid those threats.”

Air warfare officer FLTLT Adam Palmer’s role during the exercise was to compute the release point for the loads that were dropped and direct the pilots to put the aircraft in the right position to make sure they were in place for the drop.

“It can be difficult, we have a lot of things to contend with, whether it’s other traffic, the wind, weather conditions and also the loads and the size of the drop zone and how easy it is to get to the drop zones plays a big factor.”

The skills practiced in the training have been used in real-life scenarios including a deployment in December 2019 on a US Air Force-led Operation Christmas Drop out of Guam where a C-130 crew delivered pallet loads of goods via airdrops to people living on remote islands and atolls in the Pacific.

**“The exercise is about as real as we can make it in New Zealand. There’s always a bit of rivalry between the crews to see who can drop loads closest to the target.”**

**– Flight Lieutenant Adam Palmer**



## Celebrating Matariki

**We're celebrating the passing of one year and the hope of what a new year may bring. Over the next few pages we will be sharing the stories of how some of our people honoured Matariki. We will also be showcasing our beautiful Tūrangawaewae in a photo essay by our photographer Corporal Dillon Anderson.**

**Mānawatia a Matariki from our whānau to yours.**



## Reflections during Matariki

B | SENIOR COMMUNICATIONS ADVISOR  
Y | SIMONE MILLAR



**Matariki 2021 has been particularly special for Mr Marshall (Cookie) Cook. “This year was different for me, my focus was mainly on remembering my father who passed last year. That’s part of Matariki, remembering lost loved ones from the previous year. This reflection was just so much more important for me,” he says.**

**A**ffectionately known as ‘Cookie’, he has spent his entire adult life serving the Air Force. Formerly in uniform, his primary role now is Material Planner within the Fleet Planning Unit and he also serves as the Māori Liaison Officer at Whenuapai.

“I was very humbled when I was asked to take on the role of cultural advisor. It’s a perfect opportunity to share my culture with my people, those people are the RNZAF.

“To guide us into the future as a culturally diverse organisation is amazing. It’s helping us move forward in sharing that information so that it’s not a scary thing to delve into different cultures.”

For Māori, the appearance of the star cluster Pleiades signals a time of remembrance, joy and peace. It is a time for communities to come together, celebrate and share kai.

“Matariki is a time to share kai and time with people, the biggest memory of Dad was that he was a provider of food.

“Dad’s name was Hori Hern. He was a third generation military man, after he left the Army he spent most of his time chasing deer, pigs and crayfish – he lived off the land. In recent years he dedicated a lot of time to teaching others to garden, be self-sufficient, hunt and catch kaimoana. He liked not having to rely on the supermarket too often,” he says.

The life of Mr Hern really did embody the spirit of Matariki and he died doing what he loved most.

“Dad passed away while he was at work. He was working on a project to reduce erosion of the Waiapu River. He passed away on the job site. He was doing what he loved in the bush and the only thing that was different was he wasn’t chasing pigs.

“He was training a crew of rough diamonds and polished them into an efficient team, giving them the skills to provide for themselves and their whānau.

“I look almost exactly like my Dad, so I see him every day, which was hard when he first passed.”

This Matariki was also about passing down knowledge to Cookie’s seven-year-old son and his school mates.

“On 2 July about 500 of us went to the top of Mt Atkinson in Titirangi at dawn to commemorate Matariki with school, staff, families and kaumatua. Then we went back and shared a big breakfast, it was an important community gathering and gave a lot of learning for my son.

“It’s teaching about the future, about what our connection to the land means. It’s teaching him that Matariki is more than just a public holiday.”

## Immersed in te reo

## Rumaki Reo

EDITOR | ÉTITA  
REBECCA QUILLIAM



**Corporal (CPL) Te Rina Naden and Sergeant (SGT) Mikayla Paora have been given the opportunity to take part in a 10-month full-immersion te reo Māori course at Te Wānanga Takiura o Ngā Kura Kaupapa Māori o Aotearoa in Auckland.**

**Kua whiwhi a Corporal (CPL) Te Rina Naden (Te Aitanga a Hauti) rāua ko Sergeant Mikayla Paora (Ngā Puhi, Tainui) i te whiwhinga mahi ki te ako rumaki reo i tēnei tau kei Te Wānanga Takiura o Ngā Kura Kaupapa Māori o Aotearoa kei Tāmaki Makaurau.**

**T**he chance to take on the study full-time, while still being paid by the Air Force has meant the pair has been able to fully embrace the language and everything it brings with it.

“The reason I took on the course was for my own cultural identity. The true benefit for me is more self-discovery and to broaden my language competency,” CPL Naden said. “Learning about tikanga and reclaiming my language has made me the happiest I have ever been,” said CPL Naden.

SGT Paora said she felt there aren't many people in the Air Force who speak te reo Māori, whakaaro Māori (think) and know tikanga Māori (customs).

“I really want to strengthen all aspects of my Māori competency and be in more of a position to give it back to the Air Force community, so as to normalise it within day-to-day Air Force life. There are so many beautiful practices and ways of thinking within te ao Māori which I think the Air Force can really benefit from.”

As Matariki passes, both CPL Naden and SGT Paora said this year has felt different after learning more about the celebration.

CPL Naden said she now had a proper understanding of the significance it has to Māori.

“I knew about the stars and which star is which – they all have their own names and mana, but I didn't properly understand how to look for the signs, what they look like and how they relate to you and your iwi.

“I knew it was a marker of a new year in te ao Māori however, I didn't really know how to celebrate it, other than going out and having a look at the stars. There are certain signs that you look for and they correlate to different parts of your environment, the taiao,” she said.

“It's also about the moon and everything the environment signals to you – the way the environment changes and the different phases of the moon and the position of the sun.

It makes you realise how incredible our ancestors were. Now that we have this knowledge and it has been recognised and will be a public holiday, we can celebrate it genuinely.”

SGT Paora said she felt more informed about how Matariki involved everything in the environment and how her ancestors operated.

“It's been an amazing journey learning about Matariki and the insight it gives into the life our ancestors lived. They lived according to the environment – there were no clocks or Monday–Sunday calendars prior to colonisation. I'm really pleased Matariki will be a public holiday next year – I would love for everyone in Aotearoa to learn about it and celebrate it.”

“Ko te mātauranga e kore e toha, kāore i te mātauranga”

Knowledge that isn't shared, isn't knowledge.

**K**o tēnei whiwhinga mahi ki te whai ako ukiuki i te wā kōtahi e utua ana rāua e Te Tauaarangi, ka taea e te tokorua te whai arotahi i te reo me ōna tikanga anō hoki.

E ai ki a CPL Naden, “Ko te take i pīrangī ahau ki te ako i tēnei ākongā kia rapua ai ko wai au, ko wai tōku ahurea, ā, kia whakapakari ai i tāku reo”. I mea mai ia, “ko te akoranga e pā ana ki ngā tikanga me te whakahoki anō o tāku reo rangatira he mea kua ngata katoa te ngākau”.

Hei tā SGT Paora, kāore i te maha ngā tāngata a Te Tauaarangi e taea te kōrero Māori, whakaaro Māori, e mōhio ana i ngā tikanga hoki.

“Nā reira ko tāku wawata, ka whakapakari ahau i tōku Māoritanga kia whakahoki ai i ēnei taonga ki Te Tauaarangi hei whakamāori i te reo kei roto i te whānau whānui. He maha ngā ritenga ātaahua me ngā momo whakaaro i roto i te ao Māori ka whai hua mai Te Tauaarangi.”

I te putanga mai a Matariki i tēnei tau, he rerekē ō rāua whakaaro me pēhea te whakanui i tēnei kaupapa hirahira i te ao Māori.

E ai ki a CPL Naden, e tino mōhio ana ia i te hiranga o Matariki ki te iwi Māori ināiane.

“I mōhio kē ahau i ngā whetū, ā, ko wai ia whetū mē ō rātou ingoa, mana hoki engari kāore au i mōhio me pēhea te kimi i ngā tohu o ia whetū, me pēhea ō rātou āhua me te hononga ki ngā iwi.”

“E mōhio kē ana ahau he tohu o te tau hōu Māori a Matariki heoi anō, kāore au i tino mōhio me pēhea te whakanui, tū atu i te haere kei waho ki te titiro atu ki ngā whetū. He nui ngā tohu o ngā whetū me ngā hononga ki te taiao,” i mea a CPL Naden.

“Hāunga tērā, he mea nui te marama me ngā tohu o te taiao – ko te panoni haere o te taiao, ngā mata rerekē o te Marama me te nohonga a Tamanui Te Rā i te rangi. E marama ana ahau ko ō tātou tūpuna te mutunga kē mai o aua mātauranga.

Ināiane, ka taea e māua te whakanui motuhenga, otirā ia, ka taea e tātou katoa te whakanui a Matariki ā te wā e heke mai ana, “hei tā CPL Naden.

E ai ki a SGT Paora, e whaimōhio ake ana ia i te mahi a Matariki ki ngā mea katoa o te taiao me ngā mahi ā ōna tūpuna.

“Kua tino mīharo tēnei haerenga ki te ako e pā ana ki a Matariki me te māramatanga a te oranga o ō tātou tūpuna. I ora rātou e ai ki te taiao – karekau ngā karaka, māramataka Rāhina-Rātapu i mua i te tāmitanga. Kei te harikoa tōku ngākau ki te mōhio he rā whakatā ā-ture a Matariki ā tērā tau. Ko tāku tumanako, ka ako te katoa o Aotearoa e pā ana ki a Matariki kia whakanui ai.”

“Ko te mātauranga e kore e toha, kāore i te mātauranga”







**OPPOSITE:**

Forming the tomokanga (gateway) is Tāwhiri-mātea, the atua (god) of the winds, storms, clouds and lightning. The air force is often described by Maori through Tāwhiri-mātea, as he is the guardian of the skies. Lightning bolts decorate his forehead, while spirals on his chest depict the winds.

**TOP LEFT:**

This is the view looking from the ground of the whareniui upward towards the ceiling. A whareniui is like an entity in itself. From the front a head can be seen carved into the front top, from the head barge boards extend like arms. Beneath them are vertical beams acting as legs. Inside the whareniui, the vertical beam stands for the backbone, while the painted rafters form the ribcage. Each rafter is painted to represent different values to the Royal New Zealand Air Force Tūrangawaewae

**TOP RIGHT:**

This carving depicts the dispute between the Kawau Awa (river shag) and Kawau Moana (sea shag) which arose over the food source of the river. A great battle ensued between the birds of the ocean and those from inland. This part of the carving is called "Hurumanu", which depicts the origin of sea birds

**BOTTOM LEFT:**

The tekoteko (human figure) standing on the porch is the Pou Mataaho (porch guardian) by the name of Tuariki. Tuariki was a Ngāti Apa (local iwi) chief in historic times, whose village once stood near the site of tūrangawaewae. His carving faces the territory he once watched over.







## New fuel truck hits the streets

**B** | EDITOR  
**Y** | REBECCA QUILLIAM

**The Air Force will soon take delivery of the first of six new high-tech Volvo fuel trucks that have almost twice the capacity and far better range than the ageing fleet of Scania trucks being used currently.**

**T**he contract to build the new fuel trucks was awarded to Holmwood Highgate (Australia) in August last year with RNZAF having had a significant input into the vehicles requirements and design.

“The trucks we have at the moment are about 30 years old and certainly in need of replacement,” Flight Sergeant (F/S) Robert Healey said.

“The vehicles we are getting are a huge improvement by far on the trucks they are replacing. It’s one of the largest volume aircraft fuel trucks in the country.”

The Volvo can hold 40,000L of Jet fuel compared with the Scania’s 23,000L, which means it can do more aircraft refuels before it needs to be reloaded.

Average large volume fuelling is about 15,000L, so the Volvos will be able to do multiple refuels before it needs to reload, F/S Healey said.

“This means the squadrons aren’t waiting for fuel and helps them get on and get ready to do a task.”

The new trucks will be able to refuel the Air Force’s entire fleet, the P-8A Poseidons and C-130J Hercules when they arrive, as well as other large visiting aircraft including C-17, Globemaster III he said.

The modern vehicle has advanced safety features included and the computer-driven automated fuelling system will be using the most up-to-date-technology.

“There is lane departure and blind-spot warnings fitted to the truck, which means that driver safety is improved. The fuelling system’s enhanced safety features ensure fuelling operations are conducted as safely as possible.”

That means the fuel won’t be over-pressurised, the aircraft can’t be over-filled, or if a filter was to rupture it would be detected and the fueller automatically shuts down, F/S Healey said.

“Its primary role will be to support the aircraft on the bases, but it will also be able to travel around the country if Air Force aircraft are refuelling at other airports.

“The truck will also be able to de-fuel aircraft for maintenance reasons as well. It’s a very versatile vehicle.”

The fleet of trucks will be based at Base Auckland and Base Ohakea. All six should arrive in the country and be operational by the end of the year, F/S Healey said.





## Cadets' new kit

**B** | EDITOR  
**Y** | REBECCA QUILLIAM

**For the first time in years the Air Cadets have been issued with a new uniform, more in line with the uniform used by enlisted airmen.**

**“**It's basically a replica of the GPU (General Purpose Uniform), but cheaper because it isn't made from the same fire retardant material,” Squadron Leader (SQNLDR) Shane Cole said.

Before the change, the cadets were issued with a Service Dress (SD) uniform of a blue shirt and pants, which was more expensive to maintain.

“The new uniform aligns us more to the modern day Air Force and it gives us a working dress – it's more robust and the cadets can do more activities while wearing it. SDs are not as practical and functional as a working dress.”

The cadets were excited with the change, which has taken four years for the project to come to fruition, SQNLDR Cole said.

The Covid-19 pandemic delayed the production of the uniforms last year, which were manufactured in Fiji.

The Air Cadets' uniform was the first phase of a rollout of new kit for Cadet Forces.

Over the next 12–18 months the Navy Cadet working dress will be issued and then after that the Army Cadets will receive theirs, tentatively in late 2023.

“The Cadet Working Dress will be the same style for all three corps, but the colours will mirror their parent service as much as practicable,” SQNLDR Cole said.

“The practicality and versatility of this new working dress will be an asset to Cadet Forces, and provide all Cadets nationwide with the same standard of uniform.”

**“It will give the cadets more of a sense of belonging to their Service. Whenever they predominantly see Air Force personnel, they are wearing GPUs.”**

*Squadron Leader Shane Cole*

# Award for extraordinary action

B | EDITOR  
Y | REBECCA QUILLIAM

## An Air Force medic has been awarded the Defence Meritorious Service Medal (DMSM) for his efforts during the Whakaari/White Island disaster on December 9, 2019.

**T**he medic\* worked alongside Explosive Ordnance Disposal team members in the recovery of the people who lost their lives when the island's volcano erupted. There were 22 fatalities following the eruption.

Recently, a number of Defence Force personnel received a number of awards from the Chief of Defence Force for their extraordinary work in the face of an unprecedented disaster.

The medic said he was humbled to be recognised for his work.

"I wasn't expecting it by any means, but I was excited as well."

Three days after the eruption, he received the call to make his way to Whakatane.

"My role was as a medic, but also as part of the recovery team as part of the handling of the bodies."

Before heading to the island the recovery team worked with the NZ Police's Disaster Victim Identification team to learn processes on how to handle the remains on the island.

"We went through some methods of working out how to get the victims off the island."

At midnight on December 12 the team went by a rigid hull inflatable boat (RHIB) to HMNZS Wellington, transferred their equipment on board and prepared it for use.

"I don't think a lot of sleep happened that night. I wasn't nervous – we have world class training at E Squadron and I had confidence in the equipment as well. Obviously that equipment worked, otherwise I wouldn't be here talking with you."

The team was taken to the island about 5am the next day by Navy RHIBs and were on the island by 8am.

The equipment they needed to wear was cumbersome and multi-layered, making for hot work.

"They were incredibly hot, but I was very familiar with the kit, so it wasn't unusual to wear. Once you had on all the kit and all the equipment that we had to carry, it adds up quickly," the medic said.

Photographs taken from a P-3K2 Orion as well as photos from a Fire and Emergency NZ drone had given the unit precise locations where they needed to be.

"But getting around the island was difficult – it wasn't like anywhere you've ever seen before. It looked like we were on the moon. Before the eruption there were well defined paths, but when we got there, because of all the ash and rocks, it was somewhat difficult to find our way around.

While the whole situation was tragic, it was good to know they were returning victims to their families, he said.

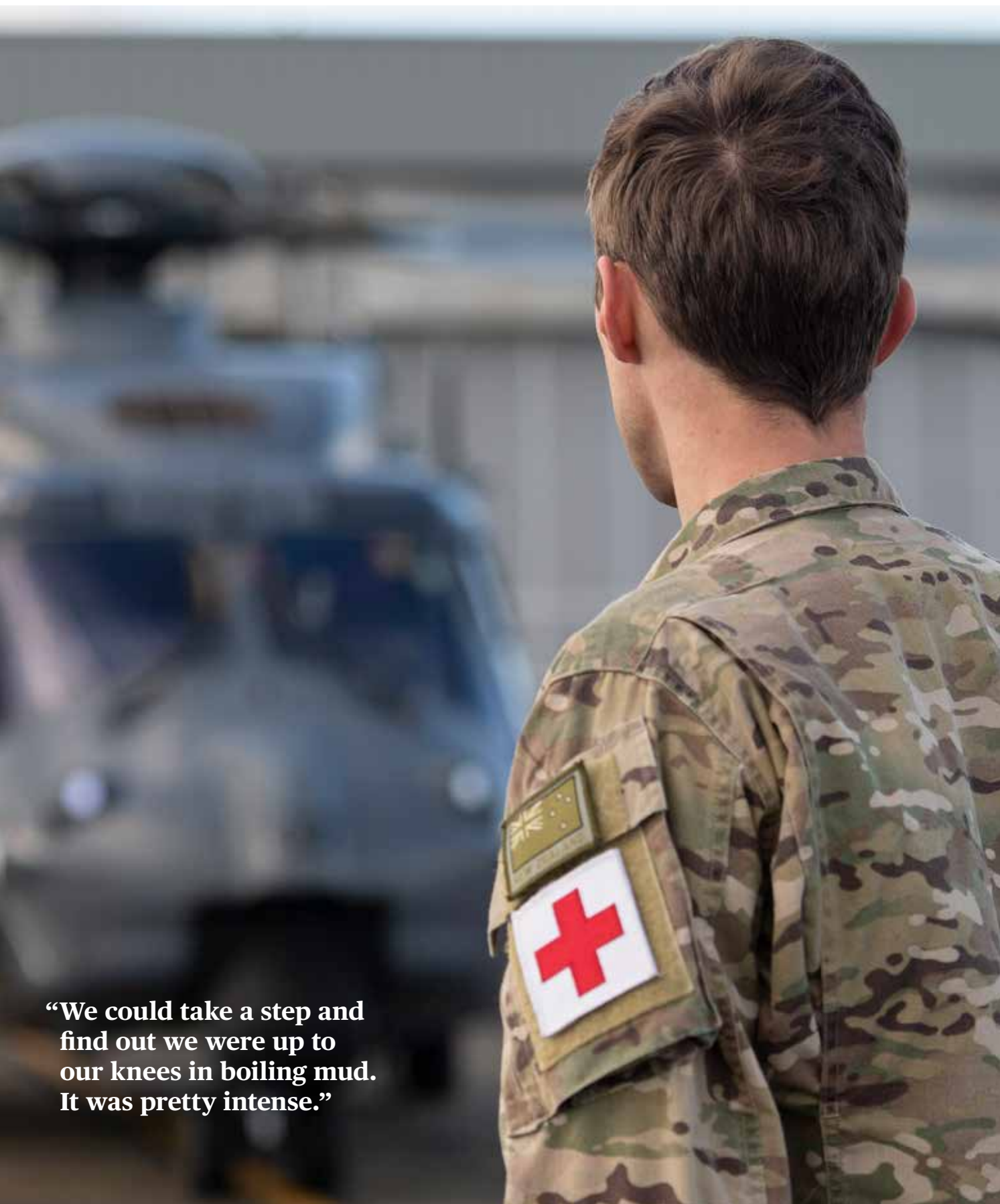
"It wasn't something we had time to think about really. We were under time pressure too, so we had to get in and get the job done."

The time pressure was due to the amount of oxygen each person carried with them on the island. Once they returned to the shore line, the team was required to do an initial decontamination before leaving the island due to the acidity of the materials they were walking through. Then a full decontamination on HMNZS Wellington.

"Looking back on the event, it was the hardest thing I've done in my life. I was pretty proud what we achieved as a team together on the island. I don't think there were many people in New Zealand who could have got the job done the way we got it done.

"It was great to see all the training and planning we have done over the years came to fruition when we needed it and worked out well."

\*Cannot be named for security reasons



**“We could take a step and find out we were up to our knees in boiling mud. It was pretty intense.”**



# Mission Critical: 20 years of Headquarters Joint Forces New Zealand

**Headquarters Joint Forces New Zealand (HQ JFNZ) exists to integrate task elements generated by the Services and enabling portfolios in order to deliver outputs that meet the Government of New Zealand's required outcomes.**

**B**ut it was a challenging road to raise the Headquarters (HQ) back in 2001, and with the first Commander Joint Forces NZ (COMJFNZ) MAJGEN Martyn Dunne at the helm for the first three years, the processes put in place would develop, evolve and continue to assist the Government of New Zealand in all manner of ways for the next 20 years. We take a look back at how far the HQ has come, and where to now.

MAJOR GENERAL (RTD)  
**MARTYN DUNNE**



## THEN

### Why was the HQ created?

The NZDF realised the benefits of centralising the command of Joint Warfare and it was the actions of the late Chief of Defence Force, Air Marshal Carey Adamson, which led to a defining meeting in early 2000 that established the Joint HQ implementation working group.

The real test of inadequacy was illustrated by the Command and Control and Communications (C3) arrangements for Timor-Leste. Initially the Air Force Operations Command in Auckland was appointed the lead headquarters but it soon became apparent that the largest component was to be Army supported by Air Force and Navy assets.

While I was eventually sent as the Senior National Officer and concurrently commanded a Brigade Headquarters (Dili Command), the role became one of coordination of national interests and reporting lines back to Land Command, which had subsequently been appointed to command the operation. Air Force and Navy assets were assigned to HQ International Force East Timor independently and largely separate of the SNO. This changed as the operation matured but was not totally adequate should national caveats on deployments need to be applied.



Meanwhile in New Zealand, Land Command assembled liaison staff from the other services and essentially created a one-off Joint HQ. It became abundantly clear in New Zealand that this ad hoc arrangement, though workable, was inadequate for future consistency and retention of experienced staff in joint operations.

During a visit by the Chief of Defence Force and Secretary of Defence (the late Graeme Fortune) while I was in Timor-Leste, I was advised that on return to New Zealand I would start work on the Joint HQ, which began in early April 2000.

The Labour Government's view at the time signalled greater Defence jointery, in effort and equipment acquisition. Timor-Leste was a catalyst but not the only one.

**What was it like trying to pull together, especially asking the three Services to really work together?**

The reality of creating the HQ in the 18 month timeframe required clear and present commitment from all services. Standing operational HQ (Maritime Command – Auckland, Land Command – Trentham, RNZAF Op Command – Auckland) would be required to disestablish its HQ and under completely new arrangements be re-established using the Continental Staff system (J1-J8) within a matrix C3 arrangement.

There would be no single Service components within the Joint HQ although there would be single Service operational commanders at (Brigadier equivalent) level. This would not be easy to manage but was essential to the Joint HQ and COMJFNZ who had to rely on these senior officers for advice and at times operational deployments as much as they also worked to their single Service Chiefs on raising and training.

There were many issues related around structure and rank. Preserving a viable career structure and embedding jointery into single Service education was paramount. I was fortunate that the three initial component commanders in the Joint HQ would shortly after we were established, become their respective single Service Chiefs. They understood the process and were helpful in making it work.

Everything from Standard Operating Procedures, security, intelligence, IT, global communications for deployed forces to personnel management had to be devised and implemented. We even worked up the triangle logo for the Command that endures today.

HQJFNZ opened on 1 July 2001. It was a freezing but clear day. We would have no time to rest as exhausted as we were, little did we know that we would be at war in Afghanistan three months later following the terror attacks in the United States on September 11.

I have no doubt that with ongoing commitments, especially to Timor-Leste, of an infantry Battalion and aviation rotations, the urgent deployment of the SAS to Afghanistan along with No. 40 Squadron's C-130 support, would not have been possible without HQ JFNZ. We might have muddled through but much would have been lost.

**What were you most proud of at the end of your tenure?**

We managed to raise the HQ in 18 months and within three months we were handling multiple operations. I was never sure this was widely understood or that HQ JFNZ was a 24/7 functioning HQ, providing the platform for deployed operational forces who at times had urgent and dangerous situations to deal with and receive guidance on. This was often demonstrated in the early days of the Afghanistan deployment.

I often look back on the time as being a significant change in the NZDF structure and provided it was allowed to prosper, attitudes and experience would develop and provide opportunities for all Service staff to deploy into coalition combined operations.



## REAR ADMIRAL JIM GILMOUR



### NOW

#### What is the impact that HQ JFNZ has on the NZDF as a whole?

This is the Headquarters that gives reality to the vision of joint operational excellence, being integrated in the way we work, train and operate at home and abroad. HQ JFNZ brings the best of NZDF people and capabilities where they are needed in the quickest possible time. Having one HQ that provides NZDF operational planning means there is one source of the truth and one point of contact for both strategic and tactical elements of the NZDF and our allied counterparts.

The continuing capability development of the Deployable Joint Interagency Task Force has been one of HQ JFNZ's success stories. Having a dedicated team to provide integrated Command and Control for Joint, inter-agency and multinational operations enhances operational effects supporting Government outcomes.

#### What is the current tempo, and how have things evolved over the past few years?

Certainly, over the last 18 months, the cadence has increased. While numbers of people deployed operationally offshore is less than for some years, we have domestically deployed numbers comparable with the first Timor-Leste rotations in support of Op Protect, the NZDF's contribution to defeating the Covid-19 pandemic.

#### What is the biggest challenge the HQ faces?

Due to the nature of the Headquarters and the way in which it conducts its everyday business, staying ready for the next big unexpected thing, be that a natural disaster or security challenge at home, regionally or globally, has always been its mainstay. It is clear that the challenge of Covid will be with us for the foreseeable future, and we must now plan on how we can continue to successfully conduct our missions whilst in a global pandemic.





**HQ JFNZ has had to maintain readiness for conventional warfare, HADR and support to UN and other operational missions, whilst also facing a contemporary foe in Covid-19. What has that been like for the HQ?**

Being unable to conduct higher level training both at home and with our allies is having a big impact on operational readiness for parts of the Defence Force. While some key capabilities are not part of Op Protect and available, some are now at a much longer response time and will require regeneration before they can be considered available for operations.

**The HQ has had significant involvement in response planning for national disasters in the past 20 years, including the Pike River Mine disaster, Christchurch earthquake, Christchurch mosque shooting and Whakaari/White Island. How has the HQ adapted due to lessons learned from these major events?**

After each response to such critical events we review our process and try to learn from any lessons. We do not get it perfect every time and the regular change of staff means we need to continually review how we do business. The Whakaari/White Island response for example reinforced just how complex command and control can be in a multi-agency effort when time is precious. The progress HQ JFNZ has made in responding to domestic disasters has been significant over the years. Identifying specific areas where intended actions did not work out as planned, and applying corrections to operational procedures as a result has been key to ensuring the best response possible can be delivered.

**What is your vision for the HQ?**

My vision is to continue to build on what we do well on operations. We don't know what each day will bring, but we have a skilled workforce who can generate military responses for a wide range of challenging scenarios and mobilise joint forces whenever and wherever they're needed.

Our maritime, air and land specialist staff are involved in the day to day running of operations, supporting those on operations, and planning for future operations. The environment in which the NZDF works is evolving and we're always looking for continuous improvements.

**What are you most proud of?**

Our people and their professionalism. Thank you to all the service people over the past 20 years that have been at the forefront of the planning, supporting, and commanding NZDF's operations – you are often 'un-sung' but never fail to deliver.



## Moving from the bomb squad to the pilot seat

After 12 years in the New Zealand Army Leighton Joll is switching roles from jumping out of the back of aircraft to sitting up front and piloting them.

**A**t the RNZAF Officer's Course, Pilot Officer (PLTOFF) Joll was awarded the Robinson Memorial Trophy. Named after Pilot Officer Howard Allan Robinson who was killed in a 1957 crash, it is presented to the graduate who, in the eyes of their peers, demonstrated the greatest leadership.

The 31-year-old spent the earlier part of his New Zealand Defence Force (NZDF) career as an Explosive Ordnance Disposal Operator with the Army.

He had always liked flying and had been involved in paragliding for more than six years.

"I started doing my private pilot licence and decided to pursue flying as a new career.

"Flying as a commercial airline pilot didn't appeal to me in the long run. I liked the idea of being able to maintain the same feeling of purpose and belonging that the NZDF provides.

"So I made the decision to apply for a change to the Air Force rather than leaving NZDF to pursue the commercial route," PLTOFF Joll said.

While he knows there are a few more years of hard study before he can call himself an Air Force pilot he has enjoyed getting a wider understanding of how another Service does things.

**"During this time I've flown in the back of Iroquois, roped from NH90s and jumped out of C-130s, so it will be interesting to be on the other side of the action."**

**- Pilot Officer Leighton Joll**

"The change of culture between the Services has taken some getting used to, but it's been really enjoyable," he said.

Anyone wanting to join the Air Force should give it all they have, he said.

"The NZDF is an organisation full of opportunities that you can't possibly have anywhere else, and the rewards for the hard work are well worth it."

He is now looking forward to the next phase of his career and starting his pilot training at Base Ohakea.



## Swapping hospo for hot spots

**New Pilot Officer Kelsey May has traded in the heat of hospitality for the world of juggling logistics as she embarks on a new career in the Air Force.**

**T**he 23-year-old studied hospitality and tourism management and spent time working overseas before deciding to pursue a career in the Air Force.

“I decided to join the Air Force as I wanted an exciting career that was both challenging and interesting, and where I would always be learning,” she said.

She will soon head to Base Auckland to work as a Junior Supply Officer after completing the RNZAF Officer’s Course.

“I am very excited for the next chapter of my career, although I will miss my course mates, it has been a privilege being on this journey with them.

“I have really enjoyed the last 17 weeks and have learnt so much and gained so much more confidence.”

There were many highlights on course, including roughing it with just a nylon sheet, or hoochie, Pilot Officer (PLTOFF) May said.

“The field exercises have been amazing experiences. It was fun sleeping in the bush under hoochie tents, setting up camp in silence only using red light, and running around in the field trying to achieve a mission.

“One of the biggest highlights though was talking to the P-3K2 Orion crew over the radio on exercise, watching a parachute drop from a C-130 Hercules and riding on the NH90 helicopter,

**“I would one day like to be deployed to Antarctica and work there, I am also keen to work overseas to get an understanding of how other militaries work.”**

**- Pilot Officer Kelsey May**

which all happened on the same day. A completely unforgettable experience.”

She was looking forward to learning her trade and putting it into practice.

“I am focussing on being a great supply officer, I want to be really good at my job and see where my career takes me.

Her advice to those wishing to seek a career with the New Zealand Defence Force was to get in touch with a recruiter who would match their interests with a trade.

“Once you have found a trade that you might like, ask your recruiter to put you in touch with someone currently working in that role to get a feel for what they do.

“I did this, and it helped me to decide which Service to apply for and whether the trade I was interested in was right for me.”





## We are Invictus

**B** | SENIOR COMMUNICATIONS ADVISOR  
**Y** | CHARLENE WILLIAMSON

**LEFT**  
Robert 'Tiny' Graham

**RIGHT**  
Flight Sergeant Stacey Adam

**A**lthough the Invictus Games has been postponed, this hasn't stopped Flight Sergeant (F/S) Stacey Adam and Robert 'Tiny' Graham from continuing to do their part for wounded, injured and sick (WIS) around the world.

They have both been named as the New Zealand moderators of the Invictus Games Foundation's 'We Are Invictus' app and have taken up a two year volunteer role.

'We Are Invictus' seeks to build, maintain and reinforce the global network of those with a shared history of wounding, injury or illness during or as a result of service to their country. Launched in 2019 by the Invictus Games Foundation, it allows users from around the world to engage with each other on a global Invictus platform.

F/S Adam, an Air Force medic, said the platform is a great way for people to connect and for those already in the WIS community to keep motivated.

"I have gained so much from being part of the Invictus community and I want to get the word out there.

"I want to give something back to the WIS community and get more people engaged and feel comfortable reaching out for help. The app isn't just for past or future Invictus competitors but all those who have been wounded, injured or ill as a result of their military service," she said.

F/S Adam is part of the 2020 New Zealand Team, but due to Covid-19 and the postponement of the Games, hasn't had a chance to compete yet.



“Even though I have not participated in a Games yet, I know there is a power in sport for recovery,” she said.

F/S Adam was diagnosed with a large brain tumor in 2018 and while the tumor was removed her recovery from brain surgery has been slow and difficult, Invictus and sport has given her a new focus.

Robert ‘Tiny’ Graham, New Zealand Army Veteran, competed in the Invictus Games in Toronto in 2017, and again in Sydney in 2018.

Mr Graham said he feels privileged to have been given the opportunity to be a moderator with ‘We Are Invictus’.

“In essence the Invictus concept is phenomenal, the experiences that my family and I got when I participated as an athlete have been second to none.

“If I could be that conduit to our New Zealand fraternity and be able to not only share my experiences but to aid in the journey of others, that is icing on the cake.

“My Invictus experiences have been the pinnacle of my sporting career and to be able to in some way be a part of others’ journeys is very rewarding,” he said.

The New Zealand Defence Force has sent teams to the Invictus Games since its inception in 2014 where more than 60 athletes have had opportunity to experience what it is like to recover through sport with the help of the Invictus Games.

**“I have really come to value the way sport and exercise encourages rehabilitation and I want people to know that it’s ‘okay to not be okay’ and that it is also okay to be last because it’s about participation, that’s what I want to promote.”**

**- Flight Sergeant Stacey Adam**



# Jumping for our mates

B | EDITOR  
Y | REBECCA QUILLIAM

**Leading Aircraftman (LAC) Jacob Adams recently organised a Missing Wingman Trust fundraising event with the goal of raising \$1,000 for people to box jump or do step-ups to the height of Mt Everest in a 12-hour period. But the participants smashed his expectations out of the park.**

**T**he team at Base Woodbourne brought their best and raised twice the goal amount and summited the mountain five times – reaching a height of 44,230m between 10am and 10pm.

“My initial maths told me we would summit Mt Everest twice, so when everyone showed up and more than doubled that, I was absolutely blown away.

“The charity is close to my heart because one day I, or someone I know, could need it.”

Inspired by an event he saw on social media, LAC Adams decided to adapt it to suit Air Force personnel.

“I was looking for something to do outside of work and I enjoy helping charities and I like fitness, so it meshed well.”

Entire courses, personnel living on the base and families and their children came along to conquer the mountain.

Throughout the day there were a few stand out performances, including from Flying Officer Api Taiapa who smashed out 1,052 box jumps in an hour and Flight Lieutenant Iain Warren who completed two separate sessions.

“There were a few people limping at work the next day with sore legs.”

Even though LAC Adams was overlooking the event, he still managed to get in about two hours of jumping throughout the day. He’s now looking towards his next charity event.

“I was very sore afterwards, but I didn’t really think about it because I was just so ecstatic about how the event ran.”

## BY THE NUMBERS:

- 5 summits of Mt Everest
- 44,230m jumped and stepped
- Just over 110,000 box jumps/step-ups
- Just over \$2,000 raised
- Boxes 50cm in height
- Step-ups 32cm in height



## Notices

### JOIN THE RNZAF POLICE

**RNZAF Police are recruiting now for 2022.**

Make a difference every day protecting the Air Force and the wider Defence community. Expressions of interest for re-muster are invited from serving men and women in the RNZAF.

For more information contact your local MP or email [MP.Recruiting@nzdf.mil.nz](mailto:MP.Recruiting@nzdf.mil.nz)

### A SHOUT-OUT TO THE AIR FORCE MUSEUM OF NEW ZEALAND

**We would like to give a big shout-out to the Air Force Museum of New Zealand, which has seen a record number of people through its doors in the last financial year, despite Covid disruptions.**

The Museum welcomed 231,944 museum and corporate visitors – the highest number in the history of the Museum. This is more impressive considering the loss of international visitors, which normally make up nearly a third of visitor numbers. It is a testament to the hard work of the Museum staff and volunteers, as well as its very impressive displays.



THE NEXT SELECTION FOR THE

# 1 NZSAS REGT

OCTOBER 2021

NOMINATIONS OPEN  
**12 JULY**  
AND CLOSE  
**10 SEPT**

For more information or to download your application, please visit the NZSOF Intranet site:

<http://org/nzsof/LP/Recruiting.aspx>





**B | CORPORAL  
Y | SEAN SPIVEY**

No. 3 Squadron arrived in Westport during a major flooding event last month to assist 3 Combat Service Support Battalion (CSSB). The flooding was in full force and weather wasn't letting up. This particular flight was for Fire and Emergency NZ to assess vulnerable areas on the roads and any other potential dangers. Featured here, soldiers from 3 CSSB are passing 48hr care packages on to Tom who is loading them into the NH90. The care packages were made for any residents that we saw along the way that may have needed them.





THE NEXT NEW ZEALAND SPECIAL OPERATIONS FORCES

# COMMANDO ASSESSMENT

**OCTOBER 2021**

NOMINATIONS OPEN  
**12 JULY**  
AND CLOSE  
**10 SEPT**

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