

# AIR FORCE NEWS

Doing the  
mahi in the  
Pacific

Submarine  
hunting on  
exercise

Police on  
board to  
train

#241

NOV 21



Parachute  
instructors in  
the jump zone

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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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Parachute instructors

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NZDefenceForce



Te Kāwanatanga o Aotearoa  
New Zealand Government

# First Word



**B** | WING COMMANDER  
**Y** | SUSIE BARNES

**“As we have seen over the past 18 months, during a global pandemic, the RNZAF has delivered on both a domestic and global stage, regardless of restrictions, challenges, alert levels and lockdowns.”**

**‘C**ongratulations, you are the next Logistics Commander (Air).’

We are in the midst of the greatest modernisation programme the RNZAF has seen in more than 60 years. Over the next seven years, the average age of the NZDF’s operational aircraft will reduce from more than 50 to under ten years old and our ‘modern’ NH90 helicopters will become the oldest aircraft across our fleets. As the next Logistics Commander (Air), what does this mean to me?

Modern capability requires a fundamentally different focus from a Logistics perspective. We will become information and relationship managers, with a need for modern business tools and skills to support. With modern and reliable fleets, our focus will need to shift from a significant in-house repair capability to a more integrated workforce focussed on delivering operational effect.

The Logistics Transformation Programme (LTP), a key part of our Future Operating Model, is currently focussed on the design of a future Logistics system to support our modernised Air Force. The LTP will ensure our future workforce delivers value through a contemporary, resilient and integrated Logistics system. It will situate Logistics as a key capability for the RNZAF.

No doubt about it, the only constant right now is change; the introduction of the Defence Aviation Rules regulatory framework, delivery of the Future Technical Trade Capability project, introduction of the new capabilities, withdrawal/disposal of the legacy fleets, all whilst delivering military air operations.

Add the current overlay of Op Protect and we have never been so ‘occupied’.

How then do we navigate our way through this exciting but challenging period of change? We need to adopt deliberate change management philosophies.

Through careful definition of our ‘end state’ and development of a blueprint to deliver, the LTP will address our future workforce in a phased manner. In parallel, task prioritisation will be critical, based on alignment with NZDF/RNZAF Strategy 25 and driven by the Defence Logistics Command Campaign Plan.

Underpinning all of this is the exceptional calibre of our people. Throughout my career, I have always been impressed by the ability of our personnel to deliver military air operations in a safe and professional manner. Everything we do in the Logistics arena contributes to our military outputs. As we have seen over the past 18 months, during a global pandemic, the RNZAF has delivered on both a domestic and global stage, regardless of restrictions, challenges, alert levels and lockdowns.

As the Logistics Commander (Air), my commitment is to you – our people. This period of transformational change is exciting and unprecedented. Communication, transparency and engagement will be key to our collective success. So, with this in mind, I encourage you to be curious, lean in and maintain an open mind over the coming years. We are shaping our own exciting future, together.

**E huri tō aroaro ki te rā  
tukuna tō ataarangi ki muri I a koe**

*Turn and face the sun and let  
your shadow fall behind you.*



## Orion crew find missing Kiribati sailors

**Aircrew on a P-3K2 Orion found two people who had been reported overdue from a fishing trip to Maiana Island in Kiribati, after scouring more than 7,000 square nautical miles of ocean.**



**T**he two people had last been seen on board a 5.8m fibreglass boat departing Tarawa, Kiribati, on the afternoon of 30 September. They had planned to go to Maiana Island, an atoll about 2-3 hours away from Tarawa.

The Rescue Coordination Centre Fiji sought assistance from New Zealand through the Rescue Coordination Centre NZ, who requested an Orion assist with the search.

Aircrew on the Orion departed Base Auckland on October 5 to search for the pair, covering a search area of approximately 7,300 square nautical miles on the first day of searching.

The aircrew overnighted in Nauru before resuming the search and were successful in locating the boat with two people that morning, 230 nautical miles from Nauru.

New Zealand's search and rescue area is one of the largest in the world, covering 30 million square kilometres. The P-3K2 Orion, and the incoming P-8A Poseidon aircraft, are a vital tool for the Rescue Coordination Centre NZ.

**“Nearby fishing vessel FV Queen Elizabeth 959 was asked to rendezvous with the boat while the P-3K2 remained overhead until the fishing vessel was on station.”**

## Urgent flight to the islands

B | EDITOR  
Y | REBECCA QUILLIAM

**Aircrew on a C-130 Hercules recently completed a quick trip to Solomon Islands and Kiribati, moving both people and equipment.**



**K**iribati nationals had been experiencing significant power outages due to the deteriorating condition of electrical generators on the island. The country's government asked for Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the New Zealand Defence Force's help in getting a 5,100kg electrical generator stator from Tarawa to New Zealand for repair.

On the way, the C-130 was able to take a small group of Solomon Islands RSE (recognised seasonal employer) workers and New Zealand Police personnel, who had been experiencing difficulty finding commercial options, to Honiara.

The aircrew had time to do some forward planning of the mission and how they would be moving the heavy generator, air loadmaster Corporal (CPL) Emma Porritt said.

"Before we left we were sent a lot of images and dimensions and rough weights to manage how we would restrain it and meet the heavy equipment requirements. From there we could work out what tie-down equipment we would need to take with us to restrain it properly.

"We could do rough calculations and figure out how much restraint we would need between the loadmasters and the air load team from Air Movements – we had four of them travelling with us as well."

The crew took with them calibrated scales, and the Kiribati airport had a crane that was used to lift the generator onto static dock rollers, which the crew used to manoeuvre it onto the aircraft.

"So we weighed it, lifted it onto the pallet, restrained it and loaded it onto the aircraft. Luckily we had 19 crew members to help," CPL Porritt said.

"It was a very cool experience, particularly being a loadmaster under training on my first overseas/overnight trip – and especially since we didn't have access to all the modern equipment that we do at home. It was an opportunity to do things differently and find a way to move something that is 5 tonnes with limited gear."

The fixed generator will be returned to Kiribati later this year.

It was also a great feeling to be able to fly the eight passengers needing to get to the Solomons, but had found it difficult to get there because of limited flights.

"The fact that this lined up for them was a blessing," CPL Porritt said.

**PHOTO**  
Loading the generator onto the C-130



## Golden jubilee during Singaporean exercise

B | DETACHMENT COMMANDER  
Y | SQUADRON LEADER MARCUS HOGAN

**Exercise Bersama Gold (XBG21) was significant for a number of reasons. Firstly, it came in the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary (Golden Jubilee) of the Five Power Defence Arrangements (FPDA) which were signed in 1971. Secondly it was the first live FPDA exercise held since the start of the Covid-19 pandemic and significantly for No. 5 Squadron it is planned (and likely) to be the final time a New Zealand P-3K2 Orion will participate in an FPDA exercise.**



**T**he participating forces this year were numerous particularly on the naval side with all FPDA member countries contributing significantly capable naval units, including a Malaysian Scorpene Class Submarine (KD Tun Abdul Razak), a Royal Navy Type 45 Destroyer (HMS Diamond) and various other Singaporean, and Australian major surface units.

Significantly our own Royal New Zealand Navy sent HMNZS Te Kaha and HMNZS Aotearoa, including an embarked Seasprite. I was humbled on one particular sortie to see an Orion crew in action with a Seasprite crew working Direct Support with Te Kaha, screening (protecting) Aotearoa from a submarine over 8,000km from home in the South China Sea.

The Orion was for the first time in a long time based out of Singapore. Operating from the military side of Changi Air Base the detachment were hosted by various base units and were co-located with the Republic of Singapore Air Force A330 MRTT squadron. Even though any social interactions were strictly limited by Covid protocols both squadrons proved excellent hosts and provided excellent support throughout the detachment.

HQ IADS is the FPDA Headquarters and they did an excellent job of planning and executing the exercise. The end result was highly valuable, safe and effective individual and collective training in conventional maritime warfare.

The value of XBG21 in enhancing co-operation, building trust and confidence and fostering interoperability was more important than ever given the Covid break away from more regular interactions and the virtual construct we now operate in.

**“It’s not often you get a major international airport closed for 30 minutes while you fly in formation with over a dozen aircraft over one of the most densely populated cities in the world.”**

**- Squadron Leader Marcus Hogan**

For me personally it was hard work bringing all of this together and my thanks go out to the entire team that deployed (and who stayed at home) to make this all happen. Three weeks in isolation, a tough work schedule, Singapore heat and Covid protocols may take the shine off things overall but we can all be extremely proud of our collective achievements during the deployment.

Finally a highlight of the deployment for me was the FPDA 50<sup>th</sup> Flypast over Marina Bay Sands.

It’s not often you get a major international airport closed (Changi) for 30 minutes while you fly in formation with over a dozen aircraft over one of the most densely populated cities in the world. The RSAF planned the flypast in exceptional detail and the results – well... I’ll let the pictures do the talking.

The event was the final FPDA exercise for our retiring Orions and the next time we take part will be with our new P-8A Poseidon fleet.

## ‘Seeing the whole picture’

**B** | LEADING AIRCRAFTMAN  
**Y** | MAX HENDERSON

**As a Communications and Information Systems Technician I provide mission support services to our operational outputs. For XBG 21, I provided network connectivity access for our internal computer system, printing and projector services.**

**A**n exciting and memorable experience from this trip was my first flight on the P-3K2 Orion. Having supported No. 5 Squadron in the past from a desk or radio handset, sitting on the aircraft during an active mission was like finally finishing a puzzle.

It was truly impressive to see all of the aircrew in action, from the pilots taking off after an active lightning storm, the Tactical Coordinator coordinating sono-buoy launches and requesting scanning zones, to the Air Ordnance Specialist arming simulated training torpedoes in the bomb bay – it was an unforgettable flight.

All of this simultaneous work led to the coolest part and the reason for the flight, to detect, track and simulate attacking a real Scorpene Class submarine. The crew had to triangulate its location, predict its movement and constantly track it while the submarine was trying to evade “the patterns”.

Having seen a small part of how the aircrew operate, I have a clearer understanding of our outputs and how vital it is that we continue to participate in these exercises alongside our partners to maintain our warfighting capabilities and operational focus.

As for Singapore, well during my time here, I have probably sweated the equivalent of my own bodyweight as the temperature didn't seem to drop below 30°C ever.

Unfortunately during our seven-day isolation, after landing in Singapore, the Covid cases spiked locally to their highest since they transitioned to an endemic management phase. This led to tighter restrictions of two-person groups maximum. But having come from Level 4 lockdown in New Zealand, it was still refreshing to have some freedom to explore, walking for hours each day and exploring the fast-paced and insanely green-thumbed landscape Singapore has to offer.

There are so many unique cultures here as well as amazing food, mazes for malls and the best public transport I've ever come across.



Singapore's Covid management was also impressive despite the spike in cases – every area required strict Bluetooth enabled contact-tracing check -ins and the public's general mask and hygiene compliance as well as vaccination percentage is among the best in the world.

This seemed to enable a somewhat business as usual approach in Singapore for those who were vaccinated, allowing so many businesses and services to open up, albeit with a temporary restriction in numbers of customers. Of course we were very careful to avoid crowds and maintained good social distance and hygiene practices ourselves enabling the entire team to stay safe and achieve the mission.

Overall, I have had a great time in Singapore and No. 5 Squadron is an amazing team to work with. This has helped me see not only the value in this exercise but also how my trade and skills can contribute to achieving outputs while understanding what those outputs actually are!





**“All of this simultaneous work led to the coolest part and the reason for the flight, to detect, track and simulate attacking a real Scorpene Class submarine.”**



## Seasprites in the ‘war zone’

**No. 6 Squadron has deployed one of its SH-2G(I) Seasprite helicopters to support HMNZS Aotearoa on its first large scale, multinational naval exercise: Bersama Gold 21.**

**T**his is also the first time the Royal New Zealand Navy and No. 6 Squadron have deployed to a Five Power Defence Arrangements (FPDA) exercise in three years, showing our support and strengthening ties to the other nations of the FPDA; Australia, Malaysia, Singapore and the United Kingdom.

Working towards common goals with FPDA nation ships and one submarine, there was the opportunity to simulate and refine anti-surface warfare and anti-submarine warfare tactics within a task group.

The exercise presented opportunities to learn about how other FPDA nations conduct these operations, adapt our own methods to achieve a combined objective in an efficient and effective way and test many of our skills while operating in a significantly different environment to that of New Zealand or the South Pacific.

It also allowed us to conduct cross-deck operations with HMAS Anzac and HMAS Canberra, including conducting radar approaches, Vertical Replenishments (transferring stores between ships by helicopter), winching operations and refuelling.

This all leads to building on our interoperability with our friends “across the ditch”.

# Preparing for the extremes

WORDS | REBECCA QUILLIAM  
PHOTOGRAPHY | CORPORAL SEAN SPIVEY

**The high risk weather season has just got underway and during this time, extreme conditions could cause havoc here or for our neighbours in the Pacific. This is why our Headquarters Deployable Joint Inter-Agency Task Force has just completed an exercise to prepare for the worst.**







**TOP LEFT**  
An HQ DJIATF member talking with NZ Police about disaster preparation

**BOTTOM LEFT**  
A C-130 preparing to leave Rongotai for Hawke's Bay airport

**MIDDLE**  
The HQ DJIATF team on exercise in Hawke's Bay

**RIGHT**  
The tent set-up used as the base of operations

**B**etween November and March there is an increased chance the Defence Force will need to take part in a humanitarian aid and disaster relief mission as a result of cyclones from the Southwest Pacific, Warrant (W/O) Mitch Mitchell said.

“So this was an activity for us to make sure we are ready to respond, and to give confidence to the Commander of Joint Forces that HQ DJIATF (Headquarters Deployable Joint Inter-Agency Task Force) is ready to walk out the door during that period.

“It tested our ability to deploy at short notice with the right equipment and operate away from home. It was an austere environment for us and we were totally self-sufficient, living in tents, eating from ratpacks and operating from our command post-operating environment.”

The three-day exercise was based on Defence Force land at Roy's Hill, west of Hastings.

Joining the team were shadow posts from the Defence Force, including air, maritime and health liaison officers and an environmental health officer.

A large part of the exercise was engaging with local organisations, including Ngāti Kahungunu iwi representatives, Napier Council, Hawke's Bay Civil Defence and Emergency Management, NZ Police, and Fire and Emergency New Zealand.

“All of that was around us establishing and building pre-disaster relationships – so rather than waiting for something to happen and we meet people for the first time, we try to have the basis of a relationship established. So that was a key function while we were there doing our operations.”



A big part of the exercise was looking at “real-world thinking” and planning around natural disasters, such as earthquakes or a tsunami – which is a possibility for the coastal region, he said.

“The airfield in Napier is very close to the water table, so it’s vulnerable. We tried to work out how to provide air support and logistical support to the region if it and the airport and the seaport were unusable. Are there alternative locations we could use to get a C-130 to? Could we utilise assets in their home locations, so could No. 3 Squadron support from Ohakea rather than having to be based in Hawke’s Bay? So it’s looking for solutions to real life situations.”

It was important to have those conversations with the local agencies now rather than after disaster struck, W/O Mitchell said.

The team also practised taking down its command post and equipment and setting up in an old barn.

“Ideally that’s how we would operate when we go into these situations. We would try to find some shelter and use it as best we can, which reduces our payload and footprint and equipment that we need to bring – which then of course gives more room on aircraft or ships for aid.”

During the exercise, HQ DJIATF also visited Pukemokimoki Marae, which involved a pōwhiri and storytelling session as a means to understand more about the region and the tangata whenua.

“It’s about understanding the Defence Force’s bicultural policy and also developing a better sense of cross-cultural competence. So when we are required to help our Pacific neighbours, taking with us and adapting things that we’ve learnt helps us to understand the culture so when we get there, we can fit in much better and not tread on people’s toes,” W/O Mitchell said.

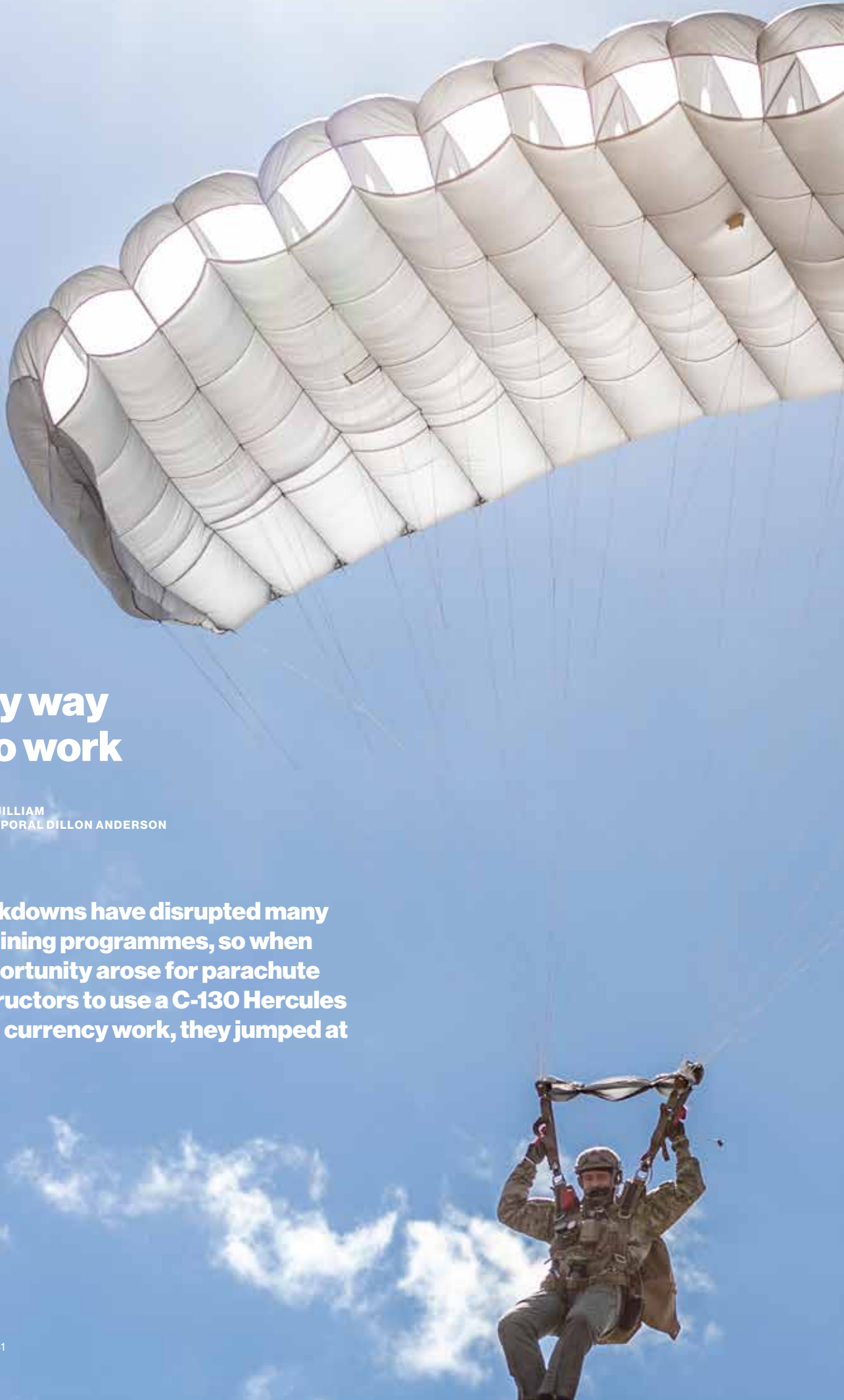
**“It was an austere environment for us and we were totally self-sufficient, living in tents, eating from rat packs and operating from our command post-operating environment.”**

**– Warrant Officer Mitch Mitchell**

# A gnarly way to get to work

WORDS | REBECCA QUILLIAM  
PHOTOGRAPHY | CORPORAL DILLON ANDERSON

**Covid-19 lockdowns have disrupted many Air Force training programmes, so when a recent opportunity arose for parachute training instructors to use a C-130 Hercules for essential currency work, they jumped at the chance.**





**LEFT**  
AW/O Justin Tamehana and CPL  
Josh Stone walk off the drop  
zone after a HAHO training jump

**RIGHT**  
W/O Justin Tamehana preparing  
to land

**The Parachute Training Support Unit's (PTSU) main role is to provide parachute support and instruction primarily for NZDF Special Operations Forces. However, interruptions from Covid lockdowns meant a strain was put on Parachute Jump Instructors to maintain their currencies.**



“**T**here are only 10 Parachute Jump Instructors (PJI) at the unit with about a 50/50 split between senior and junior instructors. So it’s a balancing act being able to provide the output the NZDF requires and try to keep currencies and also bring up the junior guys,” PJI Warrant Officer (W/O) Justin Tamehana said.

“So every time we have the opportunity to use the C-130 for training, we throw everything at it.”

The week-long training also involved use of a civilian aircraft, but the time period for that aircraft was cut short due to poor weather. However, with two full days’ use of the C-130, the team was able to practise all the jumps they needed.

The first morning saw the team look at low-level jumping from 1,000 feet, using the MC-6 round parachute.

“We very rarely get an opportunity to concentrate on that because we’re always teaching it to others.”

They practised fully-equipped high altitude, low opening (HALO) freefall jumps from 10,000 feet wearing combat equipment, a weapon and webbing.

The training also brought up one of the instructors to a senior level, allowing for PTSU’s major training activity to take place next year.

The PJIs also did some high altitude, high opening (HAHO) training, where they exited the aircraft at 10,000 feet and opened the chute up straight away, W/O Tamehana said.

“That enables us to come together into a patrol and then we’ll fly back as a group using GPS. We’re all talking with each other on radio and that’s how you can transit to a target.

“HAHO is very quiet as opposed to HALO (freefall) which makes quite a bit of noise when the parachute opens. At 4,000 feet you can hear the parachute open. You can’t hear my parachute open at 10,000 or 13,000 feet, 15km away which gives the benefit of stealth. So we did two sorties of HAHO currency with nine of us in the air.”

During the exercise, W/O Tamehana also made some tandem descents where the passenger was also carrying combat equipment.


“It gets pretty full on, but our systems are military systems designed to carry a lot of weight. The MC-6 has a 400lb weight limit, so we can carry some gear. The RA-1 that we use for freefall and high altitude patrolling has a 450lb weight limit for one person and the SOV-3 tandem system can take up to 650lb.

“Another role of mine is to be one of two Tandem Master Instructors (TMIs), and we teach PJIs and Special Operations Forces tandem parachuting. It requires our TMIs to stay alert, because when you’re teaching people to fall through the sky with two people, packs and rifles, you’ve got to be quite sharp.”

The training was essential because of all the aspects PJIs need to be proficient in, W/O Tamehana said.

“We need to be current and proficient with three elements – jumping with all parachutes in different modes and techniques; we need to be proficient and current in dispatching parachutists; and we need to be current and proficient in instructing it.”





**“Our job is to teach people how to get to their job. It’s just a bus ride to work, that’s all it is. It just happens to be a gnarly way to get to work.”**

# Base Commander up for the challenge

B | EDITOR  
Y | REBECCA QUILLIAM

**Base Woodbourne's new commander Wing Commander (WGCDR) Paul Drysdale knows how great the base is and he's keen to inspire others to work alongside him.**



**“**I'm really excited about the new job. The key vision will be around trying to make Woodbourne an attractive place for posting.

“My focus will be around looking at the training system and how that's working and continuing to tell the organisation that Woodbourne is a military air base that delivers training, and is a rewarding place to post to.”

Aside from the excellent weather Woodbourne enjoys, the base offers a great deal to personnel, he said.

“It's the satisfaction of seeing new people come into the organisation as untrained and leaving the base as trained and effectively qualified tradespeople. It's an inspiring place to be – particularly with all the young people coming through on their courses. There's an energy to it.”

“We're also working on Te Whare Manaakitanga, Community Centre, being built here, which will be a key piece in bringing the community together and making a real community feel.”

Initially joining the Army's 2<sup>nd</sup>/1<sup>st</sup> Battalion as an infantry soldier in 1988, WGCDR Drysdale corps-changed to RNZ Signals Corps before service-changing nine years later to the Air Force, commissioning as a Communications and Information Systems Officer.

“Since then I've spent some time at Joint Forces Headquarters, on an overseas deployment to Bahrain with the Combined Maritime Forces (CMF), then into Director of Career Management (DCM) in Wellington.”

His deployment to Bahrain was a particular career highlight.

“I was N53 Chief Plans. I had an Italian officer and a Korean officer who worked for me and our job was effectively to plan and bring nations in to join the CMF for their six-month deployment.”

He also spent three years in the United States as the Communications and Electronics liaison officer, based out of the Embassy in Washington DC.

“I worked a lot in the Pentagon – that was a really good posting and it was great to take the family with me too. That was 2006–2009. We watched the Obama inauguration on TV from our home in Washington, it was fascinating to see a real change in history.”

Now, with his new command role, WGCDR Drysdale is looking forward to being back on a base, but recognises there will be different challenges to face.

“We're trying to make sure that the Covid situation brings as little disruption as possible to the base and the training that we deliver. We have a pretty strict set of protocols around making sure that Covid is kept at bay.

“The big piece for us is protecting the force. People come in and out of the base and the last thing we need is to be a vector for the virus.”



## Staying grounded in a challenging year

B | CORPORAL  
Y | DENNIS TOMMY

### “Leadership and learning are indispensable to each other.”

– John F. Kennedy

I find it funny how I never get used to how time goes by so quickly, especially for a once young Samoan kid from South Auckland always looking forward to hanging out with “the boys” at school, eating lunch and looking forward to getting home by 4.30pm to watch the next episode of Dragon Ball Z.

I would like to say times have changed but they are still the same LOL!

The opportunity of the Airman of the Year role has been a challenging one but fun nonetheless. I instantly knew what I had gotten myself into (well what the many influencers at the time got me into haha you know who you are).

I have been a part of many interesting things within the organisation during this time.

Most notably formally through the Air Force Leadership Board, Leadership Forums and the Command Noho Marae at the Tūrangawaewae. But I think something that has been equally important is attending Youth Development Unit graduation parades, visits to Woodbourne for recruit graduations and dinners, working behind the scenes with the Pasifika movement in the Air Force and meeting so many wonderful and inspiring people in our organisation.

My mind-set has remained the same, be humble, stay grounded, work hard and serve others. That’s what has been instilled in me throughout my childhood from my parents and family and what I am always pursuing. You add a bit of cheekiness inside there and voila! It’s a match made in heaven right?!

Airman of the Year has most definitely helped me to do that in a different context and one that has broadened my horizons and enabled me to network with so many people in different stages of the Defence Force.

Covid-19 has offered its challenges ever since breaking onto the scene two years ago. We have had to adapt, learn, operate in a multitude of ways, which has given us an opportunity to become more resilient, still serve our country and be able to adapt to an ever-changing environment to learn more about ourselves and become more connected with family, friends and our community.

So for myself, although the working environment changes, the understanding of still working as hard as I can to do the best I can and also help others has never changed, which has meant thinking outside the box to deliver what I need to. So long as our people are safe, doing the best we can, helping each other and caring for one another I believe our organisation will be more than capable to tackle any situation that comes our way.



# Working with our mates in blue

WORDS  
REBECCA QUILLIAM

PHOTOGRAPHY  
SERGEANT SAM SHEPHERD &  
CORPORAL RACHEL PUGH

No. 3 Squadron crews have recently been spending time training with teams from the NZ Police. They've been transporting the Armed Offenders Squad to safe points along the Kāpiti Coast and flying to the mountains on search and rescue exercises – essential training for when things go wrong.



## Training with the AOS



The nature of the work the NZ Police's Armed Offenders Squad (AOS) is involved with means they sometimes need to get to a hard-to-reach area fast. And the best way to do that is by air. That's why the team spent some time with No. 3 Squadron recently getting familiar with travelling by helicopter.

The day-long exercise took place at Queen Elizabeth Park on the Kāpiti Coast.

"The Police wanted to do some training for their teams - they wanted to simulate moving the AOS to a forward safe point and also get a familiarisation on the NH90," NH90 pilot Flight Lieutenant (FLTLT) Paul Robinson said.

The training involved an introduction to NH90 safety requirements, dangerous air cargo regulations and the process of safely getting on and leaving the helicopter.

The Police set up a couple of scenarios for themselves where they cleared a stand of trees and cleared a property, he said.

"They had three teams that cycled through the different scenarios. They were practising getting on and off the aircraft with all their equipment. It was a successful day, they seemed to enjoy it."

It was always good to train alongside the Police, FLTLT Robinson said.

"It was helpful for them to see how our communications worked, so they could see how they could integrate directly into the helicopter and be able to speak to the teams on the ground using our radios."

Alongside the AOS team were dog handlers and paramedics training with the squadron.

"At the end of the exercise we did some stretcher training with the paramedics, who practised taking a patient on board and seeing how they would be secured to the aircraft."



**“It was a case of them getting familiar with our equipment. Having a big aircraft where they can get a lot of people on board was very efficient - they can do a large amount of training in a shorter amount of time. That was the advantage we could provide.”**

**- Flight Lieutenant Paul Robinson**

“For the dogs it’s a matter of the more exposure they get to the aircraft, the better they are with it. For the dog handlers, they like to get regular training, which is something we can provide. The training makes it easier if we need to work together in the future.”

NH90 loadmaster Sergeant Craig Hartnett said it was always good from their perspective to work with people who weren’t very familiar with how the crew operates.

“It certainly shows the value of taking sufficient time to go through briefs and rehearsals without the aircraft running and makes for much smoother interactions when they’re running through their scenarios.”

**LEFT**  
AOS training to be familiar with travelling by helicopter

**MIDDLE**  
AOS staff clearing a property

**RIGHT**  
NZ Police dogs getting used to travel by air

## In the mountains with Police



Low cloud, rain and high winds were perfect conditions for an NH90 crew to be doing search and rescue training with Police recently.

“**T**rampers never get lost on nice sunny days, it’s always going to be in difficult conditions,” NH90 pilot Flight Lieutenant (FLTLT) Glenn Blay said.

The two-day training with Police search and rescue (SAR) officers as well as their dive team took place between Raumai, west of Bulls, and the Ruahine Ranges.

The search element of the training involved dropping a Police team into the Ranges after some winching and helicopter familiarisation work.

“The intent was to drop them into a hut in the Ruahine Ranges, where they were going for a couple of days’ search and rescue training.

“About half of them were first-timers in the helicopter, which was primarily why we were sent to support that part,” FLTLT Blay said.

The dive team joined the training during the winching aspect at Raumai on the morning of the first day, before the search team was dropped into the mountains, he said.

“The weather was quite poor and we were aiming to get to Sunrise hut, which was about 4,500 feet high, but given the conditions we had to drop the search team into the bottom of the valley at a place called Waipawa Forks hut. They ended up tramping up the hill to Sunrise and then back down the next day.”



**“The conditions were similar to many search and rescue situations. Our aim is always to get them in as close as possible to where they want to go as safely as we can and they have to walk their way up from there.”**

*- Flight Lieutenant Glenn Blay*



Low cloud, rain and wind reaching 40 knots hampered the helicopter crew and made flying to the top of the ranges difficult, FLTLT Blay said.

“We tried, we got a bit of a gap and managed to fly up there, but there was no way we could safely winch them in, which is why we dropped them off at the bottom.

“The conditions were similar to many search and rescue situations. Our aim is always to get them in as close as possible to where they want to go as safely as we can and they have to walk their way up from there.”

Day two of the exercise saw the NH90 team take on more winching training with the dive team and later fly back to the Raumai Ranges to collect the Police search team.

“It was good for us to be working with Police, especially now in this current environment with Covid back in some communities. Life still goes on and for us training still needs to be conducted so that when we are needed, we can still carry out an effective rescue.

“Covid doesn’t stop everything. It was conducted in accordance with health protocols – personnel were wearing face masks and we were sanitising and ensuring everyone was as safe as could be.”

**PHOTOS**  
File footage

# Occupying Japan: The RNZAF and J Force 1946–48

B | AIR FORCE MUSEUM OF NEW ZEALAND  
Y | SIMON MOODY, RESEARCH CURATOR



**Seventy-five years ago, the personnel of No. 14 Squadron RNZAF marched through the streets of Auckland to board the British aircraft carrier HMS Glory. Bound for the homeland of their recent enemy, Japan, it was an overseas odyssey which would last for two years.**

**A**s soon as the Japanese surrendered to the Allies at the end of World War II, the question of an occupation force was raised. On 21 August 1945, the New Zealand Government agreed to provide one fighter squadron in addition to an army contingent to the British Commonwealth Occupation Force (BCOF). This New Zealand contribution was known collectively as 'J Force'.

The selection of No. 14 Squadron RNZAF was historically significant. It had been formed out of the remains of No. 488 Squadron on its return to New Zealand in 1942. That fighter unit had been the first New Zealand squadron to confront the Japanese in the ill-fated Malayan and Singapore campaign of 1941–1942.

The deployment in March 1946 was also important at a time when the RNZAF was being stripped down to the minimum and participating in the occupation would provide purpose and positive publicity.

Equipped with Corsair aircraft, the pilots were nearly all Pacific war veterans, led by Squadron Leader Jesse de Willimoff, one of the most experienced New Zealand fighter pilots of the Pacific campaign.

Following their arrival in Japan in March 1946, No. 14 Squadron was stationed at Iwakuni in southern Honshu. The airfield, like many others, had been heavily attacked during the war, with bomb craters still in the runway and bullet holes in the hangars. Once operational, the squadron played a full part in the surveillance of the former enemy's home territory.

They patrolled a large area, looking out for any sign of insurgency and for illicit fuel or weapons dumps. They also monitored places such as schoolyards for military parades, banned under the demilitarisation of Japanese culture imposed by the Allies. Smuggling from nearby Korea was also an issue, so low-level patrols over the sea were flown to deter vessels from attempting to land.

**LEFT**

No. 14 Squadron RNZAF Corsair flying past Mount Fuji, Japan, 1947.

**MIDDLE TOP**

Parade of No. 14 Squadron personnel in front of seven Corsairs. Note the hangars stripped of cladding to make shelters for the survivors of the atomic bomb in Hiroshima. Iwakuni, Japan, 1946.

**MIDDLE BOTTOM**

The devastated city of Hiroshima, Japan, as viewed by members of No. 14 Squadron RNZAF, March 1946.

**BELOW**

Led by Squadron Leader Jesse de Willimoff, No. 14 Squadron RNZAF parading along Queen Street in Auckland, before embarking for Japan on occupation duties, 7 March 1946.



During this time, No. 41 Squadron also played a vital role in maintaining supply and communication links with New Zealand for the units in Japan. The route was a 20,000km round trip and after a survey flight in February 1946, regular flights by RNZAF Dakotas were undertaken weekly. They carried mail, spares and supplies for the New Zealand Army contingent. With long range fuel tanks, the Dakotas hopped across the Tasman Sea, then to Darwin, the Philippines, Okinawa and finally, Iwakuni.

For the members of No. 14 Squadron, their posting to Japan brought them into contact with a new and unfamiliar culture, which until recently had been a bitter enemy. They were also surprised by how they were received. Pilot Bryan Cox later recalled, "whenever we met a Japanese [person] walking in the opposite direction... we would say 'konbanwa', meaning 'good evening', and without exception they would reply in a similar fashion".

Time off was spent visiting tourist landmarks and shopping for souvenirs to send home.

Many personnel visited nearby Hiroshima, where they witnessed first-hand the effects of the atomic bomb on both city and people. As a consequence, some of the metal sheets covering the hangars at Iwakuni were repurposed to provide makeshift shelters for the refugees.

As well as No. 14 and No. 41 Squadrons, a few individual RNZAF servicemen were sent to Japan on special duties. Flight Lieutenant Andrew Grimwood kept a diary of his attachment to the BCOF Headquarters in 1947-1948. During his time there, he witnessed one of the other purposes of the Occupation, the trial and conviction of Japanese leaders and war criminals by the War Crimes tribunal.

On 10 May 1947, he visited the court: "Once ensconced my first glance was for the men who were responsible for Pearl Harbor and all that followed! They were singularly calm and appeared to be in that state of mind which is often induced in spectators at involved legal proceedings..."

Could one expect them to be anything but bored? Particularly as the outcome is more or less a foregone conclusion. For many of them, death or life imprisonment."

In February 1948, No. 14 Squadron moved to nearby Bofu, as the Occupation drew to an end. Later that year, in October, the Squadron's veteran Corsairs, having reached the end of their service life, were piled up on the airfield and burnt. It was time for the New Zealanders to come home.

While the activities of J Force may not have been as intense as the fighting experiences of World War II, they heralded a new and important role for the RNZAF. No longer was the destruction of the enemy the primary aim. As would be found in succeeding decades, the maintenance of peace would become one of the defining roles for the service.



## Surviving and thriving in Covid times

B | HEAD OF AIR FORCE PSYCHOLOGY  
Y | MAJOR SAM WILLIAMS

**How little life adjustments can lead to large life differences.**

**A**s a military psychologist, I get to work with some very talented people who are well-trained to operate in environments that are uncertain and consequential. During military operations, our minds' natural ability to scan for danger can be adaptive and helpful, but when we come home, we need to reset our mental habits so that our body and mind know when it's time to relax and recover.

### **Aotearoa's emotional environment**

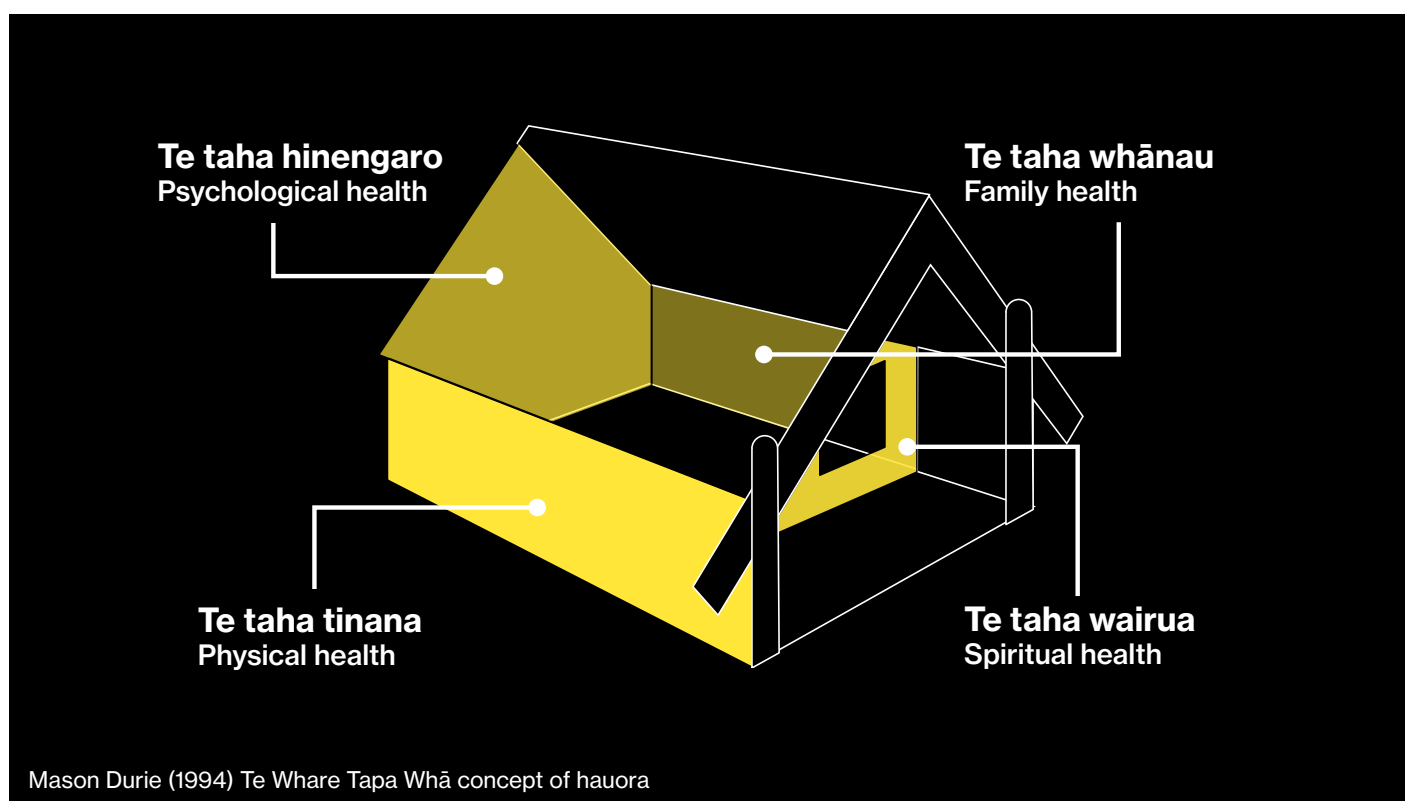
Covid-19 has changed the day-to-day life experience for all New Zealanders. The changes in routine, increased uncertainty, reduction in social and leisure activities and health risks have effectively trained our brains to go into overdrive to protect us from harm. That social interaction that was once easy now causes some anxiety and churn in the gut. That argument we had with a loved one, might now cause us a lot more frustration and rumination. It may feel like we are just surviving, rather than thriving.

### **How do we move from survive to thrive?**

I was talking the other day with a person that I deeply respect\*. They were glowing with optimism, clear about their future goals and I got a deep sense of self-confidence from them. It was invigorating to be around them. Six months before they had been uncertain about the future, frustrated and worn out by uncertainty and life's stresses. How did they turn this around? They made a commitment to sit down to dinner at the table with their family every night.

### **Why was this so effective?**

This person managed to connect with their value of caring for their family and chose to act in ways that were aligned. When you look deep down, what is most important to you? Some of us may not be clear on our values, and if we are clear, we may dwell on behaviours we do that aren't aligned with those values. Nobody lives in alignment with their values all of the time, but even the smallest change in behaviour in support of our core values can have large effects over time!



### How do I take a step toward my values?

The best way to make behaviour change is to build your self-awareness; take small, deliberate actions; evaluate the result and then make adjustments. To do this with values you can:

- Identify your core values – You can use a free worksheet (Google “ACT Values Worksheet”) to help you get down to two or three core values that are very important to you. Don’t judge yourself on what your core values are – it’s for you, and you only.
- Set a goal around one of your core values. For this example, we use the value of caring:
  - G – Goal: Setting what you want to achieve or what you will do.
  - R – Reality: What challenges might get in the way and how can I mitigate them. I sometimes don’t see many people in my day, so there’s not much opportunity to do caring things. I will mitigate this by taking one caring action for myself on these days, or by setting up a call with friends/whānau.

- O – Opportunities: What are upcoming opportunities that I may have to achieve this goal? I might be able to do this during meal-time with my flat/whānau?
- W – Work: What am I ready to commit to? I will take caring behaviours at least two times a day. I will do this by taking five minutes with my morning coffee to identify upcoming opportunities and possible actions I can take. I will take a small moment to reflect at the end of the day.
- Evaluate the result: Have a non-judgmental look at any changes in your mind/body and behaviour:
  - Positive feelings/thoughts – Have these increased?
  - Negative feelings/thoughts – Have these decreased?
  - Your behaviours – Are you doing something different or better?
- Adjust: It’s not always going to work and that’s ok! Make small adjustments and don’t get too disheartened – you will find what works for you.

### What else can I do?

An increase in strain (all the work our mind does) requires an increase in recovery, otherwise our battery goes flat. Good recovery can be small (taking a breath between the kids yelling) or large (a day away with valued friends). A helpful tool to figure out where to focus your recovery is Te Whare Tapa Whā. Ask yourself, what area needs most attention or where might a small bit of recovery have a large result? You can use GROW to set recovery goals as well!

### What if I’m really struggling?

Mental health can vary for a lot of reasons. If you are struggling talk with your GP as they can help find the most effective support options for you. If you want to talk to a (non-NZDF) health professional anonymously you can call 0800 NZDF4U. If you or someone you love is feeling at risk you can call your local mental health crisis team. More information is available at [www.health.nzdf.mil.nz](http://www.health.nzdf.mil.nz)

*\*Permission was granted to use this story.*

# A taste of military life

B | SENIOR COMMUNICATIONS ADVISOR  
Y | LUCY HANDFORD



## How do you lead a team across a body of water using limited equipment? How can you effectively use available man power to pull a Unimog using only a couple of ropes?

**T**hese are just a couple of the challenges that 52 Māori students from the Pūhoro STEM Academy (science, technology, engineering, maths, matauranga, or Māori knowledge) Academy faced while on a Defence Careers Experience (DCE) recently.

The DCE, designed for high school students, is an immersive, highly interactive event that showcases what the NZDF has to offer as a potential career option across the three Services. Students across the country visit bases and camps, don uniform and not only see what the forces do, but also get to try it out for themselves.

The multi-day event gives students a series of challenging tasks and team building activities, leadership development training, Q&A sessions with military personnel from diverse backgrounds and some moderate physical training (PT) activity. Upon completion, students are awarded with a certificate to recognise their participation.

Giving young people a taste of military life is what the DCEs are all about, according to Flight Lieutenant (FLTLT) Brad Anderson, Central Recruiting Officer for Defence Recruiting.

Working with the Pūhoro STEM Academy had been on FLTLT Anderson's radar for some time as he and his team were aware that a DCE dedicated to Māori young people could be beneficial.

"When the Pūhoro STEM Academy asked if they could look into some capabilities that the NZDF offers to promote to their students, it naturally led into the development of a DCE that was shaped both by us and the Academy," he said.

Leland Ruwhiu, Te Urunga Tū Manager from the Pūhoro STEM Academy said the diversity of roles within the NZDF and the taura (students) seeing a line of sight into their future careers really made an impact.

"For a number of our taura who haven't been on a physical pathway but thrived on academic pathways it was hard to see them being challenged in ways they would not normally expose themselves to. But it was humbling to see them work through those barriers and I was proud of a number of students who pushed through their own hara (mistakes) to successfully accomplish tasks," Leland said.

Alia Robinson, from Palmerston North Girls' High School is one of the students who attended. Alia who hopes to become a medic with the Air Force, said while she had already applied to join the NZDF, the DCE made her fall even more in love with the idea.

"The camp is so amazing and such a nice environment, and was such a cool place to spend time at. Getting to do all the leadership activities with my group and building a stronger connection with them throughout that day was also a highlight."

FLTLT Anderson is keen to point out that DCEs are only made possible with the support and input from a wide range of units and departments, in this case the Youth Development Unit, No. 3 Squadron, Defence Health School, 3CSSB, 2<sup>nd</sup>/1<sup>st</sup> Battalion RNZIR, and 1CSR.

As for future DCEs, it's likely that the NZDF and the Pūhoro STEM Academy will continue to partner on an annual basis to support Māori into STEM-related career pathways.

# Training squadron restructured

B | SENIOR COMMUNICATIONS ADVISOR  
Y | CHARLENE WILLIAMSON



**Since 2009 Logistics Training Squadron (LTS) at Base Woodbourne has been providing trade training to 12 Air Force trades, and while this is set to continue, it will be now be conducted by two separate squadrons.**

**W**hen full to capacity, LTS was the largest squadron in the Air Force. It was officially divided in two in August to create the Technical Training Squadron (TTS) and Mission Support Training Squadron (MSTS).

Officer Commanding MSTS, Squadron Leader (SQNLDR) Rud Andrew said the reorganisation of the squadrons will provide a greater focus on technical and mission support areas of ground training.

“It has also meant that we now have an appropriate structure to support the growth of mission support trades so we can meet the requirements of future capabilities.

“We will be able to apply more focussed energy and resource to a smaller set of trades creating greater value for effort,” he said.

MSTS provides training to five mission support trades – Intelligence, Communication and Information Systems, Logistics, Air Movements and Security Forces. TTS provides training to seven technical trades – Aircraft, Avionics, Machinist, Metalworker, Safety & Surface, Ground Support Equipment and Armament.

At peak throughput the squadrons have 85 staff and up to 250 students at a time on base, conducting close to 110 courses over a 12-month period.

Officer Commanding TTS, SQNLDR John Humfrey said the change to two squadrons is an evolution of training.

“This is a necessary step for the Air Force with the ultimate goal of improving training through improved focus.

“TTS will be able to focus entirely on technical training, and on increasing integration with our partner Nelson Marlborough Institute of Technology at both the development and delivery stages of technical training,” he said.

SQNLDR Andrew said it is important that we continue to improve our training.

“The pace of change in the world in terms of technology, and the social construct that our newest members have grown up in demands that we keep up with these changes.

“This includes improving what we do in order to provide relevant, relatable and leading edge training,” SQNLDR Andrew said.

This new focus will ensure that Ground Training will both align more closely to the Air Force’s technical and mission support trade structures as well as being organised into more agile and manageable elements.

# Career Management – Performance, Promotion and Development

The Directorate of Career Management (DCM) want to help set Air Force members up for success using the PDR 3!

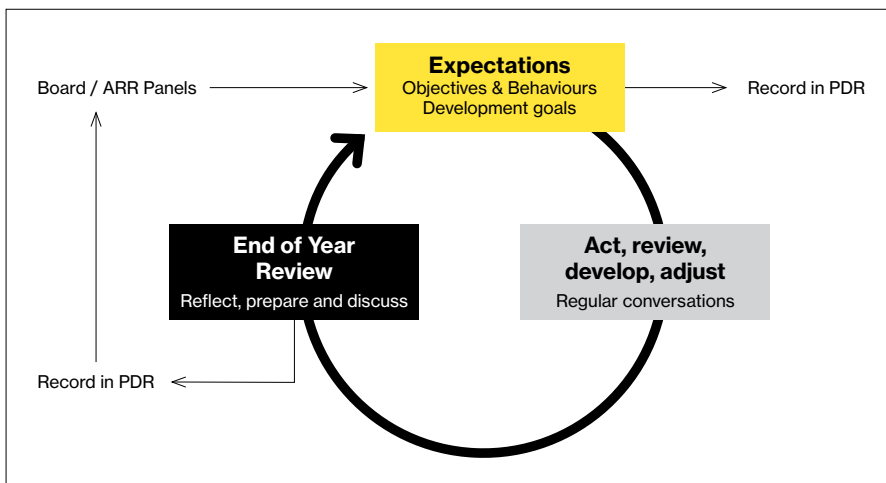
Over a series of short *Air Force News* articles we hope to highlight key aspects of the PDR process to enable you to stay on top of your game in terms of communicating about your performance and the performance of those reporting to you. In this article, we'll highlight why you need the PDR 3. We'll also explain the PDR cycle and the key dates that you need to be aware of.

### Why you need the PDR 3

- To communicate about and measure performance
- To make a case for promotion
- To focus development
- To support good feedback and coaching

### Key points:

- Start with a thorough conversation to set expectations for performance and development.
- Throughout the 12-month reporting period have regular performance conversations.
- End with clear evidence from throughout the reporting period backing up your assessments and clearance recommendation.
- Close off the PDR 3 in time for the Promotion Advisory Board (PAB).
- Use feedback from the PAB at the start of the next review period and in the next PDR 3.



## Air Force News Book Giveaway

**Voices of World War II: New Zealanders share their stories**

Be in to win this stunning historic account of the Second World War. Edited by Renée Hollis,

*Voices of World War II* is a visually captivating compendium of photographs and written accounts, providing a snapshot of life during WWII from the point of view of those who lived through it. Fascinating and genuine, it shows the human side of war through dozens of first-hand memories, stories, and reflections on wartime life in New Zealand and overseas. Younger generations will gain an important insight into the lives of their ancestors with this tribute to a nation's bravery and resilience.

The 304-page hard back shows the human side of war through a collection of memories sent in by one hundred families across New Zealand, you will find a rare insight into wartime life across generations and vocations. It is both a tribute to the resilience and bravery of those who served in WWII.

Email [airforcenews@nzdf.mil.nz](mailto:airforcenews@nzdf.mil.nz) by November 30 to go into the draw for a chance to win a copy of *Voices of World War II*. Include your name and postal address and type: Air Force News GIVEAWAY and the name of the book in the title line.





# Vintage Calendar

**Just in time for Christmas is this beautifully crafted vintage calendar, filled with iconic photography. Featuring currently serving Royal New Zealand Air Force personnel alongside retired Air Force aircraft.**

At just \$20 each\*, you can order your copy today. Pre-orders available now by visiting [bit.ly/3noARja](https://bit.ly/3noARja)

All proceeds go to the Missing Wingman Trust.

*\*postage cost may apply*



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**B** | CORPORAL  
**Y** | RACHEL PUGH

For a Covid-disrupted Wings course and a Covid-reduced graduation parade, it was awesome that the sun was shining, the breezes were cool, and No. 14 Squadron was still able to celebrate such a significant achievement for their next generation of pilots. The flyover is always my favourite moment in a parade, and the Black Falcons never fail to provide a great shot.



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