



LOGISTICS

# MATTERS

2025

The Annual Publication for Royal Navy Logisticians





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## FOREWORD

Rear Admiral Paul Murphy  
Chief Naval Logistics Officer

**What a year it has been! Reading the articles in this edition of Logistics Matters, I continue to be astounded by the level of output across our branch and the extraordinarily high calibre of our people. Your efforts have maintained our reputation for providing the highest quality logistics support across the Royal Navy and wider Defence, so thank you and well done!**

Looking at the bigger picture, this has been a year of change for Defence, the Royal Navy and for us as logisticians. The recent Strategic Defence Review sets the headmark and flicking through its pages one loses count of the multiple references to investing in the strategic base, in resilience, in munitions and in digital modernisation. It gives a renewed focus on NATO and on warfighting readiness. For far too long, Whitehall mandarins and apparatchiks have claimed we couldn't afford to invest in these things; now the narrative is we can't afford not to! Closely linked to this is the work of Defence Reform. In particular, the creation of a new 4\* National Armaments Director (NAD) which creates a powerhouse of all the major support enablers.

What this means for us is that we will need to focus increasingly on how we deliver and sustain pro-longed military operations away from the home base, both on and below the waves. And how best we leverage the support of allies and partners.

Closer to home, I'm delighted that our people continue to be recognised for their excellence. At national level, we continue to feature strongly in the six-monthly Honours Lists as well as winning numerous prestigious competitions (such as Armed Forces Caterer of the Year). And of course, I'm delighted to see the recent announcement of the Catering Services FRI.

As ever, one of my personal highlights of the year was to attend the annual CNLO awards ceremony and recognise the achievements of our people across all areas, whether deployed on operations, supporting operations from the home base, or in training. It was such a heart-warming experience and a massive well done to all the recipients. There really is no better way to recognise our people than in front of their families, peers and shipmates.

The variety of articles within this edition show the adaptability, flexibility and professionalism of our people and how they are delivering every day, across every theatre, and often in the face of incredibly challenging circumstances. I'm sure we'll hear more about these successes at our next biennial conference and dinner at Worthy Down (Thu 11 Jun 26) – mark your calendars!

It only remains for me to offer you my sincere thanks for all that you continue to do. Well done for all that you have achieved, and I look forward to catching up and hearing more about your exploits over the coming year.



## DCNLO's view from NCHQ

Commodore Rich New RN  
Deputy Chief Naval Logistics Officer

There has been no let-up in activity during 2025 so far, and it's fantastic to see reflections from operations currently underway in these pages.

As but one example, Op HIGHMAST continues to advance steadily towards achieving the full operational capability of our carrier strike group, made possible by the continuous support of Logistics professionals ashore and afloat.

Looking to the future, this edition goes to press as the RN's senior leadership team is taking shape. The appointment of a new 1SL, and the imminent arrival of the next 2SL and Fleet Commander have seen renewed focus and energy across the Military Command as we look to reset our warfighting capability under, on, above and from the sea.

Global events have driven the Defence of the UK and its interests to the fore in a way unprecedented across recent years. With wars in Europe and the Middle East and increasing instability elsewhere, we must build the warfighting force that our nation needs.

Accordingly, 1SL has directed that in the coming months we'll launch the RN2029 Plan to deliver a combat-ready RN that: forges a new generation of warfighting leaders; strips away bureaucracy to enable rapid decisions; deploys cutting-edge autonomous technology at scale to the front-line; and secures the submarine and CASD support enterprises.

Through these actions we will ensure that we are ready to fight and able to win. This is not a distant ambition – it is a necessity now.

Looking to the coming year and beyond then, we must turn our collective talents and abilities towards maximising our contribution to this main effort.

This will require absolute honesty in reflecting our current position, before applying proactivity, innovation and creative thinking to develop solutions that make things better. These are all traits that you possess in abundance and, as my daily interactions with talented people from across our branch confirm, we couldn't be better placed to meet the challenges ahead.

# Fleet Logistics Officer's Foreword

Cdr Alex Savage RN

Welcome to the 2025 edition of Logistics Matters, which once again showcases the huge variety of roles and opportunities that we have within the Logistics and Personnel Profession. This edition reflects the direction of 1SL and the Strategic Defence Review for a greater readiness for war, and therefore has a deliberately more operational feel to it this year.

Please take the time to read through the articles which range from the strategic to the tactical, from the most testing logistic operations preparing for Op HIGHMAST and Submarine operations to the more unique

challenges of hosting the Prime Minister onboard, via running Field Gun in the DSLA Junior Leader's Competition, to some excellent reflections on self-improvement. You will recognise names and faces but hopefully the opportunities that those oppo depict will inspire you to pursue similar challenges in your own career; you can tell us about them next year!

Also, a huge thank you to those who have taken their time to contribute articles, and my sincere thanks go to the Royal NAAFI, without whom the publication of this magazine would not be possible.

## RN Logistics Strategy update

In April 2024, the Royal Navy, through CNLO, launched its comprehensive Logistics Strategy, designed to guide us through to 2040. This strategy defines a clear headmark: to deliver a cadre of highly skilled, motivated, and professional maritime logisticians ready to meet tomorrow's challenges. A year in, much progress has been made in both the short term activity, but also refining the longer term vision, as challenges and opportunities present themselves that must be overcome and embraced respectively.

Below is a summary of the key areas of focus across our sub-strategies – encompassing the Catering Services (CS), Writer (Wtr), Supply Chain (SC) and Logistic Officer (LO) cadres – each underpinned by long-term vision and clear lines of effort. These lines of effort vary by campaign plan but the headline areas of focus are:

- **Embrace wider Defence change.** The RN Logistics & Personnel Profession will actively engage with major Defence-wide change programmes, ensuring we adapt to new ways of working and seize opportunities to enhance effectiveness. Outputs and processes will be shaped to remain relevant and operationally fit for purpose.
- **Through Career Training and Accreditation.** A strong focus on career training and external accreditation to ensure personal and professional development aligns with industry standards. Ongoing discussions with external bodies are progressing to formalise accreditation pathways.
- **Rationalisation and Digitalisation of processes.** Increased use of digital tools and at-sea connectivity to reduce manual processes such as stocktaking and compliance spot checks. Logistic Officers (LOs) will be encouraged to exercise appropriate risk tolerance, supported by updated policies.
- **Workforce Management.** New approaches to career structures to improve sea/shore harmony ratios and support retention. For the CS specialisation, work is underway to improve catering assistance alongside by changing shoreside positions to better support units.
- **Industry Placements.** Building on Project INTERCHANGE to pilot industry placements for all RN personnel, enhancing skills and civilian-military integration.

So, with the overarching direction for each sub-specialisation set, significant progress has been made across those lines of effort to modernise processes and adapt to the future:

### COMPLIANCE REVIEW

While the Compliance Management Tool (CMT) remains a critical tool for assurance and compliance, efforts are underway to reduce the administrative burden, eliminate duplication, and empower LOs to manage risk more effectively while learning lessons from our tri-Service counterparts. An ongoing review, led by the Tier 4 FLO Team aims to simplify and reduce duplication within the question sets and empower the LO with the management of risk, putting greater emphasis on the CLSR and Supersession / FLI checks, while continuing to provide all the tools to manage an effective department. So how are we doing this?

- **Targeted Questions for flexibility.** Tier 1 to 3 checks have now been split into Governance, Compliance and Assurance categories, which will reduce duplication between Flotilla and FOST, and enable T3s to take a more targeted risk-based approach to inspections.
- **Reduce the monthly ask.** There will be a greater emphasis on primary methods (such as the CLSR, the supervisors log, FOODMIS etc), as well as supersessions and inspections, to manage risk. Monthly questions will be reduced to only the essentials – phase 2 of this reduction varies between unit types, but for front line units afloat has seen a reduction of up to 80% of Tier 1 & 2 questions, depending on specialisation, with further guidance to follow on release.
- **Data Tools.** Improve the data tools in CMT to enable Tier 1 and 2 to use systems such as SCIO and KRAKEN to let the data do the spot checks and highlight anomalies for our practitioners to do targeted investigations. It also allows Tier 3 and Tier 4 to use data from the live CMT systems to analyse trends and ease reporting to the external authorities such as the National Audit Office

### CATERING SERVICES

**Future Vision.** The complex web of stocktaking and accounting processes currently in place will be simplified to improve the lived experience of our caterers and allow them to focus on core catering. Caterers will be able to concentrate on ensuring operational endurance and high-end Defence Engagement. There will be the introduction of a higher number of meaningful shore roles, to improve the work-life balance of Catering Services Ratings. Additionally, in recognition of the fact that not everyone in the galley needs to be trained to the same standard, NAAFI are now employing Galley Assistants to work ships to delivering semi-skilled outputs, allowing our CS specialists to focus on the high-quality output they excel at.

The CS cadre is under pressure so, as part of the 1\* CS Recovery Working Group, work is prioritising novel solutions for improving the offer, including the recently introduced Retention Payment (RP), the successful rollout of NAAFI Galley Assistants and wider trials to change routines onboard. This will then be augmented by the longer term strategy that is looking at how to reduce the operational demand at sea, rebalance sea and shore positions, improve galley equipment and deliver better trained CS personnel to meet the demand:

- **Reduce Operational Demand at sea.** The way we feed in the RN has not substantially changed since the 70s. We are long overdue a generational change to feeding – but to enable that we need to improve the options available from the food contract to change the way we can feed; in the coming year, we will be trailing different menus and watch rotations to understand how we can reduce the galley demand signal without compromising the quality of our food offer. We also need to replace the equally outdated TRICAT, in the same way we have recently retired SAGE.
- **Reduce Operational Demand alongside.** We are also looking at how to reduce the demand on CS alongside and have introduced the Fleet Support Galley (FSG) in Devonport, which we will aim to duplicate in Portsmouth. Finally, we have flipped the priorities of the newly titled Catering Support Unit (CSU), formerly the CSSETs, so that they will always prioritise support to ships alongside.
- **Trained CS to meet demand.** We continue to explore opportunities to create greater number of shoreside positions to provide a better sea/shore ratio for the CS cadre and allow harmony opportunities; this will be achieved through a stepped approach by further enhancing the CSU positions to make them genuine shoreside roles while exploring options to re-introduce positions with the contracted Caterers in HM Naval Bases. Finally, a dedicated CS Maritime Reserve cadre will be formed to provide surge capacity, especially for deploying units.
- **Improved Galley Equipment.** Funding is being prioritised in Flotillas to fix the here and now, but the strategy is looking to the future at how better use of automation can reduce the demand on chefs, learning lessons from a DASA sponsored trial that is ongoing and using best practice from industry for future platforms.

## WRITERS

**Future Vision.** Our Writers will continue to support personnel both at sea and ashore, in a wide variety of appointments. As part of the wider “Logistics and Personnel” profession, and embracing the likely efficiencies of the new Defence HR System, Writers will become more focused HR professionals and an essential point of contact for all Divisional matters. They will also become a crucial link to the onboard Executive, with increased involvement in discipline, support to Command, and as EWO and Cox’n Assistants. Underpinned by professional accreditation at the Senior Rate level, specialists will be rewarded through greater training, accreditation, and roles.

The big unknown for the Writer specialisation is the implications of the new Defence HR System, due to be released in 2027, which will have a major impact on how HR is conducted across Defence. It is not known how it will work at sea, and therefore how the Writers role will change to accommodate the new system. The Fleet Writer and his team are supporting P&T to influence the design, however, while we wait, progress on the strategy has continued.

The main focus of the Writer Strategy is twofold: define then enhance the HR specialist training and accreditation; and to align closer with the Executive to enable the Writers to become the Command Executive Adviser.

- **Define the role.** While awaiting the changes from Defence HRS, work has been ongoing to define the role of the Writers at sea. The exact role of the Writer in Information Management has long been a source of frustration so the FLO Team and DSLA have been working with MCSU to define this role. An agreement to take on a Maritime Information Supervisor Officer/Assistant role, with a dedicated RN training package, will now be included in policy (BR 7747) and should reduce this ongoing frustration.
- **Enhance HR training and accreditation.** As part of the Writer Strategy Working Group, surveys have been conducted to understand how Writers’ time are currently being spent across the various tasks. This survey will directly feed future training and enable greater alignment with professional HR bodies, such as CIPD, to explore accreditation at different stages of the Writers’ career.
- **Command Executive Adviser.** The ambition for the Writer cadre is to better support the Executive team onboard units and so there are multiple trials ongoing as both EWO(Assistant) and Cox’n(Assistant) to test how Writers can achieve this. We will also investigate expansion into Deputy Cox’n and Deputy EWO roles for the Senior Rate Writers, to help plot the route to a “Command Executive Adviser”.

## SUPPLY CHAIN

**Future Vision.** Supply Chain ratings will see a continuation of the shift of emphasis away from storekeeping to a more end-to-end supply chain role, with a presence at all stages of the Joint Support Chain. There will be new opportunities for our people to be employed on industry placements and bring those experiences and lessons back to the Fleet. With multiple new RN and Defence Support solutions underway, the future Supply Chain rating will be a more proactive part of planning, procurement and data analysis, allowing the profession to keep pace with increasingly complex support requirements.

There is significant change coming in Support contracts and Logistic Information Systems (LogIS) which will change how our Supply Chain Logisticians manage stores and processes across Defence. However, MJDI will remain the core LogIS for the foreseeable future, so it is important to improve current processes while preparing for the future.

In the short term, this means a greater focus on Digitalisation and Centralisation, bringing in modern ways of working which will embrace digital data support tools; we will work with our Army and RAF counterparts to understand how they manage their stores, seeking best practice. We will also better align with Engineering counterparts to improve the data purity and enable greater oversight of the end-to-end Supply Chain.

- **Centralise and Digitalise processes.** An ongoing trial in HMS GLASGOW, which will significantly reduce the paperwork printed by MJDI, is progressing well. The intent is to minimise the often arduous administration process of voucher retention and associated manual processes. Expansion of the trial will commence soon to wider acceptance testing, before implementation throughout the Fleet. Additionally, an improved U592 core workbook is under development which will reduce the effort required to review and maintain the data input necessary when managing consignments.
- **UMMS vs MJDI.** To enable greater purity across the Joint Support Chain, there is a requirement to get better data purity, as championed by Project RENOWN, and subsequently closer

alignment with the engineers. The recent direction to include an UMMS reference for all demands on MJDI, accompanied by the electronic S3015, will align processes moving forward with DEAMS, the successor to UMMS, and enable closer integration onboard between the N4 Support teams.

- **Deployable Shoreside support.** There is an ongoing review to meet the needs of the future warfighting requirement, both for expeditionary support, which must include greater military movement familiarity, and host nation support to NATO. With an increasing demand for movement of complex stores across borders, the RN must grow its own organic capability with Movements experience and greater utility of the Maritime Reserve cadre.

**LOGISTIC OFFICERS**

**Future Vision.** For Logistics Officers (LO), there are fewer changes planned as the career structure is broadly producing the right quality of people with broad experience in their first stage careers. Junior Logistics Officers will continue to be employed in a range of front-line facing roles, while those reaching their ‘second stage career’ will focus primarily on Career Fields such as Operational Support and Personnel, acknowledging that our LOs are excelling across multiple Career Fields and so we must be agile enough to use core Logistics jobs, the wider Career Field plot, academic and military courses, industry placements and other professional development opportunities to keep growing well-rounded, outstanding officers. There will be some changes to management tools to improve the quality of life of deployed Logistics Officers, for example an updated and improved Compliance Management Tool and the roll out of the Global Maritime Support Framework (GMSF) database.

The LO Strategy outlines a roadmap to ensure LOs remain adaptable, operationally credible, and future-ready as the Service evolves towards 2040. Modern LOs are strategic planners, multi-domain logisticians, personnel

administrators, legal advisors, and operational leaders. Their adaptability, rooted in a 400-year history, is key to their success, however a number of lines of effort are underway to respond to feedback and improve the offer:

- **Recruitment and Retention:** Recruitment targets have been met since 2022, with female representation (29% OF1-OF4) exceeding RN averages. Outflow remains low at 3%. However, recruitment messaging will be modernised to better reflect the diversity of LO roles.
- **Training Transformation:** The 2023 Basic Logistics Officer Course (BLOC) was streamlined to balance seagoing readiness with broader employability. However, concerns remain over limited sea-time, lack of structured mentorship, and isolation in singleton posts. Proposed solutions include a two-tier DLO model, an LO mentorship scheme, and a Personal Learning Network (PLN) and the automatic completion of ILOC after first appointment.
- **Career Transparency:** Feedback highlighted inconsistent guidance on promotion and career management. Planned updates include clearer promotion criteria, standardised messaging, and a review of OF4 PLC eligibility to ensure fairness.
- **Future Vision:** By 2040, LOs will be technology-enabled leaders, mastering advanced supply chains, sustainability, and innovation. They will remain central to operational success, guiding the RN through a dynamic Defence landscape.

**Strategy Leads and how to contribute**

If you are interested in supporting these work-strands, then please volunteer through the relevant lead as detailed in the table below. Alternatively, if you have an idea on how to modernise, improve the lived experience by changing process or policy then you can provide direct feedback through the “Logs Branch Strategy Feedback” box on the FLO SharePoint Site.

Sub-Strategy	Role	Email Address
Catering Services	Fleet Logistic Officer, Cdr Alex Savage, Fleet Caterer, W01CS Wes Cain	Alex.savage304@mod.gov.uk Wes.Cain709@mod.gov.uk
Supply Chain	Director SM Logistics, Cdr Sarah Parker Fleet Jack Dusty, W01SC Bryn Phillips	Sarah.Parker357@mod.gov.uk Bryn.Phillips451@mod.gov.uk
Writers	FOST SLO, Cdr Jared Ward Fleet Writer, W01Wtr Alistair Bufton	Jared.Ward152@mod.gov.uk Alistair.Bufton644@mod.gov.uk
Logistic Officers	Logs S01 CM, Cdr Verity Fane-Bailey DE&S HR S01, Cdr Mark Paton	Verity.Fane-Bailey989@mod.gov.uk Mark.Paton398@mod.gov.uk



# Strategy Implementation

The Logistics Branch Strategy provides a structured process for coordinating efforts to develop and modernise the Branch, with ideas taken straight from the people that will lead us into the Navy of the future



## Strategy success

Success will be a Branch that is able to continually evolve and improve to best meet the needs of a modernised and lethal Navy - using technology where we can, simplifying processes and identifying opportunities as they arise.



# Logistics & Personnel Workforce & Professions Management Update

Cdr James Thompson RN - Logistics & Personnel Profession Manager

This is the first Logistics Matters article I have written since my role title evolved to that of Logistics and Personnel Workforce and Profession Manager. Whilst many of you will be more familiar with the legacy title of 'Branch Manager', the new name is reflective of the increasing focus on our profession and the necessary skills that are an integral part of that.

At the time of writing, the team are hard at work as we go through the Annual 2025 modelling round. For those not familiar, this work involves looking at workforce structures across all specialisations out to 2041 and is the basis for several linked work strands such as setting promotion requirements, recruiting targets etc. and contains a huge amount of data. When the results are finalised, it will give us an indication of where we need to focus our efforts going forwards to ensure we as a Profession can deliver the right people at the right rank with the right skills where and when needed. Numbers alone, however, do not tell the full story and it is completely recognised within the Headquarters that the Logistics and Personnel Profession, like many other Professions, are facing clear people challenges many of you will likely recognise through symptoms such as gapping. Rest assured, a huge amount of work is being undertaken to address these challenges with my team working closely with those of both the Fleet Logistics Officer and the Flotilla Logistics Commanders. Turning to the future, there is a huge amount to be positive about. Interest to join our Profession is a clear strength, perhaps the best it has been in years. Logistics Officer places are hugely oversubscribed in addition to a large pool of exceptional in-Service candidates making competition fierce. Supply Chain and Catering Services training pipelines are at capacity with Writers slightly below full. Both PTI and RNP pipelines are steady with plenty of interest being generated.

But we must not rely on people joining alone. Instead, in line with CNLO's strategy for meeting the future Navy requirements, the encouraging

recruitment should be used as a platform to underpin our Profession's evolution. At the heart of everything we are doing is a clear recognition of the operational capability you bring to the front-line. That will remain as a constant. Demand for Royal Navy Logisticians remains high, testament to the professionalism, dedication and skills you bring. But this value you add needs to be used in the most efficient and effective and, of critical importance, sustainable way. Primarily we are looking at operational demand for workforce, both in number of people per unit and how they are employed on a daily or even hourly basis to make sure we have got the balance right. New and emerging technology offers opportunity to help offset this demand, as will changes to process and policy, but the value people bring to the operational environment is beyond question. To be clear, this is not about financial savings, rather targeting workforce sustainability, so that Logician functions are there when needed by Command with the absolute minimum trawling, churn, or gapping; so we can reduce uncertainty, give you a rest after a demanding sea assignment and provide you the opportunity to spend time with your family ready for your next professional challenge.

To deliver this positive change, a bold approach is needed. You, the individuals and teams at the front line, are critical to helping us evolve. Some of these initiatives will test what we are accustomed to and can feel uncomfortable. For any of this to be a success, your engagement is critical. Not only in terms of keeping an open mind, but also in identifying how a concept might be improved. Equally, not all solutions can come from the Headquarters, and I have already received some outstanding ideas whilst out visiting units that we are taking forwards. But I am incredibly eager to hear more and, in addition to being particularly keen to visit you in your place of work, would welcome emails or calls. We all have a role to play in taking the opportunities we have as a Profession in the coming weeks, months and years.

## Career Management Update

Lt Cdr Paul 'Des' Linehan RN

**Introduction.** Much has changed over the last 12 months in Logistics Ratings' Career Management. In September 24 we gained responsibility for the Career Management of all Medical Assistants, followed in January this year in gaining both the RNP and PTI specialisations. This has brought our total headcount to circa 3300 personnel - fully 18% of the Royal Navy's trained strength; we have also gained an uplift of 5 Career Managers (CM) to support. For me this can only prove a positive, and brings a level of flexibility, coupled with opportunity for our people, that was somewhat trickier to navigate before. Throughout this change there remains a firm constant - and that is our people remain central to our ability as a Service to do what is demanded of us. Whilst meeting this Operational demand, we strive to hold at the forefront of our minds that every one of you is a unique individual. It is achieving this balance of meeting service demand and personal aspirations that underpins the positive steps forward that we are making.

**Career Manager Availability.** There has been a significant focus over the last 18 months on ensuring that you are able to access Career Management services when you need them. If you are unsure as to who your CM is you can access this information within the 'Personnel Details' box when you log onto SCIO, or by opening the 'Career' tab on your MyNavy App. For Junior Ratings, Career

Management is conducted in one of our Career Management Cells in HMNB Portsmouth, Devonport or Faslane. Even if your CM does not work in your local Career Management Cell you are still able to drop in and ask a CM for advice should you have any queries - if they cannot answer there and then, they will be able to ensure that you are given the details of the person who can help you.

**OR CAPPs.** The aim of OR CAPPs is to enable greater flexibility for our people by identifying positions that, whilst historically tied to a specific specialisation, could be performed by individuals from a variety of specialisations, if they hold the right skills and aptitudes (think RNLA, R&A, HMS RALEIGH); allowing you greater opportunity to undertake roles that suit your talents and preferences. Further details are contained within RNTM 01-039/25, with full roll-out of this expected to deliver in early Autumn, where you will be able to use SCIO to see all the positions that are designated as a CAPPs opportunity. If you think that there is a role you would be suited to please raise this with your CM.

**Training Positions.** There are a variety of challenging and equally rewarding positions across the RN and tri-service delivering training to Phase 1, Phase 2 and beyond, that require high calibre individuals with the right skills,

experience and motivation; all of which play a vital role in the rewarding task of growing the Navy. A crucial enabler for CMs to identify the right people for these positions is the mandatory (for LH / Cpl and above) checkbox on SJARs that highlights suitability for either all, or post Phase 1 training. When writing annual appraisals on those individuals who you believe would be well suited (or specifically not) for training positions, an honest and supported recommendation in their SJAR is an essential element to enable CMs to make an informed decision. All too many SJARs state in the potential narrative that the SP is highly suited to HMS RALEIGH and/or DSLA, but with no corresponding 'tick'

**Project Interchange.** As part of wider initiatives to deepen the relationship between the RN and the Defence Sector and to provide increased opportunity for individuals to develop skills and experience, Project Interchange has

been established to cohere and facilitate professional placements of RN personnel into industry partners and for industry personnel into RN teams. Opportunities to undertake an industrial placement exist for OR4 and above, with details on the eligibility criteria and application process contained within RNTM 01-26/25.

**SJARs.** My intention to push out a feedback letter aimed at identifying common trends, pitfalls and highlights of the latest round of promotion boards has now been subsumed into my rolling Career Management Presentations, the next of which will begin in September; please keep your eyes peeled for further information and do try and attend where you can. Whilst most of you are well versed in how Career Management works, I concentrate the second hour exclusively on Promotions and SJARs; evidence suggests we can do better here – most especially with our Page 1.



*HMS VENGEANCE was chosen as the first platform to trial employing a Lieutenant Commander Logistics Officer.*

## RN Logistics Strategy: Logistics Officer Submarines

Cdr James Lancaster RN, Lt Cdr Ric Santana RN and Lt Cdr Tom Ringham RN.



Now is a remarkable time to be a Logistician Submariner. From delivery of Continuous at Sea Deterrence through to A-Class deployments across the Atlantic, Mediterranean and beyond, the Submarines are delivering incredible Operational outputs. Sustaining such activity though is increasingly challenging as the In-Service boats grapple with obsolescence, maintenance debt and incomplete support solutions; all issues that Logistics Officers are playing a key role in mitigating. Concurrently, preparations for HMS DREADNOUGHT are now well underway which will bring end-to-end challenges and opportunities for the Supply Chain. Finally, the AUKUS partnership will see the persistent deployment of an A-Class Submarine in the next few years as well as new Submarines in the longer term.

Logistics expertise underpins all these projects. The demand for Submarine Qualified Logistics Officers is increasing with new shore support roles for Lieutenants through to Commanders in Abbey Wood, Devonport, Barrow-in-Furness, Faslane, London, NCHQ and overseas. As part of the ongoing RN Logistics Strategy, the Logistics Officer (Submarines) pathway has been crafted; a series of subtle changes to the existing career profile, most notably introducing opportunities for some Lieutenant Commander Logistics Officers to serve on selected Submarines.

Why this change? First, it must be emphasised that the majority of Logistics Officer positions on Submarines will remain at the Lieutenant rank. Experience has shown that Logistics Officers who have completed such assignments early in their career have thrived on the challenges of operating in a singleton role delivering the highest priority Defence missions. This will not change. However, the scale of the support challenge being faced by some units has illuminated the very real benefits arising from assignment of individuals both with previous submarine sea experience and relevant Capability & Acquisition expertise. Furthermore, with reduced SSN availability limiting opportunities for delivery of the Submarine Command Course ("Perisher"), there is an increasing demand signal for Executive support. Finally, with many support roles moving to common assignments, introduction of Lieutenant Commander sea assignments brings parity and alignment with our Engineering (Submarines) colleagues. For all these reasons, trials are now ongoing of Lieutenant Commander Logistics Officers onto selected Submarines where the programme, workforce and material state suggest it would benefit Force Generation and subsequent Operations.

The first trial was conducted in HMS VENGEANCE with Lieutenant Commander Ric Santana taking the reigns as LO. For a variety of reasons, not least the relentless operational tempo, this unit was carrying extensive maintenance debt and faced a formidable challenge to generate. Moreover, the concurrent disruption caused by the failure of the CRISP maritime base inventory system forced reliance on local purchase and alternative procurement far beyond the norm. The assignment of a Logistics Officer with previous Submarine and Submarine Delivery Agency experience enabled all these challenges to be overcome and the boat was successfully generated.

Augmenting the sea assignments are a range of Logistics focused shore roles in support of Submarine operations. Many of these are Capability & Acquisition focused with the latest role being occupied by Lieutenant Commander Tom Ringham. With previous experience in Project RENOWN and as the Logistics Officer of an A-Class submarine, Tom has taken on a key role in seeking to address significant provisioning shortfalls impacting Submarine availability.

Looking ahead, beyond the In-Service challenges, the Submarine Service is preparing for transition from V-Class to D-Class and the introduction of HMS DREADNOUGHT in the years ahead. This new platform brings many capability uplifts and will assure the future of Continuous at Sea Deterrence into the 2050s and beyond. However, the platform also introduces a range of new challenges for material support including high cleanliness standards and management of obsolescence arising during the build phase. Concurrently, the enterprise is also preparing for the Submarine focused elements of the AUKUS partnership. The Logistics and Personnel profession is well placed to support this activity going forward.

In summary, the Logistics Officer (Submarines) career pathway, as part of the broader RN Logistics Strategy, is shaping up well. It will continue to develop over the coming years allowing those wishing to do so to undertake both Submarine facing and broadening assignments ashore and at sea.

*As plans for AUKUS develop, options are being scoped for a rotational Logistics Officer arrangement, including a Lieutenant Commander Logistician, on a future persistently deployed Astute-Class submarine.*



# OP HIGHMAST: Carrier Strike Group Reflections

## CSG Group Logistic Commander's Team

### Phase 1 – UK to Souda Bay

HMS PRINCE OF WALES, HMS DAUNTLESS, HMS RICHMOND, and HMCS VILLE DE QUEBEC (Canadian Frigate) sailed from Portsmouth and Plymouth to huge crowds on the shoreline on 22 April. HNoMS Roald Amundsen (Norwegian Frigate), HNoMS MAUD (Norwegian Tanker), RFA TIDESPRING and RFA TIDEFORCE were already in the South Coast Exercises areas. EPS MENDEZ NUNEZ (Spanish Frigate) was steaming up from the Mediterranean to meet us. On 23 April, the United Kingdom Carrier Strike Group formed; Operation HIGHMAST had begun.

Whenever the Strike Group sails on a deployment the first significant milestone, after getting off the wall, is the embarkation of the Air Wing and for HMS PRINCE OF WALES this was the largest air group embarked in a Queen Elizabeth Class (QEC) Carrier. Eighteen F-35B Lightning embarked from RAF Marham and this meant the largest concentration of British fast jets embarked in a Royal Navy carrier since HMS ARK ROYAL in 1978. A total of seven Merlin Mk2, three Merlin Mk4 and two Wildcat Helicopters also embarked, not forgetting the Malloy T150 Unmanned Aerial System (UAS) drones, which were already on board having been brought on in their transit cases alongside. HMS RICHMOND and RFA TIDESPRING embarked a Merlin Mk2 each, and a Wildcat embarked on both HMS DAUNTLESS and HNoMS ROALD AMUNDSEN.

The Merlin Mk4 were quickly employed in their Maritime Intra-Theatre Lift (MITL) role, visiting RNAS Culdrose and the prepositioned Forward Logistics Site (FLS) to collect those stores and spares which were unable to be loaded prior to sailing. Fleet Operational Standards and Training (FOST) staff also embarked the Royal Navy units after the Thursday War, which brought the UK Ship's to their maximum bunk capacity. From the earliest point of planning, and throughout the initial phases of Op HIGHMAST, bunk space would occupy a surprising amount of the Group Logistics Commander's team focus, and

provided a continual topic of conversation. HIGHMAST quickly became "the big show" with everyone in Defence wanting a part in it.

Lt Matt Ford, as the Assistant Group Logistics Commander is responsible for coordinating the movement of all Personnel, Mail and Cargo. His job is simple in principle; however, competing priorities, language barriers, emergencies and a sometimes limited availability of MITL assets can make it challenging. The visit of the UK Prime Minister and UK Defence Secretary in the early part of the deployment for example provided a key means to bring high priority defect stores out to the platforms. Every routine helicopter or boat transfer would be considered as a stores or personnel move.

Fully embracing the "International by Design" strapline, the Strike Group quickly integrated each newly joined Allied Ship. The whole deployment would likely see around 14 international ships join and leave the Group, which was an exciting prospect for the team as this would provide both a sustainment challenge but also an opportunity to really test that "International by Design" idea and prove that it could deliver more than just a nicely-formed PHOTEX.

We continued our transit south across the Bay of Biscay and then along the coast of Spain and Portugal. Formal Command of the Strike Group was passed from UK directly to NATO and we found ourselves assigned to Strike Force NATO (SFN), the Allied Headquarters located in Lisbon that commands Carrier Strike Groups on behalf of the Alliance. While operating under their Command, the Strike Group transited the Strait of Gibraltar in company with HMS ASTUTE before heading through the Mediterranean to the north of Sicily where all embarked personnel had the opportunity to view the active volcanic island of Santorini. From there we passed through the Strait of Messina and were able to see the snow-capped summit of Mount Etna in the distance. Supported by the FLS who had deployed from the UK to US Naval Air Station

HMS PRINCE OF WALES departs.





Signonella, Sicily, HMS DAUNTLESS made a short stop in Catania, Sicily to embark personnel and stores. This was also the first of many occasions that a Ship would collect stores, spares and personnel for others within the Strike Group for them to be transferred at sea later.

The big milestone in Phase 1 was Exercise Mediterranean Strike conducted in the Italian exercise areas south of Italy. It commenced in earnest on 5 May and thereafter followed seven days of focussed activity testing the Strike Group against all possible threats. The training, under the watchful eye of FOST staff, ranged from on board damage control to the engagement of drone targets by both ships and aircraft of the Strike Group. The complexity was further enhanced by the presence of the Italian Carrier Strike Group centred on the aircraft carrier ITS CAVOUR, which put to sea to provide both a simulated enemy and an ally dependent on the training serial. The final two days of the Exercise took the form of a “free play” LIVEX where no warning was provided and the Group was challenged to react instinctively to the full spectrum of threats. The exercises ended when ships of both Strike Groups, accompanied by units of Standing NATO Maritime Group 2 (SNMG2), which had also participated in the exercise, assembled for a final photo opportunity. This image unashamedly shows the largest gathering of NATO Warships for many years and demonstrates the capability, inter-operability and combined power of Europe’s only F-35B operating Carrier Strike Groups. At this juncture, RFA TIDESPRING was detached to proceed around Africa to meet the CSG off the coast of Oman, and RFA TIDEFORCE turned back to the UK via Gibraltar, this left HNoMS MAUD alone as the Group’s oiler.

Lt Cdr Jonny Kenward, Deputy Group Logistics Commander discovered a hidden talent for planning and executing complex port operations and assumed the temporary title of “KHM Souda Bay” for the Strike Group’s first combined port visit. On 13 May, the whole Strike Group descended on Souda Bay for a significant logistics, maintenance and resupply stop. This was the first time in living memory that a UKCSG of this size and scale all entered the same overseas port. The port and airfield became a hive of activity, all focussed on improving the sustainability and material resilience of the CSG ready for Phase 2. The UK FLS team was invaluable, delivering an essential linkage between UK Defence Liaison Officer Souda Bay, Marathi Military Port and Marathi FLS, and assisted the Canadian and Norwegian FLS supporting their Ships as well. The CSG received support from five UK military flights, two significant road moves and a vast amount of equipment and spares moved by civilian air routes. Ships receive resupply of ammunition, spares, provisions, and a much-needed mail delivery. Meanwhile, the Air Wing received an uplift to Rotary Wing Deployed Spares Packs and the F-35B Afloat Spare Pack, which helped to set the Air Wing for the next Phase of HIGHMAST. The

replacement of a Wildcat for PRINCE OF WALES, and HMS RICHMOND’s S2087 towed Array Sonar showed the full support provided to the CSG from across the Defence Support enterprise. However, this was not all, the complex port movements continued for each ship to replenish fuel alongside, and for MAUD to top up her cargo tanks after Phase 1. All this was carefully balanced against the need for Royal Navy and SALMO divers to work around the clock to ensure that the Strike Group’s hulls were in a state suitable to enter Australia’s tightly controlled territorial waters – more on this later.

### Phase 2 – Souda Bay to Duqm

The Frigates, Destroyers and MAUD departed Souda Bay 48 hours ahead of HMS PRINCE OF WALES to undertake some trials and training, testing sensors and weapons. HMS RICHMOND took the chance to complete some boarding training with the embarked Royal Marines, and test her repaired S2087. HMS PRINCE OF WALES sailed after embarking additional stores, including some for the Destroyers USS THE SULLIVANS and USS TRUXTUN, who joined the Strike Group for Phase 2. Their stores had missed them in their previous port so these we quickly moved to Souda Bay for embarkation and transfer by Vertical Replenishment (VERTEP) from HMS PRINCE OF WALES. The agreed 13 pallets of stores turned out to be 21 on arrival, and a mixture of dangerous goods, general stores and OPDEF spares. The last operational VERTREP from a QEC was on Op FORTIS in 2021 and during that time, many lessons were identified with the majority of them learned. However, as this evolution had



Vertical Replenishment (VERTEP).

not been undertaken for a while the GLC Team worked closely with HMS PRINCE OF WALES AE and SC teams to prioritise and build the loads for subsequent transfer to the USS Ships pre and post the Suez Canal.

On the evening of the 23 May, the Group anchored off Port Said and awaited the call from the Suez Canal Authority to commence the transit in convoy. It was a call that came in the early hours of 24 May. The Strike Group weighed anchor and entered the Canal for a passage that would take most of the day and require absolute concentration from those on the Bridge and in the SCCs of each Ship. Focus is everything in such a narrow waterway. As we sailed down the Canal under the blazing Egyptian sun, we watched, as the sea temperature increased from around 20oC to 30oC, the heat for those out on the upper deck was stifling.



*HMS PRINCE OF WALES transits the Suez Canal.*

Once into the northern Red Sea, the Strike Group set a posture of enhanced readiness, in State 2. Action coveralls were being worn across the Strike Group and Battle Bags containing Anti-Flash Glove and Hoods, hydration, and of course copious amounts of nutty were being carried at all times. The time in the northern Red Sea allowed our ships, aircraft and people to acclimatise to the heat. Cooling systems for radars and engines were calibrated and crews got into better habits on board, including closing doors and hatches to maintain air conditioning boundaries, much to the satisfaction of MEOs across the Group. Over the following days the Strike Group prepared for the transit south



*Ops Room*

past Yemen and areas controlled by the Houthis. It was during this period we stopped the use of mobile phones and limited communications ashore.

A very detailed Replenishment at Sea (RAS) plan for this period was produced in the planning phase, this was reviewed and updated many times by 2/O Steve Mutch, the Underway Replenishment Coordinator, due to its importance and as more detailed fuel capacities and consumption data was received. The plan was executed with every unit of the Strike Group completing a RAS with HNoMS MAUD, after which she headed back north to the Suez Canal and safer European waters while the rest of the Strike Group pressed on south. During her time with the UKCSG, she conducted 31 RAS serials, 15 of which were in the Red Sea. 21 were single ship RAS and five were double RAS, meaning refuelling a ship on either side simultaneously. In total, she supplied the Group with 6568 m<sup>3</sup> of fuel, the equivalent of fuelling 131,360 cars or 2½ Olympic Swimming Pools.

As the rest of the Group continued into the southern Red Sea and towards the Bab al Mandeb Strait, we maintained this heightened posture, and all sensors monitored what was happening around the now tightly formed Group, ready to respond and protect if required.

On 1 June, the Strike Group safely exited the Red Sea and continued into the Gulf of Aden. Over the next few days we worked alongside the USS CARL VINSON Strike Group (CSG1), a US Navy Carrier Strike Group conducting Dual Carrier Operations, a complex activity where the Air Wings of both Carriers worked together to provide mutual protection. The Strike Group took the opportunity to RAS again but this time from a US tanker the USNS GUADALUPE. We also said goodbye to the US Navy escorts USS THE SULLIVANS and USS TRUXTUN who had other tasking in the region.

On 3 June, the Strike Group disaggregated to allow HMCS VILLE de QUEBEC and ESPS MENDEZ NUNEZ to head into Salalah (Oman) for their logistics stop and some very well deserved downtime. On 4 June, HMS DAUNTLESS arrived in Duqm (Oman), 24 hours prior to the remaining units still at sea, to enable an ammunition resupply and commence inspection, repair and maintenance of equipment on board. The next day HMS PRINCE OF WALES and HMS RICHMOND arrived alongside followed by RFA TIDESPRING who re-joined the Strike Group on 7 June after travelling approximately 10,000 nautical miles around Africa.

The herculean efforts of the Global hub Oman (GHO) team, UK Mobile Air Movements Squadron, the deployed Navy Movements Controllers and the UK FLS enabled a significant resupply evolution in Duqm. The temporary temperature controlled storage in the Explosive Storage Areas (ESA) permitted the transfer and resupply of ammunition. Further spares and equipment were delivered in an impressive series of C17 and A400(M) movements, to improve material resilience and sustainment levels of all units. SALMO conducted further diving on UK ships to keep their hulls clean to provide the required evidence to the Australian authorities.

Duqm is not the most luxurious or "instagrammable" of stops. However, the Ship's Companies did have some unique options when it came to entertainment whilst alongside. The first of which was the 'Container Village' adjacent to the jetty. A purpose built (from ISO containers) facility it offered sports facilities, an outdoor cinema, food, drink, antiques, gifts, supermarket, barbers and, most of important of all - WIFI! In addition, there was the opportunity to spend the day at one of two hotels in the area, the Crown Plaza or the Park Inn, along with the local beach and the Rock Garden (if you imagine the moonscape from Wallace and Gromit's A Grand Day Out you won't go far wrong...).

### **Phase 3 – Duqm to Darwin**

All Ships successfully sailed from both ports on 9 June and assembled just south of Duqm. At this point HMNZS TE KAHA (New Zealand Frigate) joined the Strike Group. Over the next couple of days RFA TIDESPRING completed five RAS and her first Dual RAS of the deployment with HMCS VILLE de



*Malloy T150 drone.*

QUEBEC and ESPS MENDEZ NUNEZ, in which she transferred approximately 1700 m<sup>3</sup> (the equivalent of filling up 34,000 cars at the petrol station) despite the challenges presented by the monsoon season and associated sea states. The fixed and rotary Air Wing saw a high level of activity during this transit, both in the pursuit of continuation training but also in preparation for Exercise Talisman Sabre 25, a major multinational exercise later in the Phase. Flying sorties were overlaid with additional complexity regarding aircraft moves on the deck, made even more challenging by prevailing monsoon weather conditions as the Strike Group transited through the Bay of Bengal, en route to the Singapore.

*Ships alongside.*



RFA TIDESPRING completed her first Malloy T150 drone flight. One of many objectives of the deployment is to trial and prove the integration of uncrewed systems alongside the crewed aircraft of the Air Wing. The Malloy offers a means to cheaply and efficiently move stores between ships of the Group. Although still early in the trials process, the ambition by the end of the deployment is to see Malloy T150s moving regularly between ships.

On 19 June, HMS DAUNTLESS arrived in Sembawang Naval Installation (Singapore), 72 hours ahead of the other units, to commence repair and maintenance of equipment. HMS RICHMOND joined her on 21 June followed by HMNZS TE KAHARA and RFA TIDESPRING on 23 June. After HMCS VILLE de QUEBEC detached to arrive in Port Klang, Malaysia, and HMS PRINCE OF WALES came alongside the Marina Bay Cruise Centre in downtown Singapore on 23 June to a great welcome from the locals and Royal Marines Band. She is the first Warship of any nation to do so. HMS RICHMOND sailed on the afternoon of the 23 June to join ESPS MENDEZ NUNEZ in Jakarta, Indonesia for their own Defence Engagement activities. Overall, the Strike Group spread across three countries, Malaysia, Singapore and Indonesia, supporting the respective embassy staff in delivering vital "Soft Power" in a congested and contested region.

Logistically, Singapore provides everything a Strike Group requires. Fuel is readily accessible through the British Defence Singapore Support Unit (BDSSU) and whilst the escorts and RFA TIDESPRING replenished F76 and F44 alongside in Sembawang, BDSSU worked with the port agent to refuel the Carrier alongside the Marina Bay Cruise Centre, another first for the deployment, and for the BDSSU team. Customs clearance times are swift, which means this is a prime location for OPDEF stores to be sent to permit rectification of defects. Equipment and stores for HMS RICHMOND



*Alongside Singapore.*

were embarked in those units remaining in Singapore after she sailed for Jakarta. Task Force 73, the logistics support organisation of the US Seventh Fleet is also based in Sembawang. This provided the ideal opportunity for the CSG LNO Lt Cdr Chris Pannell to visit the HQ CSG team and discuss the future interoperability replenishments and RFA TIDESPRING's Transfer for Authority to CTF73 later in the deployment. This J4 visit, like those

conducted in Souda Bay and Duqm, proved the criticality of these locations to the resilience of the Strike Group.

Alongside the formal engagements, all Ship's Companies from across the Strike Group took the opportunity to get ashore and enjoy the delights that Singapore has to offer. From learning how to make a Singapore Sling in the famous Raffles





RAS.

Hotel, to a night safari at the Singapore Zoo, experiencing the Light and Sound displays that take place in the Gardens by the Bay and watching the fireworks display around Marina Bay. This visit was the ideal opportunity to experience the history, culture and nightlife of this beautiful city.

On 29 June, HMS PRINCE OF WALES, HMS DAUNTLESS and RFA TIDESPRING sailed from Singapore in company with HMAS SYDNEY, the newest member of the Strike Group. At the same time, HMCS VILLE de QUEBEC sailed from Port Klang, Malaysia while HMNZS TE KAHA arrived in Jakarta, Indonesia to join RICHMOND and ESPS MENDEZ NUNEZ alongside. HMS PRINCE OF WALES proceeded south through the Archipelagic Sea Lanes of the Java Sea. This meant that King Neptune had a busy few days, calling on HMS PRINCE OF WALES first, before visiting HMS DAUNTLESS and HMAS SYDNEY on 2 June and the remainder of the Strike Group over the course of the following day. In another first for the deployment, HMS PRINCE OF WALES replenished fresh water from RFA TIDESPRING (in addition to fuel), to validate the capability which allows ships with defects on their Reverse Osmosis Plants (or too many people taking "Hollywood" showers!) to remain at sea.

HNoMS ROALD AMUNDSEN sailed from Singapore on 4 July to re-join the Strike Group while the main body was South of Java on transit towards Australia. HMS DAUNTLESS and RFA TIDESPRING conducted the first inter-ship T150 Malloy transfer, a further step on the road of the Royal Navy's progression to a hybrid (crewed and un-crewed) Air Wing. Later that day ESPS MENDEZ NUNEZ and HMAS SYDNEY arrived alongside in Darwin ahead of HMS DAUNTLESS and RFA TIDESPRING that came alongside the following day.

HMS PRINCE OF WALES, HMS RICHMOND and HNoMS ROALD AMUNDSEN remained at sea operating in the Joseph Bonaparte Gulf off the coast

of northern Australia to prepare for Exercise Talisman Sabre 2. Over the following days, the tempo of fast jet sorties increased with multiple "8-Ship" F-35B sorties launching from the Carrier. In addition, two United States Marine Corps F-35B jets landed on HMS PRINCE OF WALES to refuel and relaunch in a pit stop even the Ferrari F1 mechanics would have been proud of. Alongside all the fast jet activity, the Rotary Wing (helicopters) continued flying in support of operations, practising their myriad primary and secondary roles that make them so useful to the CSG.

On 16 and 17 July, RFA TIDESPRING refuelled F76 and JP5 from the US CONSOL tanker the M/T BADLANDS TRADER. Over two days and four separate RAS serials, totalling 14 hours, 6000oz of fuel was transferred to the RFA's cargo tanks. This CONSOL was the first operational replenishment of a RFA tanker in this way, demonstrating interoperability and enhancing the ability for the CSG to sustain at sea for longer periods. (image: RFA TIDESPRING CONSOL)

Phase 3 concluded with four United States Marine Corps F-35B jets embarking in the Carrier and the whole Strike Group alongside in Darwin to improve material and people resilience. More details on this, the RAS of Provisions and Ammunition from a United States T-AKE and how Full Operating Capability Carrier Strike was achieved, plus much more, will feature in the next Logistics Matters.

Killer Statistic. From departing the UK until the end of June, the MITL transfers included the requirement to move 38 FOST personnel daily to and from different TG units, flying six VERTREP loads of defect stores for USN partner ships and a total movement of over 1000 people and nearly 20 tonnes of equipment. MITL is essential to sustaining a CSG at sea.

# RFA Integration within UK Carrier Strike Group

## 2/0(LS) Stephen Mutch RFA

The role of Underway Replenishment Coordinator (URC) for UK Carrier Strike Group (CSG) is one of the most unique roles within UKCSG and is open to an RFA Logistics Supply Officer (LSO). I am currently the CSG URC and embarked in HMS PRINCE OF WALES, which is deployed as part of OPERATION HIGHMAST. I am the sole representative of the RFA operating as part of the enable team of UKCSG HQ and therefore the only RFA member among over 1500 RN, Army, RAF and civilian staff in HMS PRINCE OF WALES.

The role involves monitoring the task group sustainment picture by predicting unit fuel levels based on reported fuel consumption and planning all replenishment at sea (RAS) serials for the task group. While RAS serials are largely fuel based, RAS(L), the URC is also responsible for planning all replenishments for solids such as provisions, RAS(S), and ammunition, RAS(A). This is achieved by utilising whatever replenishment vessel is available in the area. Primarily that is RFA TIDESPRING but also included HNoMS MAUD, USNS GUADALUPE, MSC M/T BADLANDS TRADER and USNS WILLY SCHIRRA. With UKCSG comprising units from the UK, US, Norway, Spain, Portugal, Canada, Australia, New Zealand and Japan the URC has direct communications with all units on a regular basis proving that interoperability is the foundation of foreign navy collaboration. In addition, the URC monitors endurance figures including food, water and sillage.

Planning a RAS requires the URC to be fully integrated within the CSG HQ organisation. Several key items can influence the planning of a RAS. Being spatially aware of the program is crucial to the RAS plan. The URC needs to know where the units are in relation to the tanker, what activities the units are doing and if the unit can replenish while doing that activity. The material state of the unit can provide limitations during the replenishment serial so keeping on top of the unit daily sitreps helps. All this information is fed into the daily N35 refine meeting where the task group schedule is finalised with the URC present.

Communication channels between the URC and the RFA are vital with the need for a constant 2-way flow of information between the RFA and CSG. As the RFA operates slightly differently to the RN due to workforce constraints

the URC becomes a conduit between CSG and the RFA tanker to ensure the requests placed on the tanker can be fulfilled. Because of this, I have been the focal point to several key decisions of the deployment so far and it has been rewarding to be able to predict fuel usage for a variety of scenarios and offer choice to COMCSG.

The logistics sustainment working group is held three times per week and is attended by the Group Repair Commanders, Group Logistics Commander and chaired by the Deputy Group Logistics Commander. Task group sustainment is discussed with the URC presenting the latest task group sustainment picture and upcoming RAS serials. The relationship with GRCs is significant as this enables serials to be planned appropriately.

On a day-to-day basis the URC provides CSG, HMS Prince of Wales and the task group a key point of contact as the ambassador for the RFA by acting as a liaison officer and vital conduit between the ships, task group and organisations. Having the URC role filled by an RFA logistics officer strengthens the already tight bond between the RFA and the RN.



# Contaminated Water, Infectious Diseases, The 12 Day War: The LANCASTER STBD Crew Experience

SLt Kyra Balderstone RN

HMS LANCASTER (STBD) Logistics Department has faced many unique and unrelenting challenges throughout their last 4 months rotation, from battling infectious diseases to intense periods of defect rectification and sailing at short notice in response to the rising tensions in the region. The team worked tirelessly to continue to deliver on operations, diligently and professionally providing sustenance to Command whilst contributing to the MC of OC in spades.

Within a week of taking over the Ship, fresh water contamination onboard meant the consumption of all the ship's potable water was to cease immediately, including the use of the water for food preparation, this included the use of all ovens within the Galley. The team, led by POCS Dyckes, enabled a takeaway food delivery for the ship's company for dinner that evening and a new menu drafted within hours, whereby the team could only cook utilising only one Bratt pan, a tilting kettle, a deep fat fryer and the range. A longer term plan to sustain the ship's company of 220 deployed sailor's over a longer period at sea was created, as well as large scale store ships of bottled water and a stowage plan created to distribute this securely throughout the ship. The precise calculations and extensive planning of quantities vs duration meant LANC could sail on operations whilst sustaining solely on bottled water, consequently seeing LANC at sea for over a month on operations including a successful £30 million drugs bust.

Thankfully following 6 weeks of bottled water, and a month at sea LANC received the welcome news that the fresh water onboard could be consumed. This was followed by a galley sports session of all the ovens that had been OOA the entire time, in which the ship celebrated the welcome news with CS Ferguson-Charles' famous banana bread!

As if the first 6 weeks didn't provide enough of a challenge, LANC was then hit with a Scarlett Fever outbreak, the first seen in the Royal Navy in over 100 years. Suddenly working practices had to change, with social distancing and masks coming back into play and increased cleaning routines daily. The medics worked round the clock to monitor the outbreak working to isolate those with symptoms, and prevent the spread as much as possible. The Logistics Department rallied together to help each other out, ensuring those in isolation were as comfortable as possible whilst working towards the preparations for a DSP due to start in the coming days. Thankfully with support from shoreside flying out an infectious disease consultant and medics we were able to test the entire ship's company. It was only then we could consider lifting isolation restrictions which had been ongoing for the previous two weeks.

The 12 day war between Iran and Israel saw LANC once again react and sail with 4 hours' notice in order to protect coalition assets in the region whilst continuing to regain the department in defence watch routines. The Supply Chain team that had been working to break down 90 pallets of stores in



The successful £30 million drugs bust.

preparation for the Deployed Support Period (DSP) suddenly loaded as much as possible, instead switching focus to issuing action overalls and securing all loose stores. During this period at sea, there were many unknowns, including where our next refuel would take place, or where and when we would be able to next store ship. Despite these unknowns, the heightened tensions and subsequently reacting to potential threats including closing up to Action and having ballistic missiles fly over the ship, the crew were unphased, working towards the final challenge of the deployment - an FLI.

The performance from the Logistics Department allowed LANC to work through and regain from a multitude of unique challenges, ensuring the Ship was ready for operational tasking. It has been a pleasure to work with such a determined and dedicated crew who have continued to show the same level of drive throughout and succeeded against all odds in some very challenging situations.



*Bottled water awaits storage onto ship.*



*The Logistics Department*

# HMS DIAMOND in the Crucible: Navigating the Logistic Labyrinth of the Bab el-Mandeb

Lt Cdr Noel Wilson RN



In early 2024, following the escalation in frictions in the Broader Middle East, the tumultuous waters of the Bab el-Mandeb Strait were transformed into a crucible for naval operations, testing the mettle of warships and their sailors. At the heart of this high-threat environment, facing relentless coordinated drone and missile attacks from Houthi rebels, HMS DIAMOND (DMND) stood as a bulwark for international shipping and freedom of navigation, working with regional allies on Op PROSPERITY GUARDIAN. While her combat prowess has been lauded, her sustained presence in such a contested zone has shone a light on the formidable logistical challenges integral to operations, particularly in regions with limited host nation support and units with pre-existing maintenance deficits.

The Bab el-Mandeb, a critical chokepoint connecting the Red Sea to the Gulf of Aden, is no ordinary operating area. Its narrow confines, coupled with the persistent threat of sophisticated, Iranian-backed, Houthi weaponry demand a constant state of readiness (State 1&2) and preparedness for defensive action. For DMND, this translated into frequent engagements, expending valuable munitions, stressing intricate sensor systems, and pushing propulsion and auxiliary machinery to their limits. Each interception, whether of a drone or a missile, while a testament to the Sea Viper missile system and guns, depletes the Ship's magazines. Replenishing these vital stores in a dynamic combat zone, far from proven logistical hubs, presents a logistical nightmare. To enable this critical resupply, PJHQ and the MOC needed to guarantee the supply chains, as such the deployed support period and reload had to be conducted out of theatre in Gibraltar. This allowed personnel to recover and ensure reach back to UK support was less of a constraint to logistics planning.

Throughout the operation, one of the most significant logistic hurdles faced by DMND was the limited host nation support in the region with port visits often turned off at the last minute for operational reasons. Unlike traditional deployments to allied ports with robust naval infrastructure,

the geopolitical complexities of the Red Sea region mean that readily available repair facilities, spare parts, and even simply safe harbour for extensive resupply are scarce. This forces logisticians to rely heavily on organic capabilities or distant, less convenient options. Replenishment at sea, while a cornerstone of naval logistics, is a demanding and inherently risky operation, particularly under the constant threat of attack; this was never more so than when DMND simultaneously RAS'd both fuel and Heavy Jackstay stores with the USNS KANAWHA during a month-long stint at sea that proved very timely due to the cold room being OOA. This lack of reliable shore-based support significantly extends the logistical chain, increasing transit times for critical components and personnel, and increasing the overall operational risk.

When a warship is deployed to a high-tempo, high-threat environment, any defect is exacerbated. The constant strain of combat operations accelerates wear and tear on complex systems, from the highly stressed radar arrays and weapons launchers to the demanding gas turbines that power the Ship. Without the luxury of readily available spares or extended periods in dry dock, the Ship's engineering departments face an uphill battle to keep all systems operational. Improvised solutions and cannibalisation of parts, while a testament to ingenuity, are unsustainable in the long term and can compromise sustained availability.

Operating in an environment like the Red Sea demands a profound shift in mindset for logistics professionals. It's no longer about simply ensuring timely delivery; it's about embracing proactive risk management, anticipating potential failures under duress, and developing agile, and often unconventional solutions on the fly. This means moving beyond routine procedures to embrace a more expeditionary and adaptive approach, where logistics teams must think like operational planners, constantly evaluating potential threats to the supply chain and identifying alternative routes or sources for critical items; be that ePC or Agent led. The focus shifts from



efficiency to survivability and mission assurance, requiring an exceptional degree of improvisation, communication, and resilience to maintain the flow of vital supplies and equipment in a truly contested battlespace.

Yet, despite these formidable logistical obstacles, DMND maintained remarkable availability and effectiveness. This extraordinary feat is, in large part, a direct reflection of the role personnel played in supporting availability and morale. The highly trained and resolute Ship's Company, from the Warfare specialists who operate the combat systems to the engineers who tirelessly keep the machinery running, are the true bedrock of the ship's success. All are ably supported and sustained by the various specialisations of the logistics department. In the face of sustained attacks and the constant pressure of a high-threat environment, their ingenuity, resilience, and unwavering commitment have been paramount. All logistics department personnel had to be exceptionally resourceful, managing limited inventories and coordinating complex resupply efforts across vast distances. All part of Logistics in action.

The psychological toll of operating under constant threat cannot be overstated. The potential of being part of either a Damage Control or Firefighting team or at a First Aid post becomes real and an appreciation that it will be more intense than a Thursday War. The threat of drone and missile attacks is not abstract; it is a very real and immediate danger to life and limb. Maintaining high morale in such an environment requires strong leadership, a cohesive team, and a clear sense of purpose. Regular communication, opportunities for rest and recreation when possible, and recognition of their vital contributions were essential in maintaining the Ship's Company mental and emotional well-being. The pride in their mission – protecting vital global shipping lanes and deterring aggression – undoubtedly served as a powerful motivator.

DMNDs deployment on OP PROSPERITY GUARDIAN offers invaluable lessons on the complexities of operating in a high-threat maritime environment. The coordinated Houthi drone and missile attacks have laid bare the potential vulnerabilities of deployed units. However, the Ship's sustained availability and success are a resounding testament to the unwavering dedication, resourcefulness, and sheer grit of its personnel. Their ability to overcome logistics hurdles and maintain morale under extreme pressure underscores that in the face of evolving threats, the human element remains the most vital component of naval power and ensured the finest traditions of the Service were upheld.



# Submarine Sustainment: Not Complex?

LSC(SM) J Clark – SUBFLOT OPLLOGS



## Supporting submarines in the UK and beyond, from a flotilla perspective

In last year's Logistics Matters there was an article detailing SUBFLOT's Forward Support to Submarines, more specifically how the Royal Navy Logisticians enable the delivery of 'Demonstration and Shakedown Operations' (DASO) for the nuclear deterrent. Routine operations for our newest hunter killers, whilst maybe not as high profile, remain similar in their complexity and require an almost continuous flex of Defence and commercial movements.

With the limiting factor on our surface fleet being food and fuel, regular port visits or RAS are the best way to keep a ship at sea. For our submarines, fuelled by a (very) hot rock, cram stowed to triple digit endurance figures, we need to think more about equipment maintenance and repair with the stores to support them. To keep a submarine on mission and maintaining our 'Force Elements at Readiness' (FE@R), there needs to be a constant conduit of support. For our submarines in UK water and overseas, this comes in the shape of the SUBFLOT OPLLOG team.

The first and final mile are always essential to getting that widget to where it needs to be. Add the cloak of secrecy and classification of both the transfer details and the widget itself, and you increase the complexity of any movements. Our logisticians execute delivery of stores and food all over the UK to ensure the tactical advantage, sometimes in the depths of winter in the Scottish Highlands where the conditions are not dissimilar to a Bardufoss to Tromsø drive.

When deploying stores around the world, the ability to predict what will be required in theatre is often reliant on experience. Traditionally in deployment planning, a unit LO will follow the four 'D's. If you take any of those items out of the mix you have to move from a 'Just in Time' concept to a 'Just in Case'; Predicting what maintenance or OPDEFs may contribute to the demand, where a unit may come alongside and how long they plan to operate for, may not be understood as activations remain fluid. This process involves a key amount of engagement with the MOC, NCHQ Movs, DSCOM and the JAMC, significantly increasing exposure for our specialisation in movements processes and with our enabling stakeholders. Supporting this, we have

introduced Forward Inventory nodes at tactical touch points. This allows us to mount resupply opportunities across Europe and the Mediterranean, especially for those items that are harder to transport. A nuclear reactor and submarine systems require a wide array of chemicals, solutions and POL, often with long lead times that cannot be transported easily.

When a submarine enters a port, be it UK or overseas, they require increased security, accommodation, shore power, and many other additional services. All of this is either transported out, managed externally or relies on host nation engagement. Along with the SUBFLOT team of N4 experts, a number of SUBFLOT engineering representatives surge as a 'one stop shop'. Enabling all of the shore services and Real-Life Support (RLS) before a submarine even arrives alongside.

The most recent port visit was Gibraltar in support of Project SCYLLAm, where a complex move of equipment from across the UK and the USA required meticulous planning and extensive engagement with external organisations. Through liaison with the NCHQ planning cell, MilAT from Brize Norton was made available and when all was prepared to move, the team were involved throughout the end to end process. From booking transportation to the JAMC from Faslane and Heathrow to meet the CFi's, engaging with DSCOM CCT to push through customs clearance as the equipment was being imported on two different licences, escorting the equipment at the JAMC to the flight, to final mile delivery on the jetty. This was planned with such precision that all the equipment, shipped from 3 countries, arrived within an hour of each other. Then the easy task of reversing it all back to origin on successful completion of the trial.

Supporting submarines overseas with a deployed team allows for expedited repairs, and allows time for the crew to prepare for their next period of high tempo operations. On departure, the RSC elements are then managed carefully to ensure that items are returned for refurbishment and reuse, rather than stock being held onboard for an unknown period of time, out of the system and unable to be released into the repair loop. In the last 12 months, SUBFLOT OPLLOGS have delivered round the clock support within UK waters in support of CASD and on 10 overseas port visits, enabling submarines to stay on task and avoid programme delay.



# Operational Catering on a SSBN: Feeding the Silent Sentinels

POCS(SM) Dan Carrington

The Royal Navy's fleet of nuclear-powered ballistic submarines, the Vanguard-Class SSBNs, are responsible for sustaining the UK's Continuous at Sea Deterrent (CASD). The vessels deploy on Patrol for extended periods without any opportunity for logistics replenishment. As such, the Catering teams onboard have a crucial role both before and during the deployment to ensure the success of the mission.

## The Crew Behind the Culinary Curtain

The Catering department onboard comprises a Logistics Officer, two POCS, three LCS, and four CSIs. This dedicated team works around the clock in 12-hour shifts, ensuring all four daily meals are prepared for over 160 personnel. Their role also requires them to test their culinary skills as both butchers and master bakers, producing not only bread products but also sweet treats such as cookies and brownies.

## Beyond the Design Intent: Endurance through Cram Stowage

With SSBNs now often deploying for lengthy patrols, cram stowage has become a key requirement. Despite the units grossing 16,000 tonnes, almost every spare space onboard is utilised for food storage. As fridge and freezer capabilities are limited by platform design, freeze-dried foodstuffs have become commonplace on deployments. Drawing upon lessons learned from recent missions, the Submarine Flotilla has worked to refine the offering of such products. The freeze-dried menu now consists of five proteins, with plans to expand this to include vegetables such as broccoli, green beans, and carrots. Work is also underway to introduce a variety of freeze-dried cheeses.



## Menu Planning: A Lifeline for Morale and Health

Menu planning aboard an SSBN is about more than just nutrition; it directly impacts the physical and mental well-being of the crew. Diverse dietary needs must be met, and meals need to be engaging to help sustain morale during long patrols. A well-planned menu can significantly boost morale and enhance human performance through nutrition, thereby supporting the operational effectiveness of the submarine.





**The Logistics of Feeding a Submarine**

Efficient logistics are at the heart of operational catering. The POCS and LCS must carefully plan food supply orders, considering lead times and potential restrictions. This involves deconflicting store ships with the Submarine's maintenance schedule and dealing with department defects, also any potential boat transfers. In the face of aging platforms and increasing programme pressures, the Catering Department often finds itself vying for priority against other critical maintenance and operational needs.

**Storeroom Management: The Backbone of Sustenance**

Maintaining storerooms is a continuous challenge. Correct and efficient management ensures that cram stowage is effective and minimises the risk of food spoilage or infestation. Damage to packaging during storage or transport can lead to breakages, jeopardising the Submarine's endurance. Although challenging, given the volumes (over 75 tonnes), it plays a critical role in the success of extended deployments.

**Weathering the Scottish Elements**

The unpredictable Scottish weather presents unique challenges for the Catering workforce. High winds can halt crane operations on the jetty, forcing the crew to manually transport supplies to the Submarine, a labour-intensive process without storing aids. The operational flexibility of the Catering team is continuously tested as schedules shift and maintenance needs arise, often at short notice.

**Cold Room Failures: A Persistent Challenge**

Aged cold and cool room systems frequently fail, threatening the preservation of stored food. The fragility of these systems, due to outdated designs and obsolete parts, underscores the importance of proactive maintenance and rapid response to equipment failures. To reduce these failures the Submarine Flotilla looked to industry for a solution. Recognising that most failures are down to excessive moisture, Absorbopoles were introduced with great success significantly reducing failures.



**Conclusion**

Catering on an SSBN is integral to the Submarine's Operational Capability and morale of the crew. It demands meticulous planning, unwavering execution, and an ability to adapt to the unique challenges of life under the sea. As the Vanguard-Class prepares to hand over its duties to the Dreadnought-Class within the next decade, the Catering knowledge and bespoke experience passed on to the next generation of Submariner will continue to be integral to the success of the Silent Service's mission.



# OPERATION CETO: Reactive Sustainment

Lt Cdr Ben Normanton RN



RAS with RFA TIDESPRING

OPERATION CETO is the Surface Flotilla's enduring commitment to maritime security in an increasingly contested underwater domain and directly supports the maintenance of the Continuous At Sea Deterrent. As part of a multinational effort to track and deter Russian submarine activity in the North Atlantic, HMS RICHMOND – which had returned a month earlier from OPERATION PROSPERITY GUARDIAN in the KIPION JOA – deployed at short notice and without a defined programme in April 2024, holding the duty until September. This period of operations highlighted not only the potency of the UK's Anti-Submarine Warfare capability, but also the unique logistical challenges of sustaining a warship on an unpredictable, reactive footing.

With HMS RICHMOND tasked to maintain persistent surveillance and readiness over an extended period, sustaining her operational effectiveness became a balancing act. RFA TIDESPRING provided vital support throughout, delivering fuel and limited stores at sea. However, without a defined deployment schedule, traditional logistic planning tools – such as pre-planned stores deliveries and replenishment points – were difficult to employ and sustainment focus was reduced to exceeding set tripwires for Class I and Class III.

Port visits to Reykjavik, Bergen and Aarhus were arranged within 48 hours' notice, the timing dictated by emerging intelligence on submarine movements. These visits were not aligned with European logistic hubs, and unless driven by significant operational defects, there was minimal scope

for broader Class II resupply or engineering support and Class I resupply was often limited. As a result, routine maintenance and resupply were deferred or constrained, placing additional pressure on the Ship's Company and logistics team. Innovative engineering supported by intelligent use of the Port Agency Contract and Electronic Procurement Card became key to sustaining on operations.

This experience underscored the importance of agility in military maritime logistics. The ability to adapt rapidly to evolving operational requirements – particularly in the underwater battle space – is now a core competency. It also reinforced the importance of Learning From Experience in the form of Port Guides and the Global Maritime Support Framework, as swift operational decisions were frequently made on the basis of port information within these resources. It is crucial that ships continue to update these information repositories, as they form the basis of a flexible logistics planning framework that is capable of responding to reactive tasking.

OPERATION CETO remains an ongoing success, both tactically and logistically. But it serves as a reminder: to operate effectively in an unpredictable threat environment, the Royal Navy must continue to develop agile support solutions and robust forward logistics networks. It also highlighted the importance of close integration between operators and logisticians – ashore and afloat.



*HMS RICHMOND acoustic testing on Loch Goil.*

# End of an Era: HMS TRIUMPH Last of the T-Class

Lt Peter Reynolds RN and POSC(SM) Harrison



Store Ship in Gibraltar in June 2024.

In December 2024 HMS TRIUMPH, the last Operational Trafalgar-Class submarine, returned alongside Devonport for the final time. For the Logistics department onboard, it was a time of mixed emotions. Sustaining a 33-year-old Submarine was no easy feat but the team successfully supported the platform during a busy final 3 years of Operational running since its emergence from deep maintenance in 2022.

The first challenge following the maintenance period was Operational Sea Training. Once completed the boat was ready for Operations and the Logistics department played a key role in preparing for the broad range of potential taskings that can be assigned to any multi-role SSN. With TRIUMPH as the only T-Class Submarine Operational at this stage, the Supply Chain team onboard actively sought to mitigate the many challenges arising from obsolescence and the winding down of provisioning activity to support the class. Using the team's deep knowledge and understanding of their platform, they made extensive modifications to their onboard inventory holdings to ensure the unit could sustain no matter what tasking was assigned. The result was very successful and helped reduce reliance on the end-to-end Supply Chain; something evident during the three Operational Support Periods in Gibraltar, Souda Bay and Haarkonsvern.

The importance of Submarine Logistics came to the fore during an Operational holdover in HM Naval Base Clyde. Whilst remaining at Very High Readiness for contingent deployment, an emergent defect on the Cool and Cold rooms threatened the readiness profile. Swift action by the onboard catering team, ably assisted by the Waterfront Logistics Support Group,



HMS TRIUMPH conducting a transfer operation with a Merlin from 820 Naval Air Squadron.

enabled a rapid de-store of the platform; no mean feat given the unit was stored to its full capacity at this time. More importantly, aided by recent modifications to the Operational food contract, the unit was able to rapidly replenish back to its mandated endurance level. The readiness profile was maintained throughout.

Returning to her home port of Devonport, TRIUMPH underwent a Base Maintenance Period where the Supply Chain team worked closely with the Submarine Delivery Agency charged with delivering the package. Working collaboratively with their colleagues, the TRIUMPH team helped refine the Bill of Materials to enable the work. The maintenance package enabled TRIUMPH to return to sea to deliver the infamous Submarine Command Course, also known as PERISHER.

When TRIUMPH returned to Devonport for the final time in December 24, it drew to a close the T-Class era. This was marked by the decommissioning event and attended by over 1,500 personnel ranging from Industry Partners, affiliates, veterans and members of the T-class community. Over the last year, the boat slowly had all of her stores accounted for and returned, which saw numerous compartments stripped of equipment, all in aid of supporting in service vessels.

From my perspective as LO, it has been a pleasure and an honour to lead the department on the last running T-boat. Although testing at times, the Logistics team have shown their professionalism as both Logisticians and Submariners. Despite the challenges associated with an older platform, the department excelled in every aspect. Their efforts have re-emphasised that Logistics is crucial for the wider success on Submarine Operations.



*HMS TRIUMPH at sea leaving Norway in August 2024.*



*Ship's Company of HMS TRIUMPH after a successful completion of Submarine Command Course.*

# Ambassador's Dinner in HMS LANCASTER (PORT)

PO(CS) Paul "Pablo" Williams



*Piping party conducting ceremonial for the guests as they arrive.*

During FTSP 01-25, HMS Lancaster's Catering Services team were presented with a prestigious opportunity: to deliver a high-end dining experience for the Commanding Officer and distinguished guests. Among them were His Excellency Ambassador Bondy, the US Ambassador to Bahrain; Vice Admiral Wikoff, Commander US Navy Central Command, US Fifth Fleet and Combined Maritime Forces; and other senior US Navy personnel. Commodore Aldous, the UK's Maritime Component Commander in the Middle East, was the senior Royal Navy representative.

Under normal circumstances, such an event demands meticulous planning, time, and professionalism. However, the team faced an extraordinary challenge, the ship's galley was completely out of action due to planned maintenance activity.

With refrigeration systems also offline, endurance holdings were significantly reduced, adding to the challenge. Initially, the task seemed impossible. How could a fine dining experience be delivered without any cooking or preparation facilities?

Despite the daunting situation, the team's ingenuity prevailed. Determined to showcase their skills to such high-ranking officials, they devised a bold solution: to execute a fine dining experience using the ship's BBQs.

The idea was met with a mix of awe and apprehension. Could a dinner of this calibre really be pulled off under such constraints?

With limited space, the team transformed the Wardroom pantry into a prep area and set up the BBQs in the midships cross passage. A sense of camaraderie and determination filled the air as preparations began.



*CS Edge preparing canapes of bruschetta, coronation chicken, beef carpaccio with horseradish, and smoked salmon with cream cheese and chive.*



*Pablo and LCS Torrance fire up the BBQ's on midships!*

As the guests arrived, escorted in true U.S. fashion by armoured police vehicles with lights blazing, the scene was set. The Commanding Officer led them past the BBQ kitchen, where chefs worked over hot coals with meat sizzling. Far from being discouraged, the team were inspired to rise to the occasion.



*The Captain gives the guests a tour of the flight deck with the Peregrine UAV's on display.*



*The starter featuring sweet chilli king prawns skewered on rosemary, served with salad and a firecracker dressing.*

Each course was cooked to perfection, plated with the finesse of a five-star restaurant, and presented in the Captain's Cabin. Upon completion, the team were invited in and received high praise from all guests. Admiral Wikoff remarked that, had he not seen the BBQ's himself, he would never have believed such a meal was prepared under those conditions and that it was the finest meal he had ever had on any warship. High praise indeed from such a senior officer.



*The main event! Chateaubriand with charred asparagus spears, battered root vegetables, and BBQ potato skins filled with bacon, cream cheese and chive, finished with a rich wine jus.*

The dinner served as a means of strengthening ties between our countries and reinforcing our cooperation and commitment to both our individual and mutual endeavours in the region. It stands as a testament to the resilience, creativity, and unwavering commitment of HMS Lancaster's Catering Services team.

# Barrow-in-Furness: A Small Town with a Big Responsibility

## HMS AGAMEMNON Logistics Department Senior Rates and Lt Kassie Rennoldson RN

For over a century, Barrow-in-Furness has been at the heart of the Royal Navy's submarine programme, playing a vital role in the construction and delivery of the fleet's most advanced underwater assets. From the launch of the first Royal Navy submarine in 1902 to today's Dreadnought and SSN(AUKUS) programmes, the town's shipbuilding expertise and industrial capacity has made it indispensable to UK national security.

Yet behind every successful submarine build lies a meticulously planned logistical operation. The delivery of HMS AGAMEMNON, the sixth Astute-class boat, is no exception. The Logistics Department has been working at full tilt to ensure everything from supply chain readiness to personnel support, catering provision, accommodation management, and test phase coordination runs seamlessly.

### Scaling Up: Logistics for a Growing Ship's Company

A submarine is not just a vessel, it is a self-sustaining ecosystem that requires everything from food, medical supplies, and fuel to the countless spare parts needed for reactor, propulsion, and weapon systems. The past year has seen AGAMEMNON's Ship's Company grow from just 30 personnel to 140, requiring a massive logistical effort to provide accommodation, catering support, and personal kit. Each of these logistical elements is fundamental to building a fully operational team, ensuring the Submarine's crew is ready to take ownership of their submarine as she progresses toward service.

### Supply Chain Resilience: Supporting the Build & Beyond

Logistics does not stop at supporting the crew – it is also essential for maintaining the complex industrial supply chain that enables AGAMEMNON's continued construction, testing, and commissioning. The Logistics Department has been directly involved in inventory control, delivery of “just-

in-time” stores for the submarine's in-water testing, and monitoring supplier contract performance.

During AGAMEMNON's delicate four-day launch operation in September 2024, the Logistics Department ensured that all lifting gear, support structures, and emergency response equipment were on hand, allowing for a seamless transition from the construction hall to the basin. Without in-depth logistical oversight, even a minor delay in equipment delivery could have impacted the carefully timed evolution.

### Catering & Sustainment: Preparing for Life at Sea

Feeding a crew in a land-based build environment is one challenge, but preparing for sustained operations at sea requires a complete logistical transformation. Over the next year, AGAMEMNON's Logistics Department will oversee the commissioning of the shore galley, the testing of the new galley onboard the submarine, and begin development of long-term victualling plans for potential lengthy deployments.

This transition is a critical milestone in AGAMEMNON's development, ensuring she can operate independently without reliance on external shore facilities.

### Personnel Support

Logistics has also played a vital role in supporting the welfare of AGAMEMNON's personnel while away from HMNB Clyde, primarily supporting physical fitness and adventurous training. As the crew does not have access to a local PTI in Barrow, POWtr Dean Hindmarch worked with a local fitness centre to secure access to Royal Navy Physical Education Scheme facilities, ensuring that personnel maintain high fitness standards. Alongside this, POCS Brady secured £20,000 worth of AT equipment with the support of the NAAFI



HMS Agamemnon formal naming ceremony.

fund, enabling outdoor activities in the Lake District. Members of the Ship's Company have also taken the opportunity to complete the gruelling 60km-long Keswick to Barrow race, held every May.

The Logistics Department have also actively engaged in community support efforts, including renovating an animal rescue facility in Kendal, and supporting the relocation of a soup kitchen in Wakefield, AGAMEMNON's affiliated city.

### **Looking Ahead: Trials, Commissioning & Deployment**

With the Submarine now launched, the next 18 months will be dominated by test and commissioning evolutions, including power range testing for the reactor, loading and testing the submarine's torpedo and missile systems, and departure from Barrow by Q4 2025, all of which require in-depth support by the logistics team. This transition will mark one of the biggest logistical shifts for AGAMEMNON, moving from an industry-supported build programme to a fully operational Naval unit. The Logistics Department will be at the heart of this evolution, ensuring all supplies, contracts, and personnel movements are correctly executed.

### **A Future Secured by Logistics**

Logistics is more than just an enabler, it is the golden thread that ties every stage of submarine development together. From procurement and supply chain resilience to personnel support and catering, the work of AGAMEMNON's Logistics Department today lays the foundation for operational success tomorrow. As the Submarine moves closer to joining the Fleet, the logisticians remain focused on one mission: ensuring that every part, every provision, and every person is ready for the challenges ahead. Because in the world of submarines, logistics isn't just important, it is mission critical.



*Members of the Ship's Company complete the gruelling 60km-long Keswick to Barrow race.*



*HMS Agamemnon launch.*

*HMS Agamemnon in the water.*



# A Prime Ministerial Stand Easy

Lt Cdr Garreth Hughes RN & CS Joshua 'Harry' Warr



In early May, HMS St Albans took a short break from conducting Op CETO tasking to visit the Norwegian capital, Oslo. This visit was a little out of the ordinary due to a top-secret VVIP visitor. Rumours had been flying around 2 Deck about who this mysterious person might be, with guesses ranging from Tom Cruise to Sabrina Carpenter. Members of the Ship's Company who kept one eye on geopolitics noticed that St Albans' visit coincided with the Joint Expeditionary Force (JEF) Leaders' Summit, which was taking place at the same time. Their guesses that the visitor would be a senior military or political figure, were a little closer to the mark.

One of the few members of the Ship's Company who had the inside scoop that the visitor would, in fact, be the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom, Sir Keir Starmer was CS Joshua 'Harry' Warr. With the Logistics Officer acting as the lead planner for the visit, it was inevitable that the catering element would be integral to the plan. CS Warr was tasked with providing a dish for a stand easy with the Prime Minister, a contemporary take on a quintessentially British dish. The only restriction was that it had to be easy to eat in front of the multitude of international press cameras in attendance.

CS Warr spent significant time researching and developing recipes before finalising his plan: a raspberry and almond tart inspired by the traditional Bakewell tart. For his hard work and effort, he was also placed front and centre in the group of Ship's Company selected to host the Prime Minister. Reflecting on the experience, CS Warr said "I am very honoured, not only to be selected to meet the Prime Minister, but also to cook for him too. Personally,



it was a very proud day for me and my family. It gave me the opportunity to do something that I love in baking and pastry work, as I don't often get the time to bake complicated fresh desserts whilst operational at sea. I also fed one of the most important people in our country, so I'm very pleased and I hope he is too!"

During his time aboard St Albans, the Prime Minister received an All-Arms ASW brief from the Commanding Officer Cdr Matt Teare, a propulsion capability brief in the SCC, and met with several groups from the Ship's Company. He offered his thanks and gratitude for the sacrifices that both serving personnel, and their families make to keep the nation safe. CS Warr was 'coined' with perhaps one of the rarest challenge coins available; that of No. 10 Downing Street and has since been 'crated' countless times following the global broadcast of his baked goods. This included coverage by Sky News, the BBC, and even the Prime Minister's social media channels.



# Navy Digital Spiral App Development for RN Supply Chain Cyber Resilience

Lt Cdr Tim Bird RN

## The CRISP Crash (catastrophic loss of the Maritime Base Inventory System (CRISP)).

In early 2024, the Maritime Supply Chain was preparing to make the transition from the Base Inventory System that had been in service since 1982 (Comprehensive RN Inventory Supply and Transport System Project (CRISP)), to the Base Inventory and Warehouse Management System (BIWMS) that they would jointly share in future with Land and the existing users of BIWMS, Air. BIWMS, although not new to Defence, promised better function, stability and efficiency to all Services than maintaining three separate systems in the Joint Supply Chain.

A Base Inventory System (BIS) exists so that virtually all items of supply are procured into the Defence Inventory and all demands for items from MJDI (Management of the Joint Deployed Inventory) can be connected to the sites where the items are physically located, through Warehouse management systems that dispatch consignments.

A BIS also directly feeds Defence Finance with unit cost-centre consumption; it counts the taxpayer's bill for the stores we use and hold. They are critical to Supply Chain function.



Home | Administration | Enterprise | Material | MILS | Reports | Requisitioning | Stock Modules |

Welcome to BIWMS Release 4 GOLDesp

<Inquiries> <Setup> <Process>

**General**

- Tapestry Solutions
- Modify My User Account
- Message Center

**Help**

- About GOLDesp
- Contents

**User Preferences**

- Make Default Desktop

- The [Message Center](#) will notify you of important
- The [Total Asset Visibility](#) screen provides visibility
- The [Acquisition Request Inquiry](#) screen provides you with
- The [Part Request Inquiry](#) screen provides you with
- The [Item Workbench](#) provides you with capabilities to initiate a Material Workflow such as an Issue

CRISP - Main Menu - Google Chrome

https://mates.app.logis.r.mil.uk/crisp/dmdynamic.aspx?HtdID=38664.0937146

**BOEING** Information Services

**CRISP - Main Menu** Timeout 30 Mins

Enquiries	DDE	Demand	Receipt / Return	Stocktaking	Misc	Help	LOG OUT
B	C	E					

**CRISP TRANSACTION PROCESSING SYSTEM - EAGLESCLIFFE SERVICE**

The following facilities are available:

- Enquiries index\_\_\_\_\_ Enter ENQ
- Demands index\_\_\_\_\_ Enter DEM
- Receipts index\_\_\_\_\_ Enter REC
- Returns index\_\_\_\_\_ Enter RET
- Stocktaking/Stock Location Change index\_\_\_\_\_ Enter STS
- Direct Data Entry index\_\_\_\_\_ Enter DDE
- OBD Task index\_\_\_\_\_ Enter OBD
- Give last TAB no (VDU or Printer)\_\_\_\_\_ Enter TAB
- Reprint TP Documents/Vouchers\_\_\_\_\_ Enter RPT
- Recreate Mainframe Batch\_\_\_\_\_ Enter BAT
- Re-display last message\_\_\_\_\_ Enter GLR
- Printer Control Index\_\_\_\_\_ Enter SPO

Help/News/Information/Error Messages\_\_\_\_\_HELP or Ctrl\_H

Routeing prefixes are B - Bath (GS & VS)  
C - Copenacre (WES)  
E - Eaglescliffe (MES & MEF)

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Enquiries  ODE Demand Receipt / Return Stocktaking Misc Help LOG OUT
B C E EENQ14A*001357711*S

STOCK AVAILABILITY (TYPE A)

SHORT ITEM NAME - GASKET          IINC - EB39      B OF Q - EA
ALT ITER        -                  ALT ITER BEL    -
DRI             -                  ACCTG CLASSN   - C
PLS QTY        - 0 MRA -          ITEM STATUS    - 0 SEG MRA      -
TLS QTY        - 24 MRA - F      SHELF LIFE     - 84 SEGSTK CODE - 0
CAPITAL STOCK  PRESENT REP N  SERV N  MGT CTRL CODE - 0 SECURITY IND - N
MRA            0 F P
SERVICABLE STOCK      0 0 15 35
DUES OUT(EXCL DELAYED) 37 0 0 37
DEFER FUTURE REQTS    0 10 0 36
FREE SERVICABLE STOCK -37 -40 15 -62
DUES IN              0 0 61 61
DEMANDED DUES IN     0 0 0 0
FREE SERVICABLE ASSETS -37 -40 76 -3
SERV STOCKTAKE DISCREPS 0 0 0 0
SERV SUSPECT STOCK    0 0 0 0
MONTHLY DEMAND RATE  1.64 0.77 1.40 3.81
TYPE B SERVICABLE STOCK 0 0 0 0
REPAIRABLE STOCK     0 0 0 0
COMMITTED REP STOCK  0 0 0 0
END OF ENQUIRY ON 17 AUG 17 AT 09:39

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Enquiries  ODE Demand Receipt / Return Stocktaking Misc Help LOG OUT
B C E EENQ09A*001357711*S

COMMON ITER DATA

SHORT ITEM NAME - GASKET          IINC - EB39      B OF Q - EA
IINC            - EB39          DEL MGT ITER INDICATOR - 0
D OF Q         - EA            ACCOUNTING CLASSN     - C
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POLARIS APPLIC IND - 3        DATE ITER STATUS CHANGED - 02/12/77
DISPOSAL INSTN CODE - 0      V AND A INDICATOR     - N
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STCC INDICATOR  - N           PRICE/VALUE CODE     - B
LATEST MODN NO -              SHIP UPKEEP CODE     - 1
MOON ACTION CODE -           USER INTEREST        - 1
EXISTING SYSTEM USER INT - 0   DOCKYARD USER INTEREST - 0
DESSICANT INDICATOR - 0       TRIDENT APPLIC IND   - 3
MONITORING CODE -            BODS INTEREST CODE    - 0
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PRM/CRM IND    - 0
DIRECT SUPPLY IND - N

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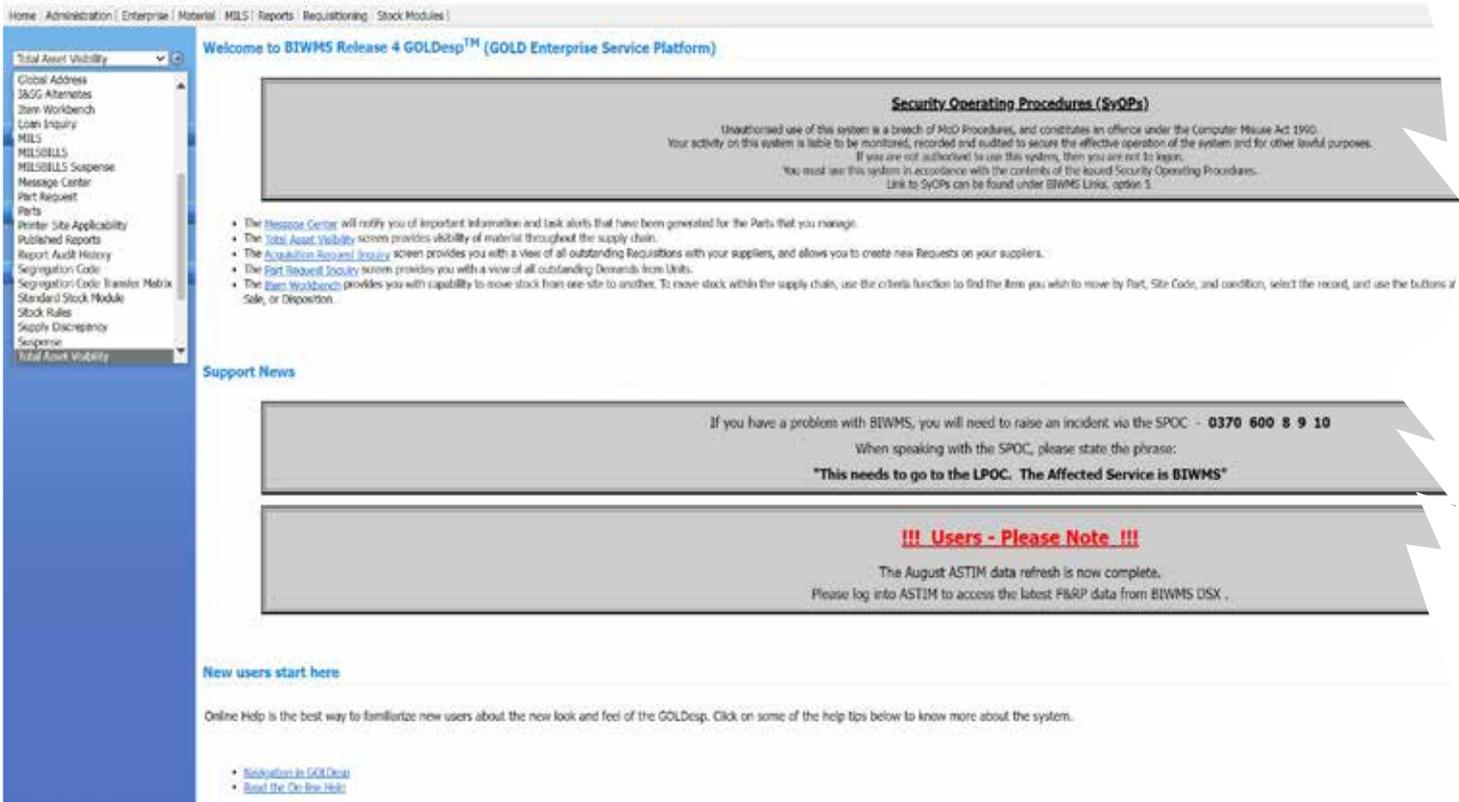
In Apr 24, the connection between MJDI, CRISP and the RN's Warehouse Information Transaction System (WITS) was severed, as efforts to save Land's fragile Base Inventory System (SS3) failed, taking down the servers responsible for both SS3 and CRISP. SS3 was saved, but CRISP was unrecoverable. Symptoms soon started to appear with demands returning no status codes to units and OPDEF demands going unsatisfied; this prompted immediate manual bypass procedures and a reduction in capacity to approximately 5-10% of normal demand volume, and even this limited capacity being reserved for only the highest priority demands for operational units. Temporary continuity measures couldn't last, with a bow-wave of formerly "less" urgent demands becoming steadily more so – so what to do?

A team of coders from Navy Digital, RNR, with OAC Logs and HMNB Waterfront Logs expert Staff advising on required data fields, coded a temporary demand management system in roughly 4 working days. Dubbed "NDDIS" (Navy Demand Data Information System) and despite not being able to solve the missing procurement of new inventory or financial accounting functions (that sit in DES), it nevertheless bridged the broken connection between MJDI and WITS, meaning that the Fleet could once again place their demands, with customer liaison teams at all three Dockyards managing demand progression. This was spiral development under tight deadlines and enabled c12,000 demands (including c2000 OPDEFs) to flow through the system over two months between CRISP and BIWMS, keeping the Fleet at sea. NDDIS mitigated one of the most impactful Logistics Cyber incidents Maritime had ever experienced.



CDLS 3\* Commendation to representatives of the NDDIS Team including Navy Digital, RNR, OAC, NCHQ, Customer Liaison and Industry Partners.





# Capability Recovery: The accelerated rollout of BIWMS

Lt Cdr Megan Strudwick RN

The BIWMS+ Project Team accelerated the rollout of BIWMS to the Maritime domain to restore the much needed inventory, procurement and financial accounting capability that the BIS provides. With some agreed workarounds, BIWMS was accepted into the Maritime Domain (NCHQ, SDA, DES) and the entire Maritime Inventory was migrated over to BIWMS in Aug 24; a total of 510K NSNs and c1000 former CRISP users.

However, it has not been without its challenges and while we continue using a new Inventory system in conjunction with an old (1982!) warehousing system (WITS), we will continue to see problems. From the outset, the stock synchronisation process that keeps the Inventory and Warehousing systems aligned has been defective, driving significant manual workarounds and data divergence. The demand reconciliation process between MJDI and BIWMS has at times caused problems including a defect that saw a multiplication of demand quantity, leading to demands of over £5Bn of Fire Fighting helmets being generated in a week (these were caught and cancelled!). Safety related data fields including shelf life have been subject to various problems and until resolved, end users are to be extra vigilant when handling these items.

Everyone in the Maritime Domain, from DES Inventory Managers, Customer Liaison Teams and FMSP warehouse operators (K&N and Babcock) have adopted multiple SOPs as workarounds to these defects to continue delivering for the front line. This hopefully gives you a flavour of the challenges the supply chain is facing and illustrates the significant amount of work going on behind the scenes to resolve defects and keep inventory moving.

Defence Support (BMFS) has a much wider remit than just BIWMS, and in the next few years they will be rolling out a new Warehousing Management System (BODMS) and a consignment tracking system (VITAL) to naval warehousing and MJDI to Naval Return Stores. They will also migrate the Land Base Inventory System (SS3) into BIWMS and MJDI, bringing all defence inventory under one 'BIWMS' roof.

# The Power of Support: The Logistics Behind a Wildcat Cab Swap

Lt Olivia Ashman RN

In my previous draft in HMS SCOTT, the most significant stores movement I had coordinated involved transporting two ovens to Madeira. While there are, fortunately, a number of parallels with moving an entire Wildcat cab, the scale and complexity of the latter presented a valuable learning opportunity. This evolution underscored the critical role of logistics in enabling operational capability. The success of the move was a direct result of the professionalism and dedication of the Wildcat Maritime Force (WMF) logistics team, led by myself and Sub-Lieutenant Henry Phillips.

What is normally a four-month planning task became an urgent, week-long operation following the identification of an unserviceable cab in Souda Bay, unsurprisingly, late on a Friday morning. The WMF Logistics team immediately coordinated with the Maritime Operations Centre, Carrier Strike Group, DSCOM and the Navy Movements Team to identify options and prioritise the task. The submission of the Force Element Table (FET) and Master Export Import List (MEIL) set things in motion.

A C-17 was allocated for airlift—resulting in a late change of plan for existing freight, much of which had to be road-moved instead. The replacement Wildcat was called forward to RAF Brize Norton the following day. 815 Engineers, ably led by CPOAET Hixson, rapidly turned the aircraft around, while our stores team (POSC Pead and LSC Gray) completed complex documentation including Dangerous Goods and Biosecurity forms.

A key learning point came when the MEIL hadn't been submitted to the Customs Compliance Team, delaying clearance—thankfully resolved quickly once identified. Meanwhile, we explored options for returning the U/S aircraft to RNAS Yeovilton. An A400M became available during the same port visit, mitigating a potential delay.

Support from the UKLO, Forward Logistics Site and the Navy Movements Warrant Officer proved invaluable, particularly as no WMF logistics personnel were deployed forward, highlighting another lesson for future planning. They





*Wildcat on the move.*

assisted not only with the paperwork, but also in transporting our engineers, confirming accommodation, and with the quickly apparent challenges of base access.

This cab swap was a multi-agency effort that relied on flexibility, persistence and professionalism at every level. While often behind the scenes, logistics remains a vital enabler of operational output, and this evolution was no exception.



# NAAFI: Working in Synergy with the Royal Navy

Natalie Williams, NAAFI HQ



When you envision the Royal Navy, you likely picture powerful warships, advanced technology and a wide range of dedicated sailors on deck. But there's an equally important, often-overlooked team working tirelessly behind the scenes: the Galley!

Charlotte Hall is just one of many Galley Assistants recruited by NAAFI to support the Royal Navy's Galley staff. These staff members can now be found in galleys across almost every major ship in the Royal Navy. Their role goes far beyond simple food preparation; they are instrumental in maintaining morale and well-being.

"I love the banter on board and how everyone is treated equally; working alongside serving Navy personnel you really feel like part of the Ships Company."



Like Charlotte, all of our Galley Assistants are sponsored reservists, undergoing vital ship-based training to fully prepare them for life on-board. Many bring invaluable prior experience, with some being ex-service personnel themselves.

"I enjoy the fast-paced environment, knowing that when I'm finished, everything is done to a high standard. The recruitment process was smooth and I feel looked after on-board and when we are at sea." Charlotte is currently serving on HMS Dragon and has now been in the role for a year.

Others join from various NAAFI locations worldwide, demonstrating adaptability and ability to thrive in a variety of Forces environments bringing

their experience with them. Currently, ten NAAFI staff members are actively supporting the Carrier Strike Group; something we are incredibly proud of.

NAAFI's capabilities on-board Royal Navy ships extend far beyond recruitment. We operate a wide array of services that enhance the quality of life for sailors, such as organising events and family days, managing retail stores and coffee lounges, providing wholesale supplies, operating laundry services and running various enterprise initiatives.

Through dedicated recruitment, operations and facilities, NAAFI is proud to partner with the Royal Navy. We don't just provide essential logistical support; we bring a touch of home and normality to those serving at sea.

# The Fleet Support Galley (FSG)

PO CS Phil Owen

The Fleet Support Galley (FSG), based at HMS RALEIGH, is now fully operational and functioning under Catering Support Unit (CSU) Devonport (previously CSSET). Officially registered with Cornwall County Council as a Centralised Production Unit (CPU), the facility meets all food safety, HACCP, hygiene, and traceability standards required to operate as a Distribution Galley.

Following a successful transition from the planning phase to full-scale production, the FSG is now delivering high quality, ready-to-serve meals to front line units. The initiative is designed to ease the burden on the CS specialisation while ships are alongside, freeing up personnel to focus on Duty Watch, Whole Ship responsibilities, and enabling greater flexibility for leave during periods of workforce strain.

In January 2025, the FSG hosted a “taster” session for Logistics Officers and POCs from various units, showcasing the range of products available. These meals are pre-prepared, frozen, and can be reheated as required in accordance with FSG guidelines; making them ideal for use during harbour weeks in Operational Sea Training (OST) packages.

Ordering is straightforward: units can request products by emailing [NAVYFGENLOGS-FSG@modgovuk.onmicrosoft.com](mailto:NAVYFGENLOGS-FSG@modgovuk.onmicrosoft.com). Deliveries will be made by the SURFLOT (W) team, along with all necessary due diligence documentation.

The FSG represents a significant step forward in supporting operational readiness and personnel welfare across the Fleet.



# The PAC is Dead, Long Live GPS

Cdr Brett Simpson RN

As maritime logisticians afloat, it is of our responsibility to ensure that the Ship is always sustained when deployed away from UK base ports. Whilst many of our colleagues think that logistics support happens by magic, without the support of a global network of local Port Agents, ships would not have tugs, fenders and gangways on arrival, food to replenish the dwindling stock rooms and transport to and from towns and airports for crew rotation when alongside.



The overarching name given to this support and drilled into every Loggy during initial Logistics Officer training was the Port Agency Contract or PAC. The service it provided was exceptional and sustained countless ships and units around the globe. Be it on routine deployments, Humanitarian and Disaster Relief support, or more kinetic Operations. Despite having been working well for the last two decades, there was however a flaw in this provision: it was based purely around a single commercial contract.

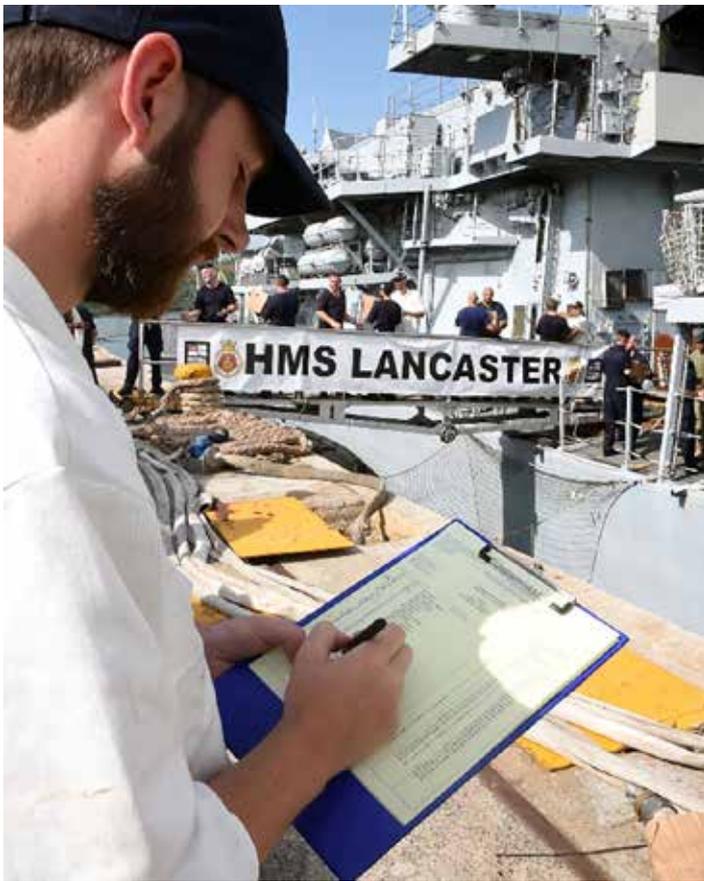
In 2022 this arrangement ended abruptly and the MOD were left with no option other than to step away from the contract. Whilst this could have been catastrophic for Operations, thankfully our predecessors had been good logisticians and looked at the 'what if' scenarios, with the NATO Support and Procurement Agency (NSPA), who were already providing all deployed fuel to the RN and RFA, highlighted as a 'break glass' fall back option. Well we had to 'break that glass' and the Maritime Logistics Support

Partnership (MLSP) within NSPA took over the management of global port husbandry on our behalf.

Whilst I count myself as an experienced Operational Logician who fully understands the importance of the port agent, to my shame and until relatively recently, I had not heard of the NSPA or MLSP. Why not? Well putting it simply, the previous support framework described above was so indoctrinated in our psyche that I never looked any wider than I needed to, and although the NSPA are a hugely capable organisation, the MOD as a whole perhaps does not understand or utilise their capabilities to the full and their profile remains low across the RN.

After leaving the Fleet Logistics Coordinator (FLC) position in Apr 24, I was tasked to review how port services should be provided to the RN, RFA and RM; who should provide these services and then gain financial approval to facilitate this, all before the previously approved PMLSSC (PACs latter name) funding was due to reach its limit in Summer 25. In all honesty, I didn't think this to be such a challenging task, that was until I was exposed to MOD bureaucracy and process! The first hurdle was to undertake a Delivery Model Assessment, a new to Navy, formulaic process to explore all variations of future delivery options i.e. should we simply create a new commercial contract? Was it something that we could take fully in house? Should we formalise the NSPA delivery method or perhaps a hybrid of any or all of these? I won't bore you with the 170+ different supporting pieces of evidence that were required to be scrutinised both internally and externally, but needless to say that, Lisa Wilde, the Civil Servant working alongside me, and I, really did have our work cut out.





### What should you do?

This does reinforce the importance of the LO / Nominated Point of Contact (NPOC) role in the process as laid down in BRd 2002. Ultimately, you are the front line of combating fraudulent activity and are personally responsible for the invoices that you agree to and sign on behalf of the MOD.

In order for the GPS team to hold the local agent to account via the MLSP, it is imperative that you follow the correct LOGREQ process by completing these 3 easy steps:

- Raise your LOGREQ in e-CIS as early as security classification allows.
- Scrutinise all quotes and invoices.
- When you sail, end the visit in e-CIS and complete the online NSPA Quality Assessment Form (QAF), not a local copy provided by the agent.

Ultimately, with your continued help and diligence, the provision of first rate Global Port Services to front line units will continue when and where you need it. Though our ongoing scrutiny, both deployed and in the HQ, we will combat and reduce the likelihood of fraudulent activity occurring, ensure Value for Money is met and that GPS support continues into the future.

Finally, everyone loves some good loggy stats, so for RN GPS activity in 2024:

Number of LOGREQs submitted	-	2383 (does not include Fuel LOGREQs)
Total annual value of RN GPS	-	c.£78M
Percentage of QAFs completed	-	13% (This needs to improve!)

### So where are we now?

The PAC is no more! Formal approval has been obtained for future provision of Global Port Services (GPS) to continue to be provided by the MLSP within the NSPA<sup>1</sup> for the next 10 years. We had to change the name from PAC to GPS as there is no recognised contract with the MLSP, rather a framework agreement much in the same way that the MOD has with DE&S or NAAFI. The MLSP, whilst still using commercial husbandry companies, has multiple providers who contractually overlap geographically, therefore always providing immediate fallback options. MLSP provide global husbandry provision for 19 other NATO navies and therefore have a complete overview of pan-Naval GPS value for money. The MLSP conduct the scrutiny of all GPS invoices, adding additional assurance to this high value capability, with any contractual challenge or impropriety falling to the MLSP to deal with, ultimately adding an additional layer of reputational insulation to the MOD.

While the day-to-day authority for the MLSP arrangement sits with FLC in the MOC, the assurance of the arrangement sits with a small team working to the Fleet Logistics Officer, in FGEN Logs, NCHQ. This small team of two Civil Servants are responsible for ensuring that both NSPA and the RN are keeping their side of the deal, scrutinising LOGREQs, invoices and service delivery, ensuring value for money is met. In the murky world of port agency, this team works closely with NSPA to identify mistakes and flag potential fraud for NSPA to investigate.



<sup>1</sup>Standfast in Cyprus or Communist countries such as Vietnam where standalone contracts will be let by Navy Commercial with assurance being undertaken by NCHQ staff.

# NATO First: What can you do?

Lt Ben Streeter RN

NATO is clearly ever more in the spotlight within the current global climate. It is increasingly clear that we are a large cog in an even larger machine and the importance of our collective role is as prevalent as ever. Just last week we were visited by the UK Defence Committee for discussions on UK and NATO relations, with Sir Kier Starmer and President Macron then visiting us for a brief from COM MARCOM and a chance to engage with personnel highlighting their commitment to NATO and the importance of what we do day to day.

Under the command of VAdm Utley, MARCOM has been continually developing into a warfighting headquarters, ensuring we are able to 'fight tonight' alongside our NATO allies. This includes implementing the NATO force model, ensuring we enhance our readiness to respond to emerging threats, improve coordination between the 32 member nations, making sure we increase scalability to scale a response relative to the size of threat, as well as supporting regional plans and of course focussing on deterrence and defence.

The RN's linkage with NATO and MARCOM will be ever growing as time goes on. In the event of us getting on a warfighting footing with a non-NATO state, we will of course be working as part of a multi-national NATO team, likely under direct command of COM MARCOM. We see this in local and ACO wide exercises on a regular basis, where we directly communicate with external units throughout all directorates in MARCOM.

What do we as a HQ need from our and other navies relative to N1 and N4? The answer is the same as you would expect; clear and honest reporting to MARCOM and enough detail to ensure we can build the picture for our commander.



Cdr Veenendaal (NLD), shared with me the requirements that MARCOM N4 needs from N4 professionals in their respective navies. Listed below, these will continue to enhance and support our operational strength when on Exercise and Operations:

- To have a clear picture of their national maritime shore support facilities (and share this picture with MARCOM N4!)
- To have an organizational structure to tap into these facilities
- To appoint a single POC who can coordinate the needs of the ships with the available support facilities



HNoMS Maud fuelling HMS PRINCE OF WALES.



- To provide a national plan of rearming naval units regarding Maritime Battle Decisive Ammunition (MBDM), i.e. missiles and torpedoes
- And for ship's Log Officers to provide an accurate picture regarding remaining stores and naval operational defects (NAVOPDEF's)

With a vast number of roles across NATO HQ's not only in the UK but abroad, including the continual expansion of JFC Norfolk, there are constantly growing opportunities for our personnel ranging in rank and trade to get a job or two in NATO. I couldn't recommend it more and I highly encourage anyone, be it yourself or your wider team, to get that 'NATO tick'!

**#WEARENATO**





## Your in-house logistics support

When you think of NAAFI, you might picture a comforting cuppa and a familiar chocolate bar; a welcome taste of home in an often-unfamiliar world. And while our shops remain at the heart of what we do, this barely scratches the surface of the extensive services NAAFI provides to Armed Forces communities worldwide.

NAAFI is a dynamic, global organisation capable of delivering a comprehensive suite of services, contributing to the welfare of UK personnel wherever they are deployed. From on-board HM Ships to the world's most remote stations, our commitment to the Royal Navy stretches across the globe.

    @naafisocial



FIND OUT MORE

# Got a challenge? Ask us for support

While our canteens and shops, often brimming with popular British treats, are a cornerstone of our offering, the NAAFI of today extends into a multitude of essential areas.

## Logistics, Procurement and Wholesale

For those in isolated detachments, we offer wholesale, delivery and procurement, ensuring a taste of home is never far away. With our independent supply chain, we can easily procure and move products, vehicles and equipment around the world, supporting you wherever you're deployed.

## Facilities Management

We provide everything from catering and cleaning to events management, building accommodation and even setting up heating and lighting solutions from the ground up. Our dedicated teams ensure that facilities on military bases are welcoming, safe and efficient environments for personnel to live and work.

## Real Life Support

On exercises and short-term deployments, NAAFI provides key real life support. This can involve deploying temporary facilities like pop-up retail outlets and catering units, as well as fuel and emergency supplies at short notice. Our ability to quickly respond with these capabilities, in even the most remote and challenging locations, ensures that personnel can focus on their deployment knowing their basic needs are met.

## Beyond the Everyday

NAAFI's commitment goes beyond practical services. We operate cafes, bars and leisure venues, providing spaces for relaxation and socialising. We also play a significant role in supporting events and functions, from small gatherings to large military celebrations, assisting with everything from equipment provision to catering and even general labour.



# The Importance of Time at Sea during a Logistic Officer's Training

Lt Cdr Michael Hawkins RN

The following words are purely based on my personal opinion alone and are not necessarily the view of the Logistics & Personnel Profession or Royal Navy as a whole.

In the world of technological advances, automation of services and communication across the globe at our fingertips, it could be argued that the requirement the Logistics Officers to be at sea has been significantly reduced. The increase in capability can also relate to the next generation of warship with the Type 45, Queen Elizabeth Class and Batch II Offshore Patrol Vessels firmly in service and Type 31 / 26 already having their own Ship's Company.

Due to this, and the ever-varied employment of Logistics Officers throughout the Armed Forces with no one person's career paths matching another's and very few going straight to sea in their first role, training at the Maritime Command Training Squadron (MCTS) based out of Worthy Down (Tri-Service) has adapted to ensure we best prepare our trainees for the future.

However, regardless of first assignment or the near to mid future technological advancements of the Royal Navy, time at sea remains a key (and arguably most important) element our maritime logisticians training.

How much time do Logistics Young Officers (YOs) spend at sea and why is it so important?

Following Initial Naval Training (Officers) at Britannia Royal Naval College including an Initial Sea Training package living the life of a Junior Rate, the newly commissioned RN Officers commence 12 weeks Common Fleet Time (CFT) prior to commencing specialisation training. The reasoning behind this is sound; to cement all they have learned and experienced in their training to date whilst truly embodying the "Officer First" mentality of all leaders in the RN.

On completion they start the Basic Logistic Officers Course at MCTS, spending 8 weeks with LOs, Senior Rates from each specialisation (Catering, Writers & Supply Chain) as well as discussions, briefs and exercises with a considerable range of external organisations. They will then consolidate all they have learned at sea for 8 weeks as an Assistant Logistics Officer (ALO).

Often the discussion arises as to the utility of this period at sea and why so much of training



is focused on preparing them to succeed at sea noting the reality that so little of their future careers will be on ships. The general conclusion is that there is no better way (in a similar time frame) to truly test and expose an individual to the variety of professional, personal and leadership challenges that they will face. On top of this, as a junior LO, their sea time as a Lieutenant / Sub Lieutenant will be the only employment that all will undertake (albeit on different platforms above or under the water) and therefore the only true standardisation in terms of challenge we can achieve.

Additionally, people join the RN to go to sea (even Loggies)... so we need to ensure they get great exposure early of the "real" Navy to maintain interest and focus ahead of their first assignments as it could be 2-4 years until they serve on a seagoing platform again.

### **The challenges**

There are 2 primary challenges facing us when aiming to achieve 8 weeks at sea and therefore all the benefits outlined above: lack of flexibility in the training pipeline and availability of units.

Due to the justifiable pressures for our LOs to reach the trained strength as soon as possible, should a Ship's programme not entirely align with ours then there is little to no "wiggle room" to adapt and ensure they match. This could occur if leave windows differ, the ship is in a maintenance period alongside so there is less opportunity to spend time with the ALOs, the operational programme limits when we can get them to join or key members of Ship's Company change over therefore disrupting continuity in training.

Once you layer this on top of a limited number of bunk spaces on board RN Ship's with every trainee in the RN competing for them, the reality is that not all ALOs will go to sea during this time and the majority will spend less than half their time off the wall.

### **The future**

Time at sea will remain central to RN Logistic Officers training and we will continue to make best efforts to maximise on the utility of this crucial stage of their development. The pictures included in this article alone demonstrate why we do it in terms of professional output, appreciation of whole-ship effort and (most importantly) for making memories. We will continue to mitigate the challenges and provide the best experience for our people at such an early stage of their careers.



# CTW's Year of Outreach, Learning, and Continuing Professional Development

CPOCS (SM) Garry Renner

At the Catering Training Wing, the pursuit of excellence doesn't stop at the training kitchen or classroom door. This year, our team has embraced a wide range of outreach initiatives, affiliate engagements, and CPD opportunities that have broadened horizons, strengthened relationships, and sharpened professional skills. Whether learning the art of mixology, studying battlefield logistics, or forging links with industry leaders, CTW has gone above and beyond in investing in its people and partnerships.

## Mixing Things Up – The Alchemist Visit

In a refreshing change of pace, members of CTW recently swapped their usual work environment for an immersive, hands-on session at The Alchemist in London. Hosted by the bar's expert mixologists, the experience provided a creative deep dive into the world of cocktail-making, from traditional techniques to theatrical, smoky presentations.

While the drinks were impressive, it was the shared experience and team bonding that made the visit so valuable. Encouraging creativity, communication, and collaboration in a fun setting helped strengthen working relationships and sparked new ways of thinking, skills that easily translate back into the training environment and which have been used to enrich the Defence Engagement phase of training.



## Learning from History – Battlefield Study in Malta

Two of our team recently joined Exercise OBJECTIVE ENABLER 25, a battlefield study focused on Malta's strategic importance during World War II. Once described as "the unsinkable aircraft carrier," Malta played a pivotal role in logistics and sustainment in the Mediterranean theatre.

Through in-depth site visits and guided discussion, the study explored the challenges and ingenuity behind the Allied logistics effort under fire. Key lessons from the campaign, resilience, adaptability, and effective supply chain coordination, remain directly relevant to modern operations. The visit reinforced how historical insight can sharpen contemporary planning and decision-making across all three services.

## Forging Industry Connections

Maintaining strong links with industry is a core part of CTW's outreach efforts, and this year saw several exciting visits and collaborations. A team visit to the Kenwood and DeLonghi manufacturing facility offered a closer look at how cutting-edge kitchen equipment is developed and refined, providing valuable insights into how these technologies can support modern Defence catering.

Elsewhere, our team attended a barista training course, deepening their understanding of beverage service and presentation, skills increasingly in demand across both deployed and static catering environments. These kinds of sessions not only develop technical knowledge but also align our training with evolving industry expectations.

We also had the pleasure of working with Mitchells & Butlers, one of the UK's leading hospitality and pub chains. This gave our instructors a behind-the-scenes look at how large-scale civilian catering operations manage quality, consistency, and customer experience, key lessons for service personnel who will work in diverse food service environments.

## Honouring the Craft – Boar's Head Ceremony and Butchery Masterclass

In a brilliant blend of tradition and hands-on learning, CTW staff were honoured to attend the annual Boar's Head Ceremony in London as guests of the Worshipful Company of Butchers, one of the City of London's oldest and most respected livery companies. The event, rich in military and culinary heritage, served as a powerful reminder of the long-standing relationship between food, service, and tradition.





The connection didn't end there, Master Butcher - Mr Julien Pursglove, visited CTW to deliver a butchery masterclass open to all staff. This standout CPD opportunity gave attendees the chance to sharpen their core knife skills, explore traditional and modern meat preparation techniques, and reconnect with the fundamentals of culinary craftsmanship.

Together, the ceremony and workshop highlighted the deep roots of military catering, while reinforcing our ongoing commitment to learning, professional pride, and preserving the skills that underpin our trade. Looking Forward

These activities are more than just interesting days out, they're essential to our mission. By investing in CPD, building industry links, and engaging in meaningful outreach, CTW strengthens not only the skills of its instructors but also the quality and relevance of the training we deliver.

From learning from history in Malta to gaining modern culinary insights in London, it's been a year rich with learning, growth, and connection. And as we look ahead, one thing's clear: whether inside the galley or out in the wider world, CTW remains committed to staying at the forefront of training excellence.



# Raising the Standard: Celebrating Excellence and Tri-Service Teamwork at CTW Worthy Down

Cdr Frances Coles-Hendry RN

Training isn't just about delivering results, it's about building cohesion, promoting leadership, and driving progress across a uniquely Tri-Service environment at DSLA. This year, three individuals stood out for their exceptional efforts not just in their own roles, but in how they've brought people together, supported others, and strengthened collaboration across services. Congratulations to LCS Natasha Mackie, LCS Nick Cassidy, and CPO Garry Renner, each of whom has gone the extra mile to make CTW a more united, high-performing team and who were recognised at the annual CTW Awards Ceremony.

## Maritime Squadron Award - Instructional Excellence

LCS Mackie has quickly become a key figure in shaping culinary standards and professional development across CTW. As a Tri-Service Culinary Instructor, she's consistently delivered first-class training while mentoring both junior and experienced personnel across all services.

What makes her stand out isn't just her skill in the galley, it's the way she brings people together. Whether she's delivering evening knife skills workshops or leading morale-boosting initiatives like film and food nights, Mackie helps break down barriers and build rapport between trainees from different service backgrounds. Her women's mental health group and support for Naomi House show her commitment to creating a more inclusive, caring training environment that lifts everyone, regardless of service. Her example encourages others to emulate not just her standards, but her spirit of unity, mentorship, and respect, everything a Tri-Service instructor should represent.

## Chief Instructor Award - Outstanding Development in Training Provision

In his short time at CTW, LCS Cassidy has made a real impact, not just through his food, but through his commitment to student development and team cohesion. As a Tri-Service Culinary Instructor, he's known for his creative approach in the kitchen, his ability to connect with students from all backgrounds, and his dedication to making sure no one gets left behind.

He's taken on the role of Functional Skills Ambassador, setting up revision sessions and making sure students are ready for their apprenticeship assessments. Cassidy also plays a hands-on role in Tri-Service integration by organising team-building sports afternoons, family's days and Christmas raffles, all to boost team spirit and cohesion. Additionally, he assists with the local Sea Cadets unit and plays an active role in supporting men's mental health across Worthy Down. A genuine team player and a driving force in both the galley and the classroom.

## Tom Selby Award - Outstanding Contribution to Training Support

Since taking on the role of Wing Co-ordinator, CPO Renner has become the go-to problem solver at CTW. From managing limited resources and addressing instructor shortages to tackling infrastructure issues, he has consistently found practical solutions to complex challenges.



LCS Mackie, CPO Renner, and LCS Cassidy receiving their awards.

Thanks to his forward-thinking approach, CTW has been able to deliver additional courses despite operating with fewer instructors than usual, an achievement made possible through improved planning, smarter resource allocation, and strong team coordination. Renner has introduced practical tools and streamlined processes that allow instructors to focus on what matters most: delivering high-quality training.

His approachable leadership style has promoted a more collaborative, Tri-Service culture, where mutual support and shared purpose are the norm. Renner has stepped in where needed and consistently drives cohesion, making him a vital force behind CTW's ongoing success. He's helped create a working environment where mutual support, professionalism, and shared purpose thrive. exactly what Tri-Service collaboration is all about.

## One Team, One Standard

The achievements of LCS Mackie, LCS Cassidy, and CPO Renner are a powerful reminder that real success comes not just from technical skills, but from teamwork, leadership, and service-wide unity. Their efforts have brought people together, raised performance across the board, and set a standard that benefits everyone.

To our award recipients: thank you for showing what great looks like. BZ from all of us at CTW.



LCS Mackie, receiving her award.



CPO Renner receiving his award.

# Leading by Example: Celebrating CPO Conybeer's Lasting Impact at CTW

Cdr Frances Coles-Hendry RN

As CPO Conybeer prepares to hand over the reins after three dedicated years at the Catering Training Wing, it's only fitting that we reflect on the remarkable legacy he leaves behind. A constant presence in the training kitchens and the Real Working Environment, and a strong advocate for both professional development and charitable outreach, he has been a central figure in shaping the next generation of Defence chefs, and doing it all with integrity, energy, and purpose.

From the moment he arrived at CTW, CPO Conybeer became a cornerstone of instructional delivery. With a teaching style rooted in high standards, practical knowledge, and clear mentorship, he's been instrumental in preparing hundreds of trainee chefs for the challenges of Defence catering, on land, at sea, and in deployed environments.

His influence has stretched across all phases of training. Whether guiding new entrants through the basics or refining the techniques of more experienced personnel, CPO Conybeer has consistently raised the bar. Trainees under his instruction not only leave with strong culinary skills but a deep respect for the standards, discipline, and teamwork essential to success in the catering specialisation. For many, he's been more than an instructor, he's been the steady, supportive presence who made the difference between just passing and truly progressing. The chefs now delivering excellence across platforms and establishments owe much to the foundations laid under his guidance.

Outside of training delivery, CPO Conybeer has been a passionate advocate for Naomi House, a local children's hospice close to the CTW community. But his commitment hasn't just been about raising funds, he's championed awareness, built enduring relationships, and inspired others to get involved.

From organising bake sales and charity runs to supporting larger wing-wide fundraising efforts, CPO Conybeer has ensured that giving back remains a visible and meaningful part of CTW life. His efforts have helped raise vital funds, but perhaps more importantly, they've helped promote a culture of service and compassion that extends beyond the gates of Worthy Down.

CPO Conybeer has also been a vital part of maintaining CTW's collaborative spirit. In a Tri-Service training environment cooperation is key, and he's modelled it every day. Whether supporting new instructors, or offering a steady hand during busy assessments, he's always been one of the first to step in and support the wider team. His practical, no-fuss approach and his commitment to standards have earned him not only respect, but trust.

As CPO Conybeer moves on to the next chapter of his career, his influence will continue to be felt, not just in the corridors of CTW, but across ships, bases, and establishments wherever Defence chefs are working today. Many of those chefs will carry forward the knowledge, discipline, and ethos he helped instil, serving with the confidence that comes from world-class training and strong leadership.

On behalf of everyone at CTW Worthy Down, your trainees, and the wider Defence community that has benefited from your dedication and skill - thank you.



# Women In Leadership Event: HMS ST ALBANS

Lt Cdr Jane West RN

On Thursday, 12 September 2024, HMS ST ALBANS hosted an extraordinary Women In Leadership Event at HMNB Devonport, transforming the ship's hangar and flight deck into an impressive conference suite, complete with chandeliers, staging and carpet. The event welcomed over 100 attendees from across Defence, ranging from Able Seamen to Commodores, creating a diverse and inclusive audience. Designed to explore and share different perspectives on leadership and management styles, the event featured an array of guest speakers from the Royal Navy and industry partners, including the renowned author and public speaker, Hira Ali.

The day was made possible through generous funding and support from key industry collaborators; BAE, Babcock, MBDA, Thales, and ESS, showcasing the strength of partnerships between the Ministry of Defence and its industrial allies. The programme was packed with insightful keynote speeches covering a variety of topics, including; the challenges and strategies of leading in a remote environment, how to grow by growing others and other pertinent and topical themes. The event was not only a platform for professional development but also a celebration of collaboration and innovation. As the day transitioned into evening, 55 attendees were treated to a spectacular Beat the Retreat ceremony at sunset on the flight deck, performed by the Royal Marines Band from HMS RALEIGH. This was followed by an exquisite seven-course dinner, a culinary masterpiece that was the result of a five-day collaboration between four ESS chefs and Royal Navy Catering Services personnel. The menu, which featured locally sourced ingredients from within a 20-mile radius of HMNB Devonport, included some elements foraged by the Catering Services team from the nearby coastal area, adding a unique and sustainable touch to the dining experience. Each course was paired with micro cocktails, further elevating the evening's sophistication.

The event concluded with a powerful closing speech from Commodore Suzi Nielsen, Deputy Director of People and Training, who emphasised the importance of leadership, collaboration, and the role of women in Defence. The Women's Leadership Event was hailed as a resounding success, not only for its engaging content and seamless execution but also as a testament to the synergy between the Royal Navy and its industry partners. It highlighted the value of effective collaboration and demonstrated how such partnerships can drive innovation and excellence within the Defence community.

The role of a Head of Department (HOD), particularly at sea, extends far beyond the management of one's own department. It carries a profound sense of responsibility to use one's position as a senior officer on board for the greater good of the ship and its crew. This event was a shining example of that ethos in action. The Women's Leadership Event was brought to life by a dedicated team of volunteers from across HMS ST ALBANS, led by Logistics Officer, Lt Cdr Jane West, representing a cross-section of the ship's company, including personnel from warfare, logistics, and engineering professions. These volunteers, spanning a range of ranks and specialisations, worked tirelessly to ensure the event's success, embodying the very themes of collaboration and leadership that the day sought to promote. Their collective effort not only demonstrated the power of teamwork but also reinforced the idea that leadership is not confined to rank or role—it is about stepping up, contributing, and inspiring others. This sense of unity and shared purpose was a cornerstone of the event, further underscoring the importance of fostering inclusive and supportive environments within Defence.





# Plans, Programmes and Palestine

Lt Cdr Laura Mullin RN

Marhaba min Falestine!

I won't lie; I did take advantage of being the Career Manager when an IA request came across my desk for a J5 Plans officer...! That's how I ended up in the Occupied Palestinian Territories, alongside Lt Paul Hoskins who until recently was conducting the tri-service rotational XO role.

The British Support Team operates out of Ramallah, using a unique 'team of teams' approach of local employees alongside a small number of UK military personnel and specialised UK contractors. The aim is to deliver a cross-government Integrated Security Fund programme, to help enhance the capability, accountability, sustainability and inclusivity of the Palestinian Authority Security Forces (PASF), which is aligned to UK national security priorities, with the eventual goal of achieving a two-state solution in accordance with the Oslo Accords of 1993.

Sadly, since 7 Oct 23, the West Bank and Gaza have rarely spent a day out of the news, and the political and security situation remains consistently challenging, with the role subject to a constant background of sirens, checkpoints, rocket attacks and ever-increasing Settler Violence. The working environment is made more complicated by an intricate financial web whereby the Government of Israel often withholds financial revenue due to the Palestinian Authority, creating fuel shortages and a lack of wage payments. For example, upon writing today in late Jun, the PASF have only been paid 35% of their salary for Apr, which brings its own challenges.

While I can't go into the specifics of the day-to-day work, from a logistics perspective, the Civil Defence Commission asked for help with their Gaza planning and as such, I delivered a ten-week training package on logistics planning. There is now a whole new cohort of planning officers (and one language assistant) who can appreciate the 4Ds of Logistics! The intent is for this planning package to be rolled out across the Combined Joint Operations Centre, to train personnel from both the National Security Forces and the Civil Police going forward. The roles here remain ever evolving based upon the needs of the PASF, but in my eyes the most important aspects you can bring are people skills, the ability to plan in the face of constant ambiguity and, of course, diplomacy. It does also help if you have a high tolerance for caffeine and a penchant for cigarettes and sweet things as our local staff are a bunch of feeders!

While rockets are a usual occurrence, it definitely got a little more tense when the Israel-Iran crisis kicked off - I had picked either an exceptionally good or bad time to go on R&R, depending on how you view these things! So, I flew back via Jordan and had just finished saying hello to everyone and handing out some shortbread before we were tasked to Tel Aviv to assist the FCDO with the Assisted Departure of UK citizens from Israel. We did a lot of reassurance, made many cups of tea, and spent more time than anticipated having to explain patiently why no, individuals couldn't go to duty free, or try and claim their VAT back on their shopping in the airport which had been opened just for them, as it was kind of 'an emergency situation'!

We are unique among the international community in that the local employees are our project leads, and we live in Ramallah full time. The norm is to live in Jerusalem and enter the West Bank exclusively in CAVs, alongside bodyguards who refuse to reveal their own name - I must admit, the phrase, 'hey SNAKEBITE, do you want a coffee' is not something I expected to say here! Living in Ramallah means we can also engage closely with our Palestinian colleagues and experience the culture, some highlights of which have involved



Outside the Dome of the Rock.

teaching a female colleague how to ride a bike, a full day's guided tour of Old Town Jerusalem by one of our Project Managers, attending a Palestinian school fete for the nephew of a staff member (there was a LOT of cake!), experiencing Bethlehem and the other governates, and being fed multiple portions of delicious homecooked meals by several mums! It turns out you aren't full until you've had at least four portions - luckily there is also a gym and cardio suite in our building!

As the Integrated Security Fund pivots from September towards harder edged National Security priorities, leading to a change in the CASIP programme outputs, it is anticipated that the military positions here will significantly



The dividing wall in the centre of Bethlehem.



*Teaching Civil Defence Logistics planning.*

reduce. As such, I am even more grateful that I was able to spend this small period of my Naval career in such a fascinating and dynamic place. I joined the military to try and make a difference, and to travel to interesting places, and as I come towards the end of my time here, I can look back and reflect that the months I have spent in Palestine have been among the most rewarding yet morally challenging of my entire Naval career.



*Bike riding lessons in the local park, Ramallah.*



*Myself and Lt Paul Hoskins.*

# Working in NATO MARCOM

Lt Ben Streeter RN



With the SDR now strongly focussing on NATO first, there may well be changes afoot with the RN's stance on MARCOM and other ACO HQ's, not least to encourage more people to take up the chance to work in one of our many, broad ranging NATO roles.

I have been under the impression that over the past few years, the view on NATO jobs has sometimes been less favourable than other potential options that could be offered to you from your career manager. With COM MARCOM's drive to transform MARCOM into an effective warfighting headquarters, along with the recent announcement of 'NATO First' in the 2025 SDR, this certainly shouldn't be the case.

In my first assignment as a Logistics Officer since commissioning, I have found working in the NATO environment to be an incredibly rewarding experience and I couldn't recommend it more highly. I serve within the N1 division as a staff officer and have more recently been appointed as the UK Executive Officer (XO) under the UK Senior National Representative (SNR). My role is highly varied. As part of the Military Personnel branch of N1, I am responsible for managing a wide range of tasks, including honours and awards, personnel movements, PERSCASREPS for exercises and operations, recruitment, and serving as the Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion (ED&I) lead, to name just a few.

In addition to these responsibilities, I oversee all UK personnel within MARCOM in my capacity as the UK XO. This involves managing UK pers issues, handling reporting and discipline matters, and overseeing the personnel plot. The latter can be particularly challenging given the wider Royal Navy personnel shortages.

My role does however bring many unexpected opportunities, some of which bring fantastic chances to travel and network outside of the RN. I have recently become involved in trying to assist our international colleagues with

changes within the UK VISA and Immigration processes. This has led to visiting and networking with members of the UK Home Office and other government authorities to improve the lived experience of visiting forces and their families. I also recently travelled to Kuwait (part of the Istanbul Cooperation Initiative (ICI), offering non-NATO countries in the middle east the opportunity to cooperate with NATO). This was as part of a Mobile Training Team, presenting to a group of Kuwaiti officers from across their armed forces on specific topics, such as the management of personnel within MARCOM / NATO, ED&I and how organisations are structured. There are also many chances to visit one of the NATO schools, mainly based in Oberammergau, Germany, to undertake one of the vast ranges of NATO courses available to all ACO staff.

Working amongst such a diverse team also teaches you many other ways that you can go about your business. I am surrounded by some fantastic SME's who have held senior positions within their respective services and bring a wealth of experience and knowledge to the table. I can't not mention that NATO is a very happy place to work, and the chance to not only learn from international SME's but also immerse yourself in different cultures is fantastic!

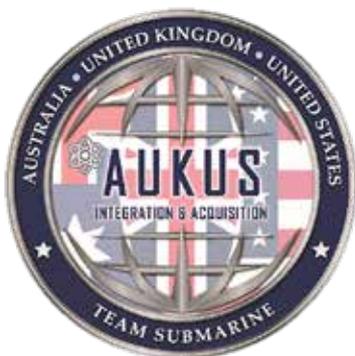


# AUKUS to Bring Exciting Opportunities for Submariner Logisticians at Sea in the Indo-Pacific Region...and Ashore in Western Australia

Lt Cdr Chris Barnett RN, NCHQ FGen Logs Plans, S02 Multinational Logistics Plans

## WHAT IS AUKUS AND WHY?

In 2021 the AUKUS (Australia, United Kingdom and United States) Defence Agreement was established to deter aggression, promote stability and safeguard shared interests in the Indo-Pacific region. The Agreement consists of Two Pillars: Pillar One - nuclear powered, conventionally armed submarines, and Pillar Two - collaboration on technology such as AI, cyber, and hypersonic capabilities.



With the vast Indian and Pacific Oceans upon Australian shores and the significance of the maritime domain, the Australian Government decided to abort plans for diesel powered submarines and to invest in a nuclear-powered attack submarine fleet capability as quickly as possible. SSNs can operate undetected underwater, with greater range, for longer periods of time than diesel powered submarines. Approaching the USA and UK for experience, resources and know-how, very shortly two (plus two more) US Virginia Class SSNs and one UK Astute Class SSN are planned to be operating out of the Australian submarine base at HMAS STIRLING on Garden Island, near Perth in Western Australia.

The UK Government continues to assert the ambition for the UK to play a role in the Indo-Pacific, and for a global, maritime, trading nation, AUKUS is a clear exemplar; to bolster security alliances, promote global trade and develop the military-industrial base for UK prosperity.

## WHERE?

The geographical significance of Perth in Western Australia is best explained in the image above. Firstly, HMAS STIRLING Naval Base is outside the furthest missile range from the South China Sea, yet still proximate

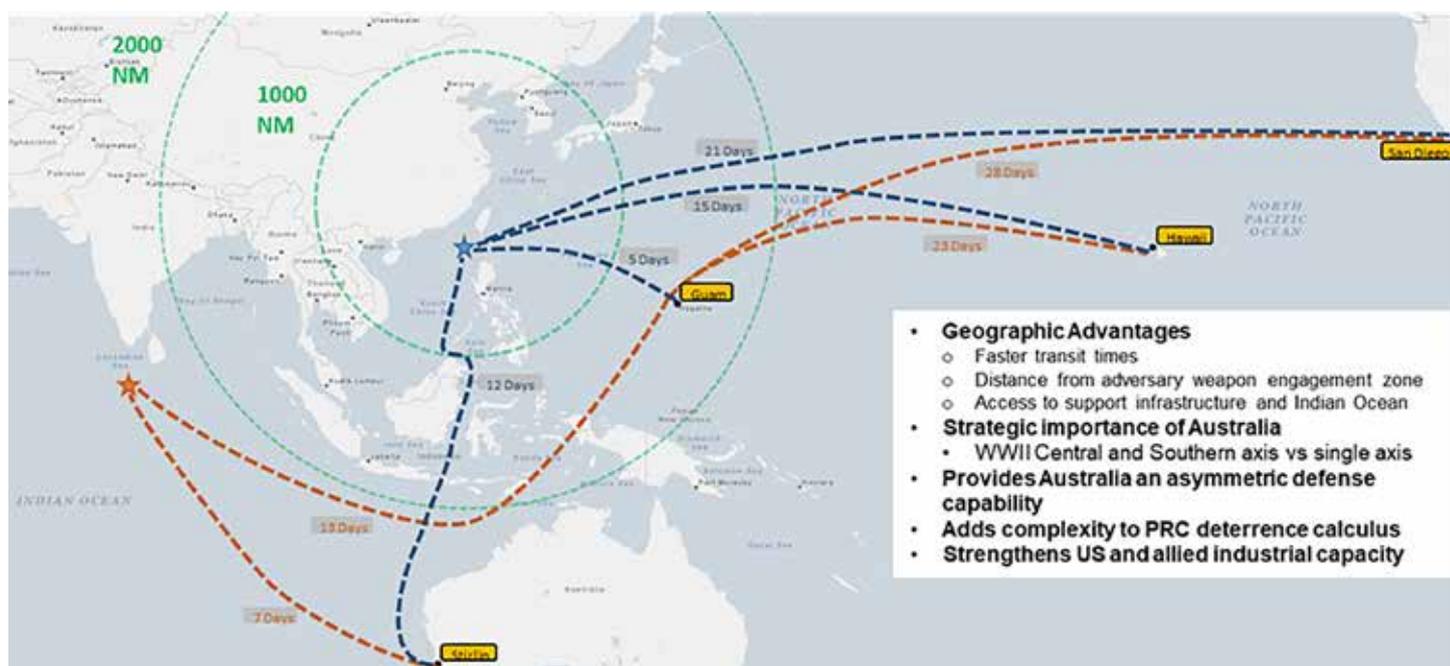
to the region in comparison to Pearl Harbor and San Diego Naval Bases. It also opens up a second north-south axis sea line of communication along with the traditional west-east from US territories. HMAS STIRLING itself is based on Garden Island, a small island linked by a causeway to the city of Perth. Although relatively isolated from the rest of Australia, Perth is one of the fastest growing cities in the world, with a burgeoning industrial base to support nuclear technology, high living standards and enjoys ever so slightly more sunshine than Faslane!



NCHQ staff at HMAS STIRLING Explosive Handling Jetty in preparation for AUKUS rotational deployments.

## HOW AND WHO?

The UK concept for supporting AUKUS is through Rotational Forces which would pulse from the UK for up to two years, comparable in concept to the



forward deployed units in Bahrain. Under a tri-nation Flotilla HQ, Submarine Rotational Forces West (SRF-W) Logistics Officers will likely be serving within the HQ function comparable to the LO SM roles in SUBFLOT with support to maintenance delivery, N1 and N4 duties ashore. RN logisticians will also staff the tri-nation LSE (Logistics Support Element) contributing to collective AUKUS waterfront tasking as required, leveraging opportunities for shared efficiencies and also taking custody of a UK warehousing facility with a forward deployed inventory. With an ashore MJDI server, the standalone

UK warehouse will be operated by SUBFLOT WLSG staff. They will serve unaccompanied in the LSE to support A-Boat tasking, for as many weeks or months as is required. Current planning is for circa 3 supply chain ratings to be present at any one time alongside 20+ Australian and US staff. There are eight AUKUS workstreams, one of which being Logistics, hence this article, but notably the Family and Personnel Support Workstream (headed up by P&T staff) is working to ensure the working environment for RN personnel is to the best standards possible.



*Lt Cdr John Robinson on exchange with the US Navy at NAVSUP HQ Mechanicsburg, is coordinating much of the NAVSUP AUKUS activity.*

#### **WHEN?**

The AUKUS timeline is deliberately ambitious to deliver a credible SSN capability to the RAN as quickly as possible. Described as the 'Optimum Pathway' with three Phases running concurrently, Phase One sees Rotational Forces arriving in 2027-2028 (and therefore waterfront preparations are required in advance) with Virginia Class SSNs increasingly blending to adopt an Australian, vice US crew. Phase Two in the 2030s will see RAN purchasing four Virginia Class SSNs and achieving a Sovereign Ready capability, whilst the UK continues to pulse Astute Class SMs for frequent two-year rotational deployments. Phase Three sees the RN's Astute Class and RAN's Virginia Class replaced with SSN AUKUS, (the maritime centrepiece in the recent UK Strategic Defence Review) with the UK acquiring up to 12 boats through a

collective industrial programme, scheduled to be delivered into service in the 2040s, however design and construction work has already commenced now.

#### **SUMMARY**

AUKUS is a significant growth area for UK Defence, and notably for the RN Submarine Service, indeed in the Strategic Defence Review the ambition for up to 12 SSN AUKUS shows a commitment to growing the SM capability in order to contribute to Indo-Pacific Security alongside the enduring 'NATO first' North Atlantic commitments. Opportunities for submariner logisticians to serve shoulder-to-shoulder alongside Australian and American submariners, in the Indo-Pacific and alongside at HMAS STIRLING is a very exciting prospect.

# From Cdo Logs Regt to HMS SOMERSET

LWtr Lily Mackenzie

In September 2019 I joined the Royal Navy as a 17 year old. From the very start I knew I was stepping into a challenging but rewarding career. After completing my Writer training at Worthy Down, I was assigned to my first unit, Commando Logistics Regiment (CLR) in Chivenor, Barnstaple. It was here that I had my first real taste of military life, operating alongside the Royal Marines in a demanding environment. One of the most memorable experiences during my time at Chivenor was deploying to Norway for cold-weather training. The training in Norway was as brutal as it was rewarding. One of the most challenging parts was the cold weather survival training; a four-day course which pushed me to my limits both mentally and physically. A key part of this training involved jumping into freezing ice water, an experience that I will never forget, and this part was essential for learning how to survive in extreme conditions.



Additionally, I spent 24 hours out in the snow, testing my ability to endure sub-zero temperatures with very limited resources; this part of the course is known as 'Survival Night'. This experience taught me the importance of preparation, adaptability and mental resilience, qualities that would serve me well in the years to come. One of my highlights during my time here was seeing the northern lights, a truly magnificent experience. If someone would ask me 'would you do the course again?' I absolutely would, this took me away from my normal day to day job as a Writer and out of my comfort zone, that's what I enjoyed.

After my time at Chivenor, I moved onto my first ship in January 2022, HMS Somerset. This was a significant transition, as life at sea presented a whole new set of challenges which I was eager to achieve. One of the many highlights of serving in HMS Somerset was when I was awarded 'Best Sailor of the Term' in December 2022. Another highlight was when the ship crossed the Arctic Circle, everyone had put on a blue nose and received a certificate, and a few members of the ship's company had the opportunity to be covered with arctic water as an old naval tradition. Another highlight for me was the opportunity to travel and experience different cultures. Throughout my time onboard I had the privilege of visiting multiple countries, including Denmark, Germany, Netherlands, Norway and Spain. Each port visit provided a unique perspective on international relations that the Royal Navy has, as well as some sightseeing. Denmark, Germany, and the Netherlands were key stops during our training and operational deployments.

I then took proactive steps in my career and decided to attend LWTRQC in February 2024, a crucial step in getting ahead of my career. This was more



than just a tick in the box, it was an opportunity to prove my readiness for promotion to LWTR, refine my leadership skills, and demonstrate my ability to take on greater responsibility. After months of preparation and anticipation, the hard work paid off. In May 2024, I was successful at the LWTR promotion board which marked a significant milestone in my career. This moment was a rollercoaster of all emotions possible, pride in achieving my goal and motivation to continue to excel in my new role.



# Life at RAF Marham

LSC Hannah Delahunty

RAF Marham is nestled in the heart of North Norfolk. This is a unique base where I have been working at the forefront of the RN's fast jet capability in a dual-service environment. RAF Marham is a busy main operating base, compiling of frontline squadrons including 2 RAF squadrons, 617 and 207, as well as the newly formed 809 Naval Air Squadron. I have been working within 617 and 809 Sqn. We support the world class elite F-35 fast jets while using the USA pioneered, multi-national, Joint Strike Fighter program, which aids us and the engineers to work simultaneously. This unique space doesn't just host Royal Navy and RAF personnel, but also industry partners. We work alongside Lockheed Martin, BAE systems, and Rolls Royce. I have been able to get to grips with all that is involved within the industry and the impact the supply chain has on the stations output. We are at the arrowhead of exciting fast paced operations working on multiple different platforms. These include land-based deployments all around the world, Op Red Flag in North America, Op Northern Edge in Alaska, and Op Masterer conducting Icelandic Air Policing. We also deploy on QE class ships during operations, which has included Op Steadfast Defender, Op Firedrake and the current Op Highmast. Whilst working with the all-encompassing Lightning platform I have been exposed to the RAF structure of the logistic supply chain world. Working in this environment has only benefitted me by expanding my breadth of supply chain knowledge within the Lightning and wider RAF and industry partner sphere.

RAF Marham is overwhelmingly socially busy, offering various sports clubs and adventurous training. Weekly newsletters are distributed where all-important information is available and easily accessible by all. There is an abundance of exciting opportunities, including the RAF Eagles scheme, which hosts multiple activities and opportunities such as staff-rides to Poland including a visit to Stalag Luft II, a Luftwaffe-run PoW camp. You can even gain scuba diving qualifications in Malta. They benefit from using the universal AT centres including Bavaria, Germany, which hosts AT on a regular basis. Here they run weeklong multi-sport packages all year round ranging from mountain biking, kayaking, rock climbing and skiing. There are a wide range of sports facilities offered at Marham including sports fields, indoor and outdoor courts, and state of the art gyms. These have recently held their own



partner fitness events simulating a Hyrox workout, a combination of running and functional fitness exercises. They are constantly adapting to cater for all fitness wants and needs. The infrastructure across the base is constantly being reviewed and upgraded, particularly in the JR accommodation. There is a huge overhaul in place, with the old buildings being demolished and in its place the creation of 800+ SLAM rooms which will be ready to move in from Summer 2025.

There are various social areas open on a regular basis for everyone to socialise. These areas host a multitude of events including comedians, singers, live bands, as well as themed evenings and cultural celebrations. We celebrate special historical events from both services and uphold traditions. I have been able to help organise many events including a country rodeo evening, where we were able to hire inflatable country themed games and activities.

Overall, my time at RAF Marham has enabled me to advance my supply chain knowledge in all things Lightning, using technology that aids the workplace. Being in this space I have met a vast range of people from across the RN, RAF and various programme partners.



# All Hands-on Deck: Navigating Service, Study, and Self

## POWtr Danielle Pritchard

Returning to work after maternity leave was a completely new experience. I'd changed, my world had changed and so had my priorities as a new mum. For me, it wasn't just about putting the uniform back on, it was about rediscovering who I was and what I wanted to achieve.

Stepping back into Service life, I joined a fast paced, operational environment within PJHQ that demanded quick thinking, adaptability, and confidence, much of which I had to rebuild after time away. It was unfamiliar ground, but it ignited something in me: a desire not just to return, but to progress. In just two years, this desire has led to more growth and opportunity than I could have imagined.

In 2022, I decided to enrol on a Bachelors of Science (BSc) degree in Human Resource Management with the University of Lincoln. It was a big leap for someone who had left school with just GCSEs and had not studied in over 15 years. I doubted myself, a lot. It was daunting, but I had made the decision, and I was committed to seeing it through.

Studying tested me in every way. My son, Edwin, was still little, and my husband Kall was studying for his own BSc. Evenings were spent with open books, laptops glowing and Edwin often reminding us (mid-cartoon cuddle), to get on with our homework. Kall, ever honest and constructive, would read my draft assignments and rightly tell me I could do better. More often than not, this meant starting again. Studying together, Kall and I became each other's editors, motivators, and calm in the storm.

Halfway through the degree, I was promoted to Acting POWtr and moved into a new role within Northwood UPO, a busy tri-service environment. Within weeks, I was covering as Office Manager (CPO role) in a team that had 40% gaps. It was a significant jump into leadership and increase in responsibility, but this is where I thrive; building trust, professional development, and creating a team with a culture where people feel supported and accountable. To help the team deal with the gapping and workloads, we created an online Arrivals Process at Northwood HQ to modernise how we conduct arrivals in a 21st century military environment. This type of innovation and collaboration demonstrates the possibilities that arise from breaking away from typical business as usual habits.

That same spirit of collaboration extended beyond the desire to improve the work-life balance for my team. I became actively involved in several Working Groups (WG) focused on shaping the future of our Writer specialisation including the UPO WG, where I helped trial CMT BE alongside the Defence Digital team and the Branch Strategy WG (now known as the Logistics Profession WG), which looks at how we evolve and grow as a profession. I also sit on CDP's Shadow Board which brings together diverse voices to influence wider organisational change.

For me, being part of a WG is not just about turning up, it is about turning up with intent. If something matters, you must be the voice for change, even when it is uncomfortable. Small ideas are where progress begins, but only if we engage fully, challenge constructively, and stay committed to pushing things forward.

That same year, I was selected for promotion, and completed SRLC and POWtr QC, achieving the accolade of POWtr of the Year for the top academic results across the training year; a recognition that still does not quite feel real. At the height of it all, while balancing full-time work, training, and family life, I submitted my undergraduate dissertation during my POWtr QC, rounding off what was undoubtedly one of the most demanding periods of professional and academic growth in my career.

Service life does not pause. The demands, the pace and the unexpected, they don't ease just because you're studying or parenting. You have to keep showing up, find your rhythm within the chaos, and get the job done.

As the year continued, I completed both the Casualty Notification Officer and Funeral Officer courses. Later, I was formally stood up as Funeral Officer, a profound honour that reminded me what it truly means to serve.

These years have seen late nights, early mornings, and more than a few moments of doubt, but in 2024, I graduated with First Class Honours. That moment was more than a milestone; it was a message to every part of me that had ever felt uncertain or underestimated. I had done it, and I had earned it.



*University of Lincoln Graduation Ceremony.*

Still, I wasn't done. I applied for P&T scholarship funding for a Master of Science (MSc) in Project Management and was selected. I enrolled later that year, and now, I'm five modules in... and five months pregnant.

So yes, I'll be finishing my master's degree with a newborn. And yes, it's going to be hard. But I've already navigated tough moments, and I've proven to myself what I'm capable of achieving. I've studied through sleepless nights, juggled essays with potty training, delivered results while being pushed far outside my comfort zone. And I'll keep going because I believe in the version of me, I'm building.

We talk a lot about work-life balance, but I've learned that it's not really about balance. It's about purpose. It's about backing yourself when no one's watching. It's about momentum, resilience, and remembering who you're doing it for, whether that's the people you lead, the family you love, or the future you want to shape.

To anyone wondering if they can study while serving or pursue something more while raising a family, you absolutely can. It won't be perfect. It won't always be tidy. But it will be worth it.

**I was once given three pieces of advice that I carry with me always:**

- Invest in yourself.
- When you achieve a goal, raise the bar and aim higher.
- Whatever you do, do it with heart.

I've tried to live by those words every step of the way, and I hope someone reading this feels empowered to start doing the same.

**So, here's my advice:**

- Turn up with intent. Be present, be purposeful, and don't wait for perfect conditions, they rarely come.
- Find your rhythm in the chaos. There's no neat line between service, study, and self, but there is momentum if you just keep moving.
- Back yourself when no one's watching. Because that's when it counts. That's when resilience is built. That's when you shape not only your future, but the example others will follow.

In a world of service and structure, choosing to invest in yourself is the most powerful act of leadership and where real change begins.



*Family at the Graduation Ceremony.*



CNLO Awards.

# Cox'n's Assistant Trial on HMS Spey

## Wtr Poppy Wells

The Royal Navy has consistently provided me with opportunities for both personal and professional development, and I have been fortunate to make the most of these. Since successfully completing Phase 2 training, I was assigned to the Tenders UPO, where I initially managed MCM2 Crews. I later transitioned to supporting Batch 2 Offshore Patrol Vessels (B2OPVs), a role that came with increased responsibility and required adaptability to meet the unique needs of each ship's crew.



Despite being a shore-based Writer who had not yet been to sea, I was approached and offered a unique opportunity to support a Tier 4 Trial introduced by the Fleet Writer as a Coxswain's Assistant in HMS Spey, an offer I eagerly accepted.

### HMS Spey and Deployment

HMS Spey is currently deployed in the Indo-Pacific region, and I joined the ship in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. Upon arrival, I had a day to familiarise myself with the ship and adjust to life at sea. I was warmly welcomed by the ship's company, and it was a pleasure to finally meet everyone in person. I was introduced to the Junior Rates Mess, where I quickly embraced mess life and integrated with the wider team.

### My Role Onboard

As Coxswain's Assistant, I played a vital support role in managing administrative and personnel matters. My responsibilities included assisting with the recording and maintenance of the Souls On Board (SOB) log, managing HR-related admin, and ensuring timely processing of essential documentation.

One of the key elements of the role was attending command update briefs, including Heads of Department and Planning meetings. I was also responsible for preparing joiner and leaver briefs, arranging watch change travel, and updating the Watch & Station Bill—an essential document detailing duty allocations during operational scenarios. I also maintained oversight of gapped positions and disciplinary records.

My daily routine involved working closely with the Coxswain and the PO/LH SC in the Ship's Office. Regular tasks included booking travel (flights, taxis, visas), managing the TDTS spreadsheet, updating recall lists, and securely handling new arrivals' paperwork.

### Exercise BERSAMA LIMA 24

A highlight of my deployment was taking part in Exercise BERSAMA LIMA 24, a multinational exercise involving personnel from Australia, Malaysia, New Zealand, Singapore, and the United Kingdom. The exercise aimed to improve interoperability, build stronger relationships between the five nations, and reinforce our collective commitment to a free and open Indo-Pacific. Participating in such a significant operation deepened my understanding of collaborative defence efforts and strengthened my operational capability.

### Runs Ashore

Outside of work, I was fortunate to experience several port visits, including Kuala Lumpur, Kuching, Manila, and both Changi and Sembawang in Singapore. My most memorable run ashore was in Singapore, where we visited River Raffles Place Park in the heart of the business district. Sitting by the river with my oppos, enjoying the view and a well-deserved meal and drinks, remains a standout moment of the trip.

### Reflection

Looking back, my time on HMS Spey was both professionally enriching and personally fulfilling. The deployment allowed me to experience life at sea, solidify my administrative expertise in an operational environment, and gain a deeper appreciation for the core values and mission of the Royal Navy. It reminded me of why I joined the RN, and I am excited for future opportunities to return to sea.

As the Tier 4 Trial progresses, I remain hopeful that the Coxswain's Assistant role on B2OPVs will become a permanent fixture. My experience aboard HMS Spey has not only affirmed my commitment to the Navy but also strengthened my confidence to take on greater responsibilities in the future.

### Logistics Special Recognition Award

After my time aboard HMS Spey, I was honoured to receive a Challenge Coin from the Fleet Logistics Officer at NCHQ. During the visit, I had the opportunity to share my experiences and offer detailed feedback to the Fleet Writer to help advocate for the Coxswain's Assistant role to be formally established as a permanent position for a Wtr1 in a bid to increasing our seagoing roles.



# Maritime UK Secondment

2/0(LS) David Collison

Following 3 very busy operational charge deployments I found myself desiring a new challenge and applied for a secondment to Maritime UK, joining the team to head up their Careers and Outreach programmes.



The post particularly appealed as it gave the opportunity to combine my previous experience as a teacher with my experiences as a seafarer, as well as presenting the opportunity for me to broaden my knowledge of the wider maritime sector.

Since starting the secondment at the end of November 2024 I have gained not only an awareness of how truly huge the maritime sector is, but also the RFA's role contribution to the sector.

Supporting 1.1 million jobs and contributing £116 billion to the UK economy annually, maritime covers everything from shipping to sub-sea technology, ports to aquaculture, maritime legal and financial services to leisure marine, and from the Royal Navy to commercial fishing. Maritime does not just mean ships and sea based infrastructure, it also includes all of the shore based support infrastructure associated with it. Responsible for enabling 95% of the UK's global trade, maritime touches every part of our lives. Quite simply, without maritime, half the world would freeze, and half the world would starve.

The RFA's role within the larger maritime sector in facilitating and extending the operation of the Royal Navy in protecting and ensuring the safe passage of shipping cannot be understated.

The role of Maritime UK is to be the single voice for the UK's maritime industries, acting as the conduit between government and maritime to create a thriving maritime sector. With a team of only 7 people and with programmes which include careers and outreach, diversity and inclusion, technology and innovation, skills, policy and public affairs, as well as the establishment and supporting of a national network of maritime clusters, the amount which is achieved by a small team is truly staggering.

How best to promote maritime careers within this macro picture of maritime was quite daunting to begin with, but I began by assessing how I could utilise my previous experience and get maximum impact from any actions taken. I also wanted to explore ways to facilitate engagement between education, job seekers, and the maritime industry both on a local and national level. When I joined, Maritime UK already had a successful network of over 350 active ambassadors which I wanted to build upon and was tasked with helping to support.

I began by exploring ways to promote the ambassador programme to schools and colleges as well as ways to nationally raise awareness of the opportunities offered by a career in maritime. Working in collaboration with career leads from Maritime UK's member organisations I designed a set of lesson plans and resources for careers teachers as well as a complimentary set of presentations and resources for use by the ambassadors. These resources were then sent nationally to careers teachers in



schools and colleges through the National Careers Hubs in England and their equivalent organisations in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland.

Following the launch of the resources I gained introductions to several of the regional hubs and began the process of speaking to each hub to promote the resources, the ambassador programme, and to establish how best to facilitate industry engagement with education in each region. A number of engagement and employer opportunities presented themselves which were then passed on to member organisations, including the RFA. An example of this came from a landlocked hub in the spine of England who had a lack of employment opportunities and career options for the students in the region. As well as linking them with the maritime industries in their region I also connected them with the maritime industries who recruit nationally and do not require employees to relocate, such as the RFA, the Cruise Line Industry Association and the superyacht sector. This engagement was mutually beneficial, promoting maritime careers in an area which was not a traditional maritime region, providing fully funded entry routes into job opportunities



for the region, and allowing maritime industries to recruit from previously underexploited areas.

Recently, and as a result of the work of the team at Maritime UK, the Department for Work and Pensions has appointed a National Manager with responsibility for the maritime sector. With access to the National Careers Centres this will

allow the careers and outreach programmes to reach post school age candidates and people seeking to change careers.

I am very much looking forward to expanding this area of the role and exploring the opportunities presented by it.



## Royal Naval Reserve Logistics Profession

Recruiting now via Firefly Transfer



Leaving the Regular Service? Your logistics knowledge, skills and experience are in high demand and we would like to offer you a way to remain part of the Naval logistics family, but in a way that enables you to balance your home life and a future civilian career.



### BENEFITS

You would be paid for any work you undertake on your equivalent pay scale

Pay is pensionable under the Armed Forces Pension Scheme.

An annual tax-free bounty, achieved in just 24 days and subject to meeting specified criteria

Retain access to sports facilities and AT opportunities.

If you would like further information or to submit an application, please contact our recruiting POC, W01 Gary Doke, on [gary.doke971@mod.gov.uk](mailto:gary.doke971@mod.gov.uk)

# From One Flagship to Another

## WO2(Wtr) Slinger WOOD

Being closed up at Action Stations with coveralls donned, wearing Anti Flash, carrying a Battle-Bag, at Air Threat Warning RED whilst tucking into an Action Snack on an AIRCRAFT CARRIER (yes you heard it right, an AIRCRAFT CARRIER at State 1!), was not somewhere I thought I would be when I agreed to join HMS PRINCE OF WALES, the new Fleet Flagship for Op HIGHMAST. What was I thinking?

Many people told me I was crazy going back to sea, doing the same job albeit in a higher rank and to any sane person this is a perfectly reasonable thing to ask. But I felt that after the experience on CSG 21 and Op FORTIS I had one final opportunity with CSG 25 and Op HIGHMAST to deploy to the far side of the world and experience the deployment that 2021 promised to be but spectacularly failed to deliver.

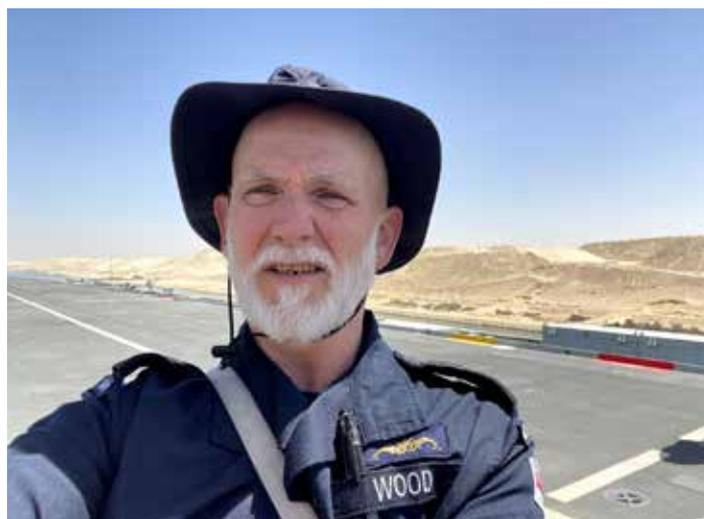
At the time, HMS QUEEN ELIZABETH was by far the best job I have had during my 32 years of service. Different challenges to face each year, fantastic people, great ship's company and LOTS of fast jets. Some would say during those 3 years she was the only lady in my life, and I would say that assessment is correct. You may think this strange, but every Sunday night, travelling back to Pompey on the train, I didn't have that sinking feeling in my stomach, I had a genuine feeling of excitement and anticipation; we were joined at the hip and where ever she went, I would go. Parting ways with HMS QUEEN ELIZABETH was such sweet sorrow; so, whilst this sense of excitement was rekindled before joining HMS PRINCE OF WALES, I was apprehensive and overtly conscious of the words that we've all heard so many times before 'never go back'. How could anything top HMS QUEEN ELIZABETH?

I was one of the few people onboard and 1 of only 2 Wtrs who has deployed on both CSG 21 and CSG 25. Taking over a department one week before deployment having not been part of the pre-deployment preps was daunting. How could I fit in? They had been through a lengthy period of workforce gapping but had managed to achieve a notable Fully Compliant assessment at FLL; no mean achievement but it was clear to me that I was inheriting a very efficient and highly motivated team; a team that was chomping at the bit to deploy. Surely my earlier QEC experience would be a real benefit to bring to the table? How could I possibly add value? Well, let me tell you, having to learn a new role as Zone 5 rover on a carrier and getting to grips with a prepare for Action SOP and sustained periods at State 2 in Defence Watches was a steep learning curve, even for this old and experienced head.

Managing and coordinating operational N1 for the largest ship in the Fleet with over 1600 personnel onboard is challenging, but 'challenging' is not a word that does its true justice and with approx. 800 Embarked Forces, of which some had no in-house HR support, the lessons we identified have been eye opening AGAIN!

So far in the 9 weeks I have been onboard there has been plenty of downtime afforded to the team in our runs ashore so far, AT opportunities, such as mountain biking in Crete and as I write there are plenty of other AT/DE openings in Singapore, where personally am looking forward to taking part in the Singapore Sling Masterclass in Raffles.

They say there is no love like your first but now I've seen PRINCE OF WALES operating at the sharp end of operations, with another talented team is hugely gratifying and a pleasure to behold; I am falling in love all over again. This is the reason I chose to come back to sea for one last time, with our profession, in the environment where we are challenged to our fullest, where our rewards are the greatest and the bonds that are forged, the strongest.



*Traversing the Suez Canal.*



*Mountain biking in Crete.*



*The long bar Raffles, Singapore.*

# Senior Leavers

This year, the Logistics profession bid a heartfelt farewell to several esteemed members who have dedicated decades of service to the Royal Navy. These individuals were honoured and celebrated at two significant events: The Logistics Officers and Warrant Officers' Dinner and the Senior Logistics Officers' Dinner. Both occasions provided an opportunity to reflect on their remarkable careers, contributions, and the lasting impact they have made on the profession and the wider Service.

The profession extends its deepest gratitude and warmest wishes to the following officers as they embark on the next chapter of their lives:

- Captain Sean Moore RN** – (Joined 10 Feb 94)
- Captain Duggie Ward RN** – (17 Sep 97)
- Commander Scott Bell RN** – (8 Jul 85)
- Lieutenant Commander Des Linehan RN** – (11 Nov 96)

Fair winds and following seas!



Capt Sean Moore RN.



Capt Duggie Ward.



Cdr Scott Bell RN.



Lt Cdr Des Linehan.

# From Fleet Warrants to Logistic Officers: Farewell and Good Luck

On 14 August 2025, the three outgoing Fleet Logistic Warrant Officers all slow marched through the doors of Britannia Royal Naval College, Dartmouth to begin the next stage of their careers as Logistic Officers. After very successful careers to date, which culminated in taking on the Fleet Warrant positions for their sub-specialisation, Lt David "Alf" Ramsey, Lt George "Bertie" Mee and SLt Dave Rutherford have now left the Fleet Logistics Team and head on to new challenges. They go with our thanks for their excellent work as the Fleet Writer, Fleet Caterer and Fleet Jack Dusty respectively and with our very best wishes for the next step in their careers as Logistic Officers.



# The Logistics Annual Awards Roundup

2025 saw the usual round of Operational, Training and Affiliates awards. First up were the **Worshipful Company of Carmen awards**, presented at Painters Hall in the City of London to:

## **Carmen Cup**

Lieutenant Grace Tomlinson Royal Navy – SURFLOT LO Tenders

## **Carmen Medal**

Petty Officer (Supply Chain) Sean Window- HMS SPEY

## **Carmen RFA Award**

Leading Hand (Supply Chain) Toni Cupit

Also this year were the long over due 'gloving' ceremonies for the 2024 winners of the **Worshipful Company of Carmen Associate Freemanships**, the recipients of which were Lt Becca Powell RN and POSC Dan Tootill. From Lt Powell:

The ceremony was graciously organised by Lt Col Richard Castle, the Company's Defence Liaison Officer, who kindly invited us to Carmen's Hall on Fleet Street, London. The proceedings were relatively straightforward and involved us reciting an oath of allegiance to His Majesty the King and to the Livery Company. This was followed by the symbolic act of being 'gloved' by the Master – an official gesture signifying formal induction to the Company.

Following the ceremony, guests enjoyed light refreshments and the opportunity to engage with the then Master, David Pugsley – a retired RN logistics officer – who offered valuable insights into the traditions and ongoing work of the Worshipful Company of Carmen.

Next we saw the award of the **RN Chef, and RN Caterer of the Year**. These awards come earlier in the awards cycle to enable submission for the Tri-Service competition, for which one of our winners was subsequently successful, coming ahead of the competition from the Army and RAF.

**Petty Officer (Catering Services) Joe Whitlock - HMS DIAMOND** won the Armed forces Caterer of the year award where he received his prize at the Public Sector Catering awards. The awards for RN Chef and RN Caterer of the Year will then be awards at CNLO's Awards Ceremony.

Later in the year came the **CDLS Commendations**, awarded at a ceremony at Worthy Down in May, celebrating individual and teams outstanding contributions to Support. Logistics RN&RM related personnel were:

**Commander Justin Rowland Royal Navy (UKStratCom, DefSp, Joint Support (JtSp))** – for his unmatched work as SO1 Strategic Base Risk where he has revolutionised the way we think of risk, assurance, and performance across the Strategic Base, through new systems, processes, and governance methods.

**Logistics Services and Commodities (LS&C)** – for this team's exceptional behaviours, work ethic and effectiveness during the CRISP crisis.



*PO Tootill is 'gloved'*



*PO Whitlock receives his prize at the Public Sector Catering awards*



*CDLS award winners*

**Generation Logistics Team Award** for a joint MOD and DHL team raising awareness of the Generation Logistics campaign.

**Awarded later:**

**Navy Demand Data Interim Solution (NDDIS) Development Virtual Team** - for their colossal effort in rapidly developing a technical and operationally workable interim solution following complete and unrecoverable loss of the maritime base inventory system.

Lastly came CNLOs Operational and Training awards. At a ceremony held at Worthy Down, the following were awarded:



*Navy Demand Data Interim Solution (NDDIS) Development Virtual Team*

**Training awards**

Award	Criteria	Winner	
The Robert Florence Trophy	For the trainee who achieved the highest overall examination results during Phase 2 Supply Chain training for the training year.	Logistician (Supply Chain) Emmanuel Oppong	Unable to attend due to operational commitments
Worshipful Company of Cooks Catering Trainee of the Year	For the trainee who achieved the highest overall examination results during Phase 2 Chef training for the training year.	Logistician (Catering Services) Chris Walton	
The Royal Naval Writer's Association Trophy	For the trainee who achieved the highest overall examination results during Phase 2 Writer training for the training year.	Logistician (Writer) Winicia Hazelwood	
The John Standring Memorial Cup	For the trainee who achieved the highest overall examination results during the Leading Supply Chain Qualifying Course for the training year.	Leading Logistician (Supply Chain) Jasmine Hindon	

The Thompson Cup	For the trainee who achieved the highest overall examination results during the Leading Chefs Qualifying Course for the training year.	Leading Logistician (Catering Services) Lewis Sharp	Unable to attend due to operational commitments.
The Peter Grocott Trophy	For the trainee who achieved the highest overall examination results during the Leading Writers Qualifying Course for the training year.	Leading Logistician (Writer) Lucy Ellison	
The Youngusband Award	For the trainee who achieved the highest overall examination results during the Royal Marine Log (Supply Chain) Class 2 for the training year.	Marine Zachary Sharpe	
The Keith Collick Memorial Trophy	For the trainee who achieved the highest overall examination results during the Petty Officer Catering Services Qualifying Course for the training year.	Petty Officer (Catering Services) Amy Hanlon	
The Worshipful Company of Chartered Secretaries and Administrators Award	For the trainee who achieved the highest overall examination results during Petty Officer Writer Qualifying Course for the training year.	Petty Officer (Writer) Katie Shorter	Unable to attend due to operational commitments.
The John Smith Memorial Cup	For the trainee who achieved the highest overall examination results during Petty Officer Supply Chain Qualifying Course for the training year.	Petty Officer (Supply Chain) Jack Butler	
The Leidos Trophy	For the trainee who achieved the highest overall examination results during the Royal Marine Log (Supply Chain) Class 1 course.	Corporal Joseph Goddard	
The Gedge Medal	For the trainee who achieved the highest overall examination results during ILOC(M) for the training year.	Sub Lieutenant Royal Navy Matthew Ireson	

## Operational and CNLOs awards

Award	Criteria	Winner(s)	
Catering Services Team Awards	The award for the CS team/ department that has consistently produced the highest professional standards, team pride and cohesion throughout the year.	RFA TIDESURGE  (Presented by Captain RFA RJ Llewellyn)	
Catering Services Team Awards	The award for the CS team/department that has consistently produced the highest professional standards, team pride and cohesion throughout the year.	HMS IRON DUKE	
Catering Services Team Awards	The award for the CS team/ department that has consistently produced the highest professional standards, team pride and cohesion throughout the year	MCM2 Crew 7	
Catering Services Team Awards	The award for the CS team/ department that has consistently produced the highest professional standards, team pride and cohesion throughout the year.	HMS DUNCAN	Unable to attend due to operational commitments
Catering Services Team Awards	The award for the CS team/ department that has consistently produced the highest professional standards, team pride and cohesion throughout the year.	HMS VANGUARD (Starboard)	
Catering Services Team Awards	The award for the CS team/ department that has consistently produced the highest professional standards, team pride and cohesion throughout the year.	Commando Logistics Regiment Field Catering Troop	
Fleet Supply Chain Team Award	The SC team that has consistently produced the highest professional standard and demonstrated the highest levels of commitment and pride throughout the year.	UK Naval Support Facility Supply Chain Team	
Family and People Support - Team Award	The FPS team that has consistently produced the highest professional standards and demonstrated the highest levels of commitment and pride throughout the year.	RN FPS Portal Team	

RN Caterer of the Year	The RN caterer who has made an outstanding contribution to the moral component through their delivery of catering services throughout the calendar year.	Petty Officer (Catering Services) Joe Whitlock HMS DIAMOND	
RN Chef of the Year	The RN Chef who demonstrated the highest standards of professionalism for food quality, culinary flare, innovation, nutritional balance, training and professional development of themselves and others.	Leading Logistician (Catering Services) Sam May RN Embassy	
Fleet Supply Chain Individual Award	The SC individual that has consistently produced the highest professional standard and demonstrated the highest levels of commitment and pride throughout the year.	Leading Logistician (Supply Chain) Romoni Glasgow	
The Nige Prouse Award	A member of the Wtr Spec who has demonstrated exceptional professional standards and who has consistently motivated, led and engendered an 'esprit-de-corps' that adopts all the Naval core values.	Warrant Officer 1 (Writer) Emma Carraher NCHQ P&T	Unable to attend due to operational commitments
Family and People Support - Individual Award	The FPS individual that has consistently produced the highest professional standards and demonstrated the highest levels of commitment and pride throughout the year.	Colour Sergeant RM Elia Georgiou RN Family & People Support (Presented by Major John Middleton RM (Unit 2IC))	
CNLO's Writer Award	Awarded to a Writer for logistics excellence across Operations, Training and Force Generation.	Leading Logistician (Writer) Chloe Ivey 1700 Naval Air Squadron	
CNLO's Supply Chain Award	Awarded to a Supply Chain rating for logistics excellence across Operations, Training and Force Generation.	Chief Petty Officer (Supply Chain) Gareth Williams Maritime Operation Centre (Collected by LSC Jack Bush on behalf of CPO Williams)	
CNLO's Catering Services Award	Awarded to a Caterer for logistics excellence across Operations, Training and Force Generation.	Petty Officer (Catering Services) Jason Hitchcock HMS PROTECTOR	
The Admiral Bradbury Award	Awarded to an Officer for logistics excellence across Operations, Training and Force Generation.	Lieutenant Commander Ric Santana Royal Navy HMS VENGEANCE	Unable to attend due to operational commitments.

The Admiral Allen Sword	Awarded to the Officer who has most effectively contributed to the Royal Navy Logistic Operational Capability.	Lt Matt Organ RN HMS VIGILANT  (Collected by PO Calum Vickers on Lt Organ's behalf)	
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Our thanks go out to the following sponsors: -

- The Worshipful Company of Carmen
- The Worshipful Company of Cooks
- The Royal Naval Writer's Association
- The Worshipful Company of Chartered Secretaries and Administrators
- The Royal Navy and Royal Marines Charity
- Team Leidos

Congratulations to all our winners, and our thanks to all nominating officers for taking the time to recognise your people.

Keep an eye out for next year's Logistics Profession Awards RNTM. First up will be the Worshipful Company of Carmen awards, for which the nomination deadline is 31 October 2025.



# RN Writers Association (RNWA) Commemorative Lectern

## CPO(Wtr) Pete Amsdon

On a blustery yet sunny morning on 28 May 25 the RNWA unveiled a commemorative lectern and plaque at DSLA.

Formed in 1887, 20 years after establishing the RN Writers Profession, the RNWA is the oldest military Association in the world. On forming in 1887 the RNWA has had the following aims:

1. To promote friendly and social contact amongst Writers.
2. Encourage members to unite their energies for the welfare of the profession generally.
3. To afford opportunities for discussion of interesting topics.
4. Provide relief to widows and dependent relatives of members and to assist members, who through no fault of their own, are placed in necessitous circumstances.
5. To encourage exemplary conduct amongst Writers and infuse a zealous application to their duties, that the Writer profession shall thereby merit the approbation and respect of all with whom its members are brought into contact.
6. To circulate to members a directory and newsletter containing information of general interest

Except for point 4 these are still the key objectives of the Association.

To commemorate the work of the RNWA and the RN Writers a Lectern, Plaque and Blossom tree were unveiled. The event was well attended with an esteemed crowd including Cmdt DSLA – Gp Capt Mawdsley, Lt Cdr Kev Fudge, the first 3 DSLA WTS LTO's – W01 Wtr Emma Day, W01 Wtr Ian McHugh and W01 Wtr Nik Sweet alongside WTS personnel and the newest batch of Wtrs to enter the RN and to be trained at DSLA.



During an inspirational speech Mr Hughes, Chair of the RNWA, covered the long history of the RNWA and the work they do. Whilst also highlighting the varied locations that the RN Writers have been instructed over the past 150 years, from London to Yorkshire to Cornwall and now in the Tri - Service environment of DSLA in the heart of Hampshire. He thanked Mrs Georgia Yates whose fathers picture adorns the lectern, Wtr Douglas Yates was onboard HMS ALBRIGHTON during the D-Day operations having joined the RN in 1943.

The lectern was unveiled by Mr Hughes and Wtr Ward, from the current Wtr class. Bringing together the past and the future of the Writers profession.

Following a humanist blessing from Cdr Charlie Jones, attendees were able to view the lectern. Members of the RNWA were able to share their experiences of the Royal Navy with the current RN Wtr class and the other serving personnel. Mrs Yates was able to share letters from her father to his family that traced his Wartime experience from joining up in 1943 to the end of the second World War.



Speaking of the event WO1 Wtr Sweet, current WTS LTO, said "this event has reinforced a unique relationship with

the Royal Navy and the RNWA that was forged during the reign of Queen Victoria over 138 years ago, this is now a relationship that is cemented into the Tri-service environment of DSLA".

## Echoes of History: The Beginning and the End of TRICAT

Cdre (Retd) Nigel Savage RN and Cdr Alex Savage RN



### Cdre Nigel

The other day I was in Wilton Carpets paying for a carpet and it was taking an inordinate time for the invoice to be prepared. The assistant offered a resigned apology and retorted loudly "MS-DOS!!" With that he turned his computer screen to show me the distinctive lines of highlighted text boxes, access to which could only be achieved through a keyboard puzzle. I shuddered with the memory of my early days with the OASIS Stores system back in the early 1990s before watching the world-changing development of the Windows concept: and here was Wilton Carpets still in MS-DOS some 40 years later! I felt very sorry for him.

In those interesting times of the late 90's I had been working in the Directorate of Naval Logistic Planning under the auspices of the Chief of Fleet Support based in Bath. This role was subsequently subsumed in the Defence Logistic Organisation (DLO) and, subsequently, after my retirement, into the DE&S where I suppose I would probably equate with an Assistant Director in the Strategic Enablers but cannot, at this range, identify which. My title at that time was Assistant Director Naval Logistics Plans (Future Developments) – a title broad enough to cover just about everything that nobody else wanted to do themselves or knew anything about!

It was a time of great upheaval as John Major's government sought the traditional Conservative cuts in Defence expenditure and, invariably, that always meant in Support. We were therefore being forced to look for efficiencies within the Support contracts and, with one of my subordinate titles being Head of Naval Catering, I was in the evaluation team exploring the industry competition for the tri-Service Defence Catering contract which had been in the hands of NAAFI since 1994. They had been awarded the contract for 3 years without competition when the in-house Victualling Yards closed. NAAFI

had, at that time, been supplying a range of victualling to the other Services but just 'non-Service' items to the Navy. Thus it had been a fairly simple expansion of their role whilst giving us a three year period to explore the requirement and then prepare the invitation to tender based on that experience.



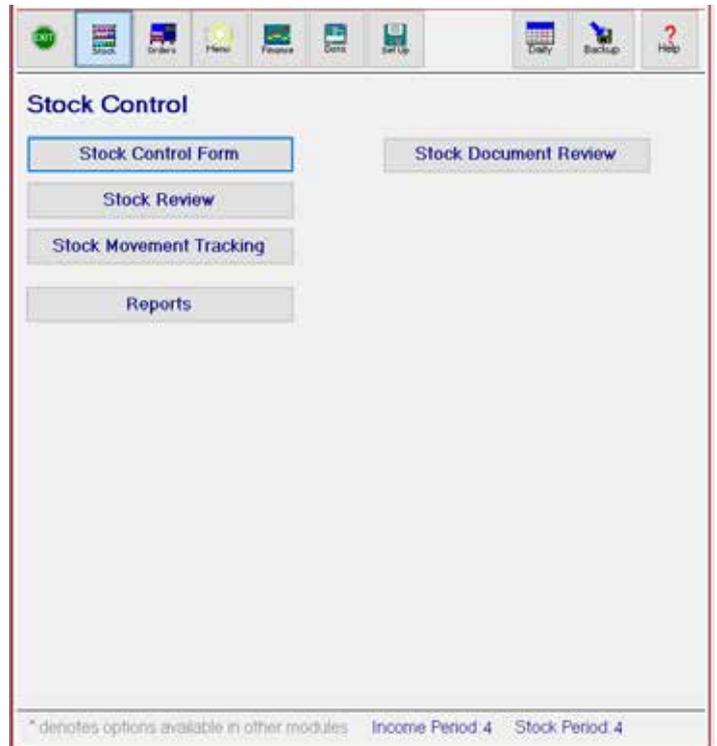
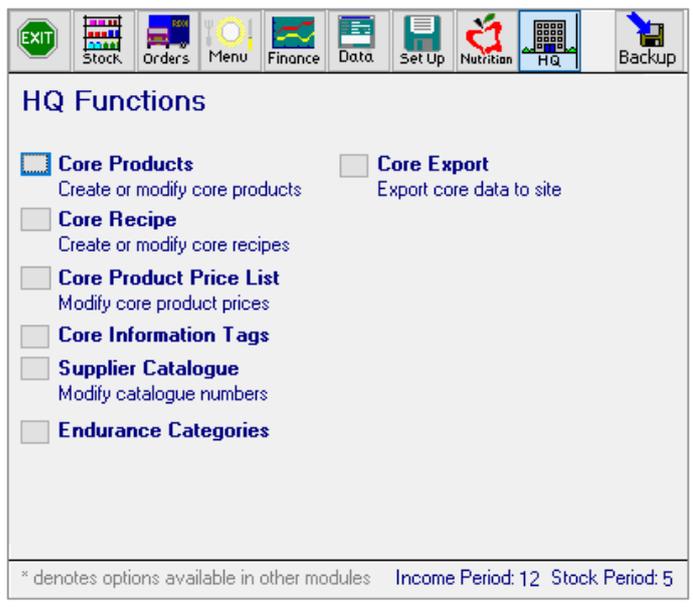
NAAFI was rather complacent that they would win the contract given their previous experience and historical knowledge of the Defence business. That, sadly, was probably their downfall because the successful competitor was Booker's who might not have known too much about the Defence business but were experts in food supply and the infrastructure of managing and delivering it. They were awarded a five year contract for £400million.

The biggest issue I recall we had to resolve was the frequency of delivery. The RAF were insisting on daily deliveries whereas the Navy was willing to accept the less frequent, but considerably cheaper, option of twice weekly deliveries of consolidated requirements. As I sat on the Joint Service Food Management Board with the two other Service Heads of Catering we were able to resolve this amicably in the Navy's favour.

In the course of implementation it became clear that Booker's was surprised by our lack of IT into which they could access for ordering and account management. This problem seemed to fit conveniently into "Future Developments" as far as everyone was concerned and so we were tasked with delivering a system in 'double-quick' time. As Project Director I was very keen to keep the Project Board small and so, with Commander Barry Stonham as Project Manager, we avoided much of the bureaucracy that we had seen in the large tri-Service stores projects. We planned the system for the Navy initially but with a vision of making

it suitable for Tri-Service adoption if it was successful. For this reason, I decided that we would brazenly call in TRICAT for Tri-Service Catering (in researching the history for this article I put TRICAT into Google and it came up as "Tactical Resource Information and Catering Application Tool" - don't let them fool you!).

Fretwell-Downing Hospitality had been in the business since the mid 80's and so it was inevitable that we should look at their products and the most applicable to our business was that developed for the Prison Service. It was a Windows system and, with the help of our in-house IT experts based in St Georges' Walk on Mumby Street, Gosport, we began to adapt their program to cater for our own requirements. It was encouraging that much of what



we were trying to achieve already existed in the program and additionally, promised wider functionality with regard to stock management and menu creation. We met our remit and were subsequently reviewed by the Treasury National Audit team and, to cut a long story short, we had brought in the system on time and to budget and, as far as I am aware, and am happy to be corrected, this was the last computer system in Defence that can claim that accolade!

Needless to say, there were teething problems rolling out the system but they were soon overcome as, although this was the first Windows system in use in the Supply (Logistics) department as a whole, it was already a familiar and user-friendly interface in general. Goodbye MS-DOS!

My RAF and Army Catering Heads both expressed unwillingness to adopt our program and were dismissive of our cheek in using the term TRICAT. I had left

my appointment before I learned that, with pressure from the Food Service Contractor, they were convinced to adopt it.

Now, of course, after nearly 30 years, it needs replacing and, no doubt, the lessons we learned of adapting a state of the art commercial system will feature highly in that exercise. It is with some amusement that I discover that the person with part of that responsibility might indeed be my son. Indeed he had been quite surprised to have discovered my involvement in TRICAT. In fact he had only ever credited me with just one achievement and that being the introduction of free laundry at sea! That, in itself, is a linked benefit for it was through my membership of the Joint Service Food Management Board that I discovered that the Army and RAF, on deployment, were entitled to free laundry. As a result, I had submitted a paper to Admiralty Board for the same entitlement for the Royal Navy at sea and it had been approved immediately. It's nice to be remembered for something.



**Cdr Alex**

It has now been 30 years since the experiences outlined by my father took place but, on joining as FLO in September 2024, I was struck by how similar those challenges are to those we are facing us now. There are similar challenges with the Defence Food contract, where the Team Leidos LCST contract is due to be replaced in 2028 by FDSS; this new contract will aim to prioritise agility and will replace a LCST commercial contract with Team Leidos and Bidfood that has incentivised savings to the cost of quality and choice, with similar drivers to that of the 1990s in order to save money.

We also have a very similar challenge with our catering IT system which has inevitably become less capable than the original TRICAT system installed in the 1990s as contractors change and digital interfaces are lost. As a result it is now unable to submit demands on our current contracted supplier's system, ECAT, meaning additional "swivel chair" input for our busy Caterers. Although we have moved forward from MS-DOS, the relatively unsophisticated Access Database is well behind where we should be in 2025 and funding runs out in

June 2027, so we need to build a replacement quickly. However, with the insights above, we will hopefully learn some of the lessons as Navy Digital, the successors to those IT experts in St George's Walk, carry out their discovery on possible future options, which will include understanding what the Prison Service, NHS and other Users have developed in the interim.

The new name for TRICAT will be tricky though; the RAF and Army have again stated they are not interested in the system so it feels wrong to call it TRICAT 2, despite the logic highlighted above. I'm sure the name will come, though. I just hope we can follow in my father's footsteps and deliver a new IT system both on time and under budget in a now highly competitive digital market. Most importantly, of course, it must support the Caterers at sea to make their lives easier.

I was once told that history never repeats itself, it merely echoes; however with the catering challenges we face now across the RN, I can definitely hear those echoes resonating loudly.



*Cdre Nigel Savage RN before he retired in 2004.*



*Cdr Alex Savage, FLO, and W01 CS Wes Cain, the Fleet Caterer.*

# IN MEMORIAM



This year's edition of Logistics Matters is dedicated to the memory of our fellow Logisticians, who have died whilst in service of their country.

**Leading Chef (Submariner) Graham VAN MARLE**

**Leading Writer Kate Elizabeth ARNOLD**

**Writer (First Class) Jack SANDERS**

Our deepest sympathies go to the friends and families of our colleagues.

## Tiny's Fleet Air Arm (FAA) Shop at RNAS Yeovilton: Raising thousands for the Central Amenities Fund

**SLt Christopher Wilson RN**

Welcome to CPO(CS) Andrew 'Tiny' Collins' shop! Combining entrepreneurial spirit and passion for supporting the wider Armed Forces community, Tiny established a FAA shop on base. Not only did he create a hub for personnel and visitors, but he also raised significant funds for the CAF, enhancing the welfare and morale of service members. The FAA shop, which opened its doors earlier this year, has quickly become a focal point of activity at RNAS Yeovilton. Stocking a wide range of merchandise, from FAA memorabilia and clothing to practical items and gifts, the shop caters to both serving personnel and the public.

Tiny, whose name has become synonymous with the shop's success, has used his resourcefulness to bring the project to life. Since its launch, the FAA shop has exceeded all expectations. Sales have been brisk, with personnel and visitors alike eager to purchase items that celebrate the FAA's rich history and achievements. The shop has also become a popular stop for those attending events at RNAS Yeovilton. The financial impact of the shop has been remarkable. In just a few months, it has generated significant funds for the CAF (approximately £6000.00), providing a much-needed boost to the resources available for welfare and community projects. Tiny's efforts and the shop received lots of praise for the initiative, dedication and innovation.

One of the standout moments of the year came on Armed Forces Day, when Tiny took the shop's fundraising efforts to new heights.

The response was overwhelming, with hundreds of people visiting the FAA shop stand. By the end of the event, Tiny and his team of volunteers had raised over £4,000 for the CAF. If you're ever in the neighbourhood, please stop by Tiny's FAA shop!



# “18 as One” DSLA Compete in their Inaugural Junior Leaders Field Competition

Lt Ian Robinson RN

“Out, Back and Home, 18 as One, clean safe drill” are the words spoken by No.1 Trainer, Lt Ian Robinson RN to 18 highly disciplined, motivated DSLA Junior Leaders Field Gunners as they await the “bang” of the thunder flash to commence each run.

During the week commencing 30th June 2025, DSLA entered a team for the very first time into the event, held annually at HMS COLLINGWOOD, which is a slightly modified version of the well-known Brickwoods Field Gun competition, held the week before. In essence, it requires a team of 18 to race and assemble a 1300kg + field gun, run with it, disassemble, reassemble and fire it as the competition requires, before dramatically dragging the gun home, maintaining the spirit of the Royal Navy’s contribution to the relief of Ladysmith.

The Junior Leaders Field Gun competition provides an introductory format for Royal Navy Field Gun. Competitors are aged 16-25 and crews compete from all three Services as well as civilian organisations including the BAE Systems, local schools and colleges, and Cadet Corps. The Junior Leaders’ competition enables young competitors to experience this great Royal Naval tradition, as well as the teamwork, leadership and discipline it encapsulates.

The inaugural DSLA team consisted of trainees from across the three services from ARTEMIS Squadron, which is the home of Phase 2 recruits for tri-service logistics at DSLA Worthy Down, with quite a few of the team under 18 years of age. For all of them, it was their first time seeing a Field Gun, let alone running it at pace down a track and firing it. Lt Ian Robinson was the No.1 Trainer’ for the crew and ensured the drills were safe, yet quick and efficient to ensure they competed well against other more experienced crews.

The competition simulates the drill which would have been undertaken to bring a naval field gun into action during the march to Ladysmith during the Boer War in 1899.

An overview of the Junior Leaders Field Gun drills are below:

## 1st Advance, Limber Lift

The limber is lifted, its wheels and drag ropes are shipped and it is run forward. The limber and wheels are then stopped and lifted on the line before running forward to meet the gun to be connected. Then both are run forward before unlimbering at pace prior to the 1st action below.

## 2nd Advance, 1st Action

The gun is unhooked, and the limber is run to the 70-yard line, where it is turned or spun to face the start; its wheels are removed, and it is dropped to the ground. The gun is run to the end of the track, turned and stopped. The gun is fired three times, each shell being run to the gun from the limber by the fastest man in the crew.

## 1st Retire, Heavy Stop

The limber wheels are shipped, and it is run back and hooked to the gun. Both are then run towards the start, stopped together at pace on the line before advancing and unlimbering ready for the 2nd action below. This is a fast stop with all the kit, in which the crew have to add in a hard brake to get it stopped before accelerating ASAP when the “go” is shouted by No.1.



### 2nd Retire, 2nd Action

Gun and limber are run towards the start line, separated and stopped. The gun is fired three times as quickly as possible.

### 3rd Retire and Finish

The limber is run back and hooked to the gun, then every member of the crew strains to accelerate the gear over the finish line. This is not the best time to fall in front of the gear, because it is very heavy and cannot be stopped and

every crew member leaves nothing on the track, using whatever energy they have left to sprint to the finish line.

DSLAs performed very well throughout the week, competing in 6 timed heats before qualifying for the Plate Final, in which they brought home the silverware to Worthy Down with a Plate 1 final time of 1.33.53, clean run. Look out for future DSLA teams in both Junior Leaders and quite possibly Brickwoods next year and beyond!



## Logistics Golf Open 2024: “Loggies Unveiled at the Vale”

### CPO(CS) Antony Challen

A warm, mild couple of days in October, albeit slightly damp under foot, saw the return of the increasing and ever successful Logistics Golf Open at the Vale Hotel, Golf and Spa Resort, Hensol near Cardiff. The open had two

excellent and difficult courses, one of which is called ‘The National’, which has previously held European Tour events, the other is called ‘The Lakes’. The event brought together an increasing number of Logisticians from across



the country. Following on from last year's success this prestigious event was very kindly supported by the Sports Lottery and Bidfood. After two days of beautiful dry weather, the overall Logistics winner after three rounds was WO1 Phil Kilpatrick. A plethora of prizes were handed out, including, highest Stableford scores, nearest the pin, longest drives, and pros approach, which were also repeated on day two.

The non-Logistics personnel and retired golfers didn't go home empty handed. The most fun (we think) was awarded to Lt Cdr Dave Jones (Rtd). The event gave the golfers the opportunity to exercise their competitive nature and meet up with colleagues, shipmates (current and ex) and friends for a couple of days away from their busy schedules. Like all golfing and sporting events, this was an ideal opportunity to talent spot RN personnel, to develop their skills and be considered to represent future regional and inter service events.

Day one of the competition saw the competitors take on the Par 73, 6987 yards 'National Course' in the morning. A very testing and long course, followed by the afternoon round, taking place on the equally difficult Par 72, 6304 yards 'Lakes Course'. Scores were totalled after day one, and after a splendid three course meal provided by the hotel, some well-earned rest & recuperation, day two commenced, with 18 holes on the 'National Course'. After two days and three rounds of golf, the overall winners were; Stableford - WO1 Kilpatrick with 87 points. Gross - PO Setterfield with 230 strokes and ex-serving WO1 Lees with 75 points.

After coordinating and organising the previous events it was only fitting that CPOCS 'Rocky' Challen, ably assisted by his oppo and partner in crime, WO1 Phil Kilpatrick, did the same this year. 'Rocky' commented on this year's event, stating "I am delighted that so many more of our profession are supporting this event. Please pass the message around your units so that this event can only get bigger and better. Thank you to our guests that participated too. We are already in the early stages of planning next year's event, and it is hoped that this will be another success, possibly returning earlier in the year next time around and at the same venue".

'Rocky' also thanked the sponsors of the event and stressed that without their assistance these events wouldn't take place. He again thanked Alex Newman and Billy Moone from Bidfood for their attendance, outstanding support, contribution and sponsorship. Each golfer kindly received a goody bag from Bidfood to take home with them.

The 2025 Logistics Golf Open location has yet to be finalised, however, it will run in a very similar format and replicate the previous year's events with three rounds of golf, two nights' accommodation with breakfast, lunch and evening meal on both days. 36 holes of golf will be played on day 1; 18 holes on day 2 and the event will conclude with a prize giving and lunch.

Any suggestions for the next Logistics Open can be forwarded to CPO 'Rocky' Challen. Antony.Challen908@mod.gov.uk. The event will be open firstly to current serving members of the Logistics Personnel and Profession, and then retired members and guests. Although the latter will not be eligible to win the main event, there will be a best retired/guest prize to play for.

**Hope to see you in 2025.**



# Pushing Boundaries: The Rise of Royal Navy American Football

LWTR Rivaldo Sealey

I am incredibly proud to be part of the Royal Navy American Football Association (RNAFA), a team and community that represents far more than just sport. It embodies the values, determination, and spirit of the Royal Navy, and continues to grow into one of the most exciting and dynamic athletic opportunities available within the Service.

The Royal Navy American Football Association (RNAFA) is leading the charge in developing and promoting American football across the RN. Combining physical strength, mental resilience, and teamwork, the sport offers a unique challenge that reflects the demands of Naval life. It brings people together, builds character, and fosters a powerful sense of identity and belonging.

Open to all serving personnel, Royal Navy American Football welcomes players from a wide range of specialisations, including Logistics, Engineering, Medical, Warfare, Catering, and Communications. This diversity strengthens the team, uniting individuals from different roles and experiences to represent the Royal Navy with pride and professionalism.

Weekly training sessions are held at Royal Navy establishments, where players regardless of experience, work on developing fitness, technical ability, and tactical knowledge. These sessions are delivered by dedicated volunteer coaches and supported by serving staff who are passionate about building the sport. The environment is challenging, rewarding, and reflective of the standards expected throughout the Service.

A key fixture in the RNAFA calendar is the annual Inter-Service Championship, where the Royal Navy competes against the Royal Air Force and the British Army. These highly anticipated matchups are a testament to the commitment and skill of the players, offering a platform to showcase the Royal Navy's strength, determination, and unity on the field.

Beyond full-contact competition, Royal Navy personnel are also involved in UK Armed Forces Flag American Football. This non-contact variation focuses on speed, precision, and strategy, allowing for wider accessibility across the Service and continued involvement for those with operational commitments. It also serves as a valuable entry point into the sport for new players.

In a major development, UK Armed Forces Sport has granted probationary Category 2 status to American football programmes across the Royal Navy, British Army, and Royal Air Force. This recognition unlocks access to funding, expanded support, and the exciting potential for international competition. It marks a significant milestone in the sport's growth within Defence.



Royal Navy personnel also contribute to the wider sport by playing for teams in the British American Football Association (BAFA), further enhancing their skills and bringing valuable experience back into the Naval setting. This civilian-military crossover helps raise performance standards and supports the development of players, coaches, and officials alike.

The RNAFA also reinforces leadership and personal development through its promotion of C2DRIL; Courage, Commitment, Discipline, Respect, Integrity, and Loyalty, ensuring American football continues to reflect the core values of the Royal Navy.

With rising participation, structured training, official recognition, and a clear pathway for growth, Royal Navy American Football is firmly establishing itself as a vital and respected part of Royal Navy sport. I'm excited to see how the team continues to evolve in the years ahead.

For more information, search for RN American Football on Sharepoint.







**NAAFI**