

# AIR FORCE NEWS

Historic moment  
at Coronation

Doing the mahi  
in Fiji

P-8A in the  
Pacific

#258

JUN|23

## Dropping in on the South Island



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### OUR MISSION

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

### OUR VISION

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

### COVER:

Dropping in on the South Island

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NZAirForce



NZDefenceForce



Te Kāwanatanga o Aotearoa  
New Zealand Government



# First Word



**B** | AIR COMPONENT COMMANDER  
**Y** | AIR COMMODORE SHAUN SEXTON

**“Victory smiles upon those who anticipate the change in the character of war, not upon those who wait to adapt themselves after the changes occur.”**

– *Giulio Douhet*

**A**s they have for many years, our aviators are delivering effects across the Pacific that are fundamentally intended to uphold a rules-based order and deter the alternative. While to date our methodology has been effective, given our changing world it seems timely to take a closer look at what we are doing, how we are doing it, and why. Arguably, if we don't adapt our approach to air power delivery, we run the real risk of being under-prepared when our knowledge and skills are needed most—either at home, or in our areas of interest.

According to New Zealand's Defence Strategic Assessment, climate change and strategic competition are now the key risks to New Zealand's security interests; a sentiment echoed in Australia's freshly released Defence Strategic Review. These documents are supported by evidence we see in the media almost daily – be that the extreme weather we've been having, or the geo-strategic manoeuvring apparent in our neighbourhood, the South West Pacific.

All this has me thinking – what does it mean for the RNZAF? What are we doing to ensure we understand these challenges now? Do we know what actions are required to ensure we're ready for the future? These are important questions to explore to ensure the RNZAF is able to achieve its mission to “provide New Zealand with relevant, responsive and effective air power to meet its security interests”.

At the strategic level, an ongoing Defence Policy Review will provide a “road map for the future” as it endeavours to ensure New Zealand's defence policy, strategy, and capability investments remain fit-for-purpose.

Examples of these investments, such as our new capabilities based around the P-8A Poseidon and C-130J-30 Hercules, will provide us with situational awareness in our vast and sometimes challenging maritime domain, and enhance our ability to deliver airlift to those in need after a natural disaster. However, there are other areas we need to explore to ensure we're doing everything necessary to meet current and future challenges to a free, open, prosperous, and resilient Indo-Pacific.

As an organisation, it is timely for us to look at how we operate. To help us understand the operational “so what”, a group of aviators will shortly spend a week wargaming the problem set. These people of different ranks, trade groups, and experience levels will consider a future security challenge and how the RNZAF could achieve mission success as part of a combat-capable, networked combat force. Their work will explore what it means for our Air Force and Defence Force and will inform our future plans.

In addition to this organisational approach, we have work to do at the individual level. My challenge for all RNZAF aviators is to consider what you are doing to be ready for the future. Don't be afraid to adapt your individual and collective training needs to meet the emerging security environment, and be innovative in how you prepare yourself and your units – work smarter, not harder!

Lastly, and perhaps most importantly, I ask you to embrace our air warfighting ethos – To be airminded (Tū Arorangi), to protect (Tū Whakamaru), to prepare (Tū Whakareri), and to win (Tū Toa).<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Our warfighting ethos framework was recently approved by CAF and has been published in the May issue of *Air Force News*.



## Teens winched from bush by NH90

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

**Two teenagers missing for two days in the bush on a hunting trip on the East Coast were winched to safety recently by an NH90 crew.**

**H**elicopter loadmaster Sergeant (SGT) Justin Grant said the crew was called out to Raukumara Forest Park, east of Whakatane to help in the search for the teenagers.

"We left with everyone who was required to come – the aircrew, maintainers and a medic."

LandSAR teams were already in the area looking for the teenagers when the crew arrived, SGT Grant said.

"As soon as we arrived at the SAR (search and rescue) Base, we heard they had just been found. We went and winched them out – the two boys and two search and rescue workers.

"We then went and extracted a couple of other search and rescue teams as well. One of the teams was made up of three searchers and a dog and the other was two searchers."

The pair was found in terrain that was dense bush on steep hills, and fortunately the weather wasn't too bad at the time, he said.

"The boys were pretty happy to be picked up. It was great we were able to bring them back so soon – their parents were definitely relieved.

"It was a really satisfying mission."

Area Prevention Manager, Inspector Phillip Gillbanks told Stuff they would remind people to always prepare for any eventuality when venturing into the outdoors.

"NZ conditions and terrain can be unforgiving, and it pays to always have the necessary clothing and equipment to spend a night in the bush regardless of your intentions."

Teams involved in the search included Police Search and Rescue and LandSAR volunteers from Whakatane, Tauranga and Rotorua.



## Poseidon's Fiji trials

**One of the Air Force's new P-8A Poseidon aircraft has recently been operating out of Nadi, Fiji as part of its operational trials.**



**T**he trials are an important part of the new aircraft's introduction into service and also continue the long-standing connections between the Air Force and Fiji.

Air Component Commander, Air Commodore (AIRCDRE) Shaun Sexton, said operational trials and development were an important part of the introduction into service of a modern aircraft like the Poseidon.

The Poseidon multi-mission maritime patrol aircraft have replaced the Air Force's recently retired P-3K2 Orions, which first entered service in the 1960s.

The aircraft are operated by No. 5 Squadron, which flew the Orions, but with new systems in the Poseidons it wasn't a case of simply transferring procedures from the Orions to the new aircraft, AIRCDRE Sexton said.

The trials and development phase ensured all operating systems, including aircrew, maintenance, mission support and air enablers were ready for missions.

"With the inaugural flight to Fiji by one of our new P-8A aircraft, and with Fiji being the first Pacific nation the P-8A will operate from during the trials, we're also continuing a connection with Fiji, which goes back many years," AIRCDRE Sexton said.

"Long-range maritime patrol aircraft operated from Fiji during and after World War II. No. 5 Squadron was formed in Laucala Bay and for more than 13 years flew Short Sunderland flying boats from there."

Given its origin, the Squadron's motto is Fijian: "Keitou kalawaca na wasaliwa", which translates as "We span the seas".

For more than 57 years, No. 5 Squadron and the Orions were regulars in the skies over Fiji.

"We have based our P-3K2 aircraft in Fiji during multi-day search and rescue operations or maritime patrols in the Pacific. We're really looking forward to seeing this connection continue," Air Commodore Sexton said.

The Air Force will have a fleet of four Poseidons supporting peace and security operations, maritime surveillance, search and rescue, resource protection, and humanitarian assistance and disaster responses in New Zealand, the Pacific and around the world.

They will start flying on operations in mid-2023.



# Doing the mahi in Fiji

WORDS | SQUADRON LEADER KIRI OHLSON  
PHOTOS | ELLIOT LIM

## Nearly 300 personnel from New Zealand's Army, Navy and Air Force have recently taken part in Operation Mahi Tahī, a biennial military exercise in Fiji.

**T**hey carried out humanitarian assistance and disaster relief training and other tasks, including various cultural engagements.

The exercise also provided the opportunity for No. 3 Squadron personnel to practise maintaining and operating the aircraft in tropic conditions in the Pacific.

Flight Lieutenant (FLTLT) Hayley Vincent was one of the NH90 aircraft captains for an exercise within the overall operation, called Exercise Tropic Astra. She said the weather had been a challenging aspect.

"The average day in New Zealand sees temperatures in the mid 20s, however by the time we started engines in the morning in Fiji it was approaching 30 degrees. This caused reduced power margins, which dictated how much fuel and people could be carried. It even changed the way we flew approaches and departures, especially in mountainous areas.

"We are used to stunning landscapes at home, but Fiji also presents exciting terrain, including river valleys and mountains, which combined with the tropical environment and weather patterns, created a dynamic environment to train overseas.

"We embarked personnel from the RFMF (Republic of Fiji Military Forces) for a familiarisation flight. We showed them through the aircraft at their base near Suva, then took them for a short flight around the local area. I've thoroughly enjoyed meeting new people and working alongside our international partners."

NH90 loadmaster Corporal Drew Manning said the heat made it hard on the aircrew as well, because they were loading and unloading thousands of kilograms of cargo.

"It can get quite taxing on the body so we've made sure we keep the hydration going.

"You can tell it's not that common for people to see the big NH90. Flying over some of the remote villages the people are always happy to see us, and always waving out so it's pretty cool to see from up in the sky."

FLTLT Shirley Barakuta was the Defence Force Cultural Advisor for the operation. She said members of the Defence Force had visited village elders and had taken part in ceremonies to request permission to train in certain areas.

"Ensuring that we respect the customs of the Pacific communities we work with is important for building our relationships across the South West Pacific region.

"During this exercise we've conducted six sevusevu ceremonies prior to use of specific training sites, and before leaving we returned to the respective villages to complete the iTatau ceremony to thank the local villages for the use of the sites," she said.

# School book delivery during exercise



## No. 3 Squadron helicopter crews delivered nearly two tonnes of books and school supplies to schools in the Yasawa group of islands in Fiji.

**T**he books were delivered on behalf of the Fiji Ministry of Education and came in the middle of the Defence Force's Operation Mahi Tahī, where nearly 300 personnel were using HMNZS Canterbury as a "Pacific Ocean lily pad" to carry out humanitarian assistance and disaster relief training and other tasks.

Flight Lieutenant (FLTLT) Glenn Blay was the captain of one of the NH90 helicopters involved in the education drop.

"We had three aircraft go up to the Yasawa Islands, two NH90s and an A109, dropping off school books. We went to Naviti District School where they were all keen to see us. The boys got out and played some footy and we had some photographs taken," he said.

"To be honest, to do that as our last flight was pretty epic, a great way to finish our trip in Fiji," FLTLT Blay said.

Without Defence Force assistance the books and supplies would have had to be delivered by small boat, which would have been difficult with recent weather.

Fiji Education Ministry Education Officer Naipolione Locoloco said they were grateful the Air Force could deliver the 70 cartons of text and library books.

"The schools are scattered across the Yasawa Islands and given the recent weather it would have been impossible to take the books across. I was delighted to see the faces of the students when they received these cartons," he said.

During the deployment, No. 3 Squadron practised flying in tropical conditions from both ship and shore, No. 230 Squadron established high-frequency communications sites and New Zealand Army personnel practised amphibious landings.

No. 3 Squadron detachment commander, Squadron Leader Andrew Scrase, said flying in tropical conditions and engaging with the Fijians and the Republic of Fiji Military Forces had provided a great opportunity to improve their skills and train in different terrain and climates to New Zealand.

"We've been able to complete 37 hours of flying, giving our crews some really useful experience in operating in a tropical environment.

"We were also able to spend some eight hours flying with HMNZS Canterbury to practise ship operations, which allowed us to qualify two new pilots and maintain skills for another four," he said.

# Communications in Fiji

**Under the umbrella of Mahi Tahi, No. 230 Squadron communications personnel established high frequency communication sites across three locations in an exercise on Viti Levu Island.**

**T**hey enabled voice and data communications at remote sites and learned wilderness survival skills in the Nausori Highlands using fieldcraft skills to set up camp. The exercise was designed to practise the deployment of Air Force Communications and Information Systems assets and personnel in support of humanitarian assistance and disaster relief (HADR) operations in the Pacific.

The team had to handle tropical weather conditions such as heavy rain and hot temperatures during their time in Fiji.

**“We are training to provide high frequency communications for the Fijian population in case we ever needed to respond to hurricanes or cyclones that may hit over here.”**

*– Aircraftman Max Marshall*

Aircraftman (AC) Max Marshall was one of the Communications and Information Systems mechanics on the exercise.

“We normally train in much colder temperatures such as Dip Flat (near Blenheim). So we have been taking our skills and applying them in a new environment to see what we can do.

“We are training to provide high frequency communications in a tropical environment in case we are ever needed to respond to cyclones that may hit over there,” AC Marshall said.

“This is important because in HADR scenarios all other communications can go down so we need to set up and operate a completely different system that is independent. That way we can communicate with the helicopters as they go and do their job surveying the area, rescuing people and delivering supplies to isolated communities.”

The exercise took place over three locations, one of which was in the Nausori Highlands. Personnel had the opportunity to learn their survival skills and set up a camp led by the Air Force Survival Training Centre with the assistance from the Republic of Fiji Military Forces (RFMF) instructors from 3<sup>rd</sup> Battalion.

Sergeant (SGT) Te Rina Naden was one of two Air Force survival instructors based in the Nausori Highlands.

“Working with and alongside experienced instructors was a valuable learning experience,” she said.

“This was a fantastic training opportunity for all Air Force personnel involved in the exercise to familiarise themselves with the tips, tricks and techniques to survive should one find themselves separated from their unit or having to support themselves for an extended period of time.

“A wide variety of tropical bushcraft skills were taught and practised including using a machete, building natural shelters, making natural rope from vines, fire making, water procurement, dehusking coconuts and foraging for food. It was a really valuable experience for all,” SGT Naden said.

## RIGHT

Using a satellite dish on exercise in Fiji  
Photo: SGT Dan May











## Historic moment at Coronation

In front of the eyes of the world, New Zealand Defence Force personnel marched through central London as part of the historic Coronation of His Majesty King Charles III.

WORDS | MITCHELL ALEXANDER  
PHOTOS | SERGEANT VANESSA PARKER



**The New Zealand contingent marched alongside members of the UK Armed Forces and personnel from across the Commonwealth in the return processions from Westminster Abbey to Buckingham Palace. More than 7,000 personnel from 40 nations were involved in the spectacle.**



**D**efence Force Contingent Commander Major Mike Beale said it was a pleasure to have led the young and diverse group.

“A lot of hard work and discipline went into this by some exemplary soldiers, sailors and aviators. I, like many in the contingent, am proud to have the opportunity to participate in such an historic event.

“The professionalism demonstrated by our hosts in preparing for a parade of such a scale has been of the highest level. It has been done with great professionalism, mixed with good humour. The professionalism of the Commonwealth troops from 40 countries, all with slight variations in their drill, has enabled us to achieve a standard befitting being at the head of the procession.”

Communication and Information Systems technician Sergeant (SGT) Hayden Smith represented New Zealand as flag-bearer in Westminster Abbey and wore the Defence Force’s Ngā Tapuwae kahu huruhuru cloak.

**“It was a once in a lifetime opportunity, something I never thought I’d be a part of.”**

**– Sergeant Hayden Smith**

Ngā Tapuwae means footsteps and the cloak has been woven as a symbolic link between those who have gone before us in the service of our nation and those who serve today.

“It was surreal walking into Westminster Abbey given the scale of the event and the calibre of people who were there. I had to maintain my discipline and keep my head to do what I had to do.

“I feel incredibly humbled. I’m proud to be a Kiwi and represent the Defence Force,” he said.



**“To be representing Aotearoa alongside His Majesty was a moment that will stay with me forever.”**

## Aviator marches alongside gold state coach

**In 2019, avionics technician Leading Aircraftman Harris Thien briefly chatted with the then Prince Charles about his career in the Air Force.**

**I**t was a “surreal” experience for him at the time, but he has again rubbed shoulders with the newly crowned King Charles III.

Leading Aircraftman (LAC) Thien was a member of the 20-strong New Zealand Defence Force marching contingent – part of a group of around 400 military personnel from up to 35 Commonwealth countries marching alongside their 6,000 British military counterparts.

He marched with New Zealand Army artillery officer Lieutenant Jessica Hansen alongside the Gold State Coach during proceedings in central London, in front of tens of thousands of royal supporters.

The 260-year-old, four-tonne coach returned King Charles and Queen Camilla to Buckingham Palace from Westminster Abbey following the Coronation.

It was LAC Thien's first overseas deployment for the Defence Force.

“I’ve never been involved with something like this before. It’s amazing to have experienced history being written and having a first-hand experience of the Coronation.”

Born in Malaysia and growing up in New Zealand, LAC Thien said he joined the Air Force “to give back to the country I’m incredibly grateful to”.

“It’s also allowed me to broaden my horizons and experience things which are not available in everyday life.”

LAC Thien was lucky enough to meet then Prince Charles while he was part of the Royal Parade in Auckland Government House in 2019.

“He was reviewing the parade and stopped to chat. The King asked me three questions; how I was, what my trade was, and how long my course was.

“He then wished me luck for the rest of my course. It was a surreal experience, one that I’ll never forget.”

He will now have another royal memory to cherish.



# Medic of the Year

WORDS | REBECCA QUILLIAM  
PHOTO | CORPORAL SEAN SPIVEY

**Corporal Jaimee McCleary has been awarded the Medic of the Year and presented with the Gordon Watt Memorial Trophy for being a leader and role model to future medics.**

**C**orporal (CPL) McCleary was posted to a medic instructor position just three years after graduating from the Deployable Health School (DHS). But even as a relatively junior medic she adapted quickly to the instructional environment with professionalism, confidence and charisma of someone well beyond her service years, her citation for the award said.

To add to her work outputs, she has performed the role of Air Force welfare officer (to DHS Air Force trainees) and volunteered as local Air Force recruiter for the medic trade.

"CPL McCleary routinely goes the extra mile to ensure others are supported for success with her genuine care and compassion for staff and students alike. She is frequently willing to assist other instructors with their workload despite her own busy schedule and full personal life.

"Instructionally, CPL McCleary has been noted as possessing 'the ability to raise the motivation and morale of a room just by her nature and attitude' as described by her immediate supervisor," the citation said.

Her "calm demeanour, stoic professionalism and medical skills" became evident during a field exercise where CPL McCleary was appointed the exercise medic in addition to her instructional role.

"CPL McCleary was tasked with providing real-time medical coverage for the exercise, for both trainees and staff, executing this role to an exemplary standard whilst dealing with two medical emergencies and a significant Covid outbreak. At this time, CPL McCleary provided timely advice to commanders in a challenging, dynamic environment which enabled key leaders to make accurate and judicious decisions."

Her actions resulted in CPL McCleary being awarded the Chief Instructors Commendation for her actions during the exercise.

"She has proven steadfast leadership ability in less than ideal situations responding and performing calmly and professionally during challenging real-time medical events. CPL McCleary is truly inspiring the next generation of practitioners with her performance and trade professionalism."

**"CPL McCleary's actions consistently go above and beyond expectations demonstrating good leadership principles including genuine care and compassion for others, high personal and professional standards, humour and humility with clear intent of the betterment of those around her."**









## Dropping in on the South Island

WORDS | SIMONE MILLAR  
PHOTOS | PETTY OFFICER CHRIS WEISSENBORN

**No. 40 Squadron has successfully completed a nearly two-week exercise of tactical flying around the top of the South Island, practising dropping loads of equipment and supplies in remote locations.**

**T**he annual training activity is designed to maintain currency in low-level flying, tactical flying and airdrop capability; skills which are crucial when responding to a range of challenging situations when called on by the New Zealand Government.

No. 40 Squadron and support units, including those from the NZ Army, were at Base Woodbourne for the exercise.

“The annual training activity is designed to maintain currency in low-level flying, tactical flying and airdrop capability,” said pilot, Flight Lieutenant (FLT LT) Michal-louise Paget.

“These skills are crucial when responding to a range of challenging situations such as resupply, humanitarian aid and disaster relief or search and rescue operations,” she said.

It helps prepare No. 40 Squadron for deployments to the likes of Antarctica, the Middle East, Asia and the Pacific.

“The nature of military operations and the environments in which they are conducted means high-quality training activities are essential for our personnel,” FLT LT Paget said.

The Hercules flew as far south as Canterbury and as far north as Manawatū, the crew coordinating pallet drops of heavy equipment and container delivery bundles to drop zones at Base Ohakea and around Marlborough.

The exercise provided crews with a range of challenging flying and navigating conditions, including over unfamiliar, mountainous and challenging terrain in a variety of weather conditions.

Support on the ground also came from No. 3 Squadron, and New Zealand Army units from 1 (New Zealand) Brigade, 2nd Combat Service Support Battalion, including 5 Movements Company and 3rd Combat Service Support Battalion.

FLT LT Paget said the exercise had proved successful in achieving a number of training goals.







# Air Force aircraft on show at Omaka

**B** | SENIOR COMMUNICATIONS ADVISOR  
**Y** | NICOLE HALLIDAY

**A four year air show drought was finally broken with the recent Yealands Classic Fighters event at Omaka, near Blenheim.**

**A**lthough popular aircraft such as the Boeing B757, P-8A Poseidon and the NH90 helicopters weren't in attendance, the first combined Air Force Heritage Flight (AFHF) and Black Falcons display – featuring the Biggin Hill Trust's Mk IX Spitfire and the T-6C Texan II aircraft – was a sight to behold.

Squadron Leader (SQNLDR) Michael Williams, No. 14 Squadron instructor and previous Flight Commander of AFHF, said that while the display was a simple combined formation flypast prior to established individual routines, the display had a greater impact than the sum of its parts.

"Through the attraction of the Spitfire, a greater portion of the public was engaged with the modern RNZAF and Black Falcons in particular. Use of the AFHF in this manner provides utility to the NZDF, and several visitors to the show commented that it was the highlight of the weekend for them."



The way that the Air Force has implemented the AFHF programme has been followed with interest by the Royal Australian Air Force (RAAF), as their 100 Squadron has gone through a respective generation in parallel. SQNLDR Williams said he has been in regular contact with the Australians.

"We have worked through similar and sometimes identical issues. Meeting in person at Yealands Classic Fighters solidifies the relationship between our organisations and provides a convenient sounding board to discuss the issues. It's encouraging to see the importance that the Australian Defence Force places on their military heritage, which likewise provides a sense of validation for what we're striving to achieve with AFHF."

The next iteration of AFHF will hopefully include the Grumman Avenger, and a combined Texan, Spitfire and Avenger display routine.

SQNLDR Williams says that AFHF is also watching the restoration of the Biggin Hill Trust's ex-RNZAF P-51 Mustang with interest.

Also undertaking flying displays for the Air Force was the Kiwi Blue parachute team, a C-130 Hercules and SH-2G(I) Seasprite. The display director SQNLDR Jim Rankin said it was important to show the capabilities of the Air Force.

"Apart from brief snippets of a search and rescue or a deployment that people may see on the television, the public generally has little interaction with the NZDF. Air shows are a way of engaging with the public so they can meet NZDF personnel on the ground, see what we do and what capabilities we have."

For the show, the RAAF returned across the ditch to display a C-27J Spartan, which had recently been seen on our shores during the response to Tropical Cyclone Gabrielle in February.



## SAR double success earns award

**No. 5 Squadron has been recognised at the New Zealand Search and Rescue Awards for a doubly successful search and rescue flight which saved the lives of seven Kiribati fishers.**



**T**he Certificate of Achievement – Operational Activity for the 2022 calendar year was recently presented by Associate Transport Minister Kiri Allan at a function at Parliament.

The annual awards recognise outstanding achievements within New Zealand's search and rescue region, which covers 30 million square kilometres.

No. 5 Squadron's award was for a P-3K2 Orion search near Kiribati in May last year involving two missing fishing boats.

The first boat, with three people aboard, was reported missing on 17 May and a second boat, with four aboard, was reported missing nearby five days later.

After locating the first boat, the Orion crew was busy identifying a ship in the area able to undertake the rescue when they discovered the second vessel.

After dropping survival packs and locator beacons to each boat, the Orion crew was able to contact two merchant vessels and arrange a rendezvous with the fishing boats.

"The Orion crew's commitment to vigilance after nearly 12 hours of open-ocean searching is a testament to their skills and professionalism. Altogether seven lives were saved due to their efforts," the citation said.

The double rescue mission occurred in the last few months of Orion operations to be conducted by No. 5 Squadron, then at Base Auckland.

Primarily employed for airborne surveillance and reconnaissance of New Zealand's areas of economic interest, Exclusive Economic Zone, the South Pacific and the Southern Ocean, the last of the Orions were retired in January.





They provided a range of services to government agencies and the community, and played a significant role in wider security monitoring and initiatives in the South Pacific and South-east Asia, along with search and rescue missions, and humanitarian assistance and disaster relief.

All those roles will be taken up by the P-8A Poseidon aircraft when the new fleet of four begins operations from Base Ohakea later this year. Three of them have arrived already and the fourth is scheduled to touch down at Ohakea later this month.

The Commanding Officer of No. 5 Squadron at the time of the search and rescue operation, Wing Commander Glen Donaldson, said the squadron was honoured to be recognised for its work.

“Naturally it’s always a thrill to get people home safely after misadventure at sea or elsewhere, but the ‘two-for-one’ here was special.

“It was a real buzz for the whole squadron, not just the aircrew but all those who play a part in the jobs we do – there are many trades on the ground as well as in the air involved in successful missions and safe returns, and this award has been earned by everyone.

“It is also a fitting final tribute to the Orion, a great aircraft which was the agent of saving hundreds of lives during its more than 57 years’ service,” he said.

**“Naturally it’s always a thrill to get people home safely after misadventure at sea or elsewhere, but the ‘two-for-one’ here was special.”**

**- Wing Commander  
Glen Donaldson**

## From beer to bravo

**De-conflicting aviation outside controlled airspace especially at low level has been a problem plaguing the Air Force for years. While attempts began in 2014 to address this issue via a 'send-to-all' email list, it quickly became burdensome and both the quality and accuracy of the notifications became sub-standard and simply irrelevant 'noise'.**



**T**he Air Force was also experiencing some near misses with low level hazards that had the potential for catastrophic consequences. While the Air Force maintained its own low level hazard database it seemed there were plenty more hazards out there than they knew about – all of them a potential killer.

As a pilot Flight Lieutenant (FLTLT) Andrew Day was concerned with the safety of Air Force low-level operations. He felt there must be a better way and during Christmas 2020, over a beer, reached out to his brother Matt Day for help.

Matt worked at Aeropath, a subsidiary of state owned enterprise Airways New Zealand Ltd, managing NZ's Aeronautical Information Service (AIS), and his team of aviators and geospatial specialists were leading the development of new technology that could assist.

A pilot himself, Matt instantly grasped his brother's concerns and the two of them set about sketching out what a solution could look like.

Ultimately they settled on a dedicated system to address two key issues – notification of air operations and crowd sourced (and validated) hazard information.

With a little Air Force Innovation Scheme funding for a proof of concept demonstration, Josh Flynn, a pilot and software developer within the Aeropath AIS team joined the effort. With Josh writing some great code the three of them in their spare time were able to put together an early beta version to pitch to the Air Force in July 2021.

The pitch went well and Ohakea's Base Commander fully backed the initiative, providing funding from his operational budget for a trial and ongoing development to meet Air Force needs.

From there FLTLT Day became the architect and the Aeropath team of Josh Flynn, Jason Russell and Matt became the engineers. This effort was backed up by the rest of the Aeropath AIS team who worked tirelessly in the background managing hazard reports, liaising with surveyors and landowners and using their aviation and geospatial skills to verify the accuracy of the hazards reported.





The team collaborated to develop Flight Advisor, one feature at a time, to address the Air Force's needs and increasingly the country's. Since then with FLTLT Day managing the system around his flying duties Flight Advisor has gone from strength to strength.

Most recently it earned international recognition as a leading edge safety application taking out the CANSO (Civil Air Navigation Services Organisation) 2022 Global Safety Award in Geneva, Switzerland.

The Day brothers' foresight in combining the Air Force's leadership and resources with Aeropath's technology and aviation know-how has produced a world class aviation safety tool free to Aotearoa New Zealand that was otherwise thought commercially unviable.

This initiative has established a new operating model and standard for aviation safety outside controlled airspace and FLTLT Day and Matt are proud of how they have been able to bring two government organisations together for the betterment of New Zealand.

Time for another beer!

**With over 40 unmarked hazards reported and undergoing verification Flight Advisor is now established as Aotearoa New Zealand's premier safety system for aviation at low level outside controlled airspace.**

#### LEFT

(L-R) Matt Day, FLTLT Andrew Day

#### TOP RIGHT

(L-R) Osman Saran – Chair of the CANSO Global Safety Standing Committee, FLTLT Andrew Day, Matt Day, Sharon Cooke – CEO of Airways International Ltd, Bill Middleswart – CANSO Safety Programme Manager

#### BOTTOM RIGHT

CANSO Trophy

# Air Force keeps dotterels flying

**B** | EDITOR, NAVY TODAY  
**Y** | ANDREW BONALLACK



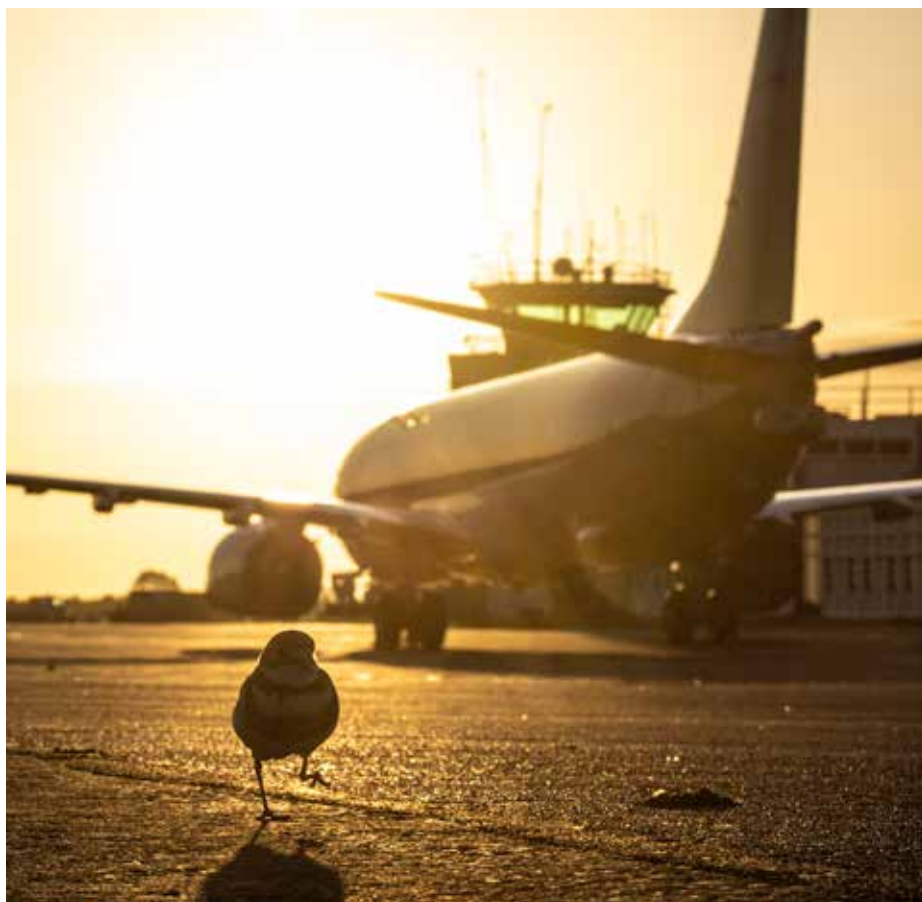
**An Air Force base environmental officer has resorted to cradling bird eggs in his hands to prevent their destruction under a taxiing helicopter.**

**LEFT**  
Jim Cook

**MIDDLE LEFT**  
A dotterel wandering near a P-8A Poseidon

**MIDDLE RIGHT**  
Dotterel chicks in Jim Cook's vehicle

**RIGHT**  
A dotterel nest at Base Ohakea



**T**hat's just one of many victories for Jim Cook at Base Ohakea, in his quest to ensure the welfare of banded dotterel (pohowera) who cheerfully persist in nesting precariously around the base.

According to NZ Birds Online, banded dotterel are a protected, endemic and declining species of small plover found throughout New Zealand, nesting on beaches, riverbeds and farmland.

Or, in the case of Ohakea, sometimes only metres away from moving aircraft or in cavities about to be filled with concrete. He reckons about three to four hundred birds accumulate at Ohakea every year, flying in big flocks round the airfield and roosting on the grass at night.

He once came across a male looking out for his mate, who at that time was sitting on four eggs underneath the Air Force's new P-8A Poseidon, about two metres from the left undercarriage. Dotterel nests are little more than scrapes in the ground. This one was basically an indent in the tarmac with a bolt at the bottom.

The birds' camouflage makes them very hard to spot when they're nesting.

"With all the apron remedial works going on I had been searching for that nest, which up to that point had always been on the edge where the grass met the apron. They had attempted to nest twice before in the same general area, once under a piece of boxing. They had to be removed before concrete was poured over the nest," Mr Cook said.

In this instance the eggs had to be moved. "If the aircraft had started up, they would have been sucked in."

Mr Cook said the mother bird would have chalked it up to a predator. She simply moved to a safer location and sat again, this time hatching three chicks.

"There was one time I had to hold eggs in a warm clasp for 10 minutes while an NH90 helicopter landed and taxied over the nest. The downdraft would have blown the eggs away. They were carefully returned, the mother came back, and all three hatched the following day."

The birds have a fondness for nesting on the apron tarmac, especially where it meets the grass, and the weedy gravel of No. 3 Squadron's carpark is a favourite spot.





But the construction works at Ohakea for the P-8A Poseidons' new hangars have created piles of gravel and unfinished terrain, reminding the birds of natural river beds. As a consequence Mr Cook has seen a huge influx in numbers. It's meant construction work has halted several times, with Mr Cook called in to help.

He recalled a meeting with Defence Estate and Infrastructure, Fulton Hogan, Department of Conservation and local iwi, all circled around a small nest.

Sometimes it's a matter of placing cones around the nest.

"They seem completely unafraid of people," he says. "There are 20-tonne diggers, huge trucks rumbling past the cone, and they still hatch and rear chicks."

Other times a nest has to be moved a short but crucial distance away.

"I moved one nest a metre. The mum came straight back on and sat on them."

Inevitably there are losses. The time of real vulnerability is the month when the chicks are learning to fly.

Feral cats can be a nuisance, although he plans to counter that, and magpies will sometimes kill chicks or devour eggs.

"Every year about three or four become a statistic on my Bird Strike database."

Mr Cook has kept birds of his own for 65 years. He worked for the New Zealand Wildlife Service, a forerunner of the Department of Conservation, and was involved in the recovery of the Chatham Island black robin from the brink of extinction.

All his past jobs have been wildlife-related, including his most recent prior job as a bird specialist for pest control companies in the lower North Island. He is on the Conservation Board of the Department of Conservation and is a Fish and Game councillor.

As winter approaches the dotterels move on, which leaves him with a fresh challenge – swallows.

"They congregate in huge flocks on the runway as the light changes in the morning. After resting they get quite slow and cold, and because the runway is black and warm, they come there to warm up for 10 or 15 minutes, then they are off. A King Air aircraft had two bird strikes this morning."



**"They are about the size of a large marble and speckled grey and black. They are really hard to find after they have hatched and take about a month to grow big enough to fledge, but they can run like the wind on ludicrously long legs."**

**- Jim Cook**



## Boats of the Air Force

B | AIR FORCE MUSEUM OF NEW ZEALAND  
Y | JASON SIM, REGISTRAR

1

**When thinking about the Air Force, boats are probably not what first springs to mind, yet once upon a time the service had its own maritime branch, which included a fleet of small vessels.**

**T**he operation of seaplanes and flying boats in the Air Force's early days, and their widespread use throughout the Pacific during World War II through to the mid-1960s presented a unique set of challenges. For a start, operating with water as a taxiway meant that all the usual ground-based support vehicles were useless. Boats had to be used instead for ferrying passengers to and from the aircraft, loading and unloading cargo, refuelling, and rearming, and support in the case of an emergency. To cater to the specific needs of flying boat operations, the Air Force established its own Marine Section.

The first Marine Section unit was established in 1928, providing small craft to support the Cutty Sark, Supermarine Walrus and Fairy III F aircraft operated by the New Zealand Permanent Air Force at Hobsonville.

The first craft believed to be operated by the fledgling Marine Section was an eight metre long unnamed vessel affectionately referred to as Gertie. Alongside Gertie, the Marine Section operated a few small dinghies and one yacht.

In late 1939, the Air Force purchased its first high speed launch similar to those operated by the Royal Air Force (RAF). The arrival of this craft in 1940 marked an increase in the number of vessels the Marine Section operated and the beginning of a numbering system to identify them. Each craft was assigned a number with the prefix "W". Interestingly the 'W' was never painted onto the vessels, only the number.

At 19.5 metres long, W1 was capable of a top speed of 38 knots (70kph). It was by far the fastest launch of its size operated by the New Zealand military at the time, with comparable Navy craft capable of reaching speeds of only 19 knots (35kph).

The vessel served as an air-sea rescue boat and provided target towing support for coastal artillery batteries. It travelled regularly from Hobsonville to Wellington and as far south as Lyttelton to support coastal artillery battery training exercises. W1 was also involved in rescuing survivors from the Niagara when it was sunk by a mine in the Hauraki Gulf on 19 June 1940.

In 1942 W1 was joined by the first three purpose-built crash/control boats to be constructed in New Zealand. They were designed specifically to operate as control launches, which maintained radio communication with flying boats and ensured their take-off and landing path was clear of obstacles and floating debris that could easily damage the thin hulls of the flying boats.

They were also responsible for laying flare strips to illuminate the flying boats' paths during low light or night-time take-offs and landings. At its peak during World War II, the RNZAF Marine Section was operating hundreds of vessels across Aotearoa New Zealand and the Pacific.





2



3



4



5

Barges and dinghies were used for refuelling and rearming flying boat squadrons while launches served as control boats coordinating take-off and landing as well as rescue boats in case of emergency and passenger transport especially between Hobsonville, Whenuapai and Auckland city, but also in bases throughout the Pacific.

One other important duty performed by the Marine Section was supporting coastal artillery battery firing practice. A launch would tow a target far enough behind for the boat to be safe and the coastal batteries would fire upon it, honing their gunnery skills. Practice like this was vital to ensure that these key defensive positions were prepared for potential enemy incursions during World War II but continued into the post-war years with the looming threat of the Cold War.

After World War II the Marine Section was reduced to a single base at Hobsonville with a support unit in Laucala Bay, Fiji. Its primary function remained the continued support of flying boats, but it retained its other functions and even sent three vessels to support occupational forces in Japan.

In 1962 the Air Force entered an era of modernisation. Plans to ensure the effectiveness of the service into the future and replacements for aging aircraft, such as the Short Sunderland, the last flying boats operated by the Air Force, were explored. As a long-range land-based aircraft, the arrival of the P-3s signalled the end of flying boat operations.

With the phasing out of flying boat activities, the Marine Section became obsolete. The Navy had already picked up some of the transportation duties, so it made economic sense to transfer the remaining four craft, two launches and two barges, to them.

One crash/control launch, W88, was gifted to the Air Force Museum of New Zealand in 1992. Built around 1942, this vessel was used as a control boat for marine operations by Sunderland and Catalina flying boats. Transferred to the Navy in 1967, W88 was used as a work boat until 1984 when it was deemed beyond economic refurbishment and destined for scrap.

The Marine Section Reunion Group acquired the launch in 1986 and began their own restoration project, which continued until the completed launch was gifted to the Museum. The launch now resides here as a testament to those who served in this once vital, and often overlooked, area of Air Force operations.

#### ONE

Marine Section members carrying out refuelling of a Sunderland during South East Asia Treaty Organisation Exercise Sea Demon at RAF Station Seletar, 1959

#### TWO

Crash/Control launch W45 under way at Hobsonville, 1942. This was one of the first purpose-built crash/control launches constructed in New Zealand

#### THREE

"Gertie" underway near Hobsonville. Note the "2" painted on the bow. With the arrival of the RNZAF's first high speed launch, a numbering system was introduced to identify Marine Section craft. The high-speed launch was numbered W1 while Gertie was designated 'W2'

#### FOUR

Marine Section members carry out a firefighting demonstration aboard W88 at RNZAF Hobsonville in 1960

#### FIVE

Aviators watch on from an unknown craft as another man is towed on an improvised waterboard in Fiji, 1945

# Missing Wingman Trust: Mike's story

WORDS | JUDY BAILEY  
PHOTOS | CORPORAL NAOMI JAMES

**Like most Kiwi blokes Warrant Officer (W/O) Mike Heikell is not one to ask for help for himself. Like so many Kiwis who face a huge challenge in their life, Mike was determined to go it alone – but eventually it fell to someone else to ask on his behalf. And for that he is eternally grateful.**

**W**arrant Officer (W/O) Heikell works in the leadership team at the New Zealand Defence College. He began his Air Force career in January of 1981 as a fresh-faced, in his words, “naïve” recruit from Gisborne, training as an aircraft technician. The Air Force has been his life and he loves it.

“You spend a lot of time with people you trust, the military provides that, a high trust model. I enjoy the people, I enjoy what I do, the environment the lifestyle and the challenges, the constant change, the postings and deployments.” He pauses for a moment, “Maree (his wife of 38 years) might disagree on that one,” he laughs wryly.

On January 13, 2020 W/O Heikell was taken to Accident and Emergency with severe stomach pains. He remembers the date with no prompting. It was the day his life changed.

Later that night he would be on the operating table having emergency surgery for a ruptured bowel. But there was more to it. The surgeon discovered a large cancerous tumour that had spread into his liver.



Since then, he has endured nine operations. The surgery removed a section of his bowel, so he needed a bag for 12 months. “I went to work with the bag ... I was okay with it. It was keeping me alive. Not many people knew I had it.”

The treatment was all-consuming. And it was tough on Maree. He worried for her. “So often the focus is on the person going through the surgery and its aftermath, yet the family are also traumatised.

“I had six rounds of chemo and then surgery to remove half my liver.”

Not one to wallow on the dark side he said, “I’m lucky because the liver regenerates”.

It’s often said that the Air Force is like a family, and so it proved to be. His colleagues rallied around. He and Maree had just decided to have their floors polished, so his mates came and moved all the furniture out of the house for her and then moved it all back in.





**“I felt shocked and humbled and a little bit guilty. But it took some of the stress away from Maree and alleviated some fears for her.”**

They also organised working parties for two or three weekends chopping wood so the family could have a fire through the winter.

After the initial rounds of chemo and surgery Mike was regularly monitored with MRI and CT scans. It was going well. And then in 2022 doctors spotted a lesion on his liver, it was large and in a spot that would be difficult to deal with unless they could shrink it.

It was a major blow to a man who had already bravely endured so much. Would Maree have to prepare for life without him?

W/O Heikell went back on a punishing schedule of chemotherapy to shrink the tumour.

It wasn't easy, he lost his hair, became puffy in the face, lost the feeling in his legs below his knees and in his hands, his fingers were covered in paper cut-like lesions as the skin split. His mouth and lips were covered in ulcers. He was tired. And still he went to work.

“I'd head in in the morning but by 2pm I was pretty much done. I was acutely aware that I didn't want to make any crucial (work related) decisions. I had huge support from people at work.”

The family had decided to also take on the burden of paying for additional chemo privately.

“It was a new drug, Cetuximab, not funded here and it cost about \$4000 per treatment.”

It was his doctor at Ohakea, who said, “Mike, do you mind if I ask the Missing Wingman Trust for help on your behalf?”

“I didn't think I was worthy of the support. But the drug was going to cost around \$25,000 by the end of the treatment. I was reluctant to get too far along with the treatments because I was worried about spending too much and taking away my wife's retirement and the children's future.”

W/O Heikell has been a long-time supporter of the Missing Wingman, each payday he's been making an automatic contribution.

The application for support was made and granted.

The new drug combo did the trick. “The surgeon at Auckland hospital said it was the best result he's ever seen with chemo. It gave me the chance to have surgery that I wouldn't have been able to have without the tumour shrinking.”

I'll leave the last words to W/O Heikell.

“The first thing to realise is that the Missing Wingman Trust needs the support of all Air Force people if it's to be viable. The second is that grants are needs based. Everyone is worthy of the fund's attention, regardless of rank or position. The Missing Wingman Trust is an important asset to Defence, I can't thank them enough.”

# From Auckland to Düsseldorf

WORDS | CHARLENE WILLIAMSON  
PHOTOS | CORPORAL SEAN SPIVEY

**Air Force veteran of 33 years, Mike Cotton took on a challenge that would ultimately show his strength, resilience and sheer determination to be the best he can.**



**H**e served as an aircraft technician for 18 years with the Royal Air Force in the United Kingdom before serving for 15 years with the Royal New Zealand Air Force and will compete at the 2023 Invictus Games in Düsseldorf, Germany in September.

As part of his training for the cycling events at the games, he decided to cycle the virtual distance from Auckland to Düsseldorf, a total of 18,300km. It has taken him just over two years to complete, with the distance equating to an hour every day for 90 weeks.

There is a special connection to Düsseldorf for Mr Cotton. He lived in Elmpt, a German village 50km west of the city when he was posted to Germany with the Royal Air Force during the Gulf War.

"Düsseldorf is one of those cities we used to visit for the annual fair on the banks of Rhine, and visiting the aquarium that is actually right next to the Invictus Games venue.

Mr Cotton has been training hard since being selected for The Hague 2020 Invictus Team, however, due to the Covid-19 pandemic New Zealand did not send a team.

"When I picked cycling as a sport, I hadn't cycled for years, initially it was difficult because I was so unfit. When I started the distance from Auckland to Düsseldorf I was certainly not a cyclist.





"All my cycling training has been high intensity to build bigger better lungs and legs. The distance travelled is kind of a by-product of that, there have been no cruisy rides just to clock up the kilometres," he said.

The majority of his training has been done virtually on Zwift, which allows him to maximize his training time in a structured manner using the training plans.

"All the Kiwi Invictus cyclists were given an indoor trainer as part of The Hague Games build-up, but I rapidly outgrew mine, so bought a new one. I wore out the first trainer's bearings after about 10,000km, so now I'm onto my second.

"Over the winter most of my time has been spent indoors on the trainer, now that I am back outside I can really see improvement out on the road.

"Cyclists are rated from A to E for online racing, depending on how powerful they are. Initially I was below the E grade, but have lost 8kg and can hold my own when racing online in a B grade race now," he said.

In 2016 Mr Cotton had the opportunity to spend a day watching the Kiwi team compete in Orlando, Florida, and this inspired him.

"I didn't realise prior to then that my PTSD made me eligible to compete, I thought it was only really for those with physical injuries.

"Invictus is not just a week of sport, it is a whole support network to help wounded, injured and sick veterans. Once people leave the military civilian medical care is not really geared up for the unique injuries service people suffer from, particularly operational events leading to PTSD.

"The Invictus Games allows those who have been in challenging circumstances while serving to focus on the power of sport and physical activity, and how it can aid in recovery of injury."

He will compete in the time trial and criterium events in Düsseldorf, and has goals well beyond the games.

"Age is catching up with me, I suffer from arthritis in my hips and will eventually need a double hip replacement. Cycling is good exercise for me because unlike running, my hips don't bear the weight while training.

"If the pain from my hips is okay, I hope to enter the New Zealand Criterium nationals in 2024, and will of course continue online cycling racing a bit more competitively.

**"Some of the events from 1990 that led to my PTSD occurred during my posting to Germany, going back is kind of going to be full circle and hopefully provide some closure 32 years later."**

"I have never really competed in any sport before. The opportunity I have to compete at Invictus is not lost on me, so I want to go out there and give a credible performance when representing the Kiwi team," he said.

The sixth Invictus Games will take place in Düsseldorf on 9-16 September under the motto "A home for respect" and together with the German Armed Forces, will welcome about 500 competitors from more than 20 nations, as well as about 1000 family members and friends, to compete in ten sporting disciplines.



## Benefits of bodybuilding

**B** | WING COMMANDER  
**Y** | STU PEARCE

**Now into its third year the New Zealand Armed Forces & Emergency Services Bodybuilding Championships continues to go from strength to strength, attracting a diverse array of athletes representing their respective Services.**

**A**nd while bodybuilding isn't an officially recognised RNZAF Sport, it enjoys wide appeal, boasting an almost 50:50 gender split, catering for athletes from teen first timers to Masters athletes in their 40s, 50s, 60s and beyond. The championships are open to current and former uniformed and civilian staff of all abilities (including those with disabilities).

**PHOTOS:**  
Rob Caven Photography

Training for the competition offers profoundly positive benefits to physical and mental health.

In fact, we've found it's the health benefits that have proven to be a powerful motivator for our people to train to step on stage, many competing in the Transformation Class – a bit like a cross between Biggest Loser and the Invictus Games. The competition also promotes drug-free sport with athletes being tested under World Anti-Doping Agency rules.

The 2022 competition, held in Palmerston North saw teams representing reigning champions NZ Army, go up against the Air Force, Royal New Zealand Navy, NZ Police, Fire and Emergency NZ, St John, NZ Customs and Corrections NZ. The standard of athlete from all Services was particularly high, but it was Team Air Force who went home with the coveted Te Kiwi Maia (The Courageous Kiwi) trophy.

Team Air Force will be defending the cup again on 28 October in Palmerston North and it promises to be a fiercely contested event. We're also delighted to have the Chief of Air Force, AVM Clark presenting the Te Kiwi Maia trophy and he had this to say:

"Kia ora, as Chief of Air Force I'm honoured to be invited to present the Te Kiwi Maia the Courageous Kiwi trophy at this year's ICN NZ Armed Forces and Emergency Services Bodybuilding Championships.

"Clearly I would be delighted if a team of aviators went home with the trophy, but whoever wins overall, whether it's Navy, Army, Air or one of our partner Emergency Services, I congratulate you all on your achievements.

"Whether competing for the first time or as a seasoned athlete, the courage, determination and sacrifice required to prepare for stage is truly impressive. I particularly commend those athletes who have made the commitment to their health to compete in the Transformation Class.

"Tournaments such as this not only promote high levels of health, fitness and operational readiness, they build strong friendships between our services. And it's those friendships and inter-service cooperation that are so important during times of emergency and crisis. We've seen this play out most recently as part of our all-of-government response to the Auckland and Northland floods and the aftermath of Cyclone Gabrielle.

"I'm also pleased to see the New Zealand Red Cross chosen as the supported charity for this year's competition. Many of us have worked alongside the Red Cross at home or overseas and have witnessed first hand the vital work they do.

"So to everyone competing and to the organisers, I wish you the very best in preparing for competition. And I look forward to celebrating your success on the night."

### FIND OUT MORE

If you'd like to find out more about competing in this year's AFES Champs or advice on getting into bodybuilding, please email [bbcomp@nzdf.mil.nz](mailto:bbcomp@nzdf.mil.nz)



# Notices

## EOD EVALUATION WEEK

**E Sqn (EOD), 1NZSAS Regt is requesting nominations for the upcoming EOD trade Evaluation. Successful candidates will be fit, motivated, and highly disciplined members of the military capable of decisive action in complex and challenging environments. You will also meet the following minimum requirements:**

- Hold the rank of Private (Band 4) or equivalent
- Have a full class one vehicle licence
- Hold a Confidential vetting security clearance
- Have a minimum medical grade of A4, G2, Z1 (RFL minimum G2)
- Complete the EOD evaluation week and an evaluation by an NZDF psychologist as suitable to operate as an EOD team member.

If you want to find out more or apply, visit <http://org/nzsof/LP/Recruiting.aspx> and download your AFNZ 3 today.

For further information, please contact SSM, E Sqn (EOD).  
ESQN.EOD.SSM@nzdf.mil.nz

**Nominations close**  
29 September 2023.

**EOD Evaluation week**  
9-13 October 2023.

## NZDF SUMMER INTERNSHIPS 2023/24

**Are you a serving Reservist about to complete your university studies or are you preparing for a break between semesters? Do you want to learn more about what the New Zealand Defence Force (NZDF) does in your area of study?**

The NZDF Summer Reserve Force Internship Scheme (RIS) will provide selected NZDF Reservists with an internship at a NZDF base across New Zealand. Interns will be placed where their individual skills can best be used while the intern will be exposed to opportunities to further a military or civilian career with the NZDF.

At the end of the placement, applicants will receive a final report/reference from their Sponsor Branch.

To find out more about the eligibility criteria and the application process, email [reserves@nzdf.mil.nz](mailto:reserves@nzdf.mil.nz)

## MENTORING: UNLOCKING SUCCESS – TUKUNA TE ANGITU

**Since 2008 the RNZAF Mentoring Programme has worked hard to lead workplace mentoring so people can unlock and achieve success. It aims to entwine the NZDF values while developing innovation, motivation and leadership attributes.**

With its highly acclaimed content, which has gained three international gold standards, the Mentoring Programme is where all RNZAF personnel, military or civilian, can expand their network and feel a sense of belonging.

For more information:  
[rnzaf.mentoring@nzdf.mil.nz](mailto:rnzaf.mentoring@nzdf.mil.nz)  
021 906 597

<http://org/A-PERS/MentoringPages/Home.aspx>

## SUPPORT ORGANISATIONS

**As a past or present aviator of the Royal New Zealand Air Force there are a number of organisations designed to support you in a variety of ways.**

These include financially, rehabilitation services, workplace support, support for you and your family in case of illness, injury or death, and keeping in touch with old colleagues.

Please look into these organisations for support you might need:



0800 483 8372 or +64 4 495 2070  
[www.veteransaffairs.mil.nz](http://www.veteransaffairs.mil.nz)



[www.missingwingmantrust.org.nz](http://www.missingwingmantrust.org.nz)



**Royal New Zealand Air Force Association Inc.**

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PO Box 164, Kirwee 7543



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

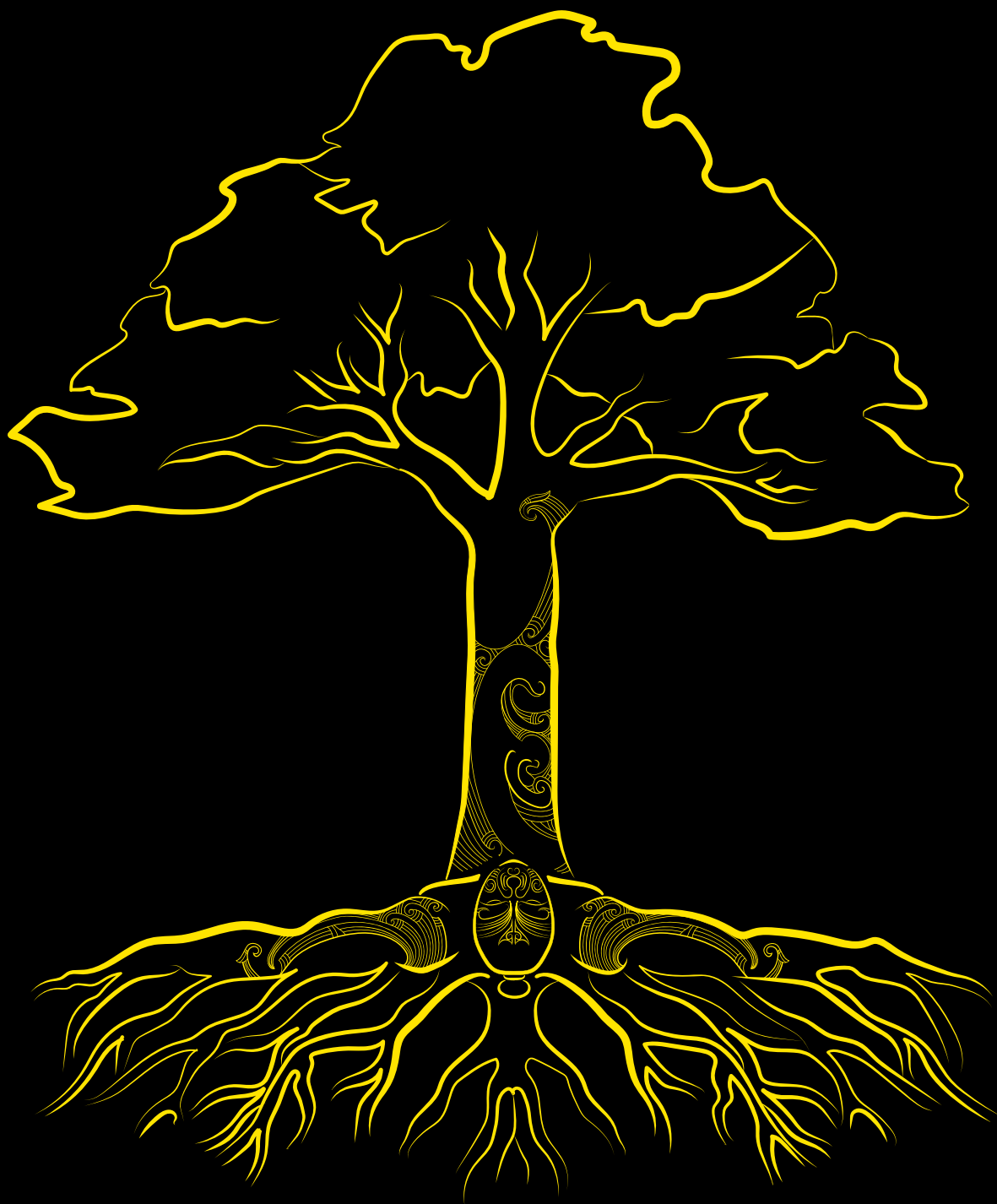
Every so often I'll get asked to capture an auspicious aircraft flyover here at Ohakea. When that happens, I like to make myself a cup of tea, head on up to the roof of the office building I work in, and enjoy a rare moment of peace and quiet in the sunshine while I wait for the action to happen.

On the morning that No. 14 Squadron flew 11 Texans in formation for the first time ever, my usual serenity was out of the question. There were so many people sharing the roof with me that we were having to paper-scissors-rock for the best spots. However, we were all treated to a great view of some very impressive and historic flying, and there's something a little bit zen about that in itself.









# **GROWING INSPIRING LEADERS**

Explore the  
Leadership Toolkit under  
**Training & Education**  
on the NZDF ILP