

# AIR FORCE NEWS

Air Force  
impact  
in Fiji

Flying a  
load with a  
difference

New  
Air Force Chief  
begins role

**#263**  
**NOV|23**

## Counter- terrorism training



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#### OUR MISSION

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

#### OUR VISION

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

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Counter-terrorism training

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# First Word



**B** | BASE COMMANDER BASE WOODBOURNE  
**Y** | WING COMMANDER PAUL DRYSDALE

**“Culture plays a pivotal role in any organisation. For the Air Force it shapes our values, behaviours, and overall ethos, establishing us as an Air Force that is trusted, valued and respected by the people of New Zealand and our international partners.”**

**T**he Air Force Starts Here, is the statement that greets everyone who either visits or drives past RNZAF Base Woodbourne and is a simple expression that outlines the important role that Woodbourne and more specifically the Command and Recruit Training Squadron (CRTS) plays in inducting the newest members of the Air Force into our organisation; introducing them into our culture, our air warfighting ethos and air-mindedness in our aviators.

But what is an organisational culture? How do we build and maintain an effective culture and how does our air warfighting ethos and air-mindedness relate to our culture?

Building an effective culture is a deliberate and continuous process where leaders at all levels, through their actions, model the values and behaviours that we expect in all of our aviators. It is important that we openly and transparently communicate our expectations and, through our training, ensure our people understand our values and ethics and, recognise and reward individuals and units that exemplify our culture.

Manaakitanga, developing a safe and inclusive workplace, one in which people treat one another with respect and work together to support the delivery of the Defence Force's operational outputs, is key to creating the climate, or mood within our workplaces.

Unit commanders play a pivotal role in creating a positive climate, ensuring that everyone feels valued and respected, that clear behavioural expectations are set, individuals are held to account for their actions, the Air Force's values are reinforced, and diversity and inclusivity within units is encouraged.

An air warfighting ethos is a set of values, principles, and norms that guide the use of airpower in armed conflicts, and is deeply entwined with air-mindedness. Air-mindedness represents not just a technical understanding of aviation but a broader mind-set that encompasses the values, principles, and attitudes necessary for the effective and responsible use of airpower in warfare. Our Air Force creed, which our newest aviators are introduced to from day one of their training, contains these tenets.

As we look to the future, air-mindedness will continue to evolve with advances in technology and changes in the strategic landscape. Maintaining a strong air warfighting ethos will be essential to ensure airpower is wielded responsibly and ethically in the face of evolving challenges.

It is the responsibility of air-minded individuals, from aviators to policymakers, to uphold these values and principles.

The Air Force's culture is a dynamic and essential aspect of our identity. Our air warfighting ethos directly influences our culture by shaping the mind-set and behaviour of personnel, and emphasises the importance of continuous learning, innovation, and professionalism.

As a result, the Air Force culture is not static but evolves in response to changing operational requirements and technologies.





## Textbooks wing their way to Fiji

**A C-130 Hercules has delivered 8000 textbooks to Fiji's Ministry of Education, destined for remote schools with no access to computers or the internet.**

**T**he ESA Revision books, donated by the Fiji Association in Auckland (Inc), and Learn Well Books, cover a mix of subjects for Year 11 to 13 students including English, biology, economics, physics, geography, accounting, maths and technology.

The C-130 Hercules that transported them had deployed to Fiji to bring home New Zealand Army equipment on completion of Exercise Cartwheel 23. NZ Army personnel recently took part in the annual bilateral exercise, led by Republic of Fiji Military Forces and US Army Pacific.

Dr Satendra Singh, president of the Fiji Association in Auckland, said the organisation was extremely grateful for the help of the New Zealand Defence Force.

"Once again, the Defence Force has made it possible for us to help local schools on the ground, especially in remote areas of Fiji, with much-needed textbooks.

"With the help of High Commissioner Charlotte Darlow in Suva, we can hand over the consignment to the Fiji Minister of Education, who distributes the books on an 'as needed' basis. This time we are delighted to cover some additional subjects such as new technology, and help teachers with resources."

Air Component Commander Air Commodore Andy Scott said the Defence Force was pleased to lend a hand.

"In situations like this, where we have spare capacity, it is a great way of helping our Pacific neighbours.

"To be able to offer the movement of charitable freight that will benefit so many students is a fantastic opportunity and it's our pleasure to be able to support the great work of the Fiji Association and Learn Well Books in this venture."



## Poseidon crew find missing Fijian fishers

**A P-8A Poseidon crew has found three Fijian fishers nine days after they were reported missing aboard their 8.5-metre wooden fishing boat.**



**T**he fishers, aboard the Lewa, left Lautoka planning to go fishing at Nanuya Island in the Yasawa group for up to two weeks.

The last known contact was on October 2, when they reported engine issues.

They were carrying life jackets and flares but had no locator beacons or communications equipment other than a mobile phone, which was believed to have run out of battery.

Another fishing boat searched for the Lewa over several days but this search, in poor weather conditions, was unsuccessful.

The Poseidon launched its search after the Rescue Coordination Centre Fiji requested assistance.

Maritime New Zealand's Rescue Coordination Centre NZ Manager of Operations, Michael Clulow, said his team provided location data that gave the Poseidon crew the highest probability of finding the missing crew.

"Our team conducted detailed analysis that included data from nine days of oceanic currents and weather to identify a search area using computer modelling," he said.

"The search area was large due to the amount of time the fishing boat had been drifting, but we were able to provide the P-8A crew an area to search, which is where the vessel was found."

The Poseidon crew began the radar and visual search on Wednesday morning and found the fishing boat in the afternoon. They contacted nearby vessels for assistance in rescuing the fishermen from the Lewa and remained in the vicinity until a rescue vessel was close enough for them to be rescued.

Air Component Commander Air Commodore Andy Scott, said it was a challenging search over a large search area given the nine days since the fishermen were last in contact.

"However the excellent search data provided by Maritime New Zealand's Rescue Coordination Centre and the manner in which the fishermen had prepared themselves to survive at sea led to this successful outcome.

"The P-8A is proving itself a highly effective and responsive platform to support the people of New Zealand and our Pacific neighbours, and was no doubt an incredibly welcome sight for the people on board the fishing vessel," he said.





## Flying a load with a difference

B | EDITOR  
Y | REBECCA QUILLIAM

**There's no manual on lifting a crashed helicopter off a steep tree-covered mountain with an NH90. But the job needed to be done, so No. 3 Squadron crews and members of the NZ Army's 5 Movements Company tackled the unique challenge of recovering the broken aircraft.**





In September a Westpac rescue helicopter had a hard landing in dense bush on Mt Pirongia in Waikato, while on a mission to rescue a trumper. The three crew walked away uninjured, but the aircraft suffered substantial damage. The Transport Accident Investigation Commission (TAIC) is investigating the incident.

There were a number of challenges facing crews working on how to recover the chopper, weighing more than two tonnes, even with the rotor blades and extra materials removed. It was resting on a 56° slope, surrounded by trees and bush, almost 3000ft high, NH90 pilot Flight Lieutenant (FLT) Hamish Park said.

“The higher you climb the less performance you have with the helicopter.”

The rigging experts, 5 Movements, were called in, along with TAIC and No. 3 Squadron, to work out how to safely attach the Westpac chopper to strops attached to an NH90.

“This isn’t something the Air Force or 5 Movements routinely does. I guess 5 Movements is used to rigging a net or a Pinzgauer in accordance with the manual, whereas there’s no approved military method of how to lift a chopper off a 56° slope,” FLT Park said.

“We identified a few key hazards, or things we needed to mitigate, to enable the flight. What became evident was just downhill from where the chopper landed was a fairly large cliff. People at the site had to be careful of the cliff edge, likewise we didn’t want the helicopter to fall off the cliff.”

In the days before the lift, Department of Conservation staff cleared the site and 5 Movements secured the helicopter to nearby trees. They also helped removed the rotor blades and other non-essential items.

On the day itself, the NH90 pilots flew near to the site and winched down the movers, a TAIC investigator and some lifting equipment needed to rig up the chopper.

“When they were ready we flew in, lowered the strop to the ground. The movers rigged and hooked the helicopter on. We gently came up, took the slack out of the strop, which was still secured to the ground, the loadmasters gave a signal to cut the moorings. The movers then gave them the signal it was all released and at that point we lifted it up off the hill.”

The NH90 flew the stricken helicopter to a paddock, just minutes away and the pilots gently lowered it to the ground.

“It all went pretty much exactly to plan. But we still had more work to do – we flew back up and took another underslung load of the blades and equipment off the hill and dropped them off, then flew back up and winched all of the team out.

**LEFT**  
NZDF personnel at the landing site

**MIDDLE**  
A TAIC investigator at the site

**TOP RIGHT**  
Rescue helicopter on Mt Pirongia

**BOTTOM RIGHT**  
View from the NH90 flying the helicopter from Mt Pirongia





"I was stoked to be on the job, because it's a really cool job to do. It was great to be able to help out the rescue team because they do a lot of good work."

He paid tribute to the hard work of 5 Movements and also the Air Force refuellers who drove down from Auckland to support the aircrew.

"5 Movements did an awesome job. At times we work relatively closely with them because they are the authority on this stuff. They did some hard work on that hill over a couple of days."

For helicopter loadmaster Sergeant (SGT) Brilee Jordan, the mission was her first task as a new loadmaster.

"It was an exciting first task for me. It was interesting getting to work with the 5 Movements guys, in terms of all the load-rigging gear and how we were going to move the helicopter."

"Because pilots can't see the load directly underneath the aircraft, we were providing the hand signals to the ground crews," she said.

"We dropped the underslung gear out of the helicopter, flew it over to the hook-on party and they loaded the rigging to the underslung load gear and we took the weight. We were responsible for positioning the helicopter over the load when we took the weight of it."

Crews were unsure how the Westpac chopper would fly under the NH90, but SGT Jordan said it was "weather-cocked" into the direction of travel and didn't swing.

"It flew surprisingly well. We were concerned it was going to spin because that's the concern when you're flying unfamiliar loads. It wasn't an everyday pick-up. It was a really interesting challenge for everyone involved."



**"The whole mission took an hour or two, but there were days of planning it out."**

**- Flight Lieutenant Hamish Park**

# Counter-terrorism training



WORDS | SQUADRON LEADER KIRI OHLSON & REBECCA QUILLIAM  
PHOTOS | CORPORAL MADDY BUTCHER

**The NZ Police Special Tactics Group recently conducted counter-terrorism and fast-rope training with No. 3 Squadron's NH90 crews. The Special Tactics Group is trained to resolve high risk situations in order to protect the New Zealand public.**

**A**otearoa New Zealand is not exempt from major acts of violence, notably the Aramoana massacre in 1990, the Napier shootings in 2009, and more recently the Christchurch terrorist attacks in 2019.

During the combined exercise helicopter crews were trained in counter-terrorism operations. The exercise tested the Air Force's ability to enable, support, and conduct counter-terrorism operations to maintain their operational level of capability in special operations roles.

The exercise also included currency and upgrade training for No. 3 Squadron aircrew and currency training for the Police.

Flight Lieutenant Hamish Park, the lead planner for the activity, said high quality training like this with NZ Police was an opportunity to practise working together so the Air Force was ready to respond when called upon.

"We've also been able to achieve pilot and helicopter loadmaster upgrades in the counter-terrorism role, as well as day and night formation flying."

A New Zealand Police Special Tactics spokesperson said it was an excellent week, and a good opportunity to practise training with No. 3 Squadron.

"It's been a valuable exercise for our team and we're confident that we'll be ready to respond and work in easily with No. 3 Squadron when called upon."





Helicopter loadmaster Sergeant (SGT) Justin Grant achieved his “advanced delivery upgrade” qualifications during the exercise, which involved fast-roping the Police from the helicopter.

“There was an instructor in the back as I went through the course.”

The flying was mostly done during the night, he said.

“That meant we needed to wear night vision goggles, which makes it a bit more difficult. We had to be very careful and deliberate with everything we were required to do so we didn’t make any mistakes.”

The exercise took place at Base Ohakea, Linton Army Camp, Whanganui Airport and the Hawera Water Ski Club.

“Conditions were a bit tricky at Linton because it was incredibly dusty, so we were losing our visual reference to the ground. We managed to pull it off safely, but it was a challenging part of the exercise.

“When you lose that reference, it’s important to let the pilots know what’s happening. The bottom line is when that happens, we need to climb up away from the ground. It was a good experience to have trained in,” he said.

Along with the fast-roping training, SGT Grant also winched an officer and police dog into the helicopter.

“I’ve only winched one other dog before, but this dog seemed pretty relaxed about the activity.”

**“It’s always good to train with the Police and getting that cohesion going. We could be called up at any time to work with them in a real life situation.”**

**– Sergeant Justin Grant**



WORDS | **SQUADRON LEADER KIRI OHLSON & REBECCA QUILLIAM**  
PHOTOS | **CORPORAL MADDY BUTCHER**



# New Air Force Chief begins role

**The Royal New Zealand Air Force has a new leader at the helm: Air Vice-Marshal Darryn Webb has taken on the Chief of Air Force role. The Queen's Colour was paraded during the change of command ceremony at Base Ohakea and a T-6C Texan flypast marked the occasion.**







**A**ir Vice-Marshal (AVM) Darryn Webb was selected for the role following the appointment of AVM Andrew Clark as Director of the Government Communications Security Bureau.

AVM Webb has served in the Air Force for 33 years and has accumulated more than 6000 hours of flying, conducting multiple operational missions and deployments.

He has commanded Air Force units at every level and held strategic portfolios including Defence Capability and Strategic Commitments and Engagements. He was seconded into the All of Government Covid-19 response and appointed as the Head of Managed Isolation and Quarantine. In recognition of this role he was appointed a Member of the New Zealand Order of Merit in last year's New Year Honours list for services to the Defence Force.

At the ceremony, AVM Webb reflected on his memories growing up around Ohakea air base.

"My connection with the Air Force runs deep and it's an absolute privilege to stand here this afternoon." He then addressed the aviators in the crowd and on parade.

"We continue to stand on the shoulders of those who have gone before us, and we benefit from their effort and contribution. But now it's our turn, it's your turn to add your own stitch or thread to the tapestry that is the RNZAF.

"I ask you to make that stitch vibrant, make it strong and make it last. The future has many challenges coming at us across the horizon. It will probably require us to be concurrently deployed around the world, it will require us to work even more closely with our critical partners."

He then quoted the Chief of Defence Force, Air Marshal (AM) Kevin Short who said "we need to be prepared to fight and we need to be prepared to win".

Outgoing Chief of Air Force, AVM Clark paid tribute to Air Force aviators – past, present and future.

"To those who went before us I acknowledge their courage, commitment and pioneering spirit. And ultimately too, their sacrifice," he said.

"I pay tribute to those currently serving – those here on parade who are committed every day in doing the mahi for New Zealand."

In the past five years as Chief of Air Force, aviators had been first responders to all manner of natural disasters, as well as the Covid pandemic, AVM Clark said.





"You've saved people missing at sea and on land and managed the quarantine of thousands. You've patrolled the Pacific, worked with our neighbours, resupplied Antarctica.

"You've deployed for military operations in the South Pacific, the North Pacific, the Middle East and Europe. You've trained and exercised across the globe and you've delivered new and upgraded capabilities and we see proof of that here today."

He also paid tribute to "our veterans of tomorrow" who will take the Air Force into the future.

AM Short acknowledged AVM Clark on his 37-year career and described him as a thoughtful and talented leader, who was engaged across all levels of defence.

"His considered and attentive approach to situations and discussions has been valued by his peers and I've been grateful for his support and counsel over the years we have worked together."

There was a burden and privilege to commanding the Air Force, he said.

"Leadership requires a toolkit of skills that expand across the technical and strategic. It requires you to work with confidence and knowledge while executing tasks and to be resilient and show empathy while doing so.

"You need to be able to deliver and show courage, being honest in what you know and what you don't know. Good leadership is knowing when to innovate and when to delegate and to lead in a way that brings pride not only to yourself, but to those you represent," AM Short said.

"It is these skillsets that the incoming Chief of Air Force, Air Vice-Marshal Darryn Webb embodies and will carry with him as he takes on the new challenge."

#### TOP & BOTTOM LEFT

Queen's Colour is paraded

#### TOP MIDDLE

AVM Webb accepts the challenge laid down

#### BOTTOM MIDDLE

Personnel and Air Force band members march in the change of command parade

#### TOP RIGHT

AVM Clark arrives at the change of command parade

#### BOTTOM RIGHT

AVM Webb receives Te Pokairewa, the Chief of Air Force kākahu, from AVM Clark, and secured by AM Kevin Short



## Air Force Leadership Forum: Shifting our gaze to the future

**This year's Air Force Leadership Forum focussed on looking beyond the arrival of the P-8A Poseidons and C-130J Hercules and towards the strategic and operational environments within which the Air Force will be operating in the near future.**

**F**ormer Chief of Air Force Air Vice-Marshal (AVM) Andrew Clark hosted the event at Base Ohakea. The two-day conference included a keynote speech from former Chief of Australian Defence Force and the Royal Australian Air Force, Air Chief Marshal (ret) Sir Angus Houston.

"The recent Defence Policy and Strategy Statement has described these as being the most challenging for several decades, with increasing threats to New Zealand's security from strategic competition, climate change and other global trends," AVM Clark said.

"We have a responsibility to New Zealand as well as to those we lead, to ensure we are ready to succeed in this more challenging environment when called upon to do so.

"There's the rapid growth of space and ultimately information warfare, which is a battle for what's true or not true."

The Air Force needs to be thinking about how it adapts and changes in the future, he said.

"We have to force our eyes up and out and adapt ourselves to a changing environment."

By focussing on the Air Force of 2027 it forces the Service to think beyond the transition of our major capabilities.

"It's a new kind of business as usual that we haven't lived before, in a more challenging environment. We need to be thinking about how we can be more present to shape, deter and respond as an Air Force and Defence Force."

Chief of Defence Force Air Marshal (AM) Kevin Short said on top of the changing military environment, the impact of climate change will place more demands on the Defence Force.





“These threats are being experienced more sharply and deeply by our Pacific neighbours. We will be expected to be present, we will be expected to provide maritime patrols, training, aid, drought support, HADR (humanitarian aid, disaster relief) response and hopefully not a military response.”

In discussing the space domain, AM Short said what was unknown was the effect of a deregulated space sector and our reliance on foreign space systems.

The Defence Force would be able to keep up with the pace of change with the possible use of advanced non-nuclear technology.

“These include undersea capabilities, quantum technology, artificial intelligence and autonomy, advanced cyber, hypersonic capabilities, electronic warfare, and information and innovation sharing.

“I think our immediate priority needs to be on systems that allow us to make smart decisions quickly.”

Incoming Deputy Chief of Air Force Air Commodore DJ Hunt said this was a good opportunity to shape what the Air Force will look like in the future and includes leveraging off the capabilities the Air Force already has.

“This is about people, training and systems, which we have a good degree of control over – how we utilise people, how we conduct our training, how we leverage our systems. Those are areas we can get quick wins in because we hold the levers internally and we can get on and make it happen ourselves.”

**“We need to be thinking about how we prepare our people for a more challenging, more dangerous environment. We need to prepare them from a human perspective to go into harm’s way.”**

**– Air Vice-Marshal Andrew Clark**



## Summer season under way for Operation Antarctica



**The New Zealand Defence Force's long-running support to Antarctica New Zealand and science and research programmes is underway for the summer season as the first flights to the ice have begun.**

**T**he Defence Force is an integral part of Antarctica New Zealand's operations and has been providing support to Antarctica programmes every year since the 1950s.

Under its annual commitment, named Operation Antarctica, the Defence Force contributes airlift and logistics support to Antarctica NZ for New Zealand's Antarctic programme, and other nations' programmes that use Christchurch as their Antarctic gateway.

At Harewood Terminal, a team of about 27 personnel facilitates all flights in and out of Christchurch.

Flights occur in winter although most take place over the summer months. Even then, an aircraft may "boomerang" back to Christchurch, if the weather window starts to close while en route.

Air Component Commander Air Commodore Andy Scott, himself a former C-130 Hercules pilot, said that while the first Hercules flew to Antarctica last week, weather then interfered with several subsequent attempts.

"Our crews are highly trained to analyse the weather conditions and decide whether they can proceed," he said.

"With no divert airfields in McMurdo Sound and inability to get there and back without refuelling, the team carefully analyses the weather patterns en route to confirm it is safe to proceed.

"The changing weather conditions do result in several attempts being aborted throughout the season where the aircraft then has to turn back to Christchurch.

"If weather affects one attempt, we'll re-schedule to the next available window to get the people who support this important work in Antarctica there safely."

The Air Force has scheduled 16 flights to Antarctica between September and March, taking passengers and cargo to the ice.

They are part of New Zealand's commitment to the Joint Logistics Pool it shares with the United States, where the Defence Force also deploys personnel in specialist roles.



This enables Antarctica New Zealand to leverage United States' capabilities in support of the New Zealand science programme each year.

Defence Force personnel work at both Antarctica New Zealand's Scott Base and the United States' McMurdo Station.

At the height of the summer season, approximately 70 Defence personnel will be on the ice, including the Scott Base Support Team of two logistics personnel, two plant operators, four communications personnel and a chef.

The logistics personnel support cargo processing, fixed-wing and helicopter operations and ship on- and off-load processes, while those in communications maintain a watch-keeping function, including checking in with teams out in the field.

Aviation refuellers, firefighters, drivers, carpenters and electricians are also deployed.

The Defence Force has a Senior National Officer who oversees Defence Force activities in Antarctica, and supports Antarctica NZ and the United States' National Science Foundation with long-term planning for operations on the continent.

Major Lucy Wright said deploying to Antarctica was a unique experience for everyone involved.

"It's a complex operation as it involves moving personnel in and out of Antarctica at different times.

"Some personnel will be there for the summer season while others go for a set period, such as the ship offload teams which unload re-supply ships when they get alongside McMurdo Station during the height of summer."

Over the 2023/24 summer season, up to 200 NZDF personnel will be involved in supporting operations in Antarctica.

**"Everyone who goes gets to experience an incredible environment and work with a great bunch of people ultimately contributing to internationally important science and research work."**

**- Major Lucy Wright**

## Surviving the cold



**Staying alive in the snow requires a particular set of skills and the best team to deliver the programme is the SERE (Survival, Evasion, Resistance, Escape) Training Centre, supported by two Antarctica NZ field training specialists.**

**T**he five-day cold weather survival course on Mt Ruapehu was delivered to both aircrew and select Defence personnel, SERE specialist Flight Sergeant (F/S) Stu Gilbert said.

"This year's programme featured an international aspect, with one of the three courses designated for the Royal Australian Air Force's (RAAF) 36 Squadron.

"The primary objective was to leverage this training to contribute to the development of the RAAF cold weather course and establish an ongoing training partnership," he said.

"Our training grounds at Memorial Hut on Whakapapa offered the ideal setting for equipping personnel with the essential skills, knowledge, and techniques needed to survive in cold weather environments.

"The winter season introduces distinctive challenges, making it imperative that our personnel receive comprehensive training to handle emergency situations effectively," F/S Gilbert said.

The training involved familiarising students with the contents of a cold weather survival pack and provide knowledge on how to use it. Selected Air Force crews carry Personal Survival Packs (PSP) when operating in cold weather environments.

SERE Instructor Corporal (CPL) Jessie Beech said several cold weather survival principles were addressed during the training.

"There was a First Aid element and how to recognise and treat cold weather injuries such as frostbite and hypothermia. We also looked at the best way to keep warm by dressing in layers to stay warm and dry, including the use of insulated and moisture wicking clothing."

The students also learned how to build snow shelters, CPL Beech said.

"First they use the minaret tent that comes in their PSP. They made snow blocks to form a wall around their tents to provide added wind protection. They then move onto building natural shelters.





"These include shovel-ups, snow caves and trenches. Between the students there was a variety of multi-person shelters to single person shelters. Students then had the opportunity to sleep in the shelters they had built."

Students were taught how to employ location aids to attract, hold and direct rescuers to their location, and they were shown how to use an MSR cooker to melt and boil snow for drinking and cooking their ration packs or any food they would acquire in a survival situation, she said.

They were taught how to cut steps with an ice axe, or the kick-step technique when moving up or down slopes to ensure stability, also how to stop themselves with or without an ice axe if they were to fall on a slope.

Antarctica NZ instructors taught the students how to recognise avalanche terrain by looking at the stability and load of the snow pack, the angle of the slope and the weather. The students also learned about the hazards of crevasses and glaciers and how best to avoid them.

**"This training we provide is to ensure that our aviators, who fly into or over cold weather environments, are prepared if their aircraft were to go down and there was the need to survive in that environment while awaiting rescue."**

*- Corporal Jessie Beech*

"Cold weather training is designed to prepare individuals to survive and operate effectively in cold and harsh winter environments," CPL Beech said.

CPL Beech said it was a "brilliant course to be part of".

"It took me out of the office, allowed me to actively practise the skills and knowledge I've acquired and shared this with the students. I highly recommend this course to those eligible personnel."



## 75 years of Defence First Aid competition

**B** | ANDREW BONALLACK &  
**Y** | REBECCA QUILLIAM

**Can you survive the Defence Force's tricky medic competition?**

**T**ransporting casualties, trauma care, CPR, medical evacuation logistics and communication – everything that makes up the expertise of a Defence Force first aider is put to the test in the Waterhouse competition.

The Waterhouse Trophy is a biennial Tri-Service first aid competition, in which teams are confronted with a number of training scenarios designed to challenge both the physical and mental components of military first aid. Fire and Emergency New Zealand submitted the only non-New Zealand Defence Force team, while 2/1 Royal New Zealand Infantry Regiment fielded the only non-health team.

Run by the Defence Health Organisation, this year's event – the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the competition – was hosted at the Police College in Porirua.

Officer in Charge Lieutenant Aidan Bilbe, said the competition got under way in howling wind and pouring rain.



“The teams really hit their stride and enjoyed the new twist on a competition which first ran 75 years ago.”

Normally teams of four, this year the teams were reduced to three, creating a resourcing challenge for life-saving duties in each scenario.

“And there were plenty more twists to keep those soldiers who had competed in the past on their toes.”

As well as dealing with trauma and organising handovers and evacuation of patients, teams were quizzed on first aid and brain-twisting logic puzzles.

Corporal (CPL) Nate Farrow has competed in the day-long competition four times now and said it was a really worthwhile challenge for medics.

“There were quite physical tasks, like stretcher carries, there were some critical problem solving tasks and quizzes that all came together at the end to test our First Aid knowledge.





“By the end I was tired but satisfied. The biggest take-away for my team was getting our teamwork together and working out communication strategies that worked out best for us,” CPL Farrow said.

Leading Aircraftman (LAC) Eloise Old said the practical challenges were close to real life scenarios. They included a car crash, a stretcher carry, treating severe injuries and working with poor visibility.

There was also a task to make a stretcher out of various items that could hold a weight, but to be made within a time limit.

“We only had 20 minutes, which was quite difficult.”

The competition was really worthwhile and was a great opportunity to meet and network with the other competitors, LAC Old said.



Her colleague LAC Maggie McLean agreed and said it was worthwhile being able to make those connections.

“We caught up with people we did our medic training and other people we had met throughout our careers, but worked at different bases. It was also great meeting people from other trades, like the firefighters and learning about what they did.”

The competition tested skill levels they did not normally practise, such as rope tying while building the makeshift stretcher, she said.

Lieutenant Colonel Kelvin McMillan, Commanding Officer Defence Health Organisation, said within a military context, treatment received in the first 10 minutes can have a significant impact on the survivability of a casualty.

“Their skills as a first aider or first responder put simply, saves lives,” he said.

The Waterhouse competition began in the 1940s in Wellington, between 13 field ambulance sub-units. Since the Vietnam War, the competition has included memorial trophies dedicated by the families of the Royal New Zealand Army Medical Corps and Royal New Zealand Air Force medics who have been killed on military operations.

**“It was a really good test of quick decision-making skills and communication with the team.”**

**- Leading Aircraftman  
Maggie McLean**



## Kiwis chalk up hillside facelift for historic memorial in UK

B | LEAD CONTENT EDITOR  
Y | ANDREW BONALLACK

**A Kiwi pilot says it was a privilege to help “chalk up” a gigantic kiwi set in the hills of Wiltshire, United Kingdom.**

**T**he 130m-long Bulford Kiwi near Stonehenge in England underwent its annual restoration recently, thanks to joint efforts from New Zealand Defence Force and British Armed Forces personnel.

In 1919 New Zealand soldiers, stationed nearby and waiting to return home after World War I, created the kiwi.

Air Force pilot Flight Lieutenant (FLTLT) James “JP” Patrick, from Hawke’s Bay, was one of two pilots operating the Chinook helicopter out of Royal Air Force Base Oldham, delivering about 100 tonnes of chalk in underslung loads to the hillside.

As well as local volunteers and British Armed Forces, the day-long re-chalking involved 25 New Zealand Army personnel, who are based in the United Kingdom training Armed Forces of Ukraine recruits. Also lending a hand were five Defence Force staff from London and about 12 New Zealand High Commission personnel and whānau, including New Zealand High Commissioner Phil Goff.

FLTLT Patrick is on exchange to the United Kingdom and has been with 18(B) Squadron at Oldham for 18 months. He said he felt very privileged to do the task and represent Aotearoa New Zealand on an international stage.

“I had only heard about the kiwi since my arrival in the UK and therefore managed to fly past it a few times,” he said.

“When the request came through for a Chinook, as soon as I heard of it I jumped at the opportunity. It’s a great sight to see on the side of a hill, the scale is rather impressive.

“It felt good that we continue to remember those New Zealanders from back in World War I and clearly all the Kiwis that have worked alongside UK Armed Forces since then.”

He says the Chinook is “a dream” to fly.

“It is a very capable helicopter, with a lot of power and can therefore carry large payloads. Definitely the right helicopter for this job. The two main rotors create a lot of downward thrust allowing the Chinook to lift very heavy loads.





"A fully loaded aircraft can carry up to 6000kg of fuel, possibly 7000kg of payload with a shorter endurance and come in at a total all up weight of 24,000kg depending on the environment."

It's quite a change from the previous aircraft he flew, the 3000kg A109. "It makes the Chinook one very capable platform."

Last year FLTLT Patrick flew a Chinook in a formation flypast for the late Queen Elizabeth's Platinum Jubilee. He has deployed on NATO operations across Europe and been on exercises in the United States.

"The idea is for exchange pilots to gain experience in austere environments. Every three years it comes up for members of No. 3 Squadron and I was lucky enough to get picked."

He'll finish his exchange in 2025.

Base life in the Royal Air Force was very similar to New Zealand, FLTLT Patrick said.

"But the winters can be rather cold, especially seeing I'm from Hawke's Bay. Having snow on my front lawn was great for about the first 10 minutes."

Defence Attaché Brigadier Jim Bliss said members of 249 Gurkha Signal Squadron, 3rd (UK) Signal Division Regiment, carried out weeding the day before the spreading of the new chalk and tidy up.

"There was waiata from the New Zealand team, Gurkha musical performance and traditional Khukuri dance and speeches," Brigadier Bliss said.

Speaking in a UK Ministry of Defence social media reel, Mr Goff said it was fantastic to take part in the restoration.

"For us, this is something that shows respect [and] pays tribute to the thousands of men who came 18,000 kilometres from the uttermost ends of the earth to Europe to fight in the World War I. 12,000 of those men never returned. It's us paying respect to those who were here in the past and continuing that link between ourselves and Bulford," Mr Goff said.

**LEFT**  
Bulford Kiwi

**TOP MIDDLE**  
FLTLT JP Patrick

**BOTTOM MIDDLE**  
A Chinook flying chalk to the kiwi site

**TOP RIGHT**  
NZ Army personnel heaping chalk on the kiwi

**BOTTOM RIGHT**  
FLTLT JP Patrick flying the Chinook during the mission



# Air Force Museum secures funding grant for critical work

B | AIR FORCE MUSEUM OF NEW ZEALAND  
Y | DAVID KING, COMMS MANAGER



**The Air Force Museum of New Zealand has secured funding from the Lottery Grants Board for a 12-month project to preserve and catalogue a critically important aviation collection.**

**B**ased at the birthplace of the Royal New Zealand Air Force at Wigram in Christchurch, the museum has more than one million objects in its collection charting the history of the Air Force from its origins 100 years ago.

Objects Curator Emma Johnson said the museum team was delighted to secure a \$68,800 grant which would be used to help catalogue and conserve the museum's Safety and Surface (S&S) Collection. The total project is more than \$106,000.

The S&S collection includes everything from life rafts, oxygen masks, helmets and parachutes through to ejector seats.

Emma said most of the collection was accumulated at Wigram in the days before digital photography and electronic cataloguing, so the time had come to go through the collection with a fine-tooth comb.

"It's a bit like a super stocktake," Emma said.

"We will be investigating everything we have, taking photographs of each object, and cleaning and cataloguing everything. There are hundreds of boxes to go through and judging from experience might find a whole lot of treasures and stories we did not know we had.

"We're grateful to the Lotto Grants Board for the funding – without this support we would not have the resources to take this on. It will make a huge difference to us, and we can't thank them enough."

The grant will allow the museum to employ an additional technician to work on the collection fulltime for 12 months.

They'll have help close at hand in the form of the museum's S&S Technician Nathan "Barf" Boshier, who has more than 42 years' experience.



**“A lot of the collection is on shelving that was damaged in the Canterbury earthquakes and although we have made it safe, this project will bring the storage and cataloguing up to best practice standards and future-proof the collection for the generations to come.”**

**- Objects Curator Emma Johnson**

S&S is the Air Force trade that covers all material relating to the safety and the finishing of aircraft.

Even though he has more than four decades in the trade, Barf said the collection is likely to be full of surprises with some of the boxes dating back to the 1930s.

“We’re likely to come across some objects that’ll leave us stumped,” Barf said.

“If there’s anything we can’t work out we will be reaching out to the international aviation heritage community and the ex-RNZAF family for help. Fortunately, there is a lot of experience around which we’ll be looking to tap into.”

The Air Force Museum of New Zealand is a world-class heritage operation with 30 aircraft and attracts more than 150,000 visitors each year. It is free and open 364 days a year.

It is also the Air Force’s national memorial to the more than 4600 Kiwis who have died while serving with the Air Force or other Air Forces since 1915.

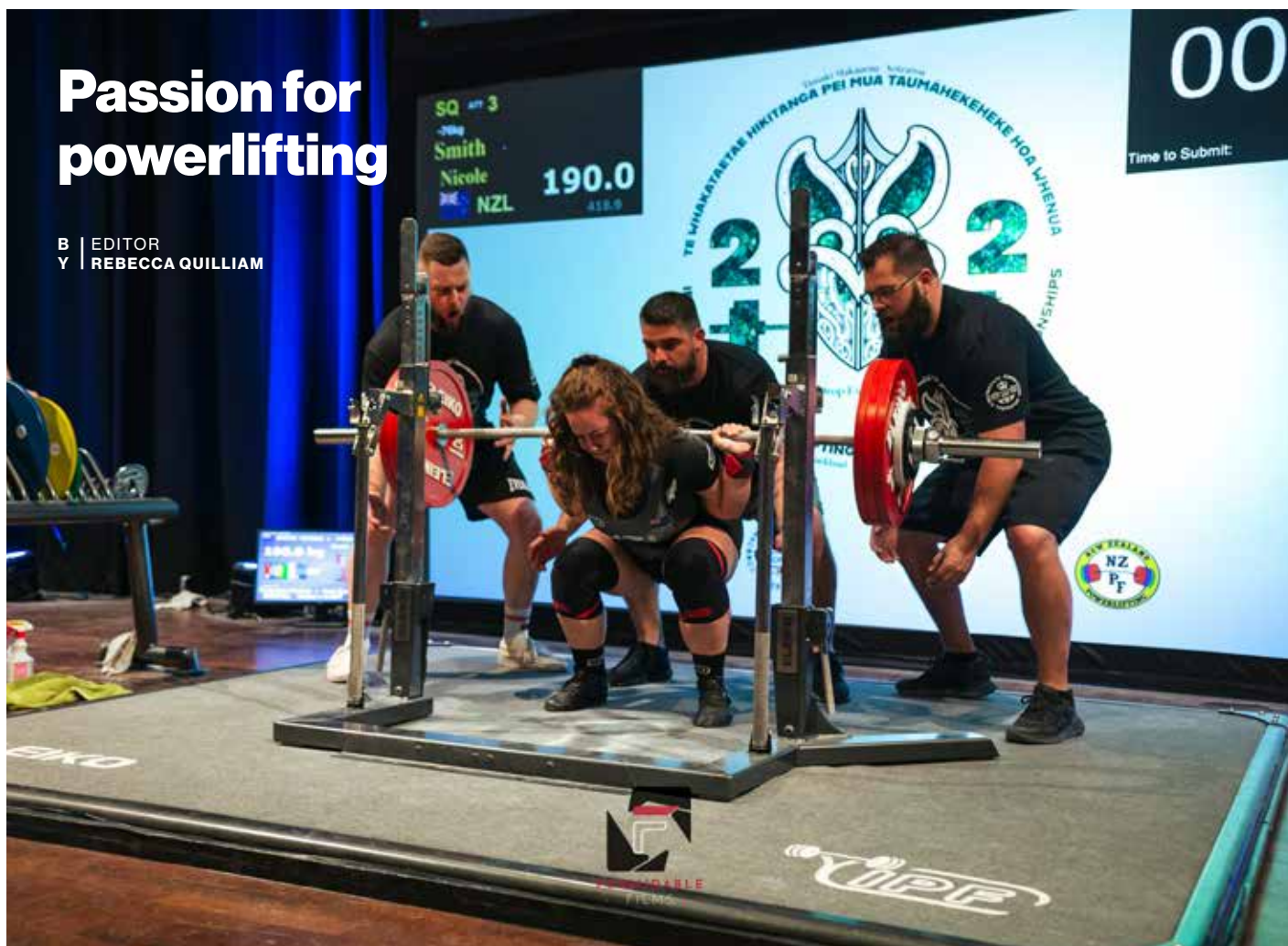
Every year, 100% of Lotto NZ profits are transferred to the Lottery Grants Board, for distribution to thousands of community groups and great causes across New Zealand.

Lotto NZ is proud to see the funds raised by its players making a difference at the Air Force Museum of New Zealand in their work to preserve Aotearoa’s aviation treasures.



# Passion for powerlifting

B | EDITOR  
Y | REBECCA QUILLIAM



**It's taken more than five years of dedicated training but now Corporal Nicole Smith has made it to the top eight female powerlifters in Aotearoa New Zealand and is the top ranked under-69kg lifter.**

**A**t New Zealand Powerlifting Federation (NZPF) Nationals in Christchurch recently, Corporal (CPL) Smith achieved a 190.5kg squat and bench pressed 110kg during the competition, creating new New Zealand records for both. She also broke the existing total record with her total score of 485.5kg in the under-69kg open female weight class, which is the combined score of your best squat, bench, and deadlift.

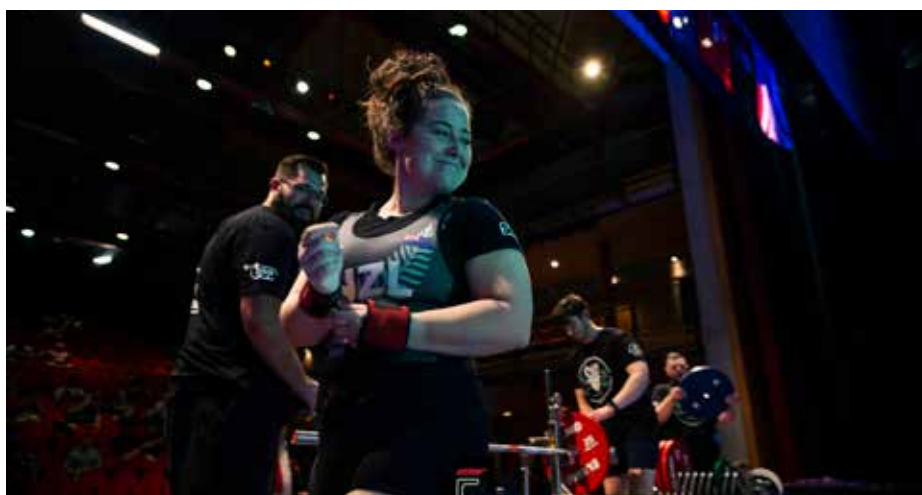
"Comparatively this total at my bodyweight puts me in the top eight females in New Zealand for this year. Considering we have two females who won their classes at a world level, and a female who came third at worlds this year, I am incredibly stoked with this result. Internationally, I believe my total puts me in the top 20 in my weight class in the world for this year."

To achieve her record-breaking numbers, CPL Smith increased the previous squat record in the under 69kg open weight class by 28kg, the previous bench record by 15kg, and the previous total record by 25.5kg in the past six months.

"I did it by losing weight this year to compete in a lower weight class than I previously lifted in. This means it has been about nine months of juggling my usual strength training alongside nutrition and increased cardio, but the results were definitely worth the effort."

CPL Smith began powerlifting when it was suggested to her by a physical training instructor, who she was running a strength programme with at Base Auckland.

"I like the predictability of powerlifting. It's based on three solid movements, so the squat, bench and deadlift, and it's really rewarding that you can put in the effort and gain the reward."



"If I show up for a certain number of training sessions and if I eat and sleep well, then I can put myself in the best position to get stronger. When you start, you see a lot of progress quite fast, which is what got me hooked initially."

Beginning her Air Force career in the Communication and Information Systems trade, CPL Smith found it challenging to juggle her career, training and attending competitions, but over the years it has become easier, especially since changing roles to work in the School to Skies unit.

"With Comms you do take a lot of trips into the field and away from gyms. In my current role, if we go away we usually have access to gyms."

"My chain of command were all really amazing when they started to understand the passion I have towards the sport. Especially last year when I competed at Worlds, everyone was understanding and super supportive and it was nice to have that support."

CPL Smith's next goal is to represent Aotearoa New Zealand at the International Powerlifting Federation Open World Championships in Lithuania in June next year, but has some work to do before then.

"I want to compete in a New Zealand competition first and see how I'm tracking and then use that as a decider. Traditionally powerlifting has an on-season and off-season, where the off-season is over Christmas and summer. This year will be a bit different where I'll be maintaining a bit more frequency and intensity over that typical rest period."

**"It's great to be able to have the balance of work and keeping up with sporting goals. When you first join it's not as easy, but the longer you're in the easier it gets."**





## Buckles Cup success at last

**B** | FLIGHT LIEUTENANT  
**Y** | HEATHER LENNOX

**The RNZAF Women's Football team has won the Inter-Services Football Tournament, winning the Buckles Cup for the first time in 15 years.**

**S**ixteen players made up the team, with seven new caps and a full coaching and management staff to round out the wider squad of 21.

The Royal New Zealand Navy hosted the 2023 Inter-Services tournament with games being held at the North Harbour QBE Stadium artificial turf. Having consistently seeded third for many years, we again had the worst draw for the games, playing back-to-back fixtures Sunday and then Monday. First up was the New Zealand Army wāhine!

Historically the Army was the team to beat, being physically dominant on the field and always displaying high levels of fitness. This year would be no different and the Air Force ladies knew they would have their work cut out for them.

Army opened the scoring with an early goal off a corner that slotted in above the keeper's head to lead 1-0. Under the composed leadership of captain, Sergeant (SGT) Kirsten Maas, the ladies settled into the game plan executing clinical plays and placing the Army team under constant pressure.

Before long Flight Sergeant (F/S) Tracey Tahuparae had scored the equaliser providing the Air Force a boost in momentum.

Rookie Leading Aircraftman (LAC) Maggie McLean then screamed one past the keeper after she was fouled just outside the box. Air Force headed into half-time with a 2-1 lead.

No surprises, the Army came out fighting in the second half and our players were being tested in all facets of the game. An injury substitution saw Pilot Officer (PLTOFF) Charlotte Green take the field and within five minutes she had found the back of the net. With 10 minutes to go, a penalty inside the box, saw SGT Kirsten Maas seal the win for Air Force with a composed strike from the penalty spot into the bottom right-hand corner. Final score 4-1.

In recent years, the games against the Navy have always been quite evenly matched. Clinical football played by each side provides a beautiful game to watch.

For the Air Force this was a must win game to guarantee the overall win. Nerves were heightened, only one player on the current team and only one of the management staff had ever won the Buckle Cup, and that was back in 2008.

That morning the Air Force ladies came out on the pitch, and they performed. Building on from the win against Army, they dominated from the outset.



**“Many of the players had been so close so many times, but it has eluded the Air Force wāhine for 14 years.”**



Rookie Aircraftman (AC) Leela Brown was composed in the centre back, running her defensive line as if she'd been playing for years. All it took to open the scoring was a clean pass to LAC Maddie Scott who slotted a pearler in from the far left. From there, another goal to F/S Tahuaparae, followed by another goal from the penalty spot – this time to PLTOFF Green, 3-0.

With less than 10 minutes to go Coach Matty Cole turned to stand-in Assistant Coach Wing Commander (WGCDR) Jackie Searle and said “is that you Jackie – I'll put you on for a run?”

Having been on the winning team in 2008, this proposition was too good to refuse, as WGCDR Searle took to the field for the remaining minutes. The referee blew his whistle for fulltime, the score remained 3-0 to Air Force.

We'd done it, finally done it. After 14 years the Air Force's Women's Football team had secured the Buckle Cup. The players, coaches, management, and our fantastic supporters erupted onto the field to celebrate the win! An unbelievable feeling, especially for those that had been yearning for this win for so long.

Celebrations continued into the changing rooms as renditions of Queen's *We are the Champions* filled the air. The ladies had played hard, worked hard and it had finally paid off.

The prize giving function was held at Ngataranga Sports Complex where the Air Force Women's team was presented the Buckle Cup. It wasn't the only accolade for the evening however with several other trophies being presented to our well-deserving players:

Additionally, seven of the RNZAF women were selected to represent the Defence Force in a fixture against Māori Football Aotearoa, with our very own SGT Maas selected to captain the team:

SGT Kirsten Maas (Captain), F/S Tracey Tahuaparae, PLTOFF Molly Scott, CPL Harriet Williams, LAC Maggie McLean, LAC Maddie Scott and AC Leela Brown.

This year was definitely the year for RNZAF Football with the ladies distinguishing themselves at all levels of the game. The high level of skill, commitment and professionalism the ladies displayed was outstanding and it definitely bodes well for the future of women's football within the Defence Force.



## AWARDS & ACCOLADES

### Achievements:

Golden Boot Award – PLTOFF Charlotte Green

Best and Fairest Individual Women's – SGT Kirsten Maas (pictured above)

Women's Player of the Tournament (MVP) – AC Leela Brown

### Defence Force Selections :

SGT Kirsten Maas (Captain), F/S Tracey Tahuaparae, PLTOFF Molly Scott, CPL Harriet Williams, LAC Maggie McLean, LAC Maddie Scott and AC Leela Brown.



# Crucial step towards C-130J Capability Integration



**The evolution of the RNZAF's air fleet continues with the refresh of the fixed wing air mobility work horse, the C-130 Hercules based at RNZAF Base Auckland. For the past 60 years the C-130H model has delivered tactical air mobility support around the globe, to the four winds.**

**T**he C-130J Transition Unit (JTU), headed by Wing Commander (WGCDR) Gareth "Case" Russell, will focus on ensuring the smooth introduction of the new C-130J Hercules, and said this much anticipated milestone was incredibly exciting.

"The C-130J is the next step in modernising our fleet and increasing our capability; it can fly further, faster and carry more passengers and cargo than we've been able to achieve before.

"Standing up a transition unit is essentially building a unit from the ground up. As military professionals we are practised in regularly changing roles. Normally this involves moving into a position where the team around you knows their job inherently. In the case of a transition 'pop-up' unit, building foundational relationships, structures and culture is a unique challenge."

WGCDR Russell is looking forward to the coming weeks and months when more personnel will come on board to fill JTU's critical functional needs.

"There is flexibility to evolve the JTU as we need, to deliver our mission. The end state is that we will be absorbed into No. 40 Squadron, which incorporates Boeing flight and Hercules flight as an integrated team," WGCDR Russell said.

Speaking of integrated teams, WGCDR Russell wanted to recognise the years of work that have been done to get the Future Air Mobility Capability (FAMC) project to this point.

"The Integrated Project Team (IPT), past and present, has been outstanding in preparing the way for the delivery of trained personnel, aircraft and supporting systems for JTU to employ on the path to operational release."

WGCDR Russell said the introduction of any new capability requires significant work, not least by the New Zealand personnel based overseas.

"We currently have maintenance, aircrew and support personnel training and working across several locations in the United States of America. The dedication of these aviators and their families is critical to mission success at the speed of relevance.

"The skill and professionalism of this team will ensure that the C-130J contribution to No. 40 Squadron continues to serve Aotearoa New Zealand, as it has done since 1964."

\*Please note the article on this subject that was in *Air Force News* #262 was printed inadvertently. This is the correct version of the article. We apologise for the error.

# Notices

## AIR FORCE NEWS BOOK GIVEAWAY

**Be in for a chance to win *Forgotten Heroes: Voices of No. 489 New Zealand Torpedo Squadron* by Don Wilkie.**

This comprehensive book covers the full history of No. 489 (NZ) Squadron from its establishment in 1941 through to its disbandment in 1946. The squadron was unique in that it was one of seven RAF units manned predominantly by New Zealand aircrew. *Forgotten Heroes* details the daily lives of the crews and the struggles they endured through their own words sourced from personal diaries, manuscripts, logbooks, and the squadron's Operations Record Book.

Operating as part of RAF Coastal Command, the squadron initially flew Handley Page Hampdens from bases on the east coast of England, but most of its operations were flown from bases in Scotland after converting to the multi-role Bristol Beaufighter.

From Scotland, they flew operations to sink German shipping along the coasts of Norway and north-west Europe in all weathers. These were very dangerous operations and the squadron suffered considerable losses.

Towards the end of the war, 489 Squadron converted to the de Havilland

Mosquito in readiness for a transfer to the Pacific and the war against Japan; however, the war ended before this could happen.

Overall, the squadron achieved considerable success with its aircrew being awarded a large number of bravery awards.

This substantial book of 490 pages contains more than 1,200 photographs and illustrations, many of which have never been published before. They came from both the families of the men who served with 489 Squadron and the Air Force Museum of New Zealand in Christchurch.

**Order from the author**

(e) longforan@xtra.co.nz

(w) www.artistdonwilkie.co.nz.

\$80NZ + P&P

**Email [airforcenews@nzdf.mil.nz](mailto:airforcenews@nzdf.mil.nz) by December 1, 2023 to go into the draw for the chance to win *Forgotten Heroes*. Include your name and postal address and type: *Air Force News Giveaway* in the title line.**

## VOLUNTARY EDUCATION STUDY ASSISTANCE (VESA)

**Semester Three/Summer School, 2023 applications are being accepted**

You may submit your request for funding within 90 days of your study start date. Apply online (ILP) at Training & Education, New Zealand Defence College (NZDC), Learning Toolkit VESA Application (e-form).

Applicants should be aware of their responsibilities prior to making an application, IAW Defence Manual of Learning (DMoL), Part C, Chapter 2: Voluntary Education Study Assistance. This chapter of the DMoL and its subordinate process manual, replaces SADFO 3/2016.

Other than a new policy to govern eligibility and study criteria, as mentioned above, VESA has:

- Increased postgraduate and undergraduate funding limits
- Introduced the option to study micro-credentials at Level 4 or higher, that sit on the New Zealand Qualifications Framework

Prior to starting the application process, applicants are to:

- Confirm the level of study is right for them with Defence Learning, NZDC
- Advise their 1-UP of their study intentions
- Provide supporting paperwork including study documentation from the official learning provider website (ready to attach to your e-form application)

Contact your local Adult Learning Tutor, Defence Learning, who can assist you with your application. If you have any queries, please email our Tertiary Services & Support Advisor at [nzdclearnvesa@nzdf.mil.nz](mailto:nzdclearnvesa@nzdf.mil.nz)

## 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** | SEAN SPIVEY

This photo was taken at the Düsseldorf Invictus Games following Stacey Adam's emotional medal ceremony. Stacey had just won a silver medal for discus, and to honour her achievement, the team performed a haka right outside the Invictus Village. Awesome work Stacey!

# INVICTUS GAMES

PRESENTED BY







A man and a woman in New Zealand Air Force camouflage uniforms stand on an airfield. The man, on the left, has a mustache and his arms are crossed; his name tag reads 'AITKEN'. The woman, on the right, has her hair in a ponytail and her hand is in her pocket. They are both looking towards the camera. The background shows a clear sky and a distant airfield.

# ICESTOCK



**RUN DEEP**



**TE TAU AARANGI  
AIR FORCE**