

# AIR FORCE NEWS

Support  
after  
disaster

Tramper  
rescue  
success

Backing  
the Pacific  
Games

#264

DEC|23



Aviator  
of the Year

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#### OUR MISSION

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

#### OUR VISION

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

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

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#### COVER:

Aviator of the Year

#### PHOTOGRAPHER:

Sam Shepherd



# First Word



**B** | GROUP CAPTAIN  
**Y** | SUSIE BARNES

**“Our ability to reconnect and bond as an organisation has been a significant focus following the restrictions, challenges and lockdowns presented in a Covid-19 environment.”**

**A**s the outgoing Logistics Commander (Air) I reflect on the past two years, where our organisation has continued to “knock it out of the park” in an environment that has been both challenging and exciting.

We continue to support the Introduction into Service for the P-8A and C-130J fleets. Through a logistics lens, the modern support solutions that come with these capabilities require new skillsets and consideration of a logistics enterprise that is data-driven, integrated and resilient.

The Air Logistics Transformation Programme (ALTP) set about designing such an enterprise, with best organisational intent. However, the ALTP was paused earlier this year, so that a deliberate and focussed approach could be taken to support the changes that are already upon us, with cognisance of the need to be iterative and agile.

Project Athena is now focussed on defining the organisational outcomes for the Defence Logistics Command (DLC(A)), working with key stakeholders to ensure the project is well defined, aligned with mature change projects (such as Future Technical Trade Capability, Logistics Management Information Systems and Defence Aviation Rules – DARs) and supports the Defence Capability Plan workstreams that are well under way.

The NZDF Approved Maintenance Organisation (AMO) started operating from 9 October 2023. This represents a significant milestone in our transition to a contemporary aviation airworthiness framework and is a major achievement not only for the AMO, but also the Air Force and wider Defence Force.

The DARs framework is aligned with global best practice, providing greater flexibility and freedom in continually improving our processes and procedures to match how we operate.

As we continue to mature as an AMO, it is great to see the various facets within the DARs framework work together in order to maximise our collective organisational benefit.

This year has seen our DLC(A) personnel actively supporting the Air Force response efforts to disaster-stricken areas across New Zealand and providing humanitarian aid overseas. Our maintenance teams have worked tirelessly (often behind the scenes) to ensure our capabilities are maximised to best effect.

This effort has been against a backdrop of workforce hollowness, high attrition and broader societal challenges. In contrast, we have seen a post-Covid resurgence of traditional team building activities, such as adventure training, inter-base/inter-service sports, squadron training days and formal dinners.

Collaboration and partnerships have also been key to our success. Over the past two years, we have actively engaged with industry partners, other government agencies and international allies to enhance interoperability and information sharing. By leveraging shared knowledge and resources, we have gained valuable insights and we are developing best practice and strengthening our collective capabilities.

The past two years have been marked by significant achievements and challenges for the DLC(A) team. As I noted at the beginning of my tenure, it is the calibre of people that underpins the myriad of successes across our diverse portfolio. It has been my absolute honour to work with you all and I wish the new LC(A), Group Captain Adam Death, all the very best for the future.

# Support to Vanuatu after Lola

B | EDITOR  
Y | REBECCA QUILLIAM



**Tropical Cyclone Lola launched cyclone season in the Pacific with wildly destructive consequences. Initial estimates reported more than 43,000 people were affected from damage to homes, schools, gardens and infrastructure.**

**A**s part of the Defence Force support to Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade's (MFAT) response to the cyclone, the Air Force deployed a P-8A Poseidon and crew on its first Humanitarian Aid and Disaster Relief operation.

On the mission the P-8A crew conducted reconnaissance of affected islands in co-ordination with Royal Australian Air Force and FANC (New Caledonian Armed Forces) partners, which also provided air support. This information was passed to the Government of Vanuatu to assist in their analysis as part of the overall Aotearoa New Zealand support package coordinated by the MFAT.

Once the damage had been assessed, a C-130 Hercules flew in 13,000kg of essential relief supplies including shelter tool kits, mother and infant kits, family hygiene kits, tarpaulins, water containers, chainsaws and generators.

Two Defence Force Deployable Joint Interagency Taskforce personnel were part of a five-member team of disaster response experts from the National Emergency Management Agency and MFAT.

"The ability to support our Pacific neighbours in times of need is a critical output for the Defence Force and so we were glad we were able to demonstrate the responsiveness and capabilities of the P-8A that has taken over the role the P-3K2 fleet provided so well for so long," Air Component Commander Air Commodore Andy Scott said.

"In parallel with this our Air Movements staff did an outstanding job preparing and loading the aid onto the Hercules to get it into the affected areas as quickly as possible."

Air Movements logistics specialist Leading Aircraftman (LAC) Josh Davenport said the day before the Hercules left Auckland with the supplies, some of the team spent the day building pallets for the items.





"So it was a big day for them. There were five pallets of gear that held all sorts of supplies. The Hercules was completely full - there was a lot to do, but it was good."

A small crew of Air Movements' personnel, loadmasters went on the mission taking care of loading and unloading the items, LAC Davenport said.

"Usually we take more people for the HADR missions, but there wasn't much room inside the aircraft with all the supplies packed in.

"At Vanuatu we were only on the ground for about 45 minutes to an hour. We didn't even shut the engines down," he said.

Hercules pilot Flight Lieutenant (FLTLT) Angus Knox was the co-pilot on the 10-hour round trip to Vanuatu.

"Luckily the airport itself was unaffected. We had been told beforehand that all the services were available, which can sometimes be a concern after these sorts of events.

"It was quite a bulky load that we took with us, but well within the capabilities of the Hercules," FLTLT Knox said.

"These missions are definitely satisfying. I think it's part of the reason why most of us here at No. 40 Squadron joined up - knowing you can directly contribute something. We're not one step removed, we're literally delivering the aid directly to the people who need it. So it's definitely a gratifying experience knowing we're helping out.

"There was an Australian C-17 on the ground with us as well, so it was a joint effort of Pacific partners pitching in where they can. That was cool to see them there as well."

**"It's always a good feeling doing something positive and helping those in need. It's quite humbling as well. I know we are doing something good and gives us a bit of a purpose as well."**

**- Leading Aircraftman  
Josh Davenport**

## Combined effort to rescue injured tramper



**An Air Force NH90 helicopter crew joined forces with civilian emergency medical services and a Police-led Land Search & Rescue (LandSAR) team to successfully winch an injured tramper out of dense bush in a remote part of the Waikato.**

**T**he man had broken his leg in a narrow valley about 35km west of Hamilton. The terrain and gusty weather conditions prevented a civilian helicopter and paramedic from reaching him.

The NH90 captain, Flight Lieutenant (FLT) Hamish Park, said the mission took place after careful assessment to ensure the rescue could be safely carried out.

"We first landed at a staging area to consult the Police LandSAR controller, then located the injured person in the bush and winched down the two Defence Force medics.

"Then we waited back at the staging area while they treated the tramper and prepared him to be extracted. Once we got the call they were ready, we returned to the scene and winched out the patient in a stretcher, escorted by a medic, and then his wife, also escorted by a medic."

The pair was flown to Hamilton Airport and the man transferred to hospital by ambulance.

"It was a fantastic team effort between agencies," FLT Park said.

"Great co-ordination was provided throughout by the on-scene civilian aircraft and the support from all involved – from LandSAR to airfield operations and Air BP refuelling at Hamilton – was exemplary."

It was always rewarding to bring people out of bad situations, FLT Park said.

"I'm proud of the NH90 crew, everyone did a brilliant job – but it was particularly satisfying that the Air Force and various agencies worked so well together to use the most suitable platform available for a rescue with the best possible result.

"We train extensively for these situations and it really paid off out there," he said.





## Poseidon finds suspect fishing boats in vast Pacific Ocean search

**The latest deployment of the P-8A Poseidon to a multi-national fisheries operation has identified 74 fishing vessels in a vast search area.**

**O**f the 74, three were identified as being of interest for potential breaches of fishing regulations and reported to the Pacific Forum Fisheries Agency (FFA) as part of efforts to tackle illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing.

The two-week Operation Kurukuru focussed on the Exclusive Economic Zones and adjacent high seas pockets of the Cook Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Fiji, Kiribati, Nauru, Niue, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Republic of Marshall Islands, Solomon Islands, Tokelau, Tonga, Tuvalu and Vanuatu – an area covering approximately 21.3 million square kilometres.

Air Component Commander Air Commodore Andy Scott was pleased to see the effectiveness of the Poseidon being demonstrated in the Pacific.

“The FFA operations aim to safeguard the marine resources of Pacific Island nations and the Western Central Pacific Ocean. We have a long history of supporting the FFA with our P-3K2 Orion and now our P-8A aircraft.

“With so many Pacific nations plus Australia, France, New Zealand and the United States working together to combat illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing, the chances of being caught breaching regulations are great.”

The FFA-coordinated operation included 25 seconded officers to the Regional Fisheries Surveillance Centre from New Zealand, Australia, Fiji, Kiribati, Niue, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu, United States and Vanuatu.

The officers received training in order to improve capability to collate, analyse and filter data to assist national and regional surveillance efforts in the fight against illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing.



## Supporting Solomon Islands during Pacific Games

**A group of New Zealand Defence Force personnel, with two NH90 helicopters, has arrived in Honiara to support the Royal Solomon Islands Police Force (RSIPF), as the country hosts the Pacific Games.**

**A**bout 5000 athletes, officials and support staff are participating in the Games, with many thousands more visitors expected in Solomon Islands for the event.

Athletes, including an approximately 45-strong team from New Zealand, will participate in 24 sports during the Games, which started late last month and will finish early this month.

As part of preparations for hosting the major sporting event, the Solomon Islands Government requested security support. Members of the Defence Force joined personnel from Australia, Fiji and Papua New Guinea in assisting the RSIPF to deliver a safe and secure Games.

New Zealand has a long-standing partnership with Solomon Islands, including on security matters. The Defence Force currently deploys personnel as part of the Solomon Islands International Assistance Force (SIAF), alongside the Australian Defence Force and Republic of Fiji Military Forces. Numbers have been boosted under the SIAF mandate to include around 90 Defence Force personnel, to provide extra resources during the busy Games period.

Task force deputy commander and senior national officer for the Defence Force contingent, Colonel (COL) Duncan George, said personnel would be working alongside their Australian and Pacific partners to support the RSIPF with security for the Games.

“The Pacific Games is a big event on the sporting calendar and one many Pacific athletes aspire to compete in,” COL George said.

“Solomon Islands asked for assistance to help ensure the Games are safe, successful and enjoyed by everyone involved.

“We’re delighted to be here supporting our partners in Solomon Islands as they host this fantastic event.”

The majority of the Defence Force contingent are Air Force personnel who have operated two NH90 helicopters in Solomon Islands. The aircraft will be used to transport RSIPF members as well as personnel from Pacific partners who are supporting the Games.

The NZDF deployment was for approximately three weeks.





# Aviator of the Year

B | EDITOR  
Y | REBECCA QUILLIAM

## Senior Intelligence Specialist Corporal Joseph Lavery is the Royal New Zealand Air Force's newest Aviator of the Year for his work around operational Defence Force deployments.

**T**he Aviator of the Year is awarded annually to the serviceperson who takes action to make a significant and positive contribution to the Air Force and Defence Force, and who personifies our core values.

Corporal (CPL) Lavery had been instrumental in the development of the Defence Force's capacity to provide specialist intelligence support to deployed personnel and to other government agencies (OGA), his nomination for the award said.

"His work within this area has enhanced the Royal New Zealand Air Force and Defence Force's reputation with partners and OGAs over the past year.

"CPL Lavery developed a number of unique skillsets, learnt on multiple deployments working with overseas partners...CPL Lavery has brought these skills back into the workplace and helped substantially to improve unit outputs," the nomination said.

The 28-year-old from Methven joined the Air Force's Intelligence trade because of the opportunities to travel.

"I have always been interested in world affairs and what's going on internationally and intelligence seemed like a great option. I talked with someone about the trades in the Air Force and they told me that if you want to travel, join intelligence."

The advice was sound and over the past six years CPL Lavery has been sent on numerous deployments around the world.

Following his training, CPL Lavery was posted to No. 230 Squadron at Base Auckland, with his main role supporting No. 5 Squadron's P-3K2 Orions.

In the past three years his deployments have expanded to working in tri-service or Joint Headquarters intelligence roles.

"Oftentimes, because we have a different background or perspective we can be quite creative about the way we approach problems, we can get quite a lot of scope to approach things in a really awesome and unique way," he said.

"When we deploy, we're out there to have an effect, you're trying to make a situation better. There are many people and groups of people who have bad intentions which don't align with our values as Kiwis. The NZDF has given me and the teams I have worked in the opportunity to contribute towards creating a safer and more secure environment by better understanding these situations."

But the most gratifying part of his job was working with colleagues on missions, CPL Lavery said.

"What's incredibly rewarding about this service is when you get someone who comes in and is keen to get involved, you can give them some of your experience to get them to the point where they can do it themselves, then they go away and do us all proud. That's where you get growth in the service. It's a big part of why I enjoy deploying."

Intelligence is "an awesome trade" because it is operationally focussed, he said.

"Through intelligence we can provide the commanders with information that informs decision-making. The goal is to provide accurate and actionable intelligence, which helps to inform a meaningful decision."

Last year CPL Lavery was part of the Defence Force contingent at the Queen's funeral – a unique opportunity.

"It was our final duty for Her late Majesty and our first for His Majesty. Having marched in the funeral precession, past the Palace up to Wellington Arch, we were positioned perfectly to see Her Majesty being transferred from the gun carriage into the hearse. I will never forget it."

Now, based in Wellington, CPL Lavery works to support New Zealand missions.

"We protect deployed New Zealanders, we make sure they are safe and continue to be safe if things change. The world is changing at the moment."

He said it was wonderful to have been recognised for the work he has done during his career.

"I have deployed a lot and it's been hefty. My partner is an absolute superstar. There's no way I could have done it without the support from her and my family. She knows how important this is to me."

**"When you deploy in my trade, you are often in a small team going into a big mission. It's cool to bring a tiny piece of Kiwi to these huge multi-national missions."**





# Sportsperson of the Year

WORDS | REBECCA QUILLIAM  
PHOTOS | SGT VANESSA PARKER

**National and international success in canoe marathon racing while managing the demands of her job has resulted in Leading Aircraftman (LAC) Sarah Lockwood winning this year's Sportsperson of the Year award.**

**N**ational and international success in canoe marathon racing while managing the demands of her job has resulted in Leading Aircraftman (LAC) Sarah Lockwood winning this year's Sportsperson of the Year award.

LAC Lockwood said there were "lots of deserving athletes" at the sports awards and she felt honoured to accept the award.

"I feel as though all of the hard work that I have putting in throughout the year has finally paid off, and has definitely been worth the personal sacrifices I have made. I was just happy to be attending the sports awards, I didn't realise I was going to be lucky enough to receive one of the awards, let alone one of the bigger prizes," she said.

Described as a "passionate, dedicated and professional athlete", in her citation, LAC Lockwood had two wins in the Open Women's Marathon events for K1 and K2 at the national level and placed 13th in the marathon event at the World Championships in Denmark this year.

To attain and maintain these achievements the Force Health Protection technician dedicates energy "above and beyond the expectations of someone so junior in the Royal New Zealand Air Force, which is testament to her dedication and drive", the citation said.

"LAC Lockwood is a member of the RNZAF Strike Masters Swim Club, the Auckland Base Sustainability Team, and has been elected as the "Voice of the Future" Junior Rank member on the NZDF Climate Change Response Programme Board. She is also an active mentee within the Air Force Mentoring Scheme. In addition, Leading Aircraftman Lockwood has been a leader in the School to Skies Camp in Ohakea as a Deputy Flight Commander and is currently studying towards a Graduate Diploma in Environmental Health."

Of the goals LAC Lockwood has achieved throughout the year, she was most proud of representing her country, Aotearoa New Zealand on the world stage, she said. It is a goal she hopes to repeat in 2024.

"I'm trying to qualify for the world's team again next year, with the aim of securing an Open Women's K1 and/or a K2 spot in the team. I have planned to pair up with one of the girls who was in the marathon team this year to make a K2, and we are going to test how we paddle together during some down time at the first sprint event of the season in December. If we work well, we'll aim to race at Marathon Nationals and maybe Worlds next year," she said.

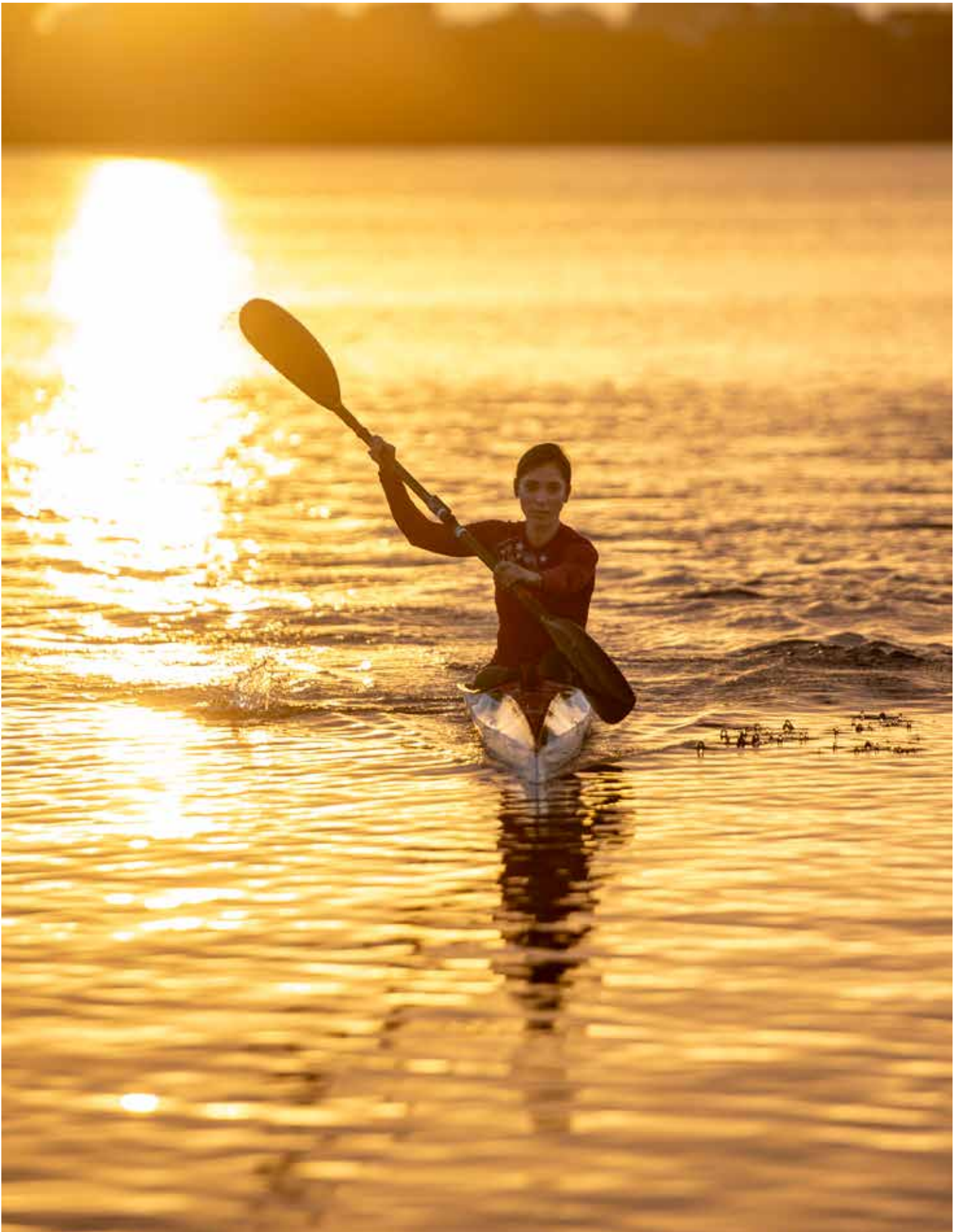
"There will be some tough competition at the New Zealand Marathon Nationals in 2024, but I'm keen to keep training hard and represent New Zealand in Croatia next August, if I can."

The citation said the comradeship and commitment LAC Lockwood demonstrates daily to further her colleagues within the Air Force includes encouraging physical training activities and then demonstrating by example how this can benefit personal health and well-being, the citation said.

"LAC Lockwood's passion for sport and well-being in all aspects of body, soul and mind has inspired the diverse people of rank and age at her unit and beyond to get moving. She is a deserving recipient of the Outstanding Sports Award."

LAC Lockwood has also been nominated by the Sports Council to go forward for the Defence Force Person of the Year Awards.

**"While competing I felt as though I was not only representing my country, but also the Air Force and wider defence force."**





## Silver Dagger

**Under the cloak of darkness two NH90 helicopters recently flew in formation along the peaks of the Southern Alps in support of a New Zealand Special Forces exercise, Silver Dagger. The exercise tested the skills the pilots will need in future challenging environments. And with wild weather, mountainous terrain and in the dead of night, it didn't get much more challenging.**

WORDS | MITCHELL ALEXANDER & REBECCA QUILLIAM  
PHOTOS | SAM SHEPHERD









**T**he Special Forces exercise took place around various South Island locations. While specific details of the activity remain classified, the exercise tested the force projection of a New Zealand Special Forces Task Unit to conduct crisis response operations.

The exercise was supported by No. 230, No.3 and No. 40 Squadrons, along with support from the NZ Army's Catering Platoon, 3 Combat Service Support Battalion, 2/4 and 3/6 Battalion. Partners on the exercise included members of the Singaporean Armed Forces and the Australian Defence Force.

Based out of West Melton, near Burnham Military Camp, the exercise simulated projection to a fictional location.

The exercise comprised of a series of short battle handling exercises focussing on consular support prior to and during crisis events, intelligence surveillance and reconnaissance, fixed and rotary wing infiltration to conduct operations and special operations.

Silver Dagger was a successful training exercise with many moving parts, including the fixed-wing deployment and recovery of task unit personnel, helicopter integration in support to Special Forces mission sets and the use of C-130 Hercules for tactical air land operations.

NH90 pilot Flight Lieutenant (FLT) George Bellamy said undertaking these types of exercises involves a lot of tactical thinking.

The mission that FLT Bellamy flew involved a scenario of flying into complex areas that were simulated to be high threat, in formation with another NH90. The flying was performed with aircrew needing to wear night vision goggles, with no moonlight to help.

"We based out of West Melton and the missions ranged from Dip Flat down to Tekapo. So it was across most of the South Island. We flew around mountains, hills and into airfields. We also landed on a coastline just south of Cape Campbell at the top of the South Island.

"It was a real variety of flying and there were long nights to achieve some pretty cool missions."

The aircrew could fly as long as seven hours between 8pm and 3am, FLT Bellamy said.



**“We try hard to give them the best platform to do their job. It’s certainly some of the most enjoyable flying – particularly by night. Night makes it so much harder, but so much more enjoyable, especially when it all goes according to plan.”**

**- Flight Lieutenant George Bellamy**

“It was all done under the cover of darkness. It was a reverse cycle to normal – so no daytime flying, which meant we needed to think about fatigue more than normal.”

With challenging weather and mountainous terrain it was important the pilots avoided flying into areas difficult to fly out of, he said.

“You’re always looking at what the weather is doing and what escape routes there are to get back to safe areas. There’s added complexity when you operate with another helicopter, particularly when you are flying to separate areas and rendezvousing at a specific place and time.”

There was constant communication between the pilots and detailed planning that went into each flight, FLTLT Bellamy said.

Training like this ensures New Zealand Special Forces provides a trusted, nationally integrated and globally connected full-spectrum special operations force that is orientated and prepared to support New Zealand’s national interests.



# Reflecting on 2023

The year kicked off at a high tempo, which was maintained throughout.





The East Coast suffered a king hit from Cyclone Gabrielle, and squadrons throughout the Air Force were called to action in the aftermath of the devastating storm. Our efforts were also needed in the Pacific for humanitarian aid and disaster relief missions, we navigated the retirement of our hardworking Orions and welcomed four new P-8A Poseidon aircraft. We also welcomed a change in top Air Force leadership, participated in major exercises here and abroad, and worked with agencies on a number of operations. Here are just a few of the highlights from 2023.



#### 1. Tacex

No. 40 Squadron 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.

#### 2. Gabrielle

Air Force provided support after Tropical Cyclone Gabrielle crashed into the East Coast on Valentine's Day leaving 11 people dead, roads destroyed, towns and residents isolated and communications systems down.

#### 3. Orion fleet retirement

After 57 years of service No. 5 Squadron's fleet of P-3K2 Orions came to rest. As the last two aircraft touched down at Base Woodbourne members of the squadron bid a haere ra to the planes.

#### 4. Wigram 100

A celebration of 100 years since the birth of New Zealand military aviation was celebrated at Christchurch's Air Force Museum of New Zealand in Wigram.

#### 5. Mobility Guardian

The Air Force participated in a major international exercise out of Guam designed to test the fast movement of aircraft over long distances. It involved about 3000 personnel and 70 aircraft.

#### 6. Aid to Bougainville

A C-130 Hercules flew to Papua New Guinea, carrying aid following a volcanic eruption which has affected more than 8000 people. Ash fall posed challenges for food and water security.











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### 7. Operational Poseidons

The final P-8A Poseidon aircraft joined No. 5 Squadron's whānau in July, just as the fleet became operational.

### 8. Talisman Sabre

Air Force personnel took part in a large-scale international combat exercise in Australia, forming part of an Anzac unit contributing to an aviation battle group.

### 9. DoC Traps

No. 3 Squadron delivered 560 traps weighing 4400kg into the Ruahine ranges to support New Zealand Department of Conservation Te Papa Atawhai pest control operations.

### 10. MWD Facility

A new military working dog facility has opened in Base Ohakea, featuring large equipment storage areas, exercise yards and CCTV along the kennel lines, as well as a hydrotherapy pool for the dogs.

### 11. P-8A SAR

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

### 12. Change of Command

The Air Force welcomed a new chief as Air Vice-Marshal Darryn Webb took over the Chief of Air Force role in October.

### 13. Op Antarctica

The New Zealand Defence Force's long-running support to Antarctica New Zealand and science and research programmes is under way for the summer season as the first Air Force flights to the ice began.

### 14. Mahi Tahi

Nearly 300 personnel from New Zealand's Army, Navy and Air Force took part in Operation Mahi Tahi, in Fiji, carrying out humanitarian assistance and disaster relief training and other tasks.



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## A Pasifika celebration

**B** | SENIOR COMMUNICATIONS ADVISOR  
**Y** | SIMONE MILLAR

**A celebration of Pasifika people took place at Base Woodbourne recently with the first ever Air Pasifika Fono.**



**M**ore than 40 personnel participated in the biannual event, which aims to bring together Pasifika people within the Air Force.

“The Fono is about our people coming together, working together and moving forward together,” Corporal (CPL) Dennis Tommy from the Air Pasifika Fono planning committee said.

“We really hope to grow our Pasifika people networks by maintaining our sense of Pasifika community and cultural connection.”

Currently Pasifika people make up 4.6% of the Defence Force, both Regular Force (5.4%) and Reserves (3%), including civilian staff and 2.9% within the Air Force.

The Fono is a way the Air Force can contribute to achieving goals outlined in the NZDF Strategic Plan 2019-2025: Operationalising Strategy 25, and the vehicle by which in turn the Air Force Pacific community can support the Chief of Air Force in achieving Air Force outputs.

“The plan is to use our employee-led Pasifika initiatives to echo our military strategic plan, reflecting evolutions in Government Defence policy. It highlights the importance of the Pacific to New Zealand’s national security.

“It really emphasises integration, acting as ‘one force’ while valuing diversity of skill, thought, and function,” CPL Tommy said.

The Fono included workshops discussing Pasifika identity in the Air Force, Pasifika sports and games, preparing a traditional umu and meals, a fiafia night with traditional performances from the local Marlborough Nav Pasifika community group and a panel of motivational speakers.

“We are creating an environment where we can come together as Pasifika people, to engage, collaborate and navigate to what Air Pasifika can become moving forward. Hopefully we are making small steps in the right direction in continuing to support our Pasifika personnel within the Air Force,” he said.

**“The Pacific Islands are made up of many nations and cultures but it is our ‘common culture and likeness’ that makes Pasifika unique.”**

**- Corporal Dennis Tommy**



# NZDF takes out top spot at Rainbow Excellence Awards



**The New Zealand Defence Force has been named as the winner of both the All-Accor Progress Award, and the overall Supreme Award, at the Rainbow Excellence Awards for continuous progress in relation to the inclusion of rainbow communities.**

**C**hief of Defence Force Air Marshal (AM) Kevin Short said he was proud of the strides the organisation has made.

“We want our rainbow communities to feel welcome, safe and valued. This award symbolises how far we have come as an inclusive Defence Force that recognises the strengths that a diverse and inclusive workforce brings.”

In the past year, the Defence Force has hosted a Pride in Defence conference that aimed to inspire, educate and celebrate rainbow communities and allies within the Defence Force, and partnered with Pride Pledge to show the organisation's continued commitment to supporting rainbow communities.

The Defence Force was also reaccredited the Rainbow Tick, rolled out training workshops with Pride Pledge, and supported the Big Gay Out event.

“The Defence Force is committed to being an inclusive organisation and we welcome anyone who wants to serve. We still have work to do, but this win serves as a powerful reminder that the efforts we are putting in are making a difference, not only within our ranks, but also across Aotearoa New Zealand,” AM Short said.

“I would like to extend my thanks to all of our people who have been the driving force behind this positive change. We should be proud of how far we have come and the progress we continue to make.”

The Rainbow Excellence Awards were held in Auckland in late September. Air Vice-Marshal Tony Davies, the Vice Chief of the Defence Force, represented the Defence Force at the awards.



# An eye to Safety and Surface

B | MARY MARTIN &  
Y | WING COMMANDER HILTON BAKER

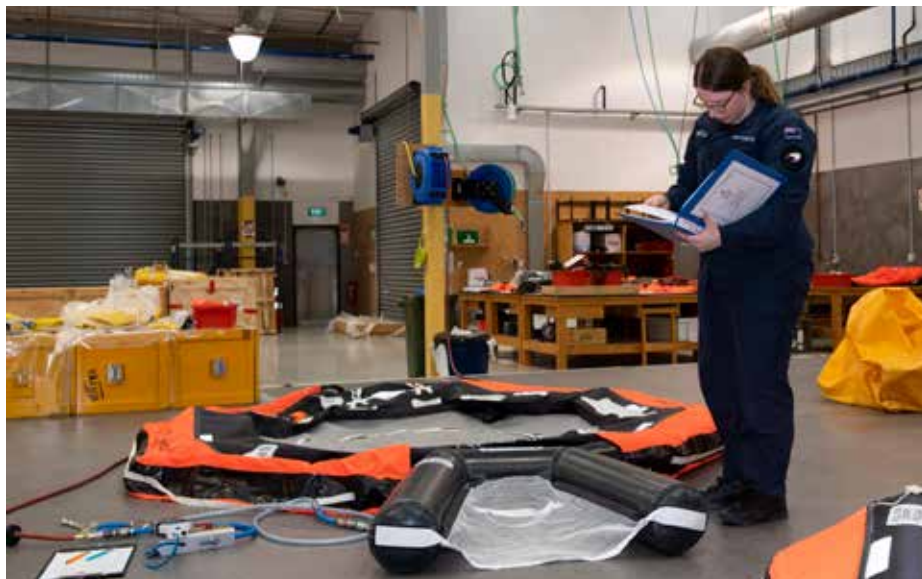
**Safety and Surface technicians are one of the seven technical trades, all of which make up more than 45% of Air Force personnel.**

**T**he technicians maintain the Air Force's aeronautical safety and survival equipment, fleet of parachutes (both personnel and cargo) and the painted surfaces of aircraft and components ensuring the continued airworthiness of Air Force aircraft and equipment.

The trade provides equipment and capabilities to deliver the operational outputs of the Defence Force. This includes cargo parachute and Minimum Aid Delivery Device (MADD pack) allowing equipment of all shapes and sizes to be delivered from aircraft to people on the surface at land and sea; Personal Aerial Delivery Equipment (PADE) allowing personnel to be inserted into an area of operation; Aeronautical Life Support Equipment (ALSE) that in the event of an emergency provides protection and survival equipment for the aircrew and passengers; and aircraft finishing which ensures corrosion protection and identification to aircraft and its components.

The Safety and Surface Trade provides support, locally, within our Pacific region, and globally.

Safety and Surface personnel have deployed to support operations in Europe, closer to home in the Pacific, and to Antarctica.





### Antarctica

Each year Safety and Surface deploys to Christchurch in support of New Zealand's contribution to the Joint Logistics Pool made up of New Zealand and American logistic assets. These deployments support science in Antarctica where personnel are often included as part of a small maintenance team who travel with Air Force aircraft to "The Ice", who are then available to provide repairs in what is the coldest, driest continent on earth. Safety and Surface trade personnel also have the opportunity to be seconded to Antarctica New Zealand to provide support services to the science programme being conducted at Scott Base.

### Europe

Safety and Surface personnel deployed as part of the wider No. 40 Squadron maintenance team to support a C-130 Hercules deployment to Europe to aid in Ukraine's self-defence from Russia. While deployed, the personnel were responsible for all Aircrew Life Support Equipment ranging from helmets which carry communication equipment and night vision goggles, through to the emergency equipment that everyone hopes to not need such as liferafts and lifejackets. Adding to this Safety and Surface personnel undertake aircraft operational level maintenance such as aircraft refuels, dispatching and after-flight servicing ensuring the aircraft can fly safely.

### Operation Pacific Relief: Tonga

Safety and Surface personnel deployed aboard HMNZS Canterbury as part of Pacific Relief Tonga Operation. While en route to the Kingdom of Tonga, Canterbury had to return to the maximum safe flying range of the NH90 to enable aircrew and medical staff, all wearing various items of Aeronautical Life Support Equipment to transport a patient with appendicitis to Auckland for medical help.

After the NH90 departed a P-3K2 Orion then made a number of passes over Canterbury and deployed Safety and Surface maintained survival packs (a Minimum Aid Delivery Device) containing items required for the Defence Force personnel aboard the ship to complete Covid PCR testing prior to arriving in Tonga.

Safety and Surface personnel remained with Canterbury for the entire Tonga Operation, supporting the flying operation and the restoration of services to the Kingdom of Tonga. They worked as part of the Deployed Headquarters assisting in the development and delivery of operational and contingency plans.

### Pacific Partnership 23

Safety and Surface personnel engage with the wider Defence Force, public service and international communities.

They were involved with Pacific Partnership 23 as cultural advisors operating in the wider Indo-Pacific region. The objective of Pacific Partnership 23 was to strengthen relationships across the region by completing community outreach tasks to improve the delivery of humanitarian assistance and disaster-relief preparedness.

**“Safety and Surface technicians ensure Defence Force personnel are safe to do their job, and the continued airworthiness of Air Force aircraft and equipment.”**



# Sergeant Raz Malkin's royal appointment

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



**Sergeant Derek “Raz” Malkin has embarked on a very special royal mission with the help of his friends from RNZAF Bases Woodbourne and Ohakea.**

**T**he Air Force Museum of New Zealand's Ground Support Equipment technician is hard at work on the conservation and restoration of a rare RNZAF Queen Mary trailer.

Queen Marys were built in the 1940s and were named after the famous luxury ocean liner-turned troopship because of their size. They were designed specifically for the recovery of aircraft parts and wreckage.

While the size of the Queen Mary looks daunting, the task of restoring it does not have Sergeant (SGT) Malkin rattled.

“It’s actually a lot of fun,” he says.

“There’s a bit of fluffing around because every measurement is imperial rather than metric. It means I’m making all the nuts and bolts myself and I had to get the team in the metal shop at Ohakea to source and cut the steel. The goose neck (front section of the trailer) had to be shortened and the team at Woodbourne did all the welding and restoration. It has become a whole of Air Force project.

**“Everyone says it is a bit of a relic and so am I, so we are good together.”**

Work on the Queen Mary began before to Covid and was then put on hold, but the museum team is now back in the swing of it.

Collections Manager Darren Hammond says the Queen Mary was an important addition to the collection.

“Specialist MT (motor transport) vehicles have played a huge part in supporting the Air Force’s flying operations over the decades and the Queen Mary trailer is a great example of this.”

The trailer was used at Wigram from the 1940s until the base closed in the 1990s.

“It had a bit of an interesting life after it left Wigram,” Darren says.



"As far as we know it was used as a road cartage trailer and then a farm trailer – the goose neck was lengthened and the trailer itself was shortened – so there is a lot of work to do to restore it."

The restoration means taking it back to its original specifications from 1940 – 34 feet long with a 3-tonne capacity. This means making the front of the trailer shorter and the body longer – as well as taking out a few of the knocks the trailer's interesting life has handed out.

SGT Malkin joined the Air Force and sat his Heavy Transport licence driving a Queen Mary around the streets of Henderson, almost taking out a lamp post along the way, but that is another story.

"They're a clever design – the box girders mean it is light and strong. It has been great to have the help of the other Air Force bases along the way and I hope everyone will come along to see Queen Mary once she is finished."

Once the structure is sound, SGT Malkin has enlisted the help of Hendriks Master Blasters to sandblast and paint the trailer for long-term conservation. It will be returned to its original Air Force blue.



### QUEEN MARY – THE VERSATILE ROYAL

Queen Mary trailers were manufactured to an Air Ministry design which required a trailer large enough to transport a fighter aircraft.

Manufactured at Andover in England by Tasker Trailers, they were a common sight at Air Force bases for more than 40 years. They were used to cart everything from aircraft to stores around the bases, and the occasional Air Force rugby team!

Incredibly versatile and easy to operate, nearly 4000 of these trailers were produced during the war. Many hundreds of thousands more were made as 1:76 scale Airfix modelling kits with matching Coles Mk. 7 cranes.

Queen Marys were towed by either a Bedford or Crossley tractor unit.

#### LEFT

SGT Raz Malkin standing in front of the Queen Mary trailer.

#### MIDDLE

Two drivers standing beside a tractor truck, number plate EJ2267, with a Queen Mary transporter trailer, in front of Avenger NZ2504 gate guardian at RNZAF Base Te Rapa.

#### TOP RIGHT

Captured German V1 flying bomb on a Queen Mary trailer at RNZAF Station Wigram.

Image from the Geoffrey Davis Newlands personal collection.

#### BOTTOM RIGHT

Officers and Sergeants rugby teams on a Queen Mary transporter outside the Officers' Mess at Ohakea, before their annual rugby match. Officers won 12–3.





## Security Forces adopt electric bikes

**Air Force Security Forces have adopted the UBCO 2X2 electric bikes, finding they make patrolling easier and faster.**

**T**he Defence Force began trialling the bikes in 2020 with each of the services putting them through their paces.

Security Forces personnel are now using the bikes at all three bases to conduct day-to-day security tasks, which include fence checks, internal patrols and emergency responses.

“The bikes have proven to be efficient and versatile on and off road. They are light and small, allowing personnel to cover areas where beforehand patrolling on foot was the only option,” said Wing Commander (WGCDR) Ivan Green, Deputy Director Aerospace Delivery, Capability Branch.

With a speed of up to 50km/h areas can be covered more often and the bikes provide the security teams with an effective and fast response capability.

“Having that ability not only makes their job easier but also aids in the overall level of domestic and operational security the Security Forces trade can provide.

“Teams have been impressed by the minimal maintenance the UBCO bikes require. Requiring a car licence to operate has simplified the training requirements, meaning people can use this transport relatively easily.”

The bikes can also cross different types of terrain on and off base, from water-saturated airfield perimeters to sand dunes and dirt tracks at remote air weapons ranges.

“All of these characteristics have meant other units have started to look at how they could also use this type of capability,” WGCDR Green said.

“The RNZAF Security Forces role within the Air Force adapts in order to be more effective. The UBCOs help in optimising the standard of security in order to maintain and improve the protection of NZDF personnel and assets.”

# Inter-base Rugby League

**B** | OIC RNZAF RUGBY LEAGUE  
**Y** | FLIGHT LIEUTENANT SKIP WARD



**Someone said, “Good things take time, great things take a long time and the best things take the longest time”. So getting two teams together for Inter-base Rugby League 2023 at Base Auckland was one of the best things.**

**D**uring the Covid-19 period Inter-base Rugby League and Inter-services for that matter, had been met with postponement and other barriers since 2019. Unperturbed, a few stalwarts hung true and continued to keep the code alive. Squadron Leader (Rtd) Beaufa Brown initiated a Tri-Nations plan, which in late 2022 Flight Lieutenant (FLTLT) Chris Moohan, Sergeant (SGT) Tash Wineera and FLTLT Skip Ward (amongst others) kicked into gear.

In looking forward to this we also needed to focus on rebuilding our team and management staff. Early 2023 supported by RNZAF Sport the Executive Team was formed and planning put in place for our future.

Inter-services was again cancelled in March this year and the planned Inter-base on Matariki Weekend also fell through, as the Base Ohakea field became unavailable. However Base Auckland agreed to squeeze us into their tight schedule, and so Inter-base was on. Personnel from Wellington and the bases arrived at Base Auckland for our AGM, and training. With 11 rookies and a long time between trainings the most was made of building up and preparing the squad.

SGT Tua Taru got the team warmed up and Leading Aircraftman (LAC) Dante Henry, Warrant Officer (W/O) Roy Robati and SGT Tai Benedito took the teams through skills training, tackle training and game play.

On game day and in front of a suitable crowd the Auckland and Ohakea teams faced off. Referee Simon Tasker made sure the game was played professionally. Game manager W/O Pete Nicholas coordinated several volunteers who jumped in to assist namely F/S Simon Marshall (touch line) and F/S Josh Larking (time keeper/scorer) with the OIC also running the touch line.

Jumping to an early lead Ohakea went into the break up 6–4. However as with some games it was to be a game of two halves. Second half and Auckland came out strong and refocused after the initial shock. Their play soon jelled and resulted in breaking down of Ohakea defences leading to a final score of 18–6.

As a code we sincerely thank our Hosts Base AK and in particular ESS, the BSO FLTLT Sam Marra and of course our supporters!

In addition thank you to our code sponsors – Craig Walker Building Removals, Auckland RSA and of course RNZAF Sport.

Lastly Inter-base and Inter-service 2024 competitions are planned for early in the year and we would love to see you involved. In particular as a code we certainly want to develop a female team so if you are interested please reach out to one of the team and come along.

## TOURNAMENT TROPHY WINNERS

**The Challenge Cup – (Winner)**  
Base Auckland

**The Cook Strait Cup – (Sportsmanship)**  
Base Ohakea

**The Keith Gell Cup – (MVP)**  
LAC P Afoa-Purcell

**Best Rookie**  
AC B McPaikie

**Best Back**  
AC D Thomson

**Best Forward**  
AC P Afoa-Purcell



# Air Force Tri-Nations Rugby League 2023:

## E Ngā Tauaarangi Mai Ngā Hou ē Whā

WORDS | FLIGHT LIEUTENANT SKIP WARD, OIC RNZAF RUGBY LEAGUE  
PHOTOS | CORPORALS MADDIE BUTCHER AND NAOMI JAMES



**Bringing together our partner Air Force teams from across the globe was an initiative begun several years ago by the Officer in Charge RNZAF Rugby League Squadron Leader (Rtd) Beaufa Brown.**

**T**his came to fruition following more than 12 months of planning and dedication by committees from the services of the Royal Air Force (RAF), Royal Australian Air Force (RAAF) and Royal New Zealand Air Force.

And what a fantastic tournament it became, not only setting a high standard in performance on the field with three exciting games but also through support to the local community in West Auckland and Bulls. This inaugural Tri-Nations Rugby League Tournament set the standard for those to follow but also placed foundations for other sports to utilise and benefit from.

Obviously this could not have been achieved without the support of many, including our sponsors, Deputy Chief of Air Force, RNZAF Sports Committee, Base Commands and the many units that managed to release their personnel in order to participate and support the event.

The first game was a battle of the tourists. Half-time saw a score of 16–8 to the RAAF and the final score 38–14 not indicative of the close-fought battle, although the RAAF were worthy winners with a deliberate kicking game and the RAF rueing their errors. Players of the game were Timothy Crellin (RAAF) and Keiron Prescott (RAF).

The second and third games were held at one of the oldest rugby clubs in the country, Bulls Rugby Club. The community, holding an interest in rugby league, asked for a delayed game so school children could attend and watch the RNZAF vs RAF match.

The RAF played with the benefit of having a game under their belt and held a good lead of 22–12 at half-time. However the RNZAF were not to be under-estimated and played with confidence and determination in the second half (even with a man in the bin). A deep RNZAF kick was caught by Ben MacManus gaining significant ground, the resulting play passed through numerous players the crowd screaming support and for a try in the left corner.



With the RNZAF tails up and a penalty in the final seconds the cool head of Matty Cole directed the kick to be taken and Des Tyrell ensured a drawn result at 32 all. Players of the game were Desmond Tyrell (RNZAF) and Keiron Prescott (RAAF).

The next day we welcomed our visitors to the Tūrangawaewae with pōwhiri and the ever-accommodating team of Wal Wallace and Ange Lambert facilitated a most memorable day. Gaining an understanding of New Zealand history as well as our Tūrangawaewae, the meaning behind the haka and how we are now embracing our Māori heritage were highlights, aptly told by our story teller and kaitiaki (guardian) Wal. Several members of the RAAF commented on how much they had to learn and could gain from what the RNZAF is doing.

The third game and a final setting for the ages. With the RAAF needing a win or draw to clinch the title the RNZAF had to win. Unfortunately due to other commitments and injuries the RNZAF was unable to field a full fit team.

As such the captain and executive committee made the tough call to effectively default, though with support of the RAF players we were able to field a team so that a full reserve list was available. This decision did not take away from the fact that both teams wanted to win.

This game was a brutal battle with both forward packs looking for dominance, though it was the kicking and running game out wide that had the RAAF leading, although the RNZAF had the final say in the first half scoring a much needed try just on half-time.

By some unusual coincidence the score was again 22-12 with the RAAF leading. In the second half with the sun and wind at their backs the RNZAF team came out determined, and dominated the centre of the field. This eventually began to take its toll on the RAAF with the RNZAF scoring again and again to jump ahead 24-22. The last ditch all or nothing effort from the RAAF was not to be and the RNZAF came away with the win.

At the function that evening the awards presented were Rugby League Tri-Nations Cup – RAAF and Most Valuable Player – RAF AS1 K Prescott.

Personally I cannot thank my executive team enough for their individual efforts to make this as successful as it was. Moo, Tash, Torps, Matty, Tai, and Callum well done team!

As it stands we are now looking ahead to 2025 and Tri-Nations in the United Kingdom. If you are interested seek out your Base Officer in Charge and get involved. With Air Commodore Andy Scott as our Code Champion and our passionate team, this is bound to be another highly successful venture. Nga mihi nui.



## RSA support

**All we want for Christmas is to be here when you need us.**

**A**s we head into the festive season, we know a lot of families will be worried about making ends meet. That, on top of the everyday stresses, means the additional expectations of the holiday season can seem overwhelming and push some to breaking point.

When you're thinking of where to turn for help, we know that the RSA might not be near the top of your list...but we should be.

Forget what you know about us, and take another look at the support the RSA can offer you and your whānau.

We've worked hard over recent years to move our organisation back to its roots. To return our focus to what is truly important, supporting Aotearoa New Zealand's veterans of military service and their whānau.

We've made it easier for you to access that support: We have over 250 support advisors right across the country, trained and ready to help. We've also been rolling out RSA support hubs in NZDF camps and bases around the country and plans are progressing to open a hub in an Air Force base in the New Year. Until that hub is open you can still contact one of our District Support Managers for support.



The kinds of support we provide to serving NZDF personnel could be anything from providing immediate hardship alleviation to families in need right through to making repairs on houses, or funding after-school care to provide respite to a military parent undergoing medical treatment.

Alongside our traditional support function, our new Veterans' Employment Service is helping a number of serving personnel transition out of the military. Our employment advisors can help by providing expert advice and connecting those looking for work with employers who understand the value of their military service.

We also provide support to whānau. We know that the families of our military personnel experience many different hardships; from long absences, frequent relocations, even disruption to family routines caused by short notice deployments.

The support they provide to our serving personnel is incomparable and we want to make sure they are looked after too.

If you're out travelling this summer, we encourage you to call in to one of our hospitality-based RSAs. There are venues around the country that can provide food and fellowship as you travel – and as a member of the NZDF, you are welcome into any RSA, just show your NZDF ID card at the door.

**Wherever you find yourself this holiday period, if you or your whānau need support – please get in touch.**

### DISTRICT SUPPORT MANAGERS:

#### Northland

Charlie Lamb – 027 421 0990

#### Auckland

Tony Miller – 027 425 1574

#### Waikato/King Country/Bay of Plenty

Tricia Hague – 027 388 6243

#### Wairarapa/Hawke's Bay/East Coast

Janet Castell – 027 239 1008

#### Central/Wellington

Danny Nelson – 027 202 3931

#### Nelson/Marlborough/Westland

Rob Todman – 021 256 2180

#### Canterbury

Jo Frew – 021 208 4622

#### Otago/Southland

Niall Shepherd – 027 600 3104

#### Australia

Valerie Church – +61 416 755 125

### VETERAN EMPLOYMENT ADVISORS

#### Northland, Auckland, Bay of Plenty and Waikato (less Taupo)

Tony Wright – 021 0274 6777

#### Taupo, Taranaki, Gisborne, Manawatu, Hawke's Bay

Dave Benfell – 021 725 481

#### Wairarapa, Wellington

Michelle Tebbutt – 021 193 6261

#### South Island

Sam Platt – 021 0910 8669

# Notices

## INCREASE OF ELECTRIC VEHICLE CHARGERS

**NZDF electric vehicles (EV) will have more access to NZDF EV chargers at camps and bases from October 30.**

One or two EV chargers at Trentham, Linton, Ohakea, Papakura, Devonport, and Whenuapai will be dedicated for NZDF EV use (ie anyone with an NZDF EV RFID fob). These chargers will only be able to be activated by an NZDF EV fob.

Burnham, Woodbourne, and Waiouru do not have enough NZDF EVs to warrant dedicated chargers.

NZDF is actively working towards increasing the number of EV chargers at NZDF locations.

If you require more information, please get in touch with [EVProject@nzdf.mil.nz](mailto:EVProject@nzdf.mil.nz).

## 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.**

[rnzafanatsec@gmail.com](mailto:rnzafanatsec@gmail.com)  
PO Box 164, Kirwee 7543







**B** | CORPORAL  
**Y** | NAOMI JAMES

This shot was taken during the sunny 22/2 Wings graduation parade at Base Ohakea. I've captured a couple of these graduations previously, but with almost 100 aviators present on parade was something I hadn't seen during a Wings graduation before. Keeping on one side of the parade helped to capture this image showcasing these numbers during an inwards dress with the recently introduced to service P-8 Poseidon as a fitting backdrop.







# PLAN ASTRA