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ON THE MARK

How our new History and Heritage Branch is coming to life – Centre
Stomping the PTSD stigma

FLGOFF Katrina Brown

THE Air Force, Navy and Army ensigns flew over the highest point in Australia to raise awareness of PTSD. About 70 staff and trainees of the RAAF School of Technical Training (RAAFSTT) in Wagga Wagga climbed from Thredbo to the summit of Mount Kosciuszko on March 11.

The event titled “Stomp the summit, crush the stigma” involved Army, Navy and Air Force personnel who climbed alongside co-workers, friends and families to show solidarity and combat the stigma surrounding mental health disorders.

The climb was inspired by CPL Andrew Summers, of RAAFSTT, an Iraqi war veteran who has campaigned to raise awareness of PTSD after suffering through his own battles.

CPL Summers said he had struggled with nightmares, anxiety attacks, feelings of shame, guilt and feeling alone after deploying to the Middle East in 2008. “In 2012 I attempted to take my own life and sought help after being diagnosed with PTSD,” he said.

“Since then I’ve made it my mission to raise awareness of PTSD and encourage others to seek help and crush the stigma.”

In 2014, CPL Summers completed a 40km pack march on Manly Beach and in 2015 he marched from Sydney to Newcastle over five days in an effort to raise awareness and help others. Many of the supporters for the Mount Kosciuszko climb travelled from interstate to join the RAAFSTT team and wore symbolic bright red shirts.

The red shirts, mixed with the large body of troops in uniform moving up the mountain, signified the body cannot function without the support of blood pumping through it, just as someone suffering mental health issues cannot function without the support of family or friends.

CPL Summers said he hoped the event would become an annual activity. “For those of us who suffer mental health issues such as PTSD, it’s like facing a mountain we need to overcome,” he said.

CO RAAFSTT WGCDR Dean Collins said the climb was an important reminder of the battle many ADF members face. “The estimated prevalence of PTSD in Defence members is about 8.3 per cent, with 50 per cent of those receiving treatment in the past 12 months,” he said.

“Defence has implemented many health initiatives to reduce stigma and increase awareness of PTSD and other mental health conditions, and events such as this have a special opportunity to impact lives and make a difference.”

He said it was important for members experiencing mental health issues to seek help early.
AN indigenous smoking ceremony marked the completion of reconstructive works at the Australian War Memorial. Photos: CPL Dan Pinhorn

Smoke signals how far we have come

SGT Dave Morley

A SMOKING ceremony at the Australian War Memorial (AWM) on March 29 marked the completion of major reconstructive works in the commemorative area.

AWM Director Brendan Nelson said the ceremony included the reconstruction and replacement of the original 26 stone-carved figures, designed by artist Leslie Bowles in 1939. They featured Australian fauna and the faces of an Aboriginal man and woman.

“The intent of the sculptures was to represent Aboriginal understanding of the land and evoke the spirit of Australia,” he said.

“These figures are an acknowledgement of Australia’s Aboriginal people and their stewardship of the land and its creatures at the heart of the memorial.”

SGT Michelle Snape, from Air Force Gender Programs at Brindabella Park, Canberra, said these ceremonies were important because they showed not only indigenous members, but also members of the public and the ADF, how inclusive Defence is.

The ceremony was inspiring, as were the speakers,” she said.

“I’ve never been to a smoking ceremony before so I feel quite honoured to be here today. It’s something my colleagues and I will definitely be encouraging other people to attend in the future.”

SGT Snape originally joined the Air Force in 2007 and wanted to represent her country in a role she believes in.

WOMEN SERVING WITH HONOUR

Australia has a long, proud military history stretching over more than a century and women have always formed an integral part of that story.

CDF ACM Mark Binskin said: “During WWII, about 3000 civilian nurses volunteered for active service, joining the 2000 enlisted members of the Australian Army Nursing Service.”

Women have always formed an integral part of the ADF engineering response towards a 25 per cent female workforce by 2023, while Army has set its sights on achieving 15 per cent female participation within the next six years.

They worked in clearing stations close to the frontline in France, Belgium and Britain, as well as in hospitals in the Middle East and India, and on allied hospital ships and trains.

Sadly, 25 Australian women died in service during WWII. Many more were awarded military honours, including eight women who received the Military Medal for bravery for their actions during the conflict.

“Our diggers are renowned for their courage and ingenuity and our nurses were no different.”

ACM Binskin said additional opportunities opened to women who wanted to contribute to the nation’s war effort during WWII.

“The Australian Women’s Army Service, the Women’s Royal Australian Navy Service, and the Women’s Auxiliary Australian Air Force all formed in 1941,” he said.

“Accepting women into non-military roles increased the number of men available for frontline duties.

“Women continued to serve, predominantly in medical or support roles during the Vietnam War and the three women’s service organisations remained separate entities until the early 1980s, when each was subsumed into the Navy, Army and Air Force.”
Wanted: women as fast-jet pilots

AIR Combat Group (ACG) has implemented recommendations from an Australian Human Rights Commission (AHRC) report to improve the recruitment and training of female fast jet pilots and aircrew in Air Force.

Commander ACG AIRCDRE Steven Roberton said ACG was directly responsible for approximately 20 of the report’s recommendations.

“ACG hosted AHRC on multiple visits to various locations and gave the report authors direct access to our personnel, as well as briefs on contemporary recruiting and training and retention initiatives,” he said.

“The report’s key conclusion is there is no single problem or barrier for women. Rather, a series of factors have prevented the progress of both female and male pilots in the Air Force.

It recommends Air Force commits to or continues supporting short-term and long-term strategies to increase the numbers of fast jet pilots, both male and female,” he said. AIRCDRE Steven Roberton

Commander ACG

“Air Force also continues to support female re-roles to fast jets while making changes to decrease the training risk for all re-role trainees. While ACG has changed its approach to certain elements of training, this has not changed the graduation standards.”

He said ACG also supported Defence Force Recruiting with major promotional and recruitment campaigns to attract women.

“Women represent half of the Australian population and ACG requires more pilots, electronic warfare officers and weapons systems officers. We believe this significantly different approach to training will encourage young women to become fast-jet pilots.

“Flying fast-jet aircraft in the defence of your country is not only one of the most rewarding careers you can undertake, but it also means you can achieve your full potential and fly Air Force’s high performance aircraft.”

The AHRC report on Improving Opportunities for Women to Become Fast Jet Pilots in Australia, released in December, was undertaken at Air Force’s request between January 2015 and April 2016. More than 50 recommendations are being acted on by Air Force Training Group, Personnel Branch – Air Force, Defence Force Recruiting, Joint Health Command, and Air Combat Group.

Arms of the more than 750 pilots in the permanent Air Force, 33 (or 4.3%) are women.

An Air Combat Group (ACG) contemporary recruiting and training initiative, such as the Aircrew Production Improvement Program, fitted alongside many of the key recommendations.

“ACG had a ‘train and test’ culture in the past but the new approach adheres more to adult learning principles, with each trainee understanding their strengths and limitations then working to overcome these limitations,” he said.

“Women represent half of the Australian population and ACG requires more pilots, electronic warfare officers and weapons systems officers. We believe this significantly different approach to training will encourage young women to become fast-jet pilots.”

The unit conducted hands-on activities in the hangar and on the flightline at RAAF Base Richmond on April 7.

CO 35SQN WGCDR Jarrod Pendlebury said the traditional approach to Safety Day was “for all personnel to down tools and undergo presentations”.

FOR No. 35 Squadron, Safety Day was an opportunity to tackle an important issue in a practical manner.

“The members went through the rescue from a cherry picker, survival equipment, and a rescue from a cherry picker.”

He said the stations covered scenarios including an immediate response and clean-up after an aircraft decompression and ground evacuation, life raft and survival equipment, and a rescue from a cherry picker.

“For each station, the members went through a brief covering low-on actions such as reporting through Sentinel and Comcare, as well as calling emergency services such as a fire section or medical.”

Hands-on guide to safety

Eamon Hamilton

35SQN members recover a mannequin from a fall-arrest system during Safety Day activities.

Photo: FSGT Sean Toohey

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FINE TIME TO TAKE FLIGHT

• Of the more than 750 pilots in the permanent Air Force, 33 (or 4.3%) are women.

• There are no female fighter pilots at present, but women are undergoing fast-jet training.

• Women are flying fighter jets in countries such as the US, France, Turkey and Israel, and Australia is encouraging women to apply as fighter pilots here.

• Air Force has no restrictions on the employment of women, including in all pilot positions.

Abbe Whitford prepares to go up in a Central Flying School CT-4 Trainer as part of the Air Force Flight Camp for young women program in March.

Photo: DPL Veronica O’Hara

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Wanted: women as fast-jet pilots
How we delivered a helping hand

Air Force plays its role in Operation Queensland Assist 17

A C-130J Hercules from No. 37 Squadron helped to protect Rockhampton Airport from rising floodwaters in the wake of Tropical Cyclone Debbie.

The Hercules delivered a much-needed flood barrier to the airport to secure a key part of Rockhampton’s infrastructure from the rising waters, as part of the ADF’s Operation Queensland Assist.

Operating from RAAF Base Townsville, the aircraft made two flights to deliver stores and equipment. The rapid ADF response following Tropical Cyclone Debbie saw more than 1600 ADF personnel working to assist affected communities and the state emergency services.

The Navy, Army and Air Force provided personnel, equipment and specialist capabilities on the ground to support the needs of people affected in North Queensland.

“Sailors, soldiers and airmen welcomed the chance to assist communities, emergency services and volunteers during Operation Queensland Assist 2017.

“Provision of clean drinking water, clearance of major routes, transport of Ergon power workers to remote locations, and medical staff and supplies as well as assistance to isolated communities were just some of the ways Defence was able to assist.

“Our response teams appreciated the warm welcome they received throughout the duration of the mission.”

Units assigned to Joint Task Force 661 were gradually returning to their home bases as the clean-up and reconstruction situation in North Queensland moved into its next phase.

CJOPS VADM David Johnston said ADF personnel had successfully completed the tasks civilian authorities requested of them, including providing specialist support to emergency services personnel.

“The Queensland disaster recovery effort in the Whitsunday region will see a transition from a Defence supported emergency response to a Queensland Government led recovery with employment opportunities for local people and businesses,” VADM Johnston said.

“Emergency services and public utilities have future restoration tasks well in hand for those areas hardest hit by the cyclone.

While many of the ADF assets had commenced transition from the region, the Engineer Support Regiment (65 personnel, 40 vehicles) planned to remain in the Rockhampton area until further notice to support possible requests for assistance as flood waters in the Rockhampton area recede.

Above: FLTLT Brodie Sweeney, of 37SQN, takes a C-130J Hercules out of Rockhampton Airport after delivering much-needed supplies.

Left: LACW Rochelle Hattam and LAC Joshua Evans, both of 27SQN, load cargo into a C-130J Hercules.

Photos: SGT Rob Hack

THE Menin Gate Lions – statues gifted by Belgium to the AWM following WWI – have been returned on loan to Brussels thanks to one of Air Force’s C-17A Globemasters.

The iconic lions, past which thousands of Australian and other allied forces marched on their way to the Belgian battlefields of the Western Front, will return to their original home in the city of Ieper (Ypres), Belgium, as part of the WWI commemorations.

AWM director Dr Brendan Nelson said that the powerful bond between Australia and Belgium, forged in the service and sacrifice of those who marched through the Menin Gate on the way to the front, is honoured with this joint initiative.

“The lions will arrive in time for Anzac Day and stand sentry once again as Flanders and Australia remember the cataclysm that was the First World War, he said.

“They will act as a reminder of the price paid by so many in battles in which many thousands of allied soldiers perished.”

23SQN Air Movements personnel, with museum and art services specialists, secure the Menin Gate Lion at the AWM annex for transportation on a C-17A Globemaster III bound for Belgium.

Photo: LAC Jesse Kane

Iconic lions get a lift back home
**‘Take every opportunity’**

Flight sergeant shares wisdom of 50 years’ service, FLGOFF Alyssa Vickridge writes

YOU need to take every opportunity and enjoy every moment.”

These are the wise words from FSgt Michael Hartley, who is one of a few people who can boast a military career spanning more than five decades.

FSgt Hartley retired from Air Force on March 15 and has an impressive 50 years of unbroken military service.

Starting his career in December 1966, FSgt Hartley enlisted in the Army as an infantryman, serving with the 6th Royal Victorian Regiment until June 1968. Looking for a career change, FSgt Hartley transferred to Air Force as a clerk equipment, graduating from Initial Employment Training in December 1968.

His career has taken him all over the country and has included overseas postings in Malaysia, Indonesia and the UK.

FSgt Hartley’s career highlight was his posting to the Darwin Base Command Post as SNOOIC Base Operations.

This posting saw FSgt Hartley coordinating logistics support for Operation Spitfire and Operation Warden, the ADF and UN operations in Timor Leste.

FSgt Hartley’s commitment and distinguished service in support of these operations was recognised by Commander NORCOM, who awarded him a Commendation in 2000.

FSgt Hartley reached his compulsory retirement age from the permanent Air Force in 2004 and, still having a passion for military service, transferred to the reserves.

Settling in Townsville, FSgt Hartley used his extensive experience as the Reserve Liaison Officer for 1A0S, No. 383 Squadron and No. 65 Squadron.

In this role FSgt Hartley was responsible for providing policy guidance and administrative support to commanders and fellow reservists.

In recognition of his professionalism and proficiency in managing a large and diverse reserve workforce, FSgt Hartley was the recipient of an Australia Day Medalion in 2013.

FSgt Hartley has a multitude of amusing anecdotes from his time in the military and is going to continue sharing them with the public as a volunteer tour guide at the RAAF Townsville Aviation Heritage Centre.

Although he has now completed his military service, FSgt Hartley will always remain a highly regarded member of the RAAF Base Townsville community.

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Plenty left in the tank

After half a century of service, Dave Gardner is showing no signs of slowing down, FLGOFF Graham Orams writes

VEN after 50 years in Defence, Dave Gardner isn’t the oldest thing in his office.

His century-old desk was once used by AIRCDRE William Anderson, who served in two world wars and rose to be the acting Chief of the Air Staff (now CAF).

One of the drawers in the old desk still contains a handwritten note from AIRCDRE Anderson during his time as Director-General Personnel and Training in 1925-26.

Considering Mr Gardner has dedicated his life to military history, it seems fitting he should be seated at such a desk.

Dave Gardner is a man known to many within Air Force.

After trying his hand at horticulture, he joined Air Force in 1967 as an ATECH to embark on “a life of excitement and adventure”.

During his “black-hander” years, Mr Gardner worked on aircraft such as the Sabre, Dakota, Neptune, Canberra bomber and F-111 as well as Sioux, Iroquois and Chinook helicopters.

After two decades of working on aircraft, the then WOFF Gardner took up the position of curator at the RAAF Museum.

“When I first got here I could see we weren’t preserving our history properly,” he said.

“And if you don’t know your history, you don’t know how you got to where you are now. What got us to that point today? The Australian Flying Corps in World War 1.”

Mr Gardner said he was determined to take the museum from a collection of items on loan, to a modern and relevant display of RAAF-owned items.

“When I first got to the museum, I think there were three aircraft which were owned by the RAAF,” he said.

“Everything else in the collection seemed to be on loan, so over the years I started to change things.”

Mr Gardner said one of the highlights of his time in uniform at Point Cook was being elected Chairman of Mess Committee of the oldest Sergeants’ Mess in the RAAF.

In 1997 – a decade after taking on the role of museum curator – the position was civilised.

With 30 years of Air Force service up his sleeve, Mr Gardner decided to hang up his uniform and apply for the position – he got the job.

Mr Gardner, who holds a masters degree in Museum Studies, has overseen several improvements since taking the helm in 1986.

“These days, the displays are a more balanced view; they are man, woman and machine,” he said.

“We’ve got a lot of stuff now in relation to women in the WAAAF, WRAAF and the RAAF.

“We’re also going to build on the indigenous contribution to Air Force.”

Mr Gardner isn’t stopping there; he is already preparing for the centenary of the RAAF.

“We’re currently getting the displays ready for 2021,” he said.

“For instance, I want to separate bomber, fighter and coastal command displays because they were separate stories and we’ve got to tell it that way.

“Another element is the Empire Air Training Scheme which was huge in the training of air crew.”

During his career, Mr Gardner has been recognised with three CAF Commendations.

One hanging on his office wall from 2009 describes Mr Gardner’s “outstanding guidance” provided during the investigation into the disappearance of a Canberra aircraft lost during the Vietnam War.

The commendation stated Mr Gardner’s assistance enabled Air Force to positively identify the crash site of Canberra A84-231.

This is all par for the course from a man devoted to the history of the RAAF.

“Even when I was in high school I loved history and I excelled in it,” Mr Gardner said.

“To tell you the truth, I’ve never read a novel; I only read history books.

“I think what reinforced my love of history was when I arrived here.”

For more information on the RAAF Museum, visit:
Teresa Jurkovic

GPCAPT Terry van Haren (Distinguished Service Medal) is one of five ADF members who have been honoured in a new commemorative coin collection.

The Governor-General GEN Sir Peter Cosgrove launched the Legends of the Anzacs – Medals of Honour collection at the Australian War Memorial in Canberra on April 3.

The coin collection, which features five current-serving ADF members’ profiles and awards on the coin backing cards, comprises 14 coins and highlights a variety of decorations, campaigns and service medals, awarded to Australians over the past 100 years.

GPCAPT Van Haren was awarded the DSM in 2003 for leading the second defensive counter-air package of Australian F/A-18 Hornet in Iraq during Operation Falconer.

He flew 15 combat missions over enemy territory, 12 of them as flight leader.

“I feel honoured to represent the Air Force and other recipients who have been recognised by this award. It’s a privilege to be signalled out for leadership in warlike operations, especially while leading a highly effective team, who came together and did a terrific job in challenging circumstances,” said GPCAPT Van Haren.

Developing an interest for flying as a young boy, GPCAPT Van Haren joined the Air Force in 1986 and made a vital contribution by building a highly cohesive, inspired and capable aircrew team. His leadership and performance in action were impeccable and his energy and initiative provided an inspiring example to all.

“It’s all about leadership; being professional, taking the initiative and setting the example. But it’s also about supporting your team and getting the best out of them regardless of the circumstances,” he said.

GPCAPT Van Haren attended the launch and was presented with a set of the coins by the Governor-General. During the launch, the Governor-General expressed gratitude to all those who have served in the ADF.

He said: “Whatever the medal, whatever the decoration, the thing all our veterans share, is pride in a nation and pride in service.”

Other Defence members featured in the collection, include: CPL Cameron Baird, VC MG; PTE B, Special Forces soldier from the 2nd Commando Regiment, representing the Star of Gallantry; CDRE Philip Spedding representing the Distinguished Service Cross; WO1 Kim Felmingham, representing the Nursing Service Cross; LS Anne Marie Becker representing the Australian Operational Service Medal; and COL Peter Sibree (retd), representing the Medal for Gallantry.

The Directorate of Honours and Awards worked had collectively on this project with the Royal Australian Mint, News Corp Australia, Government House and the AWM since June 2016.

Director Honours and Awards Margot Kropinski-Myers said it was an honour to work on the campaign.

The coin collection was available to purchase nationally through News Corp Australia newspapers (one coin was released each day from April 8). In Western Australia the coins were available from March 26 to April 9.

All profits associated with the initiative were donated to Legacy Australia. Visit www.ramint.gov.au for more information.

An online resource for ADF members and their families to find information on their posting location.

Launching April 2017

www.defencecommunityhub.org.au

A joint initiative of Defence Community Organisation, Defence Families of Australia and Defence Housing Australia.
In the fast lane

AIR Force once again provided race-goers with an array of thrilling aerial flying displays at the 2017 Formula 1 Australian Grand Prix in Melbourne.

During the action-packed, four-day event, the Roulettes performed perfectly timed aerobatic displays, and the F/A-18F Super Hornet brought the house down with a breathtaking entrance over Albert Park that drew the crowd’s focus from the track to the sky.

As part of the ADF contingent, Team Army brought back their Project Digger and Armygeddon vehicles, the Australian Army Band (Melbourne) rocked the fans and the Navy hit the race pits assisting the Supercheap Auto V8 Supercar get race ready.

CO 28SQN WGCDR Peter Gilbert said there were great synergies between the ADF and Australian Grand Prix, both on and off the track.

“Formula 1 and ADF are both high-tech environments that rely heavily on a team approach to win in respective environments,” WGCDR Gilbert said.

“Navy, Army and Air Force people and capabilities were proudly on display throughout the event, and received significant positive feedback from race fans.

“We wanted to talk to the public about ADF career opportunities, which was a key theme throughout the four days with 1SQN and the Roulettes team engaging with aviation enthusiasts. Team Army had race-goers attracted through an array of Army vehicles.”

WGCDR Gilbert said the huge crowds enjoyed the daily flying displays, with the F/A-18F Super Hornet stealing the show through various high speed and agile manoeuvres that left the Albert Park circuit patrons in awe of its capabilities.

Before the main race commenced, the Australian Army Band performed the Australian National Anthem and our impressive C-17A Globemaster III dazzled fans with a low-level configured pass along pit strait,” he said.

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Left: A 1SQN F/A-18F Super Hornet thrills the crowd at the 2017 Formula 1 Australian Grand Prix.

Above: FLTLT “Westy” and FLTLT “Dutters” sign Angus Jones’ hat during a public appearance at the Grand Prix.

Photos: CPL Veronica O’Hara
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STORY OF OUR PROUD HISTORY

The aim of our new History and Heritage Branch is to bring the narrative of our people to a wider audience, SGT Dave Malert writes

The new Air Force History and Heritage (AFHH) Branch has evolved its own role in history as it prepares for the Force's 100th anniversary in 2018.

The first Directorate-General of History – Air Force (DGHH-AF) AFRCDRE John Meier said that the new branch would bring the story of the people and the evolution of the Air Force to the wider RAAF and Australian government.

“The Air Force has a proud history and this is an opportunity to ensure our history continues to be preserved for the next generation,” he said.

“One of our major aims will be to ensure Air Force history and heritage assets are in a prime state to ensure Air Force history and this is an opportunity to ensure Air Force history and heritage assets are in a prime state to ensure Air Force history is preserved for the next generation,” he said.

The AFHH Branch and the broader AFHH Branch will be led by the new branch, which is due to be established in the coming months by then CAP RAAF (AFHH) Branch.

It will be responsible for a small group of APS staff members to provide authoritative advice on history matters including unit history records, customs and traditions as well as honours and awards.

The DH-AF produces material in support of Air Force capability and is regularly involved in research for honours and awards, DVA applications and requests from royal commissions and other high-level inquiries.

The DH-AF identifies and collects records that detail the Air Force experience relating to personnel, technical capability and operations. These records become part of the RAAF Historical Collection.

The Oral History Program records and experiences of past and present Air Force members.

The AFHH Branch and AFHH Branch are part of the Directorate of Air Force Heritage.

The Directorate of Air Force Heritage – Air Force (DH-AF) manages the historical work for the Air Force, including the Mantle of Honour, the Air Force Register of Aircraft and the Air Force Register of Unit History.

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The Oral History Program records and experiences of past and present Air Force members.

Aircraft Wrecks and MIA Investigations

The Director of Aircraft Wrecks and Missing Aircraft (AWM) Investigations SQNLDR (then FLTLT) Terry Ryan said aviation history researches were conducted and recovery missions for remains at nearby confirmed sites.

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LAC Jerry van der Slot (left), a musician in the Air Force Band, performs with SQNLDR Joel Handy during the 96th anniversary celebration at RAAF Base Glenbrook.
Photo: CPL Oliver Carter

LAC Jerry van der Slot (left), a musician in the Air Force Band, performs with SQNLDR Joel Handy during the 96th anniversary celebration at RAAF Base Glenbrook.
Photo: CPL Oliver Carter

Left to right, CPL Kirstine Horne, SGT Natasha McAluliffe and CPL Amy Pratt enjoy the function at RAAF Base Tindal.
Photo: SGT Andrew Eddie

CPL Tahlia Newby (left) and LACW Emma Chapman get into the birthday spirit at RAAF Base Williamtown.
Photo: CPL Nicci Freeman

CPL Tahlia Newby (left) and LACW Emma Chapman get into the birthday spirit at RAAF Base Williamtown.
Photo: CPL Nicci Freeman

ACW Tayla Seymour (left) cuts the cake with Commander Air Mobility Group AIRCDRE Richard Lennon at RAAF Base Richmond.
Photo: CPL Oliver Carter

ACW Tayla Seymour (left) cuts the cake with Commander Air Mobility Group AIRCDRE Richard Lennon at RAAF Base Richmond.
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Defence Housing Australia
DEFENCE personnel gathered at bases around Australia and overseas to celebrate Air Force’s 96th birthday.

A CAUST AVM Gavin Turnbull addressed members and special guests at RAAF Base Gemenick officers’ mess on April 4 before a No. 37 Squadron C-130J Hercules performed a fly-past.

AVM Turnbull spoke about Air Force’s growth from just one squadron at its formation on March 31, 1921 to a modern organisation that is well on the road to becoming a fifth-generation Air Force.

“AT 96, we are an old Air Force. In fact, we are the second-oldest independent air force in the world,” AVM Turnbull said.

“As an air force we have experienced service in WWII, the Korean War, the Vietnam War, the liberation of Iraq and multiple small wars.

“We have experienced counterterrorism and counterinsurgency operations, as well as peacekeeping, peace enforcement and disaster-relief operations.

“Over our 96 year history we have evolved our capabilities from fabric-covered biplanes to fifth-generation multi-role fighters, supported by state-of-the-art airborne early warning and control aircraft and multi-role tanker transports.

“The contemporary RAAF is one of the most capable small air forces in the world.”

Birthday celebrations at RAAF Base Townsville and Amberley were postponed due to Tropical Cyclone Debbie, but evening events at bases in Richmond, Darwin, Pearce, and Williamtown went ahead on March 31 as planned.

RAAF Base East Sale celebrated on March 30 with the traditional reception, setting the ambience with a pianist and with native flowers and foliage as decoration.

FLTLT Nikki Olsen was presented with the CAF Instructor of the Year Award and a CAF Gold Commendation during the evening.

At RAAF Base Edinburgh, birthday commemorations began on Friday morning with a ceremony and a fly-past by a No. 10 Squadron AP-3C Orion.

That evening, in keeping with tradition, the oldest and youngest members – SADFO AIRCdre Joe Iervasi and ACW Skye McMartin – cut the cake at the base’s officers’ mess.

The birthday cake made by local baker Ween Nee Tan takes pride of place at the Air Force reception, hosted by AVM Bill Henman, at the Evergreen Hotel in Penang, Malaysia. Photo: LACW Amy Richardson

For LACW Alicia Bannerman, the official birthday event at RAAF Base Tindal was a significant night, as she was awarded the 2016 AVM B A Eaton Airman of the Year award and a CAF Gold Commendation.

CO No. 17 Squadron WGCdR Andrew Tatnell said LACW Bannerman was an inspirational leader in the community and brought credit to the RAAF.

“LACW Bannerman typifies all that makes up an outstanding airman. While you are only ever as good as the rest of the squadron you work alongside, her efforts truly inspire others to excel,” WGCdR Tatnell said.

LACW Bannerman said it was “a special occasion to receive the award”.

“I felt proud to be included on a night we were recognising the achievements of Air Force and my fellow and past airmen,” she said.

Meanwhile, RAAF personnel in Malaysia celebrated at a reception in Penang hosted by Commander of the Integrated Area Defence System AVM Bill Henman.

AVM Henman acknowledged the attendance of members of the Australian Army and Navy, Malaysian and foreign forces and the Penang community.

He also spoke about the importance of reflecting on Air Force’s history on its anniversary.

“We are very close to 100 and a long way from the Defence institution born in conflict with so much sacrifice and loss in the first half of the 20th century.”

“This reflection on the past serves to guide the current generation by making us aware of what is unique about the air domain, its challenges and why we as airmen must take responsibility for advocating for air power and strongly influencing how it is employed in the service of any national campaign.”

Year older, but so young at heart
SQNLDR Bruce Chalmers

HUDLED together over complex information and sensor displays, ADF members taking part in Exercise Diamond Shield had their eyes glued to the screens as they transmitted information and provided direction to “red” and “blue forces.”

Diamond Shield’s simulated war games focused on the Defensive Counter Air mission set over the training area off RAAF Base Williamtown.

“The course was challenging, but enjoyable as it pushed us to our limits,” said an AWIC candidate and Air Battle Manager.

“The course broke new ground. Having Navy participate was a new dynamic as we had to include their information into our own thought processes,” SQNLDR Bezuidenhout said.

Air Battle Director for No. 41 Wing SQNLDR Vicky Bezuidenhout oversaw the execution of the combined weapons team in the Control and Reporting Centre.

“The course has been very successful up to now and lots of lessons have been learnt from the fighter, intelligence and command and control communities,” SQNLDR Bezuidenhout said.

“Overall you can see that the different platforms are being successfully integrated. Through this integration we have identified lots of learning outcomes which will initiate a path for the development of fifth-generation tactics,” SQNLDR Bezuidenhout said.

“We are very pleased with the students’ performance to date and, from our perspective, all are on track to achieve a successful outcome,” she said.

Meanwhile, personnel who kept the aircraft in the air were critical to the team that took part in Diamond Shield. RAAF Base Williamtown refuelers, for example, had worked at a high tempo and delivered in excess of two million litres of fuel to aircraft fighting battles in the Williamtown training area.

“Each member of the team had fuelled 20 aircraft every day during the exercise,” LACW James Roberts said.

“We have refuelled a wide range of aircraft including our own platforms and the United States Air Force 18th Aggressor Squadron F-16 Fighting Falcons.

“We refuelled a Boeing 747 cargo aircraft that transported the United States support equipment back to the their base in Eielson, Alaska.”

LACW Louise Chamberlin said Air Force had worked well with the Americans and they had learned more about each other’s different procedures.

“Our US counterparts are easy to talk to and a pleasure to work with even when the tempo rises,” she said.

“When you are refuelling a lot of aircraft a day, in simulated battle conditions, there isn’t room for error and the opportunity to share our procedures with our American colleagues is very valuable training.”

AIRCDRE Joe Iervasi
AWC Commander

88SQN is the heart of tactics development and is sponsoring our first Air Warfare Instructor course.

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26SQN Air Load Team member, CPL Brad Chester (front) and Airman First Class Nicholas Ramsey, from 18th Aggressor Squadron, secure cargo in a National Airlines Boeing 747.
Giving us the edge

The Air Warfare Centre is fuelling our progress towards creating fifth-generation warfighters, SQNLDR Bruce Chalmers writes

Exercise Diamond Shield

April 20, 2017

A

IR Warfare Centre's Exercise Diamond Shield integrated personnel and platforms as it trained the modern warfighter through the new Air Warfare Instructor Course (AWIC) conducted by No. 88 Squadron.

The AWIC, formed a year ago, had the challenging task of establishing the inaugural course. Exercise Diamond Shield, held from March 13 to 31, was a part of the AWIC.

AWC Commander AIRCDRE Joe Iervasi said the AWIC was created under Plan Jericho and aligns with our Joint Warfighting Capability vector in Air Force Strategy 2017-2027.

"For the first time we are bringing together different Defence units in the warfare space to integrate their roles in a process of continuous improvement to match the fifth-generation platforms coming into service," he said.

"As our platforms interact electronically, so too must the human elements to get the greatest benefit from this technology.

"The Air Warfare Instructors Course, developed by the Air Warfare Centre, has done that, and over the next few months each component of the course will prepare our instructors to be effective in the integrated air warfare space."

AIRCDRE Iervasi said course graduates would provide leadership in the development of future tactics and "help determine how those tactics can be used to enhance the ADF's joint warfighting capability using fifth-generation platforms."

The Tactics and Training Directorate (TTD) within the AWIC is a key element.

"The TTD is where we have our senior and most experienced war fighters from all FEGs embedded to come together to look at our current way of doing warfighting, and to peel away the skin and ask, 'Are we missing some key elements here that might integrate into a combined, joint package approach?'" AIRCDRE Iervasi said.

"From a tactics development perspective, TTD is also looking at what is happening in technology and in our environment."

The TTD is composed of two sub-units, 88SQN and the Air Warfare School. "88SQN is the heart of tactics development and is sponsoring our first Air Warfare Instructor course," AIRCDRE Iervasi said.

"Now we have a course that is deliberately looking at training the best and brightest operators and expanding their horizons to understand how they can fight together. At the conclusion of this course, our air warfare instructors will go back to their FEGs and continue to drive integration across our Air Force and, more importantly, across the joint services," he said.

Meanwhile, No. 41 Wing, part of Surveillance and Response Group, has a key role to play in maintaining the integrity of the battlespace.

"Three of our officers are AWIC students and they are joined for the first time by a Flight Sergeant Air Surveillance Operator," said GPCAPT P, Officer Commanding 41WG.

"We challenge our people to look at how they can use their training to exploit the hidden capabilities of their equipment to achieve more effective outcomes.

"When our people get to the AWIC we expect that they are close to their optimum performance; we then take them that little bit extra to make them an integrated warfighter."

No. 3 Control and Reporting Unit, No. 114 Mobile Control Reporting Unit, and No. 1 Remote Sensor Unit are some of the units under 41WG with responsibility for the recognised air picture.

"The beauty of what we are bringing together under the AWIC is that we have a more coordinated, more aligned set of training objectives and better integration of the capabilities to achieve training outcomes," GPCAPT P said.

"We have a common aim with a coordinated effort and a synchronised set of capabilities coming together as we step through each phase of the AWIC."

"Key components of warfighting capabilities include bringing together all the data sources to create a coherent air battle picture to know who is friendly and who is potentially hostile.

"Additionally, the other components on the bases help generate air power through logistics and administrative support. That support is about being able to put a person in the key position to employ weapons or make key decisions about how those weapons should be employed."

The AWIC course runs through a number of exercises until June.
A milestone has been ticked over by No. 34 Squadron, which has marked 50,000 flying hours with its current Special Purpose Aircraft (SPA) fleet.

In 2002, the unit received a pair of Boeing Business Jets (BBJs) and three smaller CL604 Challenger aircraft. AIRCDRE Richard Lennon, Commander Air Mobility Group, said the 50,000 flying hours was surpassed in March.

“This figure is an accomplishment for all members of 34SQN, the SPA Management Unit, and the operations staff, past and present” AIRCDRE Lennon said.

“Their hard work is often overlooked, especially in light of Air Force’s focus on conducting wider Defence operations at home and abroad.”

“The reality is that 34SQN’s flying hours largely provide direct support to the Australian Government and our nation’s leadership, ensuring they can meet their official commitments efficiently and with minimum disruption to their duties.”

Both the BBJ and the Challengers are operated from Defence Establishment Fairbairn in Canberra, and are capable of reaching airfields across Australia and the wider region.

“The Australian operating environment – with long distances between state capitals, regional centres, and international ports – presents unique challenges for 34SQN.

“In many cases, 34SQN provides a direct service between destinations that wouldn’t necessarily be linked by airline services or other alternative transport options,” AIRCDRE Lennon said.

“For international tasks, 34SQN directly supports the Australian Government engagement with the global community, and ensures we are represented at forums such as APEC and G20.”

“We work with unique challenges, including fluid itineraries, strict guidelines for diplomatic clearances, and crew duty limits, to ensure government has an effective and flexible transport option.”

Both aircraft types were introduced to 34SQN under a lease arrangement with Qantas Defence Services, however, their lease management and maintenance is currently supported by Northrop Grumman Australia.

WGCDR Angus Porter, Commanding Officer of 34SQN, said the milestone was marked modestly by the squadron.

“Recent flood and cyclone damage in Queensland and northern New South Wales led 34SQN to provide transport for the Prime Minister and Opposition Leader to those regions,” WGCDR Porter said.

“That such a task coincided with the squadron surpassing 50,000 flying hours with the SPA fleet is exemplary of the flexibility and reliability that we have provided government.”

Domestically, the SPA fleet has supported five Federal election campaigns in the past 15 years, as well as royal tours and visits by foreign dignitaries.

“On occasion, the SPA fleet has provided Defence with an air mobility option that combines short-notice response and maximum flexibility,” WGCDR Porter said.

“This has allowed Air Force to send personnel to where they are needed, such as medical specialists, or replacement aircrew for other flying squadrons.”

The current SPA Fleet is expected to be replaced by the end of the decade with a new type of aircraft to be operated by 34SQN.
Pursuing new horizons

Instructor of the Year award reflects the benefits of out-of-mustering employment

For the first time, a 1RTU instructor has been recognised as the Warrant Officer of the Air Force Instructor of the Year.

SGT Joseph Munro, an Aircraft Technician, has been recognised for his exemplary leadership and performance as a Military Skills Instructor (MSI) at 1RTU from January 2014 to August 2016.

SGT Munro was surrounded by his family and peers when he received the award and a CAF Commendation at the Air Force’s 96th birthday celebrations at RAAF Base Wagga.

GPCAPT Cath Wallis, Senior Australian Defence Force Officer RAAF Base Wagga, praised SGT Munro for his work.

“SGT Munro has personally trained more than 400 recruits – the future of our Air Force,” GPCAPT Wallis said.

“What is really impressive is the way that he teaches. He is able to adapt his style of delivery to a diverse range of cultural backgrounds, education levels and learning styles – he constantly strives to find innovative ways to gain the very best out of those in his charge.”

SGT Munro’s calm, considered and emotionally intelligent approach had also influenced the way other instructors approach the MSI role.

GPCAPT Wallis said SGT Munro was a great role model as he had showed that there were many effective ways to teach younger recruits.

“He has led the way to creating an environment where recruits feel comfortable asking questions rather than being confused,” she said.

At the presentation, CO 1RTU WGCdr Jules Adams said: “SGT Munro has been recognised for his exemplary performance while undertaking an MSI role.

“His achievement is testament to the fact that employment outside of core trade is highly valued by the promotion board,” she said.

SGT Munro was taken by surprise with his award.

“MSI employment is an opportunity for personal growth that is challenging, but extremely rewarding,” he said.

“I have gained skills and experience I would never have achieved in trade, which has had a positive influence on my career.

“I am grateful to those who have supported me and would encourage others to give MSI a go.”

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New look and feel

UNDER the Defence One implementation, PMKeys Self Service will make more functions available to ADF members, including how they apply for absences, allowances and deductions. Payroll in the system will be automated based on personal and operational data.

Defence One, a system for permanent ADF members, will be launched on August 7 and will bring the ADF and APS into a single system.

Director General Personnel – Air Force AIRCDRE Henrik Ehlers said it was vital personal details in PMKeyS were accurate and up to date to ensure pay/leave benefits were correct. The changes to Self Service leave functions are as follows:

- New absence terminology (Leave Management will be referred to as Leave, Management and Government Funded Travel replaces Free Travel).
- The ability to submit, modify or delete requests for an increased range of member-initiated absences (leave).
- Self Service will include four types of absence applications accessible through a mandatory drop-down box titled Absence Reason with a choice of short absence from duty, leave without pay (LWOP), ADF travel and sick leave. The drop-down box for ADF sick leave will allow military members to select “other not indicated” as a reason, as sensitive medical information may be involved.
- Leave credits will be reduced each fortnight based on the member’s approved PTLWOP/SERCAT6 arrangement.
- Shift workers will be able to override standard working days to correctly reflect the duration of an absence. To do this, members will need to self-identify at Go Live that they are shift workers. A Defence One Shift Worker fact sheet is under development.
- Members on part-time leave without pay (PTLWOP) or, from 1 July 2016, Service Category 6 (SERCAT6) will be able to use Self Service to submit absence requests. Defence One will automatically calculate leave durations, salary and allowances based on the member’s approved PTLWOP/SERCAT6 arrangement.
- Shift workers will be able to override standard working days to correctly reflect the duration of an absence. To do this, members will need to self-identify at Go Live that they are shift workers. A Defence One Shift Worker fact sheet is under development.

Members will continue to be able to update their bank account details, vary their MSBS contribution percentage and manage additional tax deductions in Self Service. Self Service will be unavailable for about 10 days during the implementation of Defence One and members will need to ensure pay, allowance, leave applications and approvals are up to date.

Any outstanding applications will need to be submitted to members’ orderly room/PAC and members will need to ensure pay, allowance, leave applications and approvals are up to date.

For further information on Defence One go to Defence Home > Groups > CIOG > For CIOG Staff > CIOG Initiatives > Defence One.

MARCH TRIAL RESULTS

NCO

- Defence Force Magistrate
  - 4 x Assault Superior – DFDA s 25(1)
  - 1 x Act of Indecency – DFDA s 61(3) and Crimes Act (ACT) s 60
- Member was accused of assaulting four superior officers, by touching three of the superior officers on intimate place, and by an intimate act on the other superior officer.
- Member was also accused of an act of indecency on one of the superior officers.
- Member pleaded guilty to the charges and was fined $27,170 (to be paid in one lump sum).

OFFICER

- Defence Force Magistrate
  - 8 x Absence Without Leave – DFDA s 24(1)
  - 2 x Prejudicial Conduct – DFDA s 60(1)
- Member was accused of being absent without leave from the member’s places of work on eight occasions.
- Member was also accused of prejudicing discipline by lying to their superior officer and commanding officer regarding their whereabouts.
- Member pleaded guilty to the charges and was found guilty of the charges.
- Member was dismissed from the Defence Force.

- 4 x Obtaining a Financial Advantage – DFDA s 61(1) and Criminal Code (Cth) s 139.2(1)
- Member was accused of obtaining a financial advantage from the Commonwealth in relation to rent allowance, totaling $27,439.56, by not notifying Defence Housing Australia of a change of address.
- Member pleaded guilty to the charges.
- Member was reduced in rank by one rank and fined a total of $3500 (with $2800 suspended, and the balance to be paid in one lump sum).

All Court Martial and Defence Force Magistrate trial results are subject to command review and appeal. The results are of trials across the ADF.

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Deployed e-health

CPL Mark Doran

Phase 4 of the ADF Deployable Health Capability Project (JP2060) achieved a major milestone on March 9 with initial approval of feasibility research funding.

This funding will progress the project towards first pass approval in 2018. JP2060-4 will investigate the best options for the design and procurement of an electronic health knowledge system.

As a multi-phase project, JP2060 originated to identify and develop the capabilities required to prevent, treat, manage and evacuate casualties across joint operations.

For Phase 4, Joint Health Command (JHC) was tasked with developing an e-health knowledge management ‘harmonised’ solution that will cover the garrison and deployed settings.

The intent is to improve the ADF’s deployable and garrison health capability, and deliver optimum services for the prevention, treatment and evacuation of casualties through a ‘whole-of-system’ approach to the delivery of health support.

Development Officer LTCOL David Bullock, of JHC, said the current methodology to capture deployed Defence health data was predominantly analogue.

“The e-health knowledge management solution will give operational commanders and command health advisers situational awareness of the end-to-end, synchronous, deployable health continuum available in any area of operations,” he said.

“This will enable the manoeuvre plan to be optimised with maximum health support and predictive force protection hazard modelling.

“At the same time, the system will capture every Defence member’s health from recruitment until retirement, through all operational deployments and every episode of care within garrison or while deployed.”

This will also significantly ease the access to, and the processes of, the Department of Veterans’ Affairs.”

He said the development team would also work alongside the Australian Digital Health Agency to achieve interfacing with ‘MyHealthRecord’ – the federal e-health record.

In its most mature form, the system’s trauma database will provide clinical decision evidence-based support, as well as vital sign tracking from the point of injury.

Tasks for JHC as it approaches the next stage are to define what is possible for the project, as well what can be achieved and how it can meet the requirements of an ADF health knowledge management system.

Work has begun at a rapid pace with the project team developing a rudimentary combat health picture to support a common operating picture, and 2GHB conducting a successful digitised hospital management ‘proof of concept’ during Exercise Giant Viper 17.

LTCOL Bullock said the solution would become one of the most advanced in the world.

“It will improve casualty survival rates from point of injury and support the morale component of fighting power,” he said.

“The difference between health information and knowledge management is the smart analysis and application of the information synchronously available to support decision making.

“The new health knowledge management system will revolutionise how the ADF manages the health continuum.”
Medical personnel can face serious consequences if they breach patient confidence, CPL Max Bree reports.

A doctor tells anyone about your haemorrhoids, genital warts or mystery rash they could be in serious trouble if you haven’t given permission.

Provisions in the Privacy Act and Australian Health Practitioners Regulation Agency code of conduct, mean Defence’s medical personnel are restricted in what they can say about your problems and to whom.

Commander Joint Health AVM Tracy Smart said health workers were prohibited from releasing patient information in the majority of cases.

“If we’ve found to have breached health in confidence and given information out without consent, then we could be deregistered or we could be sued,” she said.

“We’re very focused on ensuring we don’t just disclose health information without consent. A health information review in 2013 revealed many commanders were unhappy with health providers because they weren’t providing enough information.

Conversely, some members were annoyed at health providers because they thought too much health information was being provided to commanders.

“We’re somewhere in the middle, so that could mean we’ve got the balance right but nobody trusts us,” AVM Smart said.

“This lack of trust is itself a problem, and it’s one we are looking to address. Personnel may be asked if their medical information can be shared with commanders if it will help with their recovery.

But the amount of information commanders are told is up to the individual.

“As an example might be, ‘you can tell command I’m having mental health problems but don’t tell them the reason why’; AVM Smart said.

“During the review a CO complained that someone had a shit saying they couldn’t go out field but could work back in the office, so it looked like they were blagging.

“The truth of the matter was they had a nasty sexually transmitted infection and with minimal hygiene out field it would foster. But the individual was so embarrassed they didn’t consent to share the information, which meant we wouldn’t discuss it even when the CO complained.”

AVM Smart said verbal or written consent must be recorded on a patient’s file.

The only time we give information out without consent is if we feel the member’s life or someone else’s life is threatened,” she said.

The drive to make members aware of medical consent comes after the 2013 report identified a number of people preferring to seek outside medical care. Although this wasn’t expressly prohibited, AVM Smart strongly encouraged people to keep their healthcare within Defence.

“An outside doctor might not be able to determine if doing their normal job in the ADF might make a condition worse,” she said.

“Alternatively, if you leave Defence, then put in a claim with the Department of Veterans’ Affairs for a health problem, they’ll go back to your health records about it and there will be nothing. Then it becomes a real battle to prove your health problem resulted from Defence, because you’ve stayed outside of the system.”

AVM Smart said she wanted to break down barriers so people were treated early.

“If you’ve got a problem, put up your hand,” she said.

“If you’re having mental health problems and you come forward and say ‘I’m not doing so well’, we can provide treatment and stop it becoming a chronic illness.”

The medical system was designed to look after the individual but also needed to consider the risk for the person, according to AVM Smart.

She said Defence had to weigh circumstances where a deployment could make their problem worse, if there was a safety risk, or the individual couldn’t do their job.

“Then it becomes a real battle to prove your health problem or you leave something, the more likely it is to become chronic, and then it will almost certainly impact your career,” AVM Smart said.

“We encourage our people to be interactive, consider options and talk through it with the health practitioners.

“We’re here to work with you so that you can be as healthy as possible.”
Sgt Dave Morley

OPPORTUNITIES for ADF women and men to display their proficiency in the water and great camaraderie were two things a competitor enjoyed most at the InterService Surfing Championships at Ulladulla, NSW, from March 27-31.

CSWL Senior Constable Fiamoe Hetherington has been surfing since his dad bought him a single-fin board at a garage sale when he was 10, and he still wishes he had that board. He said conditions varied over the three-day event. "We had small glassy surf on days one and two, followed by blustery, challenging, but larger conditions on finals day," he said. "Air Force didn't fare as well as we'd hoped, but we did have a few members make the semi-finals and the top two went through to the finals." WCDR Mark Evans HQSRG and WCDR Hetherington both placed third in their semi-finals. WCDR Hetherington said the Air Force Surf Riders Association welcomed members of all abilities and was keen to increase its numbers.

"Surfing as a sport is recognised by the ADF Sports Council. It's a high-energy sport so it contributes to fitness and it produces a group of ADF women and men who are highly skilled in water sports."

FLTLT White, Fltoff Skuce and their team also placed sixth in the four-way formation intermediate skydiving competition. Sqnldr Walsh did his first skydive in 1982 and has about 5500 jumps under his belt.

"I love the combination of teamwork and exhilaration, but the people are the best part of the sport," he said. "It was great to see such a great turnout by the Defence skydiving team in the different disciplines."

Four-way formation skydiving is a technical and physically demanding sport with teams of four skydivers performing different formations. Sqnldr Walsh said his love of the sport meant he also participated in world record large formations.

"I was a part of the 202 skydivers two-point sequential formation world record set in 2015. "This year I was invited to Arizona to be a part of the world team as we attempt to break the record again," he said.

Fltoff Skuce said winning a gold medal for sports accuracy was unexpected. "It was the reigning gold medallist who convinced me and FLTLT White to enter the competition and then we beat him," he said.

Fltoff Skuce also won a bronze medal in the eight-way formation intermediate skydiving competition.
Skydivers bring home the medals

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