Our Spartan gets the thumbs up for its first major international exercise

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Taking the plunge

Eamon Hamilton

The airdrop talents of No. 36 Squadron have raised more than $30,000 for Legacy, and drawn attention for women in aviation.

On November 2, a C-17A from 36SQN carried 83 female skydivers for the Women in Adventure Sports initiative, making two drops to RAAF Base Amberley.

Two days later, a C-17A delivered about 200 skydivers to Toogoolawah drop zone, northwest of Brisbane.

For an ultimate ‘bucket list’ item, Ms Anderson said she couldn’t contain her excitement when she was chosen as one of five Legacy Brisbane youth leaders to participate in the event.

“One of my dad’s favourite things to do when he was in the Special Air Service was parachuting,” she said.

“I felt nervous and excited, and absolutely thrilled to be able to jump out of a C-17A.

“The exhilaration and rush I felt was phenomenal, and I can now see why my dad loved jumping out of ‘perfectly good aeroplanes’.

“For an ultimate ‘bucket list’ item, Ms Anderson said she couldn’t contain her excitement when she was chosen as one of five Legacy Brisbane youth leaders to participate in the event.

“I am so grateful for this once-in-a-lifetime experience and I would like to say ‘thank you’ to the RAAF, GPCAPT Adam Williams, Legacy Brisbane, Ipswich Legacy, Ramblers Skydivers and to everyone else who made this incredible day possible,” Ms Anderson said.

GPCAPT Williams said supporting the Women in Adventure Sports program had allowed “us to showcase the opportunities available to women in aviation, whether that be with a career or through their pastime”.

Women make up around half of all first-time skydivers, but on average only about 14 per cent of those take it up as a sport.

Through the Women in Adventure Sports initiative, the Australian Parachuting Federation is seeking to shift this imbalance, as parachuting is one of the few sports where men and women are able to compete on equal footing.

Officer Commanding 86WG GPCAPT Adam Williams and Brisbane Legacy youth ambassador Brianna Anderson prepare to board a 36SQN C-17A.

WHAT OUR LEADERS SAID:

Chance to engage

SGT Luke Goddard (right), trainer at 2AF Base Edinburgh, said the summit allowed him to gain some insight and knowledge into different leadership styles.

“I believe this is a great opportunity to engage in an exchange of knowledge and networking at the SNCO level,” SGT Goddard said.

“The best way to lead people is to gain knowledge and experience through other SNCOs and to put that into practice.”

Let’s guide our juniors

DEFENCE Communication Station Operations Manager FSgt Sue Cole (left) said attending the AFSELS was important to improve connections.

“The conference was not only for my professional development and networking, but also to find out how the rest of Air Force is going,” FSgt Cole said.

“Being part of Chief Information Officer Group you can feel a little bit pigeon-holed and away from the Air Force family, so this is a great opportunity to connect and take back some of the information.

“For me it is the importance of support and communication, right down to the bottom levels.

“Juniors coming in are smart when it comes to their general skill set, but when it comes to Air Force, it is up to senior leaders to guide them.”

Listen and learn

ADF’s Academy Sergeant Major WOFF Scott Chenery (right) attended the AFSELS was important to improve connections.

“I have been out of the Air Force world for the past five years,” WOFF Chenery said.

“So getting back in and talking purely Air Force was something I enjoyed.

“Summits like this are really important – this was a great opportunity to listen and learn.”

Shaping our future needs

CPL Bill Solomou

MORE than 300 senior personnel from across Australia gathered in Canberra for the inaugural Air Force Senior Enlisted Leaders’ Summit (AFSELS) from October 30-31.

A WOFF-AF and CAF initiative, AFSELS sought to identify issues and help develop specific leadership strategies to guide airmen during our next generation evolution.

Attendees were presented with the Air Force Strategy 2017-27 and CAF’s five change vectors: international engagement; infrastructure; people capability; joint warfighting; and communication and information systems.

WOFF-AF Swanwick said he and CAF were committed to empowering SELs to make decisions that would positively impact personnel, training, operational and support matters.

“SELs are encouraged to support initiative and innovative thinking throughout our workforce and provide guidance and direction to command,” he said.

The summit was also an opportunity for Air Force’s SELs to liaise with key elements of Defence’s strategic planning and development staff.

“Air Force seeks to understand the role and the expectations of our SELs,” WOFF-AF Swanwick said.

We need to lead the charge

NO. 382 Squadron WOFF Vanessa Schneider (left) said the summit “was a great opportunity to discuss real concerns, real issues that we have with the Air Force and our future to 2027”.

“For SELs, this cements the Air Force plan 2017-2027 and helps us understand how we can communicate that to our troops,” WOFF Schneider said.

“For me, it gives me a better understanding of that plan, and a better understanding of the part that we need to play.

“And, most importantly, the knowledge on how our senior leaders put their trust in us here to communicate that plan to the rest of the Air Force.”

WOFF Schneider said she would communicate the information to her troops.

“I will take the plan and the vectors to them,” she said. “As senior enlisted leaders, if we don’t lead the change, it will not happen.”

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Mastery bred of friendly dogfights

Neighbours enhance their cooperation by embracing their differences

EIGHT F/A-18 Hornets from No. 75 Squadron and seven F-16 Fighting Falcons from Tentara Nasional Indonesia-Angkatan Udara (TNI-AU) joined forces in the Northern Territory for Exercise Elang Ausindo last month.

The two-week, bilateral air training exercise aimed to enhance, develop and promote engagement between TNI-AU and RAAF.

CO 75SQN WGCDR Michael Grant said the flying aspects of the exercise, which ended on October 27, involved a building-block approach.

"The first week of the exercise entailed air combat maneuvering – starting with one-on-one dogfighting and then increasing in complexity to one-on-two in order to challenge our pilots," WGCDR Grant said.

During the second week, our pilots coordinated during beyond-visual range integrated missions.

"Instead of one-on-one or one-on-two, we progressed to four aircraft versus an unknown number of simulated adversaries," WGCDR Grant said.

"The squadron was able to build a more powerful, stronger and knowledgeable team, as such exercises facilitate opportunities to enhance our tactical mastery," WGCDR Grant said.

WGCDR Grant congratulated TNI-AU personnel on their performance during the exercise and said they were outstanding in terms of capability, professionalism and tactical execution.

"I’ve been quite impressed by the Indonesians. They’re crisp in their ground operations and have been professional during their briefs, debriefs and tactical execution," he said.

WGCDR Grant said the exercise helped develop Air Force’s international relationships to “ensure that we are prepared to operate with TNI-AU in the future”.

An F/A-18A Hornet waits at RAAF Base Darwin to be readied for flying with Indonesian air force jets.
Launch and lingo in good hands

FOR ACW Kristy Stevenson and CPL Brendan Baldwin, supporting No. 75 Squadron during Exercise Elang AusIndo was an exciting experience.

ACW Stevenson, an aircraft technician, was responsible for tasks such as flightline shift, launching, servicing and checking the overall condition of the F/A-18 Hornet.

“You have to be prepared for every error that may come up on the jet or problem we might face during the exercise,” ACW Stevenson said.

“One of the main challenges is making sure you have everything you need to do the jobs.”

CPL Baldwin, an aircraft life support fitter, said the facilities at RAAF Base Darwin were effective and decreased the challenges for his team.

“A benefit of operating at RAAF Base Darwin is that it’s very similar to working at Tindal,” CPL Baldwin said.

“The facilities at Darwin are great, enabling us to move in and start working with relative ease.”

Away from the flightline, ACW Stevenson said she enjoyed the opportunity to socialise with members of the Indonesian Air Force, despite the language barriers.

“At the opening ceremony, we had a welcome barbecue where we got to say hello and have some small talk,” she said.

“We also got to see each other at the mess. They were always friendly, welcoming and so accommodating.”

CPL Baldwin said hand signals were a great way to overcome the language barrier. He said the Indonesians “had a great attitude and were eager to learn our Australian slang”.

A passion for safety

COMBAT Support Group’s Base Aviation Safety Officer (BASO) at RAAF Base Darwin played a vital role in the safe operation of Exercise Elang AusIndo 17.

No. 13 Squadron BASO SQNLDR David Anderson is passionate about ensuring nothing threatens the safety of flight or an individual.

“The BASO has broadly two main roles – the first is a responsibility to ensure a safe operating environment airside for all operators,” he said.

“It involves being the link for air traffic control at Darwin and working close-ly with Darwin International Airport staff, ensuring their operations are not impacted by military aviation activities or vice versa.”

“The second role is to respond as the incident site commander for all military aircraft incidents and the Air Force forward commander for civilian aircraft.”

He said his role as BASO during the exercise was challenging.

“With a foreign nation operating at the airfield, it was important that any differences we have in safety standards were identified early and a mutual position was reached.”

Stories: FLGOFF Deanna Ellick
Photos: SGT Rob Hack

ACW Kristy Stevenson and CPL Brendan Baldwin fit exhaust bung covers, made by the squadron’s life support fitters, to an F/A-18A Hornet during Exercise Elang AusIndo 17.

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A TALENTED engineering officer has been recognised for his integral role in the design, delivery and commissioning of critical F-35A facilities at RAAF Bases Tindal and Williamtown.

FLTLT Mitchel Heming, of No. 381 Squadron, was instrumental as the Facilities Support Officer during his posting to the Joint Strike Fighter (JSF) Division from September 2014 until October 2016.

Director General JSF Acquisition and Sustainment AIRCDRE Terry Saunder presented a Defence Support Services Silver Commendation to FLTLT Heming at Williamtown during the base’s Site Activation Task Force activity in September.

AIRCDRE Saunder said FLTLT Heming had performed above and beyond that expected of someone at his rank level and experience.

He said FLTLT Heming was truly deserving of extra recognition for his work in keeping the F-35A facilities program on schedule.

“In what was only his second posting after graduating with a Bachelor of Civil Engineering from ADFA, FLTLT Heming was intimately involved in the design process for the new F-35A facilities at both Tindal and Williamtown,” AIRCDRE Saunder said.

“He was heavily involved in planning and coordinating the commissioning, handover and takeover of the new facilities, which is an extremely complex and challenging role.”

FLTLT Heming coordinated the handover and occupancy of Australia’s first F-35A facility – the Off Board Information Systems Centre (OBISC), which opened at Williamtown on July 5.

“In the absence of the facilities project manager during two extended periods, FLTLT Heming was able to step up and fulfil the full duties of a squadron leader and perform to a high standard,” AIRCDRE Saunder said.

FLTLT Heming said his posting to JSF Division was a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to work on a high-profile project.

“It was rewarding seeing such crucial milestones at the beginning of construction of the new facilities at Williamtown, and seeing the results of our work as construction progressed,” FLTLT Heming said.

“The opportunity to work closely with the fast-jet world and gain an understanding of their requirements, and how they operate, was exceptional.”

He said the highlights of his posting to JSF Division were working with a great team and seeing the progress of construction after being so heavily involved in the design of the facilities.

AIRCDRE Saunder said throughout FLTLT Heming’s posting, his confidence and knowledge increased dramatically – to the point where he was able to make design decisions on a daily basis and contribute at a peer level with stakeholder groups several ranks above his own.

“Had FLTLT Heming not demonstrated such a high level of initiative and stakeholder engagement in coordinating the handover of the OBISC at Williamtown, the ability for F-35A personnel to begin operating that facility – and the information systems fit-out of that facility to commence – would have certainly been delayed,” he said.

“This would have had a direct impact on the critical path to establishing the F-35A Initial Operating Capability. In this way, he directly contributed to Defence capability.”

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Buzz in the air at Williamtown

Brooke McEwan

THE flightline at No. 3 Squadron at RAAF Base Williamtown was “electric” last month with the testing of virtual F-35A operations at the recently commissioned F-35A Off-Board Information Systems Centre (OBISC).

Officer In Charge (OIC) OBISC SQNLDR Stuart Carpenter said the first OBISC test event signified another important achievement on the Australian F-35A Project.

“In addition to other functions, the OBISC gives Australia the ability to test software prior to integration into the Defence Single Information Environment. It also provides the opportunity for staff to gain an understanding of F-35A procedures and processes prior to the arrival of the first aircraft in December 2018,” SQNLDR Carpenter said.

“The test event was arranged to demonstrate the varied capabilities of the OBISC, providing confidence to Air Force that we are prepared for the significant change that this fifth-generation technology will bring to Defence.”

While the first OBISC test event was considered a success, challenges remain as the Australian F-35A Project prepares to support the arrival of the first F-35A aircraft.

“Over the next 12 months we will continue to grow our workforce to prepare for the first aircraft arrival,” SQNLDR Carpenter said.

“We will also receive our first F-35A Deployable Information Communication Technology Facility in early 2018 that we will not only have to learn how to operate locally, but also use in support of the ferry of initial aircraft to Australia.”

In the future, the OBISC may provide an opportunity for Australia to assist in software testing as part of the global F-35 Program.

SQNLDR Carpenter said the OBISC was an Australian dedicated information systems centre built to manage and sustain the highly complex global F-35 information system known as ALIS (Autonomic Logistics Information System).

The recent test event provided hands-on ALIS training and familiarisation for Air Force members. It also allowed for the validation of Enterprise Architecture Model (EAM)-developed business processes.

The Australian F-35A Project has spent several years developing the EAM – a mapping tool used to help identify Australian unique business processes and support requirements – to ensure a smooth integration of the F-35A into Air Force.

Carpenter said.

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Mission data is checked on a tablet before a sortie on a P-8A Poseidon out of RAAF Base Edinburgh.

Photo: CPL Craig Barrett
Following proud steps

Simone Liebelt

NO. 24 (City of Adelaide) Squadron (24SQN) has marched proudly through its home city, 23 years after it last exercised its right to do so.

Led by CO 24SQN WGCDDR Gretchen Fryar, more than 80 current and former members of 24SQN, based at RAAF Base Edinburgh, participated in the Freedom of Entry parade on October 30, accompanied by the Air Force Band.

In a special honour for the squadron, the parade formed up in the grounds of Government House, where the Governor of South Australia, Hieu Van Le, inspected the parade in his role as Honorary AIPCODRE to 24SQN.

The parade then marched along King William Street, towards Adelaide Town Hall, where South Australia Police Assistant Commissioner Paul Dickson provided the traditional Freedom of Entry Challenge.

A flypast by a P-8A Poseidon aircraft from 11SQN marked the occasion.

WGCDR Fryar said it was a special event, in more ways than one.

“The last time I participated in a Freedom of Entry was as a Flight Commander early in 1997 [in Victoria], and I had been in the Air Force for less than a year,” WGCDR Fryar said.

“This time took on a whole new level of significance as I had over 21 years of service behind me, and almost two years as CO of 24SQN. I felt an immense sense of pride for the people of my squadron, and it was really an honour and a privilege to march through the beautiful city of Adelaide.”

She said it was “like an historical re-enactment that made for good visual theatre.”

“I loved the sense of ceremony, and I think that was the best part for those people who had stood by to watch the parade as well,” WGCDR Fryar said.

“It was also wonderful to include members of 24SQN Association in the event [as spectators] as a number of them had participated in the original march in 1979. I really felt that we were marching for all the members of 24SQN over the past 77 years, not just for ourselves.”

Participating in the march was also a rewarding experience for junior squadron member LAC Dean Arnold.

“This is my first posting [to 24SQN] and the first time I’ve been involved in a Freedom of Entry parade,” LAC Arnold said.

“It was also the first time I’ve been involved in an event with a flypast, so it was great to take part and to see so many people here in Adelaide come out and watch us march through the city.”

24SQN was granted permission by the city of Adelaide to be designated as No. 24 (City of Adelaide) Squadron on May 7, 1951. The right to Freedom of Entry to the city of Adelaide was subsequently granted to the squadron on April 28, 1979.

24SQN has only exercised its right to Freedom of Entry on two other occasions, in 1989 and 1994.

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MEETING someone who had experienced violence has prompted a call for Air Force members to again support White Ribbon Day on November 25.

Chair of the White Ribbon Canberra region committee GPCAPT Ernie Walsh said he had recently met a “brave young survivor” who at 16 was beaten by her partner and left for dead.

“Suffering horrific brain injuries, she spent three years in rehabilitation, and only began to talk again after five years,” GPCAPT Walsh said.

He joined the victim, Angela Barker, now 30, at a recent “healthy relationship” awareness talk at a high school assembly.

GPCAPT Walsh told students: “This is why we need to raise awareness, to prevent Angela’s ordeal from happening to other women and girls.”

Defence began its annual White Ribbon Day events in 2013 with various activities held across Australia.

Air Force personnel based in the Canberra region can join a White Ribbon ‘Bridge to Bridge’ walk around Lake Burley Griffin on November 24 from 7.15am at Blamey Square. Lions Club will host a free barbecue breakfast after the walk.

GPCAPT Walsh said an event such as Bridge to Bridge was the perfect activity as “it will encourage conversations, which raises awareness, and that aligns with the White Ribbon vision”.

“The role Defence plays within society, makes this event significant for White Ribbon, as the message and the conversations from this walk, will spread out further in the community and beyond.”

GPCAPT Walsh, director Corporate Governance and Information Management at AFHQ, became a White Ribbon ambassador when Air Mobility Group (AMG) worked towards workplace accreditation in 2014.

At the time, a catalyst for AMG’s move followed when a junior member approached Commander Air Lift Group AIRCDRE Warren McDonald. She shared her experience of domestic violence and recommended that AMG become a White Ribbon workplace.

After GPCAPT Walsh moved to Canberra early last year he continued to participate in White Ribbon events.

Following a reinvigoration of the local White Ribbon committee, GPCAPT Walsh was put forward as the chair of the White Ribbon capital region committee, which meets once a month.

Members who participate in the walk should show their support in service colours: GPU pants, Air Force T-shirt or approved unit T-shirt and sports shoes or boots.

For more information visit www.airforce.gov.au/Our-People/White-Ribbon or whiteribbon.org.au

After a massacre in a college in Montreal in 1989, when 14 women were killed by a gunman, a small group of Canadian men started a male-led movement for the prevention of violence against women, known as White Ribbon. Today, more than 57 countries now participate in the annual awareness raising event – White Ribbon Day – on November 25. Air Force, Navy and Army are all White Ribbon accredited workplaces.
INNOVATIVE thinking has earned No. 2 Flying Training School the 2017 Sir Lawrence Wackett Innovation in Training Award.

CDR AFTG AIRCDRE Geoff Harland said the purpose of the award was to recognise the importance of innovative thinking among AFTG units.

“Ongoing innovation is expected to be at the forefront of everything we do in Air Force Training Group,” he said.

“2FTS has been recognised for embracing innovation and the introduction of the Performance Enhancement Program (PEP).”

AIRCdre Harland said changes such as upgrading the QF1 program, emergency of the day scenario-based training, trainee-led briefings and the introduction of the hypoxia prevention policy were just some of the reasons 2FTS took this year’s award.

CO 2FTS WGCDR David Strong said 2FTS was proud to be selected for the award because it recognised the expansive range of innovative solutions the unit had developed and implemented.

“It takes a lot of dedication, critical thinking, vision and an ability to embrace change to take on the challenge of innovation,” WGCDR Strong said.

“Each member of 2FTS has contributed to improving capability outcomes and as a result of our innovation we are significantly better placed to introduce the PC-21 Pilot Training System and take full advantage of it.”

WGCDR Strong said he specifically wanted to recognise FLTLT Anthony Rooke, FLTLT David Jackson and FLTLT Sam Da Graca Costa for their drive to improve training outcomes at 2FTS.

“It was their dedication that underpinned the success of PEP, the Female Graduate Forum and the Adaptive Learning Management Plan,” he said.

“These initiatives have helped create a more flexible adult learning environment at 2FTS where everyone can achieve their best within a culture of success.”

FLGOFF Graham Orams

SIR Lawrence Wackett was a pilot with No. 3 Squadron during WWI. He was responsible for modifying the standard bomb-rack/release gear fitted to the RE8 aircraft to carry two 1000-round boxes of ammunition. This provided the capability to para-drop ammunition from the bomb racks to resupply the machine-gunners in the front line prior to the Battle of Hamel. These innovative changes to the aircraft later earned Sir Lawrence the Distinguished Flying Cross.

CDR AWC AIRCDRE Vincent Iervasi, CO 2FTS WGCDR David Strong and OC ATW GPCAPT Mark McCallum with the Sir Lawrence Wackett trophy awarded to 2FTS.

Photo: Joondalup Photo Design

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FOR the first time since Defence brought it into service, a No. 35 Squadron C-27J Spartan has been deployed to participate in a major international exercise.

The Spartan provided an air mobility capability to the New Zealand last month for Exercise Southern Katipo 2017 – the New Zealand Defence Force’s largest combined and joint exercise.

The exercise featured a variety of air, land and sea scenarios, including intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance missions, the evacuation of civilians, delivery of humanitarian aid, maritime patrols, peacekeeping operations and conventional warfighting.

Thirteen countries participated in Southern Katipo, contributing 17 fixed-wing aircraft, six helicopters, five ships and more than 3000 ground force personnel, as well as civilian agencies such as Australia’s Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade.

Our Spartan flexes its muscles in the international arena during its first major multinational exercise.

Stories: LEUT Sarah West
Photos: STG Ricky Fuller

More on Spartan’s exploits
Pages 18-19

See footage at: http://video.defence.gov.au/play/5430#
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Reflect, learn, progress

Wise words were shared at the DATSIN Conference, CPL Bill Solomou writes

November 16, 2017

WOFF Michael Enchong, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Network (DATSIN) Conference.

More than 300 personnel from across Australia listened and shared their Defence journeys, on Ngunnawal land in Canberra from November 2-3.

The conference provided a forum for ADF and APS personnel, supervisors and supporters at all levels to contribute to the development of indigenous initiatives and their own personal development in Defence.

The 2017 theme ‘Reflect. Learn. Progress … together’ was selected to acknowledge the significant anniversaries commemorated in 2017 and also the shared journey both indigenous and non-indigenous Australians have to achieve reconciliation.

The conference provided the opportunity to reflect on some of the significant milestones including: 20 years since the release of the Bringing Them Home Report, 25 years since the Mabo decision, 25 years since the Redfern speech and 50 years since the 1967 Referendum.

WOFF Michael Enchong, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Programs – Air Force at Brindabella Park, is no stranger to the DATSIN community. He said, this year’s DATSIN Conference theme, “acknowledged the struggles our people have made collectively through recent history”.

But it also acknowledges the sacrifices that our forefathers made to make Defence a better place for our people today,” WOFF Enchong said.

“Historically, our people learn from our Elders and in today’s ADF we continue to learn and build on the successes our people have made in Defence since the inception of the ADF.”

WOFF Enchong said DATSIN had grown from 75 attendees to 350 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and advocates in the past 10 years.

“DATSIN provided junior Air Force members with the confidence and knowledge to approach senior Air Force members for guidance and mentoring for potential challenges.”

Norm Laing, a proud Danggupital man from Kempsey, NSW, once again facilitated the conference. He served in the Army from 1995-2002 and was one of the first indigenous graduates of a Bachelor of Laws.

Currently the independent chair of the Cultural Advisory Group for the Directorate of Indigenous Affairs, Mr Laing said the disperse nature of Defence meant it had people all over the country.

“So, this is an opportunity to bring together brothers and sisters, regardless of rank in uniform and the APS to network, to be more informed on what Defence is doing to assist in day-to-day operations and capability,” Mr Laing said.

“It also provides moderation and inspiration for new generations of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders in Defence.”

Defence Force’s indigenous Champion, the Deputy Secretary Estate and Infrastructure Group, Steve Grzeskowiak, provided the opening address. Guest keynote speakers included artist, musician, Jeremy Donovan, and the General Manager, Inclusion and Social Policy AFL, Tanya Hlosch.

PTE Pamela Amber, AB Kelly Clear and LACW Lateesha Barlow at the 2017 Defence Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Network Conference, Canberra.

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LACW Lateesha Barlow is a young Larrakia woman from Darwin. She said she attended her first DATSIN Conference to get a better understanding of triservice and APS programs and procedures.

“I feel I need to take on every opportunity I can, and become a mentor to others,” she said.

“My aim is to take back what I learn at this conference and focus on people outside of Defence, and show them the opportunities they too can have.”

LACW Barlow said as a young indigenous woman it was hard moving away from her family.

“Defence is my new family now,” she said.

“Defence has given me the tools and confidence to provide leadership to others.

“I am now ready to give back to my community.”

Further information on the ADF’s indigenous initiatives and programs is available by contacting SQNLDR Skye Smith at indigenous.affairs@defence.gov.au, your regional indigenous liaison officer or DATSIN chapter in your state or territory.

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17 Feature

AIR FORCE November 16, 2017

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How far can our Business Class take you?
Rough road to smooth landings

BEFORE any C-27J Spartan could touch down for Exercise Spartan Dawn, work by an airfield survey team (AST) ensured the landing surfaces were up to the job.

The AST’s work began with a request from No. 35 Squadron to look for roads, beaches and lake beds that could be used as a C-27J landing zone.

The candidate sites included one location near Kalgoorlie, a dry lake bed in Western Australia and two stretches of highway on the border of South Australia and Western Australia.

The AST then journeyed to these sites, often reaching them by four-wheel-drive, to determine their suitability for the exercise.

FLTLT Chris Barry, an airfield engineering officer with Air Mobility Control Centre, said the AST worked with local agencies to conduct the surveys.

“In the case of a salt lake, we coordinated access with local industry as the area was on mining land,” he said.

“For the Eyre Highway, we coordinated with South Australia Police to provide traffic control during our survey.

“One of our main safety concerns was getting hit by a road train when undertaking soil testing. Consequently, we were very glad of the local police assistance.”

FLTLT Sean Jamieson, of HQ Combat Support Group, said the landing zones were not fully compliant with the C-27J’s airfield requirements.

“Because of the survey, we were able to identify the non-compliances and convey the risks that the aircraft operators would be accepting,” he said.

“We were able to recommend operations for the C-27J into landing zones that C-130J could never access, due to the Spartan’s smaller size and lighter weight.”

A second AST travelled with one C-27J to confirm the conditions of the landing zones and look for any damage that might be caused by the operations.

Repeated landings by heavy transport aircraft can degrade a runway surface. The Spartan has a maximum take-off weight of less than 30 tonnes, meaning it can operate from landing surfaces that larger aircraft cannot.

FLTLT Thomas Weir, an airfield engineering officer from No. 382 Squadron, said an AST would measure the strength of the landing zone and confirm its spatial characteristics.

“The AST will provide aircraft operators’ recommendations, including how many movements an aircraft can undertake before a certain level of pavement damage is reached,” he said.

Left: SQNLDR Bradley Drew on the flightdeck of a Spartan on approach to Tamala Airport, Western Australia. Photo: CPL Oliver Carter
When it comes to accessing far-flung locations and negotiating tricky terrain, the Spartan excels, Eamon Hamilton writes

A LANDING on a remote stretch of highway in South Australia has demonstrated the C-27J Spartan’s talents for supporting hard-to-reach corners of Australia.

During Exercise Spartan Dawn, from October 16-20, No. 35 Squadron crews flew a pair of C-27Js to a series of far-flung locations in South Australia and Western Australia. This included touching down on a 1.2km stretch of the Eyre Highway, just 130km from the border of Western Australia.

Spartan Dawn also required the C-27J to operate from a sandy landing surface, CO 35SQN WGCDR Jarrod Pendlebury said.

“One of the key benefits of the Spartan is its accessibility, and one of the prime objectives for this exercise was to land on surfaces that are not traditional runways,” WGCDR Pendlebury said.

“One of the areas we used during the exercise was a sandy surface – similar in consistency to a beach – demonstrating this aircraft’s ability to access surfaces traditionally unthinkable as landing zones for such a large aircraft.”

WGCDR Pendlebury said interoperability was another important focus of Spartan Dawn. “We wanted to expand our capacity to work with Army units and civilian emergency response units, to showcase the agility of this aircraft in a number of missions,” he said.

“The landing on the Eyre Highway was carried out in conjunction with the Royal Flying Doctor Service and South Australia Police, and we utilised compatible radios on the aircraft to communicate with civilian agencies.”

Successfully engaging civilian and Defence agencies would lead to a better understanding of the Spartan’s strengths during future tasks.

“We wanted to broaden the strategic imagination of how this aircraft can be used when delivering responses,” WGCDR Pendlebury said.

Commander Air Mobility Group AIRCDRE Richard Lennon said the exercise was an important milestone for the Spartan fleet.

“The nature of our business means we can’t always be guaranteed of a large runway where we need to deliver personnel and cargo,” he said.

“The Spartan can access locations where we can’t send a larger transport aircraft. It can carry up to five tonnes of cargo or 34 passengers, or be fitted for aero-medical evacuation missions.”

AIRCDRE Phil Tammen with the manager of Spartan manufacturer Leonardo’s Aircraft Division, Filippo Bagnato, at the handover ceremony.

DELIVERY of the remaining C-27J Spartan fleet is on the horizon, with construction of the 10th and final aircraft being completed in Italy by its manufacturer, Leonardo S.p.A.

Like its nine predecessors, the 10th Spartan – serial A34-010 – was flown from Italy to the United States, where it will be fitted with additional aircraft systems by L-3 Communications.

Director General of Air and Tanker Systems AIRCDRE Phil Tammen said the aircraft would be ferried home to Australia early next year.

“Australia’s order for 10 Spartans was announced in 2012 as a foreign military sales arrangement with the United States, which had ordered 21 Spartans,” AIRCDRE Tammen said.

“Our first aircraft took flight in December 2013 and was delivered to Australia in June 2015.”

At a ceremony on September 15, AIRCDRE Tammen stressed the importance of cooperation with the Spartan’s manufacturer, Leonardo, and the wider Spartan community.

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AN AIR Force Roulettes display at the RAAF Museum at Point Cook held special meaning for one of the team’s newest pilots, FLTLT Owen Rose.

The Roulettes and the Central Flying School support Donate Life, an initiative that encourages people to register for organ donation.

For FLTLT Rose, the Donate Life cause had saved the life of a relative. FLTLT Rose, Roulette No. 3, said his father-in-law Allan had received a double lung transplant in January 2015 “thanks to the generosity of an organ donor and their family”.

“He never expected an illness as a child would lead to him receiving a transplant in later years,” he said.

“Allan is very grateful for the second chance and often says ‘it’s much better than the alternative’.”

During the event, the Roulettes dedicated a “heart in the sky” aerial display to the cause.

“If you’re willing to receive a life-saving transplant you should be willing to donate – and let’s face it, if you’re put in a position to be able to donate your organs, it means you don’t need them anymore,” FLTLT Rose said.

“It takes minutes to register your wishes and you don’t know if you or someone you know may need a transplant one day.”

FLTLT Rose is delighted to be part of Air Force’s elite aerobatic team.

“Being a member of the Roulettes is an absolute privilege. The flying is exhilarating, challenging and great fun all at the same time,” he said.

“I believe Air Force pilots are exceptionally capable and many have multiple roles and responsibilities.

“The high level of training undertaken is paramount to developing pilots capable of all tasks throughout their varied roles in Air Force.”

Registering for organ donation through Donate Life could help up to 10 people. For information visit donatelife.gov.au

CO Central Flying School WGCDDR Roland Morscheck with Roulette No. 3 FLTLT Owen Rose.

AN AIR Force chaplain has been appointed at RAAF Base Amberley’s Health Centre following the creation of a new role.

Chaplain Mike Donaldson is now on hand to respond to the spiritual and emotional needs of personnel who attend the centre.

He said members, who had additional care requirements that extended outside of the realm of the immediate clinical setting, “now have immediate access to the spiritual care and support they need”.

Chaplain Donaldson said spiritual care contributed to the health, wellbeing and the quality of care of patients and families across Defence.

“There is strong evidence from current operational experience and our allies that, similar to mental and physical health; our spiritual health should not be ignored,” he said.

Amberley Health Centre Manager SQNLDR Rebekah Herron said she advocated the connectivity and collaboration between delivery of health care and delivery of welfare services.

“Clinical treatment, rehabilitation, allied health, chaplaincy welfare and command all sit in a web which supports our members during times of need,” SQNLDR Herron said.

“It’s important to shore up our professional relationships to provide the best outcomes for Defence members and their families.”

Chaplain Donaldson said Defence was unique in both size and capability.

“Our goal is to optimise this capability through the mental, physical, emotional, social, spiritual and cultural wellbeing of our people,” he said.

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Air warfare course sets up road map

SQNLDR Bruce Chalmers

THE staging of an inaugural Senior Air Component Leadership (SACL) course is a major step towards the Air Warfare Centre achieving Final Operational Capability in 2020.

The course, held last month at HQJOC, was designed to develop and prepare selected Air Force officers for senior command and leadership roles within a multi-national, coalition or ADF Combined Joint Task Force.

CMDR AWC AIRCDRE Joe Iervasi said the course was primarily delivered face-to-face in a symposium style to maximise feedback, discussion and mentoring and it focused on contemporary command and leadership responsibilities.

“The course is purposely designed as a capstone event in the overall professional development of RAAF senior officers,” AIRCDRE Iervasi said.

“The course seeks to leverage contemporary operational practices and experiences in the application of air power to ensure selected officers are prepared to command operations.

“In this way Air Force is able to ensure lessons and experiences are shared and carried through each generation of commanders.”

AIRCDRE Iervasi said this approach to learning was a critical enabler to achieve the integration necessary to deliver a fifth-generation Air Force, which was precisely what the AWC was established to do.

He said a key aim of the course was to enhance the decision-making ability of the integrated advanced warfighter at various levels of command.

High-end warfighting and specialist training is delivered by No. 88 Squadron and Air Warfare School.

Air Warfare School is currently developing a range of air warfare training streams, including air tasking cycle, air operations planning and space operation planning.

Future course options are planned to include targeting, weapons and electronic warfare.

The collective courses, combined with lessons from major exercises, will support a range of key Plan Jericho initiatives and outcomes.

IN BRIEF

Records upgrade

DEFENCE Archives and Service Centres (DASC) is upgrading its systems and processes to provide former ADF members with faster secure access to records via the internet. From January 10, DASC will upload completed requested records to a secure Defence website for easy customer access. DASC will email a unique link and password to the relevant customer to provide them with online access to the requested records. Customers must provide a valid email address at the time of placing a records request to access the online service. Call 1800 DEFENCE (1800 333 362) if you do not have a valid email address.

EO symposium

THE 2017 Parari Australian Explosive Ordnance Safety Symposium will be held at ADFA in Canberra from November 21-23. The symposium will be hosted jointly by the Directorate of Ordnance Safety, Thales Australia and the Capability Systems Centre of UNSW Canberra. There will be exhibitions and product briefs by members of the commercial EO community, and specialist workshops and tutorials will be facilitated by the NATO Munitions Safety Information Analysis Centre on day three. Visit www.unsw.adfa.edu.au/conferences/parari or contact DOS camjlc.dos@defence.gov.au

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### Credit card watch

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<td>10</td>
<td>1485</td>
<td>149</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Strategic Policy &amp; Intelligence</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>10,647</td>
<td>2129</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Grand Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>288</strong></td>
<td><strong>199,843</strong></td>
<td><strong>694</strong></td>
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</table>

Reported to Fraud and Audit Control Division due to nil response

The sample testing of credit card transactions by the Chief Financial Officer Group during the first three months of 2017-18 resulted in 40 transactions being referred to Audit and Fraud Control Division.

Most of the inadequacies found during testing were a result of administrative deficiencies, notably:

- incorrect/exceeding delegate approval for purchases;
- failure to comply with mandatory procurement rules; and
- failure to comply with official Defence travel policies.

The testing of credit cards has been intensified during 2017-18 with the use of IT-based analytical techniques developed with the assistance of Data Analysis Australia.

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### Mental health support

The Department of Veterans’ Affairs (DVA) has established dedicated teams to manage new claims relating to sexual and physical abuse.

DVA has made it simpler for any member with a mental health condition relating to having been sexually or physically abused while serving to access compensation by broadening the use of statutory declarations as part of the claims process. Such a declaration can now be sufficient to establish that abuse took place.

A DVA spokesman said for personnel who were abused before April 11, 2011, and were under 18, a statutory declaration alone would now be sufficient to establish that an abuse event occurred, if there was no contradictory evidence.

“However, if you were an adult at the time, or the abuse took place after April 11, 2011, supporting evidence will be required in addition to a statutory declaration. Claims are always determined on the basis of all available evidence,” the spokesman said.

Current and former members of the ADF who have at least one day continuous full-time service, including reservists, are able to access treatment for any mental health condition. The condition does not have to be service-related and a diagnosis is not required. To access treatment, call 1800 555 254 or email nlhc@dva.gov.au.

The Veterans and Veterans Families Counselling Service also provides free counselling and is available by phoning 1800 011 046 or at www.vvcs.gov.au.
Housing assistance review

The annual review of housing assistance will be completed next month, with the new rates published early next year.

The annual review of service residence and rental allowance contributions involves assessing the national average rent for Defence houses in each rent band. This results in contributions being calculated on actual rent changes.

Acting Director Military Conditions and Housing Policy Derek Cox said providing housing assistance to ADF members was a longstanding policy.

"The annual review is undertaken to ensure the Defence requirement of sharing the national cost of housing with members on a 50/50 basis is met each year," Mr Cox said.

"The rent band method offers transparency for calculating contributions being calculated on actual rental increases rather than forecasts.”

Member contributions for living-in accommodation will be adjusted in line with the September 2017 rents and utilities subcomponents of the consumer price index.

Casual meal rates and the fortnightly meal contribution will also be reviewed to ensure any revised rates are based on the reasonable recovery of actual national average costs incurred by Defence in providing meals.

The new rates will be reflected in members’ salaries in February.

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Go to www.tolltransitions.com.au/defence to access and complete your AFR and Inventory online. Call Toll Transitions on 1800 819 167 if you require assistance to complete your AFR and Inventory and remember inventories (including motor vehicles) from past moves are available to update and edit at www.tolltransitions.com.au/defence

Full or partial unpack at delivery

Once your Toll Case Manager has received your AFR and Inventory, they will explain the unpack options available to you and record your election. If you elect a full unpack the removalist will unpack all cartons other than those containing clothing. If you elect a partial unpack, the removalist will only unpack those cartons containing breakable items (as agreed with you at uplift). All other personal effects will be unpacked by the ADF member/partner including clothing packed by you and cartons that had been packed by the removalists (non-breakables) at your uplift location.

Warranty

Toll’s Warranty extends to cover the contents of cartons unpacked by you (excluding breakables and PBO items). PBO items are not covered by Warranty, except in the case of loss or of obvious damage to the carton, caused by the removalist. You should ensure that any carton with obvious damage is unpacked by the removalist in your presence and any damage noted on the eICR (Inventory Condition Report).

Toll’s Warranty Scheme now allows for new replacement cover to be applied to items which fall within predefined categories and age limits. In cases where more than minor damage to an item has occurred, members will be supplied with a new replacement item if Toll Transitions determines that repair of the old item is not economical and the item is eligible for replacement in accordance with a table of age-based item inclusions.

Like-for-like replacement or compensation cover will continue to apply to items which fall outside the specified age limits.

Not every item that sustains damage will be replaced with a new item or compensation paid at new value. In the first instance damaged items will be repaired where practicable and compensation paid for minor damage.


For more information Freecall: 1800 819 167 www.tolltransitions.com/defence
When it comes to the 2017 Defence Blood Challenge, members at RAAF Base Pearce are doing their bit.

Defence Coordinator for Air Force members in WA, FSGT Paul Richardson, said he first became involved to take pressure off colleagues but had since recognised the challenge’s real importance.

“As soon as I started I learnt just what our donated blood is used for and it landed close to home,” FSGT Richardson said.

“What motivated me to donate as often as possible and to encourage others to do the same.”

What would FSGT Richardson say to someone nervous about giving blood?

“As a new donor I would say that there is very little to be nervous about, I have completed my first blood and first plasma donations this year and I hardly felt any discomfort.

“If you follow the recommendations given to eat something and ensure you drink plenty of water before your blood donation then it will ensure the whole process goes very smoothly.”

As the Defence coordinator, FSGT Richardson organised group and individual bookings with the Australian Red Cross Blood Service and ensured the Air Force members enrolments went smoothly.

“Being the Defence Coordinator in WA made this very achievable so I have found the role both rewarding and uplifting, especially to see just how many and how often other Defence members donate.”

He also liaised with senior officers to ensure their support and encouragement. “The WA response has been excellent, especially from an Air Force perspective as we have a much smaller contingent of members in WA compared to Army and Navy and many cannot donate due to their flying schedule,” he said.

“Within the first week of promoting the challenge I had people emailing me their blood donation schedule and donor numbers, it was a fantastic response.”

Visit www.donateblood.com.au/red25 to see when and where to donate for this year’s Blood Challenge, which ends on December 8.

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**Exercise for the ages**

As we grow older we need to listen to our bodies and adapt accordingly, PTI SGT Diane Mason writes.

**Throughout life** as we age we experience physiological changes such as stress, obesity, heart disease and osteoporosis, to name just a few. Our 50-year-old body is not the same as our 20-year-old one was and you can’t push it the same way you once did.

You need to train smarter as you get older if you want to keep it in working-out order.

**In your 20s**

Your body is so strong and you can get away with intense training regimes with minimal recovery, but we often punish it with late nights and bad eating habits. This is the decade of frantic exercise, fad diets, fitness challenges and the mad pursuit of physical perfection. Lots of cardio is great, especially if you mix it up so you’re really pushing the body. But it’s weight training that builds muscle definition, not to mention bone density, which will be crucial for staying active later on and preventing osteoporosis.

**TIP:** Add some weight training to your regime and maintain a healthy diet of lean meat, lean fish, vegetables and fruits, and limit your takeaways.

**In your 30s**

You start to notice your weight doesn’t come off as easily as it used to as your metabolism drops by 1 to 2 per cent every decade. Lean muscle decreases and body fat increases and you don’t need as many calories to sustain yourself. Exercise is still important, but resistance weight training is now crucial as your bones begin to weaken, especially in women.

**TIP:** Reduce impact on joints. Swimming and water running is a great alternative. Increase resistance training, and it’s vital to maintain a healthy diet.

**In your 40s/50s**

Your body composition is noticeably changing and this is the decade of gravity, hormones, and a slowing metabolism. Lean muscle mass continues to decrease and body fat increases. You will notice it around your torso, the triceps area, on the back and in the belly.

Cardio is still important, but resistance weight training is now crucial as your bones begin to weaken, especially in women.

Seek professional coaching and use correct techniques e.g. hold positions longer and do things slowly and more controlled. It’s about precision and form, not quantity. It’s also about enjoyment.

**TIP:** Talk to your local PTI and get a program tailored for you. Be mindful of the physiological changes happening to your body. Train smarter; as the quality of life is valuable and although aging is inevitable, understanding the basic physiology of aging processes can contribute to decision-making that can help sustain your quality of life.

The secret to maintaining fitness throughout life is to train smarter and enjoy what you do. Photo: Jay Cronan

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Fierce skills key to trophy

SQNLD R Bruce Chalmers

THE Sandy Tait Memorial Trophy was claimed by Air Force in a hard fought Australian Rules football match against Army played at RAAF Base Edinburgh on October 12.

The 16.10 (106) to 4.3 (27) score line didn’t do justice to the efforts of the Army team but Air Force was unstoppable in all aspects of the game.

Both teams matched in close combat with both teams, but solid marking and sound rucking kept Air Force ahead in ball possession allowing the win in front of a large crowd. Originally a No. 10 Squadron versus No. 11 Squadron contest, the trophy is now coveted by the Edinburgh Defence Precinct joint services as Army expands its presence at Edinburgh.

Air Force Coach, SQN Hamish McFarlane, of No. 92 Wing said he knew the 7RAR team would come out firing.

“It was pleasing to see the fierce attack on the ball displayed by our players early in the contest,” he said.

“It set the tone for the remainder of the match, with the backline and midfield winning plenty of ball providing the forwards with quality opportunities.”

SQN McFarlane said the Air Force team’s ability to gel with limited preparation and the loss of some key personnel to operational commitments also stood out.

“This was important coming up against a respected, well drilled unit that have trained and played together for some time,” he said.

“The trophy has been held in high regard locally for around 15 years, so it was a proud moment to be the first team to win in the new Air Force versus Army format.”

“I’m confident the match will attract increasing interest each year and we can expect an even greater contest in 2018.”

Army Coach CPL Daniel Starr, of 7RAR, said a little bit of competition and rivalry was healthy in the Defence Force.

“It was a good hit out for the boys,” he said.

“Air Force was too good on the day.”

“They prepared well, went hard at the ball and their skills were polished which are three boxes our Army team didn’t tick during the game.”

“We thoroughly look forward to our next hit out with the RAAF boys finishing with a slightly alternate outcome.”

Police nab win in Brett Forte cup

CPL Mark Doran

ARMSMEN, soldiers, and sailors of RAAF Base Amberley, Brisbane and Cairns showed their respect for a fallen police officer during the inaugural Brett Forte Cup on November 4.

In a tribute to the Queensland Police Service officer killed on duty earlier this year, the police versus ADF rugby league match was a friendly, but hard, competitive game as the curtain raiser for the Legends of League game.

Senior Constable Brett Forte’s widow, Susan, and her two sons were driven onto the field at Cahill Park in a squad car to present the cup to the team captains before the match.

At half time the score was 6-6, but the Toowoomba police claimed victory, scoring in the last two minutes to beat the ADF 14-12.

LAC Carl Taylor, of 114 MCRU, said the police team’s main advantage during the game was not making mistakes.

“I was glad to chat to the police team members – it made me realise they are similar to Defence members. We understand what can happen in our jobs.”

“When we hear about someone not going home to their wife or kids it makes us think about them and their community.”

“Police have gained a whole new respect for the rugby league game.”

The match was a sellout, with both teams showing high intensity and determination.

“It was a great moment to be the first police to win in the new Air Force versus Army format.”

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Our fierce Tait cup win

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NO FEAR

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