RAAF Base Williamtown personnel opened their hearts and pockets when they pulled together to ‘Haul-a-Hornet’ for charity on July 25.

Teams of 10 used a tug-of-war rope to pull the F/A-18 100 metres along the tarmac in the fastest time.

The inaugural event was initiated by SGT Ben Pfau from Ground Telecommunications Equipment Systems Program Office (GTESPO) to raise money for new technology to help treat young Cystic Fibrosis (CF) sufferers at John Hunter Hospital in Newcastle.

A colleague of SGT Pfau’s, Ian Matthews, has a son, Aaron, who suffers from CF and was the inspiration for the event. Aaron is in Year 11.

“Ian is a dedicated member of our team with 27 years in Defence, including 20 years in uniform,” SGT Pfau said.

“I started off seeking a Sergeants’ Mess dining-in-night charity and later raised the idea of putting around the hat to my superior, SQNLDR Philip Wray, who suggested an inter-unit OC’s challenge to ‘Haul-a-Hornet’. Aaron’s sister Jaclyn came up with the name and we were into the planning in no time.

“We were hoping to receive nominations for 10 teams but ended up fielding 14 teams on the day.

By LAC Aaron Curran
People power hauls a Hornet for CF

By LT Kris Gardiner

THE sky above Afghanistan is not a place for the faint hearted. The tight airspace is filled with every kind of military aircraft imaginable, all trying to move unrestricted, trying to support operations against Taliban extremists.

The Air Force’s Control and Reporting Centre (CRC) in Kandahar is taking responsibility for this monumental task by managing the busy airspace and providing air battle management tasks over Afghanistan in support of the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF).

The unit running the CRC, which has the distinction of being the only complete RAFU unit deployed inside Afghanistan, is providing everything from aircraft coordination through to the detection, tracking, identification and reporting of all airborne objects.

They are giving the coalition the clearest picture possible of what is happening in the air at any moment, 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

CO of the CRC, WGCDR Krista Thompson, said the unit, primarily from 41WG at RAAF Base Williamtown, shouldn’t be confused with air traffic controllers.

“While air traffic controllers abide by stringent rules and regulations to control the movement of aircraft, the CRC conducts air battle management, which covers air surveillance and the positioning of aircraft for battle, both air-to-air and air-to-ground,” she said.

Using the state-of-the-art TPS-77 radar, the Air Force’s air combat officers are demonstrating they are among the most capable airspace managers in the world, dealing with upwards of 12,000 separate aircraft a month.

“We do what we do to affect the whole Afghan airspace,” WGCDR Thompson said.

The approximately 75 personnel who make up the unit are immensely proud of the contribution they’re making to ISAF air operations and as an important component of Australia’s contribution to help prevent acts of terrorism around the world.

“We’re making an enormous contribution to ISAF operations in Afghanistan by conducting air battle management to ensure the troops on the ground are backed by enough air support,” she said.

Kandahar update

SPACE INVADERS: Above, CPL Sam Trifitt from 3CRU keeps the Afghanistan air battle space radar picture up to date from the operations cabin at the Control and Reporting Centre in Kandahar.

PHOTO: AB Paul Berry

HEALTHY EXPERIENCE: Right, 3CSM medic SGT Symon Yeates is proud to be part of the CRC team.

PHOTO: PCF, Mike McGonkey
Full load for Herc fleet

By FLGOff Eamon Hamilton

HERCULES crews have again conducted a handover/takeover of combat airlift duties in the Middle East Area of Operations (MEAO).

In late June, three C-130Js along with their associated 37SQN workforce returned home to RAAF Base Richmond after a 10-month deployment. In their place, three C-130Js returned to theatre with fellow air and ground crew.

Since February 2003 the Air Force has amassed more than 14,700 flying hours on both Hercules variants throughout the MEAO.

As of July 2008, 37SQN Hercules had completed 2194 missions in the MEAO, carrying 20,760 tonnes of cargo, 93,559 passengers and transporting 2283 medical patients.

"I think that with more than 7 million pounds of cargo moved in 445 missions during the past 10 months, the success of this task group has been easy to measure," Commander Task Group WGCDDR Pete Ward said.

"What is a little harder to measure is the reason for our success and I think it has to come down to the people. Everyone, pilot to pay clerk and maintainer to medic, has put in a fantastic effort over each of the rotations that have supported the H models."

"Their individual efforts have come together to achieve this success. Every one of them should be proud of what they have done [in the MEAO]."

Both variants of Hercules at 37SQN are appearing with fresh faces, with a new two-tone grey colour scheme - jokingly titled 'Combat Dolphin' by some at the squadron - working its way through the fleet.

This year will also mark a special series of anniversaries for 37SQN, with the recent rotation of Hercules in the Middle East coinciding with the unit’s 65th anniversary.

Formed on July 15, 1943, at RAAF Base Laverton in Victoria, the unit was initially tasked with transporting Australian forces throughout the Pacific.

Commander Air Lift Group and a former CO of 37SQN, AIRMCDRE Ian Scott, congratulated members of the unit on their work. "37SQN is sustaining operations both at home and abroad, and their success is a credit to our Air Force," AIRMCDRE Scott said.

Initially equipped in 1943 with the Lockheed Lodestar, 37SQN later flew the Dakota aircraft until its disbandment in 1949.

In 1966, the unit reformed with 12 Lockheed C-130E Hercules, which it used to support Australian forces in Vietnam. On Christmas Day 1974, 37SQN earned the distinction as the first aircraft into Darwin following Cyclone Tracy.

The squadron re-equipped with new-generation C-130Js in 2000, and in November 2006 became the Air Force’s only Hercules squadron when it incorporated the C-130Hs previously operated by 36SQN.

July marked the 30th anniversary of the arrival of 36SQN C-130Hs into service. On December 5, the Air Force will officially mark 50 years of C-130 Hercules operations since the delivery of the first C-130A to 36SQN.

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– ECU Bachelor of Security Science graduate, Raymond Anderson

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ECU Security Science graduates speak for themselves
ACAUST sets out
By Barry Rollings

THE new Air Commander Australia (ACAUST) AVM Mark Skidmore has lost no time in settling into his new post with recent visits to RAAF Bases Williamtown and Edinburgh.

AVM Skidmore, who visited Williamtown on July 10-11 and Edinburgh on July 24, was welcomed to his new position at a formal ceremony at RAAF Base Glenbrook on June 27 when he succeeded AVM Mark Binskin, now CAF.

ACAUST is responsible for all RAAF Flying and support activities. About 11,000 of Air Force’s 13,500 personnel are part of Air Command and ACAUST is also responsible for more than 200 aircraft.

His return to Glenbrook after his 1996 posting there was somewhat like a homecoming, he said.

“In some ways it is like coming home and I am currently living in the Glenbrook Officers’ Mess; it’s the best in the Air Force but I may be biased,” he said.

He spent a year living there in 2006 when he was Joint Force Air Component Commander.

His family’s base is still in a state of flux because his daughter Nicole is studying at the Australian National University in Canberra and his son Tom is completing his education at Canberra Grammar. “We (he and wife Caroline) are still working out what is best for them,” he said.

When someone achieves high office, it is said that they bring a wealth of experience to the position and for AVM Skidmore that certainly is true.

With his overseas and private enterprise experience in particular, AIR FORCE News asked AVM Skidmore if he felt he brought a broad sweep of experience to his new post and how those previous roles had equipped him for it.

“I think I have had an opportunity to see and do many things that others have not and I certainly think it gives me a good, broad experience to step into the job and be able to do the task,” AVM Skidmore said.

“The test pilot school gave me some analytical skills. My time at ARDU (Aircraft Research and Development Unit) and in the US gave me command skills.

“My time in the Middle East gave me some operational skills and my time in business gave me some business credibility, but it all comes down to the people.

“It is the people who make you who you are and I have had a great chance to work with some wonderful people over my career. I include my family in there.”

Apart from a change of workplace from Canberra to the more familiar surrounds of Glenbrook, he saw the major change for him in becoming ACAUST was the increased responsibility it carried.

“I have the welfare of about 11,000 in Air Command to look after; that’s my new focus in life,” he said.

As the Director-General of both Air Joint Operations Command and Air Command Operations, AVM Skidmore said he would miss both positions because “it is always interesting and exciting being involved in operations.

“It is difficult to chose a highlight because there have been so many over the years.”

The main difference between his old job and his new posting was that his focus now would be on preparing air power for operations.

“Specifically, my job is dedicated to the raise, train and sustain task. I need to make sure the force is relevant and capable to do what is asked of us by government.”

With the White Paper review in progress and new platforms on the way for Air Force, AVM Skidmore said his primary focus would be on looking after the people and “making sure we are recruiting, training and retaining the right people to project air power now and into the future”.

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ALG to launch PADS

Air Force trialling new system for safer and smarter air delivery

By FLGOFF Eamon Hamilton

AERIAL delivery by airlift aircraft is undergoing one of its biggest changes since the introduction of the parachute.

Precision Aerial Delivery System (or PADS) is being introduced to several Air Lift Group (ALG) aircraft to make accurate airdrops of stores and equipment from 10,000 feet or higher. It uses a mix of GPS-assisted equipment, weather mapping and computer processing to make accurate drops.

The system is progressing through an operational test and evaluation stage at ALG, and will be integrated with the existing one-tonne Container Delivery System (CDS) bundles currently used in the ALG fleet.

SQNLDR Andrew Harrigan from the capability development section at HQALG said: “We are developing this capability for the C-130, C-130J and the C-17.”

Until now, low-altitude airdrop was the only method of delivering a CDS bundle or other forms of airdrop – other than the Caribou-specific Low Altitude Parachute Extraction System – to a drop zone with any degree of accuracy.

Now, using PADS, a Hercules or Globemaster is guided to the drop point by a laptop loaded with the most up-to-date winds from a meteorological database and the CDS bundle parameters.

A GPS-equipped sonde is dropped by the aircraft near the drop zone, which relays telemetry data back to the laptop on the aircraft to update the initial meteorological data. The laptop provides run-in directions to the crew to the point in the sky from where a load needs to be dropped in order to hit the drop zone.

“PADS offers a substantial increase in terms of accuracy and operational capability for aerial delivery, including the option for higher altitude airdrops,” SQNLDR Harrigan said. “Delivering the load from high altitude will help remove the aircraft from exposure to a number of threats.

“We’ve tested this with both C-130 types by day and night and in a variety of weather conditions, as well as a range of operational scenarios.”

Testing of PADS from a C-17A will begin soon.

Up to 24 CDS bundles can be delivered by a C-130J, the stretched C-130J-30 can deliver 26 and a C-17 can deliver up to 40 bundles, depending on the size of the drop zone.

Phase one of the program involves the initial fielding of the system on C-130s and C-17As, with phase two involving a more permanent fit of equipment and system cabling to each aircraft.

Phase three raises possibilities of loads being ‘GPS guided’ to the ground by an aerofoil parachute, which further enhances the possibility of greatly increased accuracy and capability.

Working towards fielding an ADF PADS capability are HQALG, 86WG, 36 and 37SQNs, Air Movements Training and Development Unit and the Army’s 176 Air Dispatch Squadron. Both Air Lift and Heavy Air Lift systems program offices, along with the C-17A transition manager, are also involved, with testing conducted recently at Woomera in South Australia and offshore from Nowra.
A testament to Air Force

By FLGOFF Kai Ianssen

As the commander of the Military Pilgrim Task Group for the recent World Youth Day 08 (WYD08) activities, WGCDR Mary Anne Whiting felt blessed to work in a unique new role that combined her professional skills in the ADF and her Catholic faith.

Defence played host to more than 190 military pilgrims from across the world as part of Operation Testament.

"It was one of those rare opportunities in the professional world where I was able to combine my faith with my profession, so it was really special for me," WGCDR Whiting said.

"It was one of those great life experiences that is both spiritually and professionally rewarding.

"Not only was I developing my career (during Op Testament), but I also played a part in one of the great events of my faith.

"I would describe WYD08 as the world's greatest party and gathering of young Catholics and others, where they could share and reinforce their beliefs in a secure setting of peace and stability.

"The fact that pilgrims representing armed forces from around the world attended added a whole new dimension to the issues I dealt with.

WGCDR Whiting was born into a Catholic family and an Air Force family, with her father (now living in Scarborough) also achieving the rank of WGCDR.

"I have worked in the Air Force for 38 years and have enjoyed every minute of it. WYD08 and Op Testament was another exciting chapter in my Air Force journey," she said.

"I was very happy to do my bit to ensure a safe and enjoyable event for military pilgrims from across the globe," WGCDR Whiting said.

"It was a delightful task to assist the ADF pilgrims and to host the international military pilgrims.

History of military pilgrims

- The concept of a 'military pilgrimage' began in 1946 when two German soldiers made a pilgrimage to Lourdes in France to pray for peace after WWII. As a result, each year in May, the international military community are invited by the French to make a 'pilgrimage of peace' back to Lourdes.

"The highlight for us was the shared values that transcended national boundaries. I am certain this is one way for Defence forces around the world to enhance understanding, increase dialogue between nations and build new friendships across the world."

"Military Pilgrim Master Sergeant Shelly Crue of the US Air Force said the Aussies had "done it again" in terms of putting on a good show. "The Australian Defence Force was great," she said.

"WGCDR Whiting and her team were two steps ahead of the game and we (the pilgrims) wanted for nothing. The food, accommodation and organisation was first rate."

"The Australian Military Diocese has set the bar for the following WYD Diocese."

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Pilgrimage to WYD

The ADF wraps up Op Testament after supporting World Youth Day

By CAPT Adrian Dolahenty and FLGCOFF Martin Alderette

Our Air Force members joined thousands of military pilgrims from around the world to celebrate World Youth Day 2008 (WYD08) last month.

In full ceremonial dress or DPCUs, Air Force personnel were proud to attend the recent celebrations in Sydney and Canberra as part of Operation Testament, the ADF’s contribution to WYD08 and the visit of Pope Benedict XVI. The Aussies were easily recognisable in the crowd, along with their military comrades in uniforms of their countries.

Before the WYD08 celebrations in Sydney, ADF and foreign military pilgrims were treated to a special service of remembrance at the Australian War Memorial on July 11.

Op Testament Commander BRIG David Saul officially welcomed the pilgrims at the memorial, where a wreath was placed at the tomb of the unknown Australian soldier.

“It was a real privilege for the ADF to be able to support the military pilgrims from a range of nations... it was a tremendous opportunity to work with other nations and to develop close ties during this important occasion,” BRIG Saul said.

Catholic Bishop of the ADF, Bishop John O’Hehir from Victoria Barracks, Brisbane.

LACW Parkinson said she really enjoyed the program. “I made a lot of new friends from other countries and enjoyed the whole pilgrimage atmosphere,” she said.

When the Pope arrived at Government House in Sydney on July 17, Australia’s Federation Guard was there to greet him with a 104-person Royal Guard.

After a brief introduction to the Pope, OC AFG MAJ Andrew Johnstone invited the Pontiff to review the guard mounted by the ADF in his honour.

From the door openers and flag bearers to the 104 guard members – religious or not, the historic ceremonial guard was one the AFG would never forget.

Op Testament involved more than 400 ADF members. Long before the crowds descended on Sydney for WYD08 festivities, ADF members had been all over vehicles, venues and vessels to ensure the city was safe for the large contingent of Australian and international visitors.

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AUSIE FAITH: Above, Air Force clerks LACW Janelle Parkinson from No. 21 (City of Melbourne) Squadron and LACW Nicole O’Hehir from Victoria Barracks, Brisbane.

HOLY SALUTE: Above left, OC AFG MAJ Andrew Johnstone joins Pope Benedict XVI as he inspects the ADF’s Royal Guard during a ceremonial welcome at Government House in Sydney. The AFG formed a 104-person ceremonial salute to the Pope as part of Operation Testament.

Photo: AAP

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CREWATTs take off

By Andrew Stackpool

NO. 34 SQUADRON has seven new crew attendants (CREWATTs) ready and eager to apply their new-found skills on its VIP aircraft, as well as the pending KC-30B Multi Role Tanker Transport.

LACWs Alicia Johns and Jessica Johnson, and ACWs Ingrid Dylan, Nadine McCready, Natalie Oakes, Daniella Olofson and Amber Stowe recently graduated from CREWATTS’ course 01/08. LACWs Johns and Johnson are remasters; the others are direct entries.

Commander Air Lift Group AIRCDRE Jack Plenty reviewed their graduation parade at 34SQN’s base at Defence Establishment Fairbairn and reclassified the five ACWs to LACWs.

“This was a large course because we are recruiting more CREWATTs for the incoming KC-30B,” CREWATT leader SGT Tanya Lans said.

Half the course has completed the CL604 [Challenger aircraft] course and have begun flying on the CL604,” she said. “The other half is consolidating the training on the BBJ and will begin the CL604 course soon.”

LACW McCready said she enjoyed the combat survival course and the practical work completed on the aircraft.

LACW Oakes said the prospect of travelling and working with people appealed to her. “This is a position where I get to work with very interesting people and travel Australia and the world,” she said.

LACW Olofson said flying was the best part of the course. “Combat survival was the hardest part, definitely, but a good achievement,” she said.

LACW Stowe chose the mustering because a current-serving CREWATT at 33SQN recommended it to her while she was working on Hayman Island.

“I was interested in an occupation that was different from the civil flight attendant role and I was ready for the challenge,” LACW Stowe said.

LACW Johns wanted a change to “further my career in hospitality and take it in a different direction.

“Most civil aircrew training is mainly training on safety and in-flight procedures. The Air Force training also involves crew resource management training, the airman aircrew basic course and combat survival,” she said.

LACW Johnson was “looking forward to being part of the aircrew world in the Air Force, enjoying the diverse role we serve and seeing the world while we do it”.

LACW Dylan was thankful for “my opportunities, and I am very optimistic about my future”.

SGT Lans said that Air Force was producing crew attendants of a high standard.

“They are very marketable. They have the skills and knowledge to not only evacuate people from any aircraft type, but also to work in the business or first-class areas on any aircraft type,” she said.

Following their graduation, the seven new attendants have posted to 34SQN for further training and assignment.

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Recce cabin in focus

By LAC Aaron Curran

ONE of the more interesting and unique pieces of Air Force equipment used for possibly the last time on exercise recently.

The photo reconnaissance cabin, operated by 87SQN RAAF Base Amberley, was used during Exercise Pitch Black 2008 (PB08) to process the aerial imagery taken by 1SQN’s RF-111s.

The F-111C variants. The four aircraft required reconnaissance capability for four of the 24 F-111C variants. The four aircraft required major modifications to the aircraft’s bomb bays to accommodate a suite of five sensors and one was sent to the US for testing. The cabins which Air Force currently operate are housed at various RAAF bases and brought online when needed.

After the first Australian F-111C touched down in Amberley in 1973, the Air Force wanted an aerial reconnaissance capability for four of the 24 F-111C variants. The four aircraft required major modifications to the aircraft’s bomb bays to accommodate a suite of five sensors and one was sent to the US to be fitted out, with the remainder modified at Amberley.

This enabled the RF-111C to deploy to an operational base, such as Darwin, to carry out photographic reconnaissance operations and to have the resultant imagery processed quickly on-site.

The cabins are divided up into three rooms. They have a darkroom at the rear which allows for the rapid printing of areas of interest on a film; a loading room the photographers upload the magazines and chemical storage room in the middle; and a Kodak Versamat film processing machine in the front room.

In all, the cabins have a crew of up to four personnel to process film, make prints, reload camera magazines and process the imagery.

“You need a minimum of four people to operate the cabin. We had six at PB08, with four undergoing training,” NCIOIC of reconnaissance at 87SQN 82TIF, CPL Mark McConnell, said.

The cabins – which are transportable by C-130 – were first used in the tropical trials in Darwin in 1979. They were deployed for rapid press film processing at the 1982 Commonwealth Games at Chandler Stadium in Brisbane and have also been used in New Zealand.

They have been deployed to RAAF Bases Curtin and Tindal over the years for many exercises. Under operational conditions and in exercises, processed films are made available to the geospatial imagery analysts (GIAs) within a short time-frame after engine shutdown.

“Time is the single most critical factor involved,” CPL McConnell said. “The film has to be downloaded from the RF-111, processed immediately and taken to the GIAs. It is all about getting the film to the GIAs in a timely manner so they can make quick decisions that could be critical in an operational environment.”

The film has to be downloaded from the GIAs, processed and delivered to the exercise or operations area. The cabins also come with an above-ground emergency water storage bladder which can be folded away and placed in the cabin for transport. It has not been unheard of, especially in hot climates, for the bladder to be used as a pool on occasions, much to the relief of hard pressed ‘techos’ that discover its merits.

A cabin comes completely self-sufficient with a portable air-conditioner and all the tools and equipment required to run it. It is packed inside, strapped down, loaded onto an aircraft and delivered to the exercise or operations area.

The cabins are also equipped with print facilities, reload magazine magazines and chemical storage room in the middle; and a Kodak Versamat film processing machine in the front room.

CABIN FEVER: From left, CPL Mark McConnell, AC Craig Barrett, CPL Andrew Eddie and AC Daniel Pinhorn in the ‘recce cabin’ at RAAF Base Darwin during Exercise Pitch Black, and inset, CPL McConnell inspects a film to check the Versamat is processing correctly.

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News 9
By Barry Rollings

FORGET your basic maths principles; five into four does go, but only just, according to the XO of the ADF School of Languages (LANGS), SQNLDR John Ward.

New to his job at the time, he had four weeks to recruit five Pashtu speakers to assist in teaching the language to ADF personnel about to deploy to Afghanistan. He received a RAAF College commendation for his efforts.

“They had to speak good English, be Australian citizens and meet other eligibility criteria,” SQNLDR Ward said. “I had been in the job only a matter of weeks myself, so it was certainly one of the bigger challenges I have faced in my time in Defence – but I relished the opportunity,” he said.

I was also mindful of the fact that we are sending young diggers potentially into harm’s way and we need to prepare them as best we can for this challenge, which includes language and cultural education.

In the end, I had our five new Pashtu lecturers signing employment contracts the day before they flew to Darwin [to conduct the training].

“There were a few tense moments when it looked like the planets would not align but with the assistance of civilian recruiting in Melbourne and some of the contacts I had at Robertson Barracks in Darwin we got there in the end. It was certainly an interesting welcome to the position at LANGS,” he said.

The new lecturers include a former member of the Afghan Army, a doctor, a lawyer and a former engineering student. They joined the school’s other Pashtu speaker, Mr Said Mozaffaruddin, to fulfil the special ADF task.

“Many of LANGS staff are native speakers employed on a sessional basis,” LANGS CO CMDR Katja Bizilj said.

“They hail from diverse backgrounds and wide areas of previous employment, and some have only arrived recently in Australia. The school is a unique Defence training institute, delivering a critical Defence niche capability. It is held in high regard for the high calibre of graduates it produces,” she said.

“All the six instructors wanted to take time out of their regular employment to meet the ADF demand for this niche capability, and to contribute to the rebuilding of Afghanistan, as well as contribute to their new homeland,” SQNLDR Ward said.

Mr Mozaffaruddin began work at LANGS in 2006 as a Pashtu and Dari teacher. He believed that the 12-week courses, which included cultural aspects, would be of great benefit to deployed ADF personnel.

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By Barry Rollings

The new DCAF has confirmed that the Air Power Development Centre (APDC) will continue to play an important role in the future of Air Force. AVM Geoff Brown was speaking during a recent visit to the APDC in Canberra, where he discussed the future direction of the centre’s work with its director, GPCAPT Tony Forestier.

The centre has refocused its role over the past three years, leading to a refinement of some of its past functions, but its key mission remains constant. “As it explores future concepts, it helps the decision-makers make better decisions about the Air Force’s direction,” AVM Brown said. “APDC also has the role of distilling our past and applying that perspective in consideration of the force’s future. I think it is important for any organisation to be cognisant of its history, and to understand the historical basis for the way it does things and how it has responded to challenges over time. That produces an organisation that can learn from experience and adapt to the future needs of the Air Force.”

I expect the APDC will continue to perform the function of analysing where current directions might be taking the Air Force, and whenever necessary, running up a flag to remind busy managers, ‘have you considered these lessons of the past?’

To strengthen its capacity for air power analysis, the centre has refocused its visiting fellowship program. The director said that fellows with suitable qualifications would undertake short-term studies that produced concrete outcomes for the Air Force and other air power factors.

“These fellows will solve practical problems using the skills they already have, after it has been agreed that the topic is important and the outcomes will be used by the stakeholders,” he said. As an example, AVM Brown pointed to WGCDR Tracey Friend’s detailed study of increasing Air Force productivity under the reshape and rebalance program.

“We now have processes which will help people identify better work procedures from the bottom up rather than top down,” AVM Brown said.

Air power central

Assuming the new DCAF that his expectations will be met, GPCAPT Forestier said: “We do the future, present and past at APDC.”

Although the centre’s team is small, normally only about 15, he said: “We produce analysis and lessons, synthesised across time, for the future Air Force.”

While Air Force Headquarters has the responsibility to strategically lead and shape the force, in a sense the APDC sits upstream of that, identifying issues regarding concepts, technology and capability that would need to be addressed in anticipation. “We are an ideas shop, but a practical one,” GPCAPT Forestier explained. “We try to pick the things we think can turn the tide for the future Air Force.”

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The APDC has also refined its approach to air power education. Working with the Air Force Training Group, the APDC has helped to increase the air power content of Air Force courses to better develop professional mastery of the subject.

Masters of training

Twice a year, the APDC puts 10 pre-qualified instructors from training school through its new air power trainers’ course. “We give them enough air power theory and education for them to confidently teach air power,” GPCAPT Forestier said.

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HAWAII

10SQN attacks in the Pacific during Ex RIMPAC

By WGCDR John Martin

NO. 10 SQUADRON ruined the day of several submarine crews at the close of the Pacific (RIMPAC) exercise last month when during one flight they found and sank two submarines. The squadron’s AP-3C maritime patrol aircraft, under command of Flt Lt Scott Stewart, destroyed two submarines during RIMPAC’s final week.

During the month-long exercise in the Pacific, the squadron engaged in over 400 hours of flying and completed 150 sorties, conducting high-end maritime surveillance and reconnaissance (ISR) activities and confirming that the squadron had dropped only one flight. Flt Lt Stewart briefed the crew on what was expected in the operating area, tactics and other essential information.

When their aircraft returned to Kaneohe Bay after a successful mission, the crew rapidly turned to the next sortie preparation, with a 24/7 commitment to exercise the AP-3C.

For some personnel this was their first operational exercise of the year, others had been deployed to the Middle East, and in some instances personnel had even been deployed to Afghanistan.

"Heading outbound, we joined a Surface Action Group and on direction conducted ASW (anti-submarine warfare) operations," said Flt Off Brayden Pirlo.

"About half-way through the exercise we gained contact on a Type 209 diesel submarine and proceeded to engage it," Flt Off Pirlo explained. "We were very happy with the mission. It was the most challenging we had encountered in the exercise so far."

Meanwhile, other sections of 10SQN changed shifts in the war-room planning of the exercise and increased the deployment tempo to a 24/7 operation. As 10SQN’s avionics technician CPL Georgina Lysaght began her shift, the maintenance team was generally happy with the health of the aircraft.

"While there was some work with radars, avionics and avionics,servicability rates were quite good," she said.

WOFF Engineering WOoff Wayne Brayden Pirlo briefed coalition aircrews on another mission.

"One of the highlights was when we were on top of RIMPAC Walker when we found two in one sortie," said Flt Off Pirlo. "We captured some wonderful imagery of the submarine hitting the hull, exploding and sinking it, which was a very proud moment," WOOff Brayden Pirlo said.

"Everyone at RIMPAC gets to exercise their skills and it is the most rewarding experience to share submarine intelligence, coordinate missile shots and work with a multitude of different men and women," Pirlo explained.

OC 10WG CFCAPT Steve Osborne, Battle Force Maritime and Patrol and Response Aircraft Task Group Commander, said control of aircraft, the mission and communications were handled with skill, ensuring that the squadron had dropped only one flight.

"On an exercise at home we would brief to exercise our high-end maritime warfare tactics and other essential information. At RIMPAC it was about 10 a day and because coalition aircrews have different requirements compared with Australian crews, each briefing was more complex," Osborne explained.

The crew confirmed that the squadron had dropped only one flight. He had changed the maintenance group by splitting it into two 12-hour shifts, effectively giving the squadron ‘round the clock’ support.

"We completed a very good exercise and found compatibility challenges, notably with different languages, procedures and technology.

"Providing battlefield awareness in an environment with hourly changes and then being able to clearly articulate briefings in air as well as naval maritime intelligence was challenging," Flt Off Pirlo said.

"One of the highlights was when we were on top of RIMPAC Walker when we found two submarines during RIMPAC’s final week. We captured some wonderful imagery of the submarine hitting the hull, exploding and sinking it, which was a very proud moment," WOOff Brayden Pirlo said.

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To assist ADF Members prepare their 2007/08 income tax returns, the Australian Taxation Office (ATO) has provided a series of questions and answers relating to matters commonly affecting ADF Members. As tax affects ADF Members in different ways, the list is not exhaustive and should only be used as a guide. Should you require specific taxation advice relating to your circumstances you should seek independent advice from your personal taxation advisor or directly from the ATO when completing your income tax return.

For further information, the ATO can be contacted on 13 28 61 or online at: www.ato.gov.au

1. Question
If I deploy on foreign service to a non-warlike operation for an expected period of four months, and then have to return to Australia for compassionate reasons for nine days, will I incur a break in foreign service for the purposes of qualifying for a foreign employment income exemption ('section 23AG exemption')?

Answer
No. When compassionate leave is granted for reasons of an accident, illness or death of another person there will be no break in foreign service. That means you still qualify for a foreign employment income exemption.

2. Question
If I’m posted overseas to perform diplomatic duties, why might I be excluded from claiming a foreign employment income exemption ('section 23AG exemption')?

Answer
Personnel posted overseas to perform diplomatic duties may attain diplomatic status, and the privileges and immunities that go with that status. This can include exemption of a person’s diplomatic service remuneration from the income tax of the country where they are posted. You would be excluded from claiming a foreign employment income exemption if you did not have to pay tax in the country where you earned that income only because of:

• a law of another country
• the operation of a tax treaty, or
• an international agreement to which Australia is a party dealing with the privileges and immunities of diplomats, consuls, or persons connected with international organisations.

(For more information see Exempt foreign employment income on the Tax Office website.) However, if this income is not exempt from tax, you may be eligible for an overseas forces tax offset. (For more information see What is the overseas forces tax offset? on the Tax Office website.)

Note: To determine whether any foreign income amounts are assessable, you may need to consider any double tax agreement Australia has with the foreign country.

3. Question
While deployed to a United Nations (UN) operation that is classified as warlike, I was paid Mission Subsistence Allowance. It is paid directly to the member by the UN. What are the tax implications for members in receipt of this allowance?

Answer
The allowance is included in your assessable income as foreign employment income. If your salary qualifies for an exemption, the allowance will be part of that exempt income. An allowance earned by a person serving as a member of the Defence Force is exempt from tax if conditions relating to operations in warlike areas are satisfied. You should check with the Department of Defence to determine if your service meets these requirements.

The allowance may also qualify for foreign employment income exemption ('section 23AG exemption'). Where a resident taxpayer is engaged in foreign service for a continuous period of not less than 91 days, any foreign earnings they derive from that service will be exempt from tax in Australia. If the allowance paid is directly attributable to the foreign service, the allowance will be considered to be foreign earnings and exempt from income tax.

Your foreign employment income is not exempt from Australian tax if you did not have to pay tax in the country where you earned that income only because of:

• a law of another country
• the operation of a tax treaty, or
• an international agreement to which Australia is a party dealing with the privileges and immunities of diplomats, consuls, or persons connected with international organisations.

4. Question
My wife and I are both Squadron Leaders in the Royal Australian Air Force. We have three school-aged children. Do we have to pay the Medicare levy?

Answer
A Defence Force member is fully exempt from the Medicare levy for any period where the member, and their dependants, are entitled to receive full free medical treatment under Defence Force arrangements.

Where a Defence Force member is entitled to free medical treatment, but the member’s dependants are not entitled to receive free medical treatment, the member is generally liable to pay half the Medicare levy.

Where both the taxpayer and his/her spouse are Defence Force members, a child of theirs may be treated as a dependant of only one spouse. Only that spouse will be liable to pay one half of the levy and the other spouse will be exempt. You will both need to complete a family agreement.

(The family agreement, and more information about the Medicare levy exemption, are available on the Tax Office website.)

5. Question
I am a Sergeant in the Army and have no other income. I am married with three school-aged children and my wife does not work outside the home. I also have two school-aged children from my previous marriage who live with their mother in Canberra.

I have just been advised that I have been posted to Darwin where, as it is a remote location, I will be entitled to two Remote Locality Leave Travel entitlements a year. These are designed to give me and my family relief from the harsh climate and to allow us to access medical and other services. I only get this entitlement if I use it—it cannot be cashed out. The total value of the entitlement is $7,000 per year.

If I take this entitlement how will it affect my family support benefit and my child support payments?

Answer
While your employer considers Darwin remote, and therefore provides the Remote Locality Leave Travel entitlement to you for living there, it is not considered a remote location under the Fringe Benefits Tax (FBT) legislation. Therefore, the entitlement will be a fringe benefit for FBT purposes (for more information on remote locations and FBT, see ATO Practice Statement Law Administration PS LA 2000/6 on the Tax Office website).

If the value of certain fringe benefits provided to you or your associate exceeds $2,000 in an FBT year (1 April to 31 March), your employer must record the ‘grossed-up’ taxable value of those benefits on your payment summary for the corresponding income year (1 July to 30 June). The grossed-up amount reflects the gross salary that you would have to earn to purchase the benefit from after-tax dollars. (For more information see Reportable fringe benefits - facts for employees on the Tax Office website.)

The reportable fringe benefits amounts are also taken into account in the income tests for the family tax benefit and for your child support obligations.

www.ato.gov.au 13 28 61
ASIC seeks solutions

THE Air and Space Interoperability Council (ASIC) has focused its program to ensure that issues which may affect interoperability are eliminated.

The council provides a framework in which specialists from member nations can work collaboratively to develop solutions.

Australia recently played host to senior Air Force representatives from Australia, Canada, New Zealand, the UK and US for the 60th annual meeting of ASIC national directors.

ASIC’s precursor, the Air Standardisation Coordinating Committee (ASCSC), is recognised as one of the world’s oldest international military collaborative programs. Inaugurated in 1948, the committee facilitated combined operations and training through standardisation of procedures, equipment and doctrine.

Under today’s ASIC program, solutions may range from simple information exchanges on national issues to internationally-ratified air standards which set out agreed operational procedures or technical standards.

Responsibility for the implementation of the ASIC program within Australia resides with Capability and Plans Branch at AFHQ, with AIRCDRE Gavin Davies as the ASIC National Director for Australia.

AIRCDRE Davies recently noted that the challenge for ASIC was not only to ensure that resources reflect current national and combined priorities, but also to ensure that the program was appreciated as a routine tool for specialists.

He said ASIC should form part of their “day job” to solve interoperability issues through a network of qualified and authorised specialists from the member air forces.

“Interoperability does not necessarily mean commonality,” AIRCDRE Davies said.

“In operating together, an appropriate level of interoperability is dependent on the context of the operations and forces involved. Deployed forces must be able to adjust this level to meet operational needs at the time with a built-in level of flexibility to adjust.

“ASIC’s multilateral work is complementary to arrangements in both the air force-to-air force and wider joint/combined context. “Our relationship with the US Air Force, for instance, now reflects the aspiration for a seamless integration of deployed forces within a 24-hour period. ASIC will be an integral part of achieving that goal by 2012.”

ASIC’s work is organised into five functionally-based working groups covering air and space capability areas. These include: air mobility; agile combat support; command and control and intelligence; target acquisition and reconnaissance; force protection; and two additional specialist groups covering aerospace medicine and fuels.

Coordination of the specialist aspects of each working group is the responsibility of appointed heads of delegation at theWGCDR level within HQAC.

Details of the ASIC program are available on the Air Force intranet site under “agencies” or at the ASIC internet website at: www.asic.mil.au

For more information, contact ASIC national program manager WGCDR Leigh Collins on (02) 6265 5538 or email: Leigh.Collins@defence.gov.au

BULLETIN BOARD

Air Force Band

August 8: The Ceremonial Band will support the SATC graduation parade at RAAF Base East Sale at 2pm.

August 13: The Ceremonial Band will support the 1RTU graduation parade at RAAF Base Wagga at 11am.

August 15: The Air Force Wind Quintet will support the Central Flying School 95th anniversary dinner-in-night at RAAF Base East Sale Officers’ Mess.

August 16: A bugler will travel to the Shire of Yilgarn in Western Australia to play at the No. 25 (City of Perth) Squadron reedication ceremony.

August 18: The Ceremonial Band will support the Vietnam Veterans’ parade at the Melbourne Shrine of Remembrance.

Penang schooling reunion

On November 1, a reunion will be held in Canberra to celebrate 50 years of RAAF schooling in Penang, Malaysia.

RSL Legal Aid

What is RSL Legal Aid?

The RSL Legal Aid Scheme is an initiative of the RSL in cooperation with National Legal Aid (NLA). It is a scheme designed to facilitate the provision of free legal information and preliminary legal advice to Australian Defence Force personnel wherever they may be serving.

Information about civilian law is available from a number of sources, including legal aid commissions and law societies in each state and territory of Australia. Sometimes an understanding of the law relating to your problem will enable you to decide how best to handle it. Sometimes you may also need legal advice. The RSL Legal Aid Scheme is designed to help you obtain information about the law and preliminary advice about your problem.

For information about how to access the scheme, visit the RSL website at: http://www.rsl.org.au
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I'M AUSSIE PROUD: Left, local purchasing officer LAC Simon Deguara on the job at the Force Level Logistic Asset, Afghanistan, in Kandahar.

Photo: CPL Mike McSweeney

GREAT JOB: Right, CPL Darren Hobbs from 11SQN receives a CO’s Commendation for his efforts during Operation Resolute by SQNLDR Kevin Mulgrew on the flightline at RAAF Base Edinburgh.

Photo: AC Vasilis Solomou

PUPPY POWER: Below, from left, FLTLT Jodie Dell, SGT Damian Parslow with ‘Riki’, WGCDR David Coysh with ‘Quiz’, and SQNLDR Shane Hellman with ‘Quincy’ at RAAF Base Townsville. The 12-week-old Malinois pups are part of the Air Force puppy foster care program being extended for the first time outside the Amberley region.

Photo: FSGT Craig Scott

OFF ON TOUR: WGCDR Gary Roderick, from HQ Air Command at RAAF Glenbrook, presents Russell and Gail Barber with a certificate acknowledging their successful bid in the auction to take a VIP tour of RAAF Base Richmond. The Barbers $4000 bid won them a ‘walk through’ tour of a C-130, a one-hour C-130 simulator flight, with the help of a qualified flying instructor, and a military working dogs training section display. The VIP tour was one of three ADF ‘experiences’ auctioned at Parliament House in Sydney on June 4 to raise funds for the 2008 Legacy Torch Appeal. The auction featured former CDF, GEN Peter Cosgrove (ref’d), as the guest speaker and media celebrity and former Wallaby, Peter Fitzsimmons, as the master of ceremonies.

Photo: Michael Brooke

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Our flights of fancy

By FLTLT (AAFC) Steve Cousins

AUSTRALIAN Air Force Cadets (AAFC) took to the skies in style when they participated in air experience flights in an ex-military CT-4 trainer aircraft at Point Cook recently.

LCDT Matthew Knight and CDTs Dylan Crosby and Seamus Gallagher from 430SQN AAFC, located at Kyneton in Victoria, were among the lucky cadets who couldn’t contain their excitement when they strapped in for their flight.

The activity was made possible through the assistance of 4WG AAFC Flying Training Flight, based at Point Cook, and instructors WGCDR (AAFC) Peter Spiess, OC Air Training Wing AAFC, SQNLDR (AAFC) Steve Pepper and PLTOFF (AAFC) Ross Gridley.

Cadets and staff were briefed before being strapped in for a 30-minute flight around the Kyneton area. The flight was tailored to individual’s requests, ranging from mild turns and wing-overs for the novices to loops and stalls for the ‘Top Guns’ who dared to experience it all. The flights left the cadets grinning from ear to ear.

Cadets and staff declared the activity a rousing success and look forward to the air experience activity next year.

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Have your say, aircrew

By Charnie Braz

The Aircrew Sustainability Project (ASP) has received an excellent response to calls for participation in workforce consultation workshops currently underway at RAAF Base Glenbrook.

ASP is a complete review of remuneration and non-financial conditions of service for aircrew, including pilots, air combat officers and other ranks aircrew.

The project is being led by the Aircrew Sustainability Project (ASP) team, which is made up of representatives from across the Air Force, including aircrew, management and other stakeholders.

In consultation with aircrew, ASP has developed options for remuneration packages to put to the Defence Force Remuneration Tribunal mid-2009 so that officer and other ranks aircrew can be placed within their respective graded pay structures.

Another dimension of ASP’s work is to explore and develop non-financial aspects to deliver an attractive and appropriate aircrew employment package.

ASP was initiated by Air Force and is steered and backed at the highest levels of Air Force, Navy and Army aviation management.

For more information on ASP, visit: http://intranet.defence.gov.au/ralweb/sites/ASP

**LET’S WORK TOGETHER:**

All aircrew are encouraged to get involved with the Aircrew Sustainability Project by having their say on the future remuneration structure.

**MOVING AHEAD:**

Aircrew consultation workshops are part of the next phase of the project.

Photo: FSGT Craig Sharp

**Suicide awareness now available via online training**

By CPL Jane Ashby-Cliffe

ADF members are now able to complete suicide awareness training online through CAM-PUS. It is mandatory for Army and Navy personnel but optional for Air Force personnel.

The Directorate of Mental Health (DMH) has designed the self-paced online training, which includes interactive case studies and website links to further develop every member’s understanding of suicide awareness.

“The training is an opening for people to gain a better understanding of the warning signs and symptoms of suicide, so they have a better idea of what to look out for and what to do about it.” SO1 Mental Health, DMH, LTCOL Andrew Cohn said.

“It is an awareness program to teach ADF members what they need to know, but also to instil in them an interest to learn more.

Before the establishment of the Mental Health Strategy in 2002, suicide awareness training had not been standardised across Defence and was delivered only at the request of unit commanders.

“The suicide rate within the ADF has declined considerably since the strategy was introduced and is just over half of that in Australian society,” he said.

ADF members can obtain further information through DMH, their regional mental health team, the Psychology Support Section, medical centres, chaplains and the Defence Community Organisation.

LTCOL Cohn said there were many mental health professionals in Defence “willing and able to help, and it is OK to talk about it.”

For more information, visit DMH at: http://intranet.defence.gov.au/dsg/sites/dmh/ or email: DMH.mentalhealth@defence.gov.au

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Townsville showcase

By SONLDR John Le Roy

THE North Queensland Military Aviation Museum Inc. at RAAF Base Townsville has given new meaning to the word “downsizing”.

The not-for-profit organisation promoting the military aviation heritage of North Queensland and all theatres of conflict associated with North Queensland does not have the resources of its big brother, the RAAF Museum at Point Cook, in providing the “real deal” of exhibits for visitors to linger over.

So, has it done the next best thing by putting replica aircraft on display, ranging from the very small to one that is one third in size. Included in its display is a model of the Wright Brothers’ Wright Flyer and models of a wide range of aircraft flown by Australian, American and Japanese pilots during World War II.

A compact museum which allows visitors to move from one era to the next within a short distance, it boasts a half shell of an Iroquois helicopter and wings requiring painting before the aircraft for static display. The fuselage is a model of the Wright Brothers’ Wright Flyer and multimedia display on the Caribou aircraft.

The museum has its own amateur radio station, which is about to become a full-time operation. The station is operated by members of the local amateur radio club. The museum’s retired Air Force volunteers include: SONLDR John Le Roy (curator), WOFIs Doug Mills, Ken Bailey and Warren Davies, FGt Doug Bower, CPL Barbara Bower and LACW Mary Hilbig.

The museum lays claim to a number of unique achievements, including:

- It has hosted the only photograph display for Operation Interfet in Timor-Leste.
- It has the only computer-generated multimedia display on the Caribou aircraft.
- It staged a combined display for the Australian film and television personality, Charles “Bud” Tingwell.
- It is involved with the “work for the dole” program, working on the restoration of the museum’s vehicles.

The museum also has a working link trainer in which visitors are sometimes “given a fly”.

It also boasts the largest aviation library in North Queensland and that continues to grow.

The organisation is run solely by a dedicated group of volunteers, some with military background, and others just wanting to help in maintaining and improving this unique museum.

The Townsville Museum began in 1989 and then moved to its present location in 1991 as the RAAF Museum Townsville Annex. In 1997, it closed for a major overhaul of the buildings and displays. It remained closed for two years and reopened with a base open day in 1999.

On November 30, 2001, it was announced that the doors to the RAAF Museum Townsville would close permanently but on December 1, 2001, the RAAF Townsville Museum was born; it flourishes today.

Testament to the hard work of those who run it is the North Queensland Tourism Award for Heritage and Culture that it won in 2003.

The museum has benefited from being a member of Volunteers North Queensland which has sent many volunteers to it under the Centrelink “work-for-the-dole” program, as well as other interested people.

The museum has its own amateur radio call sign and has participated in a number of competitions. The radio station is involved with the “work for the dole” program, working on the restoration of the museum’s vehicles. In so doing, it won a Prime Minister’s Commendation for the high level of success in the restoration of the vehicles from “Bits to Blitz”, which was presented on August 31, 2007.

In 2006, it received a grant from the Department of Veterans’ Affairs to upgrade its Vietnam display. The display was officially opened by former RAAF WWII pilot and Australian film and television personality, Charles “Bud” Tingwell.

The museum has its own amateur radio call sign and has participated in a number of competitions. The radio station is about to become a full-time operation. The station is operated by members of the local amateur radio club.

The museum’s retired Air Force volunteers include: SONLDR John Le Roy (curator), WOFIs Doug Mills, Ken Bailey and Warren Davies, FGt Doug Bower, CPL Barbara Bower and LACW Mary Hilbig.

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Better use your head

Sub-arachnoid haemorrhage, aneurysm, vasospasms; frightening words that SONLDR Steve Laredo became intimate with this year. He felt pain and took immediate action.

THE MEDICOS referred to it as a “thunderclap headache” – a rapid and instantaneous onset of the most severe pain you could ever experience. An aneurysm (a dilation of one of the arteries in my brain) had burst, flooding the sub-arachnoid area of my skull with blood. Although I was experiencing the worst headache I’ve ever had, I was fortunate as I was still conscious and capable enough to do something about it.

I had experienced a few severe headaches before, but this pain was nothing like that – there was no gradual onset of symptoms, just the “thunderclap” from the bursting blood vessel. A few years ago, a friend of mine suffered a ruptured aneurysm, as had a very close friend of my wife’s. This little bit of familiarity with this condition led me to a very rapid self-diagnosis, and I realised that if anything was going to feel like an aneurysm, it would be this – a massive and debilitating pain behind my eyes and across my neck.

I posted to the United States. I was at home only with my nine-year-old son. I dialled 911 (the US equivalent of 0000) within three minutes of the attack. They stayed on the line with me as the symptoms progressed to numbness of the extremities and nausea until the first services arrived, closely followed by the paramedics. The paramedics administered an IV drip and discussed my condition with the local hospital.

Within 40 minutes of the attack, my son and I were in the Weston Hospital (about 20 miles west of Washington DC). The initial thoughts were that I was suffering a severe flu reaction, but fortunately the symptoms I presented mandated a CT Scan which revealed bleeding within the brain.

The Inova Fairfax Hospital has one of the best neurosurgical intensive care units (ICU) in the country, so my son and I were soon in another ambulance for a quick transfer across town.

I maintained consciousness throughout-out all this, and distinctly remember the sandpaper-like feel of the small drill piercing my skull to insert a tube to relieve pressure around the brain. This drain and accompanying bag was going to be the most significant barometer to the status of my condition over the next few weeks.

The small, clear bag draining off cerebrospinal fluid, which, under normal conditions, should be a clear straw colour; now, it contained far more red than it should have. The next 10 days consisted of pain mitigation and methods to reduce cerebral vasospasm (spasm of the blood vessels in the brain to protect against the increased pressure – these spasms also increase the risk of permanent brain damage), including drips, medication and riding the pain out.

On the second and third days, an MRI and an angiogram (an x-ray with contrast injected directly into the blood vessels around the brain through a catheter inserted in the femoral artery in the groin) could not reveal the source of the bleeding due to the amount of blood in the area. Now it was a waiting game, hoping that the vasospasms would lower in intensity before they caused any brain damage and that there wouldn’t be any further complications.

The pain over the next few days was the most intense I have ever experienced, particularly as the blood in the cerebral- spinal fluid flowing around my spinal cord caused exsanguinating back spasms as well as headaches.

Over the next fortnight, the fluid from the drain slowly cleared and the pain subsided enough to enable me to rest almost normally.

Another angiogram on the 10th day showed no sign of the rupture that caused the initial bleed, but did reveal another aneurysm that required surgery. The operation was “routine”, as it was carried out on a daily basis. However, I couldn’t agree that nearly eight hours on the operating table was routine.

The surgery consisted of an incision from the base of my left ear to over my right eye. The scalp was peeled back and several small holes were drilled in my skull. These were then joined with a circular saw, and a piece of skull approximately two inches round was removed from my forehead.

The aneurysm was wrapped with cotton to stimulate scar tissue build-up and strengthen the wall of the artery. The piece of skull was replaced and fixed in place with titanium plates, and then the scalp was returned to its original position with the aid of 29 staples.

A CT scan showed that the surgery was a complete success, and I have since made a full recovery.

The purpose of this article is to raise the general awareness of the possibility of this serious illness occurring without warning. If you, or anyone around you, suffer an instantaneous headache and/or neck ache such that there has never been felt before, act immediately and call emergency services.

Risk factors for aneurysms can be hereditary but treatable lifestyle factors such as high cholesterol and high blood pressure are also important. Unfortunately, the only guaranteed way of detecting an aneurysm pre-rupture is via an invasive procedure such as an angiogram, but new procedures are being developed, so the future looks good.

New Initiatives Announced

Initiative 1

The Defence Special Needs Support Group is pleased to announce their initiatives – ‘Focus on Furry’ Family Camps and FYI or ‘For Your Information’. The ‘Focus on Furry’ Family Camp program was trialled recently in Melbourne with 6 families having participated from the Melbourne West group.

The camp was held over one night/ two days with families staying at a school camp on Phillip Island. Families participated in a range of activities from seeing the penguins to patting a wombat. The weekend was structured so that all disabilities and special needs were catered for. It is hoped that the next camp will be in November and we would love to have families or community members express interest.

A big thank you to the Ambassador Apartments for their support in hosting this event. We thank Defcredit for their effort, but everyone who runs many of our programs, so we really appreciate the support you have always provided.

Initiative 2

The FYI program provides educational and information support to parents or carers of those with a disability or special need by providing the opportunity to attend workshops or seminars by specialist speakers in their field. We will either heavily subsidise the cost of attending the workshops or bring the speaker to where our families are located, again subsidising the attendance cost.

As part of the launch, we are assisting families so that they can attend a workshop by Sue Larkey and/or Tony Atwood, experts in the field of Autistic Spectrum Disorder. These workshops are being held in Sydney, Canberra, Wagga Wagga, Townsville and Brisbane in the coming months. The normal cost of the workshop is $125 but for DSNSG families, the cost will only be $25 per person. If you would like to have a place reserved, please contact the DSNSG National Office on 1800 037 674 for further information.

‘FYI’ is generously funded by the donations received from Defcredit’s Dig Deep for a Dollar Day and is another way in which we provide assistance to special needs families.

Round-up Across Australia

Lots of things happening in local groups across Australia. In Victoria, families can access subsidised tickets to see ‘Wicked’ – ‘The Broadway Musical’. In Sydney you can see the musicals ‘Phantom of the Opera’ and later in the year ‘My Fair Lady’ or go on a harbour cruise. In Perth you can go to the zoo or take the kids to see ‘Beauty and the Beast’ and in the Brisbane area you can go to ‘Underwater World’.

For those living in Canberra, a snow trip is on the cards as is Laser Challenge and movies during the next school holidays. All these events are at DSNSG subsidised prices.

Our Circle of Friends Respite Program currently has vacancies in both the Host Family Program and the Flexi Respite Program. If you find yourself on a waiting list to access respite or are not currently receiving respite and would like some, then give us a call.

To find out more, contact the National Office phone 1800 037 674 or www.dsnsg.org.au

Record donation from Defcredit

Defcredit surpassed their record donation of $110,000 last year, donating a record amount of $121,800 to DSNSG this year. Their staff raised a fabulous $61,800 and Defcredit’s Board of Directors then announced that Defcredit would add an additional $60,000 to funds raised by staff to further support this great result. This donation is one of the largest single donations DSNSG has ever received.

We were presented with the cheque by CEO of Defcredit Jon Linehan and Deputy Chairman WSQCDRController Brown at our annual dinner, held at Old Parliament House in Canberra on May 22. Without Defcredit’s fundraising efforts across Australia we would simply not be able to run many of our programs, so we really appreciate the strong support they have always provided. Not only do we thank Defcredit for their effort, but everyone who supports Defcredit in its fundraising efforts.

To find out more, contact the National Office phone 1800 037 674 or www.dsnsg.org.au
Basketball spirit in SA

THE SA Defence Basketball men’s and women’s teams both finished sixth when they contested the Australian Country Water Polo Championships against hot competition on the Gold Coast recently.

The ADF has an annual standing invitation to play in this competition against state country teams. This year an invitation was also extended to the Singaporean men’s and women’s national teams.

After a week-long training camp, coach SGT Phil Fletcher (Army) had the teams physically and mentally prepared to take on the best the country had to offer. Competition proved extremely tough, as both men’s and women’s state teams contained National League players, with some Australian representatives thrown into the mix.

At the end of a week of competition, both teams had shown themselves competitive and worthy of respect.

The men’s team played off for fifth against its traditional rival Western Australia. ADF led by two goals at three-quarter time, but was unable to hold out a last minute run of three goals by WA in the last quarter.

The ADF women continued their impressive form, by placing sixth after a hotly-contested finals game against WA. The highly physical game kept the crowd on edge until the final siren, with WA winning by a goal.

The Most Outstanding Player awards were presented by the coach to LT Nick Whitehead and LCPL Camille Reed.

LT Whitehead’s performances won him a berth to tour with the Australian Country water polo team to Singapore in September.

For those interested in playing water polo, the annual ADF Inter-Service Water Polo Championships will be held in Brisbane during the first week of December. Interested members are encouraged to visit: www.adfwaterpolo.asn.au for contact details of their area representatives, or contact CFN Bradley Sanderson at email: bradley.sanderson@defence.gov.au

Hot play in polo

By CFN Bradley Sanderson

THE ADF men’s and women’s teams both finished sixth when they contested the Australian Country Water Polo Championships against hot competition on the Gold Coast recently.

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Triathlon Championships in age group at the 2008 World Championships finished a creditable 23rd in his age group of cycling.

The race was cut short and turned the race into a duathlon because of the freezing conditions, according to GPCAPT Hamwood. That usually involves three demanding legs: a 1500m swim, 40km cycle and 10km run. But because of the freezing conditions on the day in Vancouver, organisers cancelled the swim and turned the race into a duathlon of two running legs and one of cycling.

Because of the freezing conditions, “it’s always a magic feeling coming up to the line,” GPCAPT Hamwood said. “But that’s life – you have to deal with what’s in front of you. That’s the difference between the stronger swimmers in the freezing conditions, the stronger runners and disappointingly, the weaker swimmers.”

As well as going head-to-head with their inter-Service rivals, they will also have to play the Royal New Zealand Air Force team. The program includes: men’s and women’s open events; mixed graded events (A-F depending on numbers); masters (men’s 35 and over, women’s 30 and over); veterans (men’s 45 and over, women’s 40 and over); doubles (depending on time and numbers); inter-Service including an APS team; and challenge matches.

The RNZAF will compete at the nationals, followed by a 10-day tour to contest the Trans Tasman Trophy. The ADF and RNZAF teams will play Test matches in Sydney, Canberra and Melbourne. The program includes: men’s and women’s 40 and over); doubles (depending on time and numbers); inter-Service including an APS team; and challenge matches.

LAC Baldwin finished 26th out of 70 starters in 2hrs and 10min for a commendable 23rd out of 70 starters in the 60-64 age group.

“Because of the freezing conditions, the stronger swimmers were a real concern and this wasn’t a risk the organisers were willing to take, although the race the next day was a qualifier at the elite level for the 2008 Beijing Olympics,” GPCAPT Hamwood finished in 2hrs and 10min for a commendable 23rd out of 70 starters in the 60-64 age group.

“The race favoured the stronger runners and disappointingly, the stronger swimmers in spite of the freezing conditions,” GPCAPT Hamwood said.

That switch so far has proved successful, with LAC Baldwin representing the NSW Central Coast in his junior years and touring New Zealand in 2004. He improved on his 2005 Arafura Games bronze medal with a silver in 2007.

Ranked around the 260 mark among NSW, ACT and Victoria players, he plays for Ipswich PCYC (Police Citizens Youth Club) in the super 8 pennants. He plays twice a week and trains up to six days.

“I love the speed of squash and it’s great for fitness,” LAC Baldwin said.

His favourite shot is the backhand drive and his favourite player is Australia’s Michelle Martin, with whom he has trained. Martin has won three world titles, six successive British open titles, seven Australian titles and two gold medals at the Kuala Lumpur Commonwealth Games in 1998.

Players interested in participating at the 2009 Arafura Games are also encouraged to attend, as the national championships provide the primary forum for selection. For more information on the squash titles, visit: http://intranet.defence.gov.au/adfg/sq/sites/squash/.
Marathon marvels

By Barry Rollings

IN A STANDOUT performance in only her third marathon, PLTOFF Lisa Flint from RAAF Base Amberley won the women’s Defence marathon championship convincingly on July 6.

The Australian Defence Marathon Championships were run in conjunction with the 30th annual Gold Coast Marathon, where PLTOFF Flint finished fifth female overall in 2:49.22, slashing 17 minutes off her previous best time.

Without the presence of Army’s SGT Elza Magyar, who has dominated the ADF women’s marathon scene in previous years, the door was left wide open in the women’s event.

WO2 Alisa Wickham was the second female, crossing in 3:19.40, with LSPT Tricia Muller a respectable third in 3:38:24.

In the men’s event, SQNLDR Richard Gardner from RAAF Base Williamtown achieved an impressive personal best, won his age category and finished second overall in the Defence championship. SQNLDR Gardner finished in 2:32:23, a personal best marathon time by 2½ minutes.

A record number of Defence runners turned up, with the male runners producing some of the fastest times of recent years.

SBLT Rowan Walker smashed the Defence marathon record by more than five minutes when he finished in 2:19:36. To put this into perspective, the speed at which SBLT Walker ran the 42.2 km marathon was equivalent to running at 7min 59sec PFT pace. He was fifth overall and was the fastest Australian over the line.

Third over the line for the ADF was Army’s SGT Mat Skate who also managed to strip more than 4 minutes off his previous best time.

Air Force’s CPL Geoff Hanckel from RAAF Base Darwin was second to SBLT Walker in the men’s veteran (35-45) category in 2:48:42.

Male Defence athletes also featured well on the podium in other championships that were held in conjunction with the Gold Coast Marathon. SBLT Walker and SGT Skate placed first and third respectively in the Oceania Marathon Championships, while SGT Skate and SGT Simon Oregan – both Queensland-based PTFs – were first and second respectively in the Queensland Marathon Championships also run in conjunction.

Army won the inter-Service championships with 44 points from Navy on 19 and Air Force on 12.

The Defence organiser of the event, SGT Skate, said that a total of 75 Defence members entered, more than double the numbers of previous years. “It was great to see the volume of numbers this year,” he said.

“For many marathoners, it’s about running the distance with as little walking as possible (if any).”

For more information and to view the race calendar for the Australian Defence Running and Athletics Associations (ADRAA), visit: www.adf.coolrunning.com.au

Guthrie second in ironman

SQNLDR Lee Guthrie finished second in the Defence category and 31st overall in the M30-34 category at the Australian Ironman Championships at Port Macquarie recently.

Army’s WO2 Gavin Wickham qualified for the Ironman World Championships in Hawaii in October after winning the Defence category and finishing 10th in category and 61st overall in a field of about 1500.

SQNLDR Guthrie, from 36SQN at RAAF Base Amberley, had an accumulated time of 10:11:20, which was made up of a 53:59 swim, 5:26:30 bike ride and 3:50:50 run.

WINNING WAYS: PLTOFF Lisa Flint from RAAF Base Amberley was first over the finish line for the women in the Defence marathon championships on the Gold Coast. CPL Geoff Hanckel (inset) from RAAF Base Darwin finished second in the men’s veteran category.

Photos: WO2 Richard Quirk

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SDSS IT CONTROLS FRAMEWORK FY 08/09

On 21 Jul 08, MBIT Released a new version of the SDSS IT Controls Framework FY08/09 (SITCF FY08/09)

What does this mean for me?

Clearer guidance, easier to understand, fewer controls, Streamlined reporting. All units will be expected to complete a minimum of 2 Self Assessment Tools per year, High Material Units will be expected to complete 3.

What if I need help?

Your Compliance and Assurance Teams are your first point of contact, or you can contact MBIT via the feedback channels on our website.

Where can I find the new SITCF FY08/09?

You can access the framework and the accompanying Self Assessment tool by visiting our website: http://intrane.defence.gov.au/CMS/Website/SITESSSITCF/SSITCF.htm

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SPORT

LET'S PLAY BALL

By Barry Rollings

AIR Force players will take their first steps towards Combined Australian Services Rugby League (CASRL) glory and representative honours when they arrive in training camp in Canberra on October 9.

Apart from competing against their Army and Navy rivals for the CASRL championship, berths in the CASRL representative squad will also be up for grabs.

To mark the centenary of rugby league this year, Australia is staging the Rugby League World Cup and in conjunction, the ADF will play host to six nations in a Defence Force World cup.

The Air Force trials will begin at RMC Oval on Friday October 10, and are expected to involve at least four teams playing two games, kicking off at 1.30pm. The teams will play again the next day at HMAS Harman in their final chance to impress for national selection.

The Air Force representative team and individual awards from the carnival will be announced at a function at HMAS Harman on October 11.

"In the year of Rugby League Centenary, the upcoming carnival is set to be the biggest yet for Air Force and the other Services," Air Force rugby league spokesman FSGT Aaron Smith said.

"With the annual Defence inter-Service title on the line and the opportunity to play in the Rugby League World Cup, players will have to be at their best.

"The Air Force team is looking the goods after a great start this year thanks to Defence Health’s generous support during the SGT Paul Mason Shield.

"Members selected for this year’s Air Force team will also play in April next year in the Patron’s Shield, which is the curtain-raiser for the Australia-New Zealand Anzac Test match."

The CASRL carnival will be held in Canberra from October 17 to 21 at RMC Duntroon and HMAS Harman.

On October 22, the representative team will travel to Townsville to play the Papua New Guinea Defence Force team on October 25 as a curtain-raiser to the England-PNG game at Dairy Farmers Stadium.

Those not selected for the Townsville game will train in Canberra on October 23 and 24 and form two sides to play a curtain-raiser at Canberra Stadium on October 26, when Scotland and France will meet in their World Cup encounter.

The Defence Force World Cup final will be played on November 16 as a curtain-raiser to the World Cup semi-final at Sydney Football Stadium.

For more information on playing or supporting the Air Force team, visit: http://intranet.defence.gov.au/raafweb/Sites/AFRLC/