

RIGHT CALIBRE: THE NEW GLOCK 17 PISTOL



Defence**Focus**

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**PULL-OUT
POSTER p16**

**HEALTH FOR
DUMMIES**



**GETTING
IN SHIP
SHAPE**

The Royal Navy's new
basic fitness test p13

A dramatic landscape at sunset with soldiers and a satellite dish. The scene is set in a rugged, hilly area with a large satellite dish on the right. Two soldiers in the foreground are looking at a device, while another soldier stands in the distance. The sky is filled with dark, heavy clouds, and a bright sun is low on the horizon, creating a strong glow. A lightning bolt is visible in the distance. Two orange arrows originate from the text: one points from 'up there' to a satellite in the sky, and the other points from 'down here' to the soldiers on the ground.

We ensure global reach
from **up there**

to ensure smooth passage
down here

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EDITOR'S NOTE

DefenceFocus

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Level 1 Zone C
MOD, Main Building
Whitehall
London SW1A 2HB
General enquiries: 020 721 8 1320

EDITOR: Fiona Simpson
Tel: 020 721 8 3949
email: fiona.simpson102@mod.uk

ASSISTANT EDITOR: Ian Carr
Tel: 020 721 8 2825
email: ian_carr@dmc.mod.uk

ASSISTANT EDITOR: Tristan Kelly
Tel: 020 721 8 4252
email: tristan.kelly569@mod.uk

ASSISTANT EDITOR: Leigh Hamilton
Tel: 020 721 8 5988
email: leigh.hamilton933@mod.uk

ASSISTANT EDITOR: Lorraine McBride
Tel: 020 721 8 2341
email: lorraine_mcbride@dmc.mod.uk

ART EDITOR: Mark Eagle
Tel: 020 721 8 3658
email: designer_defencefocus@dmc.mod.uk

DISTRIBUTION AND SUPPORT: Shell Daruwala
Tel: 020 721 8 1320
email: shell.daruwala932@mod.uk

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email: richard.stillman@tenalps.com

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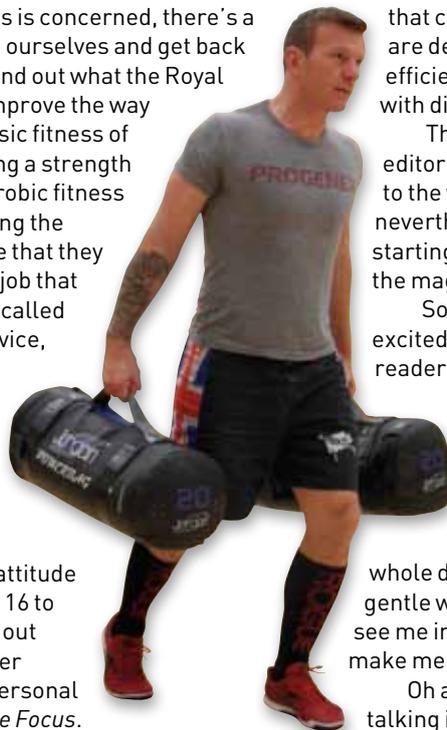
It's a familiar tale; at the start of the new year we all make some wide-ranging and well-intentioned commitments. Get fit. Stop or start something that is either bad or good for us. Do more

or less of something. Or generally become a more fabulous and well-rounded individual.

Well-rounded is often the operative phrase as, by February, we have normally slid back to the comforting biscuit-munching familiarity of our pre-resolution selves. Sound familiar?

But in this edition of *Defence Focus*, at least where fitness is concerned, there's a chance to redeem ourselves and get back to getting fit. We find out what the Royal Navy is doing to improve the way it assesses the basic fitness of the Fleet. By adding a strength element to the aerobic fitness checks and tailoring the tests to make sure that they reflect the type of job that anybody might be called on to do in the Service, Navy Command are hoping the end result will be a new enthusiasm for keeping fit.

And you can change your own attitude by turning to page 16 to find your own pull out and keep (fit) poster courtesy of your personal trainers at *Defence Focus*.



But remember, people in our profession don't have that great a reputation for healthy living – so it's probably wise not to get your hopes up too much!

Our own Doctor Nick gives you some tips on keeping going with your fitness resolutions on page 26.

It's also a case of new year, new kit, as we take a look at some of the latest equipment to come out for the Services, including the new Glock 17 pistol and the inaugural flight of the Royal Navy's first Wildcat attack helicopter.

There's also an interview with Philip Dunne, Minister for Defence Equipment, Support and Technology who reflects on his first few months at the department and looks forward to the issues affecting defence equipment this year

Also in this edition, Ian Carr looks into the essential and sometimes sombre work of the Joint Casualty and Compassionate Centre (JCCC).

The team supports the Services in their darkest hours making sure that crisis and bereavement are dealt with professionally, efficiently and above all with dignity.

The job of *Defence Focus* editor seems almost trivial next to the work of the JCCC but, nevertheless, I'm excited to be starting 2013 at the helm of the magazine.

So being new, I'm keen and excited and want to hear from readers to find out what you like about what we do, what you want to see more of, and what you'd rather we just didn't bother with.

I'm not just new to *Defence Focus* but to the whole department. So please be gentle with me, smile at me if you see me in the corridor, maybe even make me the odd cup of tea.

Oh and for goodness sake - stop talking in acronyms!

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IN MEMORIAM

DEATHS ON OPERATIONS – 10 DECEMBER 2012 TO 31 JANUARY 2013

Kingsman David Shaw

Kingsman David Robert Shaw from 1st Battalion The Duke of Lancaster's Regiment died in Queen Elizabeth Hospital Birmingham on Wednesday 16 January 2013 from wounds sustained in Afghanistan.

Kingsman Shaw sustained a gunshot wound when his checkpoint came under attack from insurgents in the Lashkar Gah district of Helmand province on 14

January 2013.

Born on 13 October 1989, Kingsman Shaw joined the Army in February 2008.

Paying tribute, his family said: "David was a much-loved son and brother who was proud to have served his country in the 1st Battalion The Duke of Lancaster's Regiment.

He loved his family and friends and would always make time for a hug for everybody."



Sapper Richard Reginald Walker

Sapper Richard Reginald Walker from 28 Engineer Regiment, attached to 21 Engineer Regiment as part of the Task Force Helmand Engineer Group, was killed in Afghanistan on Monday 7 January 2013.

Sapper Walker was shot in an apparent insider attack by a member of the Afghan National Army at Patrol Base

Hazrat in the Nahr-e Saraj district of Helmand province while he was working on a construction project.

A valued member of 73 Armoured Engineer Squadron who deployed on every single troop task, Sapper Walker was a popular and well respected member of his troop, destined to go on to greater things.

His family paid tribute to their son and brother who survive him along with his young daughter Lilly-Faith.

Ministry of Defence online

www.gov.uk/mod

Ministry of Defence

By 2014, websites of all government departments and many other public bodies will be merged into the Inside Government section of www.gov.uk.

MOD is one of the first departments to join the cross government website and can be found at www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ministry-of-defence



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Afghanistan Blog

Updated regularly with official news on the UK mission in Afghanistan as well as with stories from across the media and personal blogs from Armed Forces personnel currently deployed. www.ukforcesafghanistan.wordpress.com



FIRED UP: AS THE SUN GOES
DOWN OVER THE INDIAN OCEAN,
HMS NORTHUMBERLAND'S MERLIN
SENDS MORE THAN 100 FLARES
CASCADING THROUGH THE SKY





Picture: LA(Phot) Maxine Davies

COMING HOME

THE JOINT CASUALTY AND COMPASSIONATE CENTRE, BRINGING HOME THE FALLEN. REPORT BY IAN CARR

Footsteps on the path. There's a knock at the door. A family's world is about to collapse. Receiving a call from a notifying officer to say that a family member has been killed while serving in the Armed Forces must be every Service family's worst nightmare.

But even while the dreadful news sinks in, a dedicated team of people, who the family will never meet, are moving heaven and earth to provide the support they will need at this terrible time. It's a silent relationship that might endure for years.

It is the Joint Casualty and Compassionate Centre (JCCC) based at Imjin Barracks who, as part of the Service Personnel and Veterans Agency (SPVA), receive that first awful phone call saying that there has been an incident. From that point on it is their job, working behind the scenes, to support the family

in dealing with the grim practicalities of the death of a loved one. Repatriation of the deceased is just one small part of the process.

"We support our people throughout their life," explains Sian Gausden, SPVA's media officer, and a member of the out-of-hours support team. "When they start we give them their ID cards, put them on the payroll and give them their allowances. If they are injured we pay their compensation, and if the worst happens we repatriate them.

"But we don't just leave the families after the funeral, we provide welfare support through the Veterans Welfare Service and can help in sorting out the deceased's estate, putting up headstones or memorials. We also do our best to process any medals that may be due so that the families can be given them at the repatriation."

When the worst has happened to Service families the Joint Casualty and Compassionate Centre provides support

THIS IMAGE IS A TRAINING EXERCISE



Picture: SAC Phil Cooke

Several members of the team are qualified registrars so that death certificates can be issued to ensure that the family has all the documentation they need as quickly as possible.

Due to the nature of the work of the Armed Forces, repatriations can be required from anywhere in the world. During the winter, skiing and climbing expeditions can result in the JCCC receiving a call. But of course it is from Afghanistan that most repatriations are made.

John Pollard, a civil servant now, but, in a previous life, an RAF Warrant Officer with more than 30 years' service, has worked at the JCCC since its creation in 2005.

"The moment we are notified of a death we task our contractor, Albin International Repatriation, and their funeral director flies out to theatre in order to take care of the deceased in the mortuary at Camp Bastion, and during their return to the UK," he tells *Defence Focus*. "We use a contractor as MOD doesn't have the specialists that are needed for a repatriation."

Any members of our Armed Forces who die in Afghanistan, be they British, Fijian, Gurkha or any Commonwealth nationality, must first be brought back to the UK under the jurisdiction of the coroner so that an inquest can be held. Once the coroner has finished, they release the deceased to the contractor who will dress the deceased in their uniform, or in a manner in accordance with the family's wishes, and convey them to the family's funeral director, which could mean onward transit to Fiji or to Nepal.

"No repatriation is ever the same," says John. Out of respect for the families he won't be drawn on the details: "I never talk about them, because someone might pick up that we had difficulties getting someone home – and they don't need to know anything about that. All they need to know is that their loved one was treated with respect and dignity throughout."

Often the families wish to talk to the person from Albin's who accompanied the deceased back to the UK. "It gives them a bit of comfort to know that someone has been looking after their loved one for the whole time, from the moment they fell," says Sian.

As soon as the notification comes in, the ball starts rolling. "We could get a call at any time telling us there has been an incident resulting in, for example, four very serious injuries, two unlisted casualties and a death," says John.

"The details come through on Joint Personnel Administration and we get the kinforming process going. Say he's army, we would contact HQ Support Command at Aldershot to say they need to identify a notifying officer nearest to where the next of kin is living."

The notifying officer then makes their way to the address he has been given, and, before knocking on the door, calls the JCCC to see if there are any more details that have come through that he can tell the family. "Experience has told us that it is better for the family to know as much detail as we can give them about what happened and what condition their loved one is in, unless we have been advised that due to the state of health of the family that it would be too stressful for them, if for instance the mum is frail."

Within 24 hours of the family being told, a visiting

Picture: SAC Neil Chapman



Respect and dignity:
families take comfort
knowing that from the
time they fall their
loved ones are never
left alone

THIS
IMAGE IS A
TRAINING
EXERCISE

officer takes over and becomes the JCCC's contact with the family, asking them for all the information that is needed to sort everything out for them.

For those who have died on operations, repatriations include a military ceremony when the coffin arrives at Brize Norton. Close family members are made welcome, and the JCCC sorts out the details. "They are told by the visiting officer that the ceremony is for the military to say farewell to their comrade. Although it is difficult, they can be there, and will be allowed a short time with their loved one, but the family's funeral comes later," says John. "On the day most of them are overwhelmed by the experience."

The work can be stressful, but it is rewarding too. Occasionally it may all get too much, but at these times the team pulls together and supports each other. "Every day is challenging," says case officer Janice Baker. "But whatever you are dealing with, it affects people's lives. It's often sad, but you get on and do the best job you can." **DF**

Picture: Richard Watt



Military tribute: repatriations
to RAF Brize Norton are the
military's time to say farewell
to a fallen comrade



**CAN YOU
COME HOME?**

**WHEN PERSONAL DISASTER
STRIKES, THE JOINT CASUALTY
AND COMPASSIONATE CENTRE
CAN HELP WRITES IAN CARR**

It all starts with a phone call. And it could be anything. A mum wanting her son back from the front line because his dad's just had a stroke and is close to death in hospital. Or, a wife anxious about her husband who has just been deployed, hoping to find any reason for him to be returned to hearth and home.

Whatever the personal crisis, the team at the Joint Casualty and Compassionate Centre (JCCC) at Imjin Barracks take the call and deal with each within the constraints of what they call the matrix.

THE MATRIX

"We have a matrix that goes from one to 12 with sub-divisions from which we determine eligibility and entitlement so we can categorise the case to bring people back to the UK on compassionate grounds," says John Pollard, JCCC operations officer. "It could be that there are child care issues if a spouse is in hospital with no immediate family around to take over.

"We don't deal with the welfare side of it, but if the specialists feel there is a case for Trooper Jones to come home we would categorise it on the matrix accordingly."

Where your situation lands on the matrix governs the urgency with which you are brought home – or not at all if the circumstances or the gravity of the case don't warrant it.

"If someone's parent, wife or husband, or child is very seriously ill then that's a Comp Alpha," says John. "That means we move heaven and earth to get that soldier, sailor, airman, whatever, home by the quickest way possible." And that could mean rerouting aircraft in flight, rescheduling aircraft that are about to take off – never mind if one of the passengers happens to be a VIP, and, if there's no other choice, chartering a jet.

CHECK FIRST

"Depending on circumstances, the flash to bang could mean that the person is on their way in under two hours," adds John. But, for instance, if a soldier is in a remote patrol base in Helmand, getting him from there to Bastion might take longer to sort out, and involve sending someone out to extract him.

So before committing to that kind of financial and logistical cost, very careful checks are made with the hospital to establish the situation.

Often, because of medical-in-confidence issues, hospital staff can be reluctant to say anything. That is when the experience of the JCCC staff makes the difference.

"We tell them that we are not after any medical details, we just want to know the situation in accordance with one of three categories to decide whether we need to bring someone home," says John.

If there is still a reluctance to make that differentiation John has a way of easing things along. "I say, the difference is, depending on what you tell me – if the patient that we are talking about is VSI (very seriously ill), then it means that if you have a helipad in front of your hospital, the son or daughter will be arriving by helicopter pretty soon. If they are not that ill, Trooper Jones will be coming by bus the next day or so." That, it seems, does the trick.

COMING HOME

For troops on operations, only a VSI will result in an immediate compassionate trip home. Sometimes that home might not be the UK. "We may have to arrange for someone to go back to Fiji, or if they are a Gurkha to Nepal," says John.

Once a green light has been given for a compassionate trip, within minutes JCCC will contact the movements experts at Abbey Wood to sort out flights. The second call is to the relevant Service personnel desk dealing with that person wherever they are in the world to let them know the trip has been approved, and that it's time to get the person ready to leave. If the individual is in Afghanistan that would be J1 at Camp Bastion.

Once on the move, the journey is planned to be as seamless as possible. Aircraft can be diverted to the most suitable airport, and there are occasions where a helicopter is waiting, ready to whisk the person on to the hospital as soon as they disembark from the aircraft.

"We also have times when people need helicoptering off ships, and sometimes from submarines," says John.

KEEPING CALM

On a busy day the team of nine caseworkers could have as many as 200 calls to process. Is 'process' too cold a term to use given that the person calling may well be very distressed? Not really. "You may be talking to someone who is crying," said case officer Janice Baker, "but they're not after your compassion. We're just strangers, they want their son or husband or daughter

home and they just want you to do your job. If you started sympathising that would only make it worse."

In the majority of cases the caller has prepared what they want to say. But if they become emotional, the caseworker knows how to cope, asking if they need a moment to compose themselves or offering to call back in a few minutes.

NOT COMING HOME

In today's age of Facebook, email and free phone minutes, the caseworker is usually spared the task of breaking the news to the soldier that all is not well at home. In most cases they already know and are just waiting for the official okay that they can go back to deal with it.

But that doesn't mean that it's all plain sailing for the caseworker. Sometimes they have to break bad news of a different kind – that the situation does not qualify for a compassionate trip. "The one that causes most trouble is when a grandparent is ill," says Janice. "The policy does not allow us to authorise travel for that. The best we can do is ask if their son or daughter knows about the situation and offer to tell them if they don't."

Although this may seem tough, the line has to be drawn somewhere. Wherever possible the unit may make the decision that the individual can take some leave, or if they are in theatre and in a role that isn't immediately critical, look at the chances of rejigging their R+R leave.

BRIEFING

Before units deploy, a member of the JCCC can visit them to brief on what they can and, just as importantly, what they can't do for them. "We are governed by policy, just like everybody else. So if we tell the units where the line is drawn it means they can tell their personnel 'look, if the washing machine breaks down, contact the welfare officer or their unit for advice, not JCCC,'" says John.

But even when calls like that do come in, the team are remarkably understanding. "Sometimes, some people can become persistent, bless them. But if they want their husband back because they are worried, you can understand it," says John.

A PLEA FROM JCCC

"Could you emphasise that everyone must keep their next of kin and contact details up-to-date," asks John.

"We have to follow the wishes of the individual as to who they want contacting if anything happens. And if the details are not up-to-date it makes fulfilling those wishes more difficult, at a time when everyone wants to sort things out quickly."

So, are your details up to date? 

NEW ORDER

HEAD OF THE CIVIL SERVICE SIR BOB KERSLAKE TALKED TO IAN CARR ABOUT HOW REFORM WILL CHANGE OUR WORLD



Sir Bob Kerslake,
Head of the Civil Service

Picture: Sergeant Jez Doak

We all know, or should do by now, that we are in the grip of Civil Service reform. Plenty has been written on websites about how our Civil Service is already evolving to survive these times of austerity.

Within five years, we are told, by working more flexibly and openly, and in a more unified way, a smaller Civil Service will deliver results much more quickly than it does today. In some places this is already happening. Indeed, the way that the MOD is managing its estates through private sector partnership, bringing in outside expertise where needed, is cited as an example.

But what impact will the changes have on the people at the coalface? For success will ultimately depend on them. Sir Bob Kerslake, head of the Civil Service, a man who believes in visible leadership, has been out visiting as many government departments as he can.

"Seventy per cent of civil servants work outside London," Sir Bob told *Defence Focus*. "I want to talk to people first hand so that it's clear what we are trying to achieve – and how it will impact on them."

That impact, he believes, will be good not only for how the service supports government, but for civil servants too.

In a time where headcount is reducing

by a quarter, pay levels are static and pensions are under pressure, isn't that an ambitious claim. "I agree that reducing the deficit has meant we have had to make some tough decisions," he said, "nevertheless the Civil Service still has a good pension scheme and by any measure I think we can be seen as a good employer. The feedback I've had convinces me that people are very passionate and interested in what they do. So while they talk to me about pay and conditions, you'd expect that, they are more interested in how we can change and work more effectively."

GETTING THE BASICS RIGHT

Comments made in staff surveys, which are returned in numbers that many organisations would envy, certainly seem to back Sir Bob's claim. The statistics point to a motivated workforce that feels that its work is interesting and makes a difference.

What does come in for criticism are the things that frustrate staff who want to get on with things. Replacing those frustrations with better leadership, accountability and improved staff recognition are central to Sir Bob's vision. "We have to get the basics right," he said. "For example the IT has to support you, it sounds like a small thing, but without it people can't work

flexibly." But when it comes to rewarding good performance, staff may take some convincing that things are going to improve.

"To start with we've got to work hard on the culture," said Sir Bob. "A lot of departments are moving to flatter structures and team-based approaches. We have to make it clear what we value and change our systems and structures to reflect that. We've got to reward adaptability. Appraisals must look at how effective people are as leaders, not just look at how large an army they manage. Key to this is developing leaders at all levels."

Sir Bob believes that getting performance management right, setting clear objectives, giving honest feedback, rewarding the positive and sorting out underperformance will make for a more motivated workforce.

"I'm not going to pretend that money isn't important to people, but we're in a pretty challenging financial situation and there are other ways we can recognise performance as well as by giving bonuses. Giving people honest, immediate feedback makes a big difference. We shouldn't underestimate how important it is to tell people when they have done a good job, and recognise that if people do well it should influence their potential for promotion."

But in a shrinking organisation is promotion realistic? Isn't there a danger instead that people will become demotivated as workloads increase?

That's not how Sir Bob sees it. "Well I'm absolutely clear that we can't manage the numbers that we are talking about simply by saying to everybody 'do exactly what you've done before – only run a bit faster on the hamster wheel'," he said. "We need to change the way we do things so we don't micro-control things, and we need to have very rigorous discussions with ministers to identify priorities. The opportunities are still there for promotion with natural turnover and as people move between departments as we start to do things differently."

So in a nutshell what will the new Civil Service be like? "Smaller, more accountable and innovative; fleet of foot, a good employer that is trusted by government and the public," said Sir Bob. **DF**



Keep calm and carry on: medical personnel from HMS Dragon carry a casualty to safety during an exercise

(Inset) Chief Petty Officer Baz Sloan demonstrates the RNFT version

STRENGTH TO CARRY ON



THE NEW ROYAL NAVY BASIC FITNESS TEST NOW INCLUDES STRENGTH WRITES IAN CARR

This month the Royal Navy are introducing a new basic fitness test, which will include a strength element in addition to the well-established aerobic test.

But working out what was the right basic level of strength and how you would effectively test for it has proved to be more of a marathon than a sprint.

Lieutenant Commander Jules

Stevenson, the Royal Navy Fitness Test (RNFT) project leader, told *Defence Focus*: "Developing fitness programmes with press-ups and sit-ups are fine, but using them as a predictive tool to test your performance at sea is not straightforward. We knew we had to design something that clearly made an effective difference."

The solution was to base the RNFT on tasks that anyone in the Service might be

expected to carry out at some stage.

Working together with the Institute of Naval Medicine (INM), HMS *Temeraire* – the Navy's home to all things sports-related, started by sending out thousands of surveys to a representative spread of personnel working in all the different branches and sub-specialisms of the Navy. "We asked them to identify tasks that they felt needed a strength element," said Lieutenant

Wood fitters: using timber to stem a leak, something all matelots might face



Picture: Steve Saywell

STRENGTH ELEMENTS OF THE RNFT

- The strength element has been designed to simulate basic tasks that anyone in the RN might have to do
- The test involves using a power bag to simulate the various tasks



Picture: LA(Phot) Martin Carney

Assistant RNFT testing officer Chief Petty Officer Baz Sloan demonstrates the casualty evacuation test

Commander Stevenson. "We got everything from damage control and firefighting to carrying your kit bag up the gang-plank and even climbing onto a top bunk."

But most of these tasks were not applicable to everyone – moving helicopter landing gear might matter to the Fleet Air Arm, but not to a submariner chef.

This spread of tasks was whittled down to 25 generic tasks that everybody might be expected to do. Again surveys went out, this time asking people to rank the shortlist in order of importance, in terms of criticality to the ship or operation, and to estimate the amount of strength needed to do it.

"We ended up with a list which included casualty evacuation – both fore and aft (leg or head end), hose-handling for firefighting, carrying drums like the 20kg drums of flame-quelling foam, carrying timber (used for stuffing into holes to stop leaks), lifting and carrying heavy objects, and lifting and lowering gear on a rope," said Lieutenant Commander Stevenson.

Those tasks were analysed and replicated using existing kit to avoid extra costs. Some tasks, like the lifting weights on a rope, had to be abandoned straightaway due to the problems of finding a feasible way of simulating them consistently in a range of working environments.

"So we ended up with a core of activities, such as carrying casualties, carrying drums and timber for which we designed simulations, then trialled them to see how realistic they were."

As part of the trials, the RN School of PT put the scientifically-selected guinea pigs, 100 men and 100 women, through general fitness tests, while INM scientists subjected them to various ordeals by measurement, like the unkind calliper-pinch which gauges levels of fat. Although for some this may have felt like an exercise in public humiliation, it provided

the anthropomorphic data that the team needed to correlate individuals' fitness levels with their potential to pass the RNFT.

"I'd say that all the trial subjects enjoyed the experience and immediately saw the relevance of what we were trying to do. Everyone agreed that including the drum-carrying test was a no-brainer."

It became clear that the approach to general fitness training should focus more on simulating relevant work-related physical activities rather than on sitting at a weights machine that isolates muscle groups. Functional training, as it is known, uses more muscle groups and better prepares the body for what is expected of it," said Lieutenant Commander Stevenson.

When functional training at Pirbright barracks was introduced, presentations to sick bay of injury suffered during Army PT training reduced by a factor of six.

The new approach was tested by personnel from HMS *Daring* and from the Defence Diving School to show the RN hierarchy that it was the way to go. They agreed, and now PT basic training for phase 1 and 2 trainees includes functional fitness.

So, what will matelots face when they turn up for their new RNFTs? Well, to put it into context, the RN readily accepts that theirs is the easiest of the Service basic fitness tests. Those taking it certainly won't be expected to perform like a naval version of Jessica Ennis, Usain Bolt or Geoff Capes.

Firstly there is the aerobic element – covering 2.4km within 15 minutes. For those who don't know – a human whippet might be expected to polish that off in around six minutes. "I have had people ask me why they have to be able to do this, arguing 'none of our ships are 2.4km long!'" said Lieutenant Commander Stevenson. "Of course that's true, but I tell them that the aerobic capacity needed to do the run correlates very well with that needed if you

need to do some firefighting, or damage control on a ship."

Next, after a five-minute recovery period, it's into the strength element using specially designed power bags, tough canvas tubes filled with sand with handles on the sides and ends. A brief demonstration explains how to use the bags. "It's all pretty straightforward," said Lieutenant Commander Stevenson.

Then, with a 20kg bag in each hand, you have to complete four 15-metre shuttles, putting the bag down at the end of each run, as on a ship by this time you would have reached a door or a hatch which you would need to open.

The test, which has been designed so it can be carried out almost anywhere, even at sea, must be completed annually. At the moment an upper age limit of 52 has been set. By 2015, the cut-off point will be 55.

"We expect that nearly everyone will pass," said Lieutenant Commander Stevenson. "For the first year there won't be a remedial or punitive element if someone fails the strength test. We will look at how it's gone and make any adjustments that we think necessary. After that, if you do fail either the aerobic or the strength part it will be classed as failing the RNFT. But looking at the other Services who already have strength elements, we are not expecting that to be a big problem."

What the team are hoping is that the new RNFT will change matelots' attitudes. RN surveys have shown that although 75 per cent of respondents thought there should be some strength element to the test, only 50 per cent admitted that they actually did any kind of strength training. Having a test that is easy to pass is OK in Lieutenant Commander Stevenson's book. "If nothing else, if doing this once a year makes people realise they have to do some strength training, then we have won." **DF**



Picture: RNAS culdrose phot section



Picture: LA[Phot] Mandy Reynolds

■ Carrying heavy equipment or drums might be one of those jobs you are suddenly called on to do

■ Holding and controlling a heavy load was part of a hangar fire exercise for HMS *Invincible*.

BASIC FITNESS

NUTRITION AND WELL-BEING

HEALTHY EATING

■ Make sure you eat five portions of veg or fruit each day (not counting potatoes). If you eat a balanced diet you will not need to take vitamin supplements – and you will not need to go on a diet to lose weight, as the exercise will burn it off.

■ Avoid foods that are high in calories but low in nutrients, such as crisps, chocolate and fried food, and alcohol. These will make you put on weight but give less useable energy.



FLUID REPLACEMENT

■ Maintaining sufficient levels of fluid is essential when carrying out any form of physical activity. Perspiration cools the body during exercise to assist in maintaining core body temperature. If this fluid is not replaced, dehydration can occur, leading to fatigue, mental confusion and stress on the cardiovascular system.

■ Water is the best and most economical form of fluid replacement. While there are many brand drinks that advertise increased fluid replacement, water should be the bulk replacement option.

■ Avoid caffeinated and alcoholic drinks which have a dehydrating effect.

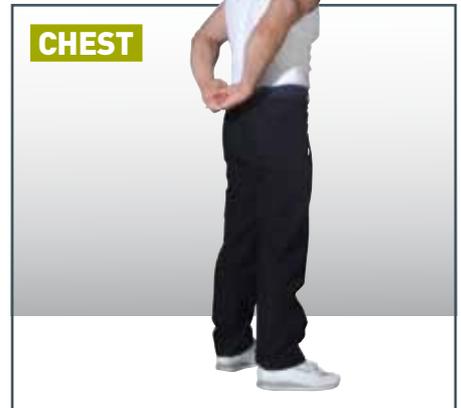


STRETCHES

QUADRICEP

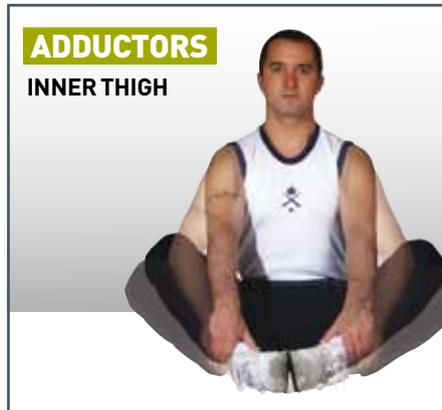


CHEST



ADDUCTORS

INNER THIGH



ADDUCTORS

OUTER THIGH



If you are anything like us in the *Defence Focus* office, your idea of physical exercise is probably sitting in the bath, pulling out the plug and then fighting the current.

But for those of you who feel that this is the year when you really are going to lose a pound or two – without going mad, we have produced this “helpful” pull-out poster.

We decided that seeing what the Armed Forces experts had to say on the subject would be a good place to start.

So, on your behalf, we picked up a few basic fitness military booklets, bending at the knees and keeping a straight back while we did it. Then, having skimmed through them, we put them down again – there’s no point in overdoing it.

If you are made of stronger stuff, and if comments like “exercise should be part of your everyday life”, don’t put you off, and you accept that instructions to “ensure you are fit to fight” are not really aimed at you, then the advice contained in these booklets is as good a place to start as any.

But before you put on your battle face, smear it with camouflage and head off across the moors carrying a rucksack full of bricks, a note of caution, if you haven’t done

any exercise for a while, or you are in one of those categories where you need to be a bit careful, it’s probably a good idea to go to your GP (walking briskly rather than jogging) to get your health checked over first.

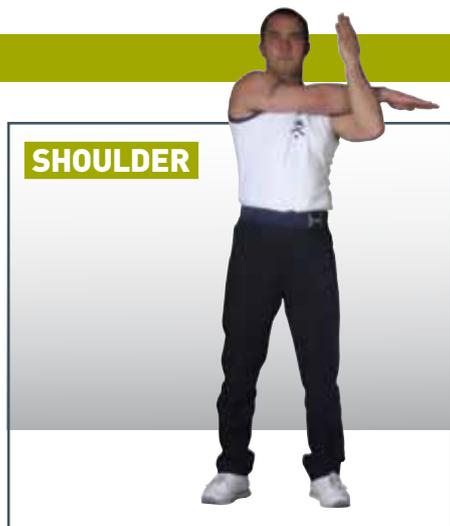
Sadly, there’s no escaping the fact that to get in shape (and no, round may be a shape, but it’s not the one we are aiming for here) you do need to observe a few obvious rules. Eat healthily, keep the fluid levels up – pints and Pinot Grigio don’t count, and always do your stretches first.

And the good news, don’t forget to factor in rest days to allow your body to recover. I think I’ll take mine now.

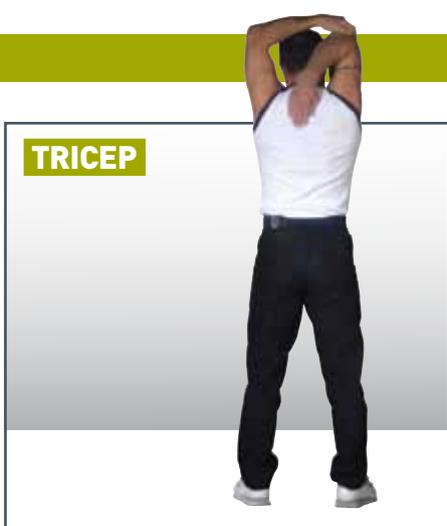


Move it: circuit training builds up all-round fitness

THE DEFENCE FOCUS GUIDE TO KEEPING PHYSICALLY FIT AND HEALTHY, WITHOUT GOING TOTALLY MAD IN THE PROCESS



SHOULDER



TRICEP



CALF



HAMSTRING
BACK OF THIGH



LOWER BACK



HIP FLEXORS

EXERCISES

PRESS-UPS REPS: 12-15

- Body straight
- Arms shoulder-width apart
- Core braced (suck in your gut)
- Lower chest towards ground
- Press back to start position and repeat



1

SIT-UP REPS: 12-20

- Lie on back with knees bent
- Feet flat or hooked under obstacle
- Hands across chest or by side of head
- Belly button pulled in towards spine
- Lift torso looking straight ahead
- Lower and repeat



2

3



SQUATS REPS: 10-12

- Standing with your feet just over shoulder-width apart
- Arms across chest
- Squat down until the knees are bent to 90°, ensuring the head and eyes are naturally looking forward
- Return back to start position



4

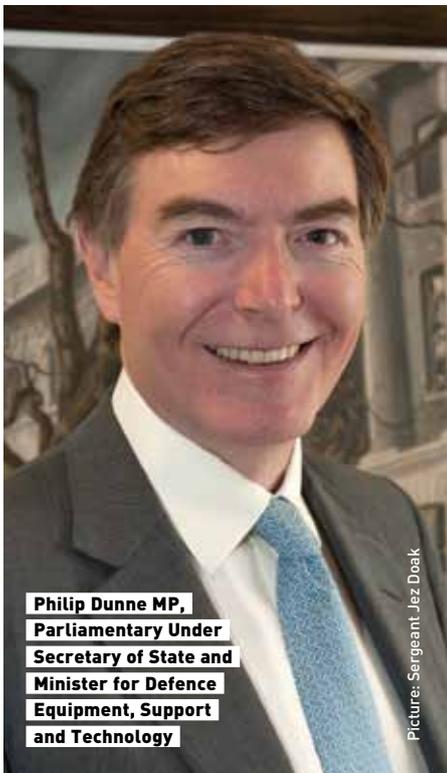


SHUTTLE RUN

- Try a shuttle run (substitute for a short distance run)
- Sprint between two points 20 metres apart until 120m is completed

'DEFENCE IS AN EYE-OPENING EXPERIENCE'

AFTER FIVE MONTHS IN POST, PHILIP DUNNE HAS DISCOVERED THAT BEING MINISTER FOR DEFENCE EQUIPMENT, SUPPORT AND TECHNOLOGY ISN'T QUITE WHAT HE EXPECTED. INTERVIEW: LEIGH HAMILTON



DF: You have been in post since September. Now you have settled in, what are your impressions of the department?

PD: The scope of activities within the Ministry of Defence is much broader than I previously anticipated. I have also been very pleasantly surprised by the capability of the people across the department and the breadth of activity that they undertake.

As for my portfolio, it is much more than just procurement. I have responsibility for the department's support to defence exports, space security policy, Atomic Weapons Establishment activities at Aldermaston, and the hugely important work done by the Defence Science and Technology Laboratory

across the range of the MOD's science and technology programme.

DF: You recently visited Afghanistan – did you find this a learning experience?

PD: Yes. As my first visit, it was a huge learning experience and I was extremely grateful to all those in theatre who were involved and who shared their experiences with me.

We need to ensure that we have the programme and capability in place to redeploy our equipment from Afghanistan as we draw down. That is largely an operational issue, but making sure that we have the right political cover with neighbouring nations to ensure that we get the right permissions for both land and air routes back is also very important. My recent visit to Afghanistan was an opportunity to learn more about those plans.

DF: What do you think are the most important issues relating to defence equipment in the department at the moment?

PD: The priority is to ensure the transformation programme extends into the procurement function. We need to start implementing those decisions regarding bringing private sector expertise into Defence Equipment and Support (DE&S) as part of the Materiel Strategy created by Chief of Defence Materiel, Bernard Gray. Redeployment of our equipment from Afghanistan is also hugely important.

DF: You mentioned DE&S transformation; how is that reform process going?

PD: It's on schedule. We completed a soft market testing exercise at the end of last year. An outline business case has been put together and is going through its internal processes now.

We're on track to make decisions on our competitive procurement approach to the market in the first quarter of this year.

Regarding DE&S, as Defence Secretary Philip Hammond announced last July, we are considering a Government-Owned Contractor-Operated (GOCO) model [DE&S would move outside government to become a ring-fenced private-sector entity] and comparing that to a value-for-money benchmark in the form of a 'DE&S plus', which envisages a substantially reformed DE&S that would remain within the MOD.

A GOCO route would need legislation so we're also looking at what we would need to do to give legislative effect to implement decisions in due course.

DF: Another element of the DE&S transformation programme is the implementation of the National Security Through Technology White Paper. One year on from publication, what progress has been made?

PD: We've undertaken a review to see how we're getting on and I'm pleased to say that measures we set out in the White Paper are being implemented, and, in a number of areas, are beginning to have a transformational effect on the way we do business.

We are encouraging small and medium-sized companies (SMEs) to fulfil their potential in responding to defence requirements. We've introduced a number of initiatives to raise the participation of SMEs in our supply chain and these have been welcomed by the SME community.

Defence is an important area of business for them and there are a good number of opportunities for them to innovate and bring their innovations into the main supply chain, either directly with us or through the prime contractors.

DF: The White Paper focuses a lot on the MOD's relationship with industry. How important is that relationship?

PD: It's very important that we maintain good relations with our suppliers. It's vital that we are clear about what our requirements are, and they are clear to us about their capability to deliver those requirements. The Defence Suppliers Forum and its sub-groups provide a useful opportunity to have those discussions.

If you look at the MOD budget overall, over 40 per cent is spent on equipment, roughly divided equally between buying new equipment and supporting existing equipment and supplies.

It's a very significant component of our spend and our assets, and I think it's fair to say that relationships in the past have been strained by a combination of inefficiencies in the way that we interacted.

What we were determined to do when the new government came in was to remove the main cause of difficulty, both for the Armed Forces and industry, by establishing an equipment programme that was fully funded.

“ Re-deploying equipment from Afghanistan is a priority ”

It took a couple of years, but we got to that point in May last year and we now have a clear ten-year equipment plan. This should provide comfort to industry that, when we commit to buy something, we will do so, instead of continually deferring and delaying to make it fit within an annual budget.

DF: Your role includes defence exports - why is there a need for the MOD to be involved in exporting goods?

PD: Exports are important for the UK as they contribute to economic growth and sustain, and even increase, highly skilled jobs.

They are also important for the department because, if we can encourage other customers to buy equipment which is similar to our own, then it brings down

the unit cost to us of the equipment that we're buying. It also sustains the production line for that equipment and helps to ensure a steady flow of spare parts to enable us to keep our equipment in good shape and to last longer. It's a win-win for everybody.

DF: The MOD is often criticised for how it spends its budget, yet it is vital that our Armed Forces personnel have the equipment that they need. Do they?

PD: I asked the military that question when I was in Afghanistan and, of course, there are always things that people would like to see more of or slight adjustments to.

But in the vast majority of cases people said they were very satisfied with the kit the department has provided to them. **DF**

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WILDCAT TOUCHES DOWN

THE FIRST ROYAL NAVY
WILDCAT HAS TAKEN TO THE
SKIES MARKING A NEW ERA IN
BRITISH NAVAL AVIATION

The first Wildcat attack helicopter to be delivered to the Royal Navy flew its inaugural flight in January, marking a milestone in the project to replace the Lynx Mark 8.

The new Wildcat has a more powerful engine, allowing it to be flown in extreme conditions all year round. It is also equipped with a more robust fuselage, a high-tech interactive display and a new radar system that provides 360-degree surveillance.

The Wildcat HMA Mark 2 will carry Sting Ray torpedoes, a door-mounted, 0.5-inch heavy machine gun and new light and heavy variants of the future anti-surface guided weapon missiles.

Expected to perform a range of tasks once it has entered service, the maritime Wildcat attack helicopter will be used in anti-surface warfare, force protection and counter-piracy. The platform will also be able to carry out an anti-submarine role.

The Royal Navy will receive 28 maritime attack variant helicopters, which will begin operations across the globe from 2015. **DF**

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== GLOCK PISTOL

Picture: Andrew Limnett

Sergeant Steve Lord from the Royal Marines Commando Training Centre at Lympstone demonstrates the new Glock pistol

GLOCK AND LOAD

BRITISH FORCES WILL BE DRAWING A NEW WEAPON AS THE GLOCK PISTOL REPLACES THE BROWNING

British forces can call on a new weapon in their arsenal now that the Glock 17 Gen4 has been selected to replace the ageing Browning Hi-Power as the standard issue sidearm.

An initial order of more than 25,000 Austrian-made pistols will replace the Browning which has been in service with the Armed Forces since 1967 and is becoming increasingly expensive to maintain.

In addition to being lighter and tougher than the Browning the main advantage for troops in the field is seen to be the ease of fire; it can be removed from its holster and fired within two seconds. With the Browning it takes four seconds or more. It also offers more capacity, with the Glock magazine holding 17 rounds compared to 13 for the Browning.

"If I'm getting it out in under two seconds, I'm going to win it," said Royal Marines Sergeant Steve Lord.

With the Browning, the user has to undo the holster flap, flick the safety catch and draw a bullet from the magazine before firing a shot. However, the Glock has three built-in safety catches so the pistol can be kept fully loaded with a round in the chamber even when it is in the holster.

"In the event of your main weapon failing, with the new Glock you can draw and shoot the enemy within two seconds," said Royal Marines Warrant Officer Class 1 Mark Anderson.

"That inspires confidence, and with the short-barrel pistol, it's easier to acquire your target, and makes it a lot safer to conduct your job."

Stocks of the weapon will be on their way out to Afghanistan later in the year and it will be down to commanding officers to decide where and when they are issued. The £9m contract for the pistols includes the holsters which are viewed as integral to the weapon system. Attachments such as lasers and lights can be added as and when they are needed. **DF**

Picture: Richard Watt

The new Glock (top) is lighter and more robust than the outgoing Browning

A new holster will also be issued allowing a draw time of under two seconds

Picture: Andrew Linnett

The Glock's magazine holds 17 x 9mm rounds

Picture: Andrew Linnett

DEBT: DON'T DO IT!

WITH CONCERN OVER THE RISE IN MILITARY PERSONNEL GETTING INTO DEBT, THE MOD IS LAUNCHING A CAMPAIGN TO MAKE THEM MORE FINANCIALLY SAVVY, REPORTS LORRAINE MCBRIDE.



Picture: Harland Quarrington

**Military and money:
Wing Commander
Justin Fowler wants
troops to get 'money fit'**

The numbers of debt-hit soldiers, sailors and air force personnel are increasing, but next month the MOD will embark on an awareness campaign to alert military personnel to the hidden dangers of slipping into serious debt.

The move comes in response to commanding officers who are increasingly worried about the rise in the number of troops racking up debts. Highlighting the danger of slipping into runaway, uncontrolled debt is part of the campaign's solution.

It has been established that debt is the second biggest cause of stress for Service personnel and their families. In 2011, the Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB) revealed that while six per cent of those seeking CAB debt advice had taken out a payday loan, the stats shot up to 16 per cent among the CAB's sample of military personnel. The pitfalls of taking out a payday loan have been widely publicised where the basic amount repayable on a loan of £1,000 is an eye-watering £1,250 and that's if the money is repaid within 31 days.

Wing Commander Justin Fowler, who works

in the MOD's non-operational welfare and families team, says: "Everyone in society is under financial pressure at the moment and members of the Armed Forces are no different."

He believes a soldier's mobile lifestyle can result in a poor credit rating, making it hard to seek cheaper forms of credit such as arranged overdrafts, credit cards or bank loans.

Next month, the MOD will team up with the Royal British Legion and Standard Life Charitable Trust to launch the campaign 'Money Force' to encourage troops to get 'money fit', which includes a website tackling money issues in 'forces friendly' language. By doing so, he hopes to prevent a minority of personnel from leaving the Armed Forces only to end up broke and homeless on civvy street.

The problem of young adults overspending and spiralling into the red is hardly new, but, while Wing Commander Fowler is keen not to preach, he knows that, if left unchecked, a soldier's debt can lead to stress, family breakdown, and welfare and operational issues. The campaign is aimed at all military personnel but naïve youngsters are particularly vulnerable.

Wing Commander Fowler acknowledges that there's a risk that some personnel can live in a bubble, removed from the reality of paying rent and bills in the real world.

He says: "It's fair to say that a high number of personnel join the Armed Forces young and straight from home. They don't have experience of owning their own home or paying bills."

He also concedes that serving in war zones can give soldiers a 'live today' mentality, saying: "There's an ethos of 'I won't pay off my debts because I've been in the desert so I'll have a good time!'"

Wing Commander Fowler particularly wants to educate young military personnel at the start of their career about managing their money responsibly. All recruits currently attend financial briefings to teach them to recognise the tools available to help them manage their finances. These include sticking to a budget, avoiding borrowing to plug a gap that can start a spiral of debt, and ultimately saving for a car or home.

In addition to the campaign, the MOD has called on credit agencies to make financial services more accessible for

all military personnel to minimise any disadvantages that result from a Service lifestyle. The MOD has also worked with the Post Office to offer shadow postcodes for BFPO addresses overseas, giving military personnel abroad a recognisable UK address to make it easier to get credit. In December 2012, the MOD stopped payday loan companies from taking out adverts in military publications including *Defence Focus*.

For military personnel struggling to make ends meet, Wing Commander Fowler urges them to get help early and confide in their chain of command, welfare officers or Service charities that offer debt advice.

"I think we're a very good employer for looking after our people and keeping an eye out for people under stress. In the old days, commanders used to take people's chequebooks off them and manage their finances in a nanny-like way.

"We definitely don't do that any more. The point is, we want to educate people to look after their money responsibly."

Look out for more on 'Money Force' online in March. 



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NEW YEAR, NEW YOU

IT'S ALWAYS TOUGH MOTIVATING YOURSELF TO GET FIT OR LOSE WEIGHT BUT WHY NOT MAKE 2013 THE YEAR THAT YOU KEEP THAT RESOLUTION TO SHAPE UP?



By Surgeon
Commander Nick
Imm, a GP at
Navy Command HQ,
HMS *Excellent*.

Hello from Whale Island in Portsmouth and my 100th column for *Defence Focus*!

How was the New Year for you? Are you among the many people who made a resolution to lose weight and get fitter in 2013?

It's a pretty good resolution to make. After all, being unfit and obese is linked to high blood pressure, strokes, some cancers, Type 2 diabetes and back pain, amongst many other medical problems. However, it's pretty amazing that you can reduce your risk of all these conditions simply by doing some exercise.

But, why do so many of us fail to keep going with our fitness resolutions? After all, we all know we should keep active. If it's been a while since you wore trainers for sport it can be difficult simply getting started.

The most important thing is to do something manageable and realistic. There's no point joining an expensive gym, aiming to go five-times-a-week and lose 10kg in a month. You won't - and you'll only end up angry and demoralised. You need to choose an activity that fits in with your life and is something you enjoy. Why not go for a swim on the way home from work?

More than 90 per cent of us don't do enough exercise. If you're between 19 and 64, you should



be doing 150 minutes of exercise per week – or five 30-minute sessions. You need to be doing moderately intensive activities such as playing tennis, hiking or riding a bike. Simply going shopping doesn't count! You need to be raising your heart rate and breaking into a sweat. If you're just starting, go for some brisk walks and gradually build up to a jog. Keep a diary of your exercise sessions and keep them varied so you don't get bored.

If you're a serviceman or woman have a chat with your Physical Training Instructor about a sensible way to get back into the phys. They are quite used to helping people get into the habit – on my last ship, circuit training sessions were divided into "Huffers & Puffers" and "Fitties" – so no-one needs to feel out of place.

If you have any medical problems such as arthritis or angina, do speak with your practice nurse or GP before making any big changes to your exercise regime.

As well as burning off more calories, have a think about what you're eating and drinking too. Make simple changes that you can stick to. Plan your meals in advance so you're not tempted to opt for junk food and don't forget the "empty" calories in alcohol. Cutting out evening takeaways and swapping those mid-morning biscuits for some fresh fruit are easy ways to make a change to your daily intake that will have a real impact over the coming months.

Don't spend your money on fad diets; they're fun for a week but will soon become dull, expensive and incompatible with real life.

So, if you're serious about keeping that resolution:

- do something you enjoy
- make sure it involves moderately intensive exercise
- keep a diary of your achievements
- find a friend to keep you motivated

Good luck. Stay healthy and I'll see you next month.

■ This is general information only - if you have any medical concerns please see your medic or GP. 

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AFGHANISTAN

My Afghanistan medal has given me most satisfaction. I deployed in 2007 with the Royal Artillery and I vividly remember patrolling in Kandahar and bringing people into camp for Eid. Back in England I collected pencils and clothes and when I handed them out the kids always smiled even though they were desperately poor. It always made me feel that the British Army did a fantastic job.

With every tour I make the most of every moment. I'd never go to Afghanistan in my wildest dreams yet I spent a year and 12 days there. My job was to hire interpreters, and civilians always asked me where I came from. I'd tell them that while I'm British first and foremost, my heart is Indian, and straight away we hit it off because I always treat people well.

When I visited Afghan homes, many families watched Hindi programmes so we'd chat in Hindi. Every time I met people I told them 'we're here and we're a force for good'.



MBE

At my investiture in 2001, the Queen asked me what I did. When I told her that I persuaded people to join the Army, she said 'good job'. It was the proudest moment of my life. I love the royal family and when I drove through the palace gates I thought 'I've made it!'

If I lived my life all over again, I'd still join the Army for true job satisfaction. Being in the Army's Diversity and Action Team in Aldershot is fantastic. We combat discrimination and travel the country promoting the Army and persuading ethnic minorities to join up. We visit schools and weddings - in fact, you name it, we do it.



Picture: Shane Wilkinson

MY MEDALS

W01 Ashok Kumar Chauhan, 53, looks back on his successful 35-year career and five of his eight medals. Interview: Lorraine McBride

There has been a huge change in attitudes to racism. When I joined, life was tough. I got name-calling from soldiers and instructors but it made me stronger.

I had an arranged marriage. I met my wife Savita on a Monday, was engaged on Tuesday and got married on Thursday. When we met, my wife's only English words were 'yes' and 'no'. After we moved to live in Germany, my boss's wife taught her English.

When Savita dropped off our daughter Pritie at kindergarten, the soldiers' wives went out of their way to help her learn English. In return, Savita ran Indian cookery demos, so whenever I was away I never worried.

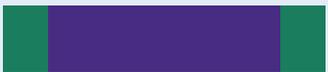
With the Army I've had ups and downs but the Army made me into what I am.



BOSNIA

I went to Bosnia in 95/96 after the Kosovo war to peace-keep and to make sure that Muslims weren't attacked by the Serb Croats. It shocked me to see how humans treat other people. I saw burnt shells and mass graves. I went out of my way to make sure the locals understood the Army was there to make sure they had a secure life.

Some atrocities were unbelievable and sometimes, when you're out there, it brings it home what a fantastic life we live. The relationship with the British Army is just like an Asian family. We have our tiffs but we always stick together and that's the great thing about the British Army.



NORTHERN IRELAND

My best Irish tour was in the Royal Ulster Constabulary (RUC) police station in 1994 at a time when the IRA was still at large. I was blessed to be at Old Park in the tower overlooking the Ardoyne and my job was to observe IRA activity right in front of us.

It got exciting knowing from intelligence that, at a precise time, someone would leave their home, turn left and walk away. From 5am to 9am my job was observing IRA activity. After that, I had the privilege of going out on patrol with the RUC. Ireland is beautiful and, like every place, there were good and bad people. You could see that the good people just wanted peace. It was one of my top three tours.



GULF WAR

I served in the first 100-day war after Saddam invaded Kuwait. My role was in the reconnaissance artillery party, when I orientated the guns and made sure they fired at the right target. I was constantly on the move with little sleep. We'd go up to the front, scrutinise where the enemy was firing, and retreat.

On ops, when I leave home, I always say to my wife 'goodbye and I'll see you when I get back'. I don't believe in writing because, if you don't receive a reply, you worry, so instead I prefer to concentrate on what I'm doing.

Losing colleagues always hits morale hard. In Afghanistan once, I was chatting to a pair of military photographers. I jokingly told one to get my photos done by the morning and he told me not to worry. That night, he was on a Chinook that got blown up. I couldn't believe that someone who I was so close to could just die. Life does go on, though you do miss them.

COMPANY COMMANDER

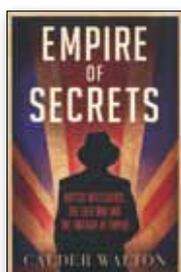
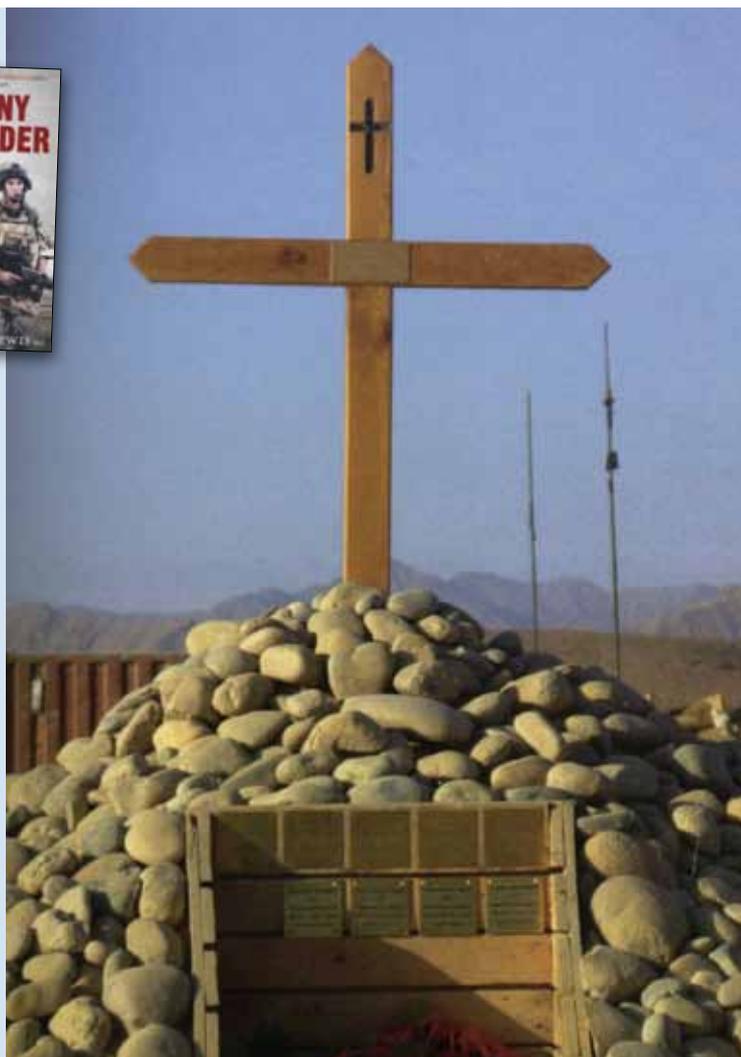
By Major Russell Lewis
Virgin Books, £12.99

PRESENTED in diary form, this is a gripping daily account of a company commander's tour of duty in Helmand province, Afghanistan, from April to October 2008.

Major Russell Lewis is focused on his mission, concerned for his men, and wants to be an effective leader. Also, most importantly, he wants to make the right decisions, quoting Al Shepard's prayer: "Dear Lord, please don't let me screw up."

He is also conscious of his regiment's illustrious history; neither he nor his men want to dishonour its memory by failure. He sums up a soldier's creed as living to be tested in the heat of battle, writing: "imagine going to every training session but never playing a game".

His writing style is straightforward, mercifully free of acronyms and very descriptive – you are left choking in empathy amid the heat, dust and dirt of Afghanistan. When Lewis relates a suicide bomb attack on three of his men, you hope desperately that they make it after they're medevac'd. Then you feel his pain and devastation when he learns of their deaths. If you've ever wondered what daily life is like for a war-fighting soldier, this book bares all. **DP**



Empire of Secrets

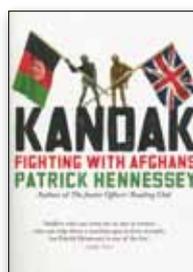
British Intelligence, the Cold War and the Twilight of Empire

By Calder Walton
HarperPress, £25.00

EMPIRE OF SECRETS reveals for the first time, exactly how MI5, MI6 and GCHQ were secretly involved in Britain's decolonisation talks for decades, even though the secret services didn't officially exist. Intelligence expert and historian Calder Walton has been allowed unprecedented access to secret MI5 files recently found by the Foreign Office that provide long lost evidence that the British government deliberately destroyed or removed records from its offices around the

world as countries reached independence.

Britain's phenomenal wartime success is credited partly due to Winston Churchill's conviction that intelligence mattered and, as PM, he granted vast resources to it. The author sheds light on everything from violent counter-insurgency in the Malayan jungle, Kenya and the Arabian Peninsula. There is plenty of cloak-and-dagger secrets from the twilight days of Britain's empire to satisfy avid students of intelligence history. **DP**



Kandak

Fighting with Afghans

By Patrick Hennessey
Allen Lane, £16.99

ARMY OFFICER Patrick Hennessey came home from Afghanistan battleworn and leaving behind a lasting bond formed in the heat of battle with the Afghan National Army (ANA). Hennessey wryly acknowledges the surge of press interest in Afghanistan (where "politicians and pop stars vie for the reflected glory of a Bastion photo-op".) But behind each story one voice is glaringly missing, the Afghan troops "for whom there are no homecoming parades or X Factor tribute songs."

Recounting his never-ending-summer the author ate, slept, lived, laughed and fought side-by-side with Afghan warriors in camps, bases and ultimately in ditches. His compelling portrayal slips beyond media caricature; soldiers like Qiam, Syed, who initially moans that all British soldiers look the same and Hazrat who are neither Western puppets nor a complete solution. Instead the ANA mirror their British counterparts, ordinary soldiers doing a difficult, sometimes extraordinary job. **DP**

SUDOKU

	3	4	8			2		
					2		3	7
					6	4		
		1		5	7	8		
	5							1
		7	2	8		6		
		3	9					
2	8		6					
		6			8	3	2	

Fill in the grid so that every row, every column and every 3x3 box contains the numbers 1 to 9

5	3	4	7	1	8	9	2	6
7	2	8	6	4	9	1	5	3
1	6	9	3	5	2	8	4	7
8	4	1	2	6	5	3	7	9
9	5	6	4	7	3	2	8	1
3	7	2	9	8	1	5	6	4
2	9	7	5	3	4	6	1	8
6	8	3	1	2	7	4	9	5
4	1	5	8	9	6	7	3	2

Solution to the December 2012 - January 2013 puzzle

CHESS



Compiled by: Carl Portman

I spent a few very enjoyable days at the London Chess Classic in December. It was here that chess fans took the opportunity to shake hands with the world's best players and watch them fight it out in the slugfest that occurred in many of the games.

To read my report about my experience visit the chess pages on my website at www.carlplanet.co.uk and you will find the PDF file.

A key event this year is the Combined Services Chess Championship. This will be held at RAF Wittering from 23 to 27 May and players of all strengths are catered for; entry form downloadable at <http://serviceschess.co.uk/>

In November I played chess for 24 hours, raising money for a local cardiac team. I want to thank those readers of this column who donated; you made a difference.

Finally I want to say a special thank you to all my team mates at the NATO Championships in France last October. I was proud to represent my country and equally proud to have done so with them at my side.



The problem this month is taken from the 2012 London Chess Classic and is the Anand-Adams showdown. It is Adams (black) to move. How did he proceed? I will give an official programme from the event as a prize for the first correct answer drawn.

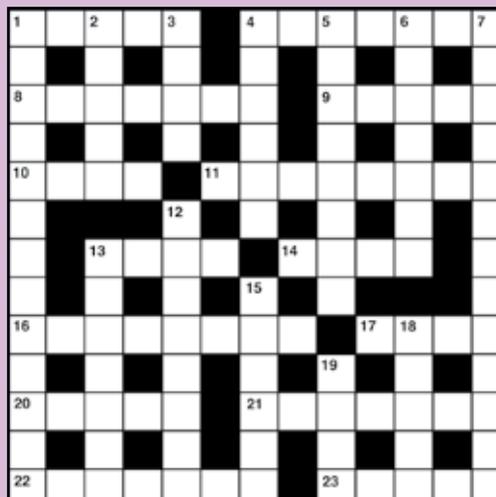
Send your answers to me at carl.portman@hotmail.co.uk please. The answer to the Dec/Jan problem is: 1. Qh6+! gxf6 2. Rxf6+Kg7 (2...Kh5 3. Rxf6 mate) 3. Bxf6+ Kg8 4. Rf8 mate.

The winner will be announced next issue. The winner of November's problem is Nigel Sheridan from DFRS at Longtown.

TOPICAL CROSSWORD

ACROSS

- Prime Minister whose father was a music hall performer and circus artiste (5)
- Sport played by Judd Trump (7)
- 'The _____ Children', one of Jenny Agutter's best-loved films (7)
- Tool used for making holes (5)
- Extremely small amount (4)
- Her novels include 'The Murder of Roger Ackroyd' and 'And Then There Were None' (8)
- Architect whose masterpiece is St Paul's Cathedral (4)
- Close-knit group of Scottish families (4)
- Anaesthetic used in childbirth (8)
- World's largest continent (4)
- Island awarded the George Cross in 1942 (5)
- See 6 Down
- Inescapable agent of someone's downfall (7)
- Big cat with a yellow-brown coat striped with black (5)



DOWN

- He plays Bilbo Baggins in the new film of 'The Hobbit' (6,7)
- Length of timber used to support a floor or ceiling (5)
- Streets....or arguments (4)
- Tool with a long, curved blade for cutting crops (6)
- 'Tubular Bells' is his most famous album (8)
- And 21 Across. She plays Bella Swan in

- 'The Twilight Saga' films (7)
- Amusement park attraction (13)
- Customers who use a restaurant frequently (8)
- Prime Minister of Australia from 1972 to 1975 (7)
- Syrupy liqueur flavoured with blackcurrants (6)
- Informal speech (5)
- Outer peel of an orange (4)

SOLUTION (NO PEEKING)

- Across**
- Major 4. Snooker
 - Railway 9. Drill 10. Iota
 - Christie 13. Wren
 - Clan 16. Epidural
 - Asia 20. Malta 21. Stewart
 - Nemesis 23. Tiger
- Down**
- Martin Freeman 2. Joist
 - Rows 4. Scythe 5. Oldfield
 - Kristen 7. Rollercoaster
 - Regulars 13. Whitlam
 - Cassis 18. Slang 19. Zest



PRIZE
Four lucky readers will win a DVD and best-selling book on British gangsters

GANGLAND STYLE!

British Gangsters: Faces of the Underworld is a fascinating new DVD release revealing the truth behind Britain's gangland history.

Former Essex Boys member and now bestselling crime author, Bernard O'Mahoney, interviews some of the most infamous criminal names of the past 50 years, including Freddie Foreman, Eddie Richardson, Frankie Fraser and Paddy Conroy. Each episode focuses on the epicentres of crime, London, Glasgow, Manchester and Newcastle, and gives a unique insight into the rise and fall of Britain's most notorious gangsters.

The series is based on the book Faces: A

Photographic Journey through the Underworld, a collection of stunning black and white images by award-winning photographer Brian Anderson. He spent five years gaining the trust of these men to create a series of photographs that will undoubtedly become an important record of social history.

Four lucky readers of *Defence Focus* will win a copy of the DVD and book. To be in with a chance, email your name, address and phone number to dmc-newsdesk@mod.uk by 12 March.

British Gangsters: Faces of the Underworld is out now on DVD, RRP £19.99.

Faces: A Photographic Journey Through the Underworld is available from Amazon, RRP £50.

COME DRIVE WITH ME!

Looking for your next endorphin-releasing kick? Experience Megastore is a nationwide company with supercar driving sites in Essex, Lincolnshire, Wales and Scotland. They offer the chance for adults and children (12+ year olds) to experience the thrill of driving and take passenger laps in some of the most prestigious sports cars ever made.

One lucky reader and their guest will win an experience worth £129 per person with the chance to experience nine laps, each in

a choice of three cars (three laps per car) including – Aston Martin Vantage, Audi R8, Lamborghini Gallardo, Ferrari F430, Maserati Gran Turismo, Lotus Elise, Subaru Impreza and Porsche 911 Turbo.

The winner and guest will be offered the chance to drive the vehicle accompanied by professional instructors.

The instructors will ensure you get the maximum from your experience at your choice of location: Aberdeenshire, East Lothian, Essex,

Lincolnshire or Vale of Glamorgan.

All *Defence Focus* readers are offered a special 10 per cent discount until the end of March in the company's online store if you quote code DF3103.

Visit the website at www.experiencemegastore.com or call 0800 999 3212 to see more, book onto one of the exciting events, or buy a gift voucher from the shop.



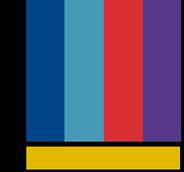
TO WIN

Email your name, address and phone number to dmc-newsdesk@mod.uk by 12 March. Include Supercar Driving in the subject line.

PRIZE
Win an exhilarating experience driving three of Britain's most prestigious cars



WHAT'S THE VALUE OF YOUR ARMED FORCES PENSION?



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In these changing times, you need to know where you and your family stand and we're here to help protect your interests.



The Forces Pension Society is your pension watchdog; independent and not-for-profit.

We're here to help all ranks in all Services receive the pension to which you're entitled.

Your expert source of advice

When you join the Society, you'll have access to our Pension Helpline, staffed by the acknowledged experts in Armed Forces Pension Schemes. We deal with hundreds of queries every month ranging from pensions on divorce, redundancy, when to leave (and when not to), pension troughs and the impact of the next AFP Scheme.

The benefits of membership

Joining our fast-growing membership (now approaching 44,000) means you'll be supporting an organisation that campaigns **for** Armed Forces Pensions to be among the best in the public sector (we've been closely engaged in the AFPS 2015 process). We also campaign **against** unfairness in earlier schemes, notably widows' loss of pension on re-marriage.



You'll receive many benefits in addition to the Pension Helpline access, including copies of our bi-annual magazine, *Pennant*, e-newsletters and a growing number of discounted services from FPS Travel (offering discounts across all types of travel) to Healthcare, Motoring, Legal and Financial advice and much more.

Join online now and receive a free Worldwide City Break voucher worth £100

Membership costs just £32 p.a. (including your spouse/partner) and if you join us online we'll send you a £100 City Break voucher (terms & conditions apply). Just visit

www.forcespensionsociety.org quoting promo code **DEF2013**.



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