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THE DEFENCE FORCES MAGAZINE

# AN COSANTÓIR



Óglaigh  
na hÉireann  
IRISH DEFENCE FORCES



JAN/FEB 2023

# ABANDON PERFECTION

[STRENGTHEN THE NATION]

[www.dfmagazine.ie](http://www.dfmagazine.ie)





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# **AN COSANTÓIR**

## **AMBASSADOR PROGRAM**

- Article writing
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# NOTICEBOARD

## Defence Forces Values Awards 2021

Chief of Staff Lieutenant General Seán Clancy was joined on the 07th of Oct 2022 by special guest Jim Gavin to present the awards to the 2021 Defence Forces Values Champions.

The winners were nominated by their peers for embodying the Defence Forces values of respect, loyalty, selflessness, physical courage, moral courage & integrity.

Below is an extract from a speech to guests by Chief of Staff Lt Gen Seán Clancy on the day.

*"It is more than 100 years since uniformed members of the National Army took their first tentative steps on to the streets of our cities. The legacy, standards and traditions of the proud men and women that have preceded us should not be forgotten. The culture they established and developed was and remains one which is underpinned by our values. The Defence Forces values are our key strength. As serving members, we must continue to build upon the legacy of our forebears, while demonstrating our core values which guide our behaviour in both our personal and professional lives."*

*I continue to be immensely proud of our organisation and of you, our soldiers, sailors and aircrew, who are living the Defence Forces Values. Your loyalty and commitment are the foundations upon which our organisation stands and the reason for our continued success."*

Our winners were:

### PHYSICAL COURAGE

Cpl Shane Maher, 1 BTI - for his actions in saving the life of an individual attempting to jump from Ballymany Bridge. Having calmly approached the individual, he was required to physically restrain and support him until the arrival of An Garda Síochána.

### RESPECT

CS John Galvin, 1 Bde HQ - for treating all ranks in a humble, respectful and fair manner. For being a vociferous advocate for the professional development of those in your charge and providing guidance, counsel and advice on a personal and

professional level to subordinates, peers and those of superior rank.

### INTEGRITY

Capt Elaine Anthony, 2 Bde HQ - for living the Defence Forces value of Integrity in her performance and attitude to her work during the Defence Forces response to the Covid-19 pandemic. For willingly and selflessly applying herself to the wide variety of taskings the Defence Forces were involved in. Providing empathy to the vulnerable and most importantly, truth to those in authority.

### LOYALTY

CPO/ERA Patrick (Mendy) Kelleher - for living the Defence Forces value of Loyalty, by staying firm in his unwavering support to his profession, Unit and Óglaigh na hÉireann. He was due to retire in July 2020 but applied to continue his service throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, in order to provide the Naval Service with his extensive experience and valuable skills. His regular volunteering for sea-going relief has ensured ships have been able to remain on Maritime Operations.

### MORAL COURAGE

Comdt Jean Fitzgerald, 1 Bde HQ - for her determination and professional contribution to change culture within the DF. For confronting the extremely challenging issues of bullying and sexual harassment and having the strength of character to support vulnerable members of our organisation while reporting wrong doing and inappropriate behaviour.

### SELFLESSNESS

Pte Alan Higgins, DFHQ - for the selfless manner in which he approaches his work and his colleagues. Although his appointment is extremely busy and carries great responsibility, he always makes time for a colleague to help or support them. To quote one of the many nominations, "Alan's concern for the needs of others far outweighs his concern for himself."

### OVERALL VALUES CHAMPION

BQMS Malachy McCaul - for enactment of the Defence Forces values of respect, loyalty, selflessness, physical courage, moral courage and integrity and in so doing, demonstrating exceptional commitment to the mission and vision of Óglaigh na hÉireann.



Back Row (L-R) – Capt Elaine Anthony, Cpl Shane Maher, Pte Alan Higgins, CS John Galvin

Front Row (L-R) – Lt Gen Seán Clancy, BQMS Malachy McCaul, CPO/ERA Patrick Kelleher, Comdt Jean Fitzgerald, Mr Jim Gavin





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#### FRONT COVER

By Airman Sam Gibney

# EDITORIAL

**Hello, and welcome to our first issue of 2023, our 83rd volume of the An Cosantóir magazine.** We hope you enjoy reading this edition and will continue to enjoy reading all the other An Cosantóir magazines we will publish in 2023. We are always interested in feature articles for the magazine; if you are interested in submitting an article, or have any suggestions for articles, please email [magazine@military.ie](mailto:magazine@military.ie)

Our *Noticeboard* page this issue features a short piece with some pictures showing our DF Values award winners for 2022.

In our first piece of our 2023 edition, we have an important remembrance feature where we remember, and offer a prayer for all of our brothers and sisters who passed in service during 2022. This is followed by an obituary to Pte Seán Rooney who sadly lost his life in December 2022 in the service of peace while serving in UNIFIL.

*On Parade* features four pages of pictures from the best of 2022 for the Army, Air Corps and the Naval Service and Overseas. These pictures include a link to the DF Flickr albums where all the pictures can be found.

We feature "The 41st An Cosantóir 10km race" by Sgt John Rossiter, which outlines the day of the Defence Forces An Cosantóir 10km race, covering the race day and its winners, while recognising the importance of the day to all.

In our next feature, Comdt Joseph Tynan outlines the upgraded Cavalry simulator located in the Cavalry School in the DFTC.

In an article about DF Men's GAA, Comdt Alan Courtney describes the various matches that took place in 2022 culminating in the Representative Series against

the AGS, BOI and AIB.

'Abandon Perfection' – Comdt Gavin Egerton discusses his experience with Mission Command; he describes how this is practiced from senior ranks down to the most junior rank.

In "Leading the Team", Lt Brian Dunne talks to us about his unit's preparation for the An Cosantóir block race, after the success of the 28 Inf Bn Block in the block race.

In our final feature BSM David O'Reilly speaks to us about Mentoring & Coaching and the huge potential it has for individuals within the Defence Forces.

As always, we have our regular features including PSS, which in this issue of '*Headspace and Timing*' discusses death and bereavement and outlines the supports available to members of the DF; as well as our 'Internal Comms' piece for all the serving soldiers who read the magazine, and not forgetting our book reviews on page 24.

*"Culture makes people understand each other better. And if they understand each other better in their soul, it is easier to overcome the economic and political barriers. But first they have to understand that their neighbour is, in the end, just like them, with the same problems, the same questions."* – Paolo Coelho

**Sgt John Rossiter – Editor**





# REMEMBERING OUR FALLEN COMRADES

## A SOLDIER'S PRAYER

Lord, I ask for your grace  
and strength for this moment.

May I be diligent  
and honourable in all things;  
and show cheerfulness and courage  
in the face of hardship and danger.  
Be with me in my trials and struggles.

Watch over my comrades and friends.  
Be with my family, friends,  
and all who are special to me.

Lord, give me confidence in times of doubt,  
strength when I feel weak,  
hope when there are feelings of despair.

Guide me, direct me and support me  
today and always. Amen.

*Every saint has a past...every sinner has a future!*

*Shrapnel Cross - St Patrick's Garrison Church, Cathal Brugha  
Barracks*

We would like to remember our brothers  
and sisters that passed in service during  
2022, we ask that you keep them in your  
thoughts. We would like to offer their  
friends and family our deepest sympathies  
and prayers.  
May they rest in peace.



Pte Jim Hannigan



Pte Robert Dyland



Sgt Michael Duddy



Cpl Emmet Mayon



Sgt Kim Marie Mullin



Pte Aoife Fields



Pte Mark Cox



Cpl Adam Murphy



Comdt Diarmuid  
O'Donoghue



Pte Aaron O'Neill



Pte Sam Hayden Kilroe



Pte Seán Rooney



# 869674 PTE SEAN ROONEY RIP



869674 Pte Seán Rooney was born on the 16th of November 1998, a native of Dundalk Co. Louth. Seán was born into a renowned Defence Forces family and spent his early life surrounded by strong connections to the Defence Forces. It is no surprise therefore, that Seán's aspiration in life was to be a soldier. After attending a local school, Seán's wish to become a soldier was realised in March 2019 when he enlisted in the Defence Forces to undertake his induction training in Gormanston Camp. On completion of his recruit training and his 3\* training he was then posted to 2 Cav Sqn, 2 Bde and it is here Seán displayed his love for his career by completing several Corps specific courses. Prior to deploying on his first tour of overseas duty in November 2021 with 119th Inf Bn, UNIFIL, Seán exemplified what a young soldier should be; he was prolific in maintaining his physical fitness, engaged wholeheartedly with unit esprit-de-corps and became widely qualified in the requisite suite of driving courses, up to

and including LTAV and AUV driving, amongst others. Seán took particular pride in his participation in Presidential Escorts of Honour as a member of 2 Cav Sqn.

In the early stages of his career, Seán was widely regarded as the 'model soldier' - someone who epitomised the Defence Forces values, both in conduct and in character. That Seán was courted for Potential NCOs Courses and career progression, did not surprise those who knew this incredible young soldier. After completing his first tour of overseas duty, Seán transferred 'home' to the 27 Infantry Battalion where he gravitated naturally towards Support Company and hoped to add to his already impressive complement of qualifications.

In transferring to the 27 Inf Bn, Seán was able to return to live in his native Dundalk where he was a passionate supporter of Glasgow Celtic, his adopted club of Derry City FC, and was proud of his local community roots. More importantly however, this move allowed him to spend time with his adoring grandparents Rachel and Eugene Snr, and it is in this way that Seán is best defined - as a family man first and foremost. Seán was a devoted fiancé to Holly with whom he had planned to travel, marry and begin their own chapter in life; he was the sweetheart of his mother Natasha with whom he shared a particularly close bond and was influenced by his proud father Paul, who guided Seán to become the fine person that he was. It is a testament to Seán's caring nature that he naturally developed into a role model for his young sister Robyn, of whom he was so lovingly proud.

Pte Seán Rooney died while on overseas service with the 121st Inf Bn, UNIFIL, on the 14th of December 2022, when he sadly lost his life in the service of peace. Eternal rest grant unto him O Lord and let perpetual light shine upon him. May he rest in peace.



# ON PARADE

**ARMY**

Photos from the best of the Army 2022.

These photos can be accessed through the Defence Forces Flickr page or from this link:

<https://www.flickr.com/photos/dfmagazine/albums/72177720304974594>



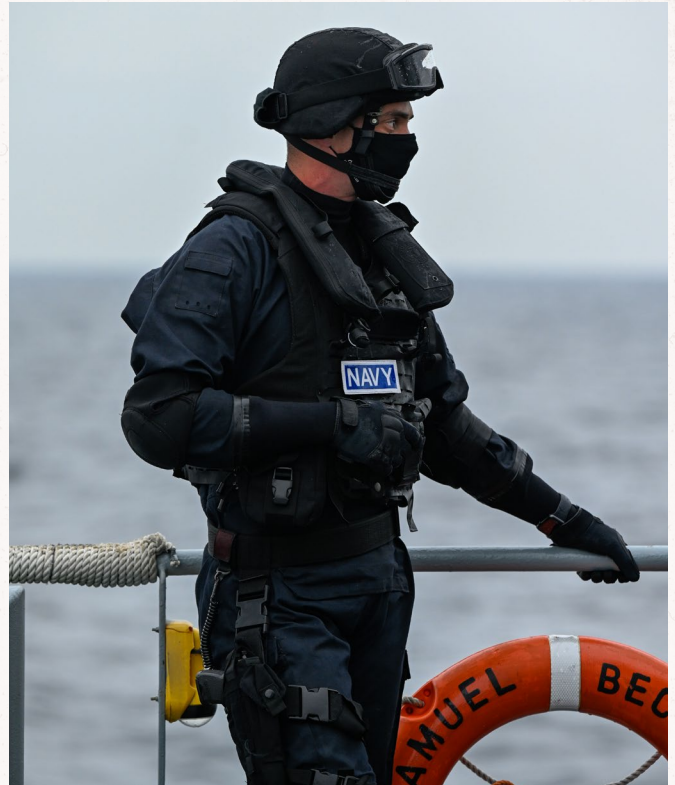


# Naval Service

Photos from the best of the Naval Service 2022

These photos can be accessed through the Defence Forces Flickr page or from this link:

<https://www.flickr.com/photos/dfmagazine/albums/72177720304960105>





# Air Corps

Photos from the best of the Air Corps 2022

These photos can be accessed through the Defence Forces Flickr page or from this link:  
<https://www.flickr.com/photos/dfmagazine/albums/72177720304978768>





# Overseas

Photos from the best of Overseas 2022

These photos can be accessed through the Defence Forces Flickr page or from this link:

<https://www.flickr.com/photos/dfmagazine/albums/72177720304960336>







Runners crossing the 10km race start line

# THE 41st AN COSANTÓIR 10KM ROAD RACE

By Sgt John Rossiter

Photos by Airman Sam Gibney & Cpl Jamie Martin

On the 12th October 2022, the ever popular An Cosantóir 10km race returned to the Phoenix Park in Dublin after a two year absence due to the COVID-19 pandemic. This race is unique in that only currently serving and retired soldiers, along with DOD and invited guests, can take part on the day. Runners are blessed to be able to take part in a scenic location such as the Phoenix Park, with its endless number of historical buildings and wildlife on display for all who take part. The park offers a picturesque setting for a 10km race, with its wide-open spaces, beautiful scenery, and well-maintained paths. This race is important to so many who take part for a variety of different reasons. For many, it is old individual or team competitive sporting rivalries going back many years. For others this is an end of year run to gauge the years training, to see if all those tough training sessions have worked, asking themselves that pre-race yearly question, "will I beat my time from last year?" And for many more, this is a day out to meet up with old friends and work colleagues and to have those vital face to face chats that had not happened recently due to COVID-19. This race is always a hugely competitive race across all categories, due to the elite level of athletes currently serving and those retired from the Defence Forces. Race goers this year were blessed with perfect weather conditions, the sun was shining and just a

gentle breeze was blowing. This type of weather always helps with any race day and aids to the overall atmosphere. On the day, it was apparent just how much this race was missed by many over the last two years, with small and large groups

gathered everywhere. The sound of laughter and that great Defence Forces humour that we have in abundance, was happening amongst many groups around McKee Bks. It was great to see our veteran groups back out again at this event, and for them to be able to meet race goers



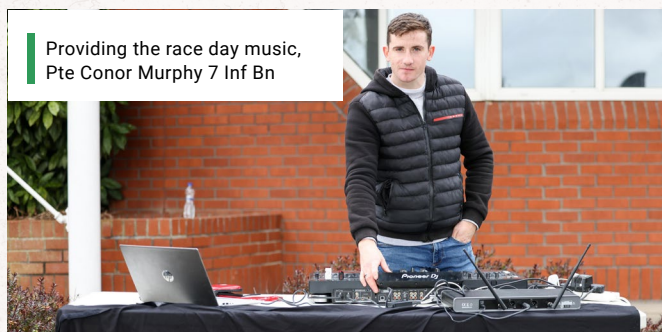
Race day prizes sponsored by Druid Craft

to establish and offer those vital links to services for recently retired members, and to guide possible future retirees in the right direction. This is what makes the race special, for an organisation such as the Defence Forces to be able to bring old friends and comrades back together in large numbers for one day, to catch up on recent events, tell old stories and to offer the opportunity for race goers to establish social and professional networks into the near future. This was the first time that I had a role in the organisation of the event, my role on the day was Chief Steward. This opened my eyes to the amount of work involved leading up to the race and on the day, it was a huge event, with so many pieces coming together to make it a successful and safe day for all. All the DF members involved were professional, as always, in the lead up to and on the



The legendary CQMS Pat Byrne

Providing the race day music, Pte Conor Murphy 7 Inf Bn







Two veterans Ray Power and Johnny Kelly

race day, with some excellent assistance from the OPW and members of the Gardaí. It was a very successful and safe day for all who took part. As a serving member myself, I believe all serving members and retirees should continue to support our great DF event for many years to come and continue to keep that personal link to the organisation and to

all of our former comrades. Over 1500 runners and walkers registered to take part this year, with many taking part and running in different locations at home, and with over 200 taking part in overseas locations. On the race day, over 450 runners and walkers crossed the start line.



The ever competitive block run event



The 3 Inf Bn (Bloods) block team entry



Lt (NS) Tahlia Britton celebrating crossing the finish line



Runners enjoying the scenic 10K route



Sgmn Josh O'Sullivan Hourihan receiving first prize from Maj Gen Anthony McKenna D Cos (Ops)



Comdt Niall Buckley receiving his prize from Maj Gen Anthony McKenna D Cos (Ops)



Sgmn Josh O'Sullivan Hourihan crossing the line in an impressive 30:58 minutes

<b>Male Race</b>	1st place – Sgmn Josh O'Sullivan Hourihan (30:58) 2nd place – Cpl Conor Tiernan (31:57) 3rd place – Cpl Paul Mitchell (32:56)
<b>Female Race</b>	1st place – Lt (NS) Tahlia Britton (39:04) 2nd place – Pte Louise Nolan (44:35) 3rd place – Lt Tara Kahn (44:46)
<b>Female O/35</b>	1st place – Cpl Natalia McGough (53:48)
<b>Male O/35</b>	1st place – Cpl Sean Montgomery (37:10) 2nd place – L/S Michael Coakley (37:25) 3rd place – Flt Sgt Colin Connolly (38:19)
<b>Male O/40</b>	1st place – Pte Garry Walsh (34:28) 2nd place – Comdt Garry Mulligan (34:35) 3rd place – Sgt Michael Colohan (36:48)
<b>Female O/40</b>	1st place – Cpl Lynda Treacy (49:33) 2nd place – Lt Col Jayne Lawlor (59:53)
<b>Male O/45</b>	1st place – Pte Paul Buckley (34:15) 2nd place – CQ Pat Byrne (35:29) 3rd place – CPO Andrew Hickey (41:43)
<b>Male O/50</b>	1st place – Comdt Niall Buckley (40:51) 2nd place – Cpl Mark Wedick (40:54)
<b>Male O/55</b>	1st place – Cpl Mark Bulman (40:28)
<b>Female Veteran</b>	1st place – Isabella Hamilton (53:45)
<b>Male Veteran</b>	1st place – Paul O' Beirne (34:12) 2nd place – Conor Walsh (36:31)
<b>Male Veteran O/40</b>	1st place – David Foley (41:38)
<b>Male Veteran O/50</b>	1st place – Noel Marum (38:59)
<b>Female Guest</b>	1st place – Teresa Geraghty (49:44)
<b>Male Guest</b>	1st place – Ray Kenny (37:57)
<b>Team Competition</b>	1st place – 27 Inf Bn 2nd place – Naval Service 3rd place – 2 Bde HQ
<b>The unit block winners on the day</b>	1st place – 28 Inf Bn, led by Block Captain, Lt Brian Dunne 2nd place – 3 Inf Bn

All race results for the day can be found by clicking on the below link.

[https://www.myrunresults.com/events/an\\_cosantoir\\_10k\\_and\\_5k\\_walk/4554/results](https://www.myrunresults.com/events/an_cosantoir_10k_and_5k_walk/4554/results)





# ABANDON PERFECTION: A PRACTITIONER'S GUIDE TO MISSION COMMAND

*In simple terms, Mission Command is about commanders telling their subordinates what to do, but not how to do it.*

By Comdt Gavin Egerton

Photos By Comdt Gavin Egerton

The Mission Command doctrine empowers subordinate leaders and facilitates mission success. The Irish Defence Forces employs the Mission Command theory and senior leaders are to encourage its practice. To fully operationalise Mission Command at the tactical-level, commanders need to engage and empower junior leaders, particularly NCOs. The successful implementation of Mission Command requires those with the most to lose to do the unthinkable: abandon perfection.

## What is Mission Command?

Based on the Prussian concept of *Auftragstaktik*, Mission Command is a philosophy of leadership and command that promotes decentralised decision making, freedom of action, and initiative, aligned with the superior commander's intent. Mission Command employs mission-specific orders and tactics to give sufficient empowerment and authority to the commander on-the-spot to decide and act in a timely manner. Superior commanders employ control measures and issue a clear intent to ensure all subordinate commanders understand what effects are to be achieved and the desired end state. Subordinate commanders employ freedom of action and disciplined initiative to identify and exploit opportunities as they present. Mission Command requires both a top-down and bottom-up approach. In this sense, its success is contingent on the presence of sufficient trust and professional competence in both superior and subordinate commanders alike. Effective implementation requires "encouraging commanders to tell their subordinates what needs to be achieved and why, and then let subordinate officers and NCOs get on with determining how to best achieve their commanders' intent."

Most western armies have embraced Mission Command in recent decades. For the U.S. Army, it began with the adoption



PSC Live Fire O Gp

of the Air-Land Battle doctrine in the early 1980s. With Air-Land Battle, "subordinate commanders were liberated to act on their own initiative in line with their Commander's Intent but without direct supervision." Other armies followed suit, including the Irish Army whose overarching joint

publication, Irish Defence Forces Capstone Doctrine, states that, "Mission Command is a philosophy of command that promotes decentralised command, freedom and speed of action and initiative, but is responsive to superior direction." In simple terms, Mission Command is about commanders telling their subordinates what to do, but not how to do it.

## Communicating Clarity

Mission Command is a two-way street. Every soldier, down to individual riflemen, must understand their role in achieving the mission and facilitating the commander's intent. They need to appreciate the operational (and often strategic) context or bigger picture. The civilian corporate world recognises the importance of this: "Leaders must know the purpose of their organization ... if managers lack true understanding of the strategy, then comprehension among employees is bound to be minimal."

If leaders at all levels don't understand the ends, then their actions may not align with higher commanders' intent. The formal orders process facilitates this. With mission orders, superior commanders' intents are transmitted two and three levels below in what is referred to as nesting, or what the civilian corporate world call organisational clarity.

Mission Command "is not 'fire and forget'," and requires constant engagement. Commanders must maintain communications and engage with subordinates in order to provide guidance, if and when required. Similarly, junior leaders must engage with their commanders, ask questions, clarify his/her intent and check-in throughout the execution of their mission and tasks.

## Building Trust

Right down to the lowest levels of command, each Section Commander in a rifle platoon must actively seek opportunities to execute disciplined initiative in order to rapidly exploit changes in the situation. Furthermore, each individual rifleman must know his/her job intimately, mastering each tactic, technique, and procedure to the point of professional excellence. With this approach, trust is fostered. Mission Command is a marketplace where leaders and followers openly trade freedom and control. In this market, trust is the most important commodity. The amount of freedom given, and control exercised by commanders, will "vary to a degree commensurate with the trust developed in subordinates and their experience level and competence."

## Mission Orders

Using mission orders avoids devising over-prescriptive schemes of manoeuvre and mitigates against micro-managing. Instead, commanders should empower (and trust) their subordinates to make decisions and take action in line with their commander's intent. This implies a level of comfort with results that might not be the exact course of action the commander would have devised personally but are nonetheless aligned with higher level objectives. For some commanders this means letting go of the reins and abandoning the pursuit of absolute perfection.

## Discomfort

The reaction to Mission Command from some junior officers and NCOs can be one of surprise and discomfort. During initial leadership training (such as cadet and potential NCO



Comdt Egerton giving his summary of execution



courses) there is a traditional emphasis on attention to detail, following orders precisely, and the relentless pursuit of perfection. Perhaps because of this, some junior leaders struggle with the transition to a more participatory approach to achieving the mission, where their opinions count, and their experience is valued. Likewise, commanders can struggle to release control and devolve decision making downwards.

### Mission Command in Practice

Whilst employed as the Officer-in-Charge and Chief Instructor of the NCO Training Wing (NCOTW), I was afforded the opportunity to command multiple company attacks. These occurred across a series of career courses for corporals from all Corps – but mostly Infantry – striving to become Sergeants. To examine and assess command and leadership ability, students rotate throughout command appointments as Platoon Sergeants, and Platoon Commander.

To facilitate the high volume of command appointments, the NCOTW deploy on week-long field training exercises to execute multiple iterations of platoon attacks by day and night. These exercises typically culminate with deliberate Infantry company attacks in order to provide important sub-unit context to the platoon level actions. As it would be unreasonable to ask students pursuing the rank of Sergeant to fill appointments at company level, the instructors themselves constitute the Company Headquarters. This provides an excellent opportunity to expose them to Mission Command in practice.

Prior to each deliberate company attack, role-playing instructors outlined the Situation, Mission, Execution, CSS, and Command and Signal paragraphs, with which most readers of this article will be very familiar. In addition, students were issued a printed copy of the Operation Order (OPORD) with various aerial photographs and given access to a terrain model. Control measures were carefully marked to clearly define each platoon's manoeuvre space. The correct explanation of commander's intent and platoon tasks was vital. As was emphasis on what effects (clear, capture, seize, destroy etc.) on terrain and enemy, each platoon was to achieve; but not how they were to achieve them.

### No Plan is Perfect

The teaching model adopted by the NCOTW is one of mentoring and coaching, with instructors close by to provide students with advice and guidance. However, if later engaged in a real-life conflict, or deployed on peace support operations overseas, the students won't have this luxury. Therefore, the instructors afforded the students the space to design and execute their own plans using the military decision-making process appropriate to their level. In doing so, we discovered the absolute imperative to abandon perfection. That is not to say we accepted poor quality planning or incomplete plans; what it meant was deliberately giving the students the freedom of action to analyse, experiment, innovate, and flourish, all within a well-defined manoeuvre space, as free from instructor interference as possible.



NCOTW Officer Instructor testing students



Platoon Attack FRAGO

Through this experimentation we found that the students developed more rapidly. They produced results far more superior than if the instructors had provided them with textbook solutions at every decision point. This ultimately meant that students developed the mental agility to quickly re-orientate and rapidly devise a plan to meet a change in the situation.

### Seizing the Initiative

One particular company attack we conducted during an Infantry Platoon Sergeants' Course, proves the efficacy of Mission Command. In this example, the lead platoon – whose role in this case was to secure the company forming up point (FUP) and line of departure (LD) – met unexpected enemy before the company reached its objectives. The instructor staff had positioned enemy in the FUP and as the platoon began their recce of the company LD, the enemy engaged. The quick-thinking NCO – who was acting as Platoon Commander – seized the initiative. He suppressed the enemy, conducted a rapid estimate of the situation, then executed an aggressive platoon attack. Crucially, he did all of this without seeking (or requiring) detailed orders from Company Headquarters. Why? Because it had been made clear in his platoon tasks that he was to secure the FUP, and feeling empowered to do so, he showed disciplined initiative to conduct a hasty platoon attack. He also showed sound judgement and decision making, acting in support of my intent. I simply adjusted my fire plan, moved H-Hr forward and assaulted our two objectives with the other two platoons, as we had rehearsed.

### Conclusion

The relentless pursuit of perfect textbook solutions to tactical problems is both inefficient and unrealistic. Paradoxically, abandoning perfection, empowering subordinates, and letting them surprise you with their ingenuity will bring better results. Operating within a defined manoeuvre space, junior leaders should have significant latitude to exercise freedom of action and initiative. Early in the commander-subordinate leader relationship, this manoeuvre space will be tight and detailed orders with little room for interpretation will be the norm. As trust builds, the commander increases freedoms and the junior leader begins to grow exponentially, with less superior direction required. As we become more familiar with Mission Command, we become more comfortable, and we enhance our outcomes.





# CAVALRY SCHOOL INTRODUCE VIRTUAL SIMULATION FOR TRAINING

By Comdt Joe Tynan

Photos By Comdt Joe Tynan



The simulator room is named after Trooper Patrick Mullins

Simulation is an essential component of modern gunnery and armoured fighting vehicle crew training as it helps to build repetition in training, expand the learning development in scenarios and environments that cannot be easily replicated or accessed in traditional training. The Cavalry School had a desktop-based gunnery simulator for the Kongsberg M151 Remote Weapon System which had become obsolescent and required a solution. The idea for a virtual reality based solution was conceived in 2019, with a contract eventually signed in 2021 with Kongsberg and Dublin based software company, VRAI.

The contract was led and managed by DoD Contract Branch, with D J3/5 and Ord Branch. The end user side of the project was led by the Cavalry School, working very closely with VRAI to develop

a simulator within scope to the end user needs. Although the simulator was specified for gunner and crew simulation, the capacity was identified to scale up to troop/platoon level simulation where there was a clear end user training need.

The project required a codification of gunner, driver and commander tasks and interactions across mission sets. Always primarily developed as a gunnery simulator, the concept of treating the vehicle as a 'system' was key to ensure the best employment of the vehicle. The simulator uses a Unity software engine. The user hardware is mainly through a Virtual Reality headset, coupled with a hand controller. The gunner has the matched Kongsberg control grip to ensure a higher level of fidelity. The driver uses COTS driver controls. Although the system is not a qualified driver simulator, all open-source driving dynamics are included, for example, side slope, gradient and step climb. The vehicles were 3D modelled to give an accurate and immersive training environment for users.

The system includes two maps; one is a composite of the Glen of Imaal range area, incorporating a replica of the range area and additional manufactured terrain to the west to increase the training area utility. The second is a generic world map incorporating additional urban and manufactured terrains based on PSO experiences. There are eight Cavalry scenarios and eight Infantry scenarios which can be



Lt Stephen Doyle briefing students



Students engaged in the lesson





Students testing the VR headsets

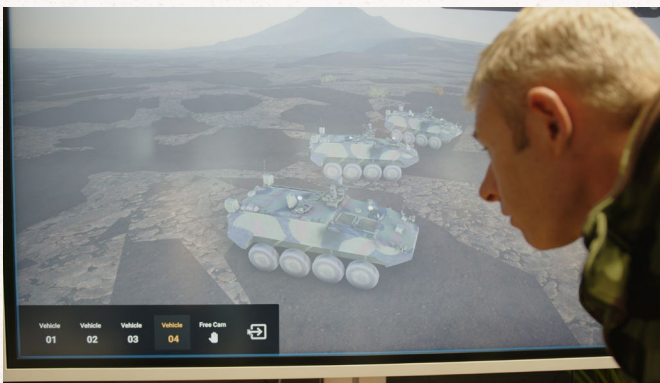
conducted on these maps. The scenarios are highly progressive and develop from initial range orientation practices to conventional operations at troop/platoon level.

The learning environment is key to an optimised simulator. The Tpr Mullins Room was selected due to its size and location. Supported by the Ordnance Corps, the classroom was designed to maximise the learning for students, with dedicated pods for each crew. Each pod represents an individual AFV crew layout. The pods are closed over upon entrance, giving clear ownership and responsibility to each vehicle commander and promotes decision making at crew level. Each pod and crew are also networked together, enabling training at the individual skill (commander, gunner, driver), through the crew and up to troop/platoon. The room also features a reception/waiting area and separate brief/debrief area, this allows specific feedback to each crew. Behind the software is VRAI's data collection system. This allows instructors to track use and performance.

On-site support is provided by VRAI to ensure the simulator is maintained; this is particularly 'added value', as this role is delivered by a retired Cavalry gunnery instructor!

In 2022, crews deploying overseas have had an opportunity to regain some currency on the simulator. Course crews from both Cavalry and Infantry variants have also used the simulator to gain experience and repetitions on weapon system functions. In addition, the Cavalry Gunnery Instructor Course had significant use in lesson development. Some of the greatest use has been on the Cavalry AFV Commander Course and the Cavalry Young Officer/Cavalry Standard NCO Courses where qualified users developed their AFV tactical acumen prior to field exercises to great effect.

For the future, the intent is to further roll out this system in the Defence Forces while also increasing the system capabilities and data collection possibilities.



Lt Doyle viewing armoured vehicles on the screen



Student using the hand controller



# DEFENCE FORCES MEN'S GAELIC FOOTBALL

By Comdt Alan Courtney  
Photos By Airman Sam Gibney



Team captains with referee John Devlin

Defence Forces Men's Gaelic Football competitions and representative series games returned after an enforced break due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Players and management came back together after carrying out a wide variety of tasks in the Defence Forces Response including testing, swabbing, contact tracing and various other roles.

The purpose for 2022 was to hold all competitions and play Allied Irish Banks (AIB), Bank of Ireland (BOI) and An Garda Síochána (AGS), ensure maximum participation across all barracks and formations and unearth some new talent for the DF team.

## Medical Services

The first competition was the unit/barrack competition; the Medical Services Cup was held in June. There were eleven teams entered, 1 Cn Cois, 3 Inf Bn, Cathal Brugha/McKee Bks, Custume Bks, Collins Bks, 12 Inf Bn, 27 Inf Bn, 28 Inf Bn, Air Corps and two teams from the Curragh. The knockout games were hugely competitive with very small winning margins and great 'buy-in' from units and teams. The final was contested between 28 Inf Bn and the team drawn from Cathal Brugha/McKee Bks which ended with a score line of 1-13 to 1-08 after extra-time. Donegal Senior Footballer Pte Oran

<b>President</b>	Major General Tony McKenna
<b>Chairman</b>	Comdt Alan Courtney
<b>Education Coordinator</b>	Comdt Brian Connolly
<b>1 Bde Rep</b>	Capt Alan Quirke/ Lt Col Cathal Keohane
<b>2 Bde Rep</b>	Lt Shane Cunnane / Lt Ronan Finn
<b>DFTC Rep</b>	Comdt Tony Bolger
<b>AC Rep</b>	Comdt Stephen McGuire
<b>Team Manager</b>	Comdt Tony Bolger
<b>Team Coach and Selector</b>	A/BQMS Philie Wolfe
<b>Selector</b>	Sgt Ruairi McLaughlin
<b>Stats</b>	RSM Rick Kearns
<b>Physio</b>	Pte Alan O' Brien
<b>Logs</b>	Lt Dean Slattery

Doherty was the 'Player of the Match'.

The next competition was the one-day '7s' in Dún Uí Mhaoilíosa in July. Six teams took part with the DFTC taking home the trophy and the 12 Inf Bn winning the Comdt Seamie Coughlan Shield.

## Inter Brigade

The Inter Bde Competition followed in October and with the Formations selecting players from across their barracks it was evident that there was a very high calibre of players across the DF. The competition is always a good opportunity for the DF team management to scout players for the representative series in November and this competition didn't disappoint. The DFTC were the



Offaly Senior player of the year Pte Anton Sullivan





DF team with coaches and support staff



NUIG Connacht GAA Air Dome in Mayo

eventual winners beating 2 Bde 0-14 to 0-10. DFTC player Cpl Peter Cunningham was the 'Player of the Match'.

### Representative Series

2022 culminated with three very successful games and the DF coming out unbeaten after a draw and two victories. Prior to this, the 28 Inf Bn hosted a 'team bonding session' in Finner Camp which included a challenge game against newly crowned Donegal Senior Football Champions, Naomh Conaill (Glenties) and a recovery session in the Atlantic Ocean the following morning. This prepared the team for what was ahead of them, and the series didn't disappoint. The first game against AIB was held in Páirc Uí Chaoimh and resulted in a draw, DF 1-09 to AIB 2-06. BOI were next in NUIG Dangan Sportsgrounds on a 'soft day' and even though 2022 all-star Cillian McDaid from Galway and multiple all-star winners, Paddy Durcan, Keith Higgins (Mayo) and Shane Enright (Kerry) played for BOI, the DF ably led by Cpl Peter Cunningham and Pte Anton Sullivan (Offaly), Lt Shane McEntee (Meath) and Sgmtn Paddy O' Sullivan (Laois) emerged victorious on a score line of 1-13 to 3-05. Cpl Peter Cunningham was the 'Player of the Match'. Finally, the team played An Garda Síochána in the NUIG Connacht GAA Air Dome in Mayo. The DF ladies football team and men's hurling teams also played on the day in a centenary event marking 100 years of service to the state by both organisations. Again, the DF team emerged victorious in a hotly contested game on a score line

of 3-11 to 0-10. The score line didn't fully reflect the competitiveness of the game which was a lot closer than the 10-point margin suggests. Pte Oran Doherty was the 'Player of the Match' on a day when the team performed as a unit, and there were so many exceptional performances.

Throughout the year, the members of the DF Football group excelled as a group and as individuals exuding the DF Values of physical courage, selflessness and respect. Players travelled the length of the country for games. With their clubs and counties, the players excelled. Pte Anton Sullivan won a Tailteann Cup All Star and became Offaly Senior Player of the Year. Cpl Peter Cunningham was Offaly Intermediate Player of the Year and Paddy O' Sullivan was the Laois Senior Player of the Year.

### DF Referees

A word of thanks must go out to all the DF Referees that made the games possible this year. Cpl Gus Chapman coordinated the refs, linesmen and umpires for games and was ably assisted by A/BSM John Devlin, Flt Sgt Barry Moore, Cpl Lee Moore, Cpl Fintan Barrett and Pte Frank Delaney at various times. The standard of officiating was very high, and the fixtures couldn't have gone ahead without them.

Overall, 2022 was a very successful year for the DF Men's Gaelic Football committee and it is hoped things will go from strength to strength in 2023 with more of the same planned.



Team manager Comdt Tony Bolger giving his pre match speech



Pte Adam Tyrell winning possession of the ball for his team





Block Winners 28 Inf Bn all smiles before the race start

## LEADING THE TEAM INTERVIEW WITH LT BRIAN DUNNE, CAPTAIN OF THE WINNING BLOCK IN THE 2022 AN COSANTÓIR 10KM RACE

By Cpl Eric Ryan

Photos by Airman Sam Gibney & Cpl Jamie Martin

In October 2022, we saw the An Cosantóir 10km and 5km race return to the Phoenix Park after being run virtually for the two years prior, due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The 2022 An Cosantóir 10km race event block winners crossed the line with an impressive time of 43.18 minutes. It was a successful day for the 28 Inf Bn and their block Captain, Lt Brian Dunne. This was the first time that the 28 Inf Bn have won this event in the units history. I interviewed Lt Dunne about his team's preparation leading up to the event.

### *Can you introduce yourself to our readers?*

Lt Brian Dunne, PTI and testing officer in 28 Inf Bn, a member of the 10th Potential Officers course, formerly a Cpl in 28 Inf Bn where my role was the day to day running of the gymnasium and the organising of the unit's PT schedule. I am a long-term recreational runner with more enthusiasm than ability.

### *In your experience as block captain for a race, what preparation is required to train troops to run as part of a block?*

As the testing officer in Finner camp, I use the annual IT tests to identify potential team members

and begin the recruitment process there. When the group is running naturally at a high level, they will achieve a faster time. Some years due to unit commitments, the level is not as high and that is absolutely ok. The most important thing for me is that we put maximum effort into our training and on the race day itself, regardless of the outcome. We are fortunate to have some excellent and experienced runners in 28 Inf Bn and we call on their expertise to devise a 6–8 week training programme leading up to the race. Unfortunately, it has not been possible in the last few years to train together as a group, but we entrust each runner selected on the team to follow the programme in their own time. Ultimately our race plan is to run as fast as our 20th person and the more quality training we have done, the faster that will be. In an ideal world and what has happened in previous years, a time trial has taken place, the fastest 25 are selected for a panel, an achievable time is selected for the group, an eight week training block is conducted and supervised and we toe the line ready to race.

### *With your leadership experience, what extra steps do you take to keep the troops motivated?*

I make myself available to all members of the team in the weeks leading up to the event to provide any additional training advice or to offer





28 Inf Bn just a few minutes into the race



28 Inf Bn crossing the finish line

reassurance. Hopefully the gym in camp will be allowed to re-open and we will be able to use the facility and its staff for group prehab to reduce the risk of injury for future events. Motivation leading up to and including the race, is relatively easy. The An Cosantóir race, in my opinion, is the best day on the DF calendar. Every member of the team is there because they volunteered to represent the unit. We only ask that they give their best. Soldiers in my experience are competitive and competition helps to bring the best out of everyone.

#### ***What do you enjoy about running with a block?***

Running is rarely anything other than a solitary sport or pastime. To get the opportunity to run side-by-side with friends and colleagues representing our unit in a race and to not be competing against them, is a memorable experience. I enjoy the camaraderie and shouts of encouragement within the block, particularly in the latter stages when the group is starting to dig deep. The feeling of achievement when the

group crosses the finish line, knowing that we have made an honest effort, is second to none. I maintain particular respect for the teammate who know that they may fall off the back of the group if everyone runs to their level, but are still willing to selflessly line up and give their maximum.

#### ***If you could give a single piece of advice to future unit block captains, what would it be?***

My advice to anyone considering becoming a block captain and entering a block would be, to just do it. Regardless of who is available for the block or what other commitments the unit has at the time, regardless of how quick or slow you think you can run, or whether you think you will come first or last, just enter. The positive outcome for you as captain and the unit as a whole, is the same. Even if it has to be walked, it is my opinion that every unit in the Defence Forces should enter a team. It is a small part of what makes the DF unique, and we should embrace it.

28 Inf Bn team and team Captain Lt Brian Dunne receiving their awards from D Cos (Ops) Maj Gen Anthony McKenna







# COACHING AND MENTORING DEVELOPING LEADERS FOR A COMPLEX WORLD

By BSM David O' Reilly



The publication of the High-Level Action Plan (HLAP) on 13th July 2022, arising from the Government decision on the report of the Commission on Defence (CoDF) in February 2022, has positioned the Defence Forces (DF) on a path of change. A key element

around structuring proposed change, is focusing on how we orchestrate the human infrastructure, because without the human infrastructure we cannot mount a meaningful defence of Ireland or its interests, as directed by Government. In essence, the DF can only be in a position to carry out the will of the Government if its personnel policies are consistent with the demands of the threats against it. Emerging threats will be as cognitive as they will be kinetic. Therefore, the DF must also be mindful of the competitions it is involved in, first focusing on emerging threats and countering threats to the security of Ireland and secondly, the competition for talent and the management of that talent.

All organisations need leaders who invest in and emphasise the importance of talent management. How we, as members of the DF, integrate and engage with our colleagues and our resources, ensures people feel they are part of a team, especially junior members of the team. It also sets the tone for their time in the DF. The meaning behind one's work is unique to the individual and finding a sense of purpose can be difficult for some. Coaching and mentoring are military capability enablers if consistently understood and practiced. The purpose of mentoring is to enhance each individual's potential in order to achieve an intellectual edge or a capability enhancement.

The lexicon around coaching and mentoring can be complex due to the different interpretation of the themes by different organisations. However, the DF is very clear on its definition: Mentoring: "A mentor is a more experienced individual willing to share knowledge with someone less experienced in a relationship of mutual trust"<sup>1</sup>. Coaching is defined as "unlocking people's potential to maximise their own performance. It is helping them to learn rather than teaching them."<sup>2</sup> Coaching aims to ask probing and challenging questions so that a person can find their own solutions to their own challenges. This process improves

decision ownership and significantly increases the likelihood of sustained action, personal growth and goal achievement.

Both coaching and mentoring are not new to the DF, they have been practiced for many years in an informal fashion. If we delve further back in time, the practice of coaching is mentioned by Socrates some 2000 years ago while mentoring first appears in Greek mythology further back than this. Having a coaching leadership style aims to create a culture of high performance. It focuses on the development of team members and encourages individuals to improve their skills and capabilities. Addressing their strengths and weaknesses, individuals can contribute to achieving the long-term goals of the organisation. Mentoring is a voluntary process, and the most successful mentoring will be driven by the mentee's goals and aspirations. Mentoring is a supportive, non-judgemental and constructive process. The mentor is there to provide an environment which promotes and encourages innovation, openness and honesty, which is free from consequence.

A coaching style of leadership nests into the DF leadership philosophy of mission command and espouses collaboration, empowerment, fulfilment, learning and development. The New Zealand Defence Force (NZDF) utilises an integrated approach to leadership development noting 10% of development is as a result of formal education/courses, 20% of development is a result of developmental relationships, including coaching and mentoring, and 70% of development occurs through challenging workplace experiences. A key principle of the NZDF Leadership Development is 'leaders develop other leaders',<sup>3</sup> which is also in line with our Leadership Doctrine. The DF has included a coaching approach to leadership in all career course syllabi, because the organisation believes in the efficacy of this approach. It is a behavioural expectation in their competency framework that leaders will integrate a coaching approach within their leadership style, asking questions and allowing members to reflect and think through their approach, rather than always 'telling' and 'directing'.

One of the tools utilised in coaching and mentoring is John Whitmore's GROW model<sup>4</sup> as laid out below. The purpose of this model is to provide a framework for purposeful exploration, and it can be used in a wide range of contexts and workplace settings. Awareness, responsibility and the intention and skill to generate them through active listening and powerful questions are fundamental elements of the GROW model. By itself, GROW is not coaching, however it is a very useful tool to generate a conversation and relationship to help



develop a vision and a factual road map to develop a plan of action as laid out below.

Step	Explanation	Sample Questions	Principles of a coaching conversation
G = Goals	Agree a specific aim, objective and topic for discussion.	What outcome do you want? Why are you hoping to achieve this goal? What do you want to achieve long term?	<div>1. Create awareness</div> <div>2. Be solution focused</div> <div>3. Generate responsibility</div> <div>4. Move to action</div>
R = Reality	Both parties invite self-assessment and other specific examples to illustrate their point.	What is happening now? What is really stopping you? Who is directly and indirectly involved?	
O = Options	Coach prompts suggestions from the person by asking effective questions and guides them towards making choices.	What could you do? What other options are there? Would you like another suggestion?	
W = Way forward	Both parties commit to action, define a time frame for the objectives and identify how to deal with possible difficulties.	What will you do? What issues have we surfaced/still remain? What insights have you had?	

To learn more about how to practice a coaching style of leadership, see DFDMJ1, the Defence Forces Leadership Doctrine, which is currently under revision, with an updated edition due to be published shortly.<sup>5</sup>

In order to help personnel to reach their potential, the DF have in place a coaching and mentoring programme within each Brigade having its own Mentoring Advisory Team (MAT) in order to enhance the capability of delivering coaching and mentoring. While the programme has many volunteers to become mentors it has currently received less mentees. Becoming a mentee is rank agnostic, the old saying “you’re never too experienced to learn” springs to mind. The field of neuroscience supports this thesis with regard to the neuroplasticity of the brain. In fact, current thinking in this field suggests we never stop learning due to the brain being malleable. Therefore, with this hypothesis we never out rank the ability to get better and learn. As a mentor, I have witnessed first-hand the powerful effect coaching/mentoring had on coachees/mentees

- assisting them to become more focussed, to think in solution-focused terms and to grow in confidence, which has had both a positive effect on their professional and personal life.

Why not reach out to your local MATS team – their details are listed below. They will help you develop as a person by providing, active listening, feedback, trust and safety – all in a confidential environment.

FORMATION	RANK	NAME
AC	Capt	Kevin Fitzgerald
AC	Comdt	Elizabeth Barrett
AC	Flt Sgt	Anne Kelly
AC	FQMS	Anthony Murtagh
NS	Lt Cdr	Gavin Mc Carthy
NS	Lt Cdr	David Memery
NS	Lt	Tom Mullaney
NS	Lt Cdr	Trish Butler
NS	SCPO	Brendan Madden
1 Bde	CS	Conor Kelleher
1 Bde	Sgt	Graham Forde
1 Bde	Comdt	Tadhg O’ Donoghue
1 Bde	Cpl	Yvonne Kearney
2 Bde	Comdt	Paul Conlon
2 Bde	Comdt	Luke Foley
2 Bde	Comdt	Enda CaldDwell
2 Bde	CS	Matt Masterson
2 Bde	BSM	Mark Gallagher
2 Bde	Capt	Cian Harte
2 Bde	Capt	Michelle Kelly
2 Bde	BQMS	Stephen Daly
2 Bde	CS	John Kennedy
DFTC	Comdt	Shane Courtney
DFTC	Comdt	Sean Clarke
DFTC	Sgt	Alan Fitzgerald
DFTC	Comdt	Padraig Duggan
DFTC	A/BQMS	Philip Wolfe
DFHQ	Sgt	Patrick Mulholland

<sup>1</sup> Clutterbuck, D. (2019). Everyone needs a mentor (5th ed.). London: CIPD.

<sup>2</sup> Whitmore, J. (2009). Coaching for performance. London: Nicholas Brealey Publishing.

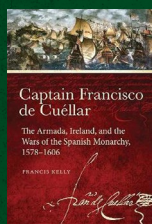
<sup>3</sup> NZDF. (2018). Performance and development (P&D) toolkit. Wellington: Headquarters New Zealand Defence Forces.

<sup>4</sup> Whitmore, J. (2017). Coaching for performance. London: Nicholas Brealey Publishing.

<sup>5</sup> Coffey, M. (2020). «Being before doing» - An exploration of a coaching style of leadership for NCO's in the Irish Defence Forces. Maynooth: Unpublished thesis for MU.



## BOOKS

**Author: Francis Kelly****Publisher: Four Courts Press (2020)****ISBN: 978-84682-875-1****Pages: 320****Cost: €31.50**

## **Captain Francisco de Cuéllar: The Armada, Ireland, and the Wars of the Spanish Monarchy, 1578-1606.**

By Dr Rory Finegan (Comdt Ret'd)

The Spanish Armada of 1588 is one of the great counterfactuals of history, whereby, if the troops of Philip of Spain (the veteran and elite Army of Flanders) had successfully landed in England, the course of the European religious wars (based on the Reformation), indeed world history, would have been rewritten. For it was during the reign of Elizabeth I that saw the true genesis of England as a renowned world naval power and future global Empire.

The Armada was battered by extraordinary storms, the so-called "Protestant Wind" and harassed by the English "Sea Dogs" of Drake and Raleigh. As part of this titanic struggle, a lesser-known drama was taking place on board the galleon San Juan de Sicilia, where a Captain of the San Pedro, from the squadron of Castille, a certain Francisco de Cuéllar, had been sentenced to death for his ship leaving formation. De Cuéllar was lucky to escape death by hanging from the yardarm and it is at this juncture that this reprieve ensured his fate was inextricably linked to Ireland. The defeated Armada attempted to beat a retreat to sanctuary in their Spanish homeland by traversing around Scotland and the west coast of Ireland. Several ships were wrecked on the Antrim Coast and others including de Cuéllar, were bashed against the inhospitable shore of Streedagh Strand in Sligo, where the survivors were beaten and stripped by the native Irish, those caught by the English being summarily executed. What followed was an extraordinary story of escape and survival for de Cuéllar, who lived amongst the Gaelic Irish of the northwest for seven months before eventually being able to reach Scotland and from there to Spanish Flanders (occupied Low Countries) and thence return to Spain.

In a thoroughly engaging work of academic research that at times reads as a modern version of the Hollywood film "The Fugitive," Francis Kelly explores the rise and fall of this enigmatic captain in the military profession and captures in vivid detail, the life of a soldier of the late sixteenth century. It is fitting that Kelly is a native of Manorhamilton in Leitrim where de Cuéllar at one point took refuge with the O'Rourke's of Breffni, and with other Armada survivors. He assisted the MacClancy clan in defending their castle at Rosclogher on the shores of Lough Melvin, County Leitrim against a concerted English attack.

The utter ruthlessness of the times was evidenced by O'Rourke being hanged at London for treason in 1590; the charges against him included succouring survivors of the Armada. MacClancy was captured and beheaded in 1590 by the brother of Richard Bingham, Governor of Connaught, the latter infamously remembered in Irish folklore as the "Flail of Connaught." After several following hair-raising adventures, de Cuéllar eventually was able to return to his native Spain.

De Cuéllar's memoirs of his time in Ireland gives a unique and fascinating historical insight into contemporary Gaelic culture and customs, much of which was to be swept away following the succeeding Nine Years War (1593-1603); in Ulster the last Gaelic bastion and resistance to English Tudor encroachment was sealed by the "Flight of the Earls" in 1607, when Hugh O'Neill and Red Hugh O'Donnell took refuge in Spain, never to return.

This work will remain the definitive account of the enigmatic and capricious de Cuéllar. It is fascinating, not only because of his Irish coda but also his career as a soldier in mainland Europe and in the Spanish Americas (one of the largest empires in history) which in conjunction with the Portuguese, were the first to usher the European Age of Discovery and achieve a global scale. His Irish experience begs a movie picture and Kelly has written the script.



## BOOKS



**Author:** Martin Sixsmith  
**Publisher:** Pegasus Books  
**ISBN:** 1639361812  
**Pages:** 592  
**Price:** \$31.95

## The War of Nerves: Inside the Cold War Mind

By Dr Rory Finegan (Comdt Ret'd)

The period of the Cold War which ended with the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989 and the collapse of the then Soviet Empire, witnessed the freedom of the nations of Eastern Europe including Ukraine, that had been under the Soviet Yoke since 1945. This, perhaps, is seen by many as a bygone era, consigned as a footnote of history. In April 2005 Vladimir Putin famously decried these events as "the greatest Geopolitical catastrophe of the century," which had fostered separatist movements inside Russia. Little did many Western Europeans at the time realise, this was in effect, an ominous portent for his "special military operation" in Ukraine; a full-scale wholly unjustified military invasion, which has seen the largest conflict in European history since the Second World War and whose tragic events are still unfolding. We have also recently seen increasing tensions in the South China Sea with large-scale Chinese military manoeuvres off the coast of Taiwan, whereby there remains an inherent danger that such aggressive sabre rattling could escalate into a major conflict.

These unfolding events are a salient reason why we should read "The War of Nerves: Inside the Cold War," by the veteran BBC journalist, Martin Sixsmith. For nearly two decades in the twilight of the Cold War as a foreign correspondent for the BBC, he was stationed in Washington, Warsaw, Brussels and in Moscow, which gave him a unique insight into the power-games and manoeuvrings taking place. Sixsmith is perhaps best known to an Irish audience as the author of "The Lost Child of Philomena Lee," which in the film version of the same, he was portrayed by Steve Coogan.

The recurring theme within this work, that has a foreboding resonance for our time, is that the whims of human behaviour from a psychological perspective, can have a disproportionate influence

on events, causing not only instability, but the dreadful prospect of tipping nations/alliances into the abyss of conflict against traditional adversaries, amplified by the haunting spectre of nuclear war. Again, with an almost existential sense of *déjà vu*, the author notes how the Cold War conflict, which pitted the United States of America against the Soviet Union, was in very real sense a psychodrama playing out between the Superpowers and was in effect, a contest of competing social, economic, political and ethical systems, each of them "professing a monopoly of wisdom and the keys to humankind's future;" are we at such a juncture again in European history?

This is not just mere hyperbole; the renowned Israeli historian, Yuval Noah Harari, along with other commentators, has noted that Russia's war with Ukraine and still escalating tensions positions society at perhaps the "most dangerous moment in world history since the Cuban missile crisis [October 1962]."

In this fraught atmosphere where each side then and now, strove to understand the thinking of the other, in what Sixsmith ascribes to as an "ongoing guessing game," which strained what psychologists called, Theory of Mind – the ability to understand that others may think differently from oneself, has a greater resonance now as ever.



# INTERNAL COMMUNICATIONS UPDATE

By Capt Austin Doyle of PR Branch  
Photos Provided by Capt Austin Doyle



DF vs AGS GAA

Internal Communications Update is created by the Defence Forces Internal Communications Team. Our aim is to deliver accurate and timely information of interest to our members, in order to increase awareness on current and future developments across the organisation.

## Member's Area (MA) of Military.ie

The Member's Area of Military.ie has been updated with the below information. You will find the most up to date Internal Communication information on the Member's Area.

- Press statements for UNIFIL incident December 2022.
- 2022 Defence Forces Review.
- Service to the state documentary.
- EOIs.
- General Staff update.
- Photo Albums:
  - DF Christmas Carol Service.
  - Jadotville Plaque unveiling.
  - DF vs AGS GAA.
  - Defence Sparx.
  - DF Review launch.
  - 120th UNIFIL homecoming.
  - DF vs AGS Rugby.
  - DFTC Gala.



## Defence Forces Internal Comms 'Connect' App

Following feedback from members of the Defence Forces over the past 24 months during employee engagement surveys and Internal Comms roadshows, an Internal Comms App has been developed. The App has been named 'Connect' in order to link it with the publication previously used for the

purpose of sharing information within the DF. This app will be available for all currently serving members of the Defence Forces to download, and once user credentials have been verified, users of 'Connect' will be able to access Course Advertisements, scheduled range days, EOIs, calendar of DF events and other relevant information.

'Connect' is being officially launched by the Chief of Staff of the Defence Forces in Casement Aerodrome, Baldonnel on 10 Mar 2023. Following this, the Internal Comms team will visit each barracks location to provide training and raise user awareness of the usefulness of 'Connect' for each member of the Defence Forces.

## Current Advertisements – for more info contact Unit Orderly Room

Promotion Competition: Petty Officer Line / Tech Naval Service

Promotion Competition: Sergeant Line / Tech Army / Air Corps

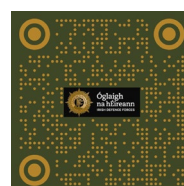
6th Annual DF Values Awards: closing date 31 Mar 2023

DF Trainee Technician Scheme (TTS) 2023



Jadotville Plaque Unveiling

To view more information on all the above please go to The Member's Area of Military.ie. Scan the QR code to go straight the Member's Area.



If there is Defence Forces Internal Messages you wish to have published here or on Military.ie please email

✉ [feedback@defenceforces.ie](mailto:feedback@defenceforces.ie)

✉ [internalcomms@military.ie](mailto:internalcomms@military.ie)





Óglaigh  
na hÉireann  
IRISH DEFENCE FORCES

# Internal Comms App Now Live



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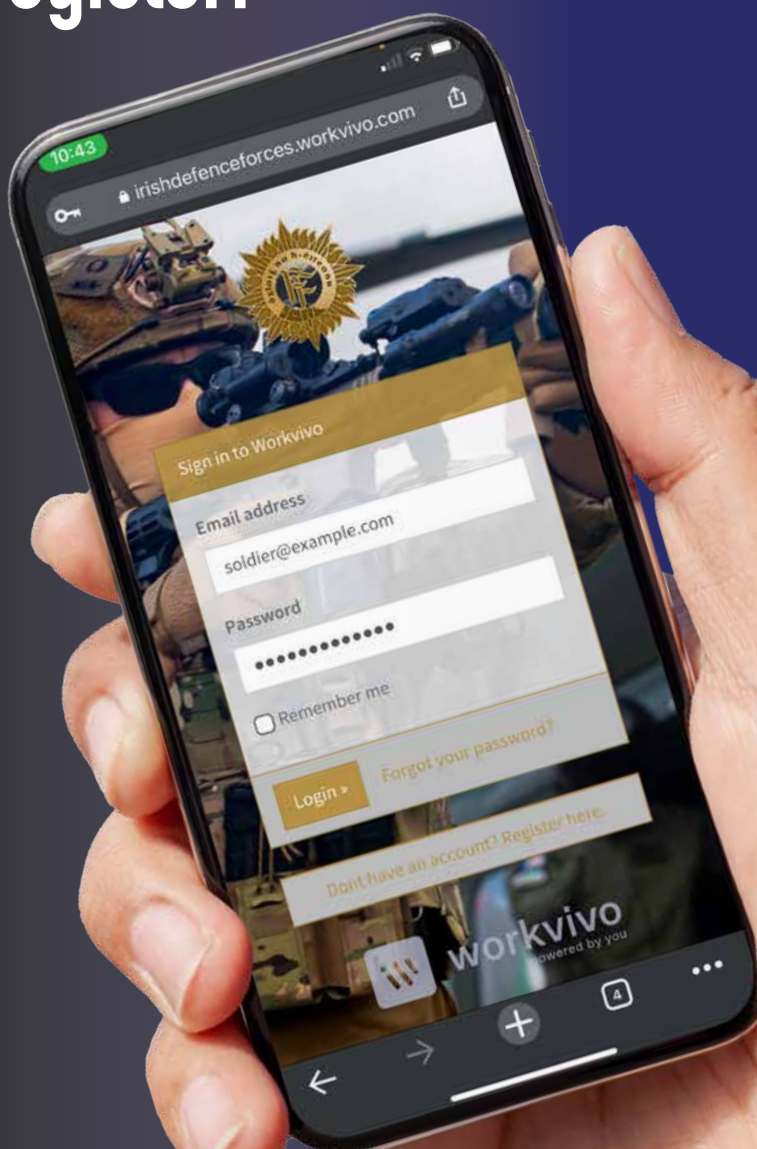
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# Experiencing and dealing with bereavement, grief and loss

[illegible]

- Physical effects: tiredness, sleep disturbances, crying,

There is no time limit with grief, or set pattern on the grief



journey. It does not come in stages – it can come and go, sometimes quite suddenly. Some feelings might occasionally come, while others might be more prolonged or persistent. Most people move through their feelings in their own way and at their own pace. Some people may feel a strong range of emotions from early on in their bereavement, while for others, these feelings may take some time to develop. More intense emotions may come and go unexpectedly, or re-emerge at significant times like anniversaries, birthdays and holidays.

### Social Support

An important factor in coming to terms with grief is social support. While the grieving process is individual, the support of friends, family, colleagues and others both in the workplace and outside of it is very important. This support can be:

- Practical, such as sharing some work tasks, or lending a hand with commitments and responsibilities.
- Social, such as continuing to interact with, invite or include the person in social events.
- Emotional, such as checking in with the person from time to time.

### Sources of Support

Many sources of support are available, both in an individual's own social circle and within the Defence Forces:

- **The Chain of Command** is available to assist a serving member following bereavement. Unit Commanders' Guidelines on Bereavement have also been issued to assist the Unit Commander in their duty of care for personnel under their command. This is a comprehensive aid that encompasses a large body of expertise.
- Personnel are encouraged to assist bereaved colleagues upon their return to duty.
- Sources of support are available on IKON and on the Members Page of [www.military.ie](http://www.military.ie)
- **The Personnel Support Service (PSS):** The PSS, together with the Chaplaincy Service, is available to provide support and assistance to personnel at times of bereavement. When bereavement occurs, the PSS may provide the following support where required:
  - o Home visits to bereaved staff members or to next-of-kin (in the event of the death of a serving member).
  - o Practical help and advice on accessing social welfare entitlements.
  - o Support for a serving member and his/ her colleagues in relation to return to work following bereavement.
  - o Advocacy role, where required, in liaising with the Defence Forces Benevolent Fund to secure confidential financial help towards funeral costs, etc.

- o Critical Incident Stress Debriefing in the event of a traumatic death in service.
- o Referral to bereavement counselling services, where required.

- **The Chaplaincy Service:** The Defence Forces Chaplaincy Service provides pastoral care and spiritual support to bereaved military families on a daily basis. Their expertise and experience in the area of grief allows them the opportunity to journey with families through difficult times. They engage at all levels of faith (or non-faith) and help families to organise and celebrate the lives of departed loved ones with dignity, compassion and understanding. Their knowledge of ritual and liturgy allows them to engage with families of multi and non-faith, to ensure all funeral rites and norms are afforded to the deceased in accordance with their family wishes, their beliefs or non-beliefs. All bereaved families are given the supports needed to help them understand the protocols that are associated with the death of a serving member of the Defence Forces, either at home or overseas. The Service acknowledges and is respectful of the fact that no death is alike, and every family is unique. Information on the Chaplaincy Service is publicly available at [www.militarychaplaincy.ie](http://www.militarychaplaincy.ie)
- **DF Medical, Psychiatry and Clinical Psychology services:** DF Clinical Psychologists are available to support members of the Defence Forces during their deployment. These services are usually contacted through your MO.
- **The INSPIRE Counselling Service** is a free and confidential service, available 24/7/365 to ALL Defence Forces personnel and adult family members – 1800 409673 OR 00353 1 685 6816



The above information is largely drawn from the Defence Forces Bereavement Handbook, available on IKON. The Handbook contains more useful information, resources available etc.

More information on sources of support is available at: [www.hse.ie/mental-health/services-support/bereavement](http://www.hse.ie/mental-health/services-support/bereavement)



An Cosantóir Volume 74, Issue 01, February 2014



# PIRACY

## on the High Seas

BY PAUL O'BRIEN MA

**T**he recent film *Captain Philips* starring Tom Hanks has once again brought to the fore the terrifying experience of kidnapping and piracy on the high seas. This true story tells the tale of a vessel captained by Captain Jack Philips that is hijacked by Somali pirates.

Piracy remains a concern for ships passing the Horn of Africa, even though an international security force has been mobilised to police the waters, and billions of dollars has been paid out to pirates for the release of ships and their crews.

The modus operandi used in a typical attack has been analyzed by security operatives. It generally involves one or two skiffs that can travel up to speeds of 25 knots. Assaults occur in daylight, often in the early hours of the morning. Using a mother ship or larger vessel, the pirates can launch their skiffs, increasing their operating range far into the Indian Ocean. Groups vary in size and many of the pirates are high on qat, a narcotic plant that they chew. They approach the target vessel from the quarter or stern and using the threat of an RPG rocket launcher they force the ship to slow down. Using homemade ladders or bamboo poles they board the ships, where they immediately make for the bridge, the control centre of the ship. The crew are rounded up and secured. If the pirates look as if they are going to be intercepted by a naval vessel, they jettison their equipment into the sea before being arrested and without incriminating evidence they avoid prosecution and are often released.

Weapons and equipment for the attacks are sourced from Yemen and Somalia's capital, Mogadishu. The weapons consist of AKMs, RPG-7s, AK47s and semi-automatic pistols such as the TT-30.

While many of the earlier attacks were carried out by disgruntled local fishermen, groups of pirates are becoming increasingly organised. The funding of pirate operations can be compared to a stock exchange where investors can buy and sell shares in upcoming attacks. Information on ships and their cargos is radioed to the investors by members of the Somali diaspora throughout the world.

Over the last 15 years Somali pirates have attacked hundreds of vessels in the Arabian Sea and Indian Ocean, ranging from fishing vessels, to tankers and cargo ships. Many crew members have been killed or left traumatized by their ordeals, which can last months un-





til the ransom is paid by the ship's owners or they are rescued.

Recent UN reports and several news sources have suggested that piracy off the coast of Somalia was partially caused by illegal fishing and the dumping of toxic waste in Somali waters by several European companies. After the outbreak of the Somali civil war in 1991, the coastline

became a target for foreign fishing vessels that over-fished the region leaving very little for local fishermen. The long and remote coastline of Somalia remained unguarded as the civil war raged and was targeted by criminals who used the area as a dumping ground for the disposal of toxic waste.

According to S Thomas Troy in his book *Warlords Rising: Confronting Violent Non-state Actors*: "In 1992, reports ran in the European press of 'unnamed European firms' contracting with local warlords to dump toxic waste in Somalia and off Somalia's shores. The United Nations Environment Program was called in to investigate, and the Italian Parliament issued a report later in the decade. Several European 'firms' – really front companies created by the Italian Mafia –

contracted with local Somali warlords to ship hundreds of thousands of tonnes of toxic industrial waste from Europe to Somalia."

The Indian Ocean tsunami of December 2004 wreaked havoc and its huge waves stirred up tonnes of toxic waste that polluted the waters and littered the shoreline of Somalia. Reports of health issues among the population of Somalia increased drastically, with cases being reported of radiation sickness and cancer.



Piracy and demanding ransoms for ships and their crews are seen as a means of extracting compensation from those that are destroying the sea and the way of life of Somali fishermen. Januna Ali Jama, a spokesman for the pirates has stated that "The Somali coastline has been destroyed, and we believe this money is nothing compared to the devastation that we have seen on the seas." The local population, who benefit greatly from the acts of piracy, support the pirates, stating that the attacks are an act of self defence against those who invade and exploit Somalia's water resources illegally.

On the other hand law enforcement agencies throughout the world believe that those taking part in attacks on international shipping are not wronged locals but are career criminals who have identified easy targets that result in the payments of substantial ransoms. It is estimated that between \$339m and \$413m was paid in ransoms off the Somali coast between 2005 and 2012, with an average haul of \$2.7m. Reports released by the World Bank, the UN and Interpol reveal that those pirates actually carrying out the attacks receive very little of the bounty. Most of the money finds its way into the hands of financial backers, corrupt government officials, middlemen and a host of unscrupulous suppliers.

Money is also paid to the countless militias that control the ports in Somalia. An example of this is one agreement in Harardheer, a port north of Mogadishu, where pirates pay a development tax of 20% to al-Shabaab, an Islamist rebel group linked to al-Qaeda.

However, some of the biggest profiteers of these attacks are the insurance companies. With so many ships from so many countries passing through the danger zone, many do not comply with naval guidelines on how best to prevent pirate attacks. Premiums have increased significantly and in what could be seen as a cynical attempt to keep them high, insurance firms have failed to insist that ship owners take security precautions that would make hijackings more difficult.

Private security contractors and the German arms industry have also profited considerably from attacks on shipping.

With the increase in pirate attacks, an international military response has been co-ordinated on the high seas. A number of states have united in providing counter-piracy operations. They work to protect humanitarian aid and reduce the disruption of the shipping routes and the destabilising of the maritime environment in the region. A wide range of military vessels and air support now police the seas making it more difficult for pirates to attack. Special Forces units trained in boarding ships and rescuing hostages have had positive results. However, one of the most inventive ways of preventing pirate attacks on shipping has come from the singer Britney Spears. As pirate skiffs approach a target vessel, pop hits such as *Oops! I Did It Again* and *Baby One More Time* are boomed out across the waters. Merchant Navy officer Rachal Owens explained: "Her songs were chosen by the security team because they thought the pirates would hate them the most. These guys can't stand Western culture or music, making Britney's hits perfect. As soon as the pirates get a blast of Britney, they move on as quickly as they can."

However, even with security measures in place, piracy still continues. A recent study reveals that the most effective way to curb such high seas attacks is to disrupt the financial backers and to target those laundering the proceeds of piracy. Whatever the answer, the instability in Somalia has provided a secure base for insurgency that in the future will need to be addressed. ■

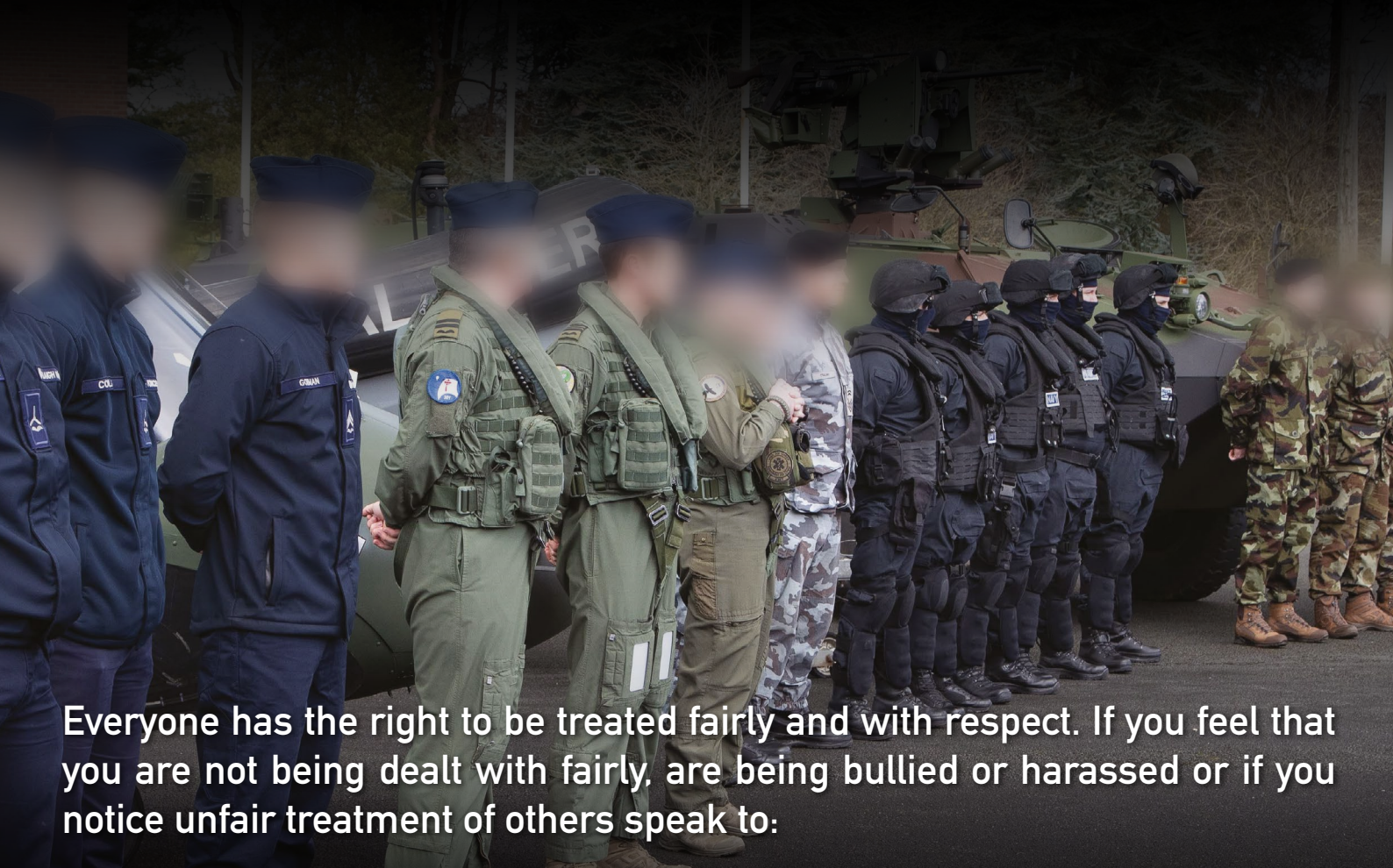


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**Chain of Command**

**The Defence Forces Personnel Support Service (PSS) [pss@military.ie](mailto:pss@military.ie).**

**The Chaplaincy Service**

**Raise A Concern (CCP) - (01)6107929 / (086)0299929**

**Dublin Rape Crisis Centre - 1800 778888**

**INSPIRE - 1800 409673**



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