



THE DEFENCE FORCES MAGAZINE

AN COSANTÓIR



Óglaigh
na hÉireann
IRISH DEFENCE FORCES



DFSM | CAMBRIAN PATROL | IUNVA

[STRENGTHEN THE NATION]



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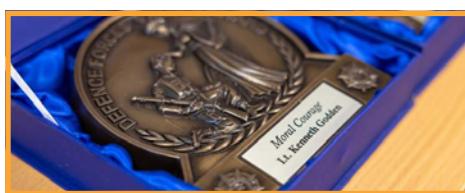
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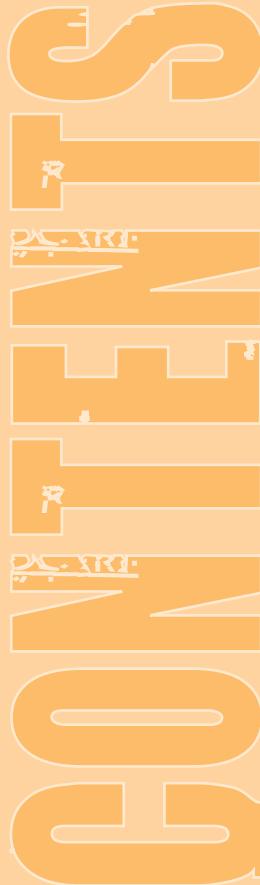
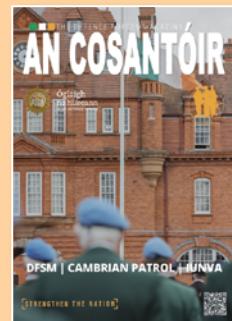
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Airman Sam Gibney

Editorial

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Hello, and welcome to our first issue of 2024, our 84th volume of the An Cosantóir magazine.

As we begin the new year we would first like to wish all our readers a happy new year, we hope you will enjoy reading all our editions throughout the coming year. We are always aiming to bring you a wide variety of articles from sports to veterans, history to tactical and many more. We aspire to feature articles from each of these areas in each edition, and many more, so if you feel you have something that could feature in the magazine why not reach out to us at connect@military.ie

On Parade section, as usual in this section we showcase pictures from across the Defence Forces offering a snapshot of some of the great things that serving and former serving members have done in recent times.

Our first feature we have an article by Lt Conor Smyth who gives us an insight into the **2023 Cambrian Patrol** and the excellent gold medal result that the 28 Inf Bn achieved in the UK.

This is followed by **DFSM a century of progress**, this article looks briefly at the history of the DFSM which recently celebrated its centenary.

Moving on to the main focus of this edition, Sgt Rena Kennedy provides us with an interview with Mr Brian Molloy **Head of Transformation** who

discusses the Detailed Implementation Plan, CODF, HLAP amongst many other current plans. We also have an update from the ACOS on the work of the **Organisational Culture Standing Committee** in 2023.

We are continuing to feature the new **Leadership doctrine**, with a piece from S/Lt Smyth (NS) in this edition. This also outlines the new Leadership Hub available on the Connect App, where the leadership doctrine is available as an audiobook – perfect for listening to on your commute!

In our veteran's section we feature an article from **IUNVA** who provide excellent services and support for our DF veterans.

We also feature the **2022 DF Values in Action** winners, congratulations to all the winners on receiving their awards.

We have our regulars as always with our **Sports & Clubs section, Book Review and From the Archives**.

As always if you would like something featured in the magazine or have any ideas on further redesigning have your say by emailing connect@military.ie. We are also looking to expand our team internally with permanent positions or also on a detachment, if you have an interest in photography or journalism this could be the team for you. For more Information e-mail connect@military.ie



"Coming together is a beginning, staying together is progress, and working together is success."
— Henry Ford

- **TACTICAL**
- **OVERSEAS**
- **SOCIAL**
- **SPORTS**

You will receive a water bottle upon completing an article or a coffee mug when you submit two articles.

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Sgt John Rossiter
Editor

ON PARADE



Sgt (Retd) John Daly seen here with his family on his promotion to Sgt in the Australian Defence Forces



Cadets on a recent training exercise



Recent recruit induction day



Sgt Ross receiving the award for International Top Student on the PSBC held in the UK



All smiles in the cookhouse on Christmas Day in UNIFIL



28 Inf Bn conducting navigation training on Errigal & Barnesmore



UNDOF members on Christmas Day



DF members conducting essential Air Ambulance training



Officers vs NCO's annual event held every Christmas in 3 Inf Bn Kilkenny



COS Lt Gen Séán Clancy recently visited the EUNAVFOR MED IRINI Operation HQ in Rome



Comdt Michael Barry seen here on his return from UNIFIL



7 Inf Bn members who recently completed their PNCO course, seen here with OC 7 Inf Bn, Lt Col Tom Fox

ON PARADE



ON PARADE



Christmas appeal 5km run held before Christmas in the DFTC



DF Engineer members on a recent Swiftwater Rescue Technician course



Recruits from the 27 Inf Bn in the Glen of Imaal



Comdt Daniel Ayiotis speaking at the DF 2023 review



Potential NCO's Course Athlone passing out parade



64 & 65 recruit platoon on a recent exercise in Cloghleagh Wood

ON PARADE



Water Crossing Drills



2023 EXERCISE CAMBRIAN PATROL

BY LT CONOR SMYTH
PHOTOS BY SGT ADRIAN FOLEY

At 0415 on the 11th of October 2023 an eight-man team from the 28th Infantry Battalion crossed the start line for exercise Cambrian Patrol 2023. Over the course of the next forty eight hours the team was tested on a range of military skills over approximately seventy kilometres of the unforgiving terrain of the Brecon Beacons in Wales, carrying upwards of forty kilograms of kit and equipment. This exercise was a culmination of four months training and would see the team tested both physically and mentally in qualities ranging from leadership and navigation, top section battle drills, basic life support and CBRN. After a gruelling forty eight hours the team were awarded Gold medal standard. They were the only one of six international teams to obtain this prestigious award.

Exercise Cambrian Patrol (CP) is an annual international military exercise conducted by Headquarters, 160 Welsh Brigade of the British Army. Exercise CP is based on the current UK Dismounted Close Combat Battle Craft Syllabus, Soldier First Syllabus in alignment with Military Annual Training Tests. The Land Warfare Centre (LWC) generate a Formal Training Statement (FTS) and Assessment Criteria with SMEs delivering and assessing each task. The exercise is designed to be an arduous event requiring physical and mental resilience and strong leadership. The exercise is regarded as the premier patrolling event in the UK Armed Forces training calendar. The concept of CP was coined in 1959 and established as a Long Range Reconnaissance Patrolling (LRRP) exercise, culminating in a small arms shoot in SENNYBRIDGE Training Area (SENTA). The exercise has continuously evolved to ensure the focus remains on assessing current military skills and attracts participants from NATO/non NATO partners. In recent years the exercise has developed towards a more mission focused scenario based training exercise.

The team itself began training in June 2023 and comprised serving members from the 28th Infantry Battalion. The twelve man patrol team consisted of Pte Mark McGlinchey, Pte Jason Gallagher, Pte Sean Ward, Pte Eddie Lynch, Pte Brian McFadden, Pte Rob Whitham, Pte Callum Robinson, Cpl Thomas O'Donnell, Sgt Daniel Devenney and Lt Conor Smyth with an administrative team of Pte Justin McBride and Sgt Adrian Foley to co-ordinate training and logistical requirements.

The training consisted of a 16 week training program divided into four blocks of four weeks each. Blocks 1 to 3 consisted of three weeks of building and one week of recovery and the last block consisted of two weeks of maintenance and two weeks of recovery prior to the competition. This allowed the troops to build their bodies up without over stress and causing injury. It involved two walks a week which were increased progressively with weight and distance each week. The team covered a total distance of over 600Km in the 16 weeks which stood to them during the 79Km covered during the 48hr Cambrian Patrol.

Throughout this training phase not one injury was sustained by the team which is a testament not only to the training plan that was afford by Sgt Foley and 28 Inf Bn unit physical training instructors but also to each member of the team and how they applied themselves professionally to it ensuring appropriate recovery measures were taken after each rigorous session.

Following the weight and distance acclimatising training

military skills became the main object during the final weeks. This included orders procedure, CBRN drills, water crossing drills, basic life support training and patrol reporting.

Because of the wide range of experienced personnel in the 28 Inf Bn most of these military skills could be revised and practised within Finner Camp. The team also used training facilities in the Artillery School in the DFTC using the virtual battle space simulator under the instruction of Lt Gary Marron and Lt Erika Murray. The level of instruction was of the highest standard and it was an excellent opportunity to use the state of the art facilities.

Throughout the training phase Sgt Foley, Sgt Devenney and Cpl O'Donnell left no stone unturned in regards to preparation and execution of all scenarios as well as critical analysis of how the team performed and what areas needed improvement. Having previously ran the Basic Infantry Close Recce Course in the 28 Inf Bn both Sgt Foley and Sgt Devenney were able to translate their experiences and knowledge into focused and well-rounded scenario based training.

The team travelled to Wales on 08 Oct 23. Prior to the commencement of the exercise on the 11 Oct 23 they had to undergo weapons handling and pyrotechnics training with UK armed forces weapons system which the team would use on the patrol. This training was provided by the royal Gurkha rifles who were acting as the teams hosting unit. The team received final training prior to commencement of the patrol in CBRN and patrol writing. The team also received maps of the patrol area from the hosting unit.

Throughout the exercise itself, each team member performed to an exceptional standard both in their physical and mental resilience as well as their application of training they received. Pte Sean Ward acted as lead scout and primary navigator throughout the duration of the exercise. Using his experience, he expertly navigated the team through the rugged and unforgiving terrain of the Welsh country side in both white out and black dark conditions using only a compass and map as all electronic and digital devices were strictly prohibited.

Cpl Thomas O'Donnell performed the role of scribe for the entirety of the patrol. This challenging appointment meant that Cpl O'Donnell had to be constantly aware of his surroundings taking note of all relevant information to be transferred into a comprehensive patrol report at the end of the forty eight hours. Having many years of experience, he shone in this role and his careful and consistent note taking were of the upmost importance during a high pressure debrief session of the team at the conclusion of the exercise by the directing staff.

Pte Eddie Lynch was integral to the team's success, in particular during the counter explosive ordnance stand where the team scored full marks. His attention to detail and tactical awareness locating all three explosive ordnance devices and clearing a safe path through a minefield was vital in allowing the team to deliver first aid to four members of friendly forces.

Pte Robert Whitham took on the role of signaller and was responsible for communications of reports back to higher command as well as reporting of rendezvous and report lines as the team progressed through different aspects of the patrol.

Pte Brian McFadden was given the arduous appointment of team medic. He impressed the directing staff in his own drills during the basic life support stand in which a friendly force patrol had ventured off road into a minefield resulting in multiple injuries. His systematic approach, calm communications and application of clinical skills ensured the friendly forces received rapid and lifesaving treatment resulting in the team scoring high in this scenario.



Pte Robinson demonstrated his professionalism and knowledge throughout the duration of the patrol. He also displayed his impressive knowledge during the AFV recognition scenario. This was a time pressured situation that required a calm disposition in order to correctly identify a range of armoured vehicles on a computer simulator.

Sgt Danny Devenney excelled in his role of 2IC of the team. From the first day of training to the final minute of the exercise, Sgt Devenney's experience and leadership was evident to be seen. His quick thinking and ability to adapt to an ever changing environment was essential during all aspects of the exercise. Sgt Devenney also acted as Counter CBRN specialist and his knowledge and expertise came to the fore during both the training phase instructing the other members of the team and during the exercise itself in the C-CBRN stand, in which the team had to use equipment they had only handled once before. This may have caused problems but for Sgt Devenney's expert knowledge in the basic principles of C-CBRN.

It is important to note that although the team trained and performed well over the course of the training and the exercise, none of this would have been possible without the help and support afforded to them by so many people within the Defence Forces. A word of thanks to Lt Col Shane Rockett (OC 28 Inf Bn), Comdt Enda Caldwell (2IC 28 Inf Bn), Comdt Neil Ledwith (CO Sp Coy 28 Inf Bn), Sgt Maj Patrick Enfield (BSM 28 Inf Bn),

The 28th Infantry Battalion would like to thank the following for support; DF Dive group, Medical School DFTC, Artillery School, Engineer School, Sgt John Cleary (28 Inf Bn Logs Staff) Staff at J7 Pte Jennifer O'Connor, 2

Bde Transport,

Dir Transport

Office Pte

Michelle Tarpey,

DF Ordnance

Procurement

Cell, 2023 7 Inf Bn

Cambrian Patrol

Team.



F22B receiving their Exercise Cambrian Patrol Gold medal 2023
 Back Row (L-R) Pte McGlinchey, Cpl O'Donnell T, Pte Robinson, Pte Whitaker, Pte Ward, Pte Gallagher
 Front Row (L-R) Pte McBride, Pte McFadden, Sgt Devenney, Sgt Foley, Lt Smyth, Pte Lynch

A special mention to Sgt John McGuigan, Sgt Sean Paul McCabe and Sgt Vinnie Quinn in the 27 Inf Bn. Without their knowledge and expertise in organising a pre exercise based on their own past experiences from the competition the team felt it would not have been possible to achieve gold standard.





DEFENCE FORCES SCHOOL OF MUSIC

ADAPTED BY LT COL MARGARET BANNISTER FROM AN ARTICLE
BY LT COL (RET'D) MARK ARMSTRONG, FORMER DIRECTOR, DFSM.

A CENTURY OF PROGRESS

2023 marked 100 years since the official founding of the Defence Forces School of Music in 1923. The celebration of a Centenary affords us the opportunity to look back over our history, to consider our beginnings and the way in which both the Defence Forces School of Music and its service to Irish State and society has changed and developed. Perusing band diaries of those early days is fascinating and highlights just how similar the work performed by today's bands is to those of previous decades. The mix of state, military, community, school and sporting events has remained constant, the principal change being the much larger volume of engagements now performed by our three bands each year – now some 400 annually.



First Army School of Music band pictured in 1923

On the death of General Michael Collins in August 1922, his successor as head of the army, General Risteard Mulcahy soon became the driving force behind the institution of a new Army School of Music possessing a clear vision of the importance of music within a military context. Mulcahy appointed Dr. John F. Larchet, then professor of music at

University College Dublin, to advise on the foundation of an Irish military music school.

"An army without a band is in the same position as a performance of 'Hamlet' without the Prince of Denmark; the central inspiration is lacking'. This bold statement was made by Larchet in the opening sentence of his 1923 pamphlet entitled 'The Army School of Music'. As a musician, Larchet's perspective was naturally firmly rooted in all things musical, however his words here are not simply rhetoric, but demonstrate with real conviction a profound understanding of the potency and vitality of military music.

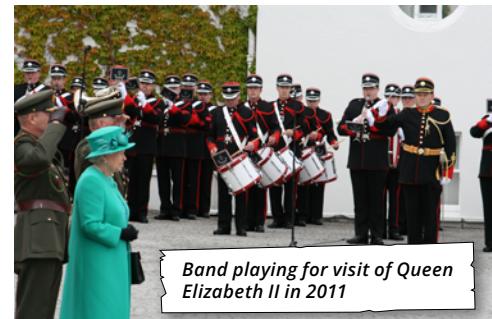
General Mulcahy's own vision encompassed a very wide view of the function of a national army in the new Ireland with the foundation of a military music school intended not only to serve the army but also to assist in a national musical revival. 'I want in the first place, bands for the Army. I want to have bands that will dispense music and musical understanding in the highest sense of these terms to the people'.

In this same pamphlet, Larchet described how the first Director of the Army School of Music was appointed.

'In seeking the best possible assistance, the



Brase and Sauerzweig reading music in the 1930's



Band playing for visit of Queen Elizabeth II in 2011



Army succeeded in securing the services of Herr Fritz Bräse, one of the outstanding figures in German music, and possibly one of their greatest military bandmasters.....

He occupied the very first place amongst the 500 Army musical directors, and as a conductor and a composer he stands on the highest pinnacle, even in the most musical nation of the world.'

Brasé accepted the offer of a Colonel's appointment in the Irish Army and brought with him a talented musician by the name of Friedrich Christian Sauerzweig to establish the new school in March 1923. Sauerzweig was an exceptionally talented musician and multi-instrumentalist and succeeded Brasé as Director in 1941.

Prior to the appointment of Brasé and the official establishment of an Army School of Music such musical activity as there was in the new Irish Army took place under the direction of Captain Thomas O'Doherty who formed the Dublin Guards Pipe band and a Fife and Drum band. A Brass and Reed band was also formed in February 1923. These bands were subsequently disestablished in November 1923 with only a small number of these players transferring to the bands in Brasé's new school of Music.

In February 1924 Col Brasé was appointed as Commanding Officer, Army School of Music.

As the Army School of Music developed, three further bands were formed and placed strategically in Cork (No. 2 Band), the Curragh (No.3 Band) and Athlone (No.4 Band).

The No. 2 Band was created in January 1924 from an amalgamation of selected members from O'Doherty's Special Infantry Corps Band and the Brass and Reed band already serving within the Cork Command. The No. 3 Band soon followed and all three bands remained in the School of Music until 1926 when they were transferred to Cork and The Curragh Camp respectively. It was not until 1936 that the fourth band was considered of sufficient strength to transfer to its permanent home in Athlone.

In time Boys Company, as it became known, was established to educate and train boys enlisting from the age of fourteen for service in the four bands.

A number of changes have naturally occurred as the Defence



Forces reshaped itself over recent decades. Three of the four army bands were renamed to reflect their territorial area of operations becoming the Band of the Southern Command, the Band of the Curragh Command and the Band of the Western Command with the Army No. 1 Band to this day retaining its original title. These new titles in turn changed to reflect new Brigade structures becoming Bands 1 and 2 Brigade and Band of the Defence Forces Training Centre. This last named band, based in the Curragh, was formally disestablished in 1998 leaving the three remaining bands today serving in Dublin, Cork and Athlone.

The bands' uniform has also undergone a number of changes with a reversion in 2011 to the parade dress of the 1920's. Boys Company also disappeared over time with new entrants between the ages of 18 and 29 now entering the school as fully qualified musicians. The Defence Forces School of Music is now the largest employer of professional musicians in the state. We have travelled a long distance from the early days and now attract the most talented of Irish and international musicians many of whom are third-level graduates.

Nowadays many of the engagements undertaken by our three military bands will be familiar such as the annual appearance at the Dublin Horse Show. Bands will also be seen out and about in towns all around the country participating in St. Patrick's Day parades, marching in military reviews of units prior to overseas service, visiting primary and secondary schools as part of a thriving educational scheme or simply entertaining at local parish and community events and festivals.



However this is barely half of the story. The general public will be less likely to observe the myriad of military and state engagements which are the staple of the bands' daily routine.

Internal military ceremonial - military funerals, passing out parades, guards of honour for visiting dignitaries, state ceremonial such as the National Day of Commemoration, Presidential inaugurations, presentation of Credentials by ambassadors to Ireland in Aras an Uachtaráin, and formal visits by international heads of state all form part of this busy and varied schedule.

As we move on from our year of centenary celebrations we look forward to the challenges and opportunities that the next decade will bring. In 2026 we travel to the International Military Music Festival in Hamina, in Finland, where we hope to forge new relationships with military musicians from all corners of the globe. I think we can proudly say that the vision of our early founders has been achieved and that the Defence Forces School of Music has become an integral part



of Irish musical life and that Defence Forces' Bands have succeeded in dispensing 'music and musical understanding in the highest sense of these terms to the people'.

INTERVIEW WITH DEFENCE FORCES HEAD OF TRANSFORMATION MR BRIAN MOLLOY

BY SGT RENA KENNEDY
PHOTOS BY AIRMAN SAM GIBNEY



HoT Mr Brian Molloy in a recent meeting with COS Lt Gen Seán Clancy

Before we get into specifics, what are your views on the overall Detailed Implementation Plan?

The Detailed Implementation Plan is a very important document as it sets out clearly the timelines for commencement and completion of recommendations from the Report of the Commission on the Defence Forces (CODF). Notwithstanding the fact that it is a living document operating within a very dynamic environment, this means that all DF members have visibility on the commitment from the Government, the Department and the Defence Forces Board to implement the findings of the CODF. I got the impression that in some quarters there was a degree of cynicism as to whether these recommendations would ever see the light of day so I think it is important

that we have captured them all in a formal document which has been endorsed by the Minister for Defence and noted by Cabinet. There is no doubt that some people will feel that the timings could be different – that's always the way – but I think getting the various commitments set out clearly should give comfort to people that the much talked about transformation of the Defence Forces is happening.



Detailed Implementation Plan Report

Can you outline the journey from publication of the Report of The Commission on the Defence Forces to the Detailed Implementation Plan?

The Commission report was published in February 2022 and was quite a comprehensive document dealing with all aspects of the Defence Forces. Given the importance of the report, the Government acted very quickly in producing the High Level Action Plan (HLAP) in June 2022 which contained the official response to the Commission Report. This response included a commitment to move to LOA2 by 2028 and outlined how the Government planned to deal with each of the recommendations (originally 69 but expanded out to 130 when sub-recommendations were included) – some were accepted, some accepted in principle, some subject to further evaluation and a relatively small number have to be reverted back to Government for decision. The HLAP identified a series of 38 Early Actions which would be targeted for completion by the end of 2022. This was very ambitious and there was slippage in the dates in some cases but 37 out of 38 were achieved. The HLAP had included the production of a Detailed Implementation Plan as one of the early actions. The update document that was issued in March 2023 included the expectation that the Detailed Implementation Plan would be completed during the second quarter of 2023 however the DIP publication was not achieved until Q4 2023.

What caused the delay from the publication of the High Level Action Plan to the delivery of the DIP?

There were a number of factors behind the delayed publication – some of the early actions took longer than had been envisaged and the production of the DIP was predicated on the completion of some of these actions (for example the recruitment of my role). The publication of the report from the Independent Review Group (IRG-DF) which focused on HR and Cultural issues in the Defence Forces and had significant cross-over with the CODF report in a number of areas. So we needed to ensure that the plans for the implementation of the Strategic HR & Cultural elements of the DIP were coherent with the recommendations contained in the IRG-DF. The overarching Strategic Framework (announced in March and published in September), by the Tánaiste, covering all aspects of Defence Forces Transformation and the priority items contained in that Strategic Framework also had to be reflected in the DIP. As the Tánaiste said in his foreword to the Update on the 38 Early Actions document in March 2023, it was important that the Detailed Implementation Plan be "completed expediently but more important that we get it right". So whilst there were delays and there is no question but that the delays were frustrating for the members of the Defence Forces, the ambitions contained in the CODF have been reflected in the DIP and the timeline for attainment of LOA2 was not impacted by these delays.

What are the quick wins you feel have had an immediate impact on improving day to day life in the Defence Forces?

There is a rolling delivery of change happening across



the Defence Forces already. These changes include some very substantial infrastructure enhancements (e.g. the new Gyms, new accommodation blocks etc.) which bring immediate benefits to those members operating out of the impacted locations. A very ambitious programme of further infrastructure roll-out is continuing and will broaden the impact of this transformative activity. A number of changes have been implemented on the pay/conditions side including some specific measures for 3 star private ranks and the very significant improvement in the Naval Service Patrol Duties Allowance. Permission for the Representative Associations for serving members to be able to participate in National Pay talks marks a very significant delivery on something that had been requested for some considerable time and ensures that the Defence Forces Members have a voice at future pay talks. One of the biggest practical changes was the extension of health care to enlisted personnel which was delivered ahead of schedule in September 2023.

The Plan has a number of ambitious deadlines for the provision of capability development. Which items are you most enthusiastic about?

I agree the capability development programme set out in the DIP is very ambitious. However this enhancement of our capabilities is very much required in order for us to achieve our ambition of reaching LOA2 by the end of 2028. The development of a comprehensive, expertly staffed CivMil Capability Development structure will be a game changer for the Defence Forces into the future. All aspects are important but I personally think the development of a fully operational Joint Cyber capability is very important, along with enhancement of the armour fleet and the development of subsurface capabilities. Finally, I am also looking forward to the full implementation of Military Radar capabilities.

In your opinion, does the DIP cater adequately for the retention of personnel which has been highlighted many times as a significant challenge?

I think the retention issue is one of our most pressing and most complex issues. There isn't one single measure that will resolve this issue and indeed the implementation of the DIP on its own won't resolve the retention issue. However it is important to recognise that the DIP is not operating in isolation. There are a range of measures being implemented and worked on which will make the Defence Forces an attractive place to work and an attractive place to stay working. I am very confident that the implementation of the DIP coupled with the other measures will deliver the paradigm shift necessary to resolve the retention issue. I do accept that people have heard this before but as more and more elements of the transformation programme are rolled out and as the scale of transformation becomes clearer to members I think people will start to change their minds on possible early exit from the force. I would urge all members

to give us a bit of time – changes are coming and the changes are positive. We are working hard to implement the type of changes that are needed to make the Irish Defence Forces a more attractive place for new and existing members to work.

Will the terms of the Plan be affected by a new Government administration should that occur?

I can't predict what any new Government will do. That said I think that there is broad approval across the political spectrum for the measures that are contained in the DIP so I don't envisage significant amendments to the plan arising out of a change in Government.

Can you sum up for our readers what the Defence Forces will look like post DIP Implementation in 2028?

That is a very big question to finish with!! It is difficult to summarise it because the transformation is of such a comprehensive nature that all aspects of life in the Defence Forces will be impacted to some extent. Ultimately, as set out by the Tánaiste in his foreword to the DIP and the Strategic Framework, there is a strong commitment at Government, Department and Defence Forces level for the transformation of the Defence Forces into a modern fit for purpose organisation to defend the State and meet the challenges of today and the future. The Strategic Framework in particular positions Cultural change as the immediate priority with a view to our becoming a continuously evolving, equal opportunities employer providing a safe workplace where self-worth is actively promoted, mutual respect becomes a dominant feature and all members are treated with dignity. In addition to the Strategic HR and Cultural changes the DIP also provides for changes across 4 other areas (Command & Control and new Joint structures, Service reform & restructure, Reserve revitalisation and Joint Capability Development). There is currently a record amount of money being spent on infrastructure which is a key part of the physical transformation that is also ongoing. I could list all the items that are scheduled for review and change in the DIP, the Strategic Framework, the Infrastructure Development Plan etc. but I'm sure your readers are already aware of these plans. Overall we are looking to deliver cultural, organisational, structural, operational, infrastructure, capability, equipment and digital transformations over a very short period of time – just 5 years – with a significant proportion of the change due to be delivered within the next 2 years. The transformed Defence Forces is going to be a radically different organisation in a very positive sense and the lived experience of our members by the time we reach 2028 will be completely different to today.



RESILIENCE: APPLIED SKILLS FOR RECRUITS TO RETIREES AND EVERYONE IN BETWEEN

BY LT (RDF) COLM DOODY PHD, BA
PHOTOS BY COLM DOODY PHD, BA



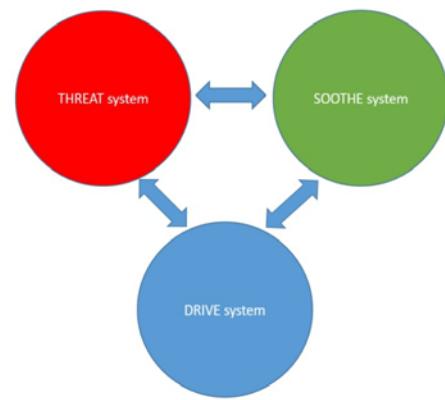
The concept of resilience has received much attention in the past few years and notably the concept has been included in several Defence Forces documents such as the new Leadership doctrine and the Infantry Ethos. Frequently we are told of the importance of resilience, but it's rare we learn how we can actually develop resilience. The goal of this short article is therefore to bridge this gap between theory and practice. I'll introduce some tangible tools, skills, tips etc. that you can begin to apply immediately. There are no magic bullets in psychology and developing our resilience takes time. In writing this article I'm primarily thinking about troops in training or those on intensive career courses. Often times in these environments our sense of control over our lives can really feel diminished: we are told what time to wake up, time to eat, sleep, where to be, even what clothes we are wearing! The beauty of the skills we'll be thinking about here is that regardless of the external demands placed on us, the majority of these skills can be used at any place, at any time and unless you tell others, they'll likely have no idea you're even using them!

To begin I'm going to introduce you to the concept of the 3 systems. The three systems is derived from a therapeutic approach called Compassionate Focused Therapy (CFT) which is a variation of Cognitive Behavioral therapy (CBT). The three systems are the:

1. Threat system
2. Drive System and
3. the Soothe system

These systems represent the different ways in which our body and brain respond to what is happening in the world around us. From an evolutionary point of view, all three are vital for our

survival but they can become either over or under activated in times of stress. One way we can build our resilience is to develop our understanding of these three systems and by practicing the skills which help keep them in balance.



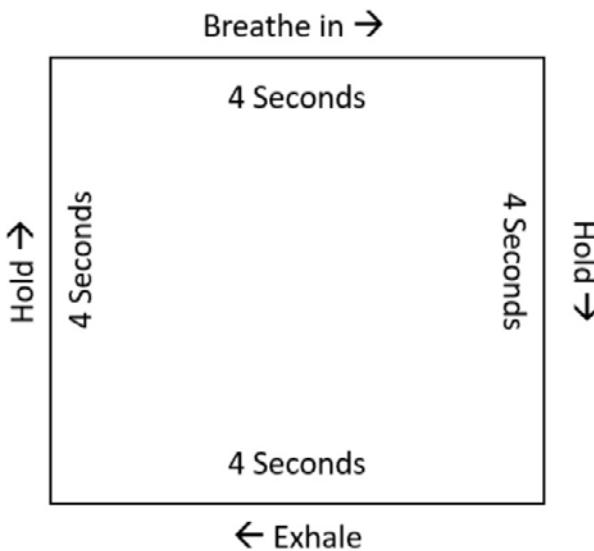
The threat system is activated in times of stress or danger and is like the fight or flight response. The drive system is responsible for getting us into gear to complete tasks. Finally the soothe system is responsible for recovery and recuperation. If you've completed any sort of military training, you'll probably already know which of these systems are more activated than others. Typically, the threat system and the drive system can be consistently active for those serving. In western society, most of us, from secondary school onwards, will fluctuate between having our threat and drive systems switched on chronically with an underpowered soothe system. The issue with long term activation of these two systems is that they use up a lot of our energy reserves. For many of us our bodies may be chronically in a low level state of fight or flight and have recovery systems which aren't able to keep up.

In a perfect world we would have ample down-time, good quality sleep and manageable caffeine intake however this is simply not realistic for personnel in training environments: particularly as a recruit, cadet or on intense career courses. We need other strategies to help activate our soothe systems in the absence of these ideal conditions. Let's discuss some practical strategies below to activate your recovery system, slow down your threat system and help cope with stress... all of which contribute to resilience.

Technique 1) Box breathing. Breathing is one of the few core functions of the body that we can consciously control. If you watch the Irish rugby team after a score you'll often see them huddle together and collectively take slow deep breaths. Why? Because slow, deep breaths from the belly help us to slow down the fight or flight response and have a measurable impact on the blood flow in the brain. Deep belly breathing actually helps activate the front part of our brains which is responsible for

clear, logical thought while reducing brain activity in areas of our brain associated with more primitive defensive and emotional reactions. For this technique imagine a box, with each side representing 4 seconds. Breathe in from the nose using your belly for 4 seconds i.e. one side of the box. Next hold that breath for 4 seconds, side 2. Exhale for 4 seconds, side 3 and hold for 4 seconds before taking the next break, side 4. Practice this as often as you like, typically for 4 or 5 boxes in total and see if you notice clearer mental focus.

BOX Breathing



Technique 2) Grounding. Many of us at some point in our lives will experience anxiety. For those in military training there can be many things that cause us to feel that sinking feeling in our stomach, heart racing, sweating and our mind racing at 1000 miles an hour. This is a normal reaction and is our brain's way of getting us ready to respond to threats in our environment. The downside of this reaction is that it can make it difficult for us to respond to orders, learn and remember new information or to think clearly under pressure. A simple technique to help clear our minds of racing thoughts and come back to the "present" is called grounding. Grounding simply involves using our sense to slow down our thoughts. We can practically do this using the 5,4,3,2,1 method. 5 – using your eyes, identify 5 different objects around you. Think about what color they are, what shape are they and get really specific. 4 – four things you can touch or feel (may be difficult while on parade), think about texture, is the object hot or cold, think about both your sense of touch but also how your clothes feel, your feet in your boots etc. 3 – three different things you can hear, birds, the hum of a computer. 2 – What two things can you smell and 1 thing you can taste. The important thing here is not what you focus on but rather that you are simply engaging all of your senses. It might surprise you to learn that grounding,

a form of attentional training is a component of mindfulness (a word with un-paralleled power to get people to stop reading your article). – But mindfulness in reality is a method or collection of methods that simply aims to clear our mind of anxiety for the future or re-hashing events of the past, something I think most of us would benefit from.

Technique 3) Your ACE in the hole. Rather than a specific technique ACE is an acronym for Achievement, Connectedness and Enjoyment. The ACE method is a method for improving your mood and your subjective feeling of wellbeing. Simply put, we should aim to engage in activities each day with give us a sense of Achievement, Connectedness and/or Enjoyment. Some activities will give us a sense of just one of these ACE's or some activities will satisfy all three. For example, going for a run might give you a sense of achievement but going for a run with a friend might give you a sense of achievement, connectedness and enjoyment. Research has shown that neurochemicals such as oxytocin, dopamine, serotonin, which are sometimes referred to as the "happy chemicals", are produced when we engage in activities which give us a sense of A, C and or E. More so, often times when we are under stress, the first things we drop are things like socialising, exercising, leisure activities. We can then notice our mood drop and feelings of stress continue to build... it's a vicious circle. In military training it might feel that you have limited control over your ability to engage in ACE activities. But hope is not lost. Aim small here, it could be pushing yourself an extra few percent in PT (achievement), getting a call in with a loved one (connectedness) or shooting pool in the mess (enjoyment). If you build in these activities, particularly when you notice stress building, it will help activate the soothe system, reduce overall mental stress and bolster your psychological resilience!

This has hopefully been an easy to digest talk through some tangible, practical skills to boost your resilience. Resilience is dynamic so it is important to know it will fluctuate both up and down throughout the day, week, and month and beyond. However, with simple steps we can "bounce back" from life's challenges in as safe and as healthy a way as possible.

*Lt (RDF) Colm Doody PhD BA is a Trainee Clinical Psychologist
Queens University Belfast and Special Staff Officer, Office of the
Defence Forces Organisational Psychologist J1.*

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IRISH UNITED NATIONS VETERANS ASSOCIATION (IUNVA)

BY COL GEORGE KERTON (RETD)
PHOTOS BY COL GEORGE KERTON (RETD)



Lt Gen Seán Clancy COS speaking with Tony Marshall, a veteran of service with 35 Inf Bn and 38 Inf Bn in the Congo during Veterans Day 2022

Vincent Savino, a former Quartermaster General and the first National President of IUNVA, wrote the following at the start of an article in the June 2008 edition of *An Cosantóir* magazine:

Tony Grant, a veteran of UN service in Cyprus and the Sinai Peninsula beside the plaque outside the Garrison Church in the former Kickham Bks Clonmel in memory of his father, Coy Sgt Felix Grant, Ireland's first fatality on UN service

"It was just another miserable winter's day and another sad occasion; a funeral was taking place in West Dublin of another "unknown" soldier. This interment was a little different. There was no immediate family; no flag; the man being buried had been found dead outside the gutter of Collins Bks. He was buried in a grave organised by the Command Welfare office and it was a stark reminder of what could happen to any lonely soldier. A group of us came together afterwards and bemoaned the fact that someone who had served his country so well, at home and overseas, should end his days in such a miserable way. A decision was made to come together to see what we could do about this situation and to prevent further tragedies. After several meetings it was decided to form an association that would help to alleviate the problems of many of our veterans living out their lives in similar circumstances. A small ad hoc committee undertook to cobble together a constitution and so the Irish United Nations Veterans Association was born".



The former UN Secretary General Ban Ki-Moon shaking hands with the late Michael Haslam during a visit to Ireland in July 2009 when he laid a wreath in memory of Irish fallen peacekeepers

Col George Kerton (Retd) IUNVA Public Relations Officer, covers the early days of the Irish United Nations Veterans Association (IUNVA) and the activities of the association today as a registered charity.

The late Maj Gen

involvement in peacekeeping, it was thirty years since the first Defence Forces deployment to the United Nations Observation Group in Lebanon (UNOGIL) in 1958. The Nobel Committee had decided to award the 1988 Nobel Peace Prize to the United Nations Peacekeeping Forces who had contributed to world peace since the first armed peacekeeping operations commenced in 1956 when the United Nations Emergency Force (UNEF) was established in the aftermath of the Suez crisis. Ireland, like a number of other countries, decided to institute a new medal for personnel who had served on peace support operations since 1958. An Bonn Chosantóirí Síochána na Náisiún Aontaithe (The UN Peacekeepers Medal) was introduced in 1989 for members or former members of the PDF or members or former members of the Chaplaincy Service who qualified for the award of a medal in respect of service with a UN mission or a UN mandated mission.



The first formal IUNVA meeting was held on 10 February 1990 to elect an interim committee. The first annual general meeting was held on 6 October 1990 at the Eastern Health Board Social Club in Grangegorman. The constitution was ratified and the first National Executive Committee (NEC) was formed. The Minister for Defence gave formal approval for the formation of the association and the Defence Forces General Staff gave their full support.

Meetings were held in the early days in a room in the Leisure Complex in St Brendan's Hospital until suitable premises were rented for IUNVA HQ in Stoneybatter. In 2004, IUNVA leased Arbour House from the Office of Public Works; this had been part of the military complex at Arbour Hill. It had



A representative group of military veterans during the visit by UN Secretary General Ban Ki-Moon in July 2009. The late Maj Gen Vincent Savino is in the front row nearest the camera.



Garden of IUNVA Post 11 Curragh Camp



Members of IUNVA Post 3 Gorey Co Wexford procured a mobility scooter for Jim Redmond who was one of the founders of the post and a Congo veteran who served with C Coy 33 Inf Bn in the Congo from Aug 1960 to Jan 1961. Members of Post 3 on the photograph are Bill Wall, James Gilbert (Chairperson Post 3), Bernard Manning, Mick Keegan, William Gilbert, Paddy Brady, Pat Cody and John O'Connell.

been unoccupied for a number of years and it was in a dilapidated state. After several months of toil by members it was transformed and it was ready for use as IUNVA HQ. While this was underway, posts were being established around the country through a network of serving and retired personnel. Soon, thirty one posts were up and running. Like many voluntary organisations, the fortunes of IUNVA flowed and ebbed over the years. Many of the original founding members in posts moved on and some posts merged with neighbouring posts, some posts stood down and were later re-activated. The aims of the association included the provision of support for members and other veterans in need and to ensure that the memory of those who gave their lives in the cause of peace were not forgotten.

The UN Memorial Garden, located at Post 1, Arbour Hill, was officially opened by President Mary McAleese, on 8 November 1998. The Remembrance Wall is "dedicated to the Irish citizens who died in service of the United Nations". At the time the memorial had seventy seven names inscribed on it, one was a

member of An Garda Síochána and seventy six were members of Óglaigh na hÉireann.

The memorial was revamped in 2023 and the name of Pte Seán Rooney was added to the list of the other 96 Irish citizens who died while on peace support



On 23 Jan 2024, members of the Chaplaincy Service visited IUNVA HQ at Arbour Hill. Pictured here are some of the Chaplains with members of IUNVA at the Memorial Garden.

operations. The causes of death range from death by hostile action, accidents (including road traffic accidents, air crashes and accidental weapons discharges and drowning) and natural causes. Eighty eight of the casualties were serving members of Óglaigh na hÉireann. One was a serving member of An Garda Síochána and eight were serving in civilian appointments. Of the eight who died while serving in the civilian components with the UN, one was a former member of An Garda Síochána and four were former members of Óglaigh na hÉireann.

A significant and sometimes forgotten or overlooked statistic is that thirty eight of the eighty eight Defence Forces fatalities overseas were killed by hostile actions; seventeen in the Congo while serving with ONUC, two in the Middle East while serving as unarmed observers with UNTSO and nineteen in Lebanon with UNIFIL.

Today IUNVA has twenty one posts and ordinary membership is open to any Irish Citizen, serving or retired, who has completed a recognised tour of duty with a United Nations or United Nations Mandated peace support operation or mission. This includes serving and retired personnel from Óglaigh na hÉireann and An Garda Síochána as well as civilians who served with the civilian

components of UN peace support operations.

IUNVA is a registered charity and, as required by the Charities Act 2009, operates in compliance with the Charities Governance Code and guidelines issued by the Charities Regulator. The association carries out various welfare and ceremonial activities. Welfare activities include liaison on behalf of veterans with State and voluntary agencies, visits to veterans in their homes, in hospice, hospital, nursing home and other residential care settings, provision of transport for veterans with restricted mobility, supplying foodstuffs and other essentials for needy veterans and veterans' families, co-coordinating counseling for members and other

disadvantaged veterans, drop-in-centres, organising support/social/sporting events at Posts, conducting training courses for members on physical health and mental health. IUNVA has burial plots in Dublin, Athlone, Mullingar and Letterkenny and

a new plot was recently acquired in Kilkenny. As well as organising remembrance ceremonies at post and at graveyards around the country, IUNVA participates in events organised by the State, Óglaigh na hÉireann, An Garda Síochána, local authorities, local communities and other national veterans' associations.

In December 2022, IUNVA adopted a new constitution and the four main objects of the association are:

The prevention or relief of poverty and economic hardship and the provision of financial relief in cases of necessity or distress to members of IUNVA and their dependants within capabilities.

To provide financial and other supports to veterans whose lives have been adversely affected as a result of service with the United Nations.

Integration of disadvantaged veterans and promotion of their full participation in society.

To promote, for the public benefit, the commemoration of Irish citizens who have died in the cause of world peace while on service with the United Nations or on United Nations mandated missions or operations.

Today IUNVA has twenty one posts nationwide. Posts are located as follows:

Post 1 Dublin	post1secretary@gmail.com
Post 2 Listowel	post2secretary@gmail.com
Post 3 Gorey	post3secretary@gmail.com
Post 4 Tipperary	post4secretary@gmail.com
Post 5 Cork	post5secretary@gmail.com
Post 6 Limerick	post6secretary@gmail.com
Post 8 Kilkenny	post8secretary@gmail.com
Post 9 Athlone	post9iunva@gmail.com
Post 10 Donegal	post10secretary@gmail.com
Post 11 Curragh	post11secretary@gmail.com
Post 15 Cavan	post15secretary@gmail.com
Post 19 Letterkenny	secretary@iunvapost19.com
Post 20 Mullingar	post20secretary@gmail.com
Post 21 Bray	post21secretary@gmail.com
Post 24 Clonmel	post24secretary@gmail.com
Post 25 Fermoy	iunvafermoy@gmail.com
Post 27 Portlaoise	post27secretary@gmail.com
Post 29 Carlow	post29secretary@gmail.com
Post 30 Galway	post30secretary@gmail.com
Post 31 Enniscorthy	post31secretary@gmail.com
Post 32 Tralee	post32secretary@gmail.com

WHAT HAS THE OCSC DONE IN 2023

BY BRIG GEN ROSSA MULCAHY ACOS

THE HEADLINES

- Developed and rolled out mandatory Sexual Ethics and Respectful Relationships (SERR) Workshops.
- Hiring 4½ (WTE) social workers to ensure SERR workshops are delivered promptly.
- Developed a working relationship with our British Army equivalent group - OP TEAMWORK.
- Developed and rolled out Training Muster package to all DF instructors and students.
- Developing an Ethics, Values and Behaviour Card to be provided to all members of the DF.
- Developing a series of videos representing the profiles of our female serving personnel.
- Amplifying the 'It Stops Now' campaign.
- Developed a proposal to name new IPVs after prominent female leaders.
- Coordinated with D Ord to develop a DF Maternity wear stock policy to ensure availability.
- Assisted in the roll out of Gender, Diversity & Unconscious Bias Training.
- Amplified the message regarding the mechanism to reimburse female personnel for the purchase of sports bras.



Sexual Ethics and Respectful Relationship Advisors (SERRA)

In order to ensure SERR workshops are delivered throughout the DF as promptly as possible and to reinforce DF Personal Support Services (PSS) capability, a number of additional social workers are currently being hired. In total, 4½ (whole time equivalent) new

social workers will be hired. The Sexual Ethics and Respectful Relationship Advisors (SERRA) will ensure the long-term support to drive the enduring culture change in the DF.

OP TEAMWORK

In 2023, the OCSC reached out to the British Army's equivalent team who have been tasked with driving positive and enduring cultural change in their Organisation. The objective of the relationship was to provide both teams with a better understanding of the issues involved and lessons learned regarding initiatives and approaches employed. The DF hosted a one day workshop in McKee Bks in November 2023 with the OP TEAMWORK team. A similar workshop will be hosted by the British Army for the DF in Q2 '24.

Training Muster

Training Muster was conducted in December '23 by the OCSC and was mandatory for all staff based in training establishments and all available students undergoing training or education in the DF. This initiative built on the mandatory Response Team briefs conducted in late 2021 and provided a platform to remind the target audience that the DF is "a workplace, where our culture is underpinned by the principles of dignity, equality, mutual respect and duty of care." The first Training Muster also reminded the target audience of our obligations to each other and importantly the supports and protections available to all. The programme commenced with an address by the Chief of Staff and concluded with the DF Sgt Maj. Other modules included,

- DF Values and leadership.
- The complaints procedure and barriers to reporting.
- Military code of practice for instructors and students.
- Resilience and mental health.
- Discussion, Q&A.

Over 700 instructional staff and students attended the Training Muster in ten (10) locations. Staff ranged from Cpl to Lt Col. The students ranged from recent inductees to recruits, apprentices, cadets, 2-3*; through to Young Officer's courses, Special Operations Forces Qualification course (SOF Q), Land Command & Staff and Joint Command & Staff students. Following an ongoing lessons learned process this package will be repeated in 2024.

Introduction

The Organisational Cultural Standing Committee (OCSC) was convened in December 2021 by the Chief of Staff and tasked with driving and coordinating the process of cultural change in the DF. The committee is chaired by myself and comprises of various SMEs and EOIs from each of the Formations and Services. Similar committees have been cascaded down to Formation and Service level, with EOIs acting as their chair. These structures facilitate 2-way communication on initiatives and messaging that support the process of cultural change. The OCSC met twelve times last year and the following provides a look back on the work undertaken.

Sexual Ethics and Respectful Relationships (SERR) Workshop

The OCSC's primary initiative to drive positive cultural change in the DF, was the development and rollout of the Sexual Ethics and Respectful Relationships workshop. The workshop was adapted from a model used by the New Zealand Defence Forces and reviewed and by the Dublin Rape Crisis Centre. The workshop modules include consent, military culture and environment, sexual ethics and respectful relationships and being an ethical bystander. The SERR workshop is mandatory for all members of the DF and is designed to give our people the opportunity to discuss, explore and learn about sexual ethics in the workplace, with a view to making the DF a safer place to work. The workshop is being delivered by Professor Louise Crowley from UCC, alongside a DF Military Champion. To date, Professor Crowley has delivered 24 workshops reaching an audience of over 1,500.

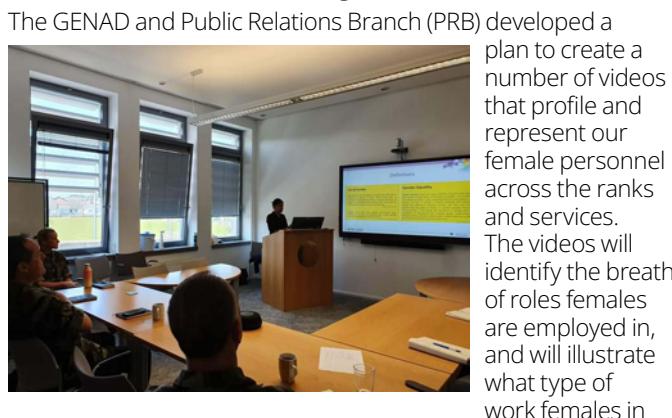
Ethics, Values and Behaviour Card

An Ethics, Values and Behaviour Card is currently under development by a sub-committee of the OCSC. The card will provide all our people with information related to ethics, values and behaviours expected of a member of the DF. This card includes a QR code which directs personnel to the information outlined below.

- DF Values.
- The Dignity Charter.
- Our Behavioural Continuum chart.
- Bystander information.
- Information on consent and what is NOT consent.
- Support services contact details.

All personnel will receive a card, with new inductees receiving a copy in their first week of training. The card will also be available on CONNECT and IKON.

Profiles of our Female Serving Members



The GENAD and Public Relations Branch (PRB) developed a plan to create a number of videos that profile and represent our female personnel across the ranks and services. The videos will identify the breadth of roles females are employed in, and will illustrate what type of work females in

the DF are engaged in. It will further identify how females in the DF have developed and progressed through various ranks and career paths. The videos will be available on CONNECT, IKON and military.ie as well as posted to our DF social media platforms. One video has been completed - the profile of a Capt Instr in the Cdt Sch. Two (2) additional videos will be completed in Q1 '24 featuring an NCO and a Pte from the NS and AC respectively.

'It Stops Now' Key Messages

A key pillar of the work to date has been the OCSC Communications Plan. The group prioritised five (5) key messages. Short videos based on these key messages were produced and socialised on all internal and external DF platforms on a staggered basis. The messages were delivered by senior male leaders, which was a key message to senior leadership from serving female personnel in the DF. The videos were complemented with an 'It Stops Now' poster campaign, which is displayed on notice boards throughout all installations in the DF. These videos were repeated again on all platforms throughout Mar & Apr '23, following the publication of the IRG DF report, with the poster campaign refreshed. They are also integrated into the Training Muster workshop.



Prof Louise Crowley
who delivers SERR
training in the DF

Naming of Inshore Patrol Vessels (IPVs) after Irish Female Leaders.

A proposal to name the two (2) new Inshore Patrol Vessels

(IPVs), after important Irish female leaders was discussed and supported by the OCSC. The DF Board (DFB) has approved this recommendation. The ACOS has further discussed with OIC A Admin that consideration will be given to naming new DF buildings and/or facilities after important Irish female leaders.

OCSC Related Work

Gender, Diversity and Unconscious Bias Training

The Commission on the DF report recommended the introduction of "gender, diversity and unconscious bias training"¹ for all ranks. Following a tender process the Irish Centre for Diversity were selected to provide the training. At this point more than half of the organisation have undergone the training, with modules including:

- Understanding gender stereotypes in society and the military.
- Addressing gender equality in the military.
- What is unconscious bias and its context in the military.
- Understanding how biases became the 'norm' in a military context.
- Impact of Unconscious Bias and individual responsibilities.
- The benefits of diversity in a military context.

DF Maternity Wear

The availability of DF maternity wear was raised in the OCSC. ACOS raised the matter with D Ord who identified that although the DF had sufficient stock of maternity wear, some issuing stores had little or no holdings. D Ord has issued an instruction, which outlines the minimum holdings required for the five issuing clothing stores and the time requirements for issuing. The stock holdings are based on an examination of issues over the past five years. Unit logistics staff can order maternity wear as required from issuing stores and central stores for issue to personnel.

Female Undergarment

A mechanism to reimburse female personnel for the purchase of sports bras was established with the first payment of this allowance made in Q4 2023. Female personnel can make one claim per year, to a maximum amount of €130. Formation and Service Logs Offices will consolidate applications and submit directly to Finance Branch, Galway in order to reimburse females the cost of purchase. At the end of 2023, 149 female personnel received a reimbursement under this scheme.

Conclusion

For further information or updates see ACOS Space on CONNECT. I would encourage all to get involved in their respective Formation and Service OCSCs and have your voice heard. I would like to thank all members of the committees for their work and commitment to the OCSC and I look forward to another productive year in 2024.



¹Recommendation 42 Section 8.2.6 Diversity Page 101

PRESIDENT OF THE EUROPEAN COURT OF HUMAN RIGHTS, MS JUSTICE SÍOFRA O'LEARY PRESENTS DEFENCE FORCES MEMBERS WITH VALUES AWARDS

On 13th November 2023 at Casement Aerodrome Baldonnel, the President of the European Court of Human Rights, Ms Justice Síofra O'Leary presented Defence Forces members with Values Awards in the company of Defence Forces Chief of Staff, Lieutenant General Seán Clancy, Award winners and their families and colleagues.

This is the 6th iteration of the Awards, whose recipients are Defence Forces personnel who have best displayed Selflessness, Loyalty, Integrity, Moral Courage, Physical Courage and Respect. Nominated by their peers, these personnel were chosen as those who best exemplify the values and standards of Óglaigh na hÉireann.

Defence Forces Chief of Staff, Lieutenant General Seán Clancy extends his gratitude to the families of the award winners and speaks about the Defence Forces Values.

'It gives me great pleasure to be here today to host this year's Defence Forces Values Award ceremony. I particularly wish to extend our gratitude to your families, whose sacrifices and support enable us to serve and perform our tasks to the highest possible standards. 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. Our values of respect, loyalty, selflessness, physical courage, moral courage and integrity are the constants that underpin our values-based leadership. 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 are the foundation on which our organisation is built and guide our behaviour in both our personal and professional lives.'

INTEGRITY

Private Sean Martin & Private Neil Martin (Donegal)

"To recognise the integrity shown by both of you through your actions in your family, community and Unit in the aftermath of the tragic passing of your Mam Martina, at Creeslough. Nominated by Sgt Liam Russell, you are both credited with showing many of our values consistently since your Mother's death and amid the depths of this grief you honoured your mother at her funeral with dignity, respect

Pte Sean Martin, who was jointly awarded the Values award for Integrity



Pte Neil Martin, who was jointly awarded the Values award for Integrity

and composure. The integrity shown by you both since you returned to work in Finner Camp has not gone unnoticed and you continue to show outstanding courage and dedication to service. On a daily basis you have demonstrated professionalism and commitment when conducting your duties, exercises and training for the Defence Forces."

PHYSICAL COURAGE

Special Operations Task Unit 6 Army Ranger Wing

"Nominated for their meritorious actions and conduct during their deployment to MINUSMA. In late June 2021, SOTU 6 responded to an urgent request for support from ISR Coy TAC HQ who had encountered a Suicide Vehicle-Borne IED leaving many MINUSMA colleagues injured. On arrival SOTU 6 provided lifesaving medical assistance in the field and led the CASEVAC by requesting and guiding in five heli-MEDEVACS and acted as stretcher bearers. Once MEDAVACS were completed SOTU 6 continued to provide support to the mission by providing vital intel and acting as a mobile QRF for the move back to Camp Castor. Letter of appreciation from Major Bochow, ISR Coy Comd stated: "With your effort and capabilities you saved lives in TARKINT. With your medical experts you supported the medical care of our wounded comrades in an outstanding way."

RESPECT

Corporal Lorraine Byrne (Kildare)

"Cpl Byrne is credited with exemplifying the Value of Respect in her approach to her work in Records and Data Management, DFTC HQ. She is widely known and respected throughout the Formations as the "GURU" on DFRs and Admin Instructions. This has not come about only through 33 years of service and knowledge gained, but by Lorraine's desire to assist, motivate and guide her comrades. Her role in R & D Mgt office is the engine and Lorraine its driver who assists the wider DF audience in all matters regarding admin and HR practices. Such is her respect for her profession that on many occasions she has forfeited personal time and annual leave to ensure the smooth administration in induction of cadets, apprentices and recruits. Such is her respect to her comrades that the knowledge that she imparts on a daily basis to those around her and indeed to those who contact her means she is a constant team player dedicated to her peers, subordinates and superiors."



Cpl Lorraine Byrne was awarded the Values award for Respect

MORAL COURAGE

Lt Kenneth Godden (student) & Lt Eoin Blake (instructor)

For your joint actions on 26th February 2021 when your

Pilatus PC-9M aircraft experienced engine power loss at 16,000 feet over Co Kildare.



Lt Kenneth Godden who was jointly awarded the Values award for Moral Courage

error would have resulted in abandonment and potentially large loss of life had the aircraft been lost over a town or city. Lt Godden displayed moral courage and resulted in textbook actions which resulted in the safe recovery of crew and aircraft. Displayed precise and effective CRM in a tense situation.

Lt Blake – instructor (Wexford)

Having the moral courage to secure the engine, further damage was prevented which ensured that the engine did not disintegrate, with potential crew ejection

avoided. Extreme danger to crew and public was prevented. With obscured vision, he glided the aircraft back to Baldonnel and landed safely due to the excellent use of CRM. By directing his student pilot through relevant check lists and cross checked all required actions. It should be noted that Lt Blake qualified as a Flight Instructor the day before this incident and was conducting the first instructional flight of his career.

LOYALTY

F/Sgt Thomas Devereaux (Kildare)

“Recently promoted F/Sgt Tom Devereaux spent the majority of his career before promotion in the DFTC, with over 13 years in the Military College (DFPES & NCO Trg Wing). His loyalty to the Military College with significant time spent undertaking

high intensity instructional duties mark him out for recognition of the DF Value of Loyalty. He brings boundless energy, enthusiasm and professional expertise to the role of military instructor and is a devoted NCO who seeks at every opportunity to enhance and develop students under his tutelage. His loyalty to his students has been consistent and relentless with his personal ethos of “put the student first”. He is not only loyal to the Defence Forces, he is also loyal to his colleagues as a source of sound advice and his industry and zeal for his profession is a source of inspiration to many.”



“Recently promoted F/Sgt Tom Devereaux spent the majority of his career before promotion in the DFTC, with over 13 years in the Military College (DFPES & NCO Trg Wing). His loyalty to the Military College with significant time spent undertaking high intensity instructional duties mark him out for recognition of the DF Value of Loyalty. He brings boundless energy, enthusiasm and professional expertise to the role of military instructor and is a devoted NCO who seeks at every opportunity to enhance and develop students under his tutelage. His loyalty to his students has been consistent and relentless with his personal ethos of “put the student first”. He is not only loyal to the Defence Forces, he is also loyal to his colleagues as a source of sound advice and his industry and zeal for his profession is a source of inspiration to many.”

SELFLESSNESS

Sgt Maj Kenneth Hurley (RIP) (Meath)

Award accepted by his wife Ann Hurley

Nominated by the CIS Group and CIS Corps, Kenneth is credited as an outstanding conscientious and hardworking NCO. His nomination stated that it is “without doubt that

Sgt Maj Hurley’s levels of leadership, empathy, integrity, respect to others, courage and selflessness set him aside from others”

Although living through a period of extreme personal challenge, Sgt Maj Hurley continued to carry out his wide and varied workload across

CIS Technical projects. Even whilst receiving robust medical treatment he continued to work on behalf of the CIS Corps progressing many Research & Development projects which required self-sacrifice, personal commitment & dedication. An embodiment of professionalism with outstanding technical and tactical expertise was an inspiration to all members of the CIS Corps, Sgt Maj Hurley was an entirely selfless individual, a senior leader, a valued colleague and mentor.

OVERALL DF VALUES CHAMPION

Cpl Barry Foley (Donegal)

Cpl Barry Foley recently received a meritorious promotion to Cpl. Nominated by many members of 28th Inf Bn across multiple award categories. Over 38 years service in 28 Inf Bn Consistently displays the values of Oglaigh na hÉireann. His rank does not reflect his level of influence in the Unit. Is a long

time mentor and a figure of guidance to personnel of the Bn regardless of rank. Provides sound actionable advice which has been developed through his many years of experience. Leader of the Environmental team, managing

over 300 acres of land in a manner which ensures Finner Camp is maintained to its best all year round. Carries out his wider duties (regimental, TRRs, ceremonial) without complaint. “Men of Barry’s quality are few and far between but he is a torch bearer who by his example, passes on the positives aspects of our shared culture to the next generation” — Comdt Brendan McGovern

“As IC of the Environmental Section, he has accepted the responsibility and taken on a leadership capacity managing and directing a small number of his peers in their daily tasks” — BSM Patrick Enfield

“Barry is a soldier of the old school who puts the job first, is loyal to his colleagues, his Unit and the DF. He lives the values he is nominated for” — CS Kieran Crawford



Cpl Barry Foley, who was the overall DF Values champion

LEADERSHIP

BY THE DF LEADERSHIP DOCTRINE WORKING GROUP,
WITH CONTRIBUTIONS FROM S/LT (NS) STEPHEN SMYTH

In the vast expanse of the maritime world, the Irish Naval Service stands as a force, safeguarding the nation's interests and ensuring maritime security. At the heart of this prowess lies a cadre of exceptional leaders who steer the course through challenges and achievements alike. Military leadership in the Irish Naval Service is not merely a position; it is a commitment to service, an embodiment of values, and a dedication to excellence.

Leadership isn't just about telling individuals what they are to do but is about leading by example and motivating those around you. The Defence Forces Leadership Doctrine has a quote which defines what they want from leadership.

Leadership is influencing people by providing purpose, direction, and motivation.

Developing and evaluating the individual, unit, and organisation, while achieving the mission.

Leaders must be nimble and adaptive since the sea is a dynamic and unpredictably changing environment. Effective leaders in the Irish Naval Service accept change, pursue lifelong learning, and promote an innovative culture. They are aware of how crucial it is to stay ahead of developments, giving their crew the tools and information they need to take on new challenges. The Defence Forces Leadership Doctrine discusses how Ireland and its EU partner states face threats that are more diverse, less visible, and less predictable. Ireland has always engaged actively with the EU, UN and UN mandated missions along with the international community to aid in a collective security response. With this, Defence

Forces leaders must be capable of operating in an environment which is complex, congested, cluttered, contested and connected and one which will continuously challenge leaders.

The Defence Forces values play a large role for leaders within the Defence Forces. From when the Defence Forces values were first introduced, they have set an ethos that has led to a continuous and exemplary level of professionalism at home and abroad. The six values of respect, loyalty, selflessness, physical courage, moral courage, and integrity form the bedrock of the organisation and are central to our effectiveness. They are fundamental to sustaining Óglaigh na hÉireann as a steadfast pillar of the Irish State. These values are what leaders shall use to ensure that they have a professional and exemplary crew. Within the Defence Forces leadership doctrine, it states how the leadership doctrine is values based and has an inherent developmental focus. Our values must be fostered and enhanced by leadership at all levels and in all contexts. These values are instilled within the leaders of the Defence Forces through the Code of Conduct and Standards of Behaviour for Cadets and the New Entrants Handbook



for other ranks. This is what lets the leaders of Óglaigh na hÉireann meet the expectations of the organisation and the Irish state.

Clear and effective communication is the lynchpin of success for naval operations. Leaders in the Irish Naval Service excel in articulating their vision, issuing precise orders, and

HISTORICAL VIGNETTE 6

“OPERATION SEABIGHT”

Commander Eugene P. Ryan MNI (NS) Commander Fleet Ops ‘Operation Seabight’

On the evening of 05 Nov 2008, I was tasked with planning directing what remains to date the largest interdiction of cocaine at sea in Europe. As the vessel of interest approached Irish waters the key JTF members were present in the Ops Room in the Naval Base. 130 nautical miles off the South-West coast of Ireland LÉ Niamh and LÉ Róisín were covertly monitoring and closing in on the unsuspecting yacht. Darkness had fallen and the weather was deteriorating rapidly. We would soon be at the outer limit of acceptance for safe boarding operations. The intelligence picture was updated with the unexpected news that the yacht was not in fact UK registered. This fundamentally changed the legal aspect of the operation. I was left with the option of boarding a stateless vessel on the High Seas. The LÉ Niamh and LÉ Róisín reported that they were in position. I remained fully aware that the responsibility to conduct interdiction operations rested with me and conscious of placing boarding teams in harm's way. My commitment to protecting Ireland in the war on narcotic smuggling was forefront in my mind. Relying on my professional experience, my reading of the evolving situation, my faith in the training and commitment of the personnel at sea and completely accepting that the responsibility was mine; I ordered OC LÉ Niamh to board the yacht 'Dances with Waves'.

HISTORICAL VIGNETTE 14

“OPERATION PONTUS”, MEDITERRANEAN SEA, MAY TO JUL 2015

Cdr Pearse O'Donnell, Ship's Captain L.É. EITHNE

I was cognisant of managing my own personal stress, that of the ship's company and migrant stress. I did this through team building by clear and consistent 'up/down' communication. With me, I had confidence in the structures above me at the Operational & Strategic Levels in the Naval Service Command Centre and DFHQ, vis-a-vis clear communication, where support, flexibility and common sense were present. Though I was the Captain of the ship, I was expected to be part of the team and if the team was strong and of one mind, then this 'unity of purpose' would be a support to all of us at times of stress. Across the ship's company, effective crew management and support mechanisms helped to reduce operational stress. Extensive exercising and role play were conducted prior to deployment. We drilled until we got it right. Each of the 22 Search and Rescue operations was followed by a 'lessons learned' process. Lessons learned were implemented immediately. Because of the novel mission, I accepted that mistakes would be made, and that personal censure and criticism should not take place. Emphasis was placed on praising achievements. Personnel were rotated through different appointments to ensure variety, and to reduce the stress load in the more demanding tasks (first responders). The ship carried seven trained Designated Contact Persons. With migrant Stress, we assured them that they would be brought to a place of safety and that they would be secure aboard our ship. I had faith in the 'old reliables' of teambuilding, clarity of purpose, the Defence Forces Personnel Support Services procedures, and clear R&R periods. Establishing these practices early was paramount to preventing and reducing stress and ensuring mission success.

fostering an open dialogue. Whether in the heat of battle or during routine operations, effective communication ensures a shared understanding and unity of purpose among the crew.

LÉ James Joyce entering Portland, Maryland, USA



Effective command and control have always been the heart of leadership. We can see this from pre-industrial times when commanders could often survey an entire battlefield from a single vantage point. Ensuring that orders were relayed quickly and accurately was difficult. In the early 20th century, the rapid modernisation of military equipment and weaponry created changes to how battle fields work. No longer would soldiers fight shoulder-to-shoulder, and commanders could no longer depend on being able to view the action first-hand. With these developments, an effective communication system became even more vital. This becomes even more prevalent to force commanders when all elements of armed forces work in cohesion together, such as soldiers on the ground requiring assistance from air or naval assets. These operations require clear and concise communications to ensure that the mission objective is accomplished.

The Defence Forces Leadership Doctrine speaks about the influence that operational leaders face and states "Leaders must know themselves, the mission, the message, the environment, the best method of communication, and must share these with subordinates". (Defence Forces 2023)

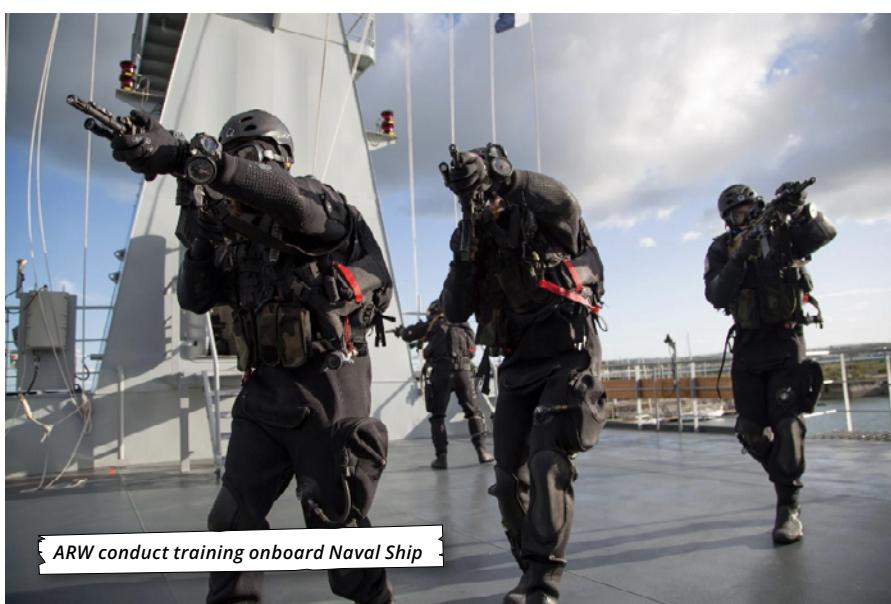
When it comes to naval leadership it is important to remember that the sea is an unforgiving environment and will continue to test naval leaders as they continue to operate in these conditions. It is important that leaders stay resilient, that they instil a culture of perseverance, equipping their teams with the mental and emotional fortitude to navigate storms, both literal and metaphorical.

In the Irish Naval Service, leadership isn't just about command; it's a commitment to excellence and a responsibility to the nation. As the force continues to evolve, the legacy of its leaders will be defined by their unwavering dedication to maritime security, exemplifying the values that have guided the Irish Navy through decades of service.

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ARW conduct training onboard Naval Ship



THE IRISH VOLUNTEERS AT WAR, 1916 – 1923

BY TOM O'NEILL, COMDT RDF (RETD)
PHOTOS PROVIDED BY TOM O'NEILL, COMDT RDF (RETD)

PART 1: THE 1916 RISING

This is the first of three articles covering the changing methodology of war fighting used by the Irish forces from 1916 to 1923. The second article will cover the War of Independence and part three, the Civil War.

This article is an ideal opportunity to look at the changing strategy of the armed elements of the Irish Citizen Army, the Irish Volunteers and the Irish Republican Army, during the 1916 Rising, the War of Independence and the Civil War, now that we have reached the end of our centenary commemorations for the decade of revolution, 1913 – 1923.

It is important to bear in mind that the officers and members of the Irish Citizen Army, the Irish Volunteers and the Irish Republican Army, were civilians. The vast majority of the members were almost entirely lacking any formal military training. It is ironic that the majority of the members of these three groups that had received military training and experience did so while serving with the British Armed Forces during World War One.

The 1916 Rising

The planning for the 1916 Rising was a natural progression for the Irish Volunteers, considering the tradition for armed rebellions that existed within Irish revolutionary and independence organisations during the previous two centuries. These included the rebellion by the United Irishmen in 1798, Robert Emmet's rising in 1803, the Young Irelanders in 1848 and the Fenians in 1867. A common theme during these attempts at gaining independence was their use of conventional warfare. This was never going to succeed considering the massive numerical superiority of troops and the abundance of arms and equipment available to the British Forces.



Mrs Erskine Childers and Ms Mary Spring-Rice examine rifles and cases of ammunition on board Erskine Childers' yacht 'Asgard', on their way to Howth, Co. Dublin, 1914. (Photo from 'Dublin 1916')

These infiltrations by British agents and informers happened on so many occasions prior to the 1916 Rising, that this led to a paranoia within the Volunteer Executive about the possible infiltration by British agents in the lead up to it. This greatly contributed to the failure of the Rising because the plans (for the rising) were kept so secret, that even those senior Irish Volunteer officers that needed to know the plans in advance, were kept in the dark until it was too late.

When studying the lead up to the 1916 Rising, the lack of command experience within the leaders becomes evident. There was a lack of

The General Post Office, Dublin, before the 1916 Rising. (Photo from 'Dublin 1916')



communications, as well as a lack of clear and decisive orders from the leaders in Dublin, to their colleagues in the provinces. This resulted in orders, countermanding orders and utter confusion within the Irish Volunteers across the country, which prevented a general uprising. Outside Dublin, many of the Volunteers did

not learn that the Rising had started until they read it subsequently in the newspapers.

The very limited logistics that were in place for the 1916 Rising also illustrates the lack of military experience within the leadership of the Irish Volunteers and Irish Citizen Army. The success or failure of the Rising largely depended on the availability of weapons, such as rifles, revolvers, light machine-guns and adequate ammunition. These were the basic requirements for the Volunteers, to enable them to fight against the well-armed British Forces. One of the problems that the Volunteers and later the IRA faced throughout the years of revolution, was the difficulty of maintaining an adequate supply of small arms and ammunition. This difficulty was compounded by the diverse range of weapons used by the Volunteers, which resulted in the requirement for different types of ammunition. In comparison the British Army and RIC, used one calibre of rifle ammunition, the ".303".

The rifles, revolvers and ammunition smuggled into Ireland before the rising were totally inadequate. What was considered the vital delivery was the weapons, ammunition and explosives on the 'Aud'. The 'Aud' was the cargo ship sent from Germany, to arm and equip the volunteers that intended participating in the Rising. The ship was carrying 20,000 Russian Mosin-Nagant 7.62mm rifles, ten Maxim machine-guns, one million rounds of assorted ammunition and explosives.

At first glance, these numbers appear to suggest that there were sufficient weapons and ammunition on the 'Aud' to start a small war, until we look at the figures in more detail. It is important to bear in mind, that at that time, a trained soldier could fire ten aimed rounds rapid fire, in thirty seconds, with a bolt action rifle. When the Ulster Volunteers successfully smuggled in weapons, they decided on fewer rifles and more ammunition.

From my experience with the Russian Mosin-Nagant rifles, these rifles were perfect for the Irish Volunteers. Simple to operate and maintain, accurate, a devastating round and on par with



A depiction of inside the General Post Office during the Rising including P H Pearse, Tom Clarke and James Connolly on the stretcher. (Photo from 'The Revolutionary Years')

P H Pearse, accompanied by Nurse Elizabeth Farrell, surrendering to Brig-Gen Lowe on the Saturday of Easter Week. (Photo from 'The Revolutionary Years')



British and German service rifles of the time.

Firstly, 20,000 rifles and that amount of ammunition equates to only fifty rounds per rifle. However, six different types of ammunition were retrieved from the wreck of the 'Aud'. Thus, the quantity of ammunition available for the rifles was totally inadequate. This lack of ammunition is compounded by the fact there was never any plans for a resupply and the only locations with that type of ammunition were Germany or Russia. The German Army had captured vast quantities of the

Russian rifles and ammunition during the early battles of the First World War.

When the 'Aud' sailed from Lubek, Germany, the captain had orders to arrive off Fenit, Co Kerry, on Holy Thursday night, 20th April 1916. Again, displaying a lack of appreciation of the consequences of their decisions, the Irish Volunteers leadership in Dublin changed the arrival time of the 'Aud' to Easter Sunday night, 22nd April, for a rising that was to begin the following day. The major problem now was there was no way of communicating the change of date to the ship's captain, because the 'Aud' did not have a radio. This was because there was no means of generating electricity on the ship, to keep the batteries charged.

The first Irish Volunteer fatalities of the 1916 Rising occurred when a car carrying four members of the force was accidentally driven off Ballykissane Pier near Killorglin, Co. Kerry, into the River Laune. Three of the passengers were drowned. They were on their way to steal wireless transmitters from the Atlantic Radio College in Cahersiveen, to use it to attempt to make radio contact with the 'Aud', which as previously mentioned, did not have a radio on board.

The planned change of arrival time for the 'Aud' allowed no time for offloading, transporting and issuing of weapons across Munster, and this with the Crown Forces doing everything possible to confiscate the cargo. What was obviously not considered was the time required to carry out basic weapon training for the Volunteers on rifles that were totally new to them. If training had been provided, I would estimate that each Volunteer would have at most only five rounds of ammunition with which to practise firing their rifles, before going out to do battle with the professional British Army and Royal Irish Constabulary.



Members of the Irish Citizen Army on the roof of Liberty Hall, Dublin, on the first day of the Easter Rising. (Photo from 'The War for Ireland 1913 - 1923')

The general strategy adopted by the Volunteers and the Irish Citizen Army during the Rising of occupying prominent buildings in Dublin, Enniscorthy and elsewhere, proved disastrous. The British military, after getting over the initial surprise

A dramatic reconstruction of an unnamed Irish rebel being executed in Kilmainham Gaol after the 1916 Rising



of the rising, simply deployed their troops to Dublin and other Rising locations and surrounded the occupied buildings, thus isolating and trapping the Irish Volunteer garrisons. This prevented co-ordination and re-supply of ammunition and communications, between the Volunteer garrisons. During the next phase, the British Army overwhelmed the garrisons and forced the Volunteers to surrender.

Taking this strategy as the one that most likely would have been used by the Volunteers had there been a general uprising, if this had happened, the potential casualties suffered by the Volunteers would have devastated the organisation. Therefore, in the long term, the lack of a national uprising and the loss of the cargo of the 'Aud'

was a blessing in disguise for the Volunteers.

It is too simplistic to look at the 1916 Rising in isolation and to consider it a failure. On the contrary, it succeeded in reawakening the spirit of independence and valuable lessons were learned from the mistakes made during the Rising. In the aftermath of the Rising, the senior Irish Volunteer officers reviewed the events and strategy of the 1916 Rising and decided to make major changes for the next attempt at Irish independence by armed force.

They decided that there would be no more taking over and occupying large urban buildings, because during the Rising this resulted in the Irish garrisons being isolated and overwhelmed by Crown Forces.

They would avoid taking on the might of the British Crown Forces using conventional warfare and instead use guerrilla warfare, hit and run, using the element of surprise.

There would be no more wearing of identifiable uniforms. This was a double-edged sword, because the IRA did not wear uniforms, they were not protected by the Geneva Convention and as a result, captured IRA men were tried by Military Courts as civilians and many were sentenced to death and executed.

They would focus on winning the intelligence and counterintelligence war, this was finding out as much as possible about the enemy and prevent the enemy, the Crown Forces, from finding out about Volunteer activities and individuals. They would also fight a propaganda war against the Crown Forces and the British government.

The thousands of Volunteers across the country that were disappointed in not getting an opportunity to participate in the 1916 Rising, were eager for a second chance and were fully prepared to fight hard and put their lives on the line for the freedom of their beloved country.

Author: Tom O'Neill from Midleton, Co. Cork is an assistant manager on Spike Island. He served in An FCA and the RDF and retired as a Commandant. He regularly has articles on Irish military history published in Ireland's Own. His books include 'The Battle of Clonmel' and 'Spike Island's Republican Prisoners 1921'. He co-wrote 'The History of the 23 Infantry Battalion FCA'.

DF Sports & Clubs Update

FOR REGULAR UPDATES ON ANY OF THESE CLUBS, PLEASE LOG ONTO THE CONNECT APP



SOCER: Crumlin FC who were excellent hosts for the tournament

DF MEN'S SOCCER

CISM triangular tournament was held in Dublin from the 03-09 Dec 23. This was a super tournament that was played in the top facilities at Crumlin United FC. The DF men's team would like to thank them for

their hospitality over the tournament. The tournament was an intense one with three games in five days played at a ferocious tempo with no quarter given by any team as you would expect from soldiers representing their country.



SOCER: Cpl Jody Dillon ready to challenge for the ball



SOCER: Cpl Chris Kenny ready to shoot

It was a case of ecstasy to agony for our team with a superb start against a strong Canadian team but then not capitalised on in the final game against the USA team.

We scored an excellent goal in the first game to take the three points and set up a de facto final against the USA after they also beat the Canadian team. In a fierce game in tough conditions on a windy day in Crumlin we had a battle, with a penalty misses for both sides, red cards and multiple shots off the bar. It was an intense and entertaining game to say the least. In the end a break by the talented USA side won the game and as such the tournament overall. We want to thank both sides for making a huge effort to make this a special week and hope to continue it going forward. It was a true reflection of the CISM motto of friendship through sport.

Playing at Crumlin United FC meant a lot to the team as we gave everything in honour of Glen Fulham (RIP) in what was his home club. Thanks to everyone who helped make this happen, without their assistance this tournament could not have happened.

Overall Results

Game 1 DF Men's 1-0 Canadian Forces

Game 2 Canadian Forces 0-1 USA

Game 3 DF Men's 0-1 USA



SOCER: DF team before kick off



SOCER: Both teams before kick off

DF WOMEN'S SOCCER

A super game of football was played in Galway recently against the Belgium Armed Forces in the excellent facilities at Mervue Utd. The



SOCER: Teams standing during national anthems

team is currently in transition as players have retired, hung up their boots while some others have recently deployed overseas. This of course has given opportunities to new players to come on board, and these players all stepped up to the task.

The game ebbed and flowed with the Irish taking the lead 1-0, Belgium then came back to 1-1. Soon after they took the lead 2-1, then 2-2 and again Belgium went ahead 3-2. We then showed great character to fight back to 3-3 in what was a thrilling game. A fantastic display by both sides in this CISM challenge. A huge credit to all the staff who continue to bring this team

forward building an ethos of desire and a never say die attitude. A massive effort by all our players and many thanks to the refereeing team on the day. The team is only on the up and we look forward to seeing where it leads to in 2024.



SOCER: Cpl Chloe Foy chasing hard to win the ball



SOCER: A top class save by the Belgium keeper

DF WOMEN'S RUGBY

The Combined Forces rugby team played their first game of 2024 against the French Military women's team in Malahide RFC. After an intense battle back and forth between the two teams, the French finished strongly to run out winners at 13-15. Overall, a great performance by the Combined Forces,



RUGBY: Capt Meabh O'Brien leading the team on the day



RUGBY: Irish players wining their lineout

and a great collaboration for future battles going forward. Many thanks to J7 staff for the assistance and Malahide RFC for hosting and providing logistical support. Well done both teams for the excellent display that they put on for all spectators on the day.



RUGBY: Joint services team before the game

DF ATHLETICS



DF ATHLETICS: The men's team on the podium

December 2023 saw the CISM regional cross-country championships held in Belgium. In ideal weather conditions in Schaffen the Irish men's and women's team both had fantastic individual

and team results. Capt Elizabeth Carr stretched the race from the start and was rewarded with a fantastic 3rd place overall in a field of 100 athletes. Pte Laoighse Styles and Pte Louise Nolan battled throughout and finished 11th and 13th overall. This ensured the Irish team finished second overall behind the dominant French team and ahead of the hosts Belgium.

In the men's event Pte Josh O' Sullivan Hourihan finished 5th place overall after mixing with the leading group early on. Pte Nathan O'Leary finished very



DF ATHLETICS: Women's team who also won medals on the day



DF ATHLETICS: Men's team before the event started

strong in 19th place with Comdt James Ledingham 15th and Pte Dave Redmond in 16th with Cpl Stephen Butler on his international debut finishing in 31st. The above team combined to finish 3rd just behind a strong French and Belgium team. A field of over 900 athletes completed in the men's event on the day.

Well done to both teams on an excellent performance in Belgium.



DF ATHLETICS: Capt Elizabeth Carr with her winners medal

DF ROWING

DF rowers recently competed in the Irish Rowing Championships which was held in the University of Limerick. The race was a 2km race which is the Olympic standard. Over 12 teams from rowing clubs all over Ireland took part on the day with the DF team finishing 3rd overall in a time of 6m 22s. The team was made up of members from all of the 3 services of the DF, Air Corps, Army, NS. Members of the team were Captain Eoin Stanley, PO Karla Foley, Sgt Gemma O'Connor and Pte Rob Diffley. Head coach is BQ Dave Williams.



DF ROWING: DF rowing team showing each other great support



DF ROWING: Sgt Gemma O'Connor on the rower giving her best as always

DF ROWING: PO Kara Foley, Pte Rob Diffley, Sgt Gemma O'Connor, Capt Eoin Stanley

CAR BOMBS AND BARRACK BUSTERS

BY LT COL (RETD) DAN HARVEY
PHOTOS PROVIDED BY PR BRANCH

A bomb is composed of a fuse, a detonator and explosive content, maybe also a timer (clock) and a power source (battery). Once set off, a bomb's detonation, a sudden, violent, noisy eruption will have a number of instantaneous concurrent effects; pressure, incendiary and fragmentary. That is gas, heat and shrapnel, felt as a blast wave, burning, and an avalanche of flying debris. An Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD) officer, a 'bomb squad' officer, is the highly qualified, carefully selected, intensely trained, 'number one', the leading member of dedicated, courageous, bomb disposal teams whose role is to disrupt, defuse, and disarm the lethal range of menacing improvised explosive devices (IEDs), unexploded objects and munitions, and a variety of dangerous substances. This 'making safe' of that which is intended to kill, maim, or destroy is achieved by utilising robots, remote controls, or by donning the 'bomb suit' undertaking the 'long walk' and manually implementing the necessary countermeasures.

We were called out to deal with a suspect device left in the Shelbourne Hotel and, while en route, our progress was impeded when we were flagged down by a Garda in Capel Street requesting we investigate another device left in a furniture shop. In the event, restoring this additional situation to as normal as possible, as soon as possible, became more important than preserving forensics. The item was easily enough disposed of, only it took a little time to deal with, after which we proceeded without further delay to our original tasking in the Shelbourne Hotel. As we neared the hotel, I noticed a uniformed Garda inspector at the scene, standing with his back to the front door of the hotel. As I got out of my vehicle and began to approach him, the bomb went off, blowing out the glass in the building's windows and doors, much of the tiny glass slivers lodging themselves into the back of the great coat of the inspector, who was otherwise uninjured. The bomb, in a briefcase, had been placed on a table at the top of the first-floor stairs. It immediately occurred to me that had I not been intercepted en route, I would likely have been busy trying to defuse it when it went off.

This firsthand account was the nearest that the Explosive Ordnance Officer (EOD) came to being killed. Bomb Disposal was and remains a dangerous and difficult undertaking. CAR BOMBS AND BARRACK BUSTERS is the remarkable true story of a quiet, unique professional elite, an account of a highly specialised publicity-shy cadre, one whose narrative needs not to be sensationalised. But this too is not a history to be allowed to become forgotten and taken for granted; it is too important for that. Hazardous, unpredictable and precarious, some of the numerous incidents that occurred during 'the Troubles' and in the post Good Friday Agreement era since, and right up to the present day at home in Ireland, but also on overseas peacekeeping duties abroad have been captured and described in this account. All these theatres and contexts

involved the necessary deployment of Irish army bomb disposal teams to contribute towards Force Protection, and a restoration of a form of normality amidst challenging and changing circumstances. The constant intent of the various paramilitary or militia bombmakers throughout remained deadly, their focus fixed, changing only was the very dangerous nature of the means they used, namely their munitions, viable improvised explosives devices, incendiaries, bomb-making 'factories' and bombs in transit, and these perhaps booby trapped into the bargain.

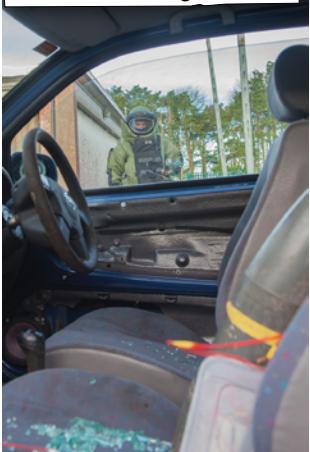
Constant vigilance was necessary during those years and decades, but of itself was not nearly enough to safeguard against the serious threats. New and evolving tactics, techniques and procedures were constantly required. This specialist upskilling needed a parallel and meaningful re-equipping, and most importantly a ready supply of suitable EOD personnel, who were reliably trained in the first instance and regularly retrained thereafter. Their development, deployment and dedication continued without fanfare, went largely unheralded, was seldom proclaimed or spoken of, much less becoming the subjects of the celebrated story that they were deserving of. Today, over fifty years since its commencement, the conscious capturing of its detail is crucial before its accurate recording was lost completely. CAR BOMBS AND BARRACK BUSTERS is an honest first attempt to capture their achievements. Anonymity preserved, their first-hand accounts are their own best reference, and for the first time allow their particular perspective be presented.



EOD operator on a training exercise



Operator preparing to search a vehicle in training exercise



The Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD) unit of the Irish Army was established as part of the Ordnance Corps in 1973 following the spillover of 'The Troubles' in Northern Ireland into the Republic, resulting in the single biggest atrocity of the period when the 1974 bombings in Dublin and Monaghan killed 33 people in one day. Members of the Corps had dealt with unexploded bombs and sea mines from the Second World War, but now even more highly trained officers were needed to deal with the growing campaign of terror that threatened the security

of the State. Suspect bombs were made safe by using robots and remote-controlled explosions but often it also required officers to don a 'bomb suit' and take 'The Long Walk' to engage manually with a device that had the potential to kill or at least maim. Each situation was unique, and EOD officers had to be constantly



DF members providing security at a live scene

vigilant. The bomb-making capabilities of the paramilitaries, especially the Provisional IRA, were steadily becoming more sophisticated and ingenious, and there was always the fear that a newly discovered bomb might contain a 'booby trap' not met before. These developments had to be countered by upskilling and regularly retraining EOD personnel. It was an arms race in which falling behind could result in death or injury.

CAR BOMBS AND BARRACK BUSTERS presents the never before told story of the serious purposefulness of a cohort of highly specialised, skilled, and carefully selected personnel. The story of their numerous involvements is not confined to on-island activity but has also been part of the Irish Defence Forces overseas peace-keeping involvements: 'It was one thing to have to deal with a singular device, shell or mortar; it was quite another to have to deal with a deluge of them all at once'.

Yet this was the exact situation facing the Irishbatt explosive ordnance disposal team arriving to rural villages throughout Southern Lebanon as they bore witness to numerous shell-shattered houses in bomb-cratered gardens, ruined rubble-strewn streets, and all around them scattered masonry haphazardly strewn in all directions having been uncompromisingly hammered by Israeli air and artillery attack during 'Operation Accountability' 25 - 31 July 1993. Known



EOD vehicle at training exercise in the DFTC

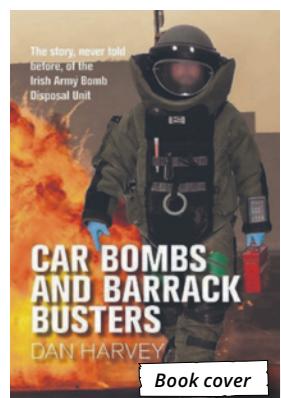
EOD operator dealing with an IED



in Lebanon as 'The Seven Day War' this occurred following increased frequent fighting between Hezbollah and Israeli forces in South Lebanon when Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin, ordered Hezbollah targets in Lebanese villages to be hit making it difficult for them to use Southern Lebanon as a base to fire their Katyusha rockets into Northern Israel from. Its aim was to displace the population there to put pressure on the Lebanese government to rein in the organisation. The resultant scale of devastation was immense; the week-long Israeli bombardment destroyed thousands of buildings and houses. Bridges, electricity supply stations and other vital infrastructure were wrecked. Unsure what to do and fearful of further attacks, some 300,000 people fled Southern Lebanon to Beirut. The blistering week-long barrage left in its wake a multitude of unexploded shells and unsafe ordnance. Another Irishbatt Ordnance Officer described the situation as follows: The impact on the local population was devastating. The shelling was indiscriminate, and those that could, left the area. After a short time, the only people left in the Irishbatt area of responsibility were the UN, Hezbollah and the very poorest and oldest of the civilian population. The artillery shells fired were both high explosive (HE), fused and unfused, and white phosphorus, fused and unfused. The fused shell would not always detonate (the fuses and shells dated from 1955) and the unfused and unexploded would leave a potentially dangerous item within a civilian area. The task to clear these fell to the Ordnance Section (one officer and three NCOs). I don't recall the number cleared, but it was hundreds.

CAR BOMBS AND BARRACK BUSTERS provides a factual account of the history of the Ordnance Corps, including its operation overseas in peace-keeping missions, and explains clearly for both military and lay readers alike some of the technical aspects of bomb-disposal. Much of the story is told by those directly involved. They recount their experiences without any sense of self-importance or recognition of their own bravery, with a good dose of black humour, are self-deprecating about their achievements and honest about their mistakes.

The author: Lt Col Dan Harvey, now retired, served on military operations at home and abroad for 40 years. He is the author of A Bloody Dawn : The Irish at D-Day (published in 2019), Soldiering Against Subversion: The Irish Defence Forces and Internal Security During the Troubles, 1969-1998 (published in 2018), Into Action: Irish Peacekeepers Under Fire, 1960-2014 (published in 2017), A Bloody Day: The Irish at Waterloo and A Bloody Night: The Irish at Rorke's Drift (both reissued in 2017), and Soldiers of the Short Grass: A History of the Curragh Camp (published in 2016) and ten other publications whose content addresses some of the involvements of the Irish Defence Forces personnel in noteworthy incidents in overseas peace-keeping mission areas, and the heretofore largely unknown, barely mentioned presence, participation and prominence of Irishmen and woman in major battles throughout European and World History. His latest book, Car Bombs and Barrack Busters, is available for purchase from www.menmabooks.eu



Book cover

PEOPLE OF THE DF, AIRMAN SUJAN KHANAL

INTERVIEW BY CPL MARTIN BENNETT



Can you give me a brief description of your career so far?

I moved to Ireland in 2014. I enrolled in Mullingar Community College and did my Leaving Certificate in 2016. A PLC QQI Level 5 in computer application and technology from Mullingar Community College followed in 2017. Then I went to IT Carlow from 2017 to 2020 to pursue a Bachelor of Engineering in Aircraft Systems. I joined the Defence Forces on September 21, 2021. My 3-star training was completed in April 2022.



On completion, I was assigned to No 402 Avionic before being assigned to No.4 HQ Centralised Technical Services because my qualifications were better suited for the position. It is a challenging and rewarding position, with lots of opportunities to travel to different parts of Europe for maintenance work or skill development courses. I recently completed a CAMP system training session in Paris and an EASA Part CAMO training course in Amsterdam. I am currently serving in Centralised Technical Services as an Airman.

What made you decide to join the Defence Forces?

Lt Col McGetrick, OC No.4 at the time, gave an online career session for IT Carlow, where I learned about the different career opportunities available through the Irish Air Corps. I applied for the Direct Entry Technician position.

What was your proudest day in the Defence Forces so far?

My proudest moment in the Defence Forces was when I

completed 3-star training. Our friends and family were invited to the passing out parade. We performed foot drills and arms drills inside No.1 Hanger all of us our No. 1s. It was a beautiful sunny day. On the Ramp, CASA, Learjet-45, and helicopters were parked. We took several pictures with our colleagues, NCOS, and parents there. My parents were delighted and proud of me.

What was your most challenging moment so far in the Defence Forces?

The most difficult aspect of serving in the Defence Forces was learning Irish commands and accurately pronouncing them. Because English was my second language, I did not study Irish in school. I did, however, conquer this via consistent practice.

Can you give me a brief description of a typical day in your job?

My daily duties include updating flight times and updating components on aviation management software. We check coming-due inquiries every month for all the aircraft to keep ourselves and AMEs informed of any upcoming maintenance. Creating work orders for scheduled maintenance. Make sure all the components have proper documents attached. Ensure that the Navigation Database and Enhanced Ground Proximity Warning System (EGPWS) are updated as scheduled.

What is your favourite quote?

"Focus on good efforts and not on the rewards" (Bhagwat Gita: Chapter 2 verse 47)

What is your favourite film?

Avatar

What is your favourite book?

Bhagwat Gita (It is a history of the Indian subcontinent and a Hindu religious book, that discusses duties and life.)

What are your goals for the future?

Improve my skills and advance in my career. Take additional courses and training. I am currently enrolled in an Aircraft Technical Services Level 7 course at TUS Limerick Institute of Technology.

Airman Sujan Khanal is currently undergoing his Potential NCO's cse.



GAISCE DEFENCE FORCES ADVENTURE CHALLENGE 2023

ARTICLE BY LT JOHN WALSH

The self-development program for young people in Ireland, Gaisce: The President's Award, has been making a significant impact since its establishment in 1985 by the Government of Ireland. Aimed at individuals aged 14-17, the program encourages the development of physical, personal, and community skills through a series of challenges and activities. Notably, the Defence Forces have been integral to the Gaisce program from its inception, offering crucial support and guidance to young participants interested in pursuing a military career.



Sgt William Archibald administrating students

One noteworthy component of the Gaisce program is the Adventure Challenge, a collaboration with the Defence Forces that involves selecting 20-30 young people to undertake a DF Adventure Challenge spanning three days and two nights. The Adventure program is meticulously designed to foster leadership, teamwork, and problem-solving skills while promoting physical and mental well-being.

The 2023 Gaisce Adventure Challenge, held from 7-9 June 2023 at Custume Barracks, Athlone, was facilitated by members of the 2 Brigade Artillery Regiment, continuing a tradition of military involvement. The event featured military-themed challenges such as camping, hiking, kayaking, rock climbing, and basic military administration in the field. These activities aim to enhance participants' leadership and problem-solving abilities while offering a unique and enriching experience.

On the first day of the Adventure Challenge, participants were immersed in a series of briefings aimed at providing essential knowledge for the upcoming challenges. The day commenced with basic administration in the field, setting the groundwork for the practical aspects of the program. Adding an exciting twist, a helicopter briefing was delivered by the Air Corps, offering participants insights into the air capabilities of the Irish Defence Forces.

The first challenge contributing to the development of physical strength, mental resilience, and teamwork among the participants was then led by Sgt Tony Farrell in a basic rock-climbing session. This day was designed to introduce participants to a diverse range of activities, setting the tone for the adventure ahead which students thoroughly enjoyed.

The second day of the Adventure Challenge was packed with physically demanding and mentally stimulating activities. The day kicked off with an obstacle course in the Defence Forces Physical Education School (DFPES), led by Sgt Sean Pollard. This challenging course aimed to enhance participants' physical fitness, resilience, and teamwork skills.

Following the obstacle course, participants embarked on a 10-kilometer terrain walk, providing an opportunity for them to test their endurance and perseverance. The day concluded with an overnight on the ground at Carnagh Range, adding an element of survival skills to the



Sgt Tony Farrell instructing students on wall climbing

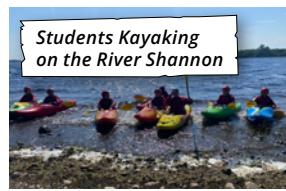


Students on the obstacle course in the DFPES



Lt John Walsh and Sgt James Tormey (both 2 AR) helping students erect a bivvy

adventure. This experience not only reinforced the importance of teamwork but also encouraged self-reliance and adaptability in an outdoor setting.



Students Kayaking on the River Shannon

The Adventure Challenge reached its climax on the third day with a kayaking session on the River Shannon. Facilitated by Sgts Cillian and Warren Curtin, this activity brought water-based challenges into the mix. Kayaking not only promoted physical fitness but also demanded teamwork and coordination among participants as they navigated the river.

This finale on the River Shannon added a unique dimension to the overall Adventure Challenge, ensuring that participants were exposed to a diverse range of experiences throughout the program.

It also demonstrated the diverse range of activities the Defence Forces offers to its members and promoted a strong sense of esprit de corps

2 Brigade Artillery Regiment would like to take this opportunity to thank the various units who played a supporting role in putting this challenge together. This involvement within the Defence Forces showcased the organisation's commitment to providing a well-rounded and impactful developmental experience for the young individuals participating in the Gaisce program, along with our own inter-operability.

One of the participants expressed their enthusiasm, stating, "Overall, I loved every single moment I was there, but personally, my favourite part was the overnight camping outside. I know I'll probably never get to experience something like that again. It was so much fun, between meeting new friends and playing games." Testimonials from parents also conveyed gratitude towards Gaisce and the Defence Forces for providing their children with such a transformative experience, "As parents, we would like to sincerely thank the team at Gaisce and the Defence Forces for creating this annual event and giving young people such an amazing opportunity of a lifetime. The planning and dedication that must go into this is phenomenal. Congratulations to all involved, and keep the fantastic work".

These positive reflections underscore the success of the Gaisce President's Award Adventure Challenge in collaboration with the Defence Forces. The

program not only offers young individuals a platform to develop essential life skills but also creates lasting memories and unique opportunities for growth. The positive feedback from both participants and parents highlights the profound impact of this annual event, emphasising the importance of continued support and collaboration between organisations to empower and nurture the youth of Ireland.

The Adventure Challenge is run on an annual basis as a collaboration between Gaisce and the Defence Forces. Gaisce will advertise this programme on their website and social media channels in Q1 of each year. Those interested should monitor www.gaisce.ie or @gaisceaward (Instagram and X).



Group photo with staff and students

The seven Giraffe Mk4 Radars (five operational and two spare) will provide the primary Low Level Air Defence (LLAD) radar for the RBS70 Missile System currently in service.

The Bandvagn Bv206 at an initial glance is a somewhat small, ugly box-type vehicle, but with some 11,000 units produced (in many variants) and operated by more than 35 armed forces and industry worldwide, it has over the last 30 years proven itself as a versatile and reliable workhorse. Irish soldiers who have served in Liberia, Chad and during the Nordic Battlegroup Exercise would have seen the Bv206 (infantry variant) in operation with other Armed Forces.

In 2008, for just over €3million the Defence Forces purchased an Air Defence equipment package from the Norwegian Defence Logistics Organisation (NDLO) that included: seven Giraffe Mk4 Radars (mounted in the Bv206s); six RBS70 Firing Systems, five RBS70 Clip On Night Devices; 40 RBS70 Mk2 Missiles; 16 Kongsberg Multi-role Radios; 20 Weapon Terminals and a RBS70 Simulator. The associated Ordnance, CIS, Transports and conversion training courses, plus manuals were also included.

The new vehicles, now painted in the Defence Forces livery are designated the 'Giraffe Mk4 Radar', as the radar is housed in the rear compartment of the Bv206.

The seven Giraffe Mk4 Radars (five operational and two spare) will provide the primary Low Level Air Defence (LLAD) radar for the RBS70 Missile System currently in service.

The Giraffe Mk4 Radar will replace the sole Giraffe Mk2 Radar, which was mounted on a truck and

was in service since the mid-80s.

The Giraffe Mk4 Radar has a three-man crew: a Combat Leader, a Radar Operator and a Driver. When in operation, the vehicle is stationary and the rear compartment has four extendable legs that give the crew a stable platform to raise the radar mast to a height of 6.7m.

Currently, 1 Air Def Regt has one Missile Troop as part of 1 Air Def Bty located in the DFTC and it trains the majority of PDF personnel on the RBS70 System. Though the structure of the Missile Troop will not change, the unit now has the operational capability to deploy a number of Giraffe Mk4 Radars at any one time and at different locations.

This will enhance the unit in carrying out its main operational tasks in providing Aid to the Civil Power Air Defence cover at our main airports and vital installations as required.

The Giraffe Mk4 Radar is a more sophisticated system than its Mk2 predecessor. Made by Ericsson, it was first integrated into the Bv206 as part of the Norwegian Army Low Level Air Defence (LLAD) System.



TRACK-ABLE

Last year, 1 Air Def Regt added an all-terrain, tracked Air Defence Radar vehicle to its inventory, which will enhance the unit's capabilities in guarding vital Irish installations from Air attack. Sgt David Nagle reports...



The NDLO has also provided Estonia and Brazil with similar Giraffe Mk4 Radars.

The unit's current Giraffe Mk2 Radar Combat leaders and RBS70 Missile Detachment Commanders are now undergoing training on the new radars and vehicles with ten drivers already qualified on the Bv206. Instruction and testing has taken place in the Curragh Camp and in the specially designed all-terrain driving course in Coolmoney Camp, Glen of Imaal.

Three Combat Leaders have already completed a conversion course on the Giraffe Mk4 Radar with



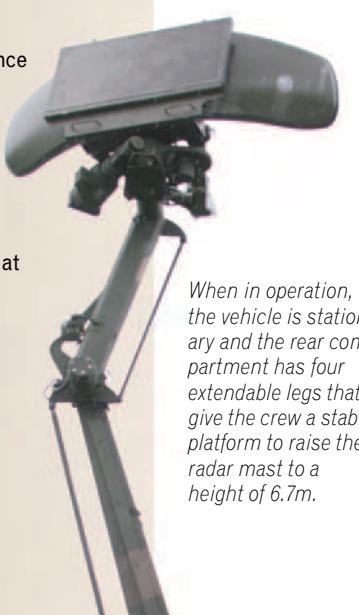
the Norwegian Army in February/March 2009 and recently a number of RBS70 Detachment Commanders completed a conversion/refresher course. It is envisaged that by the end of 2009, the majority of the unit personnel will be retrained and the Giraffe Mk4 Radars will be fully integrated into the unit.

Giraffe Mk4 Radar

Radar Type	Pulsed doppler surveillance radar with digital signal processing
Range	1.2 to 50km
Power supply	3x115/200V 400Hz 24vDC
Freq Band	G Band
Automatic Capture	up to 20 targets
Automatic designation	up to 20 targets
Can control	up to 20 RBS70 fire units at any one time
IFF capability	Yes
Communications	SINCGAR (Voice) and Kongsberg MRR (data)

BV206 Vehicle

Length	7m
Width	1.9m
Weight	6210kg
Height (mast lowered)	2.9m
Height (mast extended)	6.7m
Fuel Tanks	2x80litres



When in operation, the vehicle is stationary and the rear compartment has four extendable legs that give the crew a stable platform to raise the radar mast to a height of 6.7m.

This new radar has an identify Friend or Foe (IFF) capability, which allows the gunner to distinguish between Air Corps and Civilian Aircraft once the relevant IFF codes are input. The Command, Control and Communications (C3) functions with this system are also more advanced and this allows the Combat Leader greater flexibility, control and management of the fire units (RBS70 Missiles) under his/her control. Radar training is ongoing with a series of air defence exercise already conducted around the Curragh Camp and Casement Aerodrome, Baldonnel.

The radar can detect up to 20 targets out to 50km range and the crew can control 20 RBS70 fire units in engaging the incoming targets.

The feedback from everyone who has trained on the new radar has been very positive. The arrival of the new equipment has given the unit gunners a lift and all are eager to train with the system. Training will be key as the equipment is sophisticated and this will require skill sets that are regularly honed.

Equally important is the Bv206, a tracked-articulated vehicle, which drivers have found easy to operate. The Bv206 was first developed by Hägglunds (now part of BAE Land Systems) for the Swedish Army and it entered service in the early-80s.

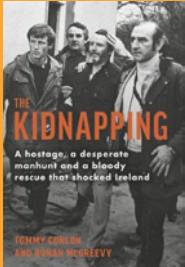
It was initially designed to carry troops and equipment through snow and boglands and the vehicle's low ground pressure enables it to cope with a wide range of difficult conditions, tackling steep inclines/declines and it is fully amphibious.

The RBS70 Missile System, which is controlled by the Giraffe Mk4 Radar crew, is a short range, portable, laser-guided Surface to Air Missile. The gunner receives instructions on the position of the target from a local combat control terminal and when the target is acquired, he turns off the safety, which switches on the main laser and sends out an IFF signal. After the missile is fired, it flies in the beam of the laser to the target, adjusting its position constantly to stay within the beam. To hit the target, the gunner must keep the laser beam on target. The missile can engage targets out to 5,000m (horizontal) and up to an altitude of 4,000m.

This recent investment in vehicles, radars, missiles and training will certainly keep the gunners of the 1 Air Def Regt busy over the coming months and will allow them to continue to carry out their primary mission in protecting the skies over vital military/civilian installations around Ireland. ■



BOOKS BOOKS



THE KIDNAPPING: A HOSTAGE, A DESPERATE MANHUNT AND A BLOODY RESCUE THAT SHOCKED IRELAND.

Publisher: Penguin, Sandycove

ISBN 978-1-844-88663-0

Pages: 369

Price: €16.99

The Troubles in Northern Ireland witnessed a sustained terrorist campaign by the Provisional IRA (PIRA) that was unparalleled in its sustained intensity and level of violence that no other country in Western Europe experienced following the Second World War. While the main focus of the PIRA campaign was within Northern Ireland, the Irish Republic (ROI) was often not immune to 'spillover' effects from the conflict. Indeed throughout the period of the Troubles much of the focus of the Irish Defence Forces (DF) was in Aid to the Civil Power (ATCP) in support of An Garda Síochána in trying to contain the very real threat posed by PIRA.

At this remove, except for the generation who experienced this period of turmoil, it can be underestimated just how unstable and visceral a period this was. Following the adaptation of PIRAs "Long War" strategy from the late 1970s PIRA took a conscious decision to fund their 'war' through a combination of bank robberies and later kidnappings in ROI. The British actor, Robert Shaw, a resident in County Mayo, famous for his role in Spielberg's Jaws, to the probable dismay of Bord Fáilte while a guest on the US Dick Cavett show argued that; "the South of Ireland is ruined economically, all the hotels are closing, it was OK [the South] but its [violence] creeping into the south, they [PIRA] rob the banks."

The most infamous kidnapping in Ireland in the 70s was that of the Dutch industrialist Tiede Herrema by Eddie Gallagher and Marian Coyle in October 1975. While the initial kidnapping was perfectly executed, the hideout chosen in the middle of a housing estate at Monasterevin, County Kildare, left the kidnappers no opportunity of escape when surrounded by Gardaí after a prolonged intelligence led operation. In February 1983, PIRA even kidnapped a famous racehorse, Shergar from Ballymany Stud in County Kildare (allegedly they killed the horse shortly thereafter). This lesson was not lost on the kidnappers of Don Tidey, a senior supermarket executive, who was seized by PIRA on his way to work in Dublin in late November 1983 and quickly brought to a 'hide' at Derrada wood in the remote wooded borderlands outside Ballinamore in north County Leitrim. In their work "The Kidnapping," the authors Tommy Conlon and Ronan McGreevy recount this fraught period in our recent history.

They predicate the genesis of the kidnapping on the Maze prison breakout. Following the visceral period of the Hunger strikes in 1981, PIRA achieved a huge propaganda victory in the largest mass prison breakout in British history when on September 25th 1983, 38 PIRA prisoners escaped from the Maze Prison (Long Kesh). While many were quickly recaptured a number remained at large and several of these hardened terrorists were to be the PIRA Active Service Unit (ASU) tasked with guarding Tidey in the wet and freezing cold conditions that prevail in an Irish winter. Acting on a series of linked intelligence, a massive joint Army/Garda Cordon and Search Operation was conducted in the Ballinamore hinterland of County Leitrim. Codenamed Operation Santa Claus, it was launched on Tuesday December 13th 1983 and consisted

of ten separate search teams, with the nomenclature of Rudolph 1-10. On the early afternoon of Friday 16th December, in fading winter light, the members of Rudolf 5 entered Derrada wood a little more than a mile from Derrada Post office, one hundred and fifty yards from the tar road on a wooded slope. The terrain was unforgiving, young plantation trees choked in brambles, briars and dense undergrowth.

Within it, Don Tidey was literally caged for more than twenty days, displaying remarkable resilience and fortitude throughout his ordeal. Two figures were observed in combats who remained silent when challenged, the brief ensuing silence was broken by a fusillade of shots in which Private Patrick Kelly of the 6th Infantry Battalion and Garda Recruit Gary Sheehan were mortally wounded. Within seconds a stun grenade was also thrown at the search party adding to the ensuing chaos, no shots were fired by the Irish Security Forces in the incident. In the confusion Don Tidey managed to escape and was rescued but the PIRA ASU also managed to exfiltrate themselves from the area, briefly taking two Gardaí and one soldier hostage. Despite the suggestion that "a ring of steel" had been put in situ the PIRA ASU made good their ultimate escape.

For the Irish Security Forces the success in freeing Don Tidey and returning him to his family was made bittersweet by the escape of the PIRA ASU and a number of additional security blunders in the following days where some of the gang might have been apprehended. It led to much more honed co-operation and training in the coming years in "Cordon and Search" operations. It was also a salient lesson to both the Gardaí and Irish Army that despite the supposed prohibition in PIRAs 'Green Book' on not targeting Southern Security Forces, that when 'cornered' PIRA members displayed utter ruthlessness and callousness with little hesitation in using lethal force.

One of the strengths of this highly readable and accessible work, based on meticulous research in outlining the background to the kidnapping against the backdrop of the Troubles; is also the ongoing trauma of the two respective families of Garda Gary Sheehan and Private Patrick Kelly who died so tragically in the service of the State.

The day after Don Tidey was successfully rescued, the PIRA "English Department" exploded a car bomb outside Harrods Department Store in London, the blast killed three police officers and three civilians, also injuring some 90 people. The IRA Army Council said it had not authorised the attack and expressed regret for the civilian casualties.

Provide by Dr Rory Finegan (Comdt Retd)

Access to Private Health Care in The PDF

...How It Works



STEP 1

You attend the Medical Aid Post/ Sick Parade and are seen by a contracted civilian GP or an MO.

This is the first step and must take place for payment by the DF to occur later.



STEP 2

The doctor refers you to a private external medical provider for an INITIAL consultation/investigation.

Don't worry about paperwork – the Doctor and the Medical Accounts Clerk for your barracks/ station will take care of the sanction form.



STEP 3

You will receive the appointment from the external provider directly to your registered home address.

You decide what is most convenient for you and the Doctor will facilitate.



STEP 4

The external medical provider will send the bill to the Defence Forces Medical Accounts Clerk.

You should NOT have to pay any money. If there is a misunderstanding ask the medical provider to ring the Defence Forces Medical Accounts Clerk. The medical provider will have the contact details.



STEP 5

After you attend the appointment, you MUST return to the GP or MO before any more treatment or investigation can take place.

This is very important. Don't worry - if you need further treatment the GP or MO will approve it in the same way.





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