



**Council of Military Education Committees  
of the Universities of the United Kingdom**

**Executive Committee Meeting**

**held on Wednesday 4<sup>th</sup> September 2019 at 1115hrs**

**at Chetwode Room, Victory Services Club, 63-79 Seymour Street, London, W2  
2HF**

**Minutes**

**Present**

Mr R G Livingston (Chairman), Mr B Ritchie (Vice-Chairman); Rev Professor J P Taylor (Treasurer); Mr J S Castle; Mr R Hall; Ms A Lyon; Ms C Kinkead; Maj I Stoney; Col D Guinness; Col N Tougher; Gp Capt H Edwards; Cdr N Downing RN

**In Attendance;**

Mr Jason Norris (Secretary); Professor Adrian Parker

**Apologies**

Professor E Archibald; Mr H Hamilton; Dr J Smith; Dr P J R Mileham; Lt Col M Bishop; Sqn Ldr A Hawes

- NOTED: The Chairman welcomed Professor Adrian Parker to the meeting

**1. Minutes**

- APPROVED: The Minutes of the Executive meeting held on 16 May 2019 (COMEC\_2019\_09\_A)

**2. Matters Arising**

- Action points arising (COMEC\_2019\_09\_A1)

Publications (Min 9 21 Feb 2019)

- NOTED: Nominations were invited from members to succeed Dr P J R Mileham as Publications Editor. The Chairman noted this would be discussed at the November Executive meeting once new members had been elected.

- NOTED: The Chairman noted Dr P J R Mileham expects to have the Conspectus copy and images ready for the November Executive meeting, and is also taking forward Occasional No 12 on the Moral Component.

Chairman's Report (Min 3 16 May 2019)

- NOTED: This item to be discussed later in the agenda.

Treasurer's Report (Min 4 16 May 2019)

- NOTED: This item to be discussed later in the agenda.

Reports from the Service Staff Officers – Royal Navy (Min 6a 16 May 2019)

- RESOLVED: Chairman sent a note to service staff officers on examples of approaches that could be taken to engage with student unions and address their antipathy.

Reports from the Service Staff Officers – Army (Min 6b 16 May 2019)

- NOTED: This item to be discussed later in the agenda.

MECs and COMEC (Min 10 16 May 2019)

- NOTED: This item to be discussed later in the agenda.

Dates & Venues of Future Meetings (Min 11 16 May 2019)

- NOTED: This item to be discussed later in the agenda.
- NOTED: Mr R Hall invited COMEC Executive members to attend Wales MEC meetings

### **3. Chairman's Report**

- RECEIVED: The following report from the Chairman:

#### **Chairman's Report September 2019**

Membership of the Council

*I have received nothing further to the Southampton and Winchester acknowledgments four months ago to my letters with regard to Southampton MEC's membership. I, therefore, asked the Treasurer to write off the bad debt of their 2017/18 subscription.*

*A second of the three Chairmen of MECs to whom I had written to offer to try to improve communications and exchange of ideas has responded positively. He made observations on the Conference which Bryden Ritchie will take into account in the review of relations with our MECs, and they are arranging a convenient time for me to visit their USUs.*

Independent Advisory Panel

*The President and I have been involved with the Panel's Chairman, who has reported and will give a briefing on the Panel's findings and Sandhurst's response at the Conference.*

STEM Graduate Inflow Scheme

*I have spoken with the Chief of Defence People on the Scheme, and have offered to the Defence Academy to contribute in any way that may be appropriate in the interest of*

*our students to their team's design, development, delivery and promotion of the Scheme. Should it have a military training requirement in our USUs to maintain bursars' engagement, such a substantial increase in numbers has the potential to distort their healthy profile. This would need to be managed to maintain their wide membership with many different viewpoints and outlooks.*

#### MECs and COMEC

*I asked MECs for sight of any papers they produce which might give an appreciation of their activities, public lectures, business updates, good practice, issues of concern or reports for their universities, which they considered might be appropriate to share with us in any form at any time.*

*I received three responses, one including their MEC's terms of reference, which expounded on their remit to illustrate their activities; one enquiring about good practice on annual reports on MEC activities for consideration by university Senates and Councils; and one sharing in confidence the minutes of recent meetings to give a flavour of what they have been up to. This last charted discussion on duty of care issues regarding security and welfare, which will be considered at item 10.*

#### Networking

*Our focus is with our USUs, though our remit extends to wider collaboration between universities and Defence, and to support for the Forces community. We have common allies, supporters, modernization agendas and aligned interests, and Defence seeks to work more effectively in partnership with the universities.*

*This goes beyond officer recruitment and the occasional Ministerial letter to Principals and Vice-Chancellors calling on them to step up and sign the Covenant. It encompasses teaching, as at King's College London and Reading, in-service degrees, as at Cambridge and KCL, and research and consultancy with Defence, as at Cranfield, and its suppliers, and perhaps also collaboration on issues such as cyber.*

*Defence intends to articulate its needs more clearly and work in concert with COMEC and our MECs, as the continuing presence in universities championing collaboration with the Armed Forces. To this end, the President is facilitating a meeting with Defence and Service Chiefs of Staff to discuss the value they see in Defence's relationship with universities and how COMEC might assist in its delivery. CGS recognises the importance of a clearer relationship in a range of areas and is discussing it at Chief level, logically this might fall to VCDS on behalf of the MoD and each Service. Propositions from members in this compass would be welcome, being as clear a possible what we want of the MoD and what we can offer to them.*

#### Armed Forces Covenant

*Further to Defence Relationship Management's briefing on the Covenant and the Defence and Universities Ministers' call to step up and support the Armed Forces and sign the Covenant, we invited the former to our Conference to follow through with us on his expectations of support for the Forces community. However, it seems it was not possible for him to step up and confirm his attendance due to the current Parliamentary timetable.*

#### Security Related Issues in Higher Education

*Universities UK has established a working group on security-related issues ranging from cyber resilience to physical security, including creating an overarching framework and updating their cyber security guidance issued in 2013. The questions relating to the threats and their responses in universities seem similar to those in Defence.*

*I have been in communication with the chairman, Sir Peter Gregson, Vice-Chancellor at Cranfield, to facilitate our engagement and contribute to his review, which he believes has some specific questions emerging for which engagement with COMEC might be advantageous. UUK are asking for input from universities, and we would encourage members to contribute in whatever way may be appropriate. The group's policy manager will join us at the Conference for Cdre Annett's session on cyber.*

- NOTED: Relating to the STEM Graduate Inflow Scheme, Ms A Lyon noted Welbeck had 161 acceptances for 180 places, which was better than some expected. It was suggested that recruitment for the new scheme would need to be much better promoted. The Chairman noted the scheme's military training component would need to be carefully managed, and Gp Capt H Edwards confirmed the UAS need to absorb 50 students per year in the scheme.
- NOTED: Relating to MECs and COMEC, the Chairman noted he received responses from West Midlands on their terms of reference, Northumbrian on annual reports and Oxford DMI.
- NOTED: The Chairman noted the need to be clear about what wider collaboration we want of the MoD and what can be offered to them. COMEC can facilitate this with MECs championing partnerships. The Chairman welcomed propositions that we could add to this agenda. Mr J S Castle noted this would add value to the MECs' current role and become more prominent in other aspects e.g. Veterans Champions networks. Mr J S Castle also noted research opportunities e.g. Defence and Security Accelerator which has open calls for innovation and themed competitions for funding in defence and security subject areas.

#### **4. Treasurer's Report**

- RECEIVED: A report from the Treasurer (COMEC\_2019\_09\_B)
- NOTED: The Treasurer noted an increased account surplus due mainly to a decrease in Executive travel, publication and web maintenance costs. As it was previously agreed to reduce the overall surplus to one year of income this has extended the timescale at which this point would be reached.
- **ACTION: Executive to discuss budget requirements for 2019/20 and beyond at the November 2019 Executive meeting.**
- NOTED: The Treasurer confirmed the Southampton MEC subscription debt has now been written off, and noted the Executive should plan for reduced income (£6650 compared to £7000) for future budgets. A discussion was had about the changing financial sustainability of universities, and about encouraging Southampton to re-join at the earliest opportunity.

#### **5. Reports from the Service Staff Officers**

- RECEIVED: A report from each of the Service Staff Officers:

- a. Royal Navy (COMEC\_2019\_09\_C1)

## **URNU REPORT**

### ***Significant Events***

1. *The main activity of note since the last report has been the Summer Deployments over Jun and Jul. Whilst some of the P2000s routed around UK and Northern European ports the majority headed to the Baltic which included participation in Baltic Operations (BALTOPS) a NATO multi-national maritime exercise.*
2. *The URNU CO's and Coxswain's Conference was hosted by Liverpool URNU in Jul 19. During the course of the conference a wide range of topics including: assurance; Ofsted; P2000 affiliation and planning; recruitment and budget were discussed at length.*

### ***Personnel***

3. *The new Commander Universities, Commander Neil Downing, took up post on 01 Jul 19 and is currently in the process of compiling a first impressions report that will guide the work of the Universities Department at BRNC over the next two years.*
4. *The staff plot of COs and Coxswains has been fluid with changes in command taking place in several units in recent months:*
  - a. *The CO at Southampton URNU has changed with Lieutenant Penny Thackery Royal Navy taking over command from Lieutenant Tony Stanley-Adams Royal Navy.*
  - b. *The CO of Glasgow and Strathclyde URNU, Lieutenant Si Collins Royal Navy, has transferred to Leeds to take over as CO of Yorkshire URNU. During the gapped period, Lieutenant Commander Ollie Loughran (CO Edinburgh URNU) will take Command of G&S URNU.*
  - c. *The gapping at Wales URNU has now been resolved with Lieutenant Lewis Roach Royal Navy taking command in Aug 19.*
  - d. *The CO of Birmingham URNU has changed with Lieutenant Commander Chris Andrews Royal Navy taking over command from Lieutenant Chris Carrie Royal Navy.*
  - e. *The CO of Liverpool URNU changed in Jul 19 with Lieutenant Adam Warland Royal Navy being succeeded in command by Lieutenant Phil Yates Royal Navy.*
  - f. *The CO of Manchester & Salford URNU, Lieutenant Rachel Jackson will soon depart on Maternity Leave. In her absence, Lieutenant Phil Yates, (CO Liverpool URNU) will take Command of M&S URNU.*

- g. *The CO of Sussex URNU has changed with Lieutenant Craig Smith Royal Navy being succeeded in command by Lieutenant Lewis Jones Royal Navy.*
5. *A selection board for the CO positions due to change in Q1 & Q2 2020 will be held early next term, while work is ongoing to reduce gapping at the Coxswain level.*

### **Infrastructure**

6. *The move of Cambridge URNU to the Coldham's Lane ARC has been completed with the official opening taking place on 05 Jul.*
7. *Glasgow & Strathclyde URNU's extension of lease is now imminent. The unit will remain in its current location whilst funding is sought for the improvement / refurbishment of the premises.*
8. *Wales URNU will be re-located in early 2020 as part of the Project Dragon, which will involve the provision of a new Royal Navy Hub in Cardiff.*
9. *Infrastructure improvements, funded by Navy Infra for Devon, Edinburgh and Sussex URNUs is nearing or has been completed.*

### **Training**

10. *COMCORE (the URNUs 2UP HQ) commenced a new format of assurance visit in Q3 19, using the Ofsted Common Inspection Framework as a guide, in preparation for the Ofsted Welfare Duty of Care Inspections that are scheduled to take place during the 19/20 reporting period.*

### **Future Activity**

11. *The start of the academic year is traditionally the busiest time in the URNU calendar with the critical recruiting phase being at the top of the agenda. The Recruit Medical process continues to be refined however, there is still an expectation that medical failures will impact unit numbers. In an attempt to counter this units have been directed to over-recruit by approximately 10%.*
12. *The first big event of the new academic year will be the New Entry Weekends that are designed to induct the newest recruits into the URNU by providing them with a taste of Naval life. Each recruit will be given the opportunity to attend one of four weekends based at various locations including BRNC Dartmouth. However, due to the challenges of travel, the Northern most units will congregate in Newcastle at HMS Calliope where representatives from Edinburgh, Glasgow and Strathclyde, Northumbria and Yorkshire URNUs will have the opportunity to participate in a varied programme which incorporates time on a P2000 alongside.*
- NOTED: Cdr N Downing RN noted as an outcome of the URNU COs' and Coxswains' Conference a wide-ranging review was being undertaken to inform the strategic plan. Options include developing a regional structure to support governance and control to help with personnel and finance issues.

- NOTED: Cdr N Downing RN noted two URNUs have a CO gap covered by other units e.g. Glasgow and Strathclyde is being covered by Edinburgh (hope to fill Jan / Feb 2020). CO gapping has been reduced significantly overall, but for Coxswains the situation has become worse.
- NOTED: Cdr N Downing RN anticipated meeting the 765 total numbers this year. The significant variance of freshers' fair costs across the country was noted.
- NOTED: Rev Professor J P Taylor noted an URNU would be welcomed in Northern Ireland. Cdr N Downing RN confirmed this was not outside thinking, noting there are funding challenges.
- NOTED: The Chairman noted concerns in the past of erosion of sea time for cadets due to fleet tasking of P2000s. Cdr N Downing RN confirmed there is a service agreement in place guaranteeing the number of sea days.
- NOTED: The Chairman noted the syllabus has been reviewed three times in past six years and asked about fast tracking of URNU graduates into RN Reserve as this appeared to have been lost. Cdr N Downing RN noted he had been in charge of reserve training and is looking at closer alignment of training programmes to recognize transfer of skills.

b. Army (COMEC\_2019\_09\_C2, to receive)

### **UNIVERSITY OFFICERS' TRAINING CORPS NARRATIVE**

*1. **Aim.** The aim of this paper is to brief the Council of Military Education Committees (COMEC) on the current OTC situation in preparation for their interaction with Commanding Officers (COs) at the COMEC AGM (6<sup>th</sup> Sept) and beyond.*

*2. **Background.** OTCs make an essential contribution to Army officer recruiting, Regular and Army Reserve. OTCs are uniquely placed to influence future societal leaders and thinking about the Army; to improve understanding of the Army in society (AiS) and to enable future recruiting. Despite these benefits, OTCs remain a much-misunderstood organisation. Within Defence too many perceptions are informed by outdated personal experience. The Army Reserve, Higher Education (HE) and business struggle to understand the role of OTCs. Lack of consistent understanding of OTCs' value and utility across the Army has resulted in under-resourcing and potentially a failure to make maximum use of OTCs in supporting Defence and the Army's engagement and other strategies.*

*3. **Context.** A difficult financial position in Defence, coupled with the demands of longer-term transformational projects, have resulted in increased scrutiny of the OTC. Following a Deloitte Sprint and an Army Advanced Development Project (AADP) study the Executive Committee of the Army Board (ECAB) requested a view on the wider utility of the OTCs. The subsequent ECAB paper (May 18) set out the OTCs' essential contribution to RMAS inflow making the case for maintaining OTCs but at the cost of major financial savings. OTCs are now subject to several efficiency projects under the Basic Training Transformation Project (BTTP).*

*4. **Mission.** As agreed by ECAB, the OTC Mission is to "Develop the leadership potential of selected students and Army Reserve potential officers, and to promote the Army's ethos and career opportunities in order to secure commitment to the Army, first*

*as officers, but also as future leaders in their chosen profession who will champion the Army in society”.*

**5. Locations.** *There are currently 19 OTCs, four of which (Leeds, Sheffield, Liverpool and Manchester) form two Officer Training Regiments (OTR) - Yorkshire OTR and North West OTR. OTCs operate from approximately 28 locations. These are a mix of Regular, Army Reserve and Reserve Forces and Cadet Association (RFCA) owned properties.*

**6. Composition.** *OTCs are currently commanded by a mixture of Regular (14) and Army Reserve officers (3). From October 2019 all 17 will be commanded by Regular officers. OTCs are established for 2864 Officer Cadets (OCdts) but are currently funded for 2570 OCdts. Staff at OTCs consist of a mix of Regular (approx. 100), FTRS, Army Reserve and civilian totalling 950. Gapping remains a significant issue with 292 gaps in the 950 staff.*

**7. OTC Training progression.** *OTC training is based on four pillars:*

*a. Military training (focussed on delivery of Modules A and B of the Commissioning Course Short (CCS)).*

*b) Adventurous training (AT).*

*c) Sport.*

*d) Cultural/social activity including battlefield studies (BS).*

*The OTC Directive will be published 1<sup>st</sup> October 2019 and will be made available to COMEC and the MECs.*

**8. Military output.** *OTCs provide two specific Army outputs: Regular and Army Reserve officer and soldier inflow; and engagement effect. It is a misconception that only core-intenders commission from OTCs.*

*a) OTCs provide approx 38% of each Regular Commissioning Course intake.*

*b) OTCs are the primary training route for Army Reserve Potential Officers through the delivery of Module B of CCS and, numerically, the primary source of Army Reserve officer, providing some 65% of the totality.*

*c) Army Reserve soldiers delivered by OTCs are an important by-product of OTC training.*

*d) OTCs raise awareness and understanding of the Army through Core Engagement activity delivered on behalf of Regional Brigades.*

**9. Other Armed Services.** *OTCs are a significant resource for other Single services (Ss). As a comparison, in TY 17/18 the RAF University Air Squadron (UAS) had an intake of 355 Officer Cadets and a strength of 857. Of their intake of 348 to Regular initial officer training (IOT), 121 were former University Air Squadron (UAS) members (35% of intake). 74% of UAS leavers were not tracked to further military service. Of the 17/18 intake of 386 to Britannia Royal Naval College, 39 (10%) were from University Royal Naval Units. 14 were from OTCs.*



**10. Higher education.** Universities are an important and distinct engagement opportunity for the Army and for Defence and, as institutions focussed on the future, are naturally aligned with interests vital to the Army and to Defence. OTCs are an important means to exploit this alignment because of their location, status, history and membership, but the wider Defence university engagement strategy to support this does not yet exist. The Independent Advisory Panel paper, to be presented at the COMEC Conference, comments heavily on the potential OTCs present in this space.

**11. Span of Influence.** OTCs have a unique role as the Army's link to HE and its c2.5M students. Within this HE population there is a high proportion of females<sup>3</sup> and the number of female OCdts at RMAS is currently at a five-year high. OTCs have a high proportion of females (circ 33%). There is also a growing student population from lower socio-economic groupings and an increasing proportion of ethnic minority students – demographics the Army is striving to attract.

**12. Engagement.** OTCs deliver significant engagement effect across a range of sectors both in support of and in addition to Defence wide engagement priorities. Much of this activity is funded via RG or the RPoC but delivery relies on OTC staff and students.

- a) **Engagement with business.** OTCs deliver variations on the Leadership in Practice (LiP) syllabus to business.
- b) **Engagement with Cadet Forces.** OTCs maintain close links with CCF Schools and ACF detachments providing OCdts to act as leaders and exemplars for Cadet training activities and on their annual camps.
- c) **Civil Engagement.** Selected COs operate as the Civil Engagement Task Force lead, providing the link with local government and civil communities in support of Army engagement priorities,

<sup>1</sup> Transferring 430 officers to Group A units between 1 Apr 14 and 31 Mar 16 (Defence Statistics (Army)).

<sup>2</sup> Individuals not selected at AOSB, transfer to type A units, decide they do not wish to be officers or remain in the pipeline as Res POs. <sup>3</sup> In August 2017, 27.3% of all young men went to university, compared with 37.1% of young women.

**13. Support to UK Ops.** OTCs provide Reg staff on 12 hrs NTE for UK Ops. In some cases, units are MLOs in Emergency Coordination Centres.

**14. Costs.** The cost of the OTCs has been much overstated and latest figures place the total cost of OTCs at between £32.5m and £34.2m . Savings have been facilitated by establishing a more rigorous governance and management information regime enabling improved control. Additional measures include standardisation across OTC activities, spending and training delivery. OTCs are being held to account against a reduced baseline. OTC OCdts receive a total of approximately £5m in Reserve Service Day (RSD) payments. OTC Army Reserve Staff cost approx. £3m in RSDs.

**15. Efficiencies.** The process of increased governance continues, coupled with the hardening of OTC activity focussed on core outputs. Improved data capture, and further reductions in establishments offer potential additional savings. Greater centralised

*guidance and monitoring by RMAS Gp further promotes uptake of best practice and the leveraging of economies of scale (joint exercises and shared deployments).*

**16. BTTP.** *OTCs are the subject of four specific strands of BTTP:*

**a. Option 1.i.** *A reduction in OTC RSDs.*

**b. Option 11.** *Rationalisation of the Scottish OTC footprint, establishing one OTR of two OTCs (Aberdeen and Tayforth) from the existing 4 OTCs.*

**c. Option 12.** *Reduce OTC establishment and RSD related costs and improve standardisation of training delivery. Two sub options have been implemented:*

- i. Reduce OCdt liability in Oxford and Cambridge OTCs from 186 to 134.*
- ii. Reduce OCdt liability within five OTCs from 134 to 96.*

*These options are being actively worked on.*

**d. Option 13.** *Phased closure of 2 OTCs.*

*Option 13 is NOT currently under consideration for implementation.*

**17. Additional OTRs.** *Potential OTR options have been identified but following implementation of the Scottish OTR option further detailed analysis should be conducted and lessons should be fully drawn before implementation elsewhere.*

<sup>4</sup> *The variance reflects occupation of a Reserve Commanding Officer PiD by a Regular Commanding Officer.*

**18. Summary.** *OTCs are a vital element of Regular and Army Reserve officer inflow. OTCs are also an exceptionally valuable resource for the delivery of a wide range of services to a sizable cohort of beneficiaries. OTCs are conducting the most rigorous analysis of all aspects of operations. Thus far, considerable savings have been made against the perceived costs. Further efficiencies through greater governance and a more corporate management structure will deliver an improved cost-benefit ratio.*

- NOTED: Col N Tougher confirmed that no activities have been taken off the agenda for students, which is continuing along with opportunities for students in the UK and overseas, including in sport.
- NOTED: Col N Tougher noted he will do what he can on COMEC / Defence initiatives but resource is an issue and he must focus on operational activities.
- NOTED: Col N Tougher noted there were not enough colour sergeants and other staff, and has requested support. Is this something COMEC / MECs can help with?
- NOTED: Col N Tougher confirmed Aberdeen and Tayforth UOTR will happen. Aberdeen and Tayforth UOTCs will have separate identities and keep their own cap badges. 51 Brigade raised issues about how they and HRFCA consult the MECs and universities. Col N Tougher noted an ongoing issue with the UOTC's building in Dundee, because the University does not want to extend the lease, so there is a need to find a suitable replacement.

The Chairman hoped all the lessons learned from the Yorkshire and North West experience would be taken into account, and that the universities and MECs would be involved. Col N Tougher confirmed he will check this.

- NOTED: Col N Tougher will fund any UOTCs that recruit over establishment. Ms C Kinkead noted concern on ability of Queen's to recruit and will take up with them after the meeting.
- NOTED: Col N Tougher confirmed there are no plans to close any UOTCs (Option 13). He may consider more UOTRs but this involved number of issues.
- NOTED: Col N Tougher welcomes engagement with MECs and relationship with COs.
- NOTED: The Chairman noted the continuation-recruiting statistics being put to good use and hoped other services would find them useful. The Chairman noted it would also be useful to track the progress of the UOTC-specific AOSB (B) attendees.

c. Royal Air Force (COMEC\_2019\_09\_C3)

## **UAS UPDATE**

### **Key Points**

- *UAS Study.*
- *Tutor Display.*
- *Northern Ireland UAS to have permanently based aircraft at Aldergrove from Mar 20.*
- *Bristol UAS future location to be announced Sep /Oct 19.*
- *Yorkshire UAS relocation.*
- *RAF Woodvale repairs completed.*
- *Project TELUM.*

1. **UAS Value for Money Study.** *AOC 22 Gp has directed that a Value for Money Study be undertaken to baseline, establish and articulate the value of the UAS organisation, in preparation for a routine governmental Comprehensive Spending Review. The aim being to evidence base its value and contribution to securing and developing the next generation of air minded advocates and recruits to the Service. The study is due to be completed by the end of Sep 19.*

2. **Tutor Display.** *AOC 22 Gp approved Tutor display on 9 May 19 and the team is programmed to undertake 24 displays at 14 Air Show Events across the UK. Last display of the season being 7 & 8 Sep 19 at the Southport Air show. UAS students actively support the team and raise awareness of the role of UASs and it is estimated that the display will have been seen by 1.9M members of the public.*

3. **NIUAS.** *Infrastructure enabling works now completed and it is planned to declare Full Operating Capability in Mar 20. As an interim measure 2 aircraft were deployed to Aldergrove in Jun 19 to conduct a week-long flying camp.*

4. **Bristol UAS.** *DIO Business Case to determine future location of the Sqn was programmed to go before the investment approvals committee in Mar with the formal*

*announcement of its decision in Apr 19. This has moved to the right and a decision is now expected Sep/Oct 19. To mitigate the paucity of flying opportunities BUAS has just conducted a successful flying camp at Newquay Airport, formerly RAF St Mawgan.*

5. **Yorkshire UAS.** *RAF Linton on Ouse is programmed to close Dec 20. Three sites are currently under consideration for the relocation of YUAS and DIO are in the process of costing the potential options.*

6. **RAF Woodvale.** *Repair of the main runway has been completed and flying sortie rates for Manchester & Salford and Liverpool UASs will be back to pre-runway closure rates by end of Sep 19.*

7. **Project TELUM.** *The Fixed-wing Light Aircraft Training System will replace LAFT 2 which delivers UAS and air experience flying and engineering support. It is planned to hold a series of industry days in Sep 19 where potential bidders will be able to put forward outline proposals as how Project TELUM could be delivered.*

- NOTED: Gp Capt H Edwards noted the UAS was undergoing a similar comprehensive spending review that the UOTCs had undertaken following an external assessment by Deloitte and PWC. The current cost of training for a UAS student is approximately £150K and options are being considered to reduce this.
- NOTED: Gp Capt H Edwards noted the Northern Ireland UAS is now fully staffed and a new badge is being formed. 60 students will be recruited this September and the Squadron has 3 permanent aircraft.
- NOTED: Gp Capt H Edwards noted Boscombe Down was no longer an option due to cost so Colerne is now being re-considered for BUAS.
- NOTED: Gp Capt H Edwards noted success in online recruitment of UAS students noting a fall in physical numbers at Freshers' Fairs. An Officer and Aircrew Selection Centre aptitude test has been introduced after 1 year at UAS, and cadets must have an active application for OASC by the end of 2<sup>nd</sup> year.
- NOTED: Gp Capt H Edwards noted an innovation conference "Hacking for Defence" which utilised skills of university students to solve technical defence problems.
- NOTED: Professor Adrian Parker noted vetting issues for students who go on a gap year which delays their progress. Gp Capt H Edwards noted he would be happy to look at individual issues.
- NOTED: The Chairman noted concern over Project TELUM and the protracted negotiations, noting the possible impact on flying in the future. Gp Capt H Edwards noted options are being considered to minimise any loss of flying between contracts.

d. Defence People (COMEC\_2019\_09\_C4)

## **RF&C UPDATE**

### Defence Overview

1. *The department's priorities remain delivering operations overseas and supporting the Government in delivering the United Kingdom's exit from the European Union. Budget management remains a priority; RF&C remains actively engaged regarding any savings measures that might affect Reserves and Cadets.*

Reserves Policy

2. FTRS. *Work continues to attempt to harmonise the definitions of FTRS commitment types across the three services. Once complete, the focus will switch to examining the feasibility of modernising Full Time Reserve Service, perhaps in conjunction with the next steps of the Flexible Service programme.*
3. Use of Reserves. *As part of the Department's focus on Whole Force we are examining ways that we might make better use of the Reserves. Specifically, we are looking at ways that we might make it easier for the Services to use Reserves across the spectrum of defence activities. A DIN aimed at enabling mobilisation to certain Defence Activities Other Than Operations (DAOTO) will shortly be published. Through the Defence Plan we are also encouraging an increase in mobilisation rates.*
4. Overseas Based Reserves. *RF&C have developed policy intended to enable and provide guidance on the routine overseas utilisation of Volunteer Reservists who are required by their personal circumstances to be resident outside of the UK. This will enable them to continue with their Voluntary Reserve service whilst based in their host nation.*
5. 2\* Pathway. *As discussed at the most recent Customer Board, work has begun with Navy and Air on developing career pathways to allow Naval and Air Force reservists to serve in 2 star posts.*
6. Reserve Forces Act 1996. *Renewal of the Armed Forces Act is due to begin in 2020. RF&C are therefore reviewing primary legislation to identify any requirements for change in support of reserve objectives.*
7. RFCA Review. *Dr Rob Sullivan has been appointed lead of the Review and engagement has begun. The review is looking into the CRFCA and RFCAs ensuring the RFCAs continue to deliver to Defence output, the best VfM for Defence, and identifying what additional opportunities the RFCAs could undertake. Engagement has gone well so far; the team have visited the majority of RFCAs and have spoken with 3\* from each of the sS.*

FR20 (Update info from the latest UK Armed Forces QSPS info)

8. *The trained strength of the Volunteer Reserves continues to increase.*
9. *As at 1 July 2019, the trained strength of the FR20 population was 32,490 (from around 22,000 at the beginning of the Future Reserves Programme), with about 4,000 more in training.*

10. *The overall trend is upwards; however, shortfalls in the trained strength of the Maritime and Army Reserves meant the target of 35,000 Reserves trained strength by 2019 was not met. Our recruitment campaign is a long-term programme, however, and numbers continue to grow.*
- a. *The Maritime Reserve (MR) trained strength (TS) at 1 Jul 19 was 2,830. It is expected that the target of 3,100 Trained Strength will not be achieved until 2021.*
  - b. *The Army Reserve (AR) TS at 1 Jul 19 was 27,000, with around another 2,500 in training.*
  - c. *The RAuxAF TS at 1 Jul 19 was 2,660. The RAuxAF achieved its FR20 target of 1,860 in 2016 and has continued to grow.*
11. *Reserves from all Services continue to operate in every theatre alongside their Regular counterparts. Around 450 reservists are currently called out for permanent service.*

#### Employer Engagement

12. Employer Notification (EN). *EN19 results have been reported to the E3G. The EN20 directive has been issued.*
13. Armed Forces Covenant (AFC). *The rate of signings now exceeds 30 per week. There are now over 4000 signatories (up from 3000 in Nov 18) and we expect to hit 5000 by spring 2020.*
14. ERS Awards. *The Gold Awards winners were published 22 Aug 19 with 100 employers recognised. This represents a 96% increase in those achieving gold standard from 2018. The awards ceremony will take place on 12 Nov 19 at the National Army Museum.*
15. CS Reserves Challenge. *The latest data is, once again, encouraging, revealing further growth in the number of Civil Servants (CS) joining the Reserves. Civil Servants now represent 0.76% of the eligible cohort, the total number of reservists now sits at 1690, a 42% increase from April 2014. The Civil Service makes up approximately 5% of the total Reserves trained strength.*
16. *The Challenge was due to end on 31 March 2019. However, given the obvious benefits accruing to Defence and the wider Civil Service, the Cabinet Secretary has agreed that this initiative should be continued until April 2022.*
17. *A full programme of events was delivered in support of Civil Service Live 2019 and a Civil Service Reserves breakfast reception was held at 10 Downing Street on 26 June.*

#### Cadets

18. Cadet Expansion Programme (CEP). *The joint MOD/DfE CEP remains on track to achieve the target of 500 cadet units in UK schools parading by Mar 2020 with over 450 units currently parading. The number of schools which have had approval to open new cadet units, or are already parading, now exceeds the risk-based overshoot figure of 510 which has been set for the programme. The focus of effort is now on ensuring that the approved schools start to parade as soon as possible.*
19. SofS Initiatives. *Work continues to progress the cadet-related Government announcements made by the then Secretary of State at the Conservative Party Conference on 30 Sep 18: delivering cyber training for cadets; an ambition to increase the number of cadets in schools to 60,000 by 2024; and planning for an annual cadet week.*
- a. CyberFirst Programme. *The National Cyber Security Centre's nationally recognised CyberFirst training programme is now being delivered to Army, Sea and Air Cadets across the country with further courses being run to train Cadet Force Adult Volunteers to be CyberFirst trainers.*
  - b. Cadet Numbers in Schools. *The ambition (not target) to grow numbers of cadets in schools to 60,000 by 2024 is a follow on from the CEP. Initial growth of new cadet units to steady state should increase cadet numbers in schools to circa 53,000 and a baselining exercise is underway to establish where the greatest potential for further growth exists. Generating ambition among headteachers for further growth will be the critical factor, and one which neither MOD nor DfE have little leverage to influence.*
  - c. Cadet Week. *The intent is to celebrate the cadet forces by inviting MPs and local dignitaries to visit cadet units in their areas during a specific week (during a parliamentary recess to be identified) and, as an outcome, to generate visibility on social media. .*
20. *The RF&C Cadet team is continuing to work with the University of Northampton (UoN) on their 4-year longitudinal study into the social impact of cadets, with the 3rd interim report due to be published this Autumn. Findings to date (available on the UoN website) suggest that a child's self-efficacy (their ability to exert control over their own future) is improved because of the activities they undertake in the cadet forces. This is particularly true amongst those from disadvantaged backgrounds.*
- NOTED: Col D Guinness noted new recruiting adverts have proved their worth (although criticised).
  - **ACTION: Col D Guinness to send COMEC Secretary update on the fourteen new universities signed up to the Armed Forces Covenant.** Mr R Hall noted University of South Wales now had the Employer Recognition Scheme gold award.

- NOTED: The Chairman noted harmonization and modernization of FTRS across the three services might promote better understanding and productive use of flexible service.
- NOTED: The Chairman asked when the RFCA Review report will be available, and Col D Guinness noted it will be published soon.

## **6. Conference 2019**

- RECEIVED: An update from the Vice-Chairman on the COMEC Conference 2019
- NOTED: The Vice-Chairman noted thanks for all the support in pulling the Conference together. Rev Professor J P Taylor noted the significant amount of work from the Vice-Chairman and COMEC Secretary.

## **7. COMEC Prize**

- REPORTED: The COMEC Prize Winner 2019 is OCdt Matthew Smith of Sheffield UOTC. The runner up is OCdt Alexandra Yorsten of EMUOTC.
- NOTED: Ms A Lyon noted Professor E Archibald would take over as COMEC Prize lead adjudicator should she be re-elected. Thanks were noted to the COMEC Secretary for support.

## **8. Membership of the Executive**

- NOTED: There are three vacancies of Ordinary Members occasioned by the completion of term of office for Prof E Archibald, Ms A Lyon and Mr R Hall.
- NOTED: Nominations to Executive Committee Member have been received by the due date in respect of the following:
  - Prof Alastair Adair (COMEC\_2019\_09\_D1)
  - Prof Elizabeth Archibald (COMEC\_2019\_09\_D2)
  - Prof James Davenport (COMEC\_2019\_09\_D3)
  - Dr Ross Hall (COMEC\_2019\_09\_D4)
  - Prof Paul Ivey (COMEC\_2019\_09\_D5)
  - Prof Michael Siva-Jothy (COMEC\_2019\_09\_D6)
  - Dr Margi Vilnay (COMEC\_2019\_09\_D7)

There being seven nominations received by the due date for three vacancies, a vote will be held at the AGM.

## **9. Duty of Care**

- RECEIVED: A paper from Professor Adrian Parker on OCdt Welfare issues:

### ***Duty of Care***

*At a recent meeting of the Oxford University Delegation for Military Instruction (DMI) important Duty of Care issues were raised by the University Service Units regarding issues around 'Security' and 'Welfare'. The DMI asked if the points in question could*



*be put to the COMEC Executive for discussion and to explore whether other MECs have experienced similar issues and explore and share areas of best practice/courses of action to follow should they arise.*

*In brief the issues/points are as follows:*

*(a) Security. The question of how University Service Units (USUs – namely the Officer Training Corps, University Air Squadron, University Royal Naval Unit) relay information back to Universities regarding Security for travel for all students linked to a Service Unit. For Oxford the situation is slightly different and more complicated to the other Universities as there are the colleges and so no single point of contact. The question arose as a student, who was a member of the OTC, was approved by their University to undertake dissertation fieldwork in a country that is on the list of countries which are restricted for identified safety/security issues for people who are members/or associated with the Armed Forces to visit. This raised a ‘Security’ issue in relation to the USU duty of care and what procedure they should follow in raising this with the University in question.*

*(b) Welfare. The question raised was how Officer Cadets would be dealt with by the University in cases where they presented a risk to themselves or others whether welfare or disciplinary.*

*As there was no unified policy on how/if University Service Units (USUs) can get sent flagged up welfare issues from the Universities relating to a student should they arise. Likewise, the question of how do USUs relay any issues back to the Universities should they arise for students who are members of a USU. The question raised was how Officer Cadets would be dealt with by the University in cases where they presented a risk to themselves or others whether welfare or disciplinary noting issues of data protection and confidentiality.*

*Due to procedural/ reporting chain differences between the constituent Universities, and also as the DMI is the body that is the interface between the academic institutions and the USUs, I was asked to look into these matters in relation to the structure of the DMI and the best courses of action address them. In consultation with each of our constituent Universities we have produced set procedures to address the Security and Welfare issues should they arise. This involved talking to various University staffs including the Proctors and Oxford, the registrar at Oxford Brookes etc. to address the points raised. In response to these two items I have looked into these matters in relation to the structure of the DMI and the best courses of action address them. The following was proposed and actioned for addressing the points listed above.*

***Duty of care relating to University Service Units and students – proposed reporting chain***

- 1. USU COs to raise concern with Chair of DMI*
- 2. Chair/USU CO to contact relevant University DMI representative to discuss issue/concern and assess best course of action.*
- 3. University DMI representative to contact/liaise with relevant University/College point of contact regarding Security, Conduct, Welfare related issues/concerns.*

4. *Relevant University to follow institutional procedures and action where appropriate.*
5. *University DMI representative to report back to USU COs/DMI if policies permit (noting confidentiality clauses if applicable, especially in relation to welfare).*

*As an example the direction followed for Oxford Brookes University would be as follows:*

1. *Issue/concern raised by USU CO or deputy if absent to DMI Chair*
2. *DMI Chair/USU CO contacts Oxford Brookes University DMI representative to discuss issue/concern and courses of action.*
3. *OBU DMI rep raises issue concern with University for:*
  - (a) *Security in relation to travel – (Head of Faculty in which student is studying/University Safety Office – both of whom who have responsibility for signing off overseas travel). This is a requirement for University Insurance cover for travel.*
  - (b) *Academic conduct – Faculty Conduct Officer*
  - (c) *Welfare – University Student Welfare Team*
4. *Procedures applied according to University regulations.*
5. *DMI rep/University POC reports back to USU CO with decision/action.*

*The above might vary slightly between institutions noting for example that Oxford has the Colleges as well as Departments/Divisions to consider.*

*With respect to the above USUs might wish to consider adding or briefing students when joining that travel restrictions to certain countries may apply. If they do travel to a country on the restricted list they inform the Unit and receive the security briefing for that country. Also when students join they need clear instruction that they are required to let the Unit know if any welfare issues arise where they present a risk to themselves or others.*

- NOTED: Professor Adrian Parker introduced the topic and how this arose at Oxford DMI. A wide ranging discussion followed on the issues and challenges. Regulations surrounding data sharing is a key issue placing the onus on the students to ensure both the university and USU are informed – however, this needs to be included in training with a process to be followed. It was noted MECs has a role as a proactive conduit between CO and university.
- **ACTON: The Chairman noted Oxford DMI’s paper and that the suggested procedure should be usefully shared with MECs.**

#### **10. COMEC Relations with MECs**

- RECEIVED: An update from the Vice-Chairman in preparation for the COMEC AGM.
- NOTED: The Vice-Chairman noted only a 50% response to the survey. The key issue is communication and ability of COMEC to connect with MECs which are themselves constantly changing.

- **ACTION:** The Chairman suggested asking delegates in the post-Conference feedback whether future events should be held in service training establishments, on a regional basis, or in London, in order to inform decision making at the November meeting.

**11. Any Other Business:**

- NOTED: No further business was raised.

**12. Dates and Venues of Future Meetings:**

- NOTED: The dates and venues of future meetings:
  - Thursday 21 November 2019 (ULOTC, London)
  - Thursday 20 February 2020 (ULOTC, London)
  - Thursday 14 May 2020 (ULOTC, London)
  - September 2020 (Date & Venue TBC)
- **ACTION:** Venues to be reviewed at next meeting