



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

Executive Committee Meeting

**held on Thursday 3rd September 2020 at 1100hrs to 1230hrs using Microsoft
Teams**

Minute

Present

Mr R G Livingston (Chairman); Rev Professor J P Taylor (Treasurer); Mr J S Castle;
Mr H Hamilton; Professor P Ivey; Ms C Kinhead; Dr J Smith; Maj I Stoney; Dr M
Vilnay; Col D Gray; Gp Capt I Sharrocks; Col D Mogg; A Walters; Lt Col A Field

In Attendance;

Mr Jason Norris (Secretary)

Apologies

General Sir P Wall; Dr R Hall; Col N Tougher; Lt Col M Bishop; Cdr N Downing RN

- NOTED: The Chairman welcomed Col D Mogg and Lt Col A Field, CO Cambridge OTC standing in for Col N Tougher.
- NOTED: Col D Mogg opened up discussions on apprenticeships, particularly STEM related, and linking reservists with companies already subscribed to the Armed Forces Covenant and DERS. This was welcomed by the Executive and it was noted there were already established links and networks that could be used to realise this opportunity.

1. Minutes

- APPROVED: The Minutes of the Executive meeting held on 14th May 2020 (COMEC_Exec_2020_09_A1)

2. Matters Arising

- Matters and action points arising (COMEC_Exec_2020_09_A2)

Minutes (Min 1 14 May 2020)

- ACTIONED: The February 2020 Executive Minutes to be uploaded to the COMEC website.

Publications (Min 2 14 May 2020)

- RESOLVED: The COMEC Conspectus is now published on the COMEC website.
- RESOLVED: Occasional Paper No. 12: The Ethics of Fighting Power by Patrick Mileham is now available on the COMEC website.

Matters Arising: Any Other Business - (Min 2 14 May 2020)

- RESOLVED: Dr R Hall to send out COMEC Prize outcomes to all nominees and provide limited feedback where requested and possible.

Treasurer's Report (Min 4 14 May 2020)

- ACTIONED: The Treasurer noted there were slightly fewer subscriptions paid than at the same time last year and reminders would be sent out in due course.

Dates and Venues of Future Meetings (Min 9 14 May 2020)

- RESOLVED: The Chairman and Secretary will move the MEC vote on COMEC Executive nominations to a virtual / online format so these can proceed at the AGM.
- NOTED: Mr J S Castle queried the 2021 Conference dates and it was noted by the Chairman it is pencilled in for 1st and 2nd September subject to final confirmation by the RAF.

3. Chairman's Report

- RECEIVED: A report from the Chairman
- NOTED: The Chairman noted the Reserve Forces 2030 Review and added that the enterprising and visionary review aims to establish how to harness and unlock the potential of the specialist knowledge and expertise of reservists. The Chairman had interesting exchanges with Wg Cdr Andrew Walters and his RF30 review team (Cols David Mogg and Darin Gray) looking at recruitment, training and retention, and also at how they might use some modern networking technology to keep in touch with USU graduates to maintain their interest and benefit from their ongoing non-military experiences.

4. Treasurer's Report

- RECEIVED: A report from the Treasurer (COMEC_Exec_2020_09_B)
- CONSIDERED: A number of MECs are in default with their subscriptions, in many cases due to the disruption caused by Covid19. These are due in the year to which they relate, and MECs which have paid are entitled to be represented at general meetings and vote. Those in arrears forfeit these rights until payment is made. The Committee noted the issues, and the extraordinary challenges for MECs this year, agreeing to allow representation and voting with the expectation subscription payments would follow shortly. This will be kept under review. Dr J Smith also noted the need to communicate to MECs the importance of the COMEC subscriptions and how this brings benefits to the MECs.

- NOTED: The Treasurer noted that due to a reduction in activity and travel this year as a result of the current restrictions, income is higher than expenditure. The current policy is to reduce reserves to one year's annual income which is expected to be achieved over the next few years.

5. Reports from the Service Staff Officers

- RECEIVED: A report from each of the Service Staff Officers:
 - a. Royal Navy (COMEC_Exec_2020_09_C1)

URNU REPORT

Introduction

1. *Due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic and the resulting restrictions implemented by Her Majesty's Government, the activity of the University Royal Naval Units (URNU) has been seriously curtailed. Face to Face Training Nights ceased with effect from 24 Mar 20, while Easter Deployment was cancelled and less than 10% of normal activity took place during the Summer Deployment period.*
2. *Individual URNUs were directed to take advice from the MECs associated with the universities to whom they were affiliated, in order to place the wellbeing and duty of care (WDoC) of both Officer Cadets (OCs) and staff at the centre of their planning. As a result, all units operated remotely with staff providing support and virtual training opportunities.*
3. *During Q2/3 20, all of the URNU Commanding Officers (COs) and Coxswains (Coxns) were put on 48 hours' notice to move. Ten staff were recalled to BRNC to support mandated training delivery, while 3 x COs were activated to support Op RESCRIPT and Op BROADSHARE. The 3 activated COs have now been stood down however, a further 2 x COs and 3 x Coxns have been activated to support mandated training delivery in other RN Training Establishments.*

Priorities

4. *In line with Capt BRNC's current intent, Commander Universities (Cdr U) has set the following higher-level priorities for the Universities Department (URNU and JD) in the coming months:*
 - a. *Provide Welfare and Duty of Care (WDoC) to JD, URNU Staff, Training Officers (TOs) and OCs, through ongoing remote interaction.*
 - b. *Provide resilience to BRNC Command, as a group or, as individuals.*
 - c. *Deliver Military Assistance to Civilian Authorities (MACA).*
 - d. *Deliver FOST Directive 002/19.*

e. *Return to business as usual (BAU) post COVID-19.*

5. *It has been recognised that the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic has affected every aspect of how we live and work. However, the URNUs have continued to deliver training in a safe, efficient and effective manner, by utilising civilian and defence managed Virtual Learning Environments. This has been achieved through the careful and considered mitigation of risk, at all levels, to ensure that we are delivering a balanced package designed to continue to develop each individual on both a personal and professional level. At this difficult time, the need for WDoC to take primacy has been clearly identified. With this in mind, each individual is being encouraged is carefully considering how they can contribute to the mental and physical well-being of their colleagues and the young people who have taken the conscious decision to join our organisation.*

6. *Having taken into account the overarching priorities of BRNC Command, our main effort as a department within BRNC Command, while delivering the priorities highlighted in para 5a, 5b and 5c on an enduring basis, are to:*

a. *Look after our people (Staff; URNU; JD).*

b. *Achieve the effect set out in FOST Directive 002/19, by delivering on the recommendations set out in the FOST Directive Phase 1 Briefing Paper.*

c. *Prepare for the return to Business as Usual (BAU).*

Our People

7. *While not having had face to face contact with the majority of URNU TOs and OCs for almost six months, unit staff have taken advantage of modern technology. All 15 x URNU restarted by delivering Virtual Training Nights (VTN) less than 2 weeks after 'crash' stopping in Mar 20. The initiative has proved popular, with the majority of units reporting 75% to 100% attendance of TOs and OCs on a regular basis. Due to demand, and in an attempt to provide a suitable support network for OCs, the Training Year was extended. The final VTN of the year, which was hosted by Liverpool URNU, took place on Thu 31 Jul 20. All 15 x URNU participated in a 300 paxs Zoom Meeting which included a 1 ¼ hr fireside hosted by the First Sea Lord.*

8. *The lockdown has forced the URNU organisation to investigate the potential of a range of Virtual Learning experiences. With the agreement of the awarding authorities, pilot schemes have been established which have enabled OCs from a number for units to complete RYA and CMI accredited awards that were commenced prior to the pandemic.*

9. *With the support of RN Media Comms and Engagement (RNMCE) the new URNU Webpages, that are hosted within the official RN website, have been launched and are now being used as a national resource to which all Social Media interest is driven. Through the use of Twitter, Facebook and Instagram, the URNU organisation has enhanced its corporate image and significantly broadened its virtual footprint at a time when recruiting by traditional means will be very challenging.*

FOST Directive 002/19

10. To provide a baseline position and understand the future direction of the URNUs, Flag Officer Sea Training (FOST)¹ directed Commander Universities (Cdr U) to conduct a review into the effectiveness of the organisation. The review which is designed to provide a legitimate foundation to instigate considerable organisational changes, taking into account the recommendations laid out in the Phase 1² brief, is now nearing completion.

11. During Q2/3 20, URNU Permanent Staff and TOs have made significant progress in delivering outcomes within the five key Workstream (WS) areas: Governance; Training Syllabus; Administration; Training Delivery and Business Continuity.³ These WS align with the URNU Organisation's core functions and recognise the fact that the organisation must evolve and transform while delivering BAU to the existing cadre of OCs.

COVID-19 Exit Strategy

12. The Universities HQ is currently working alongside the URNU COs to identify how training can be safely restarted, taking into account differing local circumstances and the ever-evolving guidelines being provided by HMG and the devolved authorities. In addition, the URNU Management Team is now considering how to mitigate against gapping, so that each unit is fully prepared to meet the challenges that we will undoubtedly face at the start of the new academic year.

13. This year, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the challenge of recruiting to full-liability will be even greater as we will not only have to recruit new OCs but also to re-recruit / re-invigorate the existing OCs who will not have had face to face contact with the unit for over 6 months. In preparation for what will clearly be a challenging recruiting environment individual COs have been encouraged to consult with MECs to ascertain the likely format of Freshers' Fayres and are preparing to utilise novel virtual strategies to supplement proven face to face techniques. Through close liaison with Captain Naval Recruiting (CNR) and RNMCE the organisation is proactively seeking opportunities to increase its media footprint. This initiative is designed to provide young people arriving at the 64 universities, which are affiliated to the URNU, with an awareness of the opportunities that the sS can offer them during their university career.

14. This year, I have set challenging recruiting targets for each unit and directed COs to over-recruit by 15% to account for the expected rate of failure. As there is clearly a risk that some units may find themselves with more than 51 students, I am content to veer liability, and funding, between units if the need should arise. However, the character and success of an URNU is intrinsically linked to its members, so quality rather than quantity will still be the watchword.

Summary

¹ FOST Directive 002/19

² 20200124-FOST Directive Phase 1_FINAL-OS

³ UTM 18/20 – Establishment of Workstreams to deliver University Royal Naval Units Review

15. *During the course of the 19/20 academic year, the URNU organisation has consolidated its numbers, worked to gain a higher profile both internally and externally and begun to gain traction in the filling the gaps in the military and civilian personnel plot. The FOST Directive, has offered us a unique opportunity that the URNU Organisation to ensure that the organisation as a whole is ready to support the New Navy as we move forward into the new decade. I am confident that each of the URNUs will be able to deliver against the Key Performance Indicators, but we are not underestimating the challenges that will be faced as the country emerges from the COVID-19 pandemic.*

- NOTED: The Chairman noted it was encouraging to see the URNU website has now launched which will substantially raise the URNUs profile.

b. Army (COMEC_Exec_2020_09_C2)

- NOTED: Lt Col A Field, CO Cambridge OTC, provided a verbal update in Col N Tougher absence focussing on opportunities for the Services, MECs and COMEC to work together more closely. In Cambridge they are trying to bring together academic networks (mainly in engineering) to build capability and operational effectiveness in the Army. It is hoped that innovation funds in the Army could be used to pump-prime this model of collaboration.
- NOTED: Mr J S Castle noted this was a good example of what could be achieved with other Universities and this should feed into DASA activity.
- NOTED: Lt Col A Field suggested COMEC ask for a Higher Education strategy from the MoD or each of the Services. This currently does not exist noting engagement would significantly increase if the various strands of possible collaboration were written down. It is currently a siloed approach and COMEC could support a more joined up model. It was noted Universities work independently on these activities and that this would be difficult to navigate.
- NOTED: The Chairman noted it would be helpful if Services could become clearer on their proposals so COMEC could foster better working relationships with institutions. This has been requested previously but has not been forthcoming, and is essential to allow COMEC to support establishment of an academic network and respond in a constructive way. Funding streams also need to be made clear.
- NOTED: Col D Gray suggested a meeting with Lt Col A Field to include in the RF30 discussions and link to DCDS to follow up.

c. Royal Air Force (COMEC_Exec_2020_09_C3)

COMEC EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE UAS UPDATE 2 SEP 20

Key Points

- *Recruiting.*
- *Student Breakdown*
- *HQ 6FTS AFCE*

- *Modular Initial Officer training*
- *Bristol UAS future location*
- *Yorkshire UAS future location*

1. **Recruiting.** *6FTS has traditionally recruited from freshers' fairs via face-to-face contact. As a consequence of Covid-19, our focus has now turned to online marketing. RAF Recruiting & Selection now hosts the UAS recruitment page which links to the RAF website. RAF Recruiting website provides information about the UAS organisation, basic eligibility criteria and how to apply. We have supported this with a series of targeted Facebook campaigns which direct interested parties to the UAS recruiting site. Those interested in applying are invited to complete an online form which is forwarded to the relevant UAS which then manages the process. Initial filter interviews are conducted over the phone before a candidate is invited to undertake a formal interview. This can be face to face, subject to Public Health guidelines, or via Teams/Skype, whichever works for both Sqn and the student. As some students will not be returning to university before Jan 21 we are looking to book their CAPITA medical close to their home. Again, for those students who ostensibly will undertake their studies online we are also considering affiliating the student to the UAS closest to their home as opposed to their university. Flexibility is the key as we navigate these uncharted waters. To date we have expended £5,500, which has reached 111K individuals, generated 29K views of the UAS recruiting website and resulted in 160 applications. We expect this figure to rise once the question of A Level grades has been resolved and individuals have confirmed their university places.*

2. **Student Breakdown.** *Of the current student cohort, 70% are male, 30% female and 11% BAME. Forty-six are studying a STEM subject of which 35% is related to engineering. This is further broken down to 84% being male, 16% female and 13% BAME. In respect of sponsorship, 75% are male, 25% female and 14% BAME.*

3. **HQ 6FTS Armed Forces Career Office.** *Since Jan 20, HQ 6FTS has also functioned as an Armed Forces Careers Office for processing UAS applications for sponsorship and direct entry into the Service. Benefit to UAS student is that we have reduced the time taken from application to attendance at Officer and Aircrew Selection Centre from 6mths plus to 8 weeks or less. Currently processing some 130 applications.*

4. **Modular Initial Officer training.** *Under Project MERCURY Initial Officer Training (IOT) has been redesigned and now comprises 4 x modules of 6 weeks duration. Module 1 focuses on general service knowledge and serving airmen will be exempt for undertaking this training and will commence IOT at week 7. A trial is currently being conducted whereby the UAS will deliver Module 1 over the 2 yrs a student is on the squadron; students will commence IOT at the start of Module 2. First MIOT which will see this occur will be Sep 21; this will require a bespoke short course as this cohort will not have completed the 2yr syllabus. Steady state will occur from Sep 22 onwards.*

5. **Bristol UAS.** *DIO Business Case to determine future location of the Sqn was programmed to go before the investment approvals committee in Jun with the formal announcement of its decision in Jul 20. The decision has been deferred whilst additional information is being sought.*

6. **Yorkshire UAS.** *YUAS will relocate to RAF Leeming Dec 20 and operate alongside NUAS. DIO value for money study which will not report before mid-22.*

7. **Retirement.** *This will be Wg Cdr T Bake's last involvement with COMEC as he will be shortly be retiring from the Service. Replacement is due to be confirmed in early Sep 20.*

- NOTED: Gp Capt I Sharrocks noted UAS' are still flying and should be able to mitigate around pandemic issues. This is more challenging with air cadet forces.
- NOTED: Professor P Ivey and Mr J S Castle congratulated the UAS' on their increasingly successful efforts to increase diversity.
- NOTED: Gp Capt I Sharrocks noted they are working to obtain civilian recognition of UAS student modular training noting the 6 weeks exemption of officer training.
- NOTED: Gp Capt I Sharrocks noted challenges remain financially and with the continued use of some airfields. This may require some UAS' moving to other locations.
- NOTED: The Chairman noted the UGSAS CO had raised the requirement of licenced full versions of video conferencing software with the increasing move to hybrid communications. The Chairman suggested Universities may be able to assist here by making COs visiting or honorary staff members thereby allowing them access to their software. Gp Capt I Sharrocks noted this was a known MoD issue and any support from Universities on this would be useful.
- NOTED: The Chairman noted that Wg Cdr T Bake had been a good friend of COMEC over many years and conveyed thanks and best wishes for his retirement.

d. Defence People (COMEC_Exec_2020_09_C4)

DEFENCE PEOPLE (RF&C) UPDATE FOR COMEC – SEPTEMBER 2020

Defence Overview

1. *The department's priorities are focusing on the immediate challenges posed by living with COVID 19 and ensuring Defence's and HMG's outputs are not adversely affected. The department continues to prepare for the upcoming Spending Review and Integrated Foreign, Defence and Security Review. R&C remains actively engaged regarding any measures that might affect Reserves and Cadets.*

2. *COVID 19 Response. MODs response to Covid-19 has been deemed as a success, the Reserves have particularly demonstrated their value as part of the whole force. More than 2000 reservists were initially called into permanent service, as part of the Covid-19 response force of 20,000; most were not required to undertake any activity and demobilisation of the majority is under way. The main contributions from reservists were: to work in co-ordination roles in local hubs; to provide logistics expertise; to deliver supplies of PPE; and to help construct the Nightingale hospitals.*

3. *Defence is now working to identify lessons from this period and ensure that the possible adverse impacts of lockdown are managed through effective engagement of Reserves and the Reserve offer is not diminished.*

Reserves Policy

4. **Reserve Forces 30 Review.** *The review is led by Rt Hon Mark Lancaster and will support Departmental thinking around Transformation and delivery of the Campaign Plan. The RF30 review is currently at its test phase where external stakeholders are to be consulted. The review continues to draw on other studies for information and to avoid duplication of effort. The review has so far been through MPLT, DPLT and sS scrutiny. It has also been briefed to Service Chiefs; on the basis RF30 is a review the Chiefs agreed the direction of travel. The review will report back to the DPLT in September following the test phase, it is expected to be completed towards the end of September with the publication of its findings and recommendations in October.*

5. **FTRS.** *R&C have finalised policy instructions to Parliamentary Council to amend RFA96 through AFB20 to allow Reserve Personnel to enter into a Service commitment, providing greater agility to defence. Finalisation of a harmonised definitions for FTRS FC definition is expected to be concluded in September.*

6. **Use of Reserves.** *As part of the Department's focus on Enterprise Approach we are examining ways that we might make better use of the Reserves. Specifically, through Ex AGILE STANCE, we are looking at the ability to assure our ability to mobilise at mass and pace and better understand the impact that Reserve, and Regular Reserve mobilisation have on our employers. We are actively considering the lessons arising from COVID 19 and how this and RF30 work shape the future role of Reserve Forces. Through the Defence Plan we are also looking to optimise the use of Reserves and develop better metrics to define the utility of reservists outwith Mobilisation.*

7. **RFCA Review.** *The Review has now been published, with the recommendation to merge the 13 RFCAs and their joint committee, the CRFCA, into a single executive NDPB. Defence Ministers and ExCo have given their approval to the recommendations, and directed ACDS R&C to develop the proposals and way forward with the RFCAs, Cabinet Office, HMT, and other key stakeholders. The new structure and operating model is currently under development by RF&C and the RFCAs, with support from Cabinet Office, HMT, and relevant teams in MOD. The intention is for legislative change to be effected through primary legislation to be brought forward in the second or third session.*

8. **Digital Optimisation.** *R&C are looking at a digital optimisation solution for Reservists and have integrated the programme into wider transformation programme reporting. The Service for Experienced Rejoiners and Volunteer Engagements platform (SERVE) portal was launched by CDP on 24th June and has now gone live. The portal is expected to evolve to meet user requirements potentially also enabling online applications*

Future Reserves 20 (FR20)

9. **Trained Strength.** *The trained strength of the Volunteer Reserves continues to increase. As at 1 Apr 2020, the trained strength of the FR20 population was 32,920 (from around 22,000 at the beginning of the Future Reserves Programme), with about 4,000 more in training. This is comprised of:*

- a. *Maritime Reserve: 2,870*
- b. *Army Reserve: 27,300*
- c. *RAF Reserve: 2,740*

10. **Utility of the Reserves.** *Reserves from all Services continue to operate in every theatre alongside their Regular counterparts. More than 2,500 reservists are currently called out for permanent service. This reflects the numbers called out as part of the response to the COVID 19 pandemic (which reached approx. 2400 at its peak) as well as for other operations in the UK and overseas.*

Employer Engagement

11. **The Response to COVID-19.** *The most significant event during the reporting period was the COVID-19 pandemic and the response from Defence. Defence generated a force of circa 20,000 personnel of whom circa 2,400 were reservists at the high-water mark. Those reservists fulfilled functions ranging from manning mobile testing units to general support tasks and specialist capabilities. The reservists were mobilised at pace in a dynamic situation where employers were facing challenges on several fronts. There were novel aspects too including furlough and self-employment support schemes to be navigated.*

12. **Employer support to operations.** *Was sustained through the relationships built up via the Armed Forces Covenant in business. The Assistant Chief of Defence Staff (Reserves and Cadets) was able to write to employers whilst Defence Relationship Management was able to use various electronic platforms to clarify the narrative, and support questions and answers. At the first time of asking the Armed Forces Covenant business network and the Defence Employer Recognition Scheme alumni, proved highly effective in terms of enabling communication between Defence and employers leading to efficient force generation and sustainment of the reserve component of the force.*

13. **Measurement of Effectiveness.** *The Armed Forces Covenant in business is delivering against its objectives in terms of output. Empirical measurements were put in place to establish an evidence based approach to engagement and an independent Employer Attitude Report was delivered in August 2020. Both internal measurement of effect and the external report reveal consistent improvement in Armed Forces Covenant output and approval ratings in relation to reserve service.*

14. **Armed Forces Covenant.** *Despite the current circumstances (COVID-19) organisations and employers continue to sign the Armed Forces Covenant at great pace with an average of 30 a week, an increase from the last reporting period. It is predicted that by the end of 2020 the total will surpass 6,000. Organisations that have signed continue to come from all regions around the United Kingdom and from different sectors as well as a variety of sizes with micro and small companies in particular. Key signings this year included Skanska, 3M and Highways England whilst every University from across the East Midlands also came together to sign the Covenant.*

15. Defence Employer Recognition Scheme. *The Defence Employer Recognition Scheme (DERS), launched in 2014, encourages employers to support Defence and inspire others to do the same. The scheme encompasses Bronze, Silver and Gold awards for employer organisations that pledge, demonstrate or advocate support to Defence and the Armed Forces community, and align their values with the Armed Forces Covenant. To obtain a Gold Award, organisations must be an exemplar within their market sector, advocating support to Defence People issues to partner organisations, suppliers and customers with tangible positive results.*

a. This year it was announced on 30 July 2020 that a total of 127 organisations were awarded Gold from a wide range of sectors and included companies of all sizes from SMEs to FTSE100 as well as Councils and NHS Trusts. A total of 13 universities were awarded Gold.

b. The rise in the number of Gold Awards gives testament to the traction achieved with Covenant signatories and the tangible outputs delivered to the Armed Forces community. Having achieved this traction, it is a challenge to continue with the current boarding system and central awards events. A review of the DERS will take place through the autumn of 2020 to report and implement any required changes for the 2021 awards.

- NOTED: Col D Gray noted the Covid response by the MoD had been a success.
- NOTED: Col D Gray noted on the RFCA review that there is a clear recommendation that endorses merging of the 13 RFCAs and Council of RFCA into a single non departmental public body. The Chairman asked that COMEC was involved in next steps as a key stakeholder.
- NOTED: Col D Grey noted on employer engagement that there were only 5 appeals out of 2500 mobilisations so employers are clearly aligned to defence. 13 Universities have also achieved Gold recognition.

6. OFSTED Welfare and Duty of Care Inspections

- CONSIDERED: The outcomes of the OFSTED reports following visits to USUs. (COMEC_Exec_2020_09_C5)
- NOTED: The Chairman noted it is important for the outcomes of the OFSTED reports to be shared with MECs and COMEC so we can learn from the process and direct resources appropriately. Welfare is a key responsibility for MECs who have a duty of care to students. The Chairman noted that of the Army OFSTED reports he had seen, MECs do not come out well noting a low profile and not supporting the welfare regime of cadets. It is essential this is resolved and MECs have representation from key decision makers at their represented University's to support this.
- NOTED: Gp Capt I Sharrocks noted units had the OFSTED reports but were not allowed to share them as they are confidential. Any assistance COMEC could provide to support the release of these reports would be helpful. Mr J S Castle noted names could be redacted if this allowed the report to be de-classified.

7. COMEC Prize

- REPORTED: The COMEC Prize Winner 2019 is APO F Hoppé of Glasgow & Strathclyde Universities Air Squadron. The runners up are Deputy Snr Mid Z Ferguson of Liverpool URNU and SUO A Wilson of Manchester & Salford UOTC.

8. Membership of the Executive

- NOTED: There are five vacancies on the Executive occasioned by the completion of term of office for Roddy Livingston (Chairman, not standing for re-election), Bryden Ritchie (former Vice-Chairman, following earlier resignation), Patton Taylor (Treasurer, eligible for re-election), Hugh Hamilton (not eligible for re-election), Jim Castle (eligible for re-election).
- NOTED: Nominations have been received by the due date in respect of the following:

Chairman

Mr Jim Castle (Glasgow & Strathclyde MEC; COMEC_Exec_2020_09_D1)
Professor Paul Ivey (London MEC; COMEC_Exec_2020_09_D2)

Vice-Chairman

Dr Margi Vilnay (Tayforth MEC; COMEC_Exec_2020_09_D3)

Treasurer

Professor Patton Taylor (COMEC_Exec_2020_09_D4)

Executive Committee Member

Mrs Simone Bedford (Northumbrian MEC; COMEC_Exec_2020_09_D5)

Professor James Davenport (Bristol MEC; COMEC_Exec_2020_09_D6)

Dr Fred Ruddell (Queen's Belfast MEC; COMEC_Exec_2020_09_D7)

Professor Michael Siva-Jothy (Sheffield MEC;
COMEC_Exec_2020_09_D8)

Mr Andy Smith (East Midlands MEC; COMEC_Exec_2020_09_D9)

Professor Adrian Spencer (East Midlands MEC; COMEC_Exec_2020_09_D10)

- NOTED: There being only one nomination for Vice-Chairman and Treasurer, Dr Margi Vilnay and Professor Patton Taylor are to be ratified by the AGM.
- NOTED: There being two nominations for Chairman and six nominations for Executive Committee Member received by the due date for these vacancies, a vote will be held at the AGM.
- NOTED: The election of Dr Vilnay as Vice-Chairman causes a third vacancy for Executive Committee Member: there may be a fourth vacancy for Executive Committee Member subject to the outcome of the Chairman vote.

9. Any Other Business:

- NOTED: The Treasurer gave thanks on behalf of the COMEC Executive to the Chairman.

10. Dates and Venues of Future Meetings:

- CONSIDERED: The dates and venues of future meetings (one to be hosted by a MEC):
 - Thursday 3rd September 2020 1400hrs (Virtual AGM)
 - Thursday 19th November 2020 (ULOTC, London)
 - Thursday 25th February 2021 (ULOTC, London)
 - Thursday 20th May 2021 (ULOTC, London)
 - Wednesday 1st – Thursday 2nd September 2021 (RAF Halton, Conference)