



Chief of the Air Staffs'

LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE SUMMARY

2020

#NextGenRAF

Leading **Today**

Leading **Tomorrow**

The **Power**
of **Culture**



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The Tedder Academy of Leadership



The Tedder Academy of Leadership is the RAF's subject matter expert for through-career command and leadership education and training. It was formed at RAFC Cranwell on 6 September 2016 with a mandate to deliver the RAF leaders of the future by informing air-minded leadership and command education and training across all ranks.

The Academy is also a key enabler in delivering the [#NextGenRAF](#), it manages the RAF MentorMe coaching and mentoring scheme, and offers other developmental opportunities. I encourage you to visit our website, sign up, and by doing so, to contribute to creating a learning culture across the organisation.



Introduction

2020 has been an unusual and challenging year in a myriad of ways; it has challenged us to reflect on how we have traditionally structured our working and home lives, and to seek adaptive and innovative solutions to embrace the changing norm.

Leadership is key and continues to play a pivotal role in supporting our people and enabling operational outputs during this extended period of uncertainty.

One of the key challenges for Team Tedder was how to deliver this year's CAS Leadership Conference against a backdrop of social

▶ One of the key challenges for Team Tedder was how to deliver this year's CAS Leadership Conference against a backdrop of social distancing and other COVID

restrictions. Rather than the usual delivery platform of a physical conference, held at the RAF College Cranwell, we took the bold step to enter the digital arena and deliver this year's event virtually. This allowed us to open the Conference to a far broader audience and I was delighted that a number of overseas units, deployed personnel and those on exchange tours were able to join us for the first time. It has also provided an opportunity to hear from speakers such as Peter Singer in the US. Seeking and grasping opportunities, whilst facing challenges, was very much the theme throughout the Conference.

When considering themes for this year's Conference, we reflected on the [#NextGenRAF](#) and posed the question 'what are the leadership challenges and opportunities to meet the demands of Astra and the Next Generation Air Force?' By focusing on

- ▲ 'what does leading today mean,
- ▲ how is that likely to change tomorrow and,
- ▲ how does this need to be reflected in our culture and sub-cultures?'

We were able to explore the breadth and complexity of the current strategic context and consider how we must all be comfortable operating within an ambiguous and complex



Group Captain Emma Keith
Commandant
Tedder Academy of Leadership

environment.

When horizon scanning into tomorrow, how will technology, artificial intelligence (AI), machine learning and quantum computing influence our decision making? Peter Singer provided an insight into the Real Robotic Revolution and offered a view on the moral and ethical decisions we may face as leaders. This supported the personal views of personnel from across the Whole Force who discussed what leading in the [#NextGenRAF](#) means to them.

Finally, the 'power of culture and subculture' allowed us to hold a mirror up to our own culture and invite comment from those that work closely with us. This insightful session provided the opportunity to reflect on what in our culture will help us achieve the [#NextGenRAF](#) and Astra vision, and what may hold us back.

Conference Programme

Time	Event	Presentation Link
0815-0820	AP7001 montage video	
0820-0825	Introduction Gp Capt Emma Keith - <i>Commandant Tedder Academy of Leadership</i>	
0825-0840	Opening Address ACM Sir Michael Wigston KCB CBE ADC - <i>Chief of the Air Staff</i>	
Session One: Leading Today		
0840 - 0900	The Breadth and Complexity of Leading in the Current Operational Context. AVM Allan Marshall - <i>Air Officer Commanding 1 Group</i>	
0900 - 0915	Pandemic Response: Resourcing Nightingale Hospital. Sqn Ldr Claire Webster - <i>SpR Vascular Doctor, Royal British Legion Centre for Blast Injury</i>	
0915- 0930	Experience from the COVID-19 Front Line Sgt Victoria Penton - <i>Infection Prevention and Control Nurse</i>	
0930 - 0945	Delivering Phase 2 Training in Extraordinary Times Wg Cdr Steve Parkes - <i>Personnel Support Branch Advisor</i> Flt Lt Daisy Tidbury - <i>2ICOTS(Air)</i> Sgt Adam Salter - <i>SNCO Trainer, OTS(Air)</i>	
0945 0950	Summary of Session One CT Jono Brough - <i>Park Fellow</i>	
0950 - 1000	Coffee	
1000 -1030	Panel Live Q&A	
Session 2: Leading Tomorrow		
1030 - 1035	Introduction Sqn Ldr Colin Macpherson - <i>SO2 Leadership, Tedder Academy of Leadership</i>	
1035 - 1105	Tomorrow's World: The Real Robotics Revolution Professor Peter Singer PhD - <i>Author of Burn-in and Ghost Fleet</i>	
1105 - 1135	Why do we need change? Mr Andrzej Kawalec - <i>Head of Security Portfolio, Vodafone Business</i>	

1135 - 1150	Astra. Authenticity, Harnessing the Power of Your Whole Self Flt Lt Abi Bagshaw - <i>Astra Communications</i>	
1150 - 1200	Coffee	
1200 - 1225	Disruptive Thinking <i>Ignite Team</i> Sqn Ldr Gemma Bean – <i>KFAC CCS A1 SO2</i> Flt Lt Tom Ginger – <i>KFAC Cmd Gp Co-Ord</i> Flt Lt Joel Forbes – <i>2Gp Sp BM Space Ops SO3</i> Flt Lt Matty Allen – <i>RAF High Wycombe STO - BA(Ed)</i>	
1225 - 1235	NextGen RAF Leadership: A Personal Perspective Cpl Symone Bromley – <i>Phase 1 Instructor, RTS</i>	
1235 - 1245	Summary of Session 2 SAC Rachel Chapman – <i>Park Fellow</i>	
1245-1315	Panel Live Q&A	
1315 - 1400	Lunch	
Session 3: Culture & Sub-Culture		
1400 - 1405	Introduction to Session 3 WO Mark Willis, WO Leadership - <i>Tedder Academy of Leadership</i>	
1405 - 1420	The Power of Culture and Sub-Cultures Lord Victor Adebawale - <i>Founder & Director, Leadership in MindLTD</i>	
1420 - 1455	A Reflection on Military Culture Air Cdre Fin Monahan - <i>Head Doctrine, Air Space & Cyber</i> Wg Cdr Louise Henton - <i>OC BSW RAF Waddington</i>	
1455 - 1510	Whole Force Culture Ms Siobhan Sheridan - <i>Director Civilian HR</i>	
1510 - 1535	A Civil Servant's Perspective of RAF Culture Ms Alanah Donnell - <i>Head of Media Comms</i>	
1535 - 1545	Coffee	
1545 - 1630	The Strength of Diversity Mr Matthew Syed - <i>Journalist and Bestselling Author</i>	
1630 - 1645	Talent Strategy Launch WO Danny Shaw - <i>WO Talent Strategy</i>	
1645 - 1715	Panel Live Q&A	
1715 - 1735	Closing Remarks ACM Sir Michael Wigston KCB CBE ADC - <i>Chief of the Air Staff</i>	

Opening Address

In opening the Conference, Air Chief Marshal Wigston reflected on how leadership underpinned ethos, core values and standards; drove relentless operational activity; and enabled all to contribute to building the #NextGenRAF.

Success could only be achieved through exceptional leadership, which adapted to the situation; there was no perfect 'one size fits all', but some things were universal and applied equally to the things to do to be a good leader, as the things not to do. He described how the last year

had provided an extraordinary context that had both challenged and provided opportunities for leaders to adapt and innovate, and driven important leadership discussions around race, sexuality and discrimination.

CAS discussed how inclusivity required leaders to develop a deep understanding of who they were to be able lead themselves and others; noting the importance of mentoring and reverse mentoring in developing that awareness. He highlighted the importance of high moral and professional standards in ensuring mutual trust, leadership and teamwork, and expected leaders at all levels to be engaged, authentic and relentless in upholding the exemplary standards of conduct and behaviour that were the foundation of RAF reputation and operational success. He emphasised the critical importance of engaged, authentic and relentless leadership at every level to tackle inappropriate behaviours and provide an inclusive environment where everybody thrived.

CAS talked about the role of Astra in the RAF's ability to operate in the ever more complex, competed and contested multi-domain operating environment of the future. He emphasised the demand for a different approach to leadership: more empowerment and mission command; more networking; fewer layers of bureaucracy; more inclusive ways of working; greater diversity of thought and



Air Chief Marshal Michael Wigston KCB CBE ADC
Chief of the Air Staff

innovation; the acceptance of challenge; and the harnessing of talent and experts, not just the right rank. He concluded by reiterating that the RAF had a well-earned reputation for excellence; cutting edge aircraft, platforms and systems were fundamental to that reputation; however, it was the quality and talent of the whole force, unleashed by exceptional leaders, that ultimately made the difference.

Key take-aways

- ▲ Check how diverse and inclusive you really are - do you foster a climate where challenge is celebrated; where active bystanders are your team heroes; and reverse mentoring is the norm?
- ▲ What could you change for the better - could you be a better leader and make better decisions as a result?

CAS talked about the role of Astra in the RAF's ability to operate in the ever more complex, competed and contested multi-domain operating environment of the future.

The Breadth and Complexity of Leading in the Current Operational Context

Operational leadership had instinctively been associated with overseas operations; however, the increase in operational activity conducted, controlled or supported remotely from the UK, and the enduring presence of 'sub-threshold' adversarial activity necessitated a change of mindset to embrace a broader perspective on what is 'operational' when considering how to lead, how others led, and how to train and develop for the future.

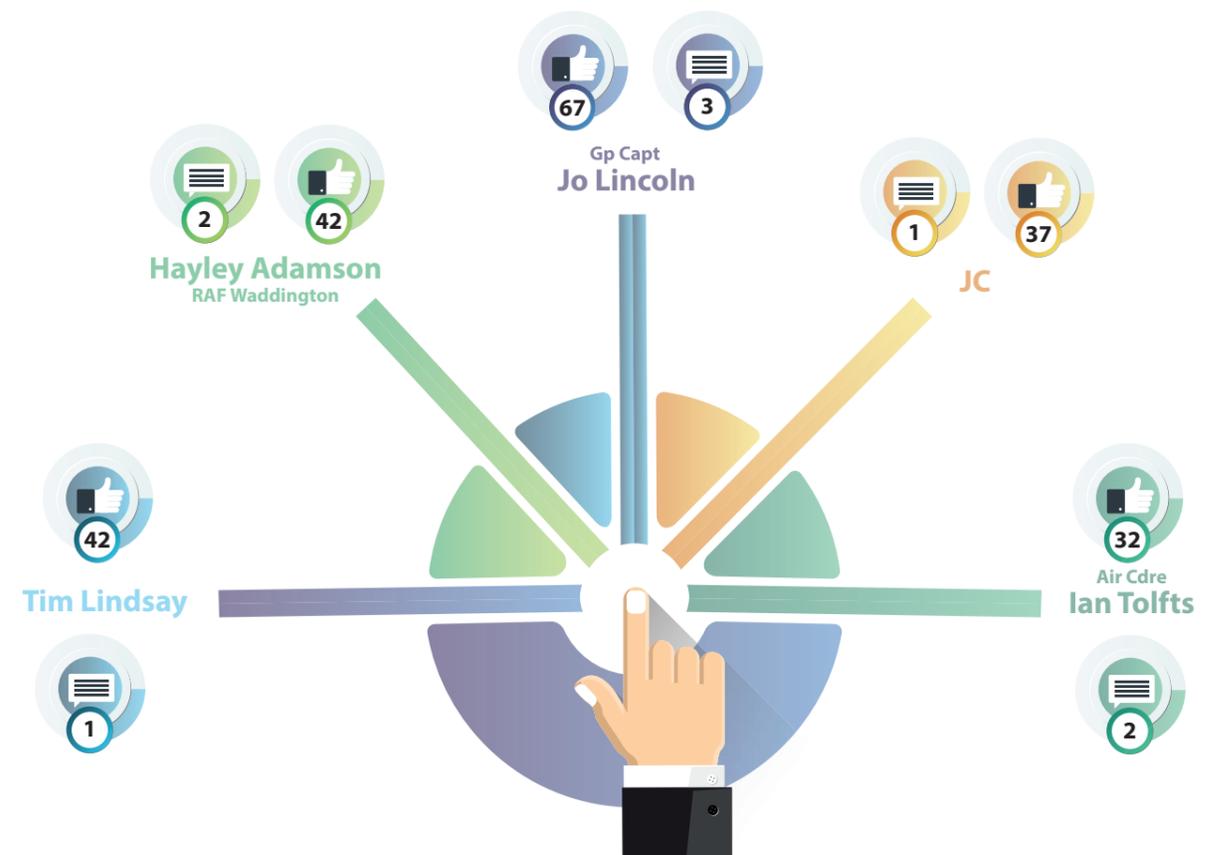
AVM Marshall envisages that the

potential for a divisive narrative between trades and branches operating in or outside of combat zones could be reduced, and that rank could become ambivalent when it comes to recognising the pivotal contribution of some of the most junior participants. There are, however, challenges in conducting operations from the home base; interacting with families and communities for sustained periods; the difficulty in prioritising specific periods for operational work-up and decompression. Leaders have a key role to play to ensure issues



AVM Allan Marshall
Air Officer Commanding 1 Group

Who were the most influential participants?



such as training and competency, an appropriate work-life balance, welfare and mental health are considered to reduce the risk of operational fatigue and burn out.

Coordinated activity has become the norm and leaders need to collaborate and integrate stakeholders effectively and at pace: It is therefore vital that leaders possess strong communications and inter-personal skills. There is an inevitable blurring of boundaries between operations and exercises where activities have been conducted to achieve multiple objectives or effects that sit between them. For example, an overseas combat air exercise that provided national and international training, achieved defence engagement,

Associated leadership challenges include the need for strategic awareness, capacity, agility and judgement in discharging and balancing the various outputs and articulating this to their teams.

reassured regional partners, provided a deterrent effect and achieved contingent readiness for warfighting. Associated leadership challenges include the need for strategic awareness, capacity, agility and judgement in discharging and balancing the various outputs and articulating this to their teams.

The tempo of pervasive modern media presents an additional leadership challenge. Increased public scrutiny, critique and complexity have compressed the time available for decision making; particularly, when pressurised to take rapid action to mitigate a situation, capitalise on events or appropriately message before activities are compromised or the 'narrative' lost. Leaders must be robust and resilient and accept that full control of the narrative is difficult, perhaps unachievable particularly when information is shared or publicised before it reaches the chain-of-command.

Active empowerment, delegation and authority for subordinates to act swiftly – at the speed of relevance - in the information space may be necessary. AVM Marshall suggests that there is still some way to go for Government and Defence to be confident and comfortable in the delegation of such information/messaging to the more tactical levels.

Teamwork offered by the effective integration, orchestration and harnessing of the ability, knowledge and experience of people from different branches and backgrounds is non-discretionary when operating as a whole force. It is important to invest in the integration of all parties to harness diversity, ensure effectiveness,

gain mutual trust and develop resilience. Traditional, old-school authoritarian and hierarchical leadership styles are unlikely to be the best approach. Leaders needed to actively tailor their approach to the task, situation, tempo and construct of their team.

Moreover, with the increased need for specialisation associated with technology it is unrealistic to expect a leader, or a command group, to routinely have sufficient information to make fully informed and optimised decisions that consider all factors and cascading effects. It is, therefore, essential for leaders to actively seek specialist input, embrace diverse views, accept ideas, and invite challenge to optimise decisions and output to stay ahead of adversaries.

Key Take-Aways

- ▲ Important for leaders to varying style and approach.
- ▲ Invite appropriate challenge.
- ▲ Actively embrace diversity of gender, ethnicity, age, branch, experience, Service and thought.
- ▲ Seek clarification in accountability for decisions and risk.
- ▲ Requirement to routinely operate with an empathetic, open, flat and inclusive leadership approach for most situations.
- ▲ Flexibility to seek views, inputs, and ideas at all levels.
- ▲ Flexibility to rapidly adapt to a more traditional military command hierarchy or structure should the situation warrant it.

Pandemic Response: Resourcing Nightingale Hospital

Sqn Ldr Webster reflected on her leadership experience of working as part of the medical team within the London Nightingale Hospital. She contrasted the 'autocratic' style of formal leadership training delivered at initial officer training with the importance of a more 'supportive' style which focuses on how to make lives easier for other leaders.

Urgency to open a 'field' intensive care unit ruled out formal screening processes and saw the Nightingale leadership team recruited largely on a cascading phone call basis of those considered to be capable of performing well under pressure. This raised several associated leadership challenges from sceptics who did not fully 'buy into' Nightingale as the most appropriate 'solution', particularly when decisive action was necessary despite the 'unknowns' of whether they were necessarily the right actions. Her experience also highlighted the conflict between medical 'duty of care' principles and the potential risks of operating in an austere environment and how this impacted on her role in recruiting doctors.

Trust played a critical role in ensuring that there was adequate legal protection should anything untoward happen.

Sqn Ldr Webster discussed her experience dealing with the lack of MACA flexibility when trying to get formal military doctor support for crisis support. These challenges were not without distraction as

media interest and the public perception of Nightingale, as a beacon of hope, generated criticism of its limited use.

As a leader she needed to 'tune these out' and concentrate on the task at hand. As part of her coping strategy, she recognised her own limitations and the need to maintain her own wellbeing. This she achieved by seeking the support and assistance from military colleagues, which reduced the communication and control burden and highlighted the effectiveness and value of a 'military' leadership style during this period of crisis.

Reflecting on leadership, she recounted the honesty of her CEO who was willing and ready to admit that the project had the potential to fail. However, by acknowledging that, as the project owner, it was his responsibility and he would stand by it, he created an environment in which the workforce could work freely without the burden of organisational accountability.

Against a backdrop of the COVID pandemic and the pace of medical response, the importance of appropriate challenge is paramount. She spoke of the need to overcome her initial discomfort, as a relatively junior individual, to challenge assertions made by a large organisation. She went on to discuss the issue of 'moral injury' should your own moral code be violated, and the associated feelings of vulnerability when you cannot operate as you might wish



Sqn Ldr Claire Webster

SpR Vascular Doctor, Royal British Legion Centre for Blast Injury

to.

Moreover, she highlighted the need for support, particularly in 'trailblazing' situations where feelings of anxiety, loneliness or isolation often accompanied difficult decision making in the absence of formal guidance.

Key Take-Aways

- ▲ The importance of the core values of respect and integrity.
- ▲ The importance of moral courage to make difficult decisions in an ever-changing environment.
- ▲ The importance of leaders to accept appropriate risk.
- ▲ Flexibility to adapt to evolving situations.
- ▲ Recognising your own need for wellbeing and support.

Experience from the COVID-19 Front Line

Sgt Penton is an Infection Prevention Nurse at the Royal Centre for Defence Medicine located within the Queen Elizabeth Hospital in Birmingham (UHB). For the last 5 months she has been employed providing direct medical care throughout the current COVID-19 pandemic.

Reflecting on her experiences as the only military Infection Prevention and Control (IPC) Nurse embedded within the Queen Elizabeth Hospital, Sergeant Penton reflects on how she has grown as a nurse, as a person and as a leader.

Whilst it is all too easy to associate leadership with power and status, it is sometimes necessary to look past the rank to see the experience and knowledge of the individual. This is particularly important in the medical profession. As the only military IPC nurse at the Unit and a JNCO at the time, Sgt Penton had to overcome several challenges from briefing senior medical staffs, developing changes in practices to leading the testing and implementation of new PPE. She established support processes using a simple video to ensure that staff anxiety to the ever-changing guidance was kept to a minimum. This effective means of communication was reinforced by a questionnaire and FAQs were

Whilst it is all too easy to associate leadership with power and status

added to the hospital's Moodle page. Sgt Penton also sought and was granted the release of military CBRN instructors from the hospital wards to take their instructing experience to all the UHB's 4 sites to walk the wards explaining and demonstrating how to fit and check PPE. This initiative was particularly well received.

On reflection she suggests that leaders, of all ranks, may need to take an authoritative stance when faced with tight deadlines but stressed that selecting the right team will pay huge dividends when it comes to task delivery. The 6 military nurses supporting her varied in rank with very few juniors. This, she suggests, demonstrates a perfect example of how knowledge and experience can overtake rank. Leaders also need to trust their team and exploit capacity to expand their leadership role. To emphasize this Sgt Penton gave the example that having trust in her team allowed her free capacity to assist her chain-of-command in developing policies, writing SOPs and conducting induction training. These additional responsibilities enhanced her leadership skills and allowed senior management the capacity to deal with other more demanding and pressing tasks.

In concluding, Sgt Penton stressed that trust and relationship building are essential for collaborative leadership. Furthermore, she suggested that a trusted ally to bounce ideas of and share experiences is essential for personal



Sgt Victoria Penton
Infection Prevention and Control Nurse

and team wellbeing. She went on to say no one really knew what to expect during the worst parts of the pandemic and even if you have the answer or are confident to lead, the biggest challenge is getting others on board or to buy in. Sgt Penton's did not see her junior rank as a barrier to good leadership and as a specialist was able to draw on her experience as a nurse and abilities as a person to successfully lead her team.

Key Take-Aways

- ▲ Rank is not a barrier to good leadership.
- ▲ Junior rank does not automatically mean lack of specialist skills or knowledge.
- ▲ Trust in your team and chain-of-command
- ▲ Never be afraid to be authoritative when the situation demands it.

Delivering Phase 2 Training in Extraordinary Times

The team discussed the remote delivery of TG 17 Phase 2 Training, covering issues ranging from maintaining professional standards; complying with training policy and processes; to guaranteeing an appropriate level of care and a place to study without distraction. They discussed how 2-way communication between the students and the training establishment supported by the RAF Senior Leadership and the Defence College of Logistics Policing and Administration helped deliver a focused and successful virtual training. Engagement and support to the students was provided via WhatsApp and Zoom giving the students the confidence that duty of care was being maintained whilst providing them with a point of contact. The use of remote training was further exploited by providing elements of professional training for 5 pre-IOT graduates, who were holding in the pipeline on delayed or postponed courses. This permitted a seamless transition from graduation from IOT to their first tours. A second initiative to deliver a full financial training day for officers, seniors and

Engagement and support to the students was provided via WhatsApp and Zoom

civil servants has reinforced the potential to deliver 100% for Phase 2 training remotely and to extend the lessons learned and practices to Phase 3 training.

Flt Lt Tidbury and Sgt Salter, members of the training delivery team, discussed the challenges and opportunities of delivering remote training, and how previous work to modernise through a 'flatter' structured and more modular approach drawing on individual skills, enabled by technology had helped. They had elected to deliver the whole phase remotely rather than a blended mix, which they saw as a more agile model that would work now and provide a blueprint for the future. It allowed individuals to take control of their own learning and was considered a more efficient way of doing business with the ability to 'tease' projects out in more detail and involve global speakers. They identified the initial risk that was taken in effectively giving them 'free reign' and the fact that individuals or organisations are often reluctant to relinquish or delegate the risk to an appropriate level.

In concluding, Wg Cdr Parkes reflected on where remote delivery was merely a need during extraordinary times or an evidence backed opportunity that demonstrated that remote training was feasible and could be successful. He ended by stating: "What was certainly proven was that the support of senior



Wg Cdr Steve Parkes
(Personnel Support Branch Advisor),
Flt Lt Daisy Tidbury (2ICOTS(Air))
and
Sgt Adam Salter
(SNCO Trainer, OTS(Air))

leadership, through an informed and measured approach to risk management, allowed the production of a remote course that was compliant, thorough, well considered agile and adaptable, and met the tightest of timescales in difficult and challenging conditions, while satisfying student expectations and the professional demands of today's RAF".

Key Take-Aways

- ▲ Senior management support.
- ▲ Well established communication lines.
- ▲ Vision and drive to challenge the accepted norm.
- ▲ Appropriate, measured, and delegated risk management.

Summary of Session One

CT Brough summed up Session One by saying:

It's rare that the military are called upon in such numbers to assist civil authorities. The RAF has performed a vital role in the country's initial response to the global pandemic, from repatriation flights and the transportation of essential medical supplies, to direct involvement with establishing the Nightingale hospitals and front-line support.

COVID-19 has affected every facet of our organisation. These may have been a temporary measure as an initial response or led to permanent changes in working practices. Time will tell if the training methodologies implemented will have a lasting transformation on the delivery.

Operating in complex, uncertain and ambiguous circumstances is synonymous with military life. The intent, capabilities and whereabouts of our adversaries are often clouded in mystery. Today, who our adversaries are is also ever changing and the volatile world we find ourselves in is likely to become ever more so.

We face complexity, uncertainty and ambiguity in our day-to-day work, not just when on operations. Our culture infers that we should endeavour to make sense of these situations through the application of policy, standard operating procedures and regulation. There are circumstances where this is necessitated; however, we should seek opportunities for experimentation, ingenuity and flexibility in how we work. There was no manual for the response

to the pandemic and the medical involvement will certainly have generated lasting skills and knowledge.

How do we prepare ourselves to thrive in such an unpredictable environment? Well, there is no panacea. Our processes today may no longer be practicable, or even relevant tomorrow, which means we need to be proactive and not reactive to remain effective and enhance our efficiency. Establishing ourselves as a learning organisation, where creating, acquiring and transferring knowledge within a cycle of continuous learning is the norm, will give us the skills needed for future challenges. Self-reflection and introspection are essential contributors to this. Examining our own thoughts and feelings is an important psychological exercise that can help us grow, develop our mental capacity, and extract value from our mistakes.

Enhancing our ability to understand ourselves, our motivations and learn more about our own values will help us overlook the distractions of our modern, fast-paced life, and bring our focus back where it belongs. Organisational agility is also imperative to achieving our objectives and to ensure we can adapt to the increasingly changing world.

Strategic and operational agility are essential in enabling us to respond effectively within a dynamic environment and this can only be delivered through agile leadership. We need to collaborate internally and externally. We need



CT Jono Brough
Park Fellow

to empower our people. We need to develop future-focused skills.

Teams need to function well together, but they also need to trust each other. Investment through mentoring, training and experiential learning will enhance the capabilities of Service personnel; the importance of which cannot be stressed enough. After all, it is the people within our organisation that will determine how successful we are. We don't lead from a position of authority and as leaders we don't need to be the ones who have all the answers. Fostering an environment where problems are solved together, innovation is encouraged and the flexibility to expand horizons without retribution, will help us deliver CAS's vision for Astra.

Developing agile leaders who can navigate complexity should lead to a more agile organisation, better adapted to survive and thrive in a turbulent world.

Introduction to Session 2

Sqn Ldr Macpherson summed up Session One by saying:

In Session One AOC 1 Gp explored the breadth and complexity of leading today in the current operational context and we heard first-hand accounts from Sqn Ldr Claire Webster and Sgt Toria Penton on how our medical staffs are supporting the NHS in the fight against COVID-19 and the leadership challenges faced by our personnel in helping deliver critical care to frontline hospitals. Closer to home, Wg Cdr Parkes and his team discussed some of the challenges faced by Phase 2 Training Schools in continuing to deliver trained personnel to our own front-line units and how the use of intellectual and technical innovation is being exploited to overcome some of these challenges.

But what of the future? What challenges lie ahead for our leaders?

Session 2 started with internationally renowned author and Professor Peter Singer introducing us to 'tomorrow's world: The Real Robotic Revolution'; Andrzej Kawalec described why he thinks we need change; and, in the context of Astra, Flt Lt Abi Bagshaw discussed the place of authenticity in harnessing the power of your whole self and the role of knowing yourself in empowering your team regardless of rank, age or experience.

The Ignite team from High Wycombe offered an insight into their Ignite initiative, the challenges and leadership at all levels required to bring a conceptual idea to life and offered a roadmap of networking opportunities for the future Force Development initiatives across the RAF.

But how do our potential young leaders of the future want to be led and what do they expect of their current and future leaders? Cpl Bromley from Recruit Training



Sqn Ldr Colin Macpherson
SO2 Leadership, Tedder Academy of Leadership

Squadron at RAF Halton gave a personal perspective and that of our current crop of Phase 1 recruits and future leaders.

Drawing Session 2 to a close, SAC Rachel Chapman reflected on the session and on the challenges of leading tomorrow.



Tomorrow's World: The Real Robotics Revolution

Professor Singer spoke on the impact of artificial intelligence (AI) and how the increasing autonomous capabilities of unmanned systems has changed the ways that we operate and

➔ **Facial recognition technology can also be linked to an individual's online history, purchases, movements, their friends and families.**

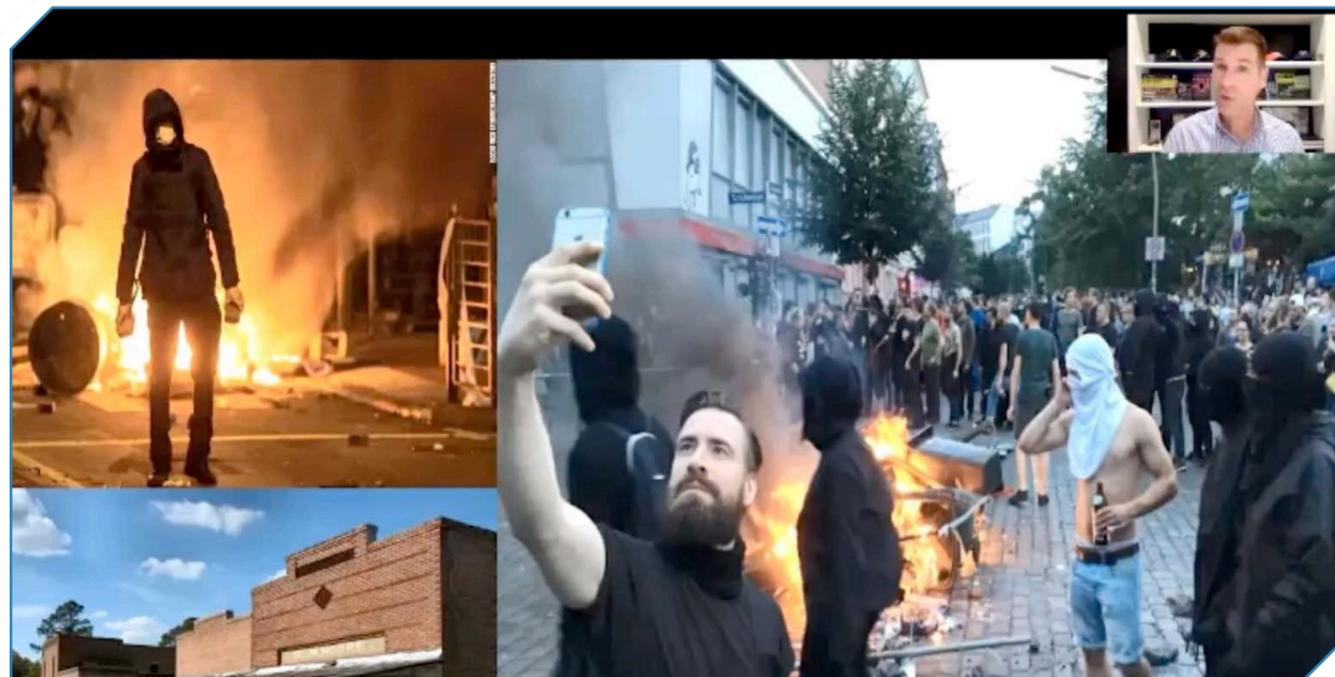
think. He went on to question whether leaders understood the technology, how quickly change was coming and the potential dilemmas posed. He opined that we were at the start of an AI journey that had already disrupted fields ranging from finance, to medicine, to manufacturing. AI is the fastest moving and most deeply funded technology area, in which a wide array of leading research universities and companies operate at the forefront of merging hardware and software.

Challenging the perception that new technologies lead to new jobs and opportunities, he presented data that showed that displacement and replacement occurred on a massive scale as increasingly intelligent and independent technology takes on more of a worker's role. The impact of resource levelling needed to be understood.



Professor Peter Singer PhD
Author of *Burn-in and Ghost Fleet*

Moreover, new technologies raised legal, moral and ethical questions about permissibility and accountability. What level of autonomy should be allowed? Who owns the technology or information they produce? Who



is accountable if something goes wrong? For example, facial recognition technology can also be linked to an individual's online history, purchases, movements, their friends and families. This information can then be used to sway or shape the individual's sub-conscious decision making. For example, lead them to buy a particular product or to proceed or behave in a certain way.

Experience has shown that technology is susceptible to cyber-attacks aimed at kinetic change rather than the theft of information. Examples were given of targeting individuals and country water supplies. Furthermore, Professor Singer suggested that there

is a disconnect between the perceived importance of AI, a baseline understanding; and how quickly the impact of AI was likely to be felt by leaders. In a survey of leaders, 91% stated AI as the most important game changing technology, however only 17% stated they had a base awareness of it, whilst it was often seen as an issue for the future. The point being made that these technologies are here now and are already shaping how we operate. He cited the example that over 80% of jobs were lost in manufacturing over the last 20 years due to automation. How could leaders cope with the associated dilemmas without greater understanding?

Key Take-Aways

- ▲ Emerging technology will impact businesses, families, politics and wars.
- ▲ Accordingly, individuals, organisations and nations that choose not to face or understand these changes, or refused to change with them, were making a deliberate choice to lose their future through their inaction.
- ▲ It is important to explore how to communicate what is important, what matters and what is new.

What were the most popular questions?



We consistently say people are our most important asset, but favour equipment over decent accommodation etc. What are we doing to improve the lived experience?

Anonymous



How do we ensure that everyone feels valued, whether they are happy fulfilling their role or going above and beyond – as not everyone wants promotion.

Gp Capt Jo Lincoln



How do we ensure that in the move to more online training, we don't lose the valuable interactions/sharing of ideas that occurs when we meet face-to-face?

Anonymous



What should we do to grow our people's emotional intelligence? Isn't this the route to greater understanding, inclusivity and compassionate leadership?

JC



Have we considered how the next generation of RAF personnel will wish to be led, to reflect the effects of growing up in a rapidly-evolving technological world?

Tim Lindsay



Why do we need change?

Andrzej Kawalec said that:

Leadership, change management and the ability to adapt has never been more exciting or important when viewed against a generational shift in the interaction of technology and society. Recent events had driven rapid technological adoption, which have broken the link between physical proximity and actions. Mr Kawalec challenged how leaders and their teams were set up to handle technology that, by design, was milliseconds faster than human thought; how do we lead organisations in the digital era? Moreover, he noted that the pace of innovation would never be slower than today however, the value of ideas would degrade quicker given that pace.

Expanding the theme, he went on to discuss the demands and expectations of the new 'digital native' generation of team members entering the workspace, how they think very differently about their impact and how they work, their desire for vibrant workspaces, for diversity of thought and the ability to affect change.

These 'digital natives' have less patience, higher expectations and are more comfortable with ambiguity. This allows them to think about interactions and possibilities in a different way. However, this is at odds with organisational status standards, hierarchical workplaces and how technologies and programmes are currently delivered. He asserted that technology was being adopted faster than individuals and organisations were adapting to it, creating a digital divide in 3 key areas: level of access to infrastructure and connectivity, usability through understanding, and how organisations are empowered to support and foster a digital centric behaviour. Without the ability to address all 3 areas, adaption would continue to lag adoption. He highlighted the tensions between transparency and anonymity; contrasting personal and private data made available through social media interaction, with anonymous online behaviour that allowed individuals to do anything from anywhere with impunity.

Mr Kawalec discussed how a leader could identify where their team was on the digital divide; on whether they faced an infrastructure, literacy or empowerment challenge and how they might bridge the gap. He offered advice on counting, modelling and



Andrzej Kawalec
Head of Security Portfolio,
Vodafone Business

correlating data to provide a logical digital model of a physical thing or process to map, predict and analyse changes without reverting to paper-based modelling and processes that relied on intuition, inference and experience. He went on to stress the importance of retaining the human element and the opportunity to create new working environments, immersive, interactive and inclusive environments.

Key Take-Aways

- ▲ Do not forget your people in an ever-increasing digital revolution.
- ▲ Help your people adapt and adopt to exploit opportunities to create immersive, empowering and liberating experiences.
- ▲ It will not be the most intelligent or the strongest that will survive, rather the most adaptable to change.



Astra. Authenticity, Harnessing the Power of Your Whole Self

'Astra. Authenticity, Harnessing the Power of Your Whole Self'

centres on individuals knowing themselves and the importance of a leadership environment that allowed everyone to then be themselves in their workplace. Flt Lt Bagshaw suggests that authentic individuals would be happier and more effective, which in turn would improve the effectiveness of the RAF. She recognised that to be yourself you need to know yourself and highlighted self-awareness as the most important element underpinning leadership.

She noted that that just being yourself without an appropriate environment was difficult because individuals behave differently in different situations or around different people. Her concern being that 'different versions' of yourself, have strayed a long way from the person that they really are; not least when trying to suppress

certain parts of their lives (like a hobby which may be considered 'nerdy'; one's sexuality or heritage) or try to be something they aren't for fear of being judged, cast out or not being liked. She argued that existing working environments stifle cognitive diversity and damage emotional and spiritual wellbeing by restricting the degree to which individuals can expose their true thoughts, feelings, beliefs and personality in their workplaces. To facilitate this, workspaces need to be psychologically safe to enable individuals to comfortably be themselves, to display strengths, weaknesses, passions and quirks without feeling threatened, to share opinions, to be heard, to know that they make a difference and know that they are accepted. Astra is striving to create that workspace through forums that allow anyone to raise, develop or challenge ideas. Astra is described as the RAF's largest interconnected network that empowers the whole force to rapidly share and replicate ideas and best practice that allows *'your local bit of awesome ... [to] ... become everyone's bit of awesome'*.

Flt Lt Bagshaw highlighted the crucial role that feedback and trust plays in building psychological safety and how the Astra team have embraced this.



Flt Lt Abi Bagshaw
Astra Communications

Psychological safety is important when creating an environment in which failure is an option. Flt Lt Bagshaw surmised that we live in a culture paralysed by fear of failure; where success or failure is assessed without considering that success is often a collection of several failures. She asserted that the result was a culture that promoted 'safe' actions and hardened a rigid sense of perfectionism, which she felt was the single most disempowering state of mind to have when trying to be more creative, inventive or entrepreneurial and noted that she did not believe this was helped by the military reporting system. Furthermore, she suggested that failure is what makes someone, and they should neither fear nor shy away from it. However, changing a culture where failure is taught to be bad rather than usefully good is not easy. Astra opens this door to allow personnel the freedom to be able to fail, to share and talk about them

Flt Lt Bagshaw highlighted the crucial role that feedback and trust plays in building psychological safety and how the Astra team have embraced this.



to learn and get better.

Experience can mean excellence but that it was not a given, and with that, the opinion of the 'seniors' seems to be given greater weight. She considered retorts such as 'we listen to everyone in my place of work' that suggested otherwise, however felt that on many occasions individuals have been unable to express themselves because they felt their seniority or lack thereof did not accord them the authority to speak, and suggested that badges and ranks further solidified 'experience' making effective challenge difficult. She raised an interesting point that often preceded a presentation or lecture, where a statement was made on how long the presenter had done x, y, z, and why that meant they should be talking, without any consideration of excellence. She opined that we are

missing excellence in emerging specialist areas such as space, cyber and information, where personnel are researching, learning and developing skills outside of a core military curriculum.

In conclusion, she re-iterated that Astra was rank, experience, branch or trade agnostic in providing an outlet for the skills outside of an individual's primary specialisation by empowering them to take their ideas from conception to completion.

Much is taught about listening to experts and specialists in leadership discussions, however she felt no-one was encouraged to say, 'I am the expert'. She encouraged individuals to just be themselves by considering the areas in which they excel in and displaying them in their workplace by taking up space, demanding to be listened to, and

saying – I am the expert, and you should listen to me because.

Key Take-Aways

- ▲ Do not be afraid to say, 'I am the expert'.
- ▲ Be your true self by knowing yourself, accepting this is difficult and takes a long time.
- ▲ Encourage and allow the Whole Force to be genuinely authentic by creating working environments that are psychologically safe and embrace cognitive diversity.
- ▲ Have positive attitudes towards failure - having a bad idea does not make someone a bad person.
- ▲ Champion your own and others excellence.

Disruptive Thinking

Ignite was introduced as a non-directed initiative to facilitate free flowing, safe, peer group discussion. It would challenge, ask and answer difficult questions through diversity of thinking in which SMEs would inform discussion rather than being sought as the sole providers of answers. It aimed to encourage and support junior leaders, who were outside of any formalised disruptive thinking programme, to bring ideas that could be realised as beneficial activities for individuals, small teams or larger groups. The perception being that informed disruptive thinking and reasonable challenge would have a positive effect on the RAF.

The team discussed the importance of mission command, empowerment and trust from leaders that had allowed the programme to get off the ground, had not 'seen' it as a threat and had enabled investment in time and

technology to unlock previously unseen potential. They also highlighted the importance of trust in the conduct of their business, in order that 'challengers' felt that they had been listened to and their ideas fully considered, and in the promotion of that experience for individual units to influence subsequent activities. Cultural trust was presented as a key requirement in enabling successful 'grass root' disruptive thinking. Moreover, they suggested that rank or status can stifle debate in any forum stressing that it is important for 'seniors' to step back from, rather than dominate debate.

They acknowledged how individuals often preferred to raise 'issues' that might be perceived as 'whinges' in side bar discussions rather than plenary, however saw the benefits that technology offered in terms of 'pseudo' anonymity, where being remote or distant facilitated more honest



**Sqn Ldr Gemma Bean,
Flt Lt Tom Ginger,
Flt Lt Joel Forbes
and Flt Lt Matty Allen**

Ignite Team

discussion and 'safe' opportunities for engagement by individuals who would normally be hidden away.

Ignite's ambition is to build a 'network of networks' to tap into station activities across the RAF; to link up thinkers, who might otherwise feel constrained by rank or the nature of their work, to tackle the problems that the [#NextGenRAF](#) is going to face and attempt to find solutions that would work for everyone.

Key Take-Aways

- ▲ Empower people to be comfortable with a disruptive growth mindset.
- ▲ Recognise that no individual has the perfect answer.
- ▲ Individuals should question what they have done today to lead better tomorrow.



NextGen RAF Leadership: A Personal Perspective

Cpl Bromley's presentation focussed on effective leadership through the lens of an instructor at the Recruit Training Squadron at RAF Halton, where the non-commissioned next generation of RAF leaders start their RAF journey. She considered effective leadership to be a balance between leadership and management with equal importance attached to both, and went on to discuss her perception of how these skills sets were manifested in the RAF.

Management skills were felt to be closely monitored, honed through promotion and came quite naturally to the majority. Whilst, elements of leadership were felt to come naturally to some, others were less comfortable. She argued for greater emphasis to be placed on a continuous process for developing leadership skills with an annual refresh. Where management and leadership skill sets overlapped, she felt that they took time to hone but were addressed on mandatory management and leadership courses that accompanied

➔ She concluded by describing how continuous feedback from her subordinates was vital to enable self-improvement.

promotion. However, she considered that there were minimal subsequent opportunities for Continuous Professional Development for associated leadership roles.

Cpl Bromley considered the most important factor was to have a leader/manager that "knew you as an individual; to build trust and enable them to motivate and mentor to get the best from you." She had felt most valued and empowered when a good working relationship was established with her chain of command, where simple things like knowing her name and role, and time taken to check in with her made her feel part of a valuable team. She also emphasised the importance of leaders being 'present' for subordinates. Acknowledging that whilst the chain of command can be extremely busy with other tasks, a few minutes of empathy/compassion could be the pull factor that retained someone in service.

She argued that the next generation recruits were keen to question and understand the rationale behind a task when they did not have oversight of the bigger picture; the days of "I say, you do" were over. Her JNCO cohort had discussed how incomplete information acted as a barrier to effective leadership making it difficult to motivate or inspire recruits to take an interest in the work. She felt that similar barriers were experienced with information flowing up from her level. She valued events such as "Station



Cpl Symone Bromley
Phase 1 Instructor, RTS

Commanders questions"; however, felt that too many remained unaware of these opportunities as they were inadequately advertised at various levels. Later in her presentation she raised her concerns that junior personnel were rarely allowed to be authentic with senior visitors and often 'guided' beforehand by their chain of command on what they can and cannot say. She perceived that there is still a culture of not being able to say exactly how you feel for fear of it being detrimental to your career or being disciplined for it.

She saw a need for all levels of ranks to sit within meetings and be enabled speak freely on the topics presented. She had experienced that opportunity and felt it was the first time in her career that she felt truly empowered to speak her mind in front of all ranges of rank without fear of being reprimanded. She considered that this had been extremely effective in achieving openness from different



perspectives. She re-iterated that it was important for junior ranks to understand the pressure placed on leaders at times; however, felt that with more information dissemination and openness it would happen.

Cpl Bromley discussed her cohort as the 'first face' of RAF non-commissioned leadership that new joiners experienced, and the importance placed in establishing core values and managing expectations, sometimes made difficult by the ongoing infrastructure issues currently at RAF Halton. Accordingly, she seeks to promote attitudes and beliefs that she would wish to experience, leads by example setting and expecting high standards in daily attitude, uniform standards and morals. She stressed the essential skills for getting the best from her recruits were being approachable, knowing her recruits, enabling them to speak freely and being there when needed. She described how she provides the

tools required to complete tasks, empowers recruits to speak up, holds them and herself to account for standards when necessary. She concluded by describing how continuous feedback from her subordinates was vital to enable self-improvement; however, highlighted that some leaders can be reluctant to do this as they misinterpret it as insubordination.

Cpl Bromley discussed how she felt a lack of understanding of some cultures and beliefs was a barrier to effective leadership and prevented leaders from fully understanding their subordinates and vice versa. She believed many felt afraid to ask questions within their workplace for fear of saying the wrong thing or sending the wrong message and that leadership skills could be enhanced from a cultural perspective by cultural awareness events, for example, a seminar held within a safe environment to help managers/leaders to fully understand various cultures and beliefs. Eliciting the views of

recruits, the single common issue fed back was that it vital for junior and senior ranks to share thoughts/opinions and perspectives on a regular basis. This she suggests ensures a sound understanding of each other's current problems/reasoning.

She gave some insights into the breadth of skills and experience brought by the current generation of recruit, many of whom have previous life experience within large companies or businesses and have completed degrees or trade training.

Key Take-Aways

- ▲ Be proud to be a member of a forward-thinking Service.
- ▲ Create and embrace an open discussion culture.
- ▲ Create an environment for constructive decent.
- ▲ Explain the 'why' not the 'how'.

Introduction to Session 3

WO Willis introduced the Power of Culture session in which civilian, Civil Service and Military experts would talk about the Power of Culture, Military & Whole Force Culture, Diversity and Talent Management.

He went on to describe culture as is a series of shared values and beliefs that provided a sense of belonging or identity, and was made up of elements of history, religion, language, traditions, values, beliefs and customs. He offered that culture was instilled early on in life but was constantly evolving,

➤ **WO Willis described culture as a 7 layer onion.**

describing it as a 7-layered onion where only the outer layer was immediately visible.

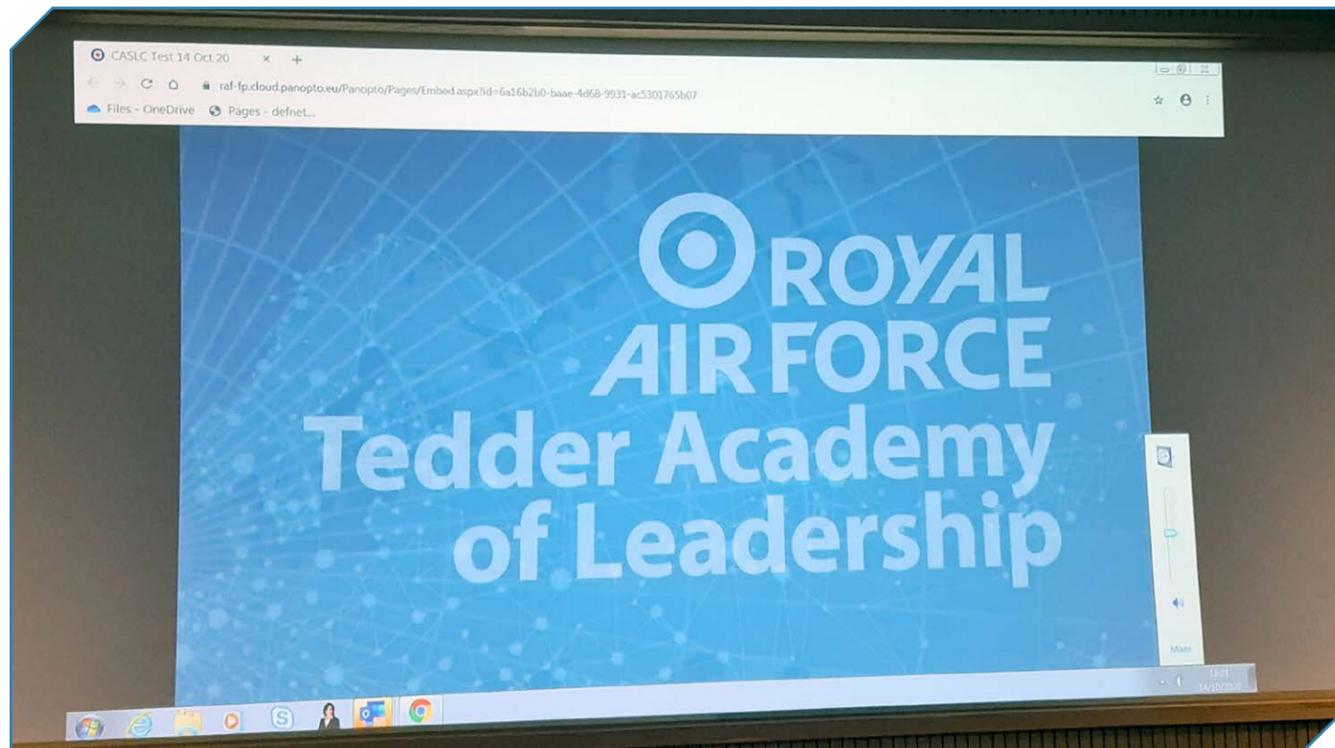
WO Willis went on to unpeel that onion; labelling the outer skin as **artefacts** (the things or objects that are connected with that person), moving inwards to **behaviours** (what a person does), through **feelings, values, beliefs** and **worldview** to the centre, which he described as **ultimate allegiance** (the beating heart, the starting point, the trigger and grounding reality that gives basic direction, cohesion and structure to the underlying stories, mental mappings, meta-narratives and perspectives in a person's worldview).

WO Willis highlighted that our new RAF leadership doctrine (AP7001)



WO Mark Willis
WO Leadership
Tedder Academy of Leadership

championed the cultural diversity of its workforce and encouraged RAF leaders to harness the variety and richness offered and to cherish, channel and utilise them to our advantage.



The Power of Culture and Sub-Cultures

Lord Adebowale discussed leadership in an increasingly more complicated world and the need to establish a 'new' normal following the global challenges that Covid-19 had brought to health, economy and defence. He highlighted the influence of dynamic information that could be parsed or manipulated to be truthful or otherwise, and reflected on the leadership challenges of organisational complexity, which now saw many different people running different things in different places, in different ways. He noted how demographics, race, gender and age were changing the RAF and stressed the importance of

➤ **He noted the importance of honesty in understanding 'where you are' and 'where you are going', and the need to be prepared to ask some fundamental questions and deal with the answers, no matter how uncomfortable that might be.**

diversity in better decision making and mitigation to groupthink.

Lord Adebowale considered leadership as the ability to lead people from where they are, to where they have not been yet, and stressed its importance in a rapidly changing, rapidly advancing dynamic world. A leader would start the process by asking and gathering those who were willing to take on that challenge, which he described as system leadership that would thrive. He stressed that the days of a leader directing 'what, when and how' without reference to context had long gone; as had any assumption that the leader was the fount of all knowledge or had all the power.

Leadership needed to be distributed; everyone needed a leadership role to facilitate communication across, down and within an organisation in the interests of its vision, values, strategy and operations. Distributed leadership relied on values established by the leader and he stressed the importance of a leader knowing and being themselves; of understanding the complexity of the organisation in which they operated; of recognising that culture was their responsibility; of leading everyone everywhere, all the time; and of comprehending that leadership was about what happened when the leader was not in the room.

Lord Adebowale highlighted the importance of leaders taking responsibility for the whole, and not just the part; seeing the organisation as a system and



Lord Victor Adebowale
Founder & Director,
Leadership in MindLTD

knowing how their place in that system would influence how it operated. He noted the importance of honesty in understanding 'where you are' and 'where you are going', and the need to be prepared to ask some fundamental questions and deal with the answers, no matter how uncomfortable that might be. He concluded by describing the leadership challenges posed by the changing context of the environment in which the RAF operates and the society that it protects; different people with different values that have come together to create an organisation with a single mission and values.

Key Take-Aways

- ▲ A leader must keep learning, asking questions throughout the organisation, listening, and exploring answers.
- ▲ Consistent and honest answers are more likely to lead to desired changes.

A Reflection on Military Culture

Air Cdre Monahan and Wg Cdr Henton examined the power of RAF culture against the backdrop of great technological change and the associated emergence of new threats; asserting that culture was a deep and powerful driving force that would either enable great power or hold the RAF back. They discussed why culture matters; the positives; the pitfalls; and the importance of ensuring that personnel were prepared for technological change and adaptation. Wg Cdr Henton described culture as a 'coat of many colours' in which discipline and professional ethos provided the cohesion to be an effective fighting force. It was distinguished from other organisational cultures by a set of distinct values and practices, the focus on rules and regulations, and the acceptance of discipline as a day-to-day occurrence. Air Cdre Monahan used the onion analogy to highlight the importance of the outer layer as the first 'visible' insight of a culture offering that processes and practices established over years demonstrated the breadth of culture and how these all contributed to the desired attitudes, expectations and assumptions made in AP1: Ethos, Core Values and Standards of the RAF.

Wg Cdr Henton saw military culture as an asset that helped define appropriate behaviour; reinforced organisational values; provided a sense of identity; foster social cohesion; and delivered a competitive advantage. Air Cdre Monahan noted the benefits as



Wg Cdr Louise Henton
OC BSW RAF Waddington

teamwork, cohesion and loyalty, and the importance of RAF training in inculcating selflessness and teamwork. He pointed to research that had shown how militaries with a strong and effective culture had prevailed in peer-on-peer warfare against those with a less effective culture, citing the Battle of Britain as an example. Both stressed the importance of marrying the cultures of elements that made up the RAF to ensure a coherent Whole Force.

Wg Cdr Henton considered that RAF subcultures at departmental, station, wing or squadron levels, and the ability to enact new regulations when faced with entrenched attitudes or core beliefs, acted as identified barriers to rapid cultural change. She highlighted the dilemma of challenge in a hierarchical culture when there was an expectation to conform. She also discussed the importance of recognising that what might be perceived as a



Air Cdre Fin Monahan
Head Doctrine, Air Space & Cyber

joke, prank or banter could easily escalate to become inappropriate behaviour; the risk of wrong behaviour being accepted as the norm; and the dangers of groupthink suppressing diversity of thoughts and challenge. Air Cdre Monahan provided examples of where a 'yes sir' groupthink mentality had adversely limited alternative thinking and questioning.

Key Take-Aways

- ▲ A leader's values and assumptions will impact on culture and organisational shaping.
- ▲ A military leader can influence almost all aspects of a subordinate's life.
- ▲ Everyone had a role to play in managing and understanding culture – encouraging what is right; and not ignoring or failing to act on, what is wrong.

Whole Force Culture

Ms Sheridan opened by talking about whole force culture and the strategic opportunity it offered for Defence to attract and retain the talent and capability needed to deal with a complex future. She highlighted the benefits that a Force, shaped by very different experiences, brought to complex problem-solving, and discussed the impact of self-reinforcement in which an individual filters what they see and experience based on their own values, beliefs, background, history and the way that they have been brought up and educated. Positives included the ability to set goals and appreciate what was relevant or related to them; the negatives being an inability to see data and evidence that conflicted with their view of the world because they are sub-consciously filtered out.

She identified the opportunity that diversity offered to rapidly develop insights through combined perspectives, which would allow the insight to rapidly sense and exploit opportunities.

Ms Sheridan emphasised the 'pull factors' of commitment and sense of purpose in attracting future generations, acknowledging that cultural differences often worked against a unified sense of purpose and commitment to collaboration. She offered that the benefits of diversity could only be realised when culture and practices allowed it, warning that the formation of 'in-groups' inevitably created an outgroup and a subcultural boundary that was very difficult for diverse perspectives to bridge. She identified the dangers posed by groups that thought in the same way, that mirrored perspectives



Ms Siobhan Sheridan
Director Civilian HR

which made them feel smarter, validated their world view, and confirmed their prejudices. It was fundamental to create a climate where individuals could be their whole selves and bring a different perspective without the risk of





being 'altered' or placed into an outgroup; future generations had grown up and were more comfortable in a vibrantly diverse, highly collaborative environment.

Ms Sheridan illustrated how a higher-demographic proportion of younger civil servants were electing to leave the MOD; citing cultural aspects such as being judged by their age rather than the perspective that they offered, feeling limited by the hierarchical ways of operating and for those from different types of backgrounds, finding themselves in an environment for the first time where they're the only one in the room and struggling to get their voices, perspectives and contributions heard. Ms Sheridan also discussed how curiosity could enable an understanding of different perspectives and how processes or procedures that might be perceived as 'strange or unusual' often had a purpose that needed to be understood in order to develop respect for a

way of operation, and to develop compassion for challenges that leaders with different perspectives faced.

Ms Sheridan raised the importance of curiosity driving the critical leadership skill of being able to assimilate and adapt to different perspectives. This was presented as being at the heart of an innovative and creative culture that would enable a psychologically safe environment, which was considered a key factor in high performing teams. Furthermore, she raised the criticality to success of a leader establishing a working environment in which individuals could contribute or challenge without fear of 'career fouling' retribution. She emphasised the importance of appropriate behaviour in creating a genuinely inclusive, empowering culture to successfully attract the talent required for the future and in developing mutual respect within multigenerational working environments so that the young

are not 'written off' as knowing nothing or the older generation seen as stuck in their ways and resistant to change. She stressed that Defence culture was not broken and that many aspects remain incredibly positive; however, she opined that there was no good or bad, no right or wrong culture. Rather, did the culture match intent; what aspects remained relevant and what needed to change to enable success?

Key Take-Aways

- ▲ The whole force construct is a powerful strategic opportunity.
- ▲ Changes in the future of warfare and working practices will need to attract and retain an exceptional talent base.
- ▲ We must react to the world around us and be prepared to change and develop.

A Civil Servant's Perspective of RAF Culture

Ms Donnell reflected on 15 years experiences of culture gained as a MOD Civil Servant under different departments, different ministers, different colour governments and leadership styles, culminating in joining the RAF as a senior leader in Feb 20.

She stressed the importance of making the effort to understand and appreciate new cultures to avoid causing inadvertent offence and noted how well the RAF was geared up to quickly assimilated individuals into new roles. She attributed this to the fact that service personnel tended to move between posts relatively often, which she contrasted with her previous experience of individuals who stayed in post for decades without seeking change. She also emphasised the importance of understanding the passion and the pride that is inherent in an organisation.

Ms Donnell discussed the importance of the shadow that a leader cast - the idea that as a leader moved through ranks and progressed in seniority, they had a conscious or unconscious, influence and impact on their team out with who they were as an individual. She opined that the shadow increased with seniority and gave an example of how frustration or upset displayed by a leader could lead to a similar response from their team, whilst a positive outlook gave direction and encouraged engagement.

She noted the challenge of

being a senior leader within an authoritative and command led structure where her profile carries more weight, and where even informal discussions might be taken as an implied task or direction. Anecdotally, she recalled how a throw away comment on what might be done in the future was often followed by funding being sought as approval for it. She also identified her desire to lead by example, using her shadow to enable greater diversity, inclusivity and a permissive culture that allowed honesty in expression.

Ms Donnell also touched on how rank pervaded the RAF and the impact on organisational culture when value is judged by seniority rather than the quality of delivery. She considered that the explicit use of rank in the military drove a degree of risk aversion to raising issues that might be perceived as career limiting, and how 'holding back' could limit operational effectiveness.

She also questioned whether RAF culture encouraged honesty, challenge or valued 2-way communication by relating an anecdote in which an individual openly and honestly replied to an issue raised on an Astra forum, only to be rang up and told to remove it.

Senior leaders should expect and be open to challenge or uncomfortable feedback, which she felt to be better than being embarrassed or discredited down the line by an inappropriate



Ms Alanah Donnell
Head of Media Comms

decision; challenge leads to innovation and effectiveness. Are there occasions when the removal of rank would be helpful?

Key Take-Aways

- ▲ A perception that career progression too often relied on not upsetting the hierarchy responsible for an individual's future prospects.
- ▲ Career advancement was achieved by 'time served', which precluded recruiting the best individuals from outside of the Service into senior positions, or to release individuals to the private sector and subsequently re-recruit them.
- ▲ Reluctance of organisation to enable new leaders to challenge existing habits, structures, processes and procedures.

The Strength of Diversity

Mr Syed focused on the mission critical role of diversity in how organisations perform and innovate. He highlighted the effect that demographic and cognitive diversity had on how information was filtered and how issues were considered, noting that a team that shared a similar background were limited in their creative ability to connect with the objective that they sought to pursue.

Mr Syed was keen to stress that diversity should not be reduced to a box ticking exercise and that cognitive diversity could build collective intelligence. He highlighted the dangers of 'like-minded' homogeneity in reinforcing or validating potentially gravely flawed assumptions in complex situations.

He further intimated that specialists often worked in knowledge silos and were reluctant to reach out to those who had different ideas of problem solving. He saw the trajectory of innovation as interdisciplinary teams who harnessed the cross pollination of divergent thinking. Specialists needed to have enough curiosity to think about how different ideas and technologies could either be blended or provoke alternate solutions; diverse teams would

▶ Mr Syed was keen to stress that diversity should not be reduced to a box ticking exercise.

assimilate data more effectively by accessing a richer, more complete dataset. He offered that whilst cognitive diversity sometimes related to demographic diversity, it was the different insights that counted. He later highlighted the territorial risks of silos with their own ethos, culture and way of doing things – highlighting the danger of an 'if it was not invented here, we are not doing it' mentality.

Mr Syed went on to discuss some of the issues faced by a leader in channelling cognitive diversity into a successful outcome: Were the right people in the room – was there the diversity? How to ensure that individuals expressed ideas – did they feel included and able to contribute? He noted the challenges facing a hierarchical organisation in which the chain of command was visibly identified with symbols or certain types of uniform. He highlighted the potential for leaders to become defensive about an idea, and for subordinates to unconsciously parrot or mirror the leader. He stressed that a leader could not out-source decision making; however, it was up to the leader to create an environment where people could speak up and better inform the decisions made.

He gave the example of Amazon in encouraging independent thinking at meetings; individuals were given 15 minutes to read the agenda, write their points out in silence and then openly discuss them – importantly the leader would speak last. The obvious benefit being that an idea is evaluated on merit and not the status of the person who suggested it.



Matthew Syed
Journalist and Bestselling Author

Key Take-Aways

- ▲ For diversity to be embraced, individuals needed to believe in it.
- ▲ An organisational diversity agenda that merely talked about diversity, either because it was considered good publicity or that it showed good values did not work.
- ▲ To avoid being defensive, individuals need to have bought into the concept of diversity.
- ▲ Most of the opportunities in the will would come from innovation and that it would be those organisations that are the most open minded and curious that will win in the long term.
- ▲ Entrenched organisations will be defeated by an adversary that innovated in an effective way.

Talent Strategy Launch

WO Shaw presented on the RAF's Talent Strategy, which aims to further realise the true value of human capital by setting 3 strategic talent objectives and creating a detailed Talent Action Plan to build the Astra talent foundation of the [#NextGenRAF](#). The Strategy takes a 5-year view to the 3 objectives of increasing 'diversity of talent', 'supercharging organisational benefit' and 'developing targeted approaches' and looks beyond pure 'talent management', leadership development and succession planning, to understand how RAF structures, policies, processes and practices attract, nurture and capitalise upon talent at all career stages.

WO Shaw stressed the importance that full engagement played in retention and recruitment, and the importance of capturing and retaining hearts and minds throughout an individual's career path. Noting that our workforce consists of 4 generations working

side-by-side and that whilst all shared the same desire to make a difference, each had different motivations and expectations. The ability to unlock differing talents would be vital to overcoming the challenges of operating across the newer warfighting domains of space and cyber, if the RAF is to remain in the vanguard of high technology.

The Strategy defines talent as 'individuals who make a difference to organisational performance, either through their immediate contribution or in the longer term by demonstrating the greatest levels of potential'. He went on to describe how characteristics attributed to talented people (leadership behaviour, initiative, expertise and creativity) provided a model to reconfigure RAF career structures and pathways that would liberate the full potential of the workforce, maximise organisation gain and supercharge people development. He saw the



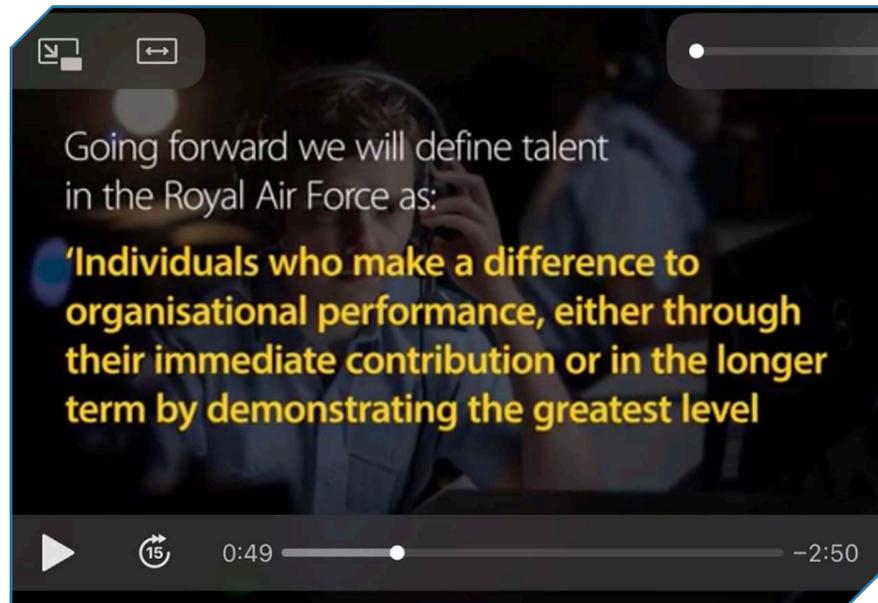
WO Danny Shaw
WO Talent Strategy

aggregation of technically and cognitively similar branches and trades restructured into a much-reduced number of professions as the key to increasing the agility of organisational structures to pre-empt and react quickly and effectively to change.

It is mission critical to recruit and retain the most able people drawn from the broadest diversity of

▶ WO Shaw briefed how targeted approaches would be developed across segments of critical skillsets, but not necessarily the organisational whole.





thought, skills and background. Accordingly, the Talent Futures Team is focussed on developing initiatives designed to identify talent early and accelerate the growth of a more diverse workforce; initiatives such as appraisal talent markers for SACs-Sgts, examining how to increase access to positive action pathways and contributing to the MOD-led independent review of the appraisals and promotion process.

WO Shaw described how skills and workforce context continues to drive persistent [external] competition for talented people, and the need to develop strategies that attracted, developed and retained talent. One initiative was the creation of the Defence Skills Framework to provide a better understanding of the commonality of jobs and skills, and how roles map into functions. This would enable clear and defined career pathways and instil a culture of career mobility. Benefit would also be gained through the delivery of an intuitive talent toolkit to assist line managers and

help develop a culture in which individuals are continuously involved in discussions about their development, aspirations and performance.

WO Shaw briefed how targeted approaches would be developed across segments of critical skillsets, but not necessarily the organisational whole, as part of an inclusive approach to talent. A High Potential Talent Programme for selected personnel filling key duties below the rank of WO would ensure earlier identification of leadership talent and provide interventions designed to nurture, cultivate and accelerate growth. This programme would also contribute to the MOD Report on Inappropriate Behaviours by ensuring our highest calibre NCOs continue to be inspired and prepared to become among the most visible and influential members setting and sustaining norms and culture.

In drawing his presentation to a close, WO Shaw questioned whether the current opportunities

for career growth through a vertical career vector where individuals are rewarded by increasing rank and leadership responsibility was appropriate for those not interested in any race to the top. He noted that whilst all our leaders have talent, not all our talent are leaders and offered that targeted skills-focussed horizontal career structures could offer the potential to attract and retain talented experts by means of reward, recognition and progression other than by rank.

Key-Takeaways

- ▲ The Talent Strategy has given the RAF opportunities to determine talent vision and future goals
- ▲ Allowed the planning of actions to answer the key challenge; how do we leverage the full talents of our people, not only to enhance operational effect, but to begin building the human capability required by the Next Generation RAF?
- ▲ The Talent Strategy supports the Astra vision to offer an authentic connection between people and organisation; a transparent psychological contract that commits to the removal of all talent barriers and engenders a high-performance meritocracy.
- ▲ All to own and be guided by the principles of the Strategy and to play their part in ensuring that the RAF capitalised upon the energy, creativity and skills its workforce to retain our decisive edge.

Presenter Biographies



**Air Chief Marshal
Sir Michael Wigston
KCB CBE ADC**

The Chief of the Air Staff is the 4-star commander and professional head of the Royal Air Force. He is accountable to the Secretary of State for its fighting effectiveness,

efficiency and morale. Reporting through the Chief of the Defence Staff, he is responsible for the development, generation, integration and sustainment of the RAF in accordance with Defence policy and priorities to meet CDS strategic objectives.

ACM Sir Michael Wigston was appointed Chief of the Air Staff on 26 July 2019.

Commissioned on a University Cadetship in 1986, he completed his pilot training on the Tornado GR1 in 1992 followed by a succession of frontline tours, including operational deployments enforcing the no-fly zones in Iraq. He commanded 12 (Bomber) Squadron, flying the Tornado GR4 and leading the Squadron on two operational tours in Iraq and large force exercises in Canada, Malaysia and the USA. Appointments in operational headquarters have included Al Udeid Airbase, Qatar, as the Chief of Combat Operations in the Combined Air and Space Operations Centre; Basrah International Airport, Iraq as Commander 903 Expeditionary Air Wing; and one year in Afghanistan as the Director Air Operations in Headquarters ISAF Joint Command. He was appointed CBE in 2013 for his contribution to that mission.

Education and training includes: reading Engineering Science at Oriel College, Oxford; the Advanced Command and Staff Course; an MA in Defence Studies from King's College London; the Higher Command and Staff Course; and the UK Pinnacle Course. He is a Vice Patron of the Royal Air Force Charitable Trust and President of the Royal Air Force Rowing Association.

In October 2020, he was appointed to the Military Division of the Most Honourable Order of the Bath as Knight Commander (KCB).



**Group Captain
Emma Keith
BA MSc RAF**

Emma grew up in Guernsey, graduating from the University of Cardiff and becoming a member of Wales University Air Squadron before joining the Royal Air Force as a

Flight Operations Officer in 1999.

Her career has included a wide variety of roles: support to the Harrier GR7, deployments on HMS Illustrious, outer office, as both Aide-de-Camp and Personal Staff Officer; the first Ops Officer on the then newly established 5 (AC) Sqn with responsibility for implementing the Mission Planning cycle; airfield management positions; detachments to Seeb, Oman in support of the Nimrod MR2 and to Al Udeid to work in the multi-national CAOC. She spent several years on detachment with the Army at the Land Warfare Centre, Warminster.

Promoted to Wg Cdr she took post as Officer Commanding Initial Officer and Airmen Cadet Training Unit in April 2015, the first female to undertake the role. The College received its first ever triple outstanding rating from OFSTED under her tenure. She received a national award as an Agent of Change in 2016 for her inclusive approach. Moving to the Tedder Academy in 2017 with responsibility for the direction of leadership and command training across the RAF. Gp Capt Keith moved into the position of Commandant Tedder Academy of Leadership in 2020.

Emma has a Master's in Leadership and a level 8 diploma in Strategic Direction. She is an Executive Coach, experienced mediator and qualified leadership instructor, qualified in several psychometrics, and has a real passion for helping people to achieve their full potential. In the rare moments, her busy life allows, she also enjoys tennis, hiking, cycling, diving & skiing.



**Air Vice-Marshal
Al Marshall
OBE MA RAF**

Following completion of a Service sponsored engineering degree at Cambridge University and pilot training, Al spent the first ten years of his career flying the Harrier. During

this period, he completed several operational tours, including Bosnia, Kosovo, Iraq and Afghanistan; gained experience of embarked operations on Invincible-class aircraft carriers and undertook instructional, standardisation, and test and evaluation roles within the Harrier Force.

Subsequently, he gained procurement experience as the UK requirements manager for the Joint Strike Fighter programme, before converting to the Intelligence, Surveillance, Targeting and Reconnaissance (ISTAR) role and command of No V (Army Co-operation) Squadron, operating Sentinel and Shadow aircraft on operations in Afghanistan, Libya and Mali.

Two joint roles within the Ministry of Defence followed: Assistant Head Global Commitments and Counter Terrorism within the Operations Directorate and Deputy Principal Staff Officer to the Chief of the Defence Staff, before he took command of RAF Waddington in Lincolnshire, responsible for Reaper, Rivet Joint, Sentinel, Sentry E-3D, Shadow and intelligence analysis capabilities.

After completion of the Higher Command and Staff Course, the US Capstone Programme and a short visiting research fellowship at Oxford University focusing on strategic intelligence, he returned to the Ministry of Defence in 2018 as Head of Defence Commitments and Crisis within the Security, Policy and Operations area. In April 2020, he was appointed as Air Officer Commanding Number 1 Group, responsible for Defence's Combat Air and Air ISTAR Forces, and the Air and Space Warfare Centre.

Al is married to Air Cdre Suraya Marshall, who is currently the Commandant of the Royal Air Force College Cranwell. They have two teenage children and between work and school commitments, spend as much time as possible together as a family, either at home in Lincolnshire or travelling overseas.



**Squadron Leader
Claire Webster
BA MSc RAF**

Claire is a RAF Medical Officer, and Specialist Registrar in Vascular and Trauma Surgery based in London. She graduated from Manchester University in 2008 and spent her

Foundation and Core Surgical years in the West Midlands, with an embedded General Duties year at RAF Akrotiri in Cyprus. She gained her Specialist Registrar post in 2013, and this is due to conclude in 2022. During this time has she completed a PhD on Blast Pelvic Trauma, which newly identified patterns of trauma due to blast injury, having crucial implications to preventative strategies.

Claire is passionate about teaching, training and communication, and has been both trainees' representative and secretary for the Royal Society of Medicine Military Medicine Section and is the Association for Surgeons in Training (ASIT) military representative. She is often found running courses and teaching activities and holds a strong research and quality improvement interest. She has also created a Virtual Officers Mess to improve communication, pastoral care and integration for military doctors based in London.

Claire likes all outdoor activities, and is a triathlete and iron woman, and has booked her English Channel swim for 2021. She sails, scuba dives and learned to ski with the RAF and has represented the RAF in the ski race team. She plays the piano and spends as much time as possible with her very important family and close friends.



**Sergeant
Victoria Penton**

Victoria joined the RAF in April 2015, after completing an Advanced Diploma in Adult Nursing at Bournemouth University and spending 2 years as a registered Nurse in Poole General Hospital. Her first

and current posting is RCDM Birmingham within the Queen Elizabeth (QE) Hospital one of the DMS JHG's.

Throughout her time at RCDM she has represented in the unit in many sports and charity events, completed her Aeromed Evacuation training and completed a short tour of TMW for manning assistance as a flight nurse. She was selected to complete an OOA as an Aeromed Evacuation Liaison Officer (AELO) in Brunei in 2018. Shortly after this she was successful at specialist selection board to study a PG certificate at Masters' level in Infection Prevention and Control, of which she achieved a Merit in. Sgt Penton has worked within the civilian Infection Prevention Control team at the QE hospital since 2018, of which she has taken a senior role for one of the hospital's division.

She also dedicates the rest of her time to the military IPC flight providing commitment towards the Air Transportable Isolator (ATI) FET. The FET was activated last November for a mission of whom she was part of and successful in retrieving patients from South Africa. Sgt Penton was heavily involved in multiple aspects of the COVID-19 pandemic; from educating clinical staff on the wards about PPE, to being involved in the NEC nightingale hospital planning as 2IC IPC lead, she designed a Moodle package for the staff and took the lead on the change in practice surrounding fit testing and checking.



**Wing Commander
Steve Parkes
HON DUniv,
Chartered Fellow CIPD RAF**

Having joined the RAF in August 1976 in the Trade of Assistant Air Traffic Controller, Steve was commissioned into the Personnel (Support) Branch

in June 1984. After graduating from Administrative (Secretarial) training at RAF Hereford he went on to complete several Junior Officer appointments, including Executive Officer to the Commander in Chief, RAF (Germany) /Commander 2 Allied Tactical Air Force (ATAF), Sir Andrew Wilson. Promoted to Sqd Ldr in January 1993, he remained in this post until the closure of RAF Germany in May 1993.

His next posting was to the Tri-National Tornado Training Establishment at RAF Cottesmore, as OC Personnel Management Squadron. In October 1995, he joined the Air Secretary's Department as the Desk Officer for career management of Junior Engineer Aero systems specialists, moving to the management of the non-commissioned rank review of the Engineering Trade in August 1998.

Promoted to Wg Cdr in July 2000, he was posted to Defence Logistics Organisation as the first military officer to manage the senior appointments process within the organisation. In July 2002 he returned to the Air Secretary's Department as SO1 Desk Officer for all Ground Branch/non-aircrew GD Squadron Leaders.

In August 2004, Steve was appointed Station Commander Joint Support Unit Corsham where, in addition to his primary role, he managed a 250 acre Cold-War underground complex and was involved in a successful PFI, delivering a rebuild of the United Kingdom communication hub at Corsham.

Steve left the Service in August 2008 to form his own Consulting Company and work as an Associate for a leading Executive Management Organisation. In June 2009, he was appointed as the Personnel Support Branch Advisor, in the rank of Wg Cdr, a Full Time Reserve Service appointment with overall responsibility for the Personnel Support Branch and Trade Group 17.



**Flight Lieutenant
Daisy Tidbury**

Daisy commissioned into the Personnel Support branch.

Her first assignment was to RAF Boulmer in 2009 as Officer Commanding (OC) General Duties Flight, and

then RAF Waddington as OC Service Discipline, where she was fortunate enough to deploy to Kenya as SO3 J1 Joint Helicopter Force (Kenya) in support of British Army Training Unit (Kenya) for 5 months.

Immediately on returning to the UK she was deployed at short notice in support of Operation ELLAMY as the SO3 Support/Visits and Protocol Officer within the 1* UK Air Component Command Headquarters based at Combined Air Operations Centre, Poggio Renatico. She remained in theatre until the cessation of the kinetic operations in November 2011, when she was assigned to RAF High Wycombe as OC Accounts Flight. During this posting she spent 3 months detached to the USA with Airborne Delivery Wing as the Deployed Admin Officer for Exercise QUICKGLASS. In 2013 she fulfilled the role of OC J1 at Training Wing, RAF Honington, to enable Phase 0 to 3 training for the RAF Regiment and in 2016 was assigned to RAF Coningsby as OC Human Resources Flight.

Throughout most of 2018 she deployed to Afghanistan. Initially employed within the NATO-led Human Resource Management branch as a NATO Advisor to the Afghan MOD and Afghan National Army (ANA) Recruiting Command, she was extended for a further 4 months to embed within a bespoke, agile co-ordination cell in support of the creation of a sustainable, accountable local security force (the ANA Territorial Force (ANATF)). She moved to Worthy Down in September 2019 to take up the role of 2ic Officer Training Squadron (Air).



**Sergeant
Adam Salter**

Adam joined the Royal Air Force in April 2007 and on completion of basic training at RAF Halton and trade training at Southwick Park, was posted to RAF Innsworth, where he assisted in the

ACOS Manning move across to RAF High Wycombe. A posting to Personnel Support Flight (PSF) at RAF High Wycombe followed, during which he completed a tour as the Vetting Protocol (VP) Clerk at Mount Pleasant, Falklands Islands.

He remained at RAF High Wycombe until 2012, when he was deployed to Camp Bastion as part of 903 EAW.

During his next posting to PSF, RAF Brize Norton, Salter was soon assigned to RAF Akrotiri, and in December 2013, he was promoted into the newly established Community Welfare post, also at RAF Akrotiri.

He returned to Headquarters Air in November 2015 to take up the role as a JNCO Career Manager for Trade Group 1. During his time in this role he also deployed to 83 Expeditionary Air Group (EAG).

Promoted to Sergeant in October 2018, he remained at HQ Air, as a Career Manager for TG1 covering several platforms as well as Overseas units. In March 2019, he was posted to his current role as a Phase 3 Instructor at the Defence College of Logistics, Policing and Administration (DCLPA).



**Chief Technician
Jonathan Brough**

Jonathan joined the RAF in 2001 as an Avionics Technician. His first tour took him to RAF Wittering where he conducted a variety of Depth Maintenance activities on Harrier. He undertook his

first operational deployment to Kandahar and worked aboard each of the Invincible class of aircraft carriers to establish an onboard maintenance facility.

In 2010 he was assigned to 14 Sqn, RAF Waddington, maintaining the Shadow R Mk1. He undertook deployments to Afghanistan in support of Op HERRICK, in addition to training tasks in Akrotiri. Taking on the role of UMO, he became the focal point for all personnel and equipment logistics support three Theatres of concurrent operations and established the Sqn's engineering element for contingency operations. He successfully completed a BSc (Hons) in Engineering Management at Lincoln University.

Remaining at RAF Waddington, Jonathan moved to 51 Sqn as an Avionics and Mission Systems engineer on the Rivet Joint (Airseeker) aircraft. He deployed on several operational tours to Al Udeid, Oman and Souda Bay, Crete supporting Op SHADER and led much of the Sqn's engineering establishment at RAF Mildenhall to ensure UK and operational sorties were sustained during Bolthole.

Following a trawl for volunteers and a successful interview, he became the first Avionics Trade Specialist Career Manager at HQ Air Command. His prior experience at RAF Waddington saw him managing the ISTAR Sqn's, including the establishment of personnel at RAF Lossiemouth to form 120 Sqn operating the P-8A Poseidon. This was a highly rewarding position and a career highlight. During this tour, Jonathan also completed his MA in Leadership and Management through Anglia Ruskin University having been granted a CAS Fellowship and became an Incorporated Engineer with the Institute of Engineering and Technology.

Promotion to CT led him to DE&S at MOD Abbey Wood where he is now the Avionics Desk Officer for the Hawk T1 and T2. He has since attained Chartered Manager status and is studying an MBA with Manchester Metropolitan University.



Peter Warren Singer

Peter is Strategist at New America, a Professor of Practice at Arizona State University, and Principal at Useful Fiction LLC.

Described in the Wall Street Journal as 'the premier futurist in the

national- security environment, he has been named by the Smithsonian as one of the nation's 100 leading innovators, by Defense News as one of the 100 most influential people in defense issues, by Foreign Policy to their Top 100 Global Thinkers List, and as an official 'Mad Scientist' for the U.S. Army's Training and Doctrine Command. No author, living or dead, has more books on the professional US military readings lists.

His non-fiction books include Corporate Warriors: The Rise of the Privatized Military Industry, Children at War, Wired for War: The Robotics Revolution and Conflict in the 21st Century; Cybersecurity and Cyberwar: What Everyone Needs to Know and most recently LikeWar, which explores how social media has changed war and politics. It was named an Amazon and Foreign Affairs book of the year and reviewed by Booklist as LikeWar should be required reading for everyone living in a democracy and all who aspire to.

He is also the co-author of a new type of novel, using the format of a techno-thriller to communicate non-fiction research. Ghost Fleet: A Novel of the Next World War was both a top summer read and led to briefings everywhere from the White House to the Pentagon.

His latest is Burn-In: A Novel of the Real Robotic Revolution. It has been described by the creator of Lost and Watchmen as a visionary new form of story telling rollercoaster ride of science fiction blended with science fact, and by the head of Army Cyber Command as "I loved Burn-In so much that I've already read it twice."



Andrzej Kawalec
Head of Security Portfolio,
Vodafone Business

Andrzej is the Head of Security Portfolio at Vodafone Business. Andrzej manages Vodafone Business' global portfolio of security offerings, including the management of our

partnership with Mobius. An inspirational and creative leader in the use of advanced information technology and digital adoption to redefine traditional business models, Andrzej is constantly working to refine the balance between securing and enabling information assets – in particular the impact of SoCoMo on risk and privacy.

Andrzej is a member of the Forbes Technology Council. Andrzej previously was the CTO and Head of Strategy and Innovation for Security Services at Vodafone Business, before becoming the CEO at 4th Horizon and working as the CTO at Optiv Inc. Trusted by CIOs around the world, Andrzej has worked at board-level across the public and private sectors to help define and promote information strategies. He is a recognised leader in technology trends and security.

Andrzej currently resides in the UK and holds an MBA from the University of Bradford and a degree from Carleton University in International Commerce.



**Flight Lieutenant
Abi Bagshaw**

Abi is a Personnel Support Officer, currently employed within the Astra Core Team.

Abi joined the Royal Air Force in April 2010 as an Aerospace Battle Manager. Following completion

of phase 2 training Bagshaw was posted to Control and Reporting Centre (CRC) Boulmer, where she was employed as an Identification Officer, before deploying to the Falkland Islands as a Duty Watch Officer within CRC Griffin.

Her next post was to the National Air Defence Operations Centre at RAF High Wycombe, as a Fighter Coordinator supporting Tactical Command of UK Air Defence Assets, where she worked on both Op OLYMPIC and Op ISMAY.

In March 2015, Flt Lt Bagshaw applied to change branch. Completing Personnel Support Phase 2 Training Spt Phase 2 training in April 2015, she was then posted to RAF Brize Norton as SO3 Media Ops. Here she frequently deployed on short term tasks, co-ordinating defence engagement and media activity for the crew and CAS. In May 2017 she was posted to Defence HUMINT Unit (DHU) as Officer Commanding Recruitment, recruiting tri-service personnel into Op SAMSON and Op METIS.

To enhance her skillset in the Information Domain she began completes the Information Operation, Psychological Operations and Joint Targeting courses. A 12-month deployment followed as the Staff Officer the UK Air Component Commander in the Middle East. On return Bagshaw joined the Astra team in a communications role.

Abi is currently studying for a BSc in Psychology with the Open University focussing on performance and coaching. She is a keen sportswoman and in 2014 was named RAF Sportswoman of the year. Retiring from Triathlon in 2014 to take up CrossFit, she continues to be a keen coach with a passion for helping people to achieve things they didn't think possible in sport and life.



**Squadron Leader
Gemma Bean**

After completing a degree in Management and Organisations in 2007 at The University of Lancaster, Gemma worked at BAe Systems on the Tornado Procurement Team for the Royal Saudi Air Force before

joining the Royal Air Force.

Gemma, a Personnel (Support) Officer, graduated from Initial Officer Training at RAF Cranwell in 2010. After a 7 month hold with Training & Development Flt (TDF) at RAF Linton-on-Ouse, she successfully completed the Personnel (Training) Officers' Course at RAF Halton.

In December 2010 Gemma was posted to RAF Leuchars as OC TDF. It was here, as a member of the Mountain Rescue Service, Gemma discovered her love for hill walking. A posting to the RAF School of Administration at Worthy Down followed, initially as Adjutant in February 2013, and in September of the same year as SO3 Training for the Personnel Administration Training Wing. On completion of this posting, Gemma deployed to Musannah, Oman, as the Wing Administrative Officer for 902 Expeditionary Air Wing.

Postings followed to RAF Lossiemouth in December 2014, as Command Group Executive Officer and then to RAF Leeming in March 2016. One of Gemma's additional roles here was Detachment Administrator on 135 Expeditionary Air Wing, and in April 2017, she deployed to Romania in support of Operation BILOXI. Awarded a CAS Fellowship in July 2015, Gemma graduated from King's College in April 2018 with an MA in Air Power in the Modern World.

In June 2018, Gemma was posted to RAF High Wycombe as Holding Student Career Manager and in July 2019 was promoted into her current role as SO2 A1 on the UK JFAC.

Given her time with the Mountain Rescue Service, it's no surprise Gemma continues to enjoy hill walking. She is a keen skier, enjoys playing piano and more recently supporting Ignite, a Speaker Series.



**Flight Lieutenant
Joel Forbes**

Joel joined the RAF in 2014. As an Air Ops Systems Officer, he is qualified in both the Surveillance and Space streams.

Having worked at RAF Boulmer and RAF

Scampton, deploying twice on Op SHADER, and working closely on exercise with the Army and Navy, he is now based at Air Command in the Space and Battle Management Force HQ as the SO3 Space Ops. He was selected for a Dowding Fellowship in 2019 to study for an MA in Air, Space and Cyber Power, and already has his eye on what further postgraduate degrees he can achieve next

Joel is Deputy Chair of the Armed Forces Jewish Community. He is working to build awareness for the small community of Jews within Defence and promoting Diversity and Inclusivity.

Joel, along with Tom Ginger, inspired by Matthew Syed's Rebel Ideas, and identifying a lack of regular external speaker engagement co-founded Ignite in Nov 2019.



Flight Lieutenant Tom Ginger

Tom joined the Royal Air Force in July 2011, commissioning into the Aerospace Battle Manager Branch in 2012 and graduating as a Surveillance Officer in May 2014.

His first tour was at No 1 Air Control Centre, RAF Scampton, where he was an Identification Officer and Officer Commanding Plans Flight. The tour included operational detachments to 727th Expeditionary Air Control Squadron (KINGPIN) in the UAE as an Air Surveillance Officer and to the Op SHADER No 1 Air Control Centre detachment in Cyprus. During his tour at RAF Scampton, Tom returned to Cyprus several times, culminating with a 4-month deployment as the Detachment Commander – a definite career highlight.

Following this Tom spent 2 ½ years working with the Royal Marines in HQ 3 Commando Brigade as Staff Officer Battlespace Management. In his role as a specialist air and littoral battlespace management, he participated in exercises and operations in the US, Singapore, Oman, France, and the Baltic; including four periods of embarked service at sea. Whilst not envying all elements of a sailor's life, the experience has left Tom with a passion for Air Maritime Integration and the need to remain constantly engaged with this part of warfighting.

Most recently Tom has taken up appointment as Staff Officer Coordination at the UK JFAC. Finding likeminded disruptors amongst HQ Air Command peers, Tom spends much of his spare helping to establish Ignite, A Speaker Series, a focus for grassroots-led disruptive thinking at RAF High Wycombe.

Tom has a bachelor's degree in Politics and International Relations from University of Manchester, and a master's degree in Air Power in the Modern World from King's College London; both have fuelled a love of Professional Military Education and Air Power academia. Tom and his partner, Simon, are both keen walkers and having recently moved house, also have an interest in DIY.



Senior Aircraftwoman Rachel Chapman

Rachel, known as Chappers holds a BSc (Hons) Degree in Sport and Exercise Science, and attested into the RAF in April 2015. She graduated from DMS Whittington as an RAF Medic in October 2016.

Chappers' first posting was to the Medical Centre at RAF Marham where she worked with the Tornado and F35 Squadrons, providing medical cover for the airfield and dealing with emergency states and 222 calls, both personally and as part of a multi-disciplinary team. Whilst at Marham, she completed personal development and professional courses, including her aeromedical ground phase. She also voluntarily undertook a Rugby First Aid course, in order to provide pitch side cover for the RAF Marham Rugby Team and acted as the community liaison for the station allotment.

In October 2018, Chappers was posted to RAF Cranwell. Here she worked closely with officer cadets going through their Initial Officer Training Course. In addition, she was part of the health and well-being committee and acted as a Liaison Officer for the Air Cadets (ACLO). It was whilst at Cranwell she was awarded the Park Fellowship Scholarship by Tedder Academy of Leadership.

Chappers' most recent posting is to RAF Leeming where she will work within Defence Primary Healthcare. Whilst there she is particularly looking forward to enjoying the surrounding hills and lakes, as she has a love of mountaineering and water sports, particularly after sailing round the world in 2012. She is also a keen rower and has previously rowed at both station and service level.



Corporal Symone Bromley

Symone attested into the Royal Air Force (RAF) on 21 August 2013, at RAF Halton. Graduating in Oct 2013 she moved to the Defence School of Policing and Guarding at MOD Southwick Park for Phase 2

Police Training, where she successfully graduated as a Royal Air Force Policewoman in September 2014

Symone's first posting was to Tactical Policing Squadron (TPS), where she deployed on short notice taskings all around the world, conducting Policing, Aviation Security and Air Transport Security on the ground. During this time, Cpl Bromley worked within Bravo Flight, the Operational Training Flight and the Operational Support Cell, facilitating all troop movement overseas within the Squadron.

She was then posted to RAF Brize Norton at the Military Working Dog (MWD) Section as a RAF Police Dog Handler, and in February 2018, Cpl Bromley deployed to the Falkland Islands as a MWD handler.

Upon promotion to Corporal in September 2018, she returned to DSPG Southwick Park, as a Phase 2 RAF Police Instructor. After 18 months teaching Phase 2 recruits, she was posted to Recruit Training Squadron, RAF Halton on 03 February 2020.

Symone is a 2nd Dan Black belt in Karate. She has played Netball and has been a member of the RAF Squad for 4 seasons, and during the 2018 season, represented the team on tour in Sydney, Australia. Cpl Bromley also enjoys Adventurous Training (AT), and has been to Germany with the RAF to conduct AT out there.



Lord Victor Adebawale

Lord Adebawale is a non-Executive Director of the Co-Operative Group, Collaborate CIC, Nuffield Health, Visionable and Leadership in Mind. He is also Chair of Social Enterprise UK and the NHS Confederation. In March 2020, Victor stepped down as CEO of Turning Point,

a social enterprise providing health and social care interventions to approximately 100,000 people on an annual basis. Victor also served for 6 years as a non-Executive Director on the board of NHS England. He has chaired a number of commission reports into: policing; employment; mental health; housing and fairness for The London Fairness Commission; the Metropolitan Police; and for central and local government. He was awarded a CBE for services to the unemployed and homeless people and became a crossbench peer in 2001.

Victor is a visiting Professor and Chancellor at the University of Lincoln; an honorary member of the Institute of Psychiatry; President of The International Association of Philosophy and Psychiatry and a Governor at the London School of Economics.

Victor has an MA in Advanced Organisational Consulting from Tavistock Institute and City University.



**Air Commodore
Fin Monahan**
OBE DFC PhD RAF

Fin joined No 138 Initial Officer Training at the Royal Air Force College Cranwell on 29 September 1991 following three years of service on East Lowlands Universities Air Squadron.

Selected to fly the Harrier, he flew on operations over the Former Republic of Yugoslavia during the 1990's. In 2006, during one of his three tours of duty in Afghanistan, he was awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross for a short notice solo tasking to support embattled and surrounded coalition ground forces.

Fin has enjoyed a very international career; his first RAF tour was at RAF Laarbruch in Germany, he later served in the Royal New Zealand Air Force, with US forces at US European Command, Stuttgart and completed staff college in India. Fascinated by the different military cultures he has encountered in his service career, he completed a PhD that examined the origins of RAF organisational culture. More recently, Fin served at RAF Cranwell from 2016-2018 as the Commandant of the Central Flying School and commanded the 2016 and 2017 Red Arrows global tours. He is now the Head of Doctrine, Air Space and Cyber at the Development Concepts and Doctrine Centre, Shrivenham.



**Wing Commander
Louise Henton**
BA (Hons) MA RAF

Louise is a Personnel (Support) Officer in the Royal Air Force and is currently serving at RAF Waddington in Lincolnshire.

She joined the Royal Air Force in 2001 after

graduating from the University of Portsmouth with a degree in Business Administration. Her tours have seen her undertake administration, HR, accountancy, training delivery, media, infrastructure and programming tours and she served at units across the United Kingdom, overseas postings include the Falklands Islands, Oman and Afghanistan.

Selected for Advanced Command and Staff College in 2018 at the Defence Academy of the United Kingdom, she undertook a Masters in Defence Studies with Kings College London during this time. Her Masters' thesis titled "Military Culture and Human Rights Violations Committed in Iraq in 2003. Has the Military Learnt its Lessons?" was awarded second place in the 2020 EuroISME competition for the best thesis on military ethics.



Siobhan Sheridan
Chief People Director,
Ministry of Defence

Siobhan joined the Ministry of Defence (MoD) in July 2017 as civilian HR director. She is responsible for the workforce of 57,000 civil servants, the broader civilian and contractor

workforce, and is also responsible for diversity and inclusion strategy at group level.

Sheridan joined the MoD with prior experience of working in the private, public and third sectors. She has previously been an HR director with Capital One, DEFRA, the DWP and the NSPCC.

Her background expertise in operational delivery informs her approach to delivering change, transforming organisations and leading HR functions. With a career commencing at the age of 16 in the finance sector she has a strong interest in social mobility and inclusion more broadly.

Sheridan is a chartered fellow of the CIPD and a member of the Guild of HR professionals. She holds a Masters degree in coaching and mentoring and a Masters in organisational change. She is now pursuing a PhD in the area of organisational change.

She learns a significant amount from her roles as a trustee for the Mental Health Foundation and as a committed senior volunteer with Crisis at Christmas.



Alanah Donnell
Head of Engagement and
Communications

Alanah is Deputy Director, Head of Engagement and Communications for the Royal Air Force, based at Air Command.

Alanah's career began as a paralegal for HM Customs

and Excise (as was). She soon began to focus on communications and engagement activities and put legal aspirations aside to undertake post-graduate studies in professional communications. Her roles in HMCE included designing stakeholder engagement for global IT change programmes, developing the vision for the future of customs operations, and internal behaviour change campaigns following the merger with Inland Revenue.

In 2014 Alanah joined the Cabinet Office where her roles included Private Secretary to the Chief Executive John Manzoni, leading on crisis response for him and Sir Jeremy Heywood, and as Deputy Director, Civil Service Strategy. She advised principals on strategy, communications and political handling for issues including the 2015 Spending Review, the failure of the UK electronic voter registration system, and the EU referendum. She led delivery of the 'Brilliant Civil Service' vision and campaign, was responsible for Cabinet Office governance (including Non-Executive Directors) and led the development of the functional model for government.

In 2017 Alanah became Head of Engagement and Communications for the Government Digital Service. She inherited a large multidisciplinary team which had suffered through lack of leadership and capability for a prolonged period, in an organisation which was reputationally damaged and operating under its third 3* leader in two years. She led the team in developing and implementing GDS's strategic vision and priorities for digital data and technology, including delivering a communications and engagement programme for the senior leadership team to rebuild the corporate reputation across public and private sectors.

Alanah left Cabinet Office on maternity leave in May 2019 and joined Air Command in February 2020. Alanah lives in a rural village outside Wendover, with her husband Robert, new baby Charles and two demanding terriers.



Matthew Syed

Matthew is an author and highly acclaimed speaker in the field of high performance. He has written six bestselling books on the subject of mindset and high performance and Rebel Ideas, Bounce, Black Box Thinking, The Greatest,

and his celebrated children's books, You Are Awesome and The You Are Awesome Journal, and has worked with many leading organisations to build a mindset of continuous improvement. He is also a multi-award-winning journalist for The Times and a regular contributor to television and radio. In his previous career, Matthew was the England table tennis number one for almost a decade.

Matthew's work explores a thought-provoking approach to high performance in the context of a complex and fast-changing world. By understanding the intimate connection between mindset and high performance, organisations can unlock untapped potential in individuals and teams, driving innovation and agility to secure a future-proofed environment.

Matthew is also co-founder of Matthew Syed Consulting (MSC); the company has worked with an impressive portfolio of clients to build growth mindset cultures and drive higher performance in individuals, teams and organisations. Matthew Syed Consulting's cutting-edge thought leadership programme and digital learning tools are becoming a catalyst for real and lasting change within business and the public sector.



Warrant Officer Danny Shaw BSc (Hons), MSc

Danny was appointed Warrant Officer Talent Strategy in March 2019. He was born and schooled in Essex before joining the Royal Air Force in 1997.

Following completion of basic training he underwent Medical Assistant phase 2 training at Keogh Barracks before a first tour in Primary Healthcare (PHC) at RAF Cranwell. During this tour he undertook duties across the PHC spectrum and deployed in support of the RAF Aerobatics Team. In 2001 he was assigned to UKSU, Ramstein Air Base providing PHC to the UK NATO element. During Op TELIC in 2003 he deployed to Basra Air Station where he was employed in the Role 1 Medical Facility providing emergency crash cover and PHC to deployed Forces. Promoted to Corporal on return, he was assigned to the Medical Facility at RAF Halton.

He deployed as part of the IRT on Op TELIC in 2006 where he flew on RW aircraft to provide emergency care to battlefield casualties in Southern Iraq where he was awarded a GOC commendation for his actions during the emergency evacuation of three seriously wounded casualties injured in an IED attack. Promoted to Sergeant in 2009, he was assigned to RAF Marham as pharmacy manager. During this tour he deployed in support of Op KIPION in 2010 as the Aeromedical Evacuation Liaison Officer where he was responsible for supporting tactical and strategic Aeromedical Evacuation flights from Op HERRICK. On return to the UK he was assigned to the Defence Medical Services Training Group where he delivered Phase 3 pre-hospital training to RAF Personnel. During this tour he was awarded the TG15 Stuart Rae Memorial Prize for his delivery of Team Medic training to Tongan Forces.

Promoted to FS in 2015, he was assigned to the RAF Medical Services Health Directorate at HQ AIR where he conducted Training Needs Analysis for several high-profile projects. He returned to PHC in 2017 as Practice Manager at RAF Northolt before gaining selection for his current role. He is passionate about patient safety and was selected as a Specialist Advisor (SpA) to the Care Quality Commission in 2018. In 2019 he completed the MSc Healthcare Management, graduating with distinction from ARU. He is also an active member of the ARU alumni network.



The Park Fellowship is open to all Regular RAF personnel, regardless of rank. The Fellowship is for part-time study at a UK university to undertake a masters-level qualification in a leadership related area. Applicants will be expected to demonstrate how their dissertation will be of benefit to the Service.

Find out more today from:
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THE TAL PERFORMANCE ROOM

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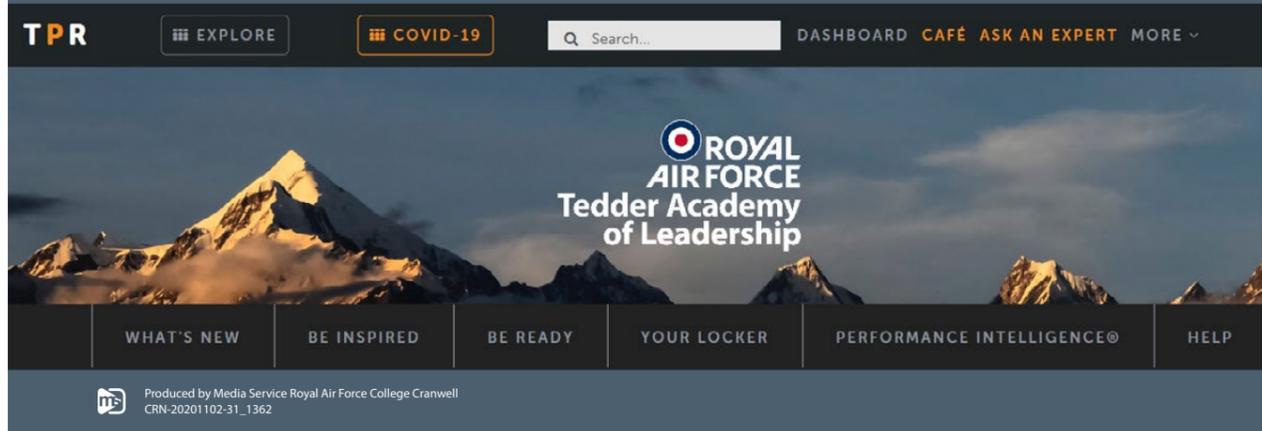
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