Article

RAF High Command in the Second World War – A New Perspective

By Air Marshal (Retd) Dr David Walker

Biography: Air Marshal (Retd) Dr David Walker was a distinguished Harrier pilot, having seen action in Bosnia and Iraq. He went on to have an illustrious career in the RAF becoming Deputy Commander, Allied Joint Force Command from 2011 to 2013, having previously served as Deputy Commander, Allied Air Component Command at Ramstein in Germany. Prior to that he was Air Officer Commanding No.1 Group. He completed a Portal Fellowship for a PhD with the University of Birmingham. Air Marshal Walker sadly died in June 2023, and as a respected scholar this paper is published here in his memory and acknowledgement of his many contributions to military academia.

Abstract: This was intended to be the first in a series of three articles examining the development of the RAF High Command during the Second World War; unfortunately, due to illness only the first article was completed. Reproduced here the article covers the period from 1932 until the outbreak of war in 1939, shedding new light on the re-organisations of the Air Ministry in 1934, the RAF Command structure in 1936, and the tri-service debate in 1937 concerning the RAF proposal to establish a Supreme Air Commander. It challenges the established historiography casting a different perspective on RAF reforms, and as such offers a fresh starting point for analysing the RAF's High Command structure and organisation as the Second World War approached. The subsequent two articles were intended to assess the development of RAF High Command practice as the war unfolded and operational challenges were met. Nonetheless, as is characteristic of the author it presents a challenging contribution to the history of the RAF as wartime approached.

Part I - Preparing for War – RAF Reforms in the 1930s

This article will address a new starting point for our understanding of the RAF in the Second World War and by implication the lessons that may be taken from that conflict for use and application today. It will look afresh at three significant reviews the RAF undertook in the mid-1930s and demonstrate that rather than being merely a managerial and organisational response to the rise of the German threat, they were in fact operationally driven adaptations to prepare for war.[1] A war as it was envisaged by the commanders of the time, not the one we now know unfolded with all the benefit that hindsight brings. In 1933 radar did not exist, the agile heavily armed fast fighter was a dream, and the bomber generally did get through because the air defence challenge of interception had no reliable solution. War in 1933 was an uncertain concept to all three services. The British Army had no official continental commitment, the Royal Navy could rightly be confident that it continued to rule the waves, and the Luftwaffe did not exist. Even by 1935 after Hitler and Goering revealed their embryonic air arm, few expected or planned for war earlier than 1942.[2] Hitler's plans for the domination of Central Europe and subsequent total war against the Soviet Union, were a long way from their final form.[3] Against this contemporary uncertainty the RAF began to reform with a view to ensuring it could fight as its concepts demanded and that its peacetime organisation reflected its wartime ambition as closely as possible.

Between 1933 and 1938 the RAF transformed its operational posture in a way that few authors have adequately credited. The development and deployment of the Spitfire, Hurricane, radar, and the twin-engine bomber force were achieved, but without associated command and control developments these tactical advances would have amounted to little. Beginning in 1932 the RAF restructured the Air Ministry including basic and advanced training, war organisational planning, infrastructure building and support and gained grudging approval for the associated increases in manpower and resource. In 1935 to 1936 they restructured the frontline from the monolithic command entitled Air Defence of Great Britain (ADGB) which encompassed all frontline home-based forces into a mono-functional structure separating those forces required for the offensive, the bombers, from the defensive assets, the fighters, and creating a separate command to cover the naval co-operation squadrons. The mono-functional nature of the commands meant that multi-functional training and operations required higher co-ordination and direction. This led to a debate concerning the need for a Supreme Air Commander (SAC) which took place between 1937 and 1938. Altogether, by 1939, the RAF had evolved its command structure and method, and been instrumental in the development of tri-service co-ordination practices that would underpin the high command of British armed forces throughout the Second World War. However, apart from the 1936 frontline command review, this is an untold story and one which should lead to a new starting point for analysing RAF performance in the War, and the learning of lessons that may be relevant for today.

RAF Reforms in the 1930s

Operational Need – The Impetus for Change. All these reforms were initiated by the Chief of the Air Staff (CAS) issuing a series of memoranda to his staff tasking an investigation and review. In this there is nothing unusual for the CAS was responsible for the effectiveness and efficiency of the Service. However, given that the impetus came from the CAS it is clear that the changes under consideration were of significance and importance, they were not simply minor adjustments. All three memos included a clear statement of the issue and an equally clear statement of how the relevant CAS wished the matter to unfold. Today, both Marshals of the RAF (MRAF) Sir John Salmond and Sir Edward Ellington might be criticised for restricting the freedom of the staff to put forward the optimum solution, as such specific direction could be seen as pre-judged, but in the 1930s it was more the norm.

In the case of Salmond's Air Ministry review the RAF was still a very centralised organisation emerging from the tight control exerted by MRAF Sir Hugh Trenchard during the 1920s, and he was seeking to broaden its decision-making base, so perhaps we can understand his clear direction to achieve his desired goal.[4] Ellington was equally unequivocal in his goal and desired outcome when tasking the 1935/6 frontline re-organisation and his subsequent strategic air commands review.[5] Ellington's style was to set clear direction accompanied by an unequivocal view of how he wanted matters to develop. This contrasts significantly with some of the assessments of him as an ineffective and insignificant CAS.[6] The Air Ministry files reveal a much more decisive and clear-thinking man who oversaw a transformation of the RAF.[7]

Salmond wanted an Air Ministry better configured for the challenges of a future European war.[8] In 1935, Ellington wanted a frontline command structure optimised for the expected course of war with Germany that by then was the central planning assumption.[9] And in 1937, Ellington sought to configure the higher command of the Service for the human and practical issues of command in wartime.[10] The 1936 command restructuring is often said to have been undertaken to meet the needs of expansion as if it were solely a managerial challenge.[11] However, the primary evidence points squarely to the fact that central to all these key RAF reforms was the need to better prepare and configure the RAF for the war that was expected to come in around 1942. We now know of course that war came in 1939 and thus the preparations of the 1930s look late and rushed but those facing the challenge at the time were soundly of the view that war would not break out before 1942 at the earliest. This included the German High Command who were preparing for a war beginning in 1943 and lasting for 10 years.[12]

Despite the fact that war came three years earlier than expected the urgency of the time pervaded the reforms. If the view that Britain was reluctantly drawn into the Second World War were true then the focus, energy, and determination to reform the Service would be perverse. However, as David Edgerton has argued, Britain whilst seeking a peaceful outcome was far more prepared for war than popular history acknowledges, especially in terms of air preparedness.[13] The Air Ministry specifications that led to the creation of the 4-engined heavy bombers that were central to RAF strategy during the second half of the War were issued in

1936 for delivery in 1940-42 and those for the development of the Hurricane and Spitfire in 1934.[14] Thus the three organisational changes we are focussing on need to be seen in the context of the frontline capability developments and the personnel training initiatives that were also unfolding in the late 1930s. This was a time of significant change requiring a clear expression of what was required and why. For that reason the rather prescriptive nature of the memos issued by Salmond and Ellington must be seen in the context of the time, the urgency of the task, and the overriding stimulus of operational need, preparedness, and the ability to transition into war smoothly and efficiently.

Vision and Urgency. Looking back it is notable how quickly and efficiently these reforms were carried out. The Air Ministry review ran from initiation in December 1932 to enactment in April 1934; the Command re-organisation from June 1935 until July 1936; and the SAC consideration from December 1936 until March 1938. However, the actual debate and deliberation before the ultimate solution was broadly agreed was remarkably short. One interpretation of this could be that the open consultation was merely the 'socialising' of a decision already reached and there is evidence which seems to support this view.

Air Chief Marshal (ACM) Sir Robert Brooke-Popham, who led the Air Ministry review completed his consultation, deliberation, and report writing in just less than a month, from 24 January 1933 until the 22 February 1933. He made four broad recommendations.[15] He argued that training should be expanded to encompass war training and that the Staff Duties element of the Air Ministry should expand to address War Organisation. He also suggested that the Air Ministry works and buildings section should go to the Air Member for Personnel (AMP). These were seemingly small changes but they significantly altered the manner in which the Air Ministry operated and in which headroom could be found to create the extra staff work required to prepare the organisation and plans for war.

On 1 April 1933 Salmond stood down as CAS to be succeeded by his older brother ACM Sir Geoffrey. However, by 5 April it was announced that Sir John would resume his role as CAS whilst his brother battled advanced cancer; sadly, Sir Geoffrey died on 27 April 1933. Sir John continued as CAS on a temporary basis before Ellington, previously AMP, became CAS on 22 May 1933 and assumed responsibility for the review process. Internal RAF discussion continued until the CAS gave his views to the Deputy Chief of Air Staf [DCAS] via a Minute on 29 June 1933 just over a month into his appointment.[16] He wanted the works and building element to remain with CAS as he argued that the airfield expansion planned required the closest integration of the plans and operational staffs. Likewise, collective training should also fall under the CAS as training had to reflect plans and plans had to reflect operational capability and reality. This effectively ended the discussion which, despite a period of debate with the financial staff in the autumn in which the need for personnel increases was conceded by the Treasury, enabled enactment of the changes in April 1934. The result was that the Air Ministry was far better configured to address the urgently developing needs of preparing for massive frontline expansion and the increasing risk of war.

On 5 June 1935 Ellington tasked the DCAS, ACM Sir Christopher Courtney, with a study into the frontline structure of the Service.[17] Immediately, the senior staff began to reply offering their views and on 12 July 1935 the Air Member for Supply and Organisation (AMSO), then Air Vice-Marshal Cyril Newall presented a lengthy paper drafted by Welsh, his Director of Organisation entitled 'The Organization of the Home Commands – 1935 Expansion Scheme C'.[18] Newall recommended Welsh's paper as the basis for further discussion and highlighted where it differed from CAS' stated views.[19] He supported Welsh's contention that the present Air Staff were over-worked and thus incapable of addressing all the issues necessary for the preparation of the RAF for war stating: 'There is no doubt in my mind that the Service as a whole, particularly at Home, is under-staffed. There is no pool to meet war requirements and, practically speaking, there is no time available to mobilize a Home Defence Force for war. It is, therefore, essential that our staffs and organization in peace-time should be as near as possible to our requirements for war.'[20]

The final form of the 1936 command re-organisation was very close to the proposals set out by Welsh on 19 June 1935, some 14 days after CAS's tasking memo. The primary sources do not suggest that these events are directly linked, but it is hard not to conclude that the CAS and his AMSO would not have at some time discussed how the RAF frontline should be better organised for war. So, although the time between initiation and enactment was over a year, the time between initiation and effectively coming to a conclusion was a matter of days.

A similar theme emerges with the debate over the establishment of a SAC begun on 11 December 1936 when Ellington set out his views stating: 'The method of exercising higher command or control of the Fighter and Bomber Commands in War will have to be settled before long. During the present stage of the expansion, and while I was CAS and Sir Robert Brooke-Popham, Inspector General, I had intended to exercise the control by making him DCAS on the outbreak of war, and the existing DCAS, D O I [Director of Intelligence] only.'[21] The outcome of this debate was to have significant implications for the higher direction of the war not just in the RAF, but in the other Services and the War Cabinet. On this occasion the intent was clearly stated by Ellington who was not to be deflected in his view by the opinions of his senior colleagues. Little staffing of this concept took place, it was more a process of enacting the CAS' wishes. The concept of appointing his Inspector General to the role of co-ordinating the activities of Bomber and Fighter Commands was sensible given the Air Ministry's role in the higher direction of the Service. However, this was less obvious or welcome in the Headquarters of the two respective Commands where their Commanders-in-Chief (Cs-in-C), ACM Sir John Steel at Bomber Command and ACM Dowding at Fighter Command, to whom Ellington had first raised the matter in November, were strongly against the idea.[22] The responses from members of the Air Council arrived in late December 1936 and early 1937. Ellington eventually faced a situation in which the senior staff were broadly in agreement with the idea, although the junior staff were less convinced, and the operational commanders were strongly opposed. The debate to resolve this impasse never really occurred, Ellington's mind

was made up and he simply continued in line with his November and December memoranda. In all three reforms little time, by modern standards, was spent reviewing options and debating the possible advantages and disadvantages. All three followed a sequence of clear statement of intent, short confirmatory review, short period of consultation, followed by the enactment of a plan that bore a very close resemblance to the original intent. In many ways one could see this as efficient and clear sighted and in the case of the Air Ministry Review and the Frontline Re-organisation the outcome endured. However, although it is easy to see this as old-fashioned autocracy, the debate that did occur was broader and more firmly stated than is often portrayed as the style of the time.

Dissent and Debate. The popular image of the military of the 1930s is one which is more aligned to the style of the Edwardian period and the First World War in which strict hierarchical deference was the norm. Unsurprisingly, the higher commanders and staff of the 1930s were all born in the late Victorian period and came of age during the reign of Edward VII, they were reflections of their time. The difficulty we have today in understanding them is that we see them with the hindsight of history and the historical theories that have subsequently been advanced to explain the period. A period portrayed as a period of appeasement, lack of preparation, and failure in the early war years.[23] The reality revealed in the primary sources paints a somewhat different picture, one that it is important to understand to be able to see the actions and decisions of the Second World War in a truer context.

Although each of the reforms we are considering unfolded broadly in tune with the schemes set out in the initiating memos from the relevant CAS, the process of internal discussion was still broad and comprehensive. All members of the Air Council were expected to offer their views both from their own area perspective and in terms of the needs of the Service as a whole. The relevant field commanders were also asked for comment despite not being members of the Air Council; C-in-C ADGB in relation to the Air Ministry and Frontline reforms and the commanders of Bomber, Fighter, and Coastal Commands concerning the SAC debate. The views ranged from broad agreement with differences of a minor nature to outright opposition. Trenchard, who was asked by Ellington for his views on the need for a SAC was typical of the latter: 'I am dictating this letter on the platform at Euston Station, so I shall not see it before it is sent to you, nor shall I be able to sign it'. …. 'Thank you for your letter and also the enclosures with reference to a C-in-C'. …'I am afraid I have never read anything that so fills me with alarm as the two letters you have sent me, as not, in my opinion, showing a grasp of the problem. As far as I can see both advocate the Air Ministry being Commander in Chief. This, of course, means eventually the Secretary of State – Quite impossible. I hope you will change it. Remember, I will not have read this after dictation.'[24] One wonders how helpful this response was for Ellington, but at least it was clear. Equally, outspoken was Dowding: 'The Commanders-in-Chief of the Bomber and Fighter Commands will be conducting two separate campaigns abroad and at home respectively, and I think that there is no necessity for the creation of any additional Command outside the Air Ministry. In fact, I think that the creation of any such Command would be definitely harmful as introducing an additional wheel of the chariot.'[25]

On the other hand, some offered perspectives that were to prove remarkably prescient. ACM Sir Fredrick Bowhill, as AMP, considering the proposed frontline re-organisation stated: 'I am of the opinion that to have a C-in-C Offensive and a C-in-C Defensive is the ideal solution except for one most important point, namely that it will really mean that the CAS will become Commander in Chief in wartime as far as home defence goes.'[26]

This led him to conclude that it was inevitable that the Air Staff would have to be 'the co-ordinating body to give the main directions of the campaign.' If his views were accepted, he suggested the Air Ministry would need an operational room and that the Chief of Staff (COS) for the CAS would be the Deputy CAS (DCAS) who would require enhanced staff support. This, he felt, would be best offered by an enhanced Air Staff in which DCAS acted as CAS' operational executive.[27] Over time this would be exactly what unfolded.

Also supportive was Brooke-Popham who was unequivocal in calling for co-ordinated command and control in relation to the need for a Supreme Air Commander: 'There must be someone in supreme control to co-ordinate the Bomber and Fighter activities. For instance, if the Fighter Command are having great difficulty in dealing with one particular type of enemy aircraft, the Supreme Commander might have to order the Bomber Command to attack the depots that feed this particular type of enemy aircraft, or the aerodromes whence they operate, possible after consultation with the War cabinet through the CAS.'[28]

Perhaps in relief at gaining wider support, Ellington side-lined this passage in pencil commenting 'Certainly'.[29] Ellington, was also willing to listen to more junior officer opinions from his direct staff or officers recently returned from operational duty. Air Commodore Arthur Barratt would, in 1940, command RAF forces in France during the German offensive and in 1935 had recently returned from the post of Senior Air Staff Officer (SASO), HQ RAF India and prior to that appointment commanding No 1 (Indian) Group, and Chief Instructor at the RAF Staff College. He was both an accomplished staff officer and seasoned commander. On 4 October 1935 he wrote directly CAS to outline his views on the proposed re-organization.[30] That he should feel able to do this says much for Ellington's openness and approachability, traits which he is often not credited with having in abundance.[31]

Barratt began by recognising that CAS had already offered his clear view on the future organization of the Home Command but he thought that 'control under CAS of the Bomber and Fighter Commands is likely to be dangerous' from the point of view of staff work and operational reality.[32] Therefore, he felt that on the outbreak of war the demands on CAS would be enormous, so much so that he would rarely be able to dedicate sufficient time to pure operational matters. This would necessitate the DCAS assuming the operational role, 'in other words the DCAS becomes a virtual C-in-C'.[33] In this sense, Barratt could be seen as the originator of the idea of a SAC for at this time Ellington was not advocating one.

Accurately anticipating the needs of 1940, Barratt suggested that there would be occasions when the bomber force might need to be directed against enemy aerodromes, and he asserted that he believed that 'this action is better controlled by a C-in-C who is freed from all other distractions.' Ellington read Barrett's memo and although not altering his immediate plans he did concede to Newall, AMSO, that: 'DSD's proposal really means introducing a super C-in-C between the Air Ministry and the organization proposed last July. Should it be considered necessary to do this, it can be done later. In any case during the expansion I am satisfied that we should adopt the organization by which Fighter and Bomber C-in-Cs come direct under the Air Ministry.'[34]

Barratt became the Commandant of the RAF Staff College with promotion to Air Vice-Marshal (AVM) on 1 January 1936 and so speaking his mind in a reasoned, logical, and loyal way to a CAS willing to listen and be challenged was no hindrance to Barratt's future prospects. It reveals that the RAF and Air Ministry of the 1930s was an organization which tolerated debate and the expression of well-considered but contrary views in a way which is at odds with the popular image of strict hierarchical deference. Nonetheless, there is little evidence that plans were much altered as a result of the consultation process. Again, everything points to the conclusion that the outcome was largely predetermined, and that consultation had an element of going through the motions. However, the RAF of the 1930s was not an autocracy, so the CAS still had to gain acceptance at the highest level for his proposals to be enacted regardless of how pre-determined they may have been. Ellington was CAS for the final stages of the Air Ministry review and the Frontline reform. Newall led the way as the SAC debate reached its conclusion. The approach taken by them highlights both a difference of style and a difference of circumstance.

Top Level Support – Guarantor of Success. Ellington worked hard to gain support from his political master, the Secretary of State for Air (SofS), initially Lord Londonderry (5 November 1931 – 7 June 1935) and subsequently Viscount Swinton (7 June 1935 – 16 May 1938). As the Air Ministry review proceeded a dispute arose between the Secretary to the Air Ministry and the CAS over the detail of the proposed changes. Much of this has the hallmark of the Secretary establishing his position with the new CAS who had, perhaps unwisely, not included him in the early discussions. Eventually, Ellington wrote to the SofS to gain his approval for the plan before the SofS departed for a tour of Egypt.[35] He stated simply that war training would move to his department, war organization would be bolstered and come under the CAS and that the Works and Building Directorate would remain with CAS for a further two to three years despite the Secretary's objection. The next day Lord Londonderry replied that he approved.[36] This drew a line under the debate and the Air Ministry re-organisation went ahead in April 1934 as per Ellington's plan.

Ellington acted in a similar way in December 1935 concerning the on-going discussions about frontline reform. Even before all Air Council members had been consulted the year concluded with the CAS asking Lord Swinton to write to Lord Wigram, His Majesty's Private Secretary,

on 12 December 1935 seeking HM's approval to a series of senior appointments he wished to make and informing the King that: 'I am proposing to divide the Command into two, one Command of bomber squadrons and one of fighter. The squadrons will be organized in groups under these two Commands, and responsibility for co-ordination will rest with the Chief of the Air Staff.'[37]

It would have been very difficult for the SofS to walk away from such an unequivocal statement to the Sovereign, whose constitutional position was the Chief of the Royal Air Force.[38] It should also be remembered that at that time King George V was mourning his beloved sister Princess Victoria who had died on 3 December 1935 and he was increasingly ill at Sandringham where he would die on 20 January 1936. It is thus doubtful HM gave much consideration to Lord Swinton's letter but the fact it was sent ensured that the plans Ellington sought would not be changed as the Air Council deliberated the matter.

On 15 January 1936, AMSO asked his colleagues to 'consider this organization and to agree to it in principle'.[39] Their responses showed that they were far from convinced. Bowhill, AMP, contended that he was unclear as to what useful function the Training Command would perform in peacetime and thus the case for a C-in-C was dubious.[40] The Air Member for Research and Development (AMRD), Dowding, replied on 1 February 1936 in his own hand and as far as AMSO would have been concerned, in a less than fully supportive way.[41] He stated: 'I am sorry to say that I should find the greatest difficulty in agreeing to this organization **in principle**. It is often the case that a system, not theoretically sound, can be made to work by energy and good will, and it may be that this is such a system, but I have my doubts.' [Emphasis in the original][42] One wonders what AMSO must have thought on reading such a submission. However, with typical efficiency and speed, CAS had already written to AMSO on 20 January 1936 stating: 'I agree in principle with this organization.'[43]

This swiftness of response, and the close working and personal relationship Newall enjoyed with the SofS, Lord Swinton, were to be pivotal in securing the decision he and the CAS sought.[44] However, if Ellington's style and circumstances allowed him to gain overt senior support as the established CAS and carry through his reforms in the way he wished, the same fortunate combination did not carry Newall to success with the SAC debate.

The Limits of Power – External Scrutiny. When Newall assumed the post of CAS on 1 September 1937 the final SAC decision was far from resolved. The internal RAF discussion had settled in favour of the post, despite the opposition of the Cs-in-C of Bomber and Fighter Command, and Ellington had gained Lord Swinton's approval for the SAC role provided no publicity was planned.[45] The Air Ministry Secretary informed the Home Commands on 19 April 1937 of the procedures to be introduced in wartime, but the wider debate with the Royal Navy, Army and Committee of Imperial Defence (CID) secretariat had a way to run.[46]

In March 1936 Sir Thomas Inskip had been appointed by the Prime Minister Sir Stanley Baldwin to the new post of Minister for the Co-ordination of Defence. In early 1937 he addressed the Royal Navy's continual demand for the transfer of naval aviation back to their oversight. Unsurprisingly, the RAF's view was that this was not an efficient or effective use of the very limited air resources available to the country. Thus, in the autumn of 1937 the RAF was faced with a significant challenge to its operational structure and needed to win support for the SAC role amongst its sister services and the members of the CID, especially its Secretary Colonel Sir Maurice Hankey RM, who had been in that post since 1912. On 15 October 1937 the 22nd Meeting of the Deputy Chief of Staff (DCOS) Committee considered the SAC proposal with AVM Peirse representing the RAF as DCAS.[47] The meeting did not go well and the RAF proposal was swiftly rejected as not suitable for co-ordination with the established RN procedures and of limited relevance to Army command methods. At this point, Newall faced a significant challenge. The methods of Ellington of gaining the highest support and then driving the matter through could not work in the wider setting of external review. Likewise, the new CAS' influence with the other Services was limited, the RN were on the charge over the Fleet Air Arm and the Army were beginning to consider the implications of a much larger expeditionary force with its attendant air arm.

Newall's response was to avoid confrontation and adapt. In this he was greatly assisted by the Deputy Chief of the Naval Staff (DCNS), Vice-Admiral Sir William James RN. James had stated at the DCOS meeting, in response to a question from Peirse as to with whom the air commander should co-ordinate, that the air commander: 'should go to the Admiralty. The Admiralty, that is to say the Chief of the Naval Staff, was in effect the Supreme Naval Commander.'[48] Then on reflection he added: 'In actual practice the officer with whom the Supreme Air Commander would get into touch would be the Deputy Chief of the Naval Staff.'[49]

Afterwards James wrote to Hankey on 18 October 1937 stating that he had been 'reflecting on our recent discussion about the proposal emanating from the Air Ministry'.[50] Reiterating the Admiralty experience of the First World War, James suggested that by establishing a 'central war room' properly manned and continually updated, the COS, or their Deputies, could meet and quickly give direction and decision to any short notice issue that might arise. He copied his proposal to Peirse and Haining, Director of Military Operations and Intelligence at the War Office, and he wrote separately to DCAS on 21 October 1937.[51]

James suggested to Pierse that he might wish to consider 'the possibilities of establishing your officer who is to control the British aircraft at your Ministry in the same way as the DCNS is located here.' He asked whether it might be that a DCAS would be 'a better practical solution in view of the inevitable centralization of all information at your own Ministry?' Once more reverting to Admiralty experience in the First World War, he explained that DNCS was responsible for the main operations while the Assistant Chief of the Naval Staff (ACNS) concentrated on the specifics of the anti-submarine war. He suggested to Pierse that he felt DCAS embraced the duties of both DCNS and ACNS and wondered if the time had not come

for the Air Ministry to expand its organization and introduce an additional senior officer onto the Air Staff to allow DCAS to operate in a manner analogous to DCNS? Pierse acknowledged James' letter on 23 October 1937 thanking him for his helpful and positive suggestion which he found 'very heartening' and convinced him that a practical solution could be found.[52]

Thus, in the space of eight days from the 15 October 1937 DCOS Meeting to the 23 October 1937 when Pierse replied to DCNS, the RAF's position on the establishment of a SAC fundamentally shifted towards the methods and procedures of the Admiralty. While James' counterproposal had much to recommend it, it stopped short of addressing many of the underlying challenges identified in the original SAC paper. It also failed to meet published Air Council policy, namely the creation of a SAC.[53] That such change could take place so quickly suggests a number of possibilities: the idea was fundamentally flawed and a great error of organization was prevented by the helpful intervention of the DCNS; the RAF singularly failed to prepare its case and gain support for a sound concept; or the RN were determined to resist change, protect their ownership of allocated aircraft, exploit a favourable period of institutional advantage following their success in the Fleet Air Arm debate, exploit the dominance and prestige of the First Sea Lord/Chief of the Naval Staff Admiral Sir Ernle Chatfield, and the sympathetic ear often given by Hankey to RN viewpoints. Or perhaps the Air Staff, and especially the DCAS' heart, were not truly committed to the idea.

Pierse had opposed the concept at the start of the year and could see that a SAC would seriously complicate his appointment's war role and significance in the eyes of the CAS. Newall was a supporter of the overall concept but one wonders what his view was, having assumed the post of CAS, of his predecessor occupying such a critical role in war since Ellington was now the Inspector General and therefore putative SAC. Could that have been partly behind Newall's suggestion that the SAC should not be located in the Air Ministry? Either way, the argument was shifting significantly towards the Admiralty solution and a memorandum published by the DCNS on 11 November 1937 added further weight to the RN argument.[54]

Entitled 'Operational Control in War' James set out over three closely typed pages the rationale behind the Admiralty's position. It was an expertly argued paper and an important document in the development of Britain's command structure for the Second World War. Its basic premise was encapsulated in the opening sentence of the third paragraph: 'Furthermore, the Admiralty were not convinced that it would be necessary or desirable for the Chiefs of Staffs to remove their hands from the pulse of operations to the extent suggested in the Air Ministry proposal.'[55]

This was an important point of disagreement and one which the Admiralty had every right and responsibility to argue. The First Sea Lord, Chief of the (Imperial) General Staff, and CAS, stood, constitutionally, ahead of their Service Board colleagues responsible to the Sovereign and Government for the fighting and operational effectiveness and efficiency of their respective Services.[56] While other commanders would of necessity be charged with the detailed execution

of the allotted operational plans, it would remain the COS's responsibility for their ultimate success. It is difficult to see, given this constitutional position, how the RAF proposal would not have resulted in the CAS being weakened in the eyes of his War Cabinet and COS colleagues.

The failure of the RAF to carry the day with its SAC initiative should not alter the recognition of its role as a key player in the development of the processes and procedures for high command in war that came from the debate. On 29 November 1937 the RAF Director of Operations and Intelligence (DOI) issued a memorandum ambitiously entitled 'Co-ordination of Higher Control of Operations by the Three Services in time of War and the Organization of the Higher Command of the Royal Air Force'.[57] The paper sought to consider: 'The war organization of the Air Staff in the Air Ministry, with whom – whether a Supreme Air Commander is appointed or not – must remain the higher direction of the RAF in war.'[58]

This document was an important steppingstone in the development of the RAF's wartime command structure and it showed that the Air Staff, regardless of the CAS and Air Council's decisions, were unconvinced about the concept of a SAC. However, Newall was not prepared quite yet for the staff to administer the coup de grace to the SAC concept. When Pierse attended the 23rd DCOS Meeting on 14 December 1937 he outlined the RAF's position as it had developed over the previous weeks.[59] But he stated that: 'in the opinion of the present CAS there might be some political outcry if there was no individual designated as responsible for the co-ordination of the air offensive and defensive….If a Supreme Air Commander were appointed, his functions would now be limited to co-ordinating the air offensive and defensive. He would have no functions in regard to the Coastal Command.'[60]

Following the DCOS meeting and their agreement, Pierse circulated his Draft Report on the Co-ordination and Control of Defence Operations.[61] Over the next few days it was commented on by his colleagues, re-drafted and issued as DCOS 57 'The Co-ordination and Control of Defence Operations in a War against Germany'.[62] On 22 April 1938, the DCOS 57 Paper was re-worked into CID Paper 1425-B and circulated summarising the winter's discussions and setting out the agreed process for the higher co-ordination and control of defence operations.[63] Its contents were the bedrock upon which higher command would be conducted in the coming war and a knowledge of its broad principles is essential for assessing the performance of the RAF and other Services as the war unfolded.

High Command in War - CID 1425-B

Responsibility for the supreme direction of the war at the highest level rested with the Cabinet.[64] The PM would discharge that duty through the War Cabinet or War Committee as determined by the size and scope of the crisis. It was expected that the Defence Plans (Policy) Committee would form the basis of the war time structure.

The machinery for submitting advice to the War Cabinet would be the same as had been developed in peacetime. The 'mainspring of this machinery was the COS Sub-Committee'.

The COS Sub-Committee would support the War Cabinet in all matters relating to the planning, execution, and assessment of the war situation. They would propose changes and enact the decisions reached by the War Cabinet and be present or represented at the War Cabinet whenever discussions of military matters were envisaged. Collectively they would act as a 'military advisor "in commission" to the Cabinet.'

The Joint Planning Committee (JPC) would provide the COS Sub-Committee with the necessary appreciations and reports for submission to the War Cabinet; the Joint Intelligence Committee (JIC) would provide the joint intelligence appreciations for the Joint Planning Staff (JPS) and the COS Sub-Committee; and the DCOS Sub-Committee would 'produce agreed reports containing advice and recommendations on matters usually of current as opposed to long range importance.'

The COS would receive the Minutes of the War Cabinet meetings but their actual instructions would be transmitted to them by the PM, Minister for Co-ordination of Defence, Service Ministers and/or the Secretary of the War Cabinet depending on the degree of urgency of the matter. Once received the instructions would be translated into 'terms of action' for each Service by the Chief of Staff concerned. This placed the CAS and the Air Staff in the operational command position envisaged for the SAC.

This process would prove satisfactory for the handling of strategy and long-range planning but the co-ordination of day-to-day operations in war required new processes and procedures. The paper reprised the path to the final decision, conceding Newall's requirement for the SAC role to be retained for possible use but only for the 'co-ordination between the action of the bombers and fighters.' It highlighted that the Air Staff had already been re-organized and an Assistant CAS (ACAS) introduced into the structure so that: 'the air war will be exercised from the Air Ministry on lines similar to those in force in the Royal Navy.'

Against this background the proposed system for operational co-ordination assumed that 'direct control of the operations of the forces of any one Service must be vested in that Service; and only when the necessity is proved beyond doubt should any Service assume control over any of the forces of another Service.' Thus, it was argued, the problem boiled down to 'the provision of an organization whereby, while each Ministry controls the operations of its own Service, those operations shall be co-ordinated with those of the other two Services, and of the civil air defence organization.'

To accomplish this goal each Service Ministry's War Room would act in concert and harmony with the Central War Room that would be situated 'in some convenient building in proximity to all the Ministries concerned.' The Central War Room would act as the meeting place for the COS or their Deputies 'for discussion on the current situation or plans for the immediate future.' Decisions taken would 'be implemented by each COS through his own individual Ministry.' Thus, the process for short notice and day-to-day events was, in effect, a compressed version

of the higher-level process but one that relied heavily on the establishment of the War Rooms and a spirit of co-operative working among the Joint and Single-Service staff. It lacked the singular authority that Ellington had sought but it embraced a far stronger element for it was the agreed position of a complex institutional structure that had grown from discussion, compromise, co-operation, and agreement. Indeed, it was a quintessentially British compromise, but one that preserved the teamwork necessary to face the uncertainty of the unfolding international scene.[65]

Sixty-Six Men on the Eve of War

The course of the War is well known, but from the perspective of September 1939 the unfolding crisis was one of unknown risk and uncertainty. The preparations of the 1930s had created a far better air force, but its readiness to meet the demands of war had yet to fully evolve. In retrospect it is easy to criticise those responsible but a more mature and nuanced approach is required to fully understand the pressures of the time.

As war broke out the War Cabinet and COS were content with the arrangements set out in CID 1425-B for the control and co-ordination of the nation's defence forces.[66] The COS delivered the strategy agreed by the War Cabinet after discussion informed by the input from the COS. It was expected that the frequency of War Cabinet meetings would make it possible to balance policy with practical military reality through an iterative process of directive, action, assessment, and re-assessment that would enable the necessary adjustments to be made. It was inevitable that pressure would build to carry out actions for which preparations were scant or absent but that was the reality of war, where the enemy could always dictate the tempo or direction of events. But this was not a phenomenon new to Britain in 1939, or resulting from the years of equivocation and appeasement in the 1930s. It was how all crises and wars developed and the British War Cabinet process, borne from hard won experience in the First World War, was as developed as any to cope with the pressure, indeed paragraph 1(a) of the first War Cabinet meeting stated that its work would be conducted 'in accordance with the practice of the War Cabinet in the last War'.[67] For the RAF, CAS was at the heart of its policy making and operational performance. It was his duty to ensure, through accurate briefing and advocacy, that War Cabinet policy was fully aware of operational capability so that strategy was achievable.

The historian, Sir Hew Strachan neatly summarised the essence of strategy as 'a profoundly pragmatic business' in which it 'has to deal in the first instance not with policy, but with the nature of war'.[68] Newall held a vital role in ensuring the War Cabinet was aware of the actual capability of the RAF. It was also Newall's responsibility to ensure that the RAF's contribution to the agreed strategy was as efficient and effective as it could be. This was the key operational role of the CAS and the Air Ministry, and the reforms of the 1930s all emphasised that CAS and the Air Staff would act in high command, with the CAS as SAC 'in effect', to ensure the direction and co-ordination of the home and overseas frontline commands. It is a key point which many histories of the RAF in the Second World War underplay in favour of focussing on the Cs-in-C and their frontline Commands.

Newall accepted that the debate over the SAC post was closed but he had left the matter with a clause that the post could be considered if events were to develop that made it advisable. Between 1938 and 1939 events did not suggest that the SAC debate needed to be resurrected.[69] However, Newall, had strongly supported the need for a SAC to act as the point of effective co-ordination and as the 'generalissimo' to whom the public could look for reassurance in command of the air.[70] Against this background it is reasonable to conclude that Newall still felt that a form of the SAC role might have a part to play and might be required as the complexity of the war unfolded.

At 9 am on 2 September 1939, Newall convened his first Morning Conference with his senior staff and advisors.[71] The Air Ministry Handbook listed the responsibilities of the Air Staff.[72] Newall was charged with 'all questions of Air Force policy', 'advice on the conduct of air operations and the issue of orders in regard thereto', the 'fighting efficiency and collective training of the Royal Air Force, and, *inter alia*, the 'collection of intelligence'. This placed Newall squarely in the role of a commander. Pierse, DCAS, was responsible for the 'plans and orders for air operations and home defence', the work of the CID and League of Nations, the collection and distribution of air intelligence and liaison with attaches. To undertake the detailed work AVM Peck's duties as ACAS Ops and Int were summarized as being 'operational policy' and liaison with the War Office Admiralty, Home Office and other agencies as required. This cascade of increasingly detailed responsibility emphasised the central role envisaged for the Air Staff in the conduct and oversight of operations. The detailed liaison with the Commands would be undertaken at the lower Directorate level who were linked to the Commands through the respective SASOs, whose role was to support the Commanders in the conduct of operations. Direct liaison between the CAS, DCAS, or ACAS and the C-in-C was normal, but invariably it was supplemented by written correspondence, in the form of an Air Council Directive or directed letter, to record the decisions taken or opinions expressed. As war began ACM Sir Edgar Ludlow-Hewitt led Bomber Command; Dowding led Fighter Command; and Coastal Command was led by Bowhill.[73]

These men were all well known to each other. Some were friends, some rivals, some worked harmoniously while others were best kept apart. The RAF of 1939, while expanding very rapidly, was still commanded and staffed by a close-knit group of men who knew a great deal about each other's strengths and weaknesses. They were also subject to many of the dangers that over familiarity and homogeneity can bring to any organization. The numbers were small, in January 1939, there were 3 serving Air Chief Marshals, 6 Air Marshals, 22 Air Vice-Marshals, and 35 Air Commodores in the RAF giving a total of 66 officers above the rank of group captain on whose shoulders the enormous responsibility of wartime command would fall.[74]

A New Starting Point

This article set out to examine the RAF's organisational changes of the 1930s in order to establish a new starting point for assessing the performance of the RAF in the Second World War especially the command role undertaken by the CAS and Air Staff.

A common theme runs through the Air Ministry Review of 1934, the Command re-structuring of 1936, and the SAC Debate of 1937, namely, the need to move the focus of the RAF away from the institutional survival and development identified by Brooke-Popham onto concentrating on its real function, the preparation for war.[75] Likewise, Ellington's memorandum that initiated the re-organisation of the commands was motivated clearly by the need to organise in peacetime as it was expected the RAF would fight in war.[76] And the RAF's proposal to establish a SAC to oversee operations was also to meet perceived operational need, with Ellington stating unequivocally that he intended in time of war to introduce Brooke-Popham into the command chain to oversee the activities of Bomber Command and Fighter Command.[77]

The Air Ministry review addressed the needs of growing a coherent force, establishing a secure operating base within the UK and ensuring the co-ordinated training and development of the frontline. It also addressed the chronic shortfall in manpower, not by the creation of larger staff, but by the establishing of the need for greater staff that would inevitably develop over time. By winning this argument in 1934 the RAF was able to expand its staff capability over the coming years with the grudging but positive agreement of the Treasury and other government bodies. This achievement alone went a considerable way to delivering the air staff envisaged by Smuts in 1917 as being capable of developing air strategy and conducting air operations on a par with its counterparts in the Admiralty and War Office.[78] Ellington's insistence on retaining the works department and unit training direction within the Air Ministry ensured the close control of two vital aspects of any air force's capability, namely effective and secure operational bases and common training standards that would allow co-ordinated and effective operations to be centrally directed by the Air Ministry. The re-structured arrangement in the areas of operations, intelligence and staff duties and organisation all contributed to the creation of a system not aimed at the command of the RAF of 1934 but of a future RAF of much greater size and equipped with much more capable aircraft facing the challenge of a major European war against Germany.

Likewise, in the 1936, Ellington was clear that the purpose of reform was the establishment of greater operational capability and the potential for better operational development. This was reinforced by his attempts to establish the post of SAC in his last days as CAS. This was the thinking of an operationally aware commander, something very few have given Ellington credit for being. He was content for the frontline to focus on developing its capability under the headings of offence for Bomber Command, defence for Fighter Command and maritime co-operation for Coastal Command, but when war came, he expected that the demands would not fall so simplistically into these narrowly defined mono-functional stovepipes, hence his perceived need for a 'Super Air C-in-C' to oversee the whole and create multi-functional effect.

The process encapsulated in CID 1425-B required the RAF to be centrally co-ordinated by the CAS and Air Staff to achieve the desires of the War Cabinet. It was an entirely logical approach and one that had the benefit of having gained credibility in the First World War. It suited the RN

and the British Army whose frontline assets, once allocated to a particular mission or task, were effectively fixed in that endeavour until completion. Neither the RN nor the British Army were faced with the possibility that political or inter-service operational demands could be exercised on their frontline forces in such a moment-to-moment way as was faced by the multitude of demands placed on the RAF even with the very limited aircraft of 1939. Flexibility may have been the key to air power but it was also a curse.

So, what does all this mean for today? Three clear lessons stand out. First, change needs clear vision, strong leadership and coherent purpose. In all three reforms of the 1930s the purpose was operational preparedness and readiness for a war. Secondly, communication, debate, dialogue, openness to dissenting views and opinions, coupled with a firm determination to deliver, were essential ingredients in achieving the aim within very pressing timescales and under severe resource constraints. Finally, the need for intelligent compromise and adaptation epitomised the final change, the call for a SAC, and through that compromise a far more resilient plan was born, one which laid the foundations for RAF higher command in the War. But perhaps the most telling reflection is that the history of the RAF, especially in the Second World War, has for over 80 years begun from a false starting point. The CAS and the Air Staff held a far more central role in the command and direction of the war, especially those operations conducted from the UK mainland. The Cs-in-C and their AOCs were central to the day-to-day tactical execution, but their guidance and direction emanated from the War Cabinet, through the CAS. The mono-functional structure of Bomber, Fighter, and Coastal commands was never designed to fight a war without co-ordinated direction from a higher authority. That was the essence of the SAC debate and the logical outcome of the structural re-organisations of the Air Ministry and frontline. These 3 reforms set the conditions for the higher command of the RAF in the War, and the 66 men mentioned above were the ones who would, for better or worse, carry out that command and leadership role.

Notes

[1] D Walker, "Supreme Air Command – The Development of Royal Air Force Command Practice in the Second World War" (PhD Thesis, University of Birmingham, January 2017) University of Birmingham *ethesis* website: **http://etheses.bham.ac.uk/id/eprint/8209**.
[2] John Terraine, The Right of the Line: The Royal Air Force in the European in the European War 1939-1945 (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1985), 32-33.
[3] Richard Overy, Goering Hitler's Iron Knight (New York: I B Tauris and Co Ltd, 2012), 82-86.
[4] TNA AIR 2/673 S32201 Encl 1A, dated 22 December 1932.
[5] TNA AIR 2/8875, S35818 Part I, E6b, Minute 1, dated 5 June 1935, Minute by CAS to DCAS outlining his intention to re-organise the Home Commands and TNA AIR 2/1950 S39818 Control of Bomber and Fighter Commands in Time of War, Minute 11, dated 11 December 1936.
[6] Anthony Furse, Wilfrid Freeman, (Staplehurst, UK: Spellmount Ltd, 2001) 95, footnote*.
[7] Terraine, The Right of the Line, 44-45.
[8] TNA AIR 2/673 S32201 Encl 1A, dated 22 December 1932.

[9] TNA AIR 2/8875, S35818 Part I, E6b, Minute 1, dated 5 June 1935.
[10] TNA AIR 2/1950 S39818, Minute 11 dated 11 December 1936.
[11] Harford Montgomery-Hyde, British Air Policy between the Wars 1918-1939 (London: Heinemann, 1976), Malcolm Smith, British Air Strategy between the Wars (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1984), Tami Davis Biddle, Rhetoric and Reality in Air Warfare, The Evolution of British and American Ideas about Strategic Bombing, 1914-1945 (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2002); Terraine, The Right of the Line; Dennis Richards, 'Royal Air Force 1939-45, Vol 1, The Fight at Odds' (London: HMSO, 1974).
[12] Asher Lee, Goering Air Leader (London: Duckworth, 1972), 60-61 and Overy, Goering Hitler's Iron Knight, 93, 106-107.
[13] David Edgerton, England and the Aeroplane: Militarism, Modernity and Machines (London: Penguin Books, 2013) 66-69, 171.
[14] Terraine, Right of the Line, 16-17.
[15] TNA AIR 2/673 S32201 – War Organization of the Air Ministry – Sir R Brooke-Popham's Report Minute Sheet attached to E2.
[16] Ibid., M10, dated 29 June 1933, Minute from CAS to DCAS.
[17] TNA AIR 2/8875, S35818 Part I, E6b, Minute 1, dated 5 June 1935.
[18] Ibid., Minute 3, dated 12 July 1935.
[19] Ibid., Welsh's Paper entitled Memorandum by D of O on the Organization of the home Commands – 1935 Expansion Scheme C, is filed as E1A, dated 19 June 1935.
[20] Ibid., Minute 3, dated 12 July 1935.
[21] TNA AIR 2/1950 S39818 Control of Bomber and Fighter Commands in Time of War, Minute 11, dated 11 December 1936. The DCAS was also Director of Intelligence at this point.
[22] Ibid., E 1A, 2A dated 16 November 1936.
[23] Winston S Churchill, The Second World War Vols I-VI (London: Cassell and Co Ltd, 1948), David Reynolds, In Command of History – Churchill Fighting and Writing the Second World War (London: Penguin, 2004) and Frederick Woods, Artillery of Words – The Writings of Sir Winston Churchill (London: Leo Cooper, 1992) all show the impact Churchill's narrative has had on shaping the development of the historiography of the SWW and the preparations made in the 1930s.
[24] TNA AIR 2/1950 S39818 E 8A dated 25 November 1936.
[25] Ibid., E 5A dated 20 November 1936.
[26] TNA AIR 2/8875, S35818, E 6c, dated 18 July 1935.
[27] Ibid.
[28] TNA AIR 2/1950 S39818, E 9A dated 1 December 1936.
[29] Ibid., E 9A dated 1 December 1936.
[30] TNA AIR 2/8875, S35818, Min 19, dated 4 October 1935.
[31] Montgomery-Hyde, British Air Policy, 494.
[32] TNA AIR 2/8875, S35818, Min 19, dated 4 October 1935.
[33] Ibid., Min 19, dated 4 October 1935.
[34] Ibid., Min 20, dated 8 October 1935.
[35] TNA AIR 2/673 S32201 M22, dated 11 December 1933 - Minute from CAS to Sof S

Lord Londonderry.
[36] Ibid., M25, dated 12 December 1933 - Minute from SofS to CAS.
[37] TNA AIR 2/8875, S35818, Loose leaf copy of letter to Lord Wigram from S of S, dated 12 December 1935.
[38] *Air Force List*, January 1935.
[39] AIR 2/8875, S35818, E 30a, dated 15 January 1936.
[40] Ibid., E 30c, dated 29 January 1936.
[41] Ibid., E 30d, dated 1 February 1936.
[42] Ibid.
[43] Ibid., E 30b, dated 20 January 1936.
[44] John Arthur Cross, 'Lord Swinton' (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1982) p. 150. Cross records that Swinton's relationship with Ellington was 'never close' and that he found Dowding 'prickly'. On the other hand, Cross records that 'he had high regards' for Newall, whom he first met in January 1934 when on his East African tour as Colonial Secretary.
[45] TNA AIR 2/1950 S39818, M 27 dated 15 April 1937.
[46] Ibid., E28D dated 19 April 1937.
[47] TNA CAB 54/3/1, 22nd Meeting of the DCOS Committee of the COS Committee dated 15 October 1937, and TNA AIR 9/81 E7 dated 15 October 1937.
[48] Ibid., E7 dated 15 October 1937.
[49] Ibid., E7 dated 15 October 1937.
[50] TNA ADM 1/4, Letter to Sir Maurice Hankey from DCNS Sir William James RN dated 18 October 1937.
[51] Ibid., DCNS to DCAS, dated 21 October 1937.
[52] TNA AIR 9/81, E11 dated 23 October 1937.
[53] TNA AIR 2/1950 S39818, E28D dated 19 April 1937.
[54] TNA ADM 1 and TNA AIR 9/81, E13 dated 13 November 1937, DCNS Paper to DCOS colleagues, Operational Control in War, dated 11 November 1937.
[55] Ibid., dated 11 November 1937.
[56] HC Deb 21 February 1918, vol.103,c.959; and TNA AIR 8/1354 - Chiefs of Staff Relationship with HMG dated 24 February 1936.
[57] TNA AIR 9/81, E14, Co-ordination of Higher Control of Operations by the Three Services in time of War and the Organization of the Higher Command of the Royal Air Force, dated 29 November 1937.
[58] Ibid., dated 29 November 1937.
[59] TNA CAB 54/1/7, DCOS 21st-23rd Meeting, dated 14 December 1937.
[60] Ibid., dated 14 December 1937.
[61] Ibid., E25 and 26 dated 3 March 1938.
[62] TNA CAB 54/4/4 DCOS 57 The Co-ordination and Control of Defence Operations in a War against Germany, dated 1 March 1938.
[63] TNA CAB 53/38/3 CID, Memorandum by the Chiefs of Staff Sub-Committee, CID 1425-B, The Co-Ordination and Control of Defence Operations, dated 29 April 1938.
[64] TNA CAB 54/4/6 CID, Report by the Deputy Chiefs of Staff Sub-Committee of the Chiefs of

Staff Committee, DCOS 68, The Co-Ordination and Control of Defence Operations, dated 22 April 1939.
[65] Ibid.
[66] TNA CAB 65/1/1 War Cabinet 1 (39) - Meeting held at 5pm Sunday 3rd September 1939, dated 3 September 1939.
[67] Ibid., para 1(a) dated 3 September 1939.
[68] Sir Hew Strachan, The Direction of War Contemporary Strategy in Historical Perspective (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 12.
[69] TNA AIR 9/81 E32 and 33 dated 14 October 1938.
[70] TNA AIR 2/1950 S39818, M14 dated 3 March 1937.
[71] TNA AIR 2/3155 CAS War Conference Minutes of Meetings, Final Minutes of the 1st Meeting held on 2nd September 1939, dated 2 September 1939.
[72] Air Ministry Handbook, *Department of the Chief of the Air Staff - List of Staff and Distribution of Duties*.
[73] *Air Force List*, September 1939.
[74] *Air Force List*, January 1939.
[75] TNA AIR 2/673 S32201 – War Organization of the Air Ministry – Sir R Brooke-Popham's Report Minute Sheet attached to E2.
[76] TNA AIR 2/8875, S35818 Part I, E6b, Minute 1 dated 5 June 1935.
[77] Ibid., E 7a dated 22 July 1935.
[78] TNA CAB 24/22/58, Second Smuts Report, dated 17 August 1917.