

# FLASHLIGHT

The Magazine of the MOD Guard Service

Issue 43 Autumn 2012



## Special 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Issue!



### HMNB Clyde try MGS boots on

**D**irector Maxal Bann...  
HMNB Clyde, Commodore  
John Bentley and  
Captain of the Base, Capt  
Iain Barclay recently took  
the opportunity to wear  
MGS uniforms and conduct  
some control duties at the  
modular operations in  
HMNB Clyde.  
It was seen by both as an  
opportunity to appreciate with  
the MGS and to gain a better  
understanding of the typical  
difficulties encountered by an  
MGS officer.  
Essentially for those they  
have a lovely dry day.  
Commodore Barclay and  
Captain Barclay enjoyed the  
experience and it is hoped that



This term we say goodbye to

- London MGS**  
Lillian Fogg - on retirement  
Frederick Veale - on retirement  
Peter Miller - on retirement  
Leo Kettle - on resignation  
R.G. Barden - on retirement  
N.E. Curtis - on retirement

Trevor...

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Articles and photos of interest to our readers are welcome, but we reserve the right to edit or omit contributions.

Opinions expressed by contributors do not necessarily represent those of the editor or the official views of the MGS.

While the editor takes care to ensure all material produced is accurate, no liability can be accepted for errors or omissions.



# From the editor

## Mark Allen



**H**ello and welcome to this special anniversary edition of Flashlight. I have to confess that the thought of taking on responsibility for editing and designing the magazine, did initially fill me with some trepidation! Whilst I consider myself reasonably knowledgeable in the field of training design, editing a magazine for a large professional organisation is a new experience. It's been a steep but enjoyable learning curve. Still, anyone that has been in the Armed Forces will know that you should never volunteer for anything so I have only got myself to blame!

There were a number of reasons for taking the decision to move the design and editorial of Flashlight

in-house. The cost to have the magazine produced by an external designer is in the Region of £10,000 PA. At a time when the public purse is being squeezed tighter and tighter and is open for ever closer scrutiny this represents an important saving. Also, producing the magazine ourselves makes us masters of our own destiny. The MGS deserves a high quality publication that not only accurately reflects its core values and business, but also is of interest to its readers. To this end I have already sought feedback from you and this issue reflects some of your ideas. All successful magazines have to evolve in response to the demands of its readers and Flashlight will be no different. After all this is YOUR magazine!

One of the concerns you raised is that the magazine doesn't carry enough features from the 'coal face'. I intend to remedy this and have therefore, been very busy speaking with individuals across the MGS seeking input and articles from them. The support thus far has been very positive but we can't rest on

our laurels and I would ask you all to keep those contributions coming in. To help me with this I would like regionally based co-ordinators to actively seek articles and interesting stories from individuals in their Regions. If this is a role that would interest you I'd be pleased to hear from you.

This special anniversary issue features a number of articles from individuals who have been in the MGS since its inception in 1992.

It doesn't seem like it, but it's over 25 years since I joined the London Guard Service as a CSO5. Throughout my time with the MGS what has made the organisation tick is its people, their enthusiasm, loyalty and commitment to get the job well done.

This issue of Flashlight aims to celebrate some of this – I hope you like it!

# David Wray

## Head of Unarmed guarding



I'm very pleased to be able to contribute to this Anniversary edition of Flashlight, with some fascinating reminiscences including at least one stretching back to before 1992. As one of the newest arrivals in the MGS (only 3 yrs 8 months service at the time of writing) I can't begin to match those stories. But I did start to wonder how well those in service in 1992 would have predicted the events of the next 20 years.

1992 was an easier starting point than 1990, because 1991 saw both the end of the Cold War and the start of international expeditionary operations, with the First Gulf War. But would anyone then have foreseen the Second Gulf War, or the enduring operation in Afghanistan? And would they have predicted the rise of international terrorism, including the horrific "9/11" and "7/7" attacks? We can be pretty sure that if any of our MGS colleagues in 1992 could have foreseen the international financial crisis, they would now be on a Caribbean island having made a killing through clever stock-market deals.

The next step is to ask how well we would do now in predicting events to 2032. On the global stage, I wouldn't know where to start. How will the international financial crisis develop? Will the Euro survive? Will the oil run out? What

will happen to world population? The questions are endless, and the answers slim.

And even closer to home, it's not easy to predict what will happen. How will the MOD and the Armed Forces look in 2032? And how will their sites be guarded? Even though we can discern some short-term changes, it would be a brave person who would bet on where things would end up in 2032. But in the short term, we can see the planned reductions to the Armed Forces being carried through, with the withdrawal of the Army from Germany leading to the establishment of some new garrisons in Great Britain, and some new and exciting equipment for all three Services.

In the guarding space, we can see the uncertainty that has been building since 2009 start to be resolved with the issue of a consultation document on 4 October, just before this issue went to press. The consultation will still be running when you read this, and I hope you will all be participating. And I should stress that the outcome isn't pre-ordained: there really is scope for changes at sites to result from consultation responses. If the outcome is complement reductions, we will do everything we can to mitigate the impact, making maximum use of VERS to create vacancies for those

who want to stay.

Beyond that, there is a "working assumption" that the MGS will transfer to the Defence Infrastructure Organisation on 1 April 2013. When the proposal is clearer, it too will be the subject of consultation, but it won't of itself make much difference to the MGS – the biggest change will be that I'll have a new two-star boss. But there is an expectation that within the DIO we'll revisit the question of outsourcing. Since preparation for outsourcing was one of the drivers of Project Unity, no-one can say this is a surprise. And there is a strong argument that if we'd been outsourced before 2009, we'd have come through the latest financial difficulties with much less impact – just look at how the Navy's guarding contractors have been totally unaffected.

Finally, this is the opportunity for the traditional Flashlight Christmas message – although I'm not sure quite how the timings will work. But actually my main point is pretty timeless. It's that I'm continually impressed with the professional way in which everyone in the MGS is carrying on with their work despite all the uncertainty. It's a great credit to you all. I often remark that it's rather more than the Department deserves, but I did want to get on record that it is noticed and appreciated.

# Marc Shreeve

## MGS B2 Ops



I have been considering what I was doing in October 1992 when the MGS was established. As I recall I was a Personnel Manager at the Royal Naval Armament Depot in Pembrokeshire, Wales. At the time I was managing the personnel rundown of the site as it was closing because of defence cuts “Options For Change”. Those are the same defence cuts that led to the formation of the MGS. Its funny how life moves in circles, though maybe with different outcomes.

I first joined the MGS in 2000, to head up the Competing For Quality Team in Wethersfield HQ. Whilst in that role I did quite a lot of research into the formation of the MGS and this is my understanding of why it was formed.

After the Deal bombing of 1989 it was decided to set up a professional in-house guard service. After some debate, the uniform

and standards were modelled on the MOD Guard Force situated in London. They were non-industrial support grades and it was, therefore, agreed that the new MGS should also be non-industrial. One interesting aspect of this is that because industrial grades (such as patrol men) were amalgamated into the new service there was some resistance to industrial Trade Unions representing non-industrial grades. Indeed, the subject was such that the formation of the MGS was delayed by six months (hence why the MGS was established on 1 October rather than the usual 1 April). The problem was finely resolved, after very senior intervention, by the industrial trade unions agreeing to set up MGS branches that did not collect a political levy automatically.

I became Project Manager for Project Unity which led to the corporate structure as we know it today. Although it has done a lot of good things in managing out inconsistencies and providing a more standardised professional organisation, I think, in hindsight, I would have wished for some processes to have been implemented differently (not least

the financial management of the new organisation).

I left the MGS in 2004 but came back in 2008 in my current role. I am not alone in thinking that the MGS is a fantastic organisation to work for. I really admire the dedication of the individuals who work within it. I see and hear a lot of stories of how MGS officers go that extra mile to ensure that their customer gets an excellent service. It really is a privilege to work for this organisation and I hope to for many years more.

As I look to the future, I can see that there will be many changes and not much chance of stability. I suppose, for those of us who are remaining post PRI2, that the next big worry is the potential of outsourcing. My view is that there is little to fear and, perhaps much to gain, if we are eventually outsourced. Remember where we were in 2009, if we were a contractor at that time then we would not have faced a recruitment and overtime ban and maybe would be in a better position today. Whatever happens in the future, I know that the MGS will deal with it professionally and to the best of its ability.

# Trevor McKinnon

## MGS B2 CD&C



**L**ike Marc I thought I'd take a stroll down memory lane and try to remember what I was doing when the MGS was formed. I was an HEO in a branch called Personnel + Logistics (Legal Services) and one of my duties was to act as the departmental focal point on inquests relating to the deaths of service personnel. Not much relationship with the MGS there you might think but a couple of years before, my duties had taken me to the inquest for the Deal bombing. So whether by coincidence or simple twist of fate I have been with the MGS from the beginning.

In 2007 I gave in to the blandishments of Sandy MacCormick (I got through an interview actually) and joined the MGS to manage a culture change programme. For me it was actually

something of a culture shock but once I'd recovered from it I realised that here was a job worth doing.

Change is not a thing generally relished and it's fair to say I wasn't overly popular when I started the change process but I had fantastic support from Sandy and the HQ team and soon found there was a significant section of the workforce, managers, supervisors and officers who were ready to come along with me. Being a self effacing sort of chap, I leave it others to judge whether or not the changes we have implemented since 2007 have had a significant impact on the organisation and its culture. I like to think they have and I like to think that the MGS is in better shape than it was then and that through the introduction of improved or targeted training modules, the encouragement of apprenticeships, enhanced TU relationships and the development of the Respect Agenda MGS officers and managers feel confident and better equipped to face current and future challenges.

Of course, the other side of my job, conduct and discipline, means that I am often the last person anyone at a unit wants to see. I don't take it personally! In fact, I find our people among the

most welcoming and open I have ever encountered in a long career. Never short of an opinion and never afraid to share it.

It's that readiness to express a view that makes the current focus of my work – Continuous Improvement – particularly rewarding. Not only has it given a voice to the workforce and encouraged it to be involved in change, it has helped us all to take stock of our own activities and question the value of our processes and whether we can do things better. The level of engagement on CI has been impressive as will be seen by a number of articles in this anniversary edition and I am keen that we continue with it by demonstrating its worth through local, regional and organisational change based on the input of the people who actually do the job.

CI, Lean, Well Being, process review are all key to the future effectiveness of our organisation but it's only with the enthusiasm and support of the workforce that we will make things happen and I look forward to seeing or hearing from many of you in the future to take this work forward.

# E&D Matters...

## Am I visually challenged or just blind?

**H**olding conversations with colleagues in recent years, there has never been an issue with them including terms such as; the blind man or Mrs Jones, into discussions when relevant. Yet conversing with these same individuals and they have to use a word to describe someone not possessing blue eyes and blonde hair, not of Anglo Saxon, Western European origin, they will swallow hard, take a deep breath, cross their fingers hoping the heavens will not fall in on them and look everywhere but at me as they mutter coloured, or brown skin and sometimes black.

Why this reaction? Could the

individual be searching for the current term that is in vogue? After all; the politically acceptable language changes so frequently one tends to be out of sync.

Recently I came across the heading “Too much diversity is problematic”. I would say, “not so.” No one of sound mind would dispute the world is one unit of diverse cultures, languages, races, ages, food and so forth. The problematic element in the statement points towards the volume of policies, guidelines and legislation currently in place. The whole thinking behind these guidelines etc when it comes to language, makes one wonder where will it all go next. Take into

consideration those amongst us over the age of 55 years. In the past middle age was considered an acceptable descriptive term, are we now elderly, aged, a pensioner or just the old boy in the corner? I was born on an island in the West Indies, now the government tells me I’m an Afro-Caribbean; the Caribbean as far as I’m aware is a sea.

A chap once said “Years ago I was categorised as blind, the government then said I visually impaired, the other day they said I was visually challenged, after all that - I still can’t see.”

Each Region in the MGS now has an E&D panel or coordinator who will offer advice or assistance if required.



Region 5 E&D Panel members



# “My Proudest Moments”

Your editor recently caught up with the CE Steve Love who was only too pleased to contribute to this special anniversary issue



**Q** Looking back at your tenure as Chief Executive, what has given you the most satisfaction from an MGS perspective?

**A** The most satisfaction of all was, without a doubt, the National Security Inspectorate Gold Standard, achieved by the MGS and, what's more, achieved by the MGS's own efforts from start to finish. This is the top level which the industry awards to security guarding – be that public sector or commercial – in the UK. And the Guard Service did it on its own. We were all very chuffed indeed. Susan Scholefield was the Agency owner then and she came down and presented the award herself, together with the Chief Executive of the NSI, Andrew White. The best things are those you have to really, really work for and it is something that the Guard Service really worked for and deserved to get.

There were also two more things that have given me a huge amount of satisfaction. One was Sandy MacCormick's OBE, which was more than just recognition of his own work in bringing the Guard Service up to the Gold Standard, but was an honour for the Guards

as a whole.

The second thing was Vic Christopher's MBE, which generated my favourite front cover from all editions of 'Flashlight', when unusually he stood still long enough for the Queen to pin it to his chest! It was such a well-deserved award for such a thoroughly nice, professional person, who has made such a huge contribution to the whole Agency, not just to MGS.

**Q** How did you set out to weld the MDP and MGS together and at the same time ensure they retained their own identities?

**A** Actually, we did not weld the MDP and MGS together. It would be better to say that we bolted them together, because you can undo bolts, but you can't undo welds and it was quite clear that the MDP and MGS were brought together for a purpose, but not for ever. I wanted to make sure that the MGS would be viable and on a level playing field to compete if and when it went its own way and now I think it is. Not only does it have the Gold Standard, but it has its own Head of Unarmed Guarding at SCS one star level, its own budget, its own identity and its own top team and I think all of that will stand it in good

stead in the future.

**Q** How important was it for the MGS to achieve the NSI Gold Standard and why?

**A** Honestly, getting the MGS up to the NSI Gold Standard is one of my top 'career pride' moments across my whole working career. It was a huge achievement, the culmination of a lot of work and is the thing which puts the MGS up on a par with the best in the industry, which means that it's quite important to stay there.

**Q** What are your fondest and worst memories of the MGS?

**A** My fondest memory has to be the plate full of fresh, warm jam donuts served up by the Guards when I visited them at RAF Kinloss. And the worst has to be Tippex the dog who, having taken an obvious dislike to me at the MGS Dog Trials one year, remembered his grudge for a whole year and decided to finish the job at the Dog Trials a year later. It's the only time I have ever presented a prize to anyone by throwing it to them, rather than handing it to them!

**Q** What are your views on the recent MGS support to the UK Border Force?

**A** Tremendous! This was the





MGS at its best, with a 'can do' attitude and up for anything. Their support for both the MDP, the Olympics and UK border security generally is something that was most welcome and appreciated.

**Q** What are your views on the Olympics and did you attend as a spectator or in an official capacity?

**A** Neither. Like lots of other people in this country I was an Olympics cynic right up to the Opening Ceremony and then I became a total convert, but by then it was too late to get tickets.

**Q** What are your plans when you 'retire' next year and what will you do with your spare time?

**A** It's a bit soon to be asking this question, as I'm still here well into next year and working full-on, and there is a great deal to get done. However, since you ask, I expect to be doing voluntary work in the daytime, being an aspiring musician in the evenings, teaching the grandchildren to fish and sail in the school holidays once I've learnt

myself, and looking after my wife Hilary, who is partly disabled, rather better than I have done in recent years – but I hope she doesn't read this, or she'll hold me to it!

**Q** What field of voluntary work do you hope to become involved with?

**A** It will be in the area of social deprivation and illiteracy, but whether this will be with adults or young people, I don't yet know. I have seen the consequences of both of these in my police career and it's not good.

**Q** What do you see as being the biggest challenges for MGS in the short or long term?

**A** That's a really big question, but I think the big challenge hasn't changed since I took on this role in 2005. That challenge is to show that the MGS really is value for money compared with the outsourced security industry, because despite certain unfortunate experiences at the Olympics, this question does not go away and isn't likely to.



# Looking Back

“Warm congratulations to the MGS on a significant milestone, made possible by the commitment and dedication of many, many good people . My two stints in MGS HQ were good times - .lots of memories but I would like to highlight two: the unique group of people who came together for the Project Unity Team and who helped to make it such a great team; and travelling round the country to deliver the various roadshows to MGS officers and trying my best to answer the questions that were thrown at me. To MGS friends and colleagues, past and present, I wish you all the very best.”



Martin Gilbey  
Hd of MGS 2002-Jan 2004



## Celebrating in words and





“In the early 90’s when I was the MDP Sub Divisional Commander at RNSD Copenacre. I found the guards at these establishments were working effectively but were keen to improve their standards by becoming an integral part of the MGS. From 1993 to 1999 when I was the MDP Liaison Officer for the Royal Navy. Part of my role was to accompany the Manpower Audit Team whose duties required them to examine the tasking to be carried out and recommend that either Police or MGS should be employed. During this period I also found that MGS Guards were enthusiastic and eager to take on new commitments when required.

I enjoyed my time working with the MGS when I was an MGS Area Coordinator based at Wethersfield and later at Gosport. Over the 15 years that I was associated with the MGS I saw vast changes with improvements in appearance and bearing, training and professional ability. I observed the MGS become much more efficient and develop an identity for which its members can be truly proud. Well done to you all.”

Mike Tozer

# pictures 20 years of the MGS



# Looking Back...

Steve Plummer, Regional Manager Region 4, gives us his personal take on the MGS story

Reaching back into the mists of time, in this case October 1960, some of the very first MoD Industrial Patrolman posts came into existence. The people that filled these posts were brought in as industrial grade civilians. They were known colloquially as ‘Patrolmen’ and they primarily covered access control and building checks. Some of these were employed as Dog Handlers. These guards replaced military personnel so that they could be released to take on other duties.

In 1984 a young man joined these ranks as a Dog Handler and listened enthusiastically to the stories of old from veterans of this by-gone age. That idealistic young man was today’s author.

As time moved on the tragedy of the terror attack on the Royal Marines Barracks in Deal, Kent horrified the world. This atrocity took place on 22nd September 1989 and exposed serious security shortcomings and jolted politicians into reviewing the quality of guarding delivered by the private sector as well as the wider MoD. In 1990 General Sir Peter de la Billière directed that a number of courses be organised in support of the

“Patrolmen” operating with South East District. Some of these were conducted at Roussillon Barracks Chichester. I attended one of these courses and the curriculum formed the underpinning basis for the future MGS Foundation Course. Over time these courses were held in Medmenham and Chichester before the entire operation was eventually transferred to MDP Headquarters Wethersfield.

In 1992 the discussions between the MoD and the lead Trades Unions heralded the arrival of the newly formed MoD Guard Service. These were to prove exciting times. As one of many existing MoD Dog Handlers and patrol staff I was ‘assimilated’ across into the MGS as a CSO5, complete with a new staff number and uniform.

One of the first enactments of the nascent MGS was to recruit additional managers, known then locally as Senior MGS Officers. The supervisory and management vacuum created many opportunities for those possessing the necessary qualities to face the challenges ahead. In an attempt to fill the vacant posts many were recruited from outside the MGS. Some of these people discovered the role

too demanding and unfortunately fell by the wayside.

In 1994 the first rumblings of the MPGS were heard. Colonel David Wonson, Deputy Provost Marshall RMP, was the senior military officer leading the project and I recall him voicing his concerns on the viability of such a service. I particularly recall Colonel Wonson’s concerns regarding recruitment and retention issues, and many current observers continue to harbour such misgivings. Interestingly, the MPGS were initially touted as an alternative to the MDP, and not the MGS – how the times have changed.

The MGS continued to grow, and our collective reputation for customer focussed service delivery was much of the underlying reason for this. The ‘can do, will do’ attitude became our byword and won favour with many of our customers.

In 2004 the MGS and the MDP were brought together under the umbrella of the Ministry of Defence Police and Guarding Agency. The amalgamation of the MGS and the MDP was always going to prove a difficult cultural challenge and time has attested to this. From a purely personal perspective I believe that this arrangement



presented huge potential for the MGS and MDP to provide an unbeatable partnership which could have delivered a security package unrivalled anywhere in the United Kingdom security field. Sadly, recent history has reflected the demise of this arrangement and we will never know what might have been.

There were positives to come from this marriage, and Project Unity witnessed the introduction of the revised management structure. This offered even CSO5s from the most far-flung outposts the opportunity to escalate their concerns all the way to MGS Headquarters. Initially this produced a rush of grievances and complaints and allegations of harassment. On closer inspection the evidence indicated that many of these cases were long overdue for resolution and some were being suppressed or ignored. In effect the new structure offered people the confidence to raise their concerns and, quite rightly, achieve a fair hearing.

Another benefit from Project Unity was the increasingly linear communication process and the rationalisation of operational practices. Ultimately this process led to the current MGS NSI Gold

accreditation. This is a measurable dynamic process of improvement and validation. The NSI Gold accreditation is a fitting testimony to advantages of the legendary MGS team spirit.

As a nationally based organisation the MGS has seen its fair share of change and the last few years have produced increased levels of uncertainty. There is little point overplaying the meagre positives that may come from the large-scale staff reductions now facing every grade across the MGS Regions. To do so would be an insult to our collective intelligence. The reality is that the MGS is now facing the greatest test of its existence. As we approach our twentieth anniversary point there are many reflecting on whether, and for how long, we will wear the uniform that has bound the MGS as brothers and sisters in the common cause of service to the MoD.

There are of course positives in all this; those that continue to serve in the brave new world of the MGS should have a clearer sense of purpose and direction. I also believe that the survival of the MGS may offer an extended period of settlement and some peace of mind

for the future.

The viability of the future MPGS is far from clear and there is always the chance that the MGS will be asked to cover their shortfalls in the months and years to come. Whatever the case, the MGS has a long creditable history of which all members past and present can be rightly proud. I believe that we will look to the future with a mixture of trepidation and excitement. For my part, and as someone who has operated within every grade of the MGS, I feel privileged to have stood shoulder to shoulder in the sun and rain with the very best of the MGS. Wherever the future takes us we should all feel confident that we quietly made a difference for good by taking care of our customers, and on numerous occasions actually saving lives.

Many of our people feel that they have been dealt a mendacious undeserving hand of cards in exchange for the loyalty that we have collectively offered over the last two decades. Whatever the case, I am sure that we will hold our heads high and face the future with grace and dignity secure in the knowledge that, come what may, we are simply the best.

# Looking Back...

A lighthearted view of a woman in a man's world

It was mid July 2003 and I was a CI as the Site Controller for Enleigh, Bath. I had been doing the job for about two years and had a team of around 200 staff including MGS, messengers, typists, drivers and site security and health and safety staff. We were an enthusiastic team and the Bath MGS were very much part of the organisation. They swapped into other facility roles and some progressed into the main stream. Anyway, back to the day in question – Danny McGauley, my CSO2 for the Bath sites came into the spur. Obviously as a uniformed officer he was noticed by all straight away. “Kathryn” he said, “We need to speak.” I listened and he announced that he had been ‘tipped off’ that the MGS were to be centralised under one organisation and merge with the MDP. It took a while to grasp but finally Danny and I went out to the bench and had a frank chat. “Danny” I said, “This could be your opportunity to pick up your CI.” I was already a CI and Danny could easily have done the proposed Regional Manager job. “No” he said firmly, “I do not want the job due to the potential travelling, but if you do not apply I will, as we get on well and are a good team.” “Let me think

about it” was my reaction but by the next morning it was sorted, I would apply for one of the new CI Regional Managers posts.

I was very enthusiastic about the MGS. What is not recognised by the main stream is that most MGS officers bring previous employment experiences into their current role so there are always lots of new ideas and good common sense. Time moved on and I applied and was interviewed on the 22nd December 2003 for the post as Regional Manager 5 at HQMGS Wethersfield. Danny had briefed me thoroughly on 1992, rosters, flexible allowances and training. I felt well prepared but was pushed heavily at the interview on MDP issues – still I managed and received a phone call on Christmas Eve that I had been successful. The rest is history but what has the last eight years actually been like as a woman and a part-time Regional Manager?

When I first met my team in March 2004, the Area managers did look at me as ‘who is that woman and can she do the job?’ Hopefully my previous experience of working with the MGS did help me through those turbulent first three months but working



with all men was definitely a new experience. Previously, in past jobs, I had several females who I could chat to over pressures at work and home life. Men work differently. I am now very knowledgeable on Xbox, football strategies and cars. I could argue the reasons why we were not successful at Euro 2012 quite easily but there is no denying that I do miss the female banter. Most men seem to not understand the pressures of organising a family Christmas or cooking for a dinner party. The majority of them -but not all, can not multitask so well as women but can do one job at a time very well. Women can text, type and eat at the same time! But do make more mistakes! When travelling on detached duty, staying in hotels, I still do not like eating on my own so tend to buy a sandwich or have room service. I do not think men have the same uncomfortable feeling when eating alone in a hotel! Do you get the picture?!

Without fail, all of my managers have been perfect gentlemen and know that I still do get nervous in





## Looking Back...

### Kathryn presenting Institute of Advanced Motorists Certificates in 1995

some situations. Take the first MDP conference when I had to do the toast at the meal in the evening. I must have been one of the few women there and also an MGS civilian officer. Still, you cope! Another attribute women have is female intuition. I can usually walk into a rest room or an MGS shared facility and pick up an atmosphere straight away. Men can sometimes do this but not always! This intuition has helped me considerably to pre-empt a problem before it arises. I also remember faces and names which I think is often a female trait and I remember if any officers have had any personal problems.

I have had so many laughs in this job, sometimes I am still laughing in my car on the way home. The men I work with all have a great sense of humour and are great practical jokers. One thing I am eternally grateful for is that I just cannot read maps! I am often on my way somewhere and end up somewhere else. There was even the time that I was reading a map for Vic Christopher who was driving. Vic

is very patient but had to stop and turn the map the right way up. I was only reading it upside down! However, again, I am generalising but a lot of my female friends and I just cannot read maps correctly and it doesn't help if I then forget my glasses.

The other difference for me is that I am a part-time officer although I do work every day now. To all my line managers' credit – Martin, Sandy, Justin and Marc, they have been always, without fail, very understanding if children are ever ill or there is a domestic blip! However, for anyone thinking about becoming part-time, the main point that I have learnt is keep your line manager, team and colleagues informed of where you are and what you are doing. Also, try and be flexible so you never miss key events e.g. the MGS annual conference. Flexible Working Patterns should be encouraged and not just for women who have childcare responsibilities. Men should be encouraged to work part-time for various reasons such as a necessary reduced working week to look after aged parents.

Right, where do we go from here!

There are so many issues and challenges ahead for the MGS that at times I panic. However, I really do feel we have a future, women and men, all together as a team to achieve our business objectives. A mixed team of gender, and age is definitely the way ahead as we are all so very different but all of us, without fail have something to contribute. We should just be aware that we have different strengths and use them to our advantage.

Men can not do without women and women can not do without men. We just need to accept this and walk into the sunset.

# Looking Back...

How times have changed! John Bills celebrates 20 years in the MGS



I was recruited as a CSO5 into the MGS in June 1992 at 5 Training Regiment, a specialist TA training centre at Grantham Lincolnshire. I was informed by telephone that my start date was 02 November 1992 and received a letter two weeks after starting confirming that.

Supply of uniform was an issue at the time and for about 2 months I was carrying out my duties in a shirt and tie with a Barbour jacket and cloth cap and wellingtons. Which are of course proper winter country clothing! But even back then we all said we were the best trained and best security organisation anywhere.

Back then MGS Headquarters had no control over how the MGS was utilised as the units

‘owned’ their own MGS and ran it as they saw fit. This of course meant there was no consistency across the organisation at all and in the midlands at least there was no MGS managers until 1998 when I became the Brigade CSO3 at 49 East Brigade at Chilwell, covering 13 counties and 125 staff. Changes in consistency across that Brigade started when I took over Line Management of all LAND Command MGS within the Brigade area in 2001.

The real national changes however started to take effect in 2004 with Project Unity when the MGS changed to one organisation

and was controlled by MGS Headquarters. Prior to Project Unity there were only three CSO1s in this country with one on the Clyde, one in MOD Main Building and one at HQ 4th Division in Aldershot, where I was based on a temporary basis since 2002. As a result of Project Unity that increased to the five CSO1/Regional Managers and one CSO1 Senior Operations Manager that we now have plus many more extra CSO2 and CSO3 grades were recruited to supply sufficient managers to Line Manage all MGS staff effectively. CSO3 grades were now managing an average of 30 staff is a change for





the better from managing 125.

When the proposals to change to a 12-hour shift came out I remember how everyone was against the change and fighting to keep the 8-hour shifts but what would happen now if we proposed to go back to 8-hour shifts? But then again have things changed that much. There was also a great deal of discussion including a Tiger Team

when we proposed the non-flexible shift in 2008. However I was told only last week to not even consider going back to flexible shifts by someone working on a non-flexible site. Therefore they must have been good changes.

In my opinion the biggest and best change to the MGS came however when we all started working towards achieving

the operational standards and consistency of management required of BS 7499 and ISO 9001. When those standards were achieved and recognised by the receipt of the NSI Gold award we then had the proof that we were as good if not better than most other private security firms in the country.

**Looking Back...**

**John at the MGS Managers' Conference in 2010**





# Op Riverbank!

The MGS successfully supports the UK Border Force during the Olympics

Article by Kevin Graham, CSOI, Project Co-ordinator. HQ MGS



Following a request by United Kingdom Border Force (UKBF) to the Agency Centre Office for support to its operations, it was agreed that officers from the MDPGA would provide support to UKBF for a seven week period covering the London Olympics beginning 15th July 2012 thru 01 Sept 2012. However, in light of an ever changing operational environment within UKBF, as soon as MGS officers were trained they were deployed with immediate effect. The operation known as Op Riverbank was augmented by 13 MGS staff who were appointed 'Temporary Immigration Officers' for the duration of their stay.

Officers were deployed to Heathrow, Luton, Stansted, Coquelles (in France) with the possibility of other Ports and Airports as required.

Prior to deployment MGS Staff were required to attend and pass 2 x 4 day (broken into 2 modules) training courses which were held primarily at Wethersfield. MGS staff were deployed usually at Primary Control Points (PCPs) i.e. passport control where they were expected to identify and process passengers accordingly for European Union / European Economic Area, as well as identify counterfeit or forged documentation and imposters and respond to hits on the (persons) Warning Index. In addition to the above and upon successful completion of Module 2, staff were also expected to identify and process various categories of non-EU passengers and were given the authority with the initial decision to allow or refuse entry to the UK.

Having spent the day at

Heathrow Airport Terminal 3 (T3) with UBBF Assistant Director T3 Ian Dennison and one of his Inspectors, I was able to witness for myself the sterling work being done by our staff whom may I add have had nothing but the highest of accolades relating to their presentation, professionalism, standards, passenger interaction, attention to detail and sense of humour. UKBF representatives I have spoken with, stated that they could not get enough of the MGS and that they were the 'Dog's Boll\*\*s (their words not mine!) and alluded to the following examples where MGS officers excelled:

- Added value to the UK's existing border security capability
- Good quality referrals of subjects requiring further examination
- Forgery/Imposter pickups at the Border

"Well done guys and girls you did us proud".

## Looking Back...

Kevin successfully imitating a 'rock god' in 1991 when the drummer as part of the 5 piece 'Screaming Thro December'



Article by Steve Rudd, MGS Trainer HQMGS



**C**an you name the 27 European Union and the 3 European Economic Areas member states? Day 1, lesson 1 of the United Kingdom Border Force (UKBF) 3 day training course. I and the rest of the class were asked this question. So why would I want to know this? Well having volunteered to support the UKBF during the Olympic period I would be working along side both my MGS and MDP colleagues supporting the UKBF in the role of an Immigration

Officer (IO) on the European Union passport holders desks and therefore it was passengers from these countries I would be processing.

I attended an intensive 3 day training course. 2 days at Wethersfield and 1 at UKBF's training facility at Heathrow Airport. The training covered various aspects of the Immigration Officers role including how to scan and process a passport and passenger. Dealing with any potential hits on the Warning Index and the detection of forged passports. Shifts were allocated and hotel accommodation booked by the Gold Cell at Wethersfield who were coordinating the support. Shifts were either 8 or 12 hours in length covering from 5am to 11pm including weekends.

On my first shift I was paired up with an experienced IO who acted as my mentor. Each shift begins

with a briefing on any changes or persons to look out for then it's into the immigration hall. The hall consists of a long row of desks for the various passenger categories including during this period special Olympic lanes for the teams and athletes. Great emphasis was put on the needs of staff by keeping queues to a minimum. So important was this that visits by the Home Secretary, government ministers and senior officials from UKBF were a regular occurrence. As it turned out the expected passenger surge did not materialise and although the passenger numbers through Heathrow broke existing records during this period, fully staffed desks ensured queues were quickly dealt with and kept to a minimum.

During the shift should I or anyone else have any queries or difficulties then there was a regular member of staff on hand to offer

# Op Riverbank Cont'

advice and support. Although I only operated the EU desks one of the most challenging areas was the various additional regulations. For example a passenger with a non EU passport can travel through EU passport control if they are family members of hold a residency permit but whose passport may require stamping. The different

guidelines for the various countries and visas is vast therefore that support from a regular experienced officer was vital and at times much appreciated.

It proved very interesting meeting a vast array of people having travelled into the UK from all around the world. The compliments from surprised

passengers who were told to expect long delays but in fact experienced no queues at all were plentiful.

The whole experience for me was a good one as it was interesting to see how other departments work and to meet different people some of which I still communicate with on a regular basis.

## Looking Back...

**Steve receiving the Lord Lieutenant's Certificate in 2005**

### Double award for Steve and wife



CSO5 Steve Rudd from Leconfield is an Adult Warrant Officer in the Air Training Corps, based at RAF Linton on Ouse.

He is pictured (in his ATC uniform) with three of his bosses, receiving the Lord Lieutenant's Certificate at a ceremony in Hull.

It is of particular note that, while Steve was receiving his award from the East Riding of Yorkshire, his wife Lynn - a Flt Lt in the RAFVR(T) at Linton - was in Scarborough, getting the same award from North Yorks.





Article by Lee Sexton, CSO3 Region 4



**W**hilst deployed on Op Riverbank in June, I saw some very strange and wonderful things!!

I was deployed at the last minute to help out at Luton Airport and worked alongside some of our colleagues from the MDP OSU.

On the training course I attended, I remember them saying "you don't want to have to respond to a 'code R.'" (confirmed undesirable)

Un-phased I went about my training and having passed, I was on duty at a booth dealing with EU passengers, dreading what might come along and sure enough my first passenger was a Code R! This is when the training kicks in and I managed to deal with the situation appropriately.

I arrived for day two and wondered what would happen today! After a couple of hours a female came along who would not make eye contact with me. I observed her body language, checked her documentation and engaged her in conversation. All came up clear and I allowed her to continue. She hung around behind my booth and was speaking in Polish to a young girl. She couldn't speak very much English. UKBF has a duty of care to all passengers under 18 and are to ensure that they are being met by a responsible adult. As the young girl couldn't understand I asked amongst the other passengers for someone who speaks Polish and English including the girl waiting behind me. She continued to be evasive and left. Another lady came up and translated for me. The young girl was Ok and being met by her father outside. We were unable to raise him by phone so my colleague from OSU took her out into the arrivals area to ensure a safe handover. The 26 year old had left my location but was still hanging around for what appeared to be this girl yet they claimed didn't know each other. I briefed my colleague before he left and he then went off

to arrivals.

It later transpired that the 26 year old had forced the 16 year old to smuggle substances for her whilst on the aircraft and she wanted them back. The message here is please take care if you send your children alone on flights as many people in the military do.

On my 3rd night, nothing happened until approx 1 am when a lady arrived hidden behind a straw hat and sunglasses out of "the fly". She removed both items when she arrived at my station. As I looked at her eyes, I thought I know these! I've seen them before... Upon checking the document I was serving.....Elizabeth Jane Hurley, who I must say had a very glamorous passport picture! ( I have a photo but for legal reasons I can not show it to you here!) This left me on a high for the remainder of my tour which was much less eventful except for the several thousand passengers that arrived in one night after delays and technical glitches had caused a back up. Lots of unhappy people, but my team and I continued to smile and finished the shift in good spirits!

# The MGS CCTV Training Programme

## An update from the Editor



**T**hanks to the continuing hard work of the regionally based CCTV Workplace Coaches, the CCTV Training Programme is being successfully delivered across the Regions. The feedback thus far from operators and the Workplace Coaches has been very positive and does therefore fully justify the decision to develop and deliver the programme in the way that we have. The CCTV Training Team will continue to work closely with all of the relevant stakeholders to ensure the programme continues to meet the needs of MGS CCTV users and the Regional Workplace Coaches. To this end, specialist functional training has already been secured for those individuals undertaking the role of Regional CCTV Focal Points. This training will ensure that they continue to be best placed to support the Workplace Coaches with the roll out and development of the programme.

Article by Andy Evans, CSO4 CCTV Workplace Coach R4



I joined the Civil Service in September 1991 as a Patrol person, I'm presently employed at Army Headquarters which is based in Andover, Hampshire. I have served 21 years at this location and seen some major changes within the MOD Guard Service. The MGS has evolved and become a very professional organisation. I am currently in the post as supervisor and CCTV coach, working in a CCTV and main control room. At this present time and ever changing climate, it is a very difficult time with the restructure and reduction

of staff within the public sector and our organisation. There is so much uncertainty, I am however, focused and determined to carry out my duties to the best. I have taken on the responsibility of a CCTV coach, to help staff in my region and to show, despite what is challenging times for us all, that it is still very important to be professional and focused at all times, which I think sets our organisation a step above the rest. I have had great help and support from my line manager, Karen Beesley CSO3. Without her support, I don't think that we would be as far as we are now with the training on CCTV. I have found this new role to be challenging but very rewarding. Trying to arrange training days with the staff at my location has been quite difficult. CCTV training plays a very important part in maintaining the security at MOD establishments,

helping prevent, detect crime and protecting personal. I have produced an easy guide, operating instructions to help staff at my unit when needed. Where possible, I help on a one to one basis with the use of the CCTV. Support and guidance has also been given to the customer, concerning the control and handling of recorded media, in their capacity as the Data Controller. Before I became a CCTV coach, I was not very well informed about the Data Protection Act 1998 and the Human Rights Act which govern the use of CCTV. What I have learnt has helped staff and the customer at my unit. The staff at my unit have also benefited from the introduction of the CCTV Workbook which was produced by Mark Allen who is the Training Design Manager based in Wethersfield. Useful links have also been placed on the MGS web site to help the Workplace Coaches.



Article by Martin Rooney, Group Manager R1

**T**raining has become a way of life for John Murdoch CSO5 of MOD Caledonia, in Fife. John spent 11 years with the Black Watch before joining the MGS at Faslane in 1994 and moving on to MOD Caledonia in 2009. He was also an adult instructor with the Army Cadet Force and worked his way up through the ranks and is now a Captain with the responsibility for assisting in the training of both Adults and Cadets in a variety of military subjects.

His voluntary work with the Army Cadet Force resulted in him gaining a Graduateship in training and completing his PTTLS. So when the East Group Manager was searching for a willing volunteer to take on the MOD Caledonia Training Project, John was the obvious choice. John joked: "The first thing I learned in the Black Watch was never volunteer for anything ... but I saw this as a real opportunity to get some of the things, I had complained about 'fixed. Before I could stop myself, I had agreed to take on the training project at MOD Caledonia." Before long the training project was extended to cover DM Crombie

and was further extended to include HQ 2 Division.

Most of John's training project was to show staff what training was available, how to access it and when required, to sit with an individual and to assist as necessary. A lot of the students already had a good working knowledge but everyone increased their knowledge and confidence. It worked really well and before long everyone was brought up to an acceptable standard.

John commented: "I suppose training is in my blood and I found the training project very rewarding. It was great to have the time to sit down and take fellow officers through things step by step and the feedback I got was excellent, they were really positive and appreciated the effort that I had put in."

In 2011 as part of a Region 1 initiative, the Area Manager Mark Scollan CSO2 was looking for volunteers to take on the role of CCTV Workplace Coach at their units. Mark said: "The idea was to empower E1 and E2 grades so that we could have the flexibility to deliver specialist CCTV training locally."

The volunteers would be required to attend CCTV workplace coach training workshops and on successful completion of their training, they would become the CCTV workplace coach for their unit or group.

Setting his military code aside, John again volunteered and attended a CCTV workplace coach training day in Kentigern House in Glasgow, and a second training day in Faslane. The two training days were very good but all the students on the course thought the course could be improved if they had a third workshop where they could do some 'live coaching' in a Control Room.

All that was needed was to find a volunteer who could: help write a training programme and produce some training materials, identify and book the venue, and do some coaching on the course. Who would be mad enough to take on all this extra work?

You guessed it – John volunteered AGAIN. John said: "The third CCTV Workshop was really useful; I got an insight into the difficulties of organising the workshop.





It was a great experience. Mark Allen had agreed that I could coach some of the lessons which I enjoyed. We all took something from the day and it was a good learning experience.”

The final CCTV Workshop at Coulport was attended by the Regional Manager John Egan, whom along with his Area managers and

Shift managers have been very supportive towards the CCTV Workplace Coach initiative.

Following the training the Regional Manager approved the production of 300 CCTV Workbooks for CCTV training and we now have training support available from the qualified CCTV Workplace Coaches. John Egan said:

“This has been a great success. I now have thirteen coaches who are delivering specialist on the job training throughout my Region. They are a great asset to me and my managers and a credit to the MGS.”





# Learning and Development Matters...

On the write lines



**B**ased on an analysis of the feedback produced by Trevor McKinnon for individuals who have submitted written reports as part of their Manager's programme, Sarah Cook looks at what makes for the production of a successful written report.

By now many individuals will have submitted their written reports as their preferred method of follow up as the final element of their Manager's Programme. All project reports are passed back through this office after having been formally reviewed, and specific individual feedback prepared, by Trevor Mckinnon (MGS B2CD&C). In looking at the reports and their feedback, I have noticed a trend in those reports that appear to be

the most successful and I thought it might be helpful if I shared below what appear to be the rules for presenting a successful written project report.

## **RULE No 1 - Follow the Prescribed Format**

If guidance has been issued – Keep to it! This includes using all the headings and in the order provided, as this will ensure your document has a logical flow to it.

## **RULE No 2 - Remain Within The Word Count.**

The size of the word count will also give an idea of the approximate level of detail that is expected to be covered in a particular section. There is no point including a lot of irrelevant detail in the introductory section and then, providing only scant details within the main body of the report, where a more detailed level of information is required on sections covering work undertaken, analysis and conclusion/ recommendations.

## **RULE No 3 - Base Your Analysis On Facts**

It is all too easy to rely on our personal opinions rather than

objective evidence to influence findings and recommendations. Those reports with definitive analysis, conclusions and recommendations and which best stand up to scrutiny, have been those that have based their analysis on evidence drawn from either statistics, policies, national standards, manuals, surveys or even input from key stakeholders.

## **RULE No 4 - Use Clear Language**

The important thing is to remember your audience – what level of prior knowledge of the subject (if any) can you safely assume? Try and convey your message, or put your ideas as clearly and simply as possible. If you have a lot of information, could that detail be better conveyed in a graph or table perhaps? Slipping into previously unexplained abbreviations such as TLAs (Three Letter Abbreviations) can also be all too easy! Finally, if you do need to use potentially unfamiliar words which are not necessarily in common usage, make sure you are using them in the right context.

## On the Write Lines Cont...

### **RULE No 4 – Spell Check it!**

Most reports these days have been produced on a computer – so make use of the Spell Check facility which can assist with highlighting grammatical errors also. Remember however, the facility will do a literal spelling check. You can therefore inadvertently use an unintended word but spell it correctly, in which case, the error will not be picked up. For those without access to Spell Check, use the old fashioned method of checking spellings in a Dictionary – it's also amazing what other words you can find whilst looking (but see Rule 3 above)!

### **RULE No 5 – Proof Read It!**

This really follows on from Rules 3&4 as, it is only by reading

a document that you can check whether what you have written, actually makes sense! Many people find it easier to proof read a hard (printed) copy document and then to make the changes on screen. If you have time, proof read the report the next day, when you can come to it afresh. Often however, in producing a document, it is hard to see the wood from the trees and a new pair of eyes is also helpful. So, once you as the author have proofed read your report and made your amendments, then ask a colleague or your Line Manager to review it for you.

### **RULE No 6 – Presentation, Presentation, Presentation**

Look at the final report, does it look professional? Have paragraph

and page numbers be inserted? If you have included tables or annexes have these been labelled and titled? Ask yourself, how could the report be improved?

Of course the above rules do not just lend themselves to the production of the Manager's Programme reports. The principles also apply to any written documentation we, either as individual job holders or managers may, on occasions, be required to produce. This might include business cases, job applications or even articles for Flashlight! So next time you put pen to paper – or even finger to keyboard, you may want to consider whether you are on the "Write Lines".



# Clothing Matters...

“My special MGS people”



**H**ave you noticed any slight differences in any of your colleagues' uniform items? If so, the chances are that they are one of my 'special' MGS people. We have a large number of people working for the MGS making it a challenge to cater for all the possible variations in one standard range.

My 'special' people fall into two categories; those with medical conditions affecting their ability to



wear certain types of clothing and footwear and those who are 'size challenged' and need clothing and footwear out with the normal range offered. Medical conditions range from Diabetes, Tendonitis, Arthritis, Plantar Fasciitis to allergies to wool. Our 'size challenged' people are not just those who have put on a few pounds as the years have gone by: we have 'petite' ladies and extra tall gentlemen and feet that range in size from 2 to size 17.

We always try to source commercial alternatives wherever possible as the MOD Special Measure system takes many months and uniform items are generally required now.

**What should I do if I think I am 'special'?**

For footwear please consult the MGS Footwear Policy (on the MGS Website) and the process

is explained there. For clothing please speak with your Group Manager in the first instance. If you have a medical reason a note from your doctor will be required to confirm your condition. Any 'size challenged' staff should provide the relevant measurements for the item required e.g. waist and inside leg for trousers (cm or inches is fine). The Group Manager will then contact me and the process of identifying a solution to the problem begins.

We now have a range of potential suppliers who can meet most of our uniform needs although getting the correct colour blue shirts in some sizes is sometimes impossible and a near match has to be settled on!

I would like to thank all my 'special' people for their patience whilst I try to find a solution to their needs. There are very few that I have been unable to accommodate.



# Clothing Matters...

The Storman's perspective



I joined the MGS as a Storeman in late 2004, coming to Region 3 in Shrewsbury Shropshire after a year working in Accommodation Stores based in Tern Hill Shropshire. At the time I didn't realise that this would become the longest job I

have done since starting work at 19 and so far it is by far the best. Time flies when you're having fun! A lot has changed over the last 8 years that I have worked here some things for the good and some bad, but one thing that never changes is the requirement for new Uniform, and that's where I come in!

My main duties are to provide Uniforms to the MGS Guards within Region 3 which in itself can be quite challenging as the Region is quite widely dispersed spreading from Shrewsbury all the way to Colchester in East Anglia and Brawdy in South Wales and Anglesey in North Wales.

If someone was to ask me what I find the most satisfying about the

job I would have to say that it is the knowledge that I am providing a service to the Guards ensuring that they have what they need when they need it. It can be quite frustrating at times when items are out of stock and I am unable to advise the Guard when they will receive their items.

Over the years I have had some unusual requests for items such as underwear and even braces! I think the funniest moments are when people phone me up and ask for a item and when I ask them what size they require they go quiet as they don't know.

Overall I enjoy the job and enjoy meeting lots of different people and long may it continue!

**Looking Back...**  
**Project Unity Bulletin**  
**March 2003**





# Dog Matters...

## Reflection and thanks

We are all acutely aware of the current position and that the future of some dog sections hangs in the balance. We should not however let this affect our relationship to the dogs in our care, this is not their doing, and despite the doom and gloom and uncertainty we know that handlers will continue with the professionalism, commitment and dedication that has become the norm.

Despite what is occurring at the moment we continue to have success stories. On the 30th June 2012 Adrian Cawte CSO5 and his MWD "Aieffe" 3647 from the UK Hydrographic Office (UKHO) in Taunton took part in the Service Dog of the Year, and competing against handlers from the Prison Service, Home Office Police, RAF Police, RAVC, and some civilian security companies, came a very creditable third place overall.

A great achievement given it was Adrian's first time in competition and the strength and breadth of experience of his fellow competitors. You can read more about Service Dog of the year in the "Service Dog" magazine. So a well deserved well done to him and

our congratulations.

When we reflect on the enormous changes that have taken place within the MGS during the last 20 years, it never ceases to amaze me what a long way we have come from those early days. How many of you recall on your dog handlers course, "checking" the fence or taking part in the obstacle run? On the last day of the course up to your neck in the stream or crossing the canal carrying your dog, or the situational exercises where the instructors' sadistic streaks came to the fore, happy days eh!!!

Some of you may have taken part in the dog trials, something greatly missed by many, not just the competition but the chance to see old friends, to swap war stories and the general camaraderie of it all.

Most of you are probably already aware that the contractor who supplies equipment for MWDs has changed. But if not, the new contractor is a company (aptly) called Von Wolf Ltd. Their telephone number is 01342 843 246. Equipment is to be purchased via the "P2P" system, in case of difficulty please contact your respective DEO for further advice



or read Defence Instruction Notice 2012DIN04-093.

We will of course keep you informed, as soon as we know, of any changes that may affect your section and we will continue to push the advantages of MGS dog sections to any who will listen (and even some that won't).

Lastly we would like to express our thanks for the continued support, good will and the willingness of handlers in these difficult times, to adapt and be flexible in support of our colleagues on gate and reception duties and the changing requirements of the unit.

Remember, remain professional, train hard, trust your dog and stay safe.

Adrian Cawte with 'Aieffe'



# NSI Audits

## An inspector Calls!



**W**hy me? I've been asked to submit a piece about Internal Audit, which is notoriously dull and prescriptive. It won't be the type of article that people like and there's no pictures of your pals, but please bear with me and I'll do my best to make it interesting!

To comply with the ISO9001 quality management system and to retain the National Security Inspectorate's Gold Award, we must conduct our own audits. So, it is increasingly likely that your site will be visited.

No-one appreciates an audit or inspection. Perhaps it's an MGS fascination with "blame culture" which provokes this reaction,

or perhaps we just have a guilty conscience. Maybe, however, I can offer a few words of reassurance based on my experience so far.

In a previous job I benefited from internal audit training at the Civil Service College, so I volunteered to conduct a percentage of the annual MGS inspections. In the last few years I have been asked to audit around 15 sites in Region 2 and Region 3, from a small adventurous training camp in the Snowdonia hills to the operational US Air Bases in East Anglia.

Everywhere I go I find examples of things not being done or not being done the way MGS HQ may have intended. Some of the items may find their way into the final report, but many warrant a passing remark only. You haven't used the right colour of pen in the DOB or you haven't filled in your notebooks in a prescriptive manner. So what? Would either occurrence present a significant risk to the overall quality of our service? I think not. Some would have you believe that every non-compliance, no matter how small, must be due to neglect, mismanagement or militancy, or is a searing indictment of the MGS

culture.

Let's not kid ourselves. We're not perfect, but we don't expect to be. There will always be instances where we cut corners or where we find a more convenient way of doing things. Clearly we can't ignore vital processes or procedures that are designed to protect, whether it be ourselves, our site or our reputation. Too often, however, we pick fault and take issue with minor deviations, which represent very minor risks. We forget to give credit for all the things that have been done well.

The early audits may have been too pedantic, but I think they are improving. We are now more inclined to acknowledge and celebrate what has been achieved rather than criticise an oversight or omission.

Consider the following questions in sequence (and the evidence the auditor will ask for):

- Has a service been agreed with the customer (Joint Business Agreement)
- How is the task to be delivered (Assignment Instructions)
- What skills are required (Post skills profile)
- Is equipment required &



- managed (Asset Register, Airwave muster, Driving licences, SyOps)
- Have we identified and controlled the hazards (Risk assessments, PUWER, DSE)
- Do we have officers to deliver this service (Resources)
- Are they security cleared (Vetting)
- Has he/she been adequately trained (PTP, Personal Skills Profile)
- Are they correctly attired (Uniform/PPE/ID card) Are they doing the task correctly (Authorisation Lists, MGS Forms)
- Do we manage the performance of the individual (PAR)
- Do we manage performance of

the team (Rosters, Absences, Annual Leave)

- Do we manage performance of the organisation (Business Plan, MGS MB)
- Have we had any complaints (Complaints Register)
- Do we monitor customer satisfaction (Monthly Performance Report)

The answers are always very positive. There may be aspects which could be improved, but the overall standard is consistently high.

As an organisation we seem reluctant to admit that we could be doing a good job. Let's face it, we are providing gold standard security to the Ministry of Defence.

Let's admit that we've got the fundamental principles correct.

Let's admit that the MGS, even with its flaws, is actually one of the best security organisations in the UK.

I am not suggesting that we ignore the fiddly detail of the standards or the specific requirements of the Ops Manual. This detail, after all, is what separates the great from the good. I am suggesting that we need to retain a sense of perspective and to focus our audits on the most significant risks.

If your site is on Internal Audit Programme, please do not think that some pedantic, jobsworth is coming to criticise your efforts or to cast doubt on how you go about your business. I will look for the key documents and evidence of the key standards. I, for one, will not be looking at the colour of your pen.

# Continuous Improvement Matters...

## CI in action in Region 1



Is continuous improvement (CI) the latest fad or is it something that can genuinely deliver results and make the MGS more efficient, more professional and leaner? This was one of the first questions posed when the Region 1 Continuous Improvement Panel first met in the Regional HQ on 26 Jun 12. I never answered the question at the time (typical Regional Manager!), but instead I merely explained how I would support CI work in Scotland and how I would do my utmost to ensure that Region 1 as a whole positively supported this new initiative. I also set out my thoughts on how I envisaged the CI Panel developing and how I anticipated Lean Events being ran across the

whole of Region 1.

During that first meeting it was evident that we were all on a steep learning curve. Granted, some of the panel members had recently attended CI training but it was clear that we were still not sure how CI would actually work in practice. We all had some knowledge and we also had a basic understanding of how we should prepare, examine and question processes, but confidence wasn't exactly ebbing out of the panel members. Despite this trepidation we did agree to run a Lean Event and examine the process currently used for managing hire cars within HMNB Clyde.

This may not seem like an overly complicated issue, but a number of the panel members spoke about how cumbersome the current process was and how there existed a general lack of ownership and accountability. Concerns were also raised about the checks carried out on hire cars and their drivers prior to them being allowed to park within the Naval Base. There was also a view that this was effectively a process that the MGS "owned" and therefore, generally speaking, we would be empowered

to make changes without too much recourse to Base management. This, therefore, seemed as good a place as anywhere to start on our CI journey.

On 14 Aug 12 the CI Panel gathered again in the Regional HQ to undertake our inaugural Lean Event. By now most of us had carried out some additional research on how CI and Lean should actually work and our confidence levels were now growing. At the start of the event, and to get the ball rolling, we agreed to map out the current processes used for the receipt and delivery of hire cars, but instead of using the standard "brown paper wall" method we mapped out the process on a large desk. This allowed us to examine each step of the process and highlight any issues that potentially impact along each step of the way. By the time we had finished the desk was covered in yellow and pink post it stickers, with each yellow post it representing a part of the process and the pink post its representing an issue.

We then started to examine the process again, but this time we started to form opinions on





what elements of the process were essential and which were wasteful and unnecessary. This not only allowed us to examine the process in more detail, but it also gave everyone the opportunity to question why things were being done in a certain way. By the end of the Lean Event we had concluded that the whole process could be turned on its head.

We identified that the current system is wasteful, removes MGS officers from core security duties and creates an unnecessary and avoidable element of security risk to the Naval Base. We then prepared a revised process map showing what could be achieved. Every panel member considered the revised process to be simpler, easier to understand but most importantly it still delivered the desired outcome which is that the Base must continue to have access to hire cars on a 24/7 basis.

Although our proposals are yet to be formally endorsed, we have since recommended that all hire cars should be parked in an area of MOD owned land outside of the Naval Base. This creates an additional and much needed 35 parking spaces for permanent car pass holders within the Naval Base and also means that the MGS are not required to facilitate the collection or dropping off of hire cars within the Naval Base during silent hours. Although not a key driver, we anticipate that this latter element alone will save the MOD just under £100k per annum. The MGS will retain responsibility for the issuing and returning of hire car keys, but will bear no responsibility for ensuring that the cars are parked in the correct area, but instead we will merely show drivers where they should park. Similarly the MGS/MOD will not be held accountable if cars are returned

damaged or are subsequently damaged in the car park. Although this is already the case, there is a perception that the MOD could be held accountable. This perception will be lifted by keeping all hire cars outside of the Naval Base.

Overall our first Lean Event went better than we could ever have imagined. We will continue to provide the Base with a 24/7 drop off and collection hire car service, MGS officers will be far more comfortable with the revised system, hire cars will be parked outside of the Base and the MGS will be able to divert resources to delivering essential security outputs as opposed to escorting duties.

I am sure not every Lean Event will run as smoothly as this one, but this first event has given rise to a new wave of confidence and all the panel members now believe that CI in practice can deliver results.

# C.i. Matters Cont...

CI in action in Region 3



**O**n Wednesday 9 May 2012 Region 3 hosted their inaugural Continuous Improvement Focus Group Meeting.

The Group consists of a representative cross-section of the Region and has been introduced to assist the Regional Manager in progressing Continuous Improvement across Region 3 and specifically in respect of:

- o Promoting CI and publicising the process through which ideas can be submitted.
- o Regularly reviewing processes and indentifying suggestions for best practice.
- o Considering proposals for change and processing quick wins.
- o Fostering good communications
- o Keeping up-to-date with CI

initiatives

- o Maintaining CI registers
- o Maintaining lines of communications with Focal Point and Group members

The meeting, which covered a number of agenda items and set the scene for the conduct of future meetings was fully participative, and whilst there remains some understandable concerns in respect of the future, all members of the Group displayed a positive commitment to progressing Continuous Improvement.

A number of action points emerged from the meeting, which will help to encourage greater interaction and sharing of best practice throughout the MGS.

Work is now underway to move these suggestions forward, and any significant developments will be notified via the MGS Website, under the MGS Continuous Improvement Programme.

# LEAN Training

## Improving efficiency and effectiveness

As part of the MGS' approach to the adoption of Continuous Improvement (CI) the MGS L&D team, in collaboration with the Defence Academy designed an MGS Lean workshop aimed at those in the Organisation responsible for assisting in the promotion and adoption of the MGS CI programme.

The design, development and piloting of the workshop, followed by a review process, implementation of changes and roll-out across the rest of the MGS was an exercise in CI and Lean itself, as I explain below...

Region 3 hosted the pilot of the MGS Lean Workshop in February this year. The workshop, which spanned two days was designed to be fully interactive, to allow participants to learn about and apply the principles of CI and Lean thinking to a Regionally based issue, and to take away with them the skills and knowledge to:

- o Improve efficiency and effectiveness;
- o Respond to change in an ordered way;
- o Find a better way of doing things and;

- o Encourage people to use their full potential

The Defence Academy Trainer, Mick Johnston very eloquently explained the positive benefits using Lean techniques can have, both on employers and employees. As part of the workshop participants completed a group plug building exercise. Initially the group followed Mick's instruction to the letter, but then, as the workshop progressed and participants learnt more about Lean principles, the exercise was repeated and the group were able to indentify for themselves how to improve the process by removing any waste, as well as re-ordering the process in which activities were



conducted.

Whilst the plug activity was a very simple exercise it demonstrated that by eliminating waste we can all make small changes to our processes and

working practices and thereby make better use of our people and assets.

Having worked through the Lean Tools & Techniques participants were then asked to apply what they had learnt to a Regional issue identified as part of the Continuous Improvement Grid exercise conducted in 2010/11. In Region 3's case participants were asked to consider what tasks undertaken by a CSO3, could be delegated to a CSO4, E1, Skills Zone 2 or CSO5, whilst still maintaining the accountability of a Manager. This session was towards the end of the workshop and as some participants had experienced difficulty relating Lean to the MGS, combined with insufficient time, it did not necessarily have the value, or impact intended.

As part of our overall approach to continuously improving our training products and this workshop in particular, participants were asked to evaluate its effectiveness. Whilst the overall feedback was positive, it was considered that there was room for improvement. In particular participants considered that specific reference should be made to the MGS throughout the



# LEAN Training Cont...

Improving efficiency and effectiveness



workshop and that sufficient time should be allocated in order to conduct the Regional exercise.

Taking into account the suggestions for improvement, and following discussions, a number of small but significant changes were made to the programme and a revised workshop was delivered to Region 3 in April 2012, in which a

shorter exercise was conducted, which allowed the Regional issue to be introduced earlier in the programme and participants to apply the principles of Lean to it at each stage of the process.

By relating the course content to the MGS it allowed all participants to think about the processes that they currently employ in their

workplaces and about how they could find a better way of doing things in the future to become even more efficient and effective. A review of the feedback from the second workshop, clearly demonstrated that participants considered that the changes had worked and that the workshop was effective.

The workshop is one element of the MGS' approach to Continuous Improvement, and by continuing to build upon this it will hopefully encourage everyone in the MGS to:

- o Look at activities as processes, and consider identifying and eliminating waste
- o Regularly communicate
- o Make suggestions for improvement
- o Be open to changes and new ways of working, take on new roles and tasks, embrace learning and share knowledge

# Regional Matters...

An update from around the Regions

## From Region 3...

On Wednesday 16 May 2012 the Regional Headquarters bid a fond farewell to Dave Jones (Group Manager at Cardiff), who left the Department on Voluntary Early Release at the end of June 2012. Dave joined the Ministry of Defence in 2001 as a Band D, and spent the majority of his Civil Service Career managing units in South Wales.

He did many exciting things

during his long career in the forces, not least the time he spent as part of the Parachute Display Team.

Whilst Dave is looking forward to new challenges, he will look back fondly on the time he spent with the Ministry of Defence Guard Service and in particular the people he has had the opportunity of meeting.

I am sure that Dave's colleagues would join us in wishing him all

the best for a long and happy retirement.



## From Region 5...



Our CCTV suite has recently been upgraded and relocated into the MDP Control room. This is beneficial when dealing with incidents as we are able to offer a coordinated response. My role at Devonport is both interesting and varied. The job has great variety as I rarely cover the same post two days running. I enjoy my job as you never know what you will be faced

with and I need to be prepared for and capable of dealing with the unexpected.

This proved the case for me in the early hours of Saturday morning on the 17th June 2012. Whilst carrying out my CCTV duties I found myself involved in a search and rescue regarding a male stranded in the Tamar waters.

At 0507 hours in the final hour of my last night duty (looking forward to my bed and some well earned sleep!) MDP control received a telephone call from a distressed member of the public explaining they could hear shouting for help from the water. I immediately sprung into action.

Using the CCTV camera in the area I managed to locate a stranded male who was clearly struggling and holding onto a water buoy. Using the camera I was able to guide the

(MDP) marine unit to the location where the male was. The male was rescued and the ambulance attended.

For the duration of the incident I carefully monitored the situation using the CCTV cameras. I also recorded the incident in accordance with MDPGA CCTV operating procedures

\*Footnote by SK Wakeley CSO3

"Ashley responded quickly & effectively, employing all of his CCTV experience & operating skills. Due to his actions he was instrumental in facilitating a happy ending to what could have been a tragedy. We are all very proud of him."

## Region 5 cont'

### It's bye pie to Ron Haggett CSO3!

**R**on joined the MGS as a CSO5 on 4th July 1994 at Foxhill, on completing induction training was posted to the City Centre, (Town Sites), until transferring to Abbey Wood on the 15th December 1995. Gained advancement to CSO4 at Abbey Wood in September 1997 and was promoted to CSO3 there in January 2000 up to his retirement on the 31st May 2012.

Ron was well known for his no nonsense approach that was balanced with an equal measure of wit and sarcasm. His silver hair and local ascent elevated him to an "English Gent" status. He had a love for pies and other stodgy food delights, both of which helped to keep him in, "good all round"

Article by Simon Ruddick CSO2.

shape! On his last day it felt right to deliver his last pie and wish him well with Mr Jim Belt in attendance.



Jim and Greg Barnes were his CSO4 team and they will miss his stewardship.

Ron has been part of a wider team of Abbey Wood Group Managers who will also miss his support especially Mr Keith Bell who enjoyed years of banter with

Ron. Not based on appearance, but they there were like twins!

Ron had a good send off securing valuable bottles of fine alcohol and crystal glasses to ensure his start to retirement was a blur. On behalf of the entire Abbey Wood CSO5 team, we wish you well Ron and hope that you enjoy a very long and happy retirement in Weymouth.

Ron said:

"The best thing I will always be grateful to Abbey Wood for was that it was there I met my wonderful lady wife Bev' in August 1996 and we were married in June 1997.....as you know we're now off to live in Weymouth and to enjoy hopefully, an extremely long and healthy retirement".

### Sue bids farewell with a new rug!

**S**ue D Alessandro-Wilks left the Area Office at Foxhill on VERS on Friday 22 June 2012.

Sue had to make a big decision in her life on whether to go to work and continue getting up at 6am, or to accept VERS and relax in the comfort of her home.

We are not saying that Sue was desperate to leave us, but on the day of the VERS application publication a whirlwind entered the office at 8 am. Before Sue could

Article by Clive Parfitt CSO3.

take her coat off and brush her hair, the computer was turned on and her VERS application was submitted in quicker time than it would have taken Usain Bolt to complete the 100 metres.

Sue joined the Area Office in 2004 where she became an invaluable figure. Her vast knowledge and experience in admin were immediately apparent. If asked, she would kindly give Officers the value of her wisdom. Sue was very

professional in her job and will be sorely missed as she had a warm heart and a great sense of humour.

Sue left with many gifts such as; a book on topiary, and pair of topiary shears and a new rug.

Sue has told us that she plans to spend part of her time with her daughters and grandchildren, which is a big part of her life, and researching her family history.

All the best Sue!

Article by Dave Parry CSO5 and Dane Fairbrother CSO5

On 2nd March 2012, HMS VENGEANCE, one of the Royal Navy's 4 Vanguard class nuclear submarines entered HMNB Devonport to begin a 2 year refit and equipment upgrade programme. The arrival required a major security operation in which the MGS played a vital role.

Due to the size of these submarines it is only possible for them to enter and leave the Hamoaze (the section of the river Tamar on which the naval base stands) on a spring tide, and VENGEANCE was initially due to arrive on the 1st March. Access to the submarine and the wharf on which it was to be berthed had to be strictly controlled and as such at 06:00hrs a sterile area was created. Fencing and gates were erected at either end of 8 wharf with the gates being manned by MGS officers. The area was then shut down and staffed by MGS with armed MDP officers patrolling the wharf side.

Then came the old adage "hurry up and wait". VENGEANCE was due to arrive at 10:00hrs, we had our list of authorised personnel, and passes ready to be issued, but the good old British weather conspired to ruin the best laid plans and thick fog came down. We already had a feeling that the move would be delayed, but still preparations had to be made.

Electric, water and sewerage connections had to be prepared and cranes moved into place to be ready to de-store the boat. Of course we had our list of personnel authorised for access to the jetty



area (including the submarine) to refer to, but with a large ship's company and so many support staff to be accounted for, no list is ever complete first time round!

The officers on the ground liaised with ship's company, MGS managers, the Base Security Officer and Babcock Marine project staff to ensure that the right people got in and the wrong people were kept away and at the same time as dealing with the problems caused by closing a major thoroughfare in a busy dockyard.

However it was decided that VENGEANCE could not berth that day as the fog was so thick the channel markers couldn't be seen! So back to plan B and the move was put back 24 hours, though the sterile area still had to be staffed submarine or no submarine!

She did eventually arrive on the 2nd March and remained on the sea wall, within the sterile area staffed by the MGS until 6th March while she was de-stored in preparation for her move into dry dock.

To add to the security concerns, HMS VIGILANT, another Vanguard

class submarine was also still in Devonport following her refit. This was the first time two of these boats had been in the same naval base at the same time and guaranteed to attract media interest and possibly attempts to gain unauthorised entry. To manage the risk MGS officers were placed at all gates and redeployed to mobile patrols.

On 6th march, HMS VENGEANCE was moved off the sea wall and into dry dock with security having been maintained and the whole operation being declared a success. The sterile area was then closed down and for a couple of weeks normality was resumed. The sterile area was re-established for one day on the 27th March when HMS VIGILANT sailed directly from the Basin for sea trials, purely as a precaution in case she had to come back along side. This didn't happen and once again we were back to our usual routines..... Until next time!

During this whole time MGS officers were kept busy and were constantly having to think on their



feet to ensure that a complex operation went as smoothly as possible. Conditions were not always easy but all those involved showed the utmost professionalism and gained the thanks of Naval Base staff.

Sharron Wakeley CSO3 said:  
“MGS staff supported the SSBN

Changeover Programme project by providing excellence in customer service delivery and a professional approach to all duties.”

“MGS officers adapted quickly and positively towards changing situations displaying positive attitudes and a flexible approach to duties.”

“Working together with RN and MDP Personnel they ensured the integrity of gates and the Restricted Berths were maintained professionally throughout.”

## From Region 3...

### Intruder apprehended

**O**n the 6 May 2011 at 1250hrs two members of the MGS at DSG Sealand were involved in the apprehension of an intruder who was suspected to be stealing lead from the roof of a disused building on the former

the perimeter fence. John alerted his colleague Mick Davidson CSO4, and both John and Mick proceeded to the area.

On arrival at the scene, 3 males were found on the roof of the building. All 3 were summoned down to ground level, one was apprehended but the other two ran off and pursued by John, however they made their escape through a hole in the perimeter fence.

The apprehended male was escorted back to the Guardroom where he was subsequently handed over to the Civil Police.

This Former RAF Site is attached to DSG Sealand and has not been inhabited since the RAF moved out. It has suffered many breaches for well over a year previous to this incident, resulting in the removal of lead and copper from inside and outside the disused buildings. Since this incident there

have not been any more significant breaches.

Well done to John and Mick for their actions on the day. The management team at DSG Sealand were very grateful and all involved were congratulated and thanked at the time of incident.



RAF Sealand site.

John Roberts CSO5 was monitoring the CCTV system in the Guardroom and noticed a person entering the site through



Article by Sharron Wakeley CSO3

**A**t the beginning of 2011 I saw an opportunity for personal and team development advertised on the Defence Intranet. Funding had been made available for Civil Servants to complete MoD Apprenticeships and achieve NVQs.

I contacted JHP for details, then invited staff to apply for the courses. 7 MGS officers and three Group Managers (including myself) took up the offer and started the MoD Sponsored Apprenticeships ranging

from, Customer Service, Leadership Skills, Business Management and Business Administration.

Adrian Maltby, Sara Clarke, Dane Fairbrother and Teresa Rogers completed Customer Service

Skills NVQ Level 2. Stephen Jones, Sean Allan and Mark Furneaux completed Leadership Skills NVQ Level 2 and Gary James, Mark Furneaux and I all completed NVQ Level 3 in Business Management. I also completed the Business Administration NVQ Level 3.

Sarah and Dane both excelled in

Everyone has said that they enjoyed the challenge and the opportunity to get into a learning environment again. They are proud of the success they have achieved. Some have developed the 'learning bug' and are planning to investigate and take up further opportunities for learning and personal development.

The Captain of the Base Mark Knibbs presented MGS staff with their awards at a presentation on Tuesday 4th September 2012. Jayne and Kerry from JHP and Tanya Milburn also attended and

presented staff with an extra treat of a box of chocolates.



their communication skills module achieving top marks of 100%. Jayne Hooper (JHP Training Assessor) said that she has only known this happen on two previous occasions in her career with JHP.

# In Focus

A brief look at individual's stories from across the MGS

## Introducing the Karate Kid?

Your editor spoke to Leanne Vaton a supervisor based at RAF Lakenheath in Suffolk



Leanne pictured above and below (left)

**Q** Leanne, could you tell me a little bit about your career with the MOD?

**A** I started my career in the MOD in March 2007 as a Basic Skills Clerk at Bassingbourn Barracks. I carried out various administrative duties on behalf of the two Basic Skills Development Managers in the Education Centre. I worked there for 5 years but had to find another job due to the site being closed down. I joined the MGS in Feb 2012 as a supervisor on level transfer.

**Q** What do you enjoy most about working in the MGS?

**A** I enjoy the team work.

**Q** What has been the most challenging aspect of your role in the MGS?

**A** I found it difficult going straight into the MGS as a supervisor as I had no previous experience. I wasn't intimidated about working predominantly with men, as I am also a Special Constable and work with men the majority of the time. I like to think I lead by example, I don't shy from working on the gate and enjoy working with my team.

**Q** I understand that in your spare time you practice Karate?

**A** I have been taking part in Taekwondo for just over 5 years. I train at the Hitchin Taekwondo School in North Hert's up to four times a week, when work allows. In March 2012 I achieved my First Degree Black Belt.

**Q** Why did you take up karate and what do you enjoy most about it?

**A** I took up Taekwondo initially because I wanted to learn how to defend myself. But it's also about the fitness. I also enjoy it because it's such a varied sport, we learn self defence, stretching techniques, fundamentals (such as different kicks, attacks and blocks) and sparring. In the last few years I have been competing in regional competitions, which have been an amazing experience.

**Q** What's been the most important competition you have won or done well in?

**A** My last competition was the British Championships and I won Gold for sparring and Bronze for power (breaking boards)



**Q** Do you train others?

**A** At the moment I don't teach as I prefer to be a student. In the future I may consider becoming an instructor.

**Q** Assuming you watched the Olympics-how important is it that Taekwondo is represented?

**A** I was pleased Jade Jones won Gold in her weight division. It put Taekwondo on the map. Hopefully now people will feel encouraged to take it up!

**Q** Do you have aspirations to be in Team GB in Rio in 2016?

**A** I'm probably not good enough for the Olympics just yet, but I have an opportunity to compete in the European Championships next year in Barcelona.

Best of luck with that Leanne and thanks for talking to me.

## 50 Years and Counting!

### Ken Drewery CS05 notches up an amazing milestone!

Article by Adrian Cross, Group Manager at RAF Fylingdales



**K**en joined the Royal Air Force on 13 Aug 1962 and after “Square Bashing” at RAF Bridgenorth where he lived in a converted chicken hut, was posted to RAF Debden to complete his training as an RAF Policeman.

In January 1963 he was posted to RAF Geilenkirchen in Germany. Towards the end of this tour he met his wife, a Dutch girl called Lieske, and they have been together now for 47 years. He thinks that she deserves a medal and cannot find anyone who disagrees with him!!

During his RAF service he travelled quite a lot, spending 17 years in Germany, 3 years in Cyprus, and 2 years in Northern Ireland. He was also in the Falklands (but not during the conflict). The rest of his service was in England.

As he gained experience and progressed through the ranks his duties as an RAF Policeman altered, he qualified as a Counter Intelligence Officer and took on various duties within that qualification such as searching for lost documents, investigating suicides and close protection duties. He also travelled several times to America, Canada and Gibraltar.

In 1996, as a Flight Sergeant, he left the RAF and joined the MOD Guard Service at RAF Fylingdales, where he has remained for the last 16 years. Ken found that his experience as a RAF Policeman greatly helped him in his guarding role. He states: “Although working in a similar environment it is sometimes hard to forget that I am no longer in possession of a warrant card!”

In August this year Ken completed 50 years of uniformed Service and to celebrate this Wg Cdr Owens, RAF Fylingdales Station Commander, invited Ken and his wife to lunch in the Officers Mess to congratulate him on this impressive achievement. He was also presented with a couple of gifts to mark the occasion.

Ken stated:

“Throughout my 50 years in uniform I have always taken pride in my work and have received an awful lot of satisfaction in doing my job, which I will continue to do until I leave the MGS.



RAF training at Bridgenorth in 1962. Ken is third from the right, middle row.



# Charity News

## MGS formalises charity link with Help for Heroes

### From the Editor...

I am pleased to announce that the MGS have formed a new partnership with the Help for Heroes (H4H) Charity. The recent announcement on the MGS Web Site asking you all for your views on formalising our links with H4H through a Charity of the Year Partnership, received overwhelming support and the MGS senior management team have also endorsed the decision to adopt H4H as our charity of the year.

Many of our staff are ex serviceman and woman and know only too well the sacrifice that so many ordinary, but brave people have made whilst serving in the armed forces. For this reason it seems entirely appropriate that the

MGS should support H4H.

I'm sure you are all aware of the important work the charity does to assist our Armed Forces personnel and indeed many of you either by direct fundraising or by buying H4H merchandise are already actively supporting this worthwhile cause. The partnership is a great way to support H4H and has benefits to both H4H and us. These may include:

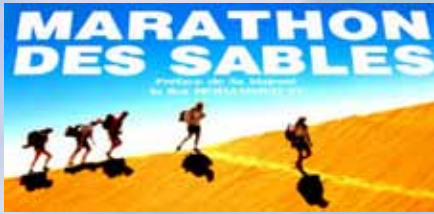
- o Demonstrating our values and commitment to our staff, customers and the wider defence community on an issue that affects their lives.
- o Boosting staff morale and encourage team building.
- o Promoting and publicising

fundraising activities on the H4H Website.

- o Monitoring donations and keeping track of the running total.

However, The MGS Senior Management Team and I, fully recognise the support our staff have given (and continue to give) to a huge number of worthy causes in this country and abroad and any fundraising activities will continue to be publicised and supported in these pages.





**A**ndy Lyall CSO5, a dog handler at Bulford Garrison, Wiltshire is training to undertake the Marathon Des Sables in 2014 for the charity Mencap. Regarded as the toughest foot race on Earth, competitors have to complete 6 marathons in 7 days in

the Sahara Desert. Competitors are also self sufficient and must carry all their own kit for the duration of the event. We will be following Andy's progress as he trains for this event. If you wish to support Andy visit his Just Giving Page at: [www.justgiving.com/andy-lyall-sahara](http://www.justgiving.com/andy-lyall-sahara), or you can text a donation by texting: TEXT-KIXF97 to 70070.

Andy, a former soldier with 'I Para', has been with the MGS since 1993. In December, he will also be taking part in the 'Grim Challenge'



which is a 8 mile cross country course with obstacles through the mud and water of the Aldershot training area. He is also hoping to take part in the 2013 London Marathon. Both these events will be in aid of Mencap.

## Security Officer raises over £8,000 to support Black Watch in Afghanistan

By Martin Rooney CSO3

**D**erick Gillies a CSO5 at Fort George, has been recognised for his efforts supporting members of the Black Watch deployed on Op Herrick in Afghanistan. Derick has raised over £8,000 through the Free Church of Scotland. The funds were part of the 'The Black Watch Appeal' which Derick set up as a way of showing his appreciation to soldiers serving in Afghanistan.

Derick decided to take action while visiting the QM stores one day where he noticed some MFO boxes filled with the personal effects of one of the Black Watch soldiers who had been killed while serving in Afghanistan. When he saw this it made him feel sad, but determined to do something to show his support. Derick said: "I felt compelled to help and I just wanted

to show my appreciation for the risks they take and the job they do".

Derick has received letters of thanks from the Commanding Officer Lt Colonel Edward A. Fenton; the Quarter Master Technical Major Gary Tait MBE; and a variety of letters from other ranks. He was told that his parcels had come at just the right time. The soldiers had begun to run out of personal items so when the parcels arrived from Derick it was a huge boost to their morale. As well as sweets, towels, toiletries, shortbread and things like OXO cubes, each parcel contained a general letter of thanks from the church and a letter of thanks penned by members of the denomination. Derick said:

"I was very fortunate to have the support of the churches both in raising the funds and the many individuals who took the time to write a letter to our soldiers.

We just wanted to show our appreciation and say thank you".

Derick served six years with the Queens Own Highlanders based in Munster West Germany. Derick also served on operations in Northern Ireland. He saw active service in the first Gulf War in 1990/1991. During his MGS career he worked at HM Naval Base Faslane for 15 years before taking up his current post at Fort George which he has held for the past five years.





# More Charity News

## Race for Life

By Jo Richards RTO, Region 3



This time last year one relatively fit person (not me, I hasten to add) and one couch potato (that's me) decided to get fit!! I believe the saying is "It's never too late", we'll see!

I cannot speak for Jules, but personally I got out of breath after 2 minutes on the cross trainer, so I never imagined I would catch the running bug and enter races.

Training (if you can really call it that) began, and I even invested in some very expensive, but necessary trainers! Never heard of excessive pronation before, but apparently I do it!! Great another affliction.

After weeks of sore knees and muscles I was ready to hit the roads. Well that was an experience, and almost put me off as it was vastly different to running on a

treadmill.

In addition to getting fit Jules and I thought we could combine something we enjoyed with something worthwhile, and so on the 26 June 2012 Julie Jones and I ran the 5km Race for Life in Shrewsbury, the UK's largest



Julie Jones (left) and Jo Richards women-only fund raising event for the fight against cancer.

If I say so myself, and I do, we didn't do too bad, cheered on by our small team of supporters (four). After a very dodgy warm up (not co-ordinated at all) we were asked

if we were runners (25-30 mins), joggers (30-40 mins) or walkers. Airing on the side of caution we

decided to place ourselves in the joggers section!

The horn sounded and we were off, very slowly because of the sheer number of people. We made our way to the start line and after about a minute we started running. We set a nice steady pace and attempted to avoid other runners and rather large puddles, very difficult to do when there are 2,000 people taking part!

Despite having run longer distances in training our concern was that we wouldn't be able to run the whole distance. However, despite a number of bottlenecks, particularly on the second lap, because of the walkers, we managed to keep going and jubilantly crossed the finish line in 31 minutes.

We thoroughly enjoyed the experience and would encourage others to take part in such worthwhile events. As the saying goes "every little helps".

10 km next for us!!

# Obituary

Frank Farmer CS04, HMS Calliope, Region 2.

Article by Terry Orde, Group Manager at DTE Otterburn



It is with great sadness and regret that I have to announce the sudden death on Monday 1st of October of Frank Farmer formally of Faslane/Catterick and at the time of his death, HMS Calliope. Frank leaves a Widow Dorothy (Dot) and many fond memories.

Frank was a well respected Officer across the whole of the MGS and will be a massive loss to

the close knit MGS team at HMS Calliope, a team he supervised with great efficiency.

Frank was a larger than life character with a very wise and experienced head on his shoulders and his knowledge and constant support was a great comfort to his Line Managers. Frank was hugely protective of his staff at HMS Calliope and worked tirelessly for the best working conditions for his officers. Frank didn't suffer fools and always spoke his mind which was very refreshing and, at times we had a good laugh over his openness. You had to really know Frank to understand his very dry sense of humour, which could easily be taken the wrong way, and often was!

Frank was a very private person

who very rarely let his guard down and you had to work hard to get to know the real Frank Farmer. Words that would describe Frank; honest, reliable, respectful are just a few. Frank was looking forward to early retirement and spending quality time with his wife Dot.

The Funeral took place at Durham Crematorium on Monday 8 October and was attended by many uniformed Royal Naval personnel from HMS Calliope and many uniformed MGS Officers who made up a guard of honour. The number of people who attended the service was a real tribute to him.

Frank - rest in peace.



# Coffee break

Time to put your feet up!

\* A prize of an MGS paperweight will be awarded to the sender of the first correctly completed Sudoku AND crossword puzzles.  
If you don't want to tear your copy of Flashlight you may send a photocopy of this page to the editor, to the address on the inside front cover.

		2	8			6		
7				9				5
3			7					4
				7		8		6
	7		4		2		9	
6		4		3				
1					3			9
9				5				3
		3			9	2		

## Sudoku



## Crossword

		1		2		3		4		5		
6												7
8								9				
10					11					12		
				13								
14							15			16		
						17						
18		19		20					21			
								22				
23						24						
	25											

Answers in the next issue!

### Across

1. Type of dessert (10)
8. Flower-seller (7)
9. Subside (5)
10. Country bordering Iraq (4)
11. Conspiracy (4)
12. Tree (3)
14. Breakfast dish (6)
15. Hair-tie (6)
18. Male cat (3)
20. Rod (4)
21. Swift (4)
23. Pancho - - - - - Mexican revolutionary (5)
24. Dark cherry (7)
25. Suffocate (10)

### Down

1. Rich, heavy fabric (7)
2. Continent (4)
3. Livestock (6)
4. Slaughterhouse (8)
5. Singer/actress, - - - - - Jones (5)
6. Not negative! (11)
7. Seed's sprouting (11)
13. Carelessly done (4-4)
16. Raised letters (7)
17. High-point (6)
19. Hayley - - - - -, actress (5)
22. Whale genius (4)