

Royal Canadian Air Force jets arrive in Romania for NATO mission

ROYAL CANADIAN AIR FORCE JETS ARRIVE IN ROMANIA FOR NATO MISSION

FOUR CF-188 HORNET fighter aircraft from Canada have arrived in Romania to support NATO enhanced air policing operations.

From September until December the aircraft – from the Royal Canadian Air Force's 409 Tactical Fighter Squadron, based at Cold Lake in Alberta – will operate from Mihail Kogalniceanu Air Base near the Black Sea port of Constanta. More than 130 RCAF personnel are to deploy to the base, to take over responsibility for the enhanced air policing mission from the Royal Air Force's 135 Expeditionary Air Wing (135 EAW).



Four Typhoon FGR4 fighter aircraft from the RAF's 3(F) Squadron have been based at Mihail Kogalniceanu since April as part of 135 EAW. 135 EAW is the first unit to have supported NATO's enhanced air policing operation, which augments Romania's existing quick reaction alert capability. During the deployment, Typhoons scrambled once in response to Russian air activity over the Black Sea, demonstrating NATO's resolve to reassure the region of the Alliance's air defence capabilities.



Ahead of the CF-188s' departure from Canada, Lieutenant-General Steve Bowes, the Commander of Canadian Joint Operations Command, said: "The Canadian Armed Forces is committed to the principle of collective defence of the Alliance, which is at the very heart of NATO's founding treaty. Our military personnel are well-trained and committed to contribute to NATO enhanced air policing that ensures the integrity of Allies' airspace. They are proud to work on behalf of Canadians, projecting the best of what Canada has to offer."

The Commanding Officer of 135 EAW, Wing Commander Andy Coe, said: "We are proud to welcome our Canadian allies to Romania to continue NATO's vital support for this region. As they arrive my team will start the final phase of our detachment: safely dismantling our operations, while handing over procedures, relationships and duties to our NATO partners. Already, it's clear to me that we are working with Canada's finest."



The RAF's Typhoons will depart Romania at the end of August, returning to their home base at RAF Coningsby in Lincolnshire. 409 Tac F Sqn shares in 3(F) Sqn's Lincolnshire heritage; the RCAF unit was first formed during the Second World War at RAF Digby, near Lincoln, as a night fighter squadron. The unit retains its wartime motto: *Media nox meridies noster* ('Midnight is our Noon').

Celebrity Aviator Carol Vorderman Receives Flying Award

Celebrity aviator Carol Vorderman receives flying award

Carol Vorderman, an honorary
Group Captain and Ambassador for the RAF Air Cadets has received a
prestigious aviation award.

The celebrity aviator, was
presented the Lennox-Boyd Trophy, whilst visiting young air cadets at RAF
Syerston, Nottinghamshire.



The award – from the Aircraft
Owners' and Pilots' Association – is for her work furthering interest in
aviation with the RAF Air Cadets.

Gp Capt Vorderman was visiting
the RAF Air Cadet Aerospace Camp at RAF Syerston where she also met 220
cadets,
who have travelled across the country to take part in a week of aviation and
engineering themed activities.

The majority of training and
activities on the camp is delivered by air cadets who have completed the
Qualified Aerospace Instructors' Course.



Ambassador Honorary Group
Captain Carol Vorderman said: "As Ambassador of the
RAF Air Cadets I am delighted to be receiving this award from AOPA in front
of
the next generation of young aviators at the Air Cadet Aerospace Camp.

"The Air Cadets
is an inspiring youth organisation for 12 to 19-year-olds and with the help
of
adult volunteers delivers fantastic STEM opportunities for young people
across

the country each year.”

The award was
presented to her by Chairman of the AOPA Mr George Done and Chief Executive
Officer Mr Martin Robinson.



Carol has her private pilot's
licence and owns her own aircraft Mildred.
She has been an Ambassador for the RAF Air Cadets since 2014 and hopes
to encourage more young people into science, technology, engineering and
maths subjects.

More
information about the RAF Air Cadets, including how to join as a cadet or as
an
adult volunteer, can be found at www.raf.mod.uk/aircadets

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From Lancashire to Texas: 10% production milestone achieved for f-35 Lightning II fighter jets

**FROM
LANCASHIRE TO TEXAS: 10% PRODUCTION MILESTONE ACHIEVED FOR F-35
LIGHTNING II FIGHTER
JETS**

British engineers working on combat jets for the UK's new aircraft
carriers have reached a key production milestone.

The 318th rear section for an F-35 Lightning II combat jet
has rolled off the BAE Systems production line in Samlesbury, Lancashire
meaning that 10% of the global requirement has now been produced.



The aft fuselage is the back part of the state-of-the-art aircraft's
main body and with more than 3,000 aircraft currently on order it is
estimated
that 25,000 jobs will be sustained across the UK by more than 500 companies

in
the supply chain when at peak production.

The rear section has now transferred from BAE Systems' advanced
manufacturing suite to Lockheed Martin's Final Assembly and Check Out line
in
Fort Worth, Texas to be connected with other major assemblies to become one
of
three aircraft variants. The 318th aft fuselage in particular will
form part of a UK 'B' model variant of the combat jet.

This variant has the short take-off and vertical landing capability
which makes it ideal for Britain's new Queen Elizabeth Class (QEC) aircraft
carriers. With HMS Queen Elizabeth set to enter her new home in Portsmouth
imminently,
the F-35B jets are on track to make their first flight trials from her deck
next year.

The F-35 programme is the world's largest single defence programme, and
as a key partner, the UK has been working closely with the US from the
outset.



Minister for Defence Procurement Harriett Baldwin, said:

"This is an important milestone and the latest example of how the F-35
programme is benefitting the UK's defence industry, creating thousands of
jobs
and helping to keep Britain safer and more secure.

"Britain is a leading partner in the development of the F-35,
supporting not just the aircraft that will operate from RAF Marham and our
two
new Queen Elizabeth Class aircraft carriers, but also the thousands of jets
that will serve our allies around the world."

Andrea Thompson, F-35 Lightning II Director for BAE Systems Military
Air & Information, said:

"Reaching the 10% mark of production on the F-35 programme shows how
far we have come, but also highlights that there is an enormous amount of
work still to do.

"With an order book of more than 3,000 aircraft for the global F-35
fleet, the investments we are making in our advanced manufacturing
facilities
are key to ensuring we continue to deliver on our commitments.

"To add to this, we are also working closely with our supply chain to
ensure they are equipped to meet the ramp up in production at the same time
as
delivering against our existing commitments."



Eric Branyan, vice president of F-35 Supply Chain Management for Lockheed Martin said:

“BAE Systems is a valued partner on the F-35 program, and we congratulate them on this significant milestone. The United Kingdom is the F-35 program’s only tier one partner and the work of BAE Systems and other in-country suppliers has a significant positive impact on the UK economy. We look forward to many more years of partnering to deliver the most advanced and capable 5th generation fighter jet to our allies around the world.”

BAE Systems is responsible for 15% of the work on each aircraft including every aft fuselage as well as other mission critical systems for the F-35 Lightning II programme.

The first operational Lightning II squadrons will be the RAF’s 617 Squadron (The Dambusters) and 809 Naval Air Squadron. Combined with the QECS aircraft carriers they will transform the UK’s ability to project influence overseas.

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[A400M draws attention at Mobility Guardian](#)

A400M draws attention at Mobility Guardian

A Royal Air Force A400M Atlas is being put through its paces as never before as it takes part in Exercise Mobility Guardian in the United States.

The airlift aircraft has been transporting military vehicles, delivering aid relief and flying aeromedical evacuation sorties in an intensive series of exercise scenarios designed to improve interoperability between the 31 nations taking part.

Wing

Commander Ed Horne Officer Commanding LXX Squadron. He said: "We've brought the

A400 with is to conduct tactical air land missions. What this means is we're picking up troops and equipment and taking them around the area of responsibility and into places to support the exercise scenario.



"The

exercise is a really excellent stepping stone for us as we build more and more

tactical capabilities on to the aircraft. Working here with the USAF, and in particular alongside the C-17 crews, is

something we just wouldn't be able to replicate in the UK, either for real on in the synthetic environment at RAF Brize Norton."

Personnel

from a number of other units are also participating at Joint Base Lewis McChord

nr Seattle. These include 47 Air Despatch Royal Logistic Corps, No. 2 Squadron

RAF Regiment, 1 Tactical Police Squadron and Tactical Medical Wing.

During

the exercise the A400 has transported a variety of US Army vehicles including a

19-ton Stryker Commander Vehicle. The aircraft has also flown aeromedical evacuation flights with multi-national aeromed teams.



Wg

Cdr Horne: "The A400 was configured right from the start for aeromed missions,

we're clearing more and more aeromedical equipment onto the aircraft. This is

the first time we'll have done any aeromed tasking on an exercise although the

aircraft has been used for real with stretcher patients in the UK previously."

Flight

Lieutenant Dave Ellis is an A400 pilot. He explained the benefits of the exercise from his perspective: "One of the big advantages is being able to discover just what the A400 is capable of. It also provides a great opportunity to train.

"For

example, prior to the exercise only one of the pilots that we brought with us

was night vision qualified but as a result of this exercise we've been able

to
qualify four more something we can't achieve during UK summertime".



The
distinctive shape of the A400 has stood out on the vast aircraft pans at
McChord Airfield. "There's a great deal
of interest in the Atlas, particularly from the C-17 and C-130 crews who
have
been on to the aircraft to look around explained Wg Cdr Horne. "The aircraft
they operate are now quite old and of course ours is very new so they're
very
excited about the different functionality the A400 has."

Editor: Wg Cdr Dylan Eklund

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[RAF Explosive Ordnance Disposal team train alongside Romanians](#)

RAF Explosive Ordnance Disposal team train alongside Romanians

Personnel from
RAF Wittering based 5131 Bomb Disposal Squadron have conducted joint
training
with their counterparts from the Romanian Army at Ramnicu Valcea in central
Romania.

The Explosive
Ordnance Disposal (EOD) detachment from RAF Wittering is supporting 135
Expeditionary Air Wing currently deployed at Mihail Kogalniceanu airbase on
the
Black Sea coast of Romania and conducting enhanced air policing of NATO
airspace.

The Officer
Commanding EOD, Flight Lieutenant Rob Cornford said: "The role I have as
bomb disposal officer is ensuring that any incidents with munitions are
dealt
with if they need to be by explosive ordnance disposal. I provide 24/7 crash
cover for making safe munitions, flares or ejection systems that may be

damaged.”



Major Adrian

Enache of the Romanian Army’s 1st EOD Group welcomed RAF personnel Cpl Greg Cheeseman and Flt Lt Rob Cornford with a tour of the bespoke training facilities and demonstration of equipment. He invited them to a parade to celebrate 20 years since the inception of the Romanian EOD unit. He said: “Interoperability is a question of attitude. If we work together here, we can work together wherever we want.”

On the training

range, Major Enache’s team demonstrated novel techniques to counter Improvised

Explosive Devices and rendering safe Romanian Air Force rockets. Bries, the ten year old German Shepherd and veteran of Afghanistan was also given the

opportunity to show her prowess in detecting different types of explosives.



Flt Lt Cornford

summed up the value of this, saying: “We’ve been doing some training on Romanian Air Force weapons, looking at how the Romanians operate and we’ve showed them our procedures for disposing of different types of munitions. They’ve also demonstrated some of their counter-Improvised Explosive Device (c-IED) capability with 3D printed C-IED weapons; it’s a pretty cost effective solution for disposing of IEDs.

He added: “It’s

been good to see how the two nations work together, and how they work their different equipment. It’s really good to train with our NATO partners. It’s something we can look forward to doing in the future.”

The Romanian

military also lead the way in working as a ‘whole force’ with civilian staff formed up alongside the Army for the 20th anniversary parade. Major Enache said: “The civilians on this unit are participating and working side by side with the military. Everyone is doing their job in order to achieve the common goal.”



The ability to

share lessons across services is eased by making personal connections. Romanian

Air Force Sergeant Major Florin Monteanu, and Romanian Navy Petty Officer Mares

Dragos were at the anniversary celebrations, the latter saying: “We all have

different skills. When we work together we spread our skills and change each other. It's a good opportunity for us."

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