

Red Arrows tour finale thrills Bahrain

A final public display of 2017 has been carried out in Bahrain by the Red Arrows.

The Royal Air Force Aerobatic Team was watched by crowds at the city's seafront, marking the end of the team's 53rd season and also a significant tour of the Mediterranean and Gulf supporting United Kingdom interests.

Wing Commander Andrew Keith, Officer Commanding, Royal Air Force Aerobatic Team, the Red Arrows, said: "Our busy schedule has meant the whole team, both aircrew and essential support staff, have worked hard, often in extreme temperatures, but it has been worth it.



"Representing the UK, we have highlighted links with close friends in the region and helped to forge new ones, across a range of industries and sectors."

The overseas deployment, known as Exercise Eastern Hawk, has focussed on British expertise in the fields of aviation, technology, engineering and education.

As well as the display, pilots and personnel of the Red Arrows' ground support team met women's networking groups, members of the business community and also students in Bahrain.



The five-week overseas tour began with a flight over the Cannes Yachting Festival – highlighting British industry at the event – before visiting Athens Flying Week, Jeddah in Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Qatar, Oman and Pakistan. A flypast over Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, follows the full display in Bahrain.

The British Ambassador to Bahrain, Simon Martin, said: "I'm delighted that the team are back to represent the best of British innovation and excellence within the Royal Air Force, which shows the UK's commitment to strengthen its relations with Bahrain."

One of the Red Arrows' key roles is as national ambassadors, supporting UK trade, business, education and industry – most recently in conjunction with the GREAT Britain campaign.



The Bahrain display was also the last show of the Red Arrows' 2017 season, which included a busy domestic programme across the UK before the overseas deployment.

It was the final public display for four of the pilots who have reached the end of their period with the team.

This includes Red 1, Squadron Leader David Montenegro, who has finished his second, three-year, stint with the team – with 2015-2017 as Team Leader.

Flight Lieutenant Tom Bould, who is Red 6, and Flight Lieutenant Emmet Cox, Red 9, have completed their three-year tours with the team.

And also leaving is Red 10, Squadron Leader Mike Ling, who has completed nine years in the team – more than any other Red Arrows pilot – and the last six years as supervisor and team commentator.



The Red Arrows are based at RAF Scampton in Lincolnshire and are famous for flying BAE Systems Hawks in a Diamond Nine formation.

For more information about the team, follow @rafredarrows on Twitter, see the latest images posted on Instagram by following rafredarrows, like RAF Red Arrows on Facebook or visit www.raf.mod.uk/reds

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