

ROYAL AIR FORCE PERSONNEL RECEIVE HIGH HONOURS IN ROMANIA

ROYAL AIR FORCE PERSONNEL RECEIVE HIGH HONOURS IN ROMANIA

EIGHT ROYAL Air Force personnel stationed in Romania on NATO operations received the Romanian Air Force's highest peacetime award at a ceremony in Bucharest on 22 August. The personnel – from 135 Expeditionary Air Wing (135 EAW), based at Mihail Kogalniceanu Air Base – received the Romanian Air Force Emblem of Honour from the Chief of the Air Force Staff, General Laurian Anastasof, for their contributions to NATO's enhanced air policing mission.



Since April four Typhoon FGR4 fighter aircraft from 3(F) Squadron, based at RAF Coningsby in Lincolnshire, have been deployed with 135 EAW to reinforce Romania's existing air defence capabilities. Commanded by NATO's Combined Air Operations Centre at Torrejon, Spain, the Typhoons have spent alternate weeks at high readiness to respond to unusual air activity over the Black Sea, in order to reassure Romania and other NATO members of the Alliance's resolve to defend its airspace. During the mission Typhoons had to scramble once – on 25 July – in response to Russian activity above the Black Sea.

Gen Anastasof presented the awards at a ceremony at the Romanian Air Force's headquarters in Bucharest. During the ceremony he praised the RAF's "outstanding" support for NATO and Romania and said he was proud of the UK's strong show of "solidarity and deterrence".



135 EAW's Commanding Officer, Wing Commander Andy Coe, was the first to be decorated by Gen Anastasof. Wg Cdr Coe said: "I can't express how proud I am to receive such a high honour from our Romanian friends and allies. But I'm absolutely clear that those of us who were honoured received our awards as ambassadors for our teams, for NATO and for the Royal Air Force. We work as a Whole Force, and that's how we'll celebrate too."

135 EAW is currently drawing down its presence in Romania as the Royal Canadian Air Force prepares to assume the responsibility for NATO's enhanced air policing mission. Four RCAF CF-188 fighter aircraft arrived in

Romania on 20 August.



The RCAF's Air Task Force commander, Lieutenant Colonel Mark Hickey, said: "135 EAW and 3(F) Squadron have put in place an outstanding handover schedule for us, and it has been a pleasure working with our British counterparts. We look forward to the exchange aspects with Romanian Air Force personnel located in Mihail Kogalniceanu Air Base as we go ahead with this NATO enhanced Air Policing mission. This is the third time since 2014 that the RCAF will be flying Romanian skies and the CF-188 Hornets deployed on this operation are ideally suited to assist Romanian Air Forces with this mission. Romania is our ally and we are committed to the principle of collective defence of the Alliance."

© MOD Crown Copyright 2017

[Let's block ads! \(Why?\)](#)