

RAF Typhoons test NATO ground based air defence capability

ROYAL AIR FORCE TYPHOONS TEST NATO GROUND BASED AIR DEFENCE CAPABILITY

Royal

Air Force (RAF) Typhoon aircraft have been playing their part in a multinational exercise to test NATO's capability to command and control ground based systems to defend the skies.

RAF

Typhoons are deployed to Romania as part of the NATO enhanced Air Policing in partnership with Romania. However there are other dimensions to securing the skies above NATO and the RAF has been playing its part with training sorties to help the UK, Romanian and US forces deployed on Exercise Tobruq Legacy at Capu Midia firing range near Constanta.



In the

work up before live firing exercises one of the Typhoon pilots from 3(F) squadron said: "We gave them two targets today. We came at them from different angles and from different heights. We fly directly towards them. It gives them a chance to use the system to lock onto our aircraft and then we do a couple of evasive turns to test them to their maximum ability."

He

added: "It's not an opportunity they are going to get very often to get to try and track and target a Typhoon. It's a good opportunity to work across the nations."

Exercise

Tobruq Legacy is an NATO exercise involving 2200 personnel and over 800 vehicles in Lithuania, Romania and the Czech Republic. The purpose is to improve the level of interoperability of multinational Surface-Based Air and Missile Defence systems forces.



3(F)

Squadron from Coningsby in Lincolnshire is deployed to Mihail Kogalniceanu air base near Constanta in Eastern Romania as part of the RAF's 135 Expeditionary Air Wing on a NATO mission to enhance Air Policing over Romania.

Enhanced air policing is part of the Assurance Measures introduced in 2014 to reassure members how NATO provides the cornerstone of collective defence.

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RAF Lossiemouth supports MSP fact finding mission

RAF LOSSIEMOUTH SUPPORTS MSP FACT FINDING MISSION

RAF Lossiemouth welcomed representatives of the Scottish Parliament to the UK's most northerly fast jet fighter station today, Thursday, 27 July 2017.

The Presiding Officer, Members and Officials headed to the Moray better understand the range of social and welfare policies and how these affect armed forces families.



MSPs have already visited the Army's Glencorse Barracks in Penicuik in June, and a visit to the Navy's Royal Marine Commando site in Arbroath is planned for November.

Air Officer Scotland, Air Vice-Marshal Ross Paterson said:

"Our Parliamentary visitors will hear how RAF Lossiemouth's Quick Reaction Alert interceptors help protect the nation's airspace, and discover how £400m is being invested on site to make us ready for the arrival of our new Maritime

Patrol Aircraft fleet, beginning in 2020.



“Most importantly, they will meet with our people and their families, including visiting our Childcare Centre, to better understand the particular needs of service families.

“This is an opportunity to showcase the contribution of the RAF in Scotland to both national security and also how we contribute to Scotland’s Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) agenda through our schools’ outreach programme.”


During their visit the Parliamentary group visited Typhoon flight simulators and aircraft, a parachute simulator and found out about the work of the RAF’s mountain rescue team.



Led by the Scottish Parliament’s Presiding Officer, Ken McIntosh MSP, and chief executive, Sir Paul Grice, the attending MSPs were:

- Bill Bowman, Con, North East Scotland
- Finlay Carson, Con, Galloway and West Dumfries
- Jackson Carlaw, Con, Eastwood
- Jamie Green, Con, West Scotland
- Daniel Johnson, Lab, Edinburgh Southern
- Richard Lochhead, SNP, Moray
- Lewis

MacDonald, Lab, North East Scotland

· 
Graham
Simpson, Lab, Central Scotland

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Chief of the Air Staff visits RAF personnel on NATO mission

CHIEF OF THE AIR STAFF VISITS ROYAL AIR FORCE PERSONNEL ON NATO MISSION

The Chief of the Air Staff has visited Royal Air Force personnel conducting the NATO air policing mission which safeguards the integrity of Allies' sovereign airspace.

On arrival at Mihael Kogalniceanu Air Base in Romania, Air Chief Marshal Sir Stephen Hillier was greeted by Wing Commander Andrew Coe, Commanding Officer 135 Expeditionary Air Wing (EAW) and given a tour of the detachment which operates four Typhoon aircraft.



The multi-role fighters have been based in Romania since May as part of wider NATO assurance measures designed to demonstrate the commitment of Allies to collective defence and deterrence.

After meeting personnel from the individual sections which comprise the EAW, ACM Hillier met with his Romanian counterpart, Lieutenant General Laurian Anastasof whom he thanked for the support afforded to the RAF detachment.

ACM Hillier said: "This is our first significant detachment into Romania, and demonstrating that commitment I know is reassuring to them. It's also an important message for the UK overall in NATO is to say that the breadth of our capability is significant."



"I think it very much

demonstrates with air power, what the Royal Air Force can contribute for a relatively small detachment, we're really sending an important strategic message which is definitely heard by others."

The Chief of the Air Staff then visited the NATO Command and Air Operation Centre (CAOC) which monitors NATO airspace over an area greater in size than the continental United States.

Situated north of Madrid, CAOC Torrejón has been fully operational since October 2014 forming part of a new NATO command structure established following the Lisbon Summit in 2010.



The CAOC monitors NATO airspace from the Canary Islands to the Turkish-Syrian border, from the Azores to Romania, an area covering about 6,500 kilometres from east to west, including all the Mediterranean, the Black Sea and part of the Atlantic.

While receiving a brief from the CAOC Commander, Lieutenant General Ruben Servert, news came through that an RAF Typhoon had been scrambled in Romania in response to Russian military aircraft over the Black Sea. ACM Hillier was able to observe first-hand how the multi-national team, which includes 17 RAF personnel, controlled the launch of fighter aircraft from four different locations to intercept the Russian Tu-22 Backfire bombers.



In common with their colleagues in Romania personnel were then afforded the opportunity to put any questions regarding the RAF to ACM Hillier and the Chief of the Air Staff's Warrant Officer (CASWO), Warrant Officer Jon Crossley who said: "There is a real desire on my part and the senior leadership team to make people feel comfortable in being able to put forward their thoughts and opinions."

He added, "I firmly believe these opportunities allow people to feel empowered that they have a say in the future of their Air Force."

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RAF Typhoon scramble in response to Russian aircraft over the Black Sea

RAF Typhoon scramble in response to Russian aircraft over the Black Sea

A Royal Air Force Typhoon based in Romania has been launched as a response to Russian aircraft operating near NATO airspace over the Black Sea.

Operating from the Romanian Mihail Kogalniceanu Air Base near Constanta on the Black Sea coast, the RAF Typhoon responded to Russian Federation Air Force TU-22 Backfire strategic bombers heading south near NATO air space.



The Russian military jets were flying over the western Black Sea and were monitored by the Typhoon in accordance with the NATO Enhanced Air Policing (eAP) mission the RAF are conducting in Romania. The Tupolevs were tracked as they departed south but the jets did not come within visual range of each other.

Previously NATO's Air Surveillance and Control System had detected several tracks of non-NATO military aircraft flying over the Black Sea, which were later identified as the two Russian jets. The NATO Combined Air Operations Centre (CAOC) at Torrejon Spain, ordered a RAF Typhoon jet to scramble and shadow the Russian jets flying in international airspace in the vicinity of NATO airspace.



Wing Commander Lewis Cunningham, Officer Commanding 3(F) Squadron said "It worked as we would have expected it to. We took down the details, ran to the aircraft and I took off within the prescribed timeline." He added: "It's satisfying. We spotted that there was something happening and then very quickly the 'phone call came and we were running out of the door."

The RAF mission in Romania is part of

NATO's Assurance Measures introduced in 2014. At the time, the Alliance started implementing these Assurance Measures with the goal to demonstrate the collective resolve of Allies, demonstrate the defensive nature of NATO and deter the threat of Russian aggression against NATO Allies.



Wing Commander

Andrew Coe, Commanding Officer of 135 Expeditionary Air Wing based in Romania

said: "This was a routine operation and is no different to what NATO aircraft

do in other areas on a regular basis".

He added; "The RAF have a long tradition and experience of conducting such activities in the UK and it is a normal peacetime activity to monitor flights in airspace of interest".

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Prince Harry Visits RAF Honington to present new Queen's Colour

PRINCE HARRY PRESENTS RAF REGIMENT WITH A NEW QUEEN'S COLOUR

The

20th July 17 proved to be a truly spectacular day for RAF Honington when HRH Prince Henry of Wales KCV0 attended to present the RAF Regiment with a new Queen's Colour to commemorate its 75th anniversary.



The

day began when Prince Harry awarded the Firmin Sword of Peace to the RAF Police. The award is given to the unit that has been judged to have made the most valuable contribution to humanitarian activities by establishing good and

friendly relations with the inhabitants of communities at home or overseas.

During 2015 the Royal Air Force Police made a significant contribution to humanitarian activities. These included

aviation security on Op PENNYWEIGHT, the provision of humanitarian aid

following the cyclone in Vanuatu; Op VOGUL supporting the movement of UK aid

supplies to South Sudan; Op LEYLAND supporting relief efforts following the earthquake in Nepal and Op TAILPIN, the repatriation of individuals from Tunisia following terrorist attacks on UK citizens.

The Royal Air Force Police have also maintained a detachment supporting security at Freetown Airport, Sierra Leone during the Ebola crisis and went forward to assist in the provision of aviation security as 16,000 British passport holders were repatriated through Sharm el-Sheikh having been stranded following a terrorist attack.

Provost Marshal (RAF) - Group Captain Steve Horne MA RAF said: "This highly coveted prize was unanimously awarded to us in recognition of the extraordinary catalogue of humanitarian, engagement and charitable activities that the organisation undertook in 2015. It is a testament to the personnel within the RAF Police that in spite of challenging regular duties, they have had an active involvement in charitable activities, fundraising over £57,710 for worthy causes."



Accompanied by the Stn Cdr Gp Capt Dave Tait MBE, ADC, MA, RAF His Royal Highness arrived at the parade square where the Queen's Colour Squadron and graduating gunners from Meiktila Flight 4-16 were waiting in anticipation. The impressive sound of the Airbus A400M Atlas flying over RAF Honington signified the start of the presentation of the new Queen's Colour. The Standards for all of the RAF Regiment Squadrons stood proudly behind the RAF Regiment Band.



HRH Prince Harry read a personal message from Her Majesty The Queen; The presentation of Colours is an opportunity to recognise historic achievements and to look forward to the future with confidence; a confidence built upon the dedication of those who have served under past colours and will serve under this colour being presented today. I am pleased that Prince Harry is able to present a new Colour to the Royal Air Force Regiment in this, your 75th Anniversary year, on my behalf as your Air Commodore in Chief.

Next year the Royal Air Force will celebrate 100 years of defending the skies over the United Kingdom and protecting our Nation's interests overseas

Here today, every generation is represented from the graduating gunners on parade to the founder members watching on. There are also a great many families present; their service and dedication is at the heart of The Royal Air Force Regiment's success."

Despite the downpour at the end of the ceremony dignitaries, service personnel, veterans, families, school children and the local community were in the audience enjoying this historic and momentous occasion.



Before meeting the families and school children Prince Harry was introduced to Ron Fairweather, William Walker and Raymond Hill who were founder members of No 1 and 2 Armoured Car Company RAF. Next in line were a few of the graduating gunners from Meiktila Flt 4-16. LAC Richard Keating who was born in Cork said: "I was thrilled to be on the parade but to meet Prince Harry was absolutely amazing"

Sam Brown (9), presented Prince Harry with a commemorative RAF Regt 75 Bear and a beautiful bouquet. Their father FS Jordan Brown, was recently diagnosed with a terminal brain tumour, said: "This is such a memorable day for Sam; one he will never forget." He added: 'Sam was nervous but very excited to meet the Prince."

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