

# **News story: Operational Honours and Awards List May 2018**

A total of 44 members of the Armed Forces and one civilian have been named in the latest Operational Honours and Awards List.

The full list, which recognises and honours service on operations is below.

## **Commander of the Order of the British Empire (CBE)**

Commodore William Jonathan WARRENDER Royal Navy

Air Vice-Marshal John Jackson STRINGER Royal Air Force

## **Officer of the Order of the British Empire (OBE)**

Lieutenant Colonel Jason AINLEY, Corps of Royal Engineers

Wing Commander Kathryn Elizabeth FERRIS, Royal Air Force

Wing Commander Mark David LORRIMAN-HUGHES, Royal Air Force

Wing Commander Matthew James PETERSON, Royal Air Force

## **Member of the Order of the British Empire (MBE)**

Captain Patrick HALFORD, Royal Marines

Colour Sergeant Mark ROUGHSEGE, Royal Marines

Major James David BROWN, Grenadier Guards

Squadron Leader Craig Robert LEDIEU, Royal Air Force

## **Military Cross (MC)**

Corporal Hugo WILTON, Royal Marines

Colour Sergeant Daniel Mark GARRATT, Parachute Regiment

## **Queen's Gallantry Medal (QGM)**

Air Engineering Technician (Mechanical) Stuart Maurice ROGERS, Royal Navy

## **Mention in Despatches**

Captain Thomas James LIMB, Royal Marines

Acting Lance Corporal Robert Patrick NEILL, Royal Marines

Lance Corporal Nathan William FLETCHER, The Parachute Regiment

Sergeant Andrew MATHER, The Royal Irish Regiment

Lance Corporal Charles Anthony Dexter TAYLOR, The Parachute Regiment

Squadron Leader Matthew Frederick AXCELL, Royal Air Force

Flight Lieutenant Helena BULLIVANT, Royal Air Force

### **Queen's Commendation for Bravery**

Sergeant Christopher SAMUEL, Royal Marines

Sergeant Alistair James SEDDON, Royal Marines

### **Queen's Commendation for Valuable Service**

Colour Sergeant Omar ACID, Royal Marines

Colonel Daniel BLANCHFORD OBE

Petty Officer Warfare Specialist (Electronic Warfare) James HICK, Royal Navy

Sergeant Paul RICHARDS, Royal Marines

Corporal Aleksandr David STOVELL, Royal Marines

Colour Sergeant Michael WAKER, Royal Marines

Acting Lieutenant Colonel Philip Matthew BIRCH, The Royal Anglian Regiment

Major Victoria Anne BULLEID, Queen Alexandra's Royal Army Nursing Corps

Major Noel Clark CLAYDON-SWALES, The Light Dragoons

Major Fiona Allison DANGERFIELD, The Royal Logistic Corps

Colonel Andrew Bernard JACKSON

Warrant Officer Class 2 Peter KEOGH MC, The Royal Irish Regiment

Major Clodia Nicolette O'NEILL, Corps of Royal Engineers

Acting Sergeant Thomas Andrew STOKES, Intelligence Corps

Lance Corporal Liam Derek STOTT, Royal Army Medical Corps

Warrant Officer Class 2 Luke TOWNSIN, Corps of Royal Engineers

Staff Sergeant Mark Robert BRODRICK, Royal Air Force

Flight Lieutenant Gregory Stuart MOULD, Royal Air Force

Mrs Lisa GARDNER, Civil Servant

## **NON-OPERATIONAL GALLANTRY**

### **Air Force Cross (AFC)**

Squadron Leader Ian Samuel DORNAN, Royal Air Force

Flight Lieutenant Ben WALLIS, Royal Air Force

### **Queen's Commendation for Bravery (QCBA)**

Petty Officer (Diver) Toby Stuart JONES, Royal Navy

Acting Flight Sergeant Benjamin Martin HOWARTH, Royal Air Force

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## **Press release: 50 Days to go until the tenth Armed Forces Day**

Saturday June 30 will see hundreds of events held to mark the tenth version of the day, including parades and ceremonies right across the country. Men and women from the Royal Navy, British Army and Royal Air Force, both regulars and reserves, will be recognised alongside the wider defence family including cadets and veterans.

The national event will take place in Llandudno, North Wales and excitement is building ahead of the biggest Armed Forces Day ever, with a record number of flypasts, displays and exhibitions planned.

Defence Secretary Gavin Williamson said:

Armed Forces Day is a valuable opportunity to honour our troops who work so hard to keep us safe.

Our servicemen and women are on hand every hour of every day to protect us from the threats we face and I encourage people across the UK to come together and salute them for their tireless commitment.

Since last year's event in Liverpool the Armed Forces have had a busy year in the UK and around the world. From troops helping those struggling in heavy snowfall to the emergency assistance provided in the aftermath of the Salisbury attack. To further afield in Iraq and Syria where our Armed Forces continued to take the fight to Daesh, helping to drive the terrorists back and give ordinary people in those countries the chance to rebuild their lives.

Around the world our troops have worked day and night, from reassuring NATO allies in Europe to deploying over 2000 personnel to the Caribbean in the aftermath of Hurricane Irma.

The UK Armed Forces are currently involved in over 20 operations in more than 25 countries, from Estonia to Iraq. But many of those back at home will be in attendance at events across the country.

Also present will be many veterans that make-up the estimated 2.56 million Armed Forces veteran community living in the UK. Young Cadets will be present too; together the Sea, Army, and Air cadets have almost 100,000 members.

On the 30 June, a parade of around 1,000 serving personnel, veterans, cadets and marching bands will step off from the Llandudno War Memorial at 11am to signal the start of the Armed Forces Day celebrations.

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## **News story: An unknown British World War 1 sailor's grave identified and rededicated a century after his death**

A dignified service of rededication was held for Petty Officer (PO) Charles McDonald yesterday, Thursday 10 May 2018, at the Commonwealth War Graves Commission (CWGC) Oostende New British Cemetery in Belgium, exactly 100 years after his death. PO McDonald, originally from Leith in Edinburgh, was formerly buried as an unknown British sailor.

The service, organised by the MOD's Joint Casualty and Compassionate Centre (JCCC), part of Defence Business Services, was conducted by the Reverend (Professor) Scott J S Shackleton, Deputy Chaplain of the Fleet, Royal Navy.



David Slade kneels beside the newly marked headstone for P0 McDonald, Crown Copyright, All rights reserved

In May 1918, Charles McDonald was on loan to HMS Vindictive when it took part in the second Ostend raid, which was the second failed attempt to block the channels leading to the port. A successful blockade of these bases would force German submarines to operate out of more distant ports, such as Wilhelmshaven, on the German coast. This would expose them for longer to Allied countermeasures and reduce the time they could spend raiding.

In anticipation of a raid, the Germans had removed the navigation buoys and without them the Vindictive had difficulty finding the narrow channel into the harbour in heavy fog. When she did discover the entrance, a mechanical fault prevented her from turning fully broadside to block access; a German shell fired from a gun battery on shore hit the bridge, killing the commander and wounding or killing most of the bridge crew.

P0 McDonald was climbing the stokehold ladder at the time, a shipmate confirmed that the ladder was shot away by the blast and Charles was never seen again. He was buried as an unknown British stoker, who died on 10 May 1918 whilst serving on HMS Vindictive.





A bugler plays during the rededication service for P0 McDonald, Crown  
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More recently, a historian with a firm interest in HMS Vindictive submitted clear and convincing evidence to the JCCC proving that the individual buried in Oostende new communal cemetery was Charles McDonald.

Louise Dorr, JCCC said:

It is very poignant to be here today on the 100th anniversary of Charles's death to be able to give him back his name and rededicate his grave to him.



Reverend (Professor) Scott J S Shackleton is joined by Navy representatives by PO McDonald's new headstone, Crown Copyright, All rights reserved

Reverend (Professor) Scott J S Shackleton said:

PO Charles McDonald was clearly a sailor's sailor having joined the Royal Navy in 1898 at the tender age of 18 years. He came from Leith, the port of Edinburgh and although we know little about him it is likely that the sea would in some way have been in his blood. The raid on Oostende on 9 and 10 May 1918 was a bold and brave assault which would have inevitably been costly in terms of lives. It is a privilege to lead a service today to commemorate PO McDonald as a fellow matelot and Scot. May his soul rest in peace and rise in glory and may we never forget the sacrifice of the few for the many.

David Avery of the CWGC said:

On the centenary of his death, we are privileged to be able to re-dedicate the grave of Petty Officer McDonald in the Commonwealth War Graves Commission's plot in Oostende new communal cemetery. The CWGC are pleased that we are now able to pay tribute to this courageous sailor who had served his country for 20 years by marking his resting place with a headstone bearing his name.

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## **News story: Lieutenant General Mark Carleton-Smith appointed new Chief of the General Staff**

*Updated: new pic*

Defence Secretary Gavin Williamson has today confirmed that Her Majesty the Queen has approved the appointment of the new Chief of the General Staff.

Lieutenant General Mark Carleton-Smith CBE is to be promoted General and will succeed General Sir Nicholas Patrick Carter KCB CBE DSO ADC Gen in June 2018. General Carter is taking up the post of Chief of the Defence Staff, succeeding Air Chief Marshall Sir Stuart Peach who is leaving to become Chairman of the Military Committee at NATO.

Defence Secretary Gavin Williamson said:

I'm delighted to offer my congratulations to Lieutenant General Carleton-Smith on his appointment of Chief of the General Staff.

Lt Gen Carleton-Smith has played a leading role in many of our recent operations at home and abroad, including our campaign to defeat Daesh in Iraq and Syria, our support to British Overseas Territories affected by Hurricane Irma and the military's support to areas badly affected by the snow earlier this year.

I have no doubt that Lt Gen Carleton-Smith will be an outstanding leader of the Army at this crucial period, as we look to strengthen and further modernise the Army to deal with intensifying threats.

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## **News story: Royal Navy gets first unmanned minesweeping system**

Following a period of successful trials the demonstrator system could go on to be used by the Royal Navy in the future to defeat the threat of modern digital mines.



The system has been designed and manufactured by Atlas Elektronik UK in Dorset, under a £13 million contract with the Ministry of Defence which has sustained around 20 jobs and created 15 new jobs with the company.

Defence Minister Guto Bebb said:

This autonomous minesweeper takes us a step closer to taking our crews out of danger and allowing us to safely clear sea lanes of explosives, whether that's supporting trade in global waters and around the British coastline, or protecting our ships and shores. Easily transported by road, sea and air, the high-tech design means a small team could put the system to use within hours of it arriving in theatre. We are investing millions in innovative technology now, to support our military of the future.

The system's innovative and modernised technology has the ability to defeat today's digital sea mines which can detect and target military ships passing overhead. The sweeper system, which features a "sense and avoid" capability, could also work together with other similar autonomous systems for the common goal of making our waters safer.

The project also aims to demonstrate the viability of an unmanned system that can safely and successfully clear mines and which is designed to be operated from a land or ship-based control station and can be deployed from a suitable ship or port.

Over the last four months, the system has been put through its paces by Atlas Elektronik and Defence Equipment and Support team members and the Royal Navy's Maritime Autonomous Systems Trials Team (MASTT).

The system was tested against a number of performance requirements, for example, how well it cleared mines, whether the autonomous system could successfully avoid obstacles and the overall system performance.

Brigadier Jim Morris Royal Marines – Assistant Chief of the Naval Staff in Maritime Capability, and Senior Responsible Officer for the Mine Counter Measures and Hydrographic Capability (MHC) programme said:

The Mine Countermeasures and Hydrographic Capability Combined Influence Minesweeping system is the Royal Navy's first fully autonomous capability demonstrator and paves the way for the introduction of this technology across the full range of maritime capabilities.

Combined Influence Minesweeping is a critical component of the Mine Countermeasures capability. This autonomous system will restore the Royal Navy's sweep capability, enabling it to tackle modern digital mines that may not otherwise be discovered in challenging minehunting conditions.

This autonomous sweep system represents a fundamental step in the Navy's transition to autonomous offboard systems to counter the threat posed to international shipping by the sea mine; we look forward to commencing demonstration of the associated minehunting system in 2019.

The handover of the system to the Royal Navy is a significant milestone for the Mine Countermeasures and Hydrographic Capability (MHC) programme, which aims to de-risk maritime autonomous systems and introduce these new technologies into the Royal Navy.

Director Ships Support Neal Lawson, of the MOD's procurement organisation, Defence Equipment and Support, said:

The autonomous minesweeper offers a commander the ability to defeat mines that cannot be countered by current hunting techniques and significantly reduces the risk to crew members in pressured and time-constrained operations.

The system can offer greater flexibility and upgradability, allowing the Royal Navy to respond better to the sea-mine threat in the long-term and operate more effectively around the world and I'm therefore delighted to be back here at Bingleaves, where I started my MOD career 29 years ago, to mark the handover of this critical programme.

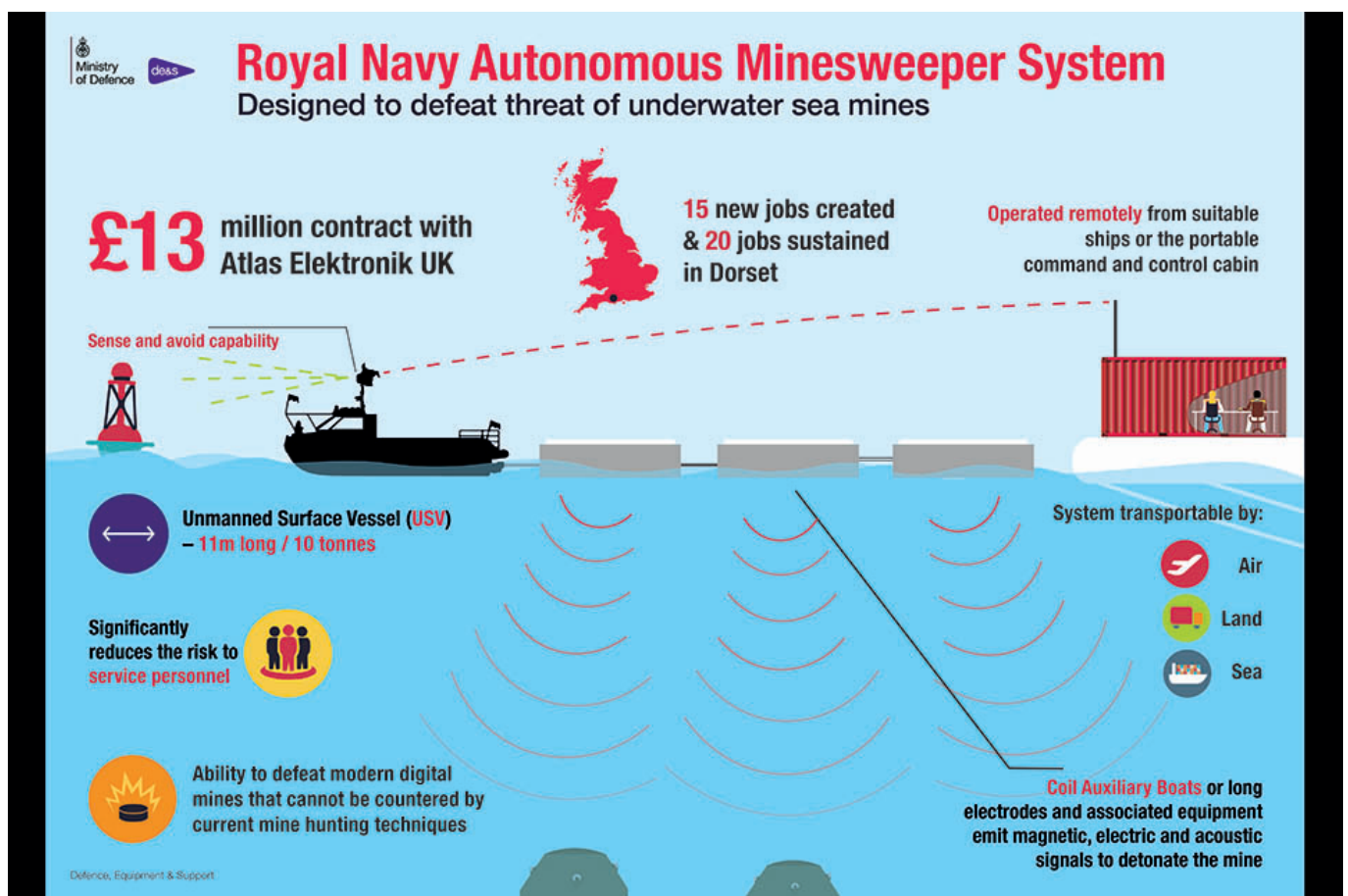


An autonomous minesweeper system that can safely clear sea lanes of mines has been handed over to the Royal Navy, Defence Minister Guto Bebb has announced. Crown copyright.

The system will now undergo a series of more detailed trials with the Royal Navy.

The Royal Navy has a proud history of minesweeping, dating from World War One when even the likes of fishing trawlers were converted for use, dragging a chain from the vessel to clear German mines. Today, with far more sophisticated equipment, the service is still called upon to clear the waters of ordnance and maintains a world-leading role in minehunting, training alongside allies in the Mediterranean and the Gulf.

The MOD has committed 1.2% of the £36bn defence budget, supported by a dedicated £800m Innovation Fund, to cutting-edge science and technology.



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