

THE BUGLE

Issue 200 | August 2014



INSIDE

- Message from SNO Op FARAD
- The Force Training Team
- An Engagement Surprise
- We are not Alone

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“THE BUGLE”

The Deployment Newsletter is produced for families and service personnel associated with current overseas deployments.

Deadline

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Bugle contributions are welcome and should be sent to Carol Voyce.

Editor: Carol Voyce
Layout: Christine Muir
Printing: Sharyn Cameron
Mere Garton

Contributions co-ordinated by
Carol Voyce and Janine Burton

Contact Information

Carol Voyce
Deployment Services Officer
Southern Regional Support Centre
Burnham Military Camp
Powles Road
Burnham 7600
Christchurch
Ph: (03) 363 0421
Cell phone: 0274 497 565
Toll free line: 0800 DEPLOY or
0800 337 569
Fax: (03) 363 0024
E-mail: dso.burnham@xtra.co.nz

Janine Burton
Deployment Services Officer
Linton Regional Support Centre
1 (NZ) Brigade
Linton Military Camp
Palmerston North 4820
Ph: (06) 351 9399
Cell phone: 021 649 903
Toll free line: 0800 OVERSEAS or
0800 683 77 327
Fax: (06) 351 9009
E-mail: dso.linton@xtra.co.nz

Disclaimer

Articles and opinions expressed in “The Bugle” are not necessarily those of the New Zealand Defence Force.

Cover Photo:

Lance Corporal Matthew Couper receiving his ISAF medal

GUEST EDITORIAL

Air Commodore Kevin McEvoy

Air Component Commander
Headquarters
Joint Forces New Zealand

By the time this gets to you the Operation TIKI VII team will have started flying operations and be into the swing of things. Under Glenn’s leadership I know the detachment will be gelling as a team and getting used to the climate; I suspect those deployed won’t get too much sympathy for the heat from those suffering through a rainy NZ winter!

When I farewelled the aircraft the sight of Ben and Gabby with their five week old reminded me of the responsibility on me as a commander to look after your loved ones, while also supporting you, and the importance of supporting the family (like it or not, you are part of the NZDF family!). In the weeks leading up to the deployment I am sure many of you have already experienced some of the emotional roller-coaster. Been there, done that! For some it might be a case of ‘same old, same old’ but for others this might be your first experience of a deployment, so let me reassure you that we are here to make the deployment as rewarding as possible, and we are here to support you as necessary.

For me, the success of the deployment will be not just that the



*Air Commodore Kevin McEvoy
Air Component Commander
Headquarters Joint Forces New Zealand*

missions were flown but that our people coming back are easily reintegrated back into home, and you and your family embrace any future deployment opportunities rather than looking upon them with a sense of dread. For those that are deployed I know you will be mission-focused, but please don’t forget you have families back here that need your support too. I know you all have been allocated a contact person so please make sure you use them if you need to. I look forward to a successful deployment and to the safe return of the team and hope to catch you all at the end and share your experiences. If there’s any way we can improve our support, please feel free to give us pointers as we go along.

MESSAGE FROM SNO OP FARAD

Emailed/posted to Primary Next of Kin on 17 July 2014

I am the Commanding Officer of the New Zealand Defence Force Contingent (26 people) with the Multinational Force and Observers (MFO) in the Sinai, Egypt and I am writing to give you a brief update on the situation here in Egypt and Israel so that you are correctly informed of the situation here given the current international focus on events in Israel, the Gaza Strip, and Egypt.

As you may be aware from watching or reading the news, a conflict between Israel and the Gaza Strip began on 8 July following tensions that developed in the West Bank following the killing of three Israeli teenagers and a Palestinian teenager. Since 8 July, nearly 1000 rockets have been fired from the Gaza Strip into Israel and Israel has conducted over 1300 airstrikes on the Gaza Strip and have positioned forces for a possible ground incursion into Gaza. Israel and the Gaza Strip border the Sinai (Egypt) and the NZ Contingent are all based in North Camp which is approximately 20km inside Egypt from the Gaza Strip, so although we are close enough to hear the airstrikes and to feel the concussion of the bombs at night there has been no direct effect of the Israeli-Gaza conflict on North Camp apart from some short power outages in the first week.

The role of the MFO is as a peacekeeping mission that observes the adherence of Egypt and Israel to the 1979 Treaty of Peace and we report any discrepancies to Egypt or Israel. The MFO is directly funded by Egypt and Israel so the MFO is unusual for a peacekeeping mission in that we operate in partnership with both nations. Therefore, based on our mandate the MFO is a neutral third-party and does not have any role in the internal security of Egypt or Israel and we purely conduct our primary task of observing that the requirements of the Treaty are met.

Despite what it may appear from the media, there has been no deterioration in the security situation inside Egypt since the start of the recent conflict between Israel and the Gaza Strip. However, due to the increased risk of rocket attacks in Israel since 08 July we have stopped all unnecessary movement into Israel. For our NZ drivers and personnel who are travelling in Israel, they have seen rockets being shot down and have been present when the warning sirens have occurred but have not been close to any rockets landing; it is important to know that despite the large number of rockets fired into Israel from Gaza, there have been an extremely low number that have landed in urban or populated areas.

You should know that your partners and loved ones are doing an outstanding job representing NZ and the NZ Defence Force in an environment and in jobs that are challenging for us. I am constantly impressed by the achievements of the team and I know that none of what we do or the positive manner in which we conduct ourselves would be possible without your support. I thank you for your continued support for those of us who are deployed overseas and your interest in what we do.

Kind regards

Lieutenant Colonel Paul Hayward

Commanding Officer NZ Contingent, Multinational Force and Observers
Sinai, Egypt

Deployment Support Services

- ◆ Need information?
- ◆ Need support?
- ◆ Need a listening ear?
- ◆ Need to send an urgent message to a deployment location?

Deployment Support Services are here for you

All personnel on deployment and their families have the support of the Deployment Services Officers (DSOs). In addition there is support from Unit Points of Contact (UPOC) and local Welfare Support Services.

The nominated Primary Next of Kin (PNOK) of families of deployed NZDF personnel should, in the first instance, contact their DSO who has a responsibility for transparency into welfare issues.

Added to this there are other very valuable support networks available in your local region. For additional support and services:

Army:

Deployment Services Officers:

Linton—Janine Burton

Ph: 0800 683 77 327

Burnham—Carol Voyce

Ph: 0800 337 569

Community Services Officers:

Waiouru—Carolyn Hyland

Ph 06 387 5531

Burnham—Cherie Mansell

Ph 03 363 0322

Papakura—John Furey

Ph 09 296 5744

Community Services Facilitator:

Linton—Lesley Clutterbuck

Ph 06 351 9970

Family & Community Services

Officer: Trentham—Marie Lotz

Ph 04 527 5029

Air Force Welfare Facilitators

Air Staff Wellington:

Lisa Macdonald

Ph: 04 498 6773

Base Auckland:

Deana Lye

Ph: 09 417 7035

Base Woodbourne:

Claudia Baker

Ph: 03 577 1177

Base Ohakea:

Bridget Williams

Ph: 06 3515 739

Naval Community Organization:

Ph: 09 445 5534, 0800 NAVYHELP

nib@nzdf.mil.nz

Local Chaplaincy Services

Unit Point of Contact

FOREIGN CORRESPONDENTS

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

News from Sinai — An Overview of the Op Farad Force Training Team	Page 4
Photos from Afghanistan — Personnel receiving the ISAF medal	Page 6
News from Dubai — Detachment Commander's Message	Page 7

NEWS FROM SINAI

AN OVERVIEW OF THE OP FARAD FORCE TRAINING TEAM

Staff Sergeant Kevin Garrick
Operations Instructor
1 Force Training Team MFO

Mission of the Force Training Team (FTT):

To shape and enable MFO training in order to increase the operational effectiveness of the Force.

Role of the FTT:

To provide training, training support, advice, coordination and validation to the MFO.

Wow, nearly half way already. Time has flown. I guess that is what happens when you are kept busy.

Sergeant Alex McKenzie and I are the two Operations Instructors working in the Force Training Team. The Ops Instructors are responsible for the instruction of a number of courses that include:

- Remote Site Commanders Course,
- Convoy Users Course,
- North Camp and South Camp Range Familiarisation Courses,
- Convoy Instructors Course, and
- Remote Site Instructors Course.

To date we have conducted the following courses:

- Remote Site Commanders (Courses run: 7 and 92 students qualified);
- Convoy User (Courses run: 5 and 52 students qualified);
- North Camp Range Familiarisation (Courses run: 5 and 54 students qualified); and
- South Camp Range Familiarisation (Courses run: 4 and 44 students qualified).

Other duties include assisting the SI and TWO with conducting Remote Site Snap Inspections and Operational Readiness Checks (ORC). The Snap Inspections involve deploying out to a remote



FOREIGN CORRESPONDENTS CONT'D...

site and conducting checks to ensure they are operating effectively in accordance with Force Directives.

The ORC involves deploying to one of the Sector Control Centres as well as a Remote Site and running through a scenario and evaluating their procedures. The ORC will generally involve a snap inspection as well.

To date we have conducted two snap inspections; FIJIBATT and 1 ORC for USBATT. By the time of publication we would have conducted an ORC for COLBATT as well.

In June, the FTT ran an exercise to evaluate the Force's Response Teams. It was a valuable exercise for all involved and a significant milestone for the Force.

Other tasks that the Ops Instructors complete include:

- assisting in evaluating North Camp and South Camp Muster drills,
- maintaining visibility on the ranges to ensure users are applying the rules and regulations, and
- providing advice and assistance to unit training.

The workload has been substantial so far. We were fortunate to have the last team stay on longer to help us through a very busy period. Having them stay on was invaluable and added to what was a great handover. Thanks especially to Danny and Nick.

The workload will not be easing off any time soon. The courses will continue and we have two big activities coming up in the form of the Force Driving Skills Competition and the Force Skills Competition. These competitions are highlights of the deployment for all contingents and are fiercely

fought. The Training Team designs and runs both activities which are expected to be of the highest standards. The last contingent both ran and competed extremely well so the pressure is on us to do the same.

While the workload has been busy, it has also been enjoyable and rewarding. There are challenges of course: instructing non-English speakers for example, but

overcoming these challenges makes the job rewarding and helps make us better instructors.

Finally, I would like to acknowledge our families back home. Your support is invaluable and knowing that the home front is sorted helps us focus on the job we do over here.

Congratulations to Captain Aitken and Sarah on their Engagement!



Sergeant McKenzie instructing on a South Camp Range Course for USBATT.



US medics applying moulage to a 'casualty' for Ex Hermes Respite II.

FOREIGN CORRESPONDENTS CONT'D...



North Camp Response Team providing security at the 'incident' site, Ex Hermes Respite II.



Staff Sergeant Garrick conducting a South Camp Range Orientation for USBATT.

PHOTOS FROM AFGHANISTAN



Private Dylan Kairau receiving his ISAF medal.



Lieutenant Colonel Matthew Weston receiving his ISAF medal.

NEWS FROM DUBAI

The below article was written for a regular newsletter to the families of the Op TIKI mission. This is reprinted with the permission of Warrant Officer Tony Fry, Secretary FSSC.

OP TIKI VII — THE DETACHMENT COMMANDER'S MESSAGE

**Glenn Gowthorpe
Detachment Commander
Operation TIKI VII
Dubai, United Arab Emirates**

"Salaam Alaikum! (Definition: Essentially means - peace be with you in Arabic and is the usual greeting here).

Greetings from Dubai, United Arab Emirates!

I hope that this newsletter finds you all fit and well back home in New Zealand. As the Detachment Commander, I thought it best that I get the ball rolling on the family newsletters prior to our regular and guest writers taking up the task throughout the rest of the deployment. The detachment has arrived safe and sound in Dubai and are now into somewhat of a routine and are beginning to feel acclimatized to the local conditions, as best we can. What follows is a short summary of our first week here in the desert. I won't talk too much about the heat, but then again, the weather section on TV1 and TV3 News seems to be stretching out to 30 minutes these days, so perhaps I will elaborate a little on the weather...

On arrival in Dubai on the 25th of July, the team were hit with a wall of hot air as they clambered off of

the Australian C-17 Transport aircraft. All of us instinctively made a beeline for the nearest area of shade, which to be honest, did not offer too much in the way of relief. The heat is constant, penetrating and very noticeable to a bunch of Kiwis fresh out of the NZ winter. The heat has been aptly described as 'having a hairdryer pointed at your face on full bore' or my favourite, 'the feeling that you get when you open the oven and that rush of hot air hits your face' However we describe it, it was the main topic of conversation for at least the first day or two.

Despite the heat, the weather appears to be pretty much the same day in, day out, 8/8 blue skies, big glaring sun and perhaps a slight breeze if you manage to get above the endless rows of

windbreak and shade cloth which is a prominent feature of the base. Noticeably, there is much less talk here about the weather as there are few variances. We have quickly come to realise that Kiwis are obsessed with the weather back home, due in part to the impact that the weather has on your daily and weekly plans, here – it is just hot, we don't even look at weather forecasts. Ok, I couldn't help it, here are a few statistics from Flight Sergeant Conrad 'the Metman' Ware = maximum daytime temperature in the shade has been 49°C, maximum temperature in the sun has been 66°C, minimum overnight temperature 27°C and the time to be out of the sun and in the air conditioning is between 1pm and 3pm. We have been told 'not to worry, it gets hotter next month!' Joy!

After the safety and induction briefs were complete, the team set about the task of unpacking the 20,000kg (20 tons) of freight that we had brought over with us. This task involved sorting the technicians



Sergeant Richie Vial stretches out the barbed wire while setting up the security fencing in the Kiwi precinct. The wet and dry bulb temperatures were constantly measured to ensure that the team did not overdo it during their first few days in theatre.

FOREIGN CORRESPONDENTS CONT'D...



Flight Lieutenant Win Walker (Logistics Officer) supervises the unpacking of the 20,000kg (20 tons) of freight into the Kiwi compound. Care is taken to check for damaged items that will shortly be critical to supporting the Maritime Security Operations flights the following week. The consignment of military equipment to a foreign country via a coalition partner's military aircraft requires detailed paperwork in order to pass the scrutiny of Air Load Teams, Aircraft Loadmasters and host nations customs requirements.

tooling and aircraft spares from the tents, camouflage nets and security fencing. From there, we selected our physical work periods carefully as the Heat Stress monitor quickly identified that physical activity during the middle of the day recommended a 10 minute work period followed by 50 minutes of rest in an air-conditioned environment – not a very efficient method of getting tasks completed. A 4am start and late evenings proved to be the best periods for setting up the Mobile Tactical Operations Centre (MTOC) and associated security requirements. The team worked well together, pulling on each other's strengths and chuckling at each other's stories and bad jokes.

Throughout the setup period, the team faced a number of challenges, many of which were driven by the climatic conditions and the fact that anything left outside tended to get 'heat soaked'. Once an item had heated up during the day, it quickly became a

'heater' adding a further challenge to our attempts at cooling the tents down to a human and computer compatible environment. The Kiwi No8 wire mentality was evident at every turn; we have air conditioning units shaded by old bunk beds wrapped in shade/wind cloth and equipment shelters lined with polystyrene sheets and plywood. It

has been great to see the team view every problem as a challenge, never giving up and willing others on in order to get the tasks completed. At the end of each day we were all looking forward to a cold shower and a good nights sleep – a cold shower has thus far been rather elusive, 33 degree Celsius water is about as cold as it gets!

On Saturday morning, the UK detachment organised a fun run with all proceeds going to the Blesma charity that care for limbless victims of military actions. Being a great cause, about 10 Kiwis joined the 5km run which kicked off at 6am. Flying Officer Emma Nicholls did the detachment proud by coming second in the ladies division, up against some very fit Army, Navy and Air Force runners. Well-done Emma! The rest of us placed well in the 'also ran' category with the finishing prizes consisting of a bottle of cold water.

Towards the end of our first week here, most took the opportunity to get off the base and visit a few of the local malls and sights. Two groups ventured to the beach for a cool dip under the beating sun, well



Flight Sergeant Conrad Ware guides SGT Jae Ekman while unpacking and setting up the various elements of the Mobile Tactical Operations Centre (MTOC) This mix of trades and skills deployed on Op TIKI VII has seen the team overcome various challenges thrown their way while setting up the MTOC and systems.

FOREIGN CORRESPONDENTS CONT'D...

Dubai had other plans for them. At the beach, the seawater was super inviting, however it did not have the effect that we were all expecting. The water was in fact warmer than the surrounding air, there was no relief whatsoever – in fact it was like jumping in a hot bath. With water this warm, we all wondered how could fish live in this sea? (We didn't see any fish, so perhaps they don't).

The first mail has arrived and with it some of the old favourites from back home, pineapple lumps, feijoa jubes and 'hundred and thousands chocolate' I guess each and every one of us will miss something different during the next few months so I am sure that we will see many more interesting items

being eagerly unwrapped when the weekly mail arrives!

I am happy to report that all of our people have arrived here absolutely 'fit for purpose' and have put 100% into each and every task and challenge that they have faced thus far. You can all be proud of your loved one, be it friend, son, daughter, Dad, Mum or whoever is over here. They are doing NZ proud and are all very motivated to achieve great results.

In closing, can I take the opportunity to thank the families and friends back home for the huge level of support provided to our Op TIKI VII personnel in the weeks prior to the deployment and onward from here as we tackle our task of

protecting New Zealand's trade interests. I acknowledge that for many, our minds were switching to 'deployment mode' as the days counted down toward the departure date. There were many last minute tasks and items to pack along with numerous pre-deployment readiness requirements. At times, these activities may have distracted us from the precious last minute family times with you all.

I hope that you are all making use of the support services and family based initiatives available to you and that communications between you and your deployed serviceman/woman are functioning well now that we have settled in.

Thanks again for your support.



Electricians, Flying Officer John Hunter (RNZAF) and Sapper Mike Stewart (NZ Army) have been kept very busy wiring and connecting the various MTOC electrical systems, along with emergency repairs to air conditioning, wiring and switching units around the Kiwi precinct.

DSO'S CORNER



Carol Voyce

Deployment Services Officer
Southern Regional Support Centre
Editor "The Bugle"

Last time I was in Bologna was in 2007 when we were making our way to Monte Cassino. I remember writing a Bugle contribution from there while waiting to change trains! It doesn't seem that long ago! At that time we were surrounded by a mass of Italian soldiers heading off on leave. Not one in sight on this visit.

It seemed quite fitting at the time as my late father had been in Monte Cassino with fellow NZ soldiers in the Battle of Monte Cassino and we were retracing his steps, and a time in history. That visit was filled with much emotion.

Since my last Bugle contribution we have travelled through parts of Slovenia, the Czech Republic, Romania, and Italy. We are now enjoying the gorgeous sights of Porto in Portugal; 12 days in Portugal will hardly be enough! We have had the most amazing hot summer weather and while you all 'freeze' at home, our biggest wish is for just one cool day!

Piran in Slovenia was planned for a much needed rest after some busy weeks and it surely lived up to our expectations. Apart from an amazing visit to the Skocjan Caves (and successfully navigating some 600 steps), we spent every day with a good book, perched under large sun umbrellas and with just several steps to plunge into the Adriatic to cool off.

While sad to leave this little slice of paradise, we were excited to head to Romania for what proved to be the most amazing experience and is now rated 'Highlight Number One' on our travel list!



Zarnesti Liberty Bear Sanctuary, Romania, is the home to 100 bears rescued from a cruel past life in a Circus, Zoo, roadside cages and Gypsy ownership, where they were exploited, poorly cared for and even injured. Since some were captured as cubs and have no experience in the wild, releasing them is not a safe option so they will spend the rest of their lives in this peaceful place.



Ring the church bells in the historic Church of the Assumption, on Bled Island, Lake Bled, Slovenia — Legend has it, that you must ring the bell three times and make a wish. Harder to ring than one might think!



Gorgeous Piran, Slovenia. A slice of paradise on the coast of the Adriatic Sea.

DSO'S CORNER CONT'D...

After a brief stopover in Bucharest, we headed to Brasov where we stayed in the most picturesque old town and were treated to five days of culture, sights and sounds of the 'Heart of Romania'.

We had a private guide/driver, his name was Florin, for all of our stay there and he proved to be the best. He was so passionate about his country and shared much history, legends and experiences with us and took us to places we would never have known about. We made a true friend here!

Our visit to Italy was brief to attend the wedding of a family friend's son. A Kiwi marrying a Welsh girl in Northern Italy! Somewhat unique but a wonderful celebration enjoyed

in 43 degree heat, including a meal of nine courses and an abundance of dancing and wine!

Portugal has exceeded our expectations, and we look forward to moving onto Lisbon and Lagos, before some time in London with the wedding couple and friends and then making the long journey home. I am anticipating a quick shopping spree if I can just stuff a little more into the bag!

I am writing this Bugle article ahead of the deadline as I can see the last days of our travels passing very quickly! Janine will be busy gathering the "Foreign Correspondence: for this edition and I will be home just in time for the final proof and mail out. It will

be great to be back on NZ soil again, but I am sure the memories of this trip will last forever. I hope too, that some of you are looking forward to homecomings as well. It will be great to be in touch with you all again soon.

***"Portugal
has exceeded
our expectations" -
One last photo to share
See photo over of
Porto in Portugal***



The view from the villa in Ponzano di Fermo, Northern Italy, where the wedding festivities took place.

DSO'S CORNER CONT'D...



Porto, Portugal, bathed in summer sun. Exciting, vibrant, steep and hot!

UPCOMING EVENTS....

20 September:
General Election

27 September:
Spring Festival, Linton Military Camp



27 September:
Linton Camp School commemorates its 50th Birthday

2014

DSO'S CORNER CONT'D...



Janine Burton
Deployment Services Officer
1 (NZ) Brigade

Welcome all new Bugle readers. We have a new team of Air Force readers with this Bugle edition, and I hope that you will enjoy receiving your copy each month. I would encourage you to consider submitting some personal messages too; this is a great way to keep in contact with loved ones overseas and for those who are on deployment, to send special messages to loved ones at home. They can be sent to either Carol or myself by deadline date (printed on the inside front cover page and at the top of the 'Personal Messages' page) and we will happily ensure they are included.

I have certainly had an active month with a number of overseas exercises deploying out of Linton, missions preparing and deploying overseas as part of their regular rotation cycle, along with preparation for support to another couple of overseas exercises.

By the time this Bugle is published Carol will be on home soil once more. She has been emailing me every couple of days from each new destination – what an amazing itinerary. I am looking forward to catching up with her at some point

over the coming weeks so I can hear more about their travels.

I met a lovely little guy last month, just seventeen months of age. Unfortunately, he was unwell enough to be admitted to hospital and his dad was away on an overseas exercise. His mum didn't have family close, and hadn't any support people (she believed) that she could call on. So in hospital late at night, alone with her little boy and feeling worried and isolated, thankfully she remembered to get in contact with me. Initially she just sent me a text, asking me to get in contact with her partner. Eventually we spoke on the phone and once I realised she was on her own, drove to the hospital to be with her; not that I could do anything that medical staff weren't doing, but just so she wasn't on her own. Happily, the outcome was very good – we were able to get a message to her partner to ring her; they were able to return home the following afternoon, and the little man is now back to full health. Even better, our mum made contact with another Army wife at the hospital with whom she has had contact since being home; she also had a visit from a neighbour when she got home offering her dinner and before that, had arrived with two mugs of coffee. A huge bouquet for this wonderful gesture – you are a

star! It just goes to prove that there are some wonderfully supportive people in our world and by reaching out to others, often just the gesture of letting them know that you are there, is all it takes to relieve what could otherwise be a lonely, worrying and stressful time.

We know it is very unsettling for our families when there are conflicts in the regions where our people are deployed but I would like to reassure you that the NZDF is constantly monitoring the situation in all our mission areas and puts a high priority on the safety of our people. For our families with loved ones currently deployed to Sinai, SNO FARAD has written to our families – this was emailed to Primary Next of Kin we have email addresses for, and posted to those we don't. If you have not seen this message, we have included it at the beginning of this edition, see page 3. One of our family members has also submitted an article on their worries/thoughts as well. While they have requested that their name be withheld, I'm sure that many will be able to relate to what has been written. You can read the article in the 'Keep the Home Fires Burning' section, page 17.

Thinking of you all, wherever you may be in your deployment journey. Have a great month.

**In New Zealand Father's Day is celebrated on the first
Sunday in September. This year we are celebrating on**

Sunday 7 September

**Don't forget to get your Father's Day Message in
the next edition of The Bugle, deadline 3 September**

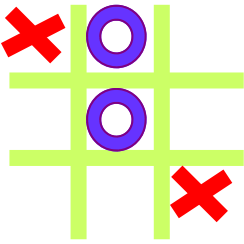
HINTS FOR THOSE DEPLOYED

Ways to keep in touch with your child



How smoothly your reunion with your child will go depends largely on how involved you stay in their lives during the deployment. Children need to know that they are important to you no matter where you happen to be. Below you will find a list of ways to help you keep a strong connection with your children.

When communicating with your children during deployment, keep in mind that it is important to send things to each child individually. They need to know you care about them, not only as "the kids, but as individuals as well.



Play games with your child through the email. Games like noughts and crosses, hangman, checkers, etc, work really well.



Share with your child WHY you must be away from them. Tell them about your job, explaining any military words that you may use. Let them know what parts of your job you like, as well as the more challenging areas.

If your schedule changes, inform your child yourself by mail or phone call. That way he learns he can depend on you for information, and the parent at home doesn't have to try to answer questions about the situation.

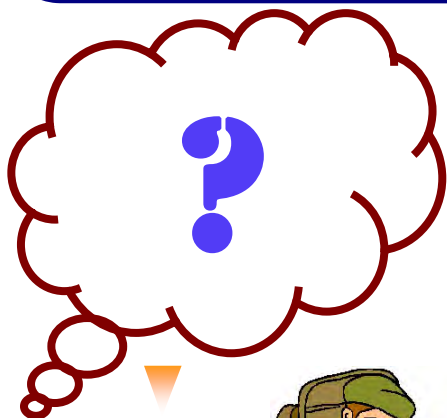


My favourite place is

I like snow. YES or NO.

My best friend is:

Create a fill-in-the-blank letter for your child to complete and send to you. Use some "Yes" and "No" questions and some that require a little thought. This is a great way to learn more about your child and keep the connection strong. Older children may want to create these letters for you to complete as well!



Have handy a list of questions or things to talk about when you phone your child from overseas. Keep notes so you don't ask the same questions with every phone call.



If you have an audio or video tape recorder, record messages to send to your child or read them a story from a favourite book or make one up. Put in a Bugle message. Ask them to record messages to you as well.

Create a crossword puzzle or word search page using a list of the things you miss about your child.



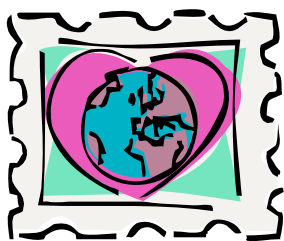
Keep up with the skills your child is working on (scout badges, musical instruments, crafts, foreign languages, spots, etc). Ask about their progress regularly and keep track so you don't always ask the same question.

Ways to keep in touch with your child cont'd.....



Ask your child to write to you reviewing new movies, videos, TV shows, video games, etc. Ask him/her to keep you up-to-date on how your favourite sports are doing by writing about them or sending newspaper clippings. Make plans to enjoy some of these things together when you return.

Correspond with your child's class. Tell them about life abroad (not just the "fun" stuff, foreign cultures, language, food sights, etc). Send them stamps, coins, newspapers, etc, especially if it relates to any places they may be studying. When you return, visit the class for "show & tell (in uniform). Share your experiences and answer their questions.



Keep a copy of your child's schedule for sports events, school programmes, field trips or other special events. That will give you things to talk or ask about in your letters, email or phone calls.



Send things to your child from different countries you visit such as gum, candy, stickers, placemats, etc. Things that kids like at home, they love when you've sent them from a foreign country! Seeing their favourite candy wrapper in Spanish is a thrill!



Older children might like to see newspapers, magazines or books from the countries you visit.



Send letters or cards celebrating occasions you may not usually note like St Patrick's Day, First Day of Summer, Labour Day, Waitangi Day or April Fool's Day. You can also celebrate events like the last day of school, learning to swim, passing a test, losing a tooth, learning to ride a bike, etc. Be creative!



Give accolades for extra help they've given, special accomplishments, or progress made in school or other areas. Mention it in your letters and phone calls. You can also send a certificate that you've made on the computer or better yet, one that you've drawn yourself".



Start making plans for home coming early. Ask your child to gather information about inexpensive things to do as a family and things that the two of you can do together.



SECRET CODE

Develop a code that you and your child can use to write letters to each other. This will make letter writing fun and different.



Tell your child often "I love you" and "I miss you".

Be sure your child knows how often to expect to receive mail, phone calls and email from you.

KEEPING THE HOME FIRES BURNING



While all is calm now, the past couple of weeks we have had a few challenges!

First off, the dog got out. Not sure how because we are always really careful about making sure the gates are kept properly closed. Luca is really great when we take him to the dog park; when he is off the leash he always comes when we call him, keeps coming back to check we are still there, then runs off to romp with his doggy mates or, his absolute favourite, playing in the water/mud. The wetter and dirtier he can get, the better he likes it. However, if he gets out of the section he runs for miles, never comes when called, is an absolute nightmare. So we are always careful about the gates. Maybe a caller to the house during day unwittingly didn't close them properly? Don't know. But this day he got out ... and it would be a day when it was later than normal for us getting home, so by the time we realised he was missing, it was dark and cold and wet. Immediate panic! He could be anywhere. We had no idea how long he had been gone or where to start looking. We checked with our immediate neighbours but no one had seen him; we drove around

the local vicinity - a long-shot but we had to do something. The kids were upset, I was upset, it was getting so close to the kids bedtime and we hadn't had dinner yet! *** dog! Luca has been micro-chipped and has a tag with my cellphone number on it, so surely if he had been found someone would have contacted me?

I finally convinced the kids that we had to go home. It took ages to get them calmed down, fed, and into bed. I made all sorts of promises that Luca would be okay and home again really soon. What else could I do? Then around 9.30 that night I got a call from someone who had found Luca! I was so relieved. He was about six streets away and had made friends with another dog and followed him home! Couldn't believe it. *** dog! As the kids were in bed asleep, I asked my neighbour who is an absolute gem, if she would come over and stay with the kids while I went and picked him up. He is such a friendly dog and had made himself quite at home. And he looked so pleased with himself too. Thankfully, the people who had found him were lovely and so kind. I gave Luca a really good talking to all the way home and I'm sure he understood every word!

The next morning proved to be as almost as chaotic as the night before. Timmy and Katie were so excited about Luca being home when they woke up; it took twice as long as usual to get them ready to get out of the house for school, daycare and work. *** dog!

Of course Dave thought it was all very funny when we told him of Luca's adventure! He tried really hard to be sympathetic, but I could see right through him. If I haven't said it before *** dog!

As for the other challenges ... when I think of it, this was by far the top of the list. We ran out of firewood, so had to arrange for another load to be delivered. Stacking firewood is not my most favourite past-time but feels great when it is done! The car was due a WOF, so had to organise that - a job Dave usually takes care of. Stuff like that. This was a month when I was really grateful for our lawn-mowing contractor - something I didn't have to do.

Denise

KEEPING THE HOME FIRES BURNING



Now it is time for me to stop worrying and go back to bed.

Good night.

Author's name withheld by request.

We are not Alone

It's 2am on Sunday morning. A 'nature call' has woken me up. It's the time of day when I guess quite a few people are lying in bed unable to sleep.

A lot of thinking, deciding and worrying goes on at this hour. In my case it is worrying.

You see, our daughter is deployed over in Sinai. We are very proud of what she has done with her life by joining the Army. She has seen quite a bit of the world, not only through the Army but also having her big OE with her partner.

The news reports out of Egypt, Israel and the Gaza Strip are very worrying for us. I have had a chat to Janine in Linton and she has assured me the situation is monitored 24/7. We have had correspondence from the Commanding Officer of the NZDF Contingent informing us of the situation in Sinai also.

The other form of correspondence we receive is The Bugle. I enjoy receiving my white envelope in the mail. The jug is put on, coffee made and I read it from cover to cover, often finishing with a few wet tissues to be gotten rid of.

The Army do a great job in keeping us, at home, informed of what is happening overseas. Those deployed are doing a great job and I know they would hate to have to come home leaving their job unfinished. I know there are 26 personnel in Sinai, only a few compared to Fiji, Australia and others over there. I am a parent concerned for just one of those 26. Please don't get me wrong; I care also for the other 25 as well. I am a caring sort of person.

I wonder how many other parents whose children have joined the Army, have been deployed and worry as we do. We are not alone. We have Carol and Janine who make themselves available to us at any time. They do a wonderful job in assuring us our loved ones are safe.

I know our loved ones will come home safe to us, full of stories of things they have done, places they have been and things they have seen. We will laugh with them wondering why we woke at 2am and worried about them.

They will have had fun. They will have done their job. They will have watched each others back and most of all they will have returned to us safe and sound knowing they are all loved.

Quote of the Day:



We look forward to the time when the power to love will replace the love of power.

Then will our world know the blessings of peace.

(William Gladstone)

AN ENGAGEMENT SURPRISE

Sarah Mark

As part of the negotiations around my partner, Captain John Aitken, being deployed to Sinai this year, we agreed on a holiday through Europe during his leave. I flew into London and then made my way down to Croatia, John took the bus to Tel Aviv and then flew in too.

Little did I know, while he was in Israel, John bought

an engagement ring and rung my parents to ask their permission. On day two of our trip, he couldn't keep it a surprise any longer. While we were out for a walk, exploring the capital, he suggested we ask someone to take a photo of us in front of a water fountain. I was a bit unsure about handing my camera over to a stranger and hoping this wasn't going to happen every time he wanted a photo of us together on holiday!

We found a family who didn't speak any English, but they looked trustworthy and we managed to communicate that we'd like them to take a photo. I stepped back and turned around and saw John down on one knee! And of course I said yes! It was a fantastic start to our two-week holiday in Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Turkey.

What a wonderful way to celebrate your deployment journey.

We send our happiest congratulations to you both. Well done John, Sarah was obviously not expecting the proposal. Thank you for sharing this with us. (Your Bugle Team).



PERSONAL MESSAGES



The deadline for contributions and personal messages for "The Bugle" is the first Wednesday of each month (**the next edition deadline is 3 September at 4.00pm**). Please note: All "Bugle" messages are to be sent to Carol Voyce, DSO Burnham (email: dso.burnham@xtra.co.nz)

From In-Theatre

Hi Gorgeous

Missing you! Always great to Skype and see your smiling face. You are doing a great job there. House and garden looks great! Time is going quickly and I will be back before you know it so make the most of the TV remote and the Soaps! It will be all Sky Sports again. Talk soon. Bradley.

Nearly Home B R V!

Can't wait to see you. Ted xx.

The W Clan

Thanks so much for your amazing support and for the great parcels. Real morale boosters! The kids drawings and art work really made my day! I'm the lucky one to have you all waiting for my return. Keep looking after each other. Skype again soon. Love you all. Mr W xx.

Hello Sharyn

That little A5 booklet has been perfect! The next handy hint for fellow travellers! Sadly the pages are now ripping out at a rapid rate but it's been fun. See you in August. C & A.

Hi Janine

Thanks for all your hard work. You have certainly earned an abundance of chocolate fish! It will be great to see you when the 'Inn' has a vacancy. Trust you got over your winter bugs. See you soon. CV.

Mac

Always good to hear from you! Thanks for taking care of so many things for us. Much appreciated. Looking out for that scarf! Will be

great to catch up on our return. Keep warm. C & Ab. Xx.

From Home

Hello Grandson

Was great to get your phone call and always reassuring to know you are well and enjoying your experience abroad. Keep safe and we look forward to your homecoming. Enjoying The Bugle and looking out for a message or two. Love Granny and Grandpop.

R

Hope all is well with you. We envy the fact that you are warm. Cold here and a few snowfalls to report but the kids still had to go to school. The holidays seem a distant memory but we all enjoyed the visit from the cousins and in-laws! Thinking of you and will get to that 'to do' list before you get back. Look after yourself and know we are thinking of you and sending all our love. W,K,O and G.xxoo.

Happy Birthday Young Man

Will be thinking of you on the 18th! Guess you are hoping to keep the day a secret from everyone so you don't have to buy cake and 41 candles! Ha ha! Not a show. We here will have cake. Apparently if you eat the whole thing in one go you can still say you only had one piece. Watch the post! Anyway have a great day in that far away place. Skype if you can. Love from us all.

Hey Babe

Missing you so much and counting the days until your return. Time seems to be dragging a bit. Maybe

it's because of the winter. Home by the fire! Basil has been digging up the lawn and yard and making a muddy mess in the porch again. I have been taking him for a run almost every night but he has so much energy! Work is busy and we met the deadlines which was great. Talk to you soon. Love you heaps. Miranda and Basil xxooxx.

Hey Hun

Last Bugle for us! Hope the next few weeks don't drag too much. I know we will have some ups and downs when you get back, but will remember the advice we got about that on our wedding day (wink wink). Looking forward to ticking the rest of the rooms off the list! Forever yours xox.

Hey SM

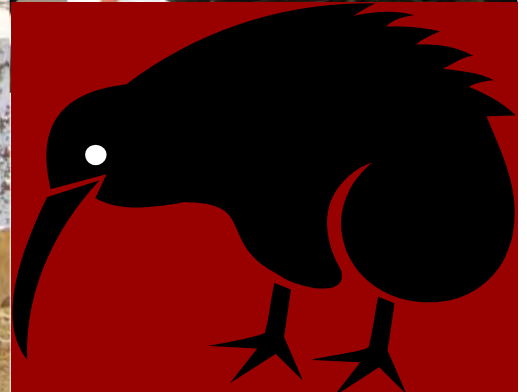
Spring seems to have sprung nice and early so at least we only have two more seasons to get through till we have you home and it feels truly warm here again. Missing your smile - the one meant just for me. Miss all the fun we have together and sharing everything with you. So very proud of you and the work you're doing, the difference I know you are all making to the lives of those around you. You are awesome! Tofu. P4u. Yours always X.

For SM

Ss5vten.

Hello there Maximilian

Just checking in on you Bro. Hope all is going well. A letter or email would be great if you can manage it. A present even better! All is sweet here. See you in a few months or so. Sis xx



Celebrating Issue No. 200