

Royal Air Force Football Association

Trustees Report 2015-2016



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**Chairman of the RAF FA
Gp Capt Rich Pratley**



RAF Football remains buoyant and the latest season has been another extremely successful one, both on and off the field of play. There is new blood amongst the Board of Trustees but a considerable amount of continuity, with a common sense of purpose about the direction the Association needs to travel in. Our efforts remain founded upon Excellence, Participation and Community & Influence, with examples of all 4 in every area of the Association. We continue to try and mature the running of RAF Football to make it as business-like as possible, both in terms of our approach to finance and more broadly governance.

At the Representative level, the U23s were once again exceptionally unlucky not to become Inter-Service champions, with a 2-2 draw against the Army following a 4-0 demolition of the Navy. Sadly goal difference once again meant the Army ran out IS winners. Despite the disappointment of not being crowned as champions, I was exceptionally proud of the U23 players and staff for the manner in which they approached the whole season both on and off the field. Fingers crossed for the coming year. RAF Women's football continues to develop very positively, with some outstanding team and individual performances throughout the season. While the IS fixtures themselves produced disappointing results, I sense this has spurred the team into greater efforts for the 2016-17 season and again our fingers are crossed for Inter-Service success. The Men had a mixed season, under-performing against the exceptionally high standards they set themselves in the IS competition, but with some notable individual efforts throughout the year, including at Armed Forces level. And a special note of thanks to FS Martin Wilkinson for his unstinting efforts in recent years across all three representative teams who stood down as Men's 1st Team Manager at the end of the last season. In all three sides, much to love and hopefully promise will be more fully realised in the coming season.

Participation remains the hallmark of RAF Football, by a considerable distance the Service's largest participation sport. RAF Marham were the RAF Cup winners, with a comprehensive defeat of the much fancied Cosford team. Waddington remain unassailable at the Festival of Football, held for the first time in Manchester with great success. A superb day of football, showcasing both known and emerging talent. As an Association we remain committed to promoting all forms of football, seeking to offer something for everyone.

Away from playing, coaching remains a key aspect of what we do, all under the watchful gaze of John Duff. Numbers and quality continue to impress, allowing not only those on Stations to benefit from the services of qualified coaches, but also into the local communities all over the UK where personnel live. Not only are we thriving as a County Association in our own right in the regard, but we are also stalwart supporters of many other County Association's efforts. A real success story and firmly aligned with the Football Association's objectives. Refereeing is buoyant and as I increasingly recognise after many years of playing, without their services the game could not take place! They are a talented bunch, several with very, very bright futures. All are hugely valued by the Association. And across Stations, Leagues, the inter-Group competition (White Cup) and the IS fixtures themselves, huge numbers of people are giving up their own time, despite exceptionally busy personal and professional lives – all for the good of others. A selfless bunch of volunteers. The RAFFA HQ epitomise this selfless commitment ably supported by the Chief of Staff. Sheila, Vince, John and Keith – I am hugely grateful.

One final thank you is to our sponsors. ISS, RAFA, RAFBF, Coolwaterdirect, SecureCloud+ and Thales, all provide huge support across the full spectrum of our business. Their continued engagement is pivotal for us going forward. I am similarly grateful to the RAF Sports Board (in all its parts) and also the Football Association for their support. Without their support, none of this would be possible either. As I said last year, I remain extremely proud to be the Chairman of such a vibrant and successful Association. We are committed to delivering in support of the Chief of the Air Staff's aims and objectives, using the 'beautiful game' as a tool to spread the word. And next year we'll be 100.....



**Director of Representative Teams
Sqn Ldr Damian Weir**

The Senior Representative Teams (RT) continue on their road to recovery and as predicted last year are another 2 years away until we reach the standard required to consistently win the Inter-Service competition. A significant change in management within the Men's Team will see a slightly different approach in the 2016/17 season and will look to build on the improvements made from previous management. Across all 3 teams one of the biggest challenges is the recruitment of players and ensuring that we have the very best players within the RAF playing at the top level.



The Senior Men's RT (SRT) under Team Manager (TM) FS Wilkinson went back to basics with a renewed emphasises on finding players that will not only be successful in the short term, but for the next 5 years. The scouting network during the pre-season produced in the region of 70+ players for the SRT and this did hinder the preparation for the IS competition as the final squad was announced a lot later than previous seasons. Although, this activity was vital in the overhaul of the squad to ensure the future success of the RT.

The build-up to the IS saw a reinvigorated fixture programme with a trip up to Hull to play East Riding FA (won 3-2) took the Squad out of its comfort zone, rather than playing the entire season at RAF Cosford. Operational deployments and exercises did impact the attendance and continuity of staff, which is never easy, but the the week long winter training camp allowed the Squad to consolidate the lessons learnt in the season to date and saw a strong 4-3 victory against the Prison Service. This season saw the re-introduction of an overseas IS training camp and this without added value as the diversions and distractions often seen within the UK were removed. The IS results were slightly disappointing with a 0-0 against the Royal Navy and a 2-0 loss against the Army, but should not detract from the progress and positive changes introduced this season.

The Ladies Representative Team (RAF LRT) is the only team in the RAF where females get to play competitive football. The season starts normally in August or September and continues to March when we play our IS fixtures against the Royal Navy and Army. This season the RAF LRT tested itself before the IS by playing numerous teams around the RAF Cosford and RAF Halton area.



The season started against a strong GB Police team who were preparing their squad for the Police Force's European Qualifiers was followed by two disappointing defeats to TNS and Wolverhampton Wanderers occurred which highlighted that despite dominating the fixtures scoring chances was a significant issue.

Over the next fixture we focussed heavily on this and we were delighted to host the Irish Defence Force's Women's Team at RAF Cosford. We were very fortunate to be able to travel to the Irish Republic two years prior and were disappointed to lose 2-1 to a strong Irish Team.

The LRT travelled overseas for the second year for a training camp held at British Forces Gibraltar. A fixture against the Gibraltar National Women's Team, who are a UEFA recognised team saw a convincing 3-0 victory. However, the highlight of the trip was when representatives from the LRT took part in 'Fun Football Friday' at Westside Secondary school in Gibraltar which helped to promote the bond between the RAF and Gibraltar FAs.



From the highs of the training camp, the LRT next experienced the lows of a highly disappointing IS campaign, beaten by both the Royal Navy and the Army. Next season starts in August and management team will look to new ways of improving the squad to improve on poor ending to the previous campaign.

The Men's Development Squad (MDS) shifted its focus during the season to broaden the emphasis on winning and developing mental toughness whilst still supporting and advancing players for onward progression to the SRT. In addition, the MDS continued to provide opportunities for coaching staff to hone their skills and identify strengths and areas for improvement in their own development.

The team performed well in the early part of the season although a 4 – 0 defeat to a strong, full time Kidderminster Harriers U21 side highlighted the need to maintain fitness throughout the 90 minutes.

Cpl Karl Milgate led the organisation of a hugely successful trip to the Liverpool FC Academy to observe and understand the preparation and application of tactics at the highest level. A return visit to RAF Cosford was facilitated by Sgt Paul O'Brien and gave the youngsters a taste of what the RAF can offer to elite sportsmen who don't quite make it in the modern game.



The season was rounded off with an emphatic 4 – 0 home win versus the Royal Navy and despite a great effort, a 1 – 1 draw away at the Army saw the hosts retain the Inter Service title on goal difference once again.



**Director of Sponsorship
Sqn Ldr Jon Smith**

As this Trustees Report outlines, RAF Football continues to be extremely strong across a broad portfolio of activity. Of note, it remains the largest participation sport in the Service, with thousands of personnel playing, officiating or coaching the sport every week. It has also acted as a key vehicle for community engagement and recruitment, through activities such as charity events, the coaching of youth football and visits to professional clubs. Finally, the various RAF representative teams continue to demonstrate levels of excellent on the pitch as they endeavour to return to winning ways.

To enable this level of activity, the RAF FA requires significant assistance. This support comes in many forms; from the army of behind the scenes committee members and backroom helpers, through to pitch side supporters and, crucially, financial assistance. The provision of the latter comes from many sources, with the National Football Association and the RAF Sports Board both providing the mainstay of support to RAF Football. However, to enable the Board of Trustees to develop the RAF FA along the pillar of Excellence, Participation and Community, additional financial support is required. This is where the RAF FA's commercial and charitable supporters are vital.

The RAF FA is extremely fortunate in that the 15/16 season saw one of its most health years in recent history in terms of financial support from sponsors. This money made a significant difference, as it enables a plethora of activity to be conducted, which would have been unachievable without this support. The organisations that provided this support, and the areas of the Association with whom they are affiliated are as follows:



The RAF Association.

RAFA were RAF Football's primary sponsor for the season, offering an extremely generous package, which included dedicated support to both the RAF Ladies Representative Team and the RAF Referees.

The former enabled the Ladies to undertake an excellent overseas training camp and the latter funded track-suites for over 100 referees, to name just a few benefits of this support.



RAF Benevolent Fund.



In recognition of the support that RAF Football provides to the RAF Community, the RAF Benevolent Fund has kindly increased its support to include the RAF Festival of Football (the largest Service sporting event in the UK) and additional support to the Senior Representative Team.



ISS.

Supporting RAF Football for the third consecutive year, ISS are the main sponsor of the Senior Representative Team and can often be seen in the stands cheering their team on. Hopefully this support will bear fruit in the 16/17 season with the reward of the Inter-services crown!





SecureCloud+

SecureCloud+.

The newest addition to the team, SecureCloud+ have kindly increased their support to the RAF FA to include sponsorship of both the end of season awards evening and the RAF Keith Christie Memorial Cup, thereby enabling the recognition of excellence and participation in the largest competition in the RAF.



Cool Water Direct

As the longest serving sponsor of RAF Football, Cool Water Direct's continuing support to RAF Football, in the form of funding of the RAF FA HQ Car, has been instrumental to the HQ Team getting around the country and enabling Association activity.



Thales.

THALES

Keen to invest in the future of RAF Football, Thales have provided much needed support to the RAF Men's Under 23 Development Squad, whose strong performance in the inter-services proves it has been money well spent!



This level of support is greatly appreciated by the RAF FA and RAF Footballing community, and I would like to use the opportunity to express a formal thank you to the financial supporters listed above. Without them RAF Football would not be the successful organisation which it is today.

FA Council Member's Wg Cdr Neil Hope MBE RAFR

The RAF FA is a member of the FA as an Associate County. This allows the RAF FA to take a full part in the running of football in England through its County FA Staff and through its sitting member of the FA Council. The Council is a body of elected members from the National Game Board, Professional Game Board and Independents. There are currently 126 Council members who sit 4 times a year at Wembley and deliberate and vote on measures such as changes or new rules and a myriad of other items. In addition, Council members sit on Committees which work on various areas of English football.



Wg Cdr Neil Hope has been the RAF FA Council member since 2008 and sits on 4 FA Committees and the National Game Board. He is currently the Vice Chairman of the Football Development Committee and also a member of the FA Youth, FA Disability and FA Sanctions and Registrations Committees.

In 2016 he became the first member of the Armed Forces to ever be elected as a member of the National Game Board. This is the Board representing Grass roots football that sits immediately below the Main FA Board.

He regularly represents the FA at fixtures at home and also abroad with the England Youth teams. He recently led the England under 18 squad visits for a double header in South Korea. In the last year Neil has spent 52 days on FA Duty.



Neil also runs the hugely successful Taking Football to Africa and Beyond Appeal which is based at RAF Shawbury. The Appeal began in May 2006 with the intent of providing aid through football. It collects unwanted and donated football kits and redistributes them worldwide. The Appeal also runs regular delivery visits to Kenya, in East Africa. The last visit in October 2016 delivered over 15000 items of kit to 53 schools and football clubs in the slum areas of Nairobi and in Gilgil on the Great Rift Valley.



He has also just completed a scoping visit to Nepal in preparation for a full delivery visit from 16th – 30th December 2017 (places available). Donations come from clubs across the country with recent donations received from England (FA), Manchester United, Leicester City, East Riding FA, Hampshire FA, Dorset FA and many clubs from Sheffield and Hallamshire CFA amongst others. Since 2006 the Appeal has delivered over 154000 items, including over 48000 football shirts to 53 countries worldwide. In 2016 the Appeal has delivered over 23000 items to 10 countries. Details on the Appeal are available at <http://www.royalairforcefa.com/shirts-appeal>



RAFFA Referees Committee's WO Graham Bielby

The RAF FA Referees have had a challenging season. The numbers of referees registered for 2015/16 at the respective levels are detailed in the table below:

	Level 1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Total
2015/16	2	0	2	9	27	16	41	0	0	4	101

The **Referees Committee** (RC) meeting each quarter under the directorship of Wg Cdr Garry Winwright assisted by COS, Sqn Ldr Danny McGinley has had to juggle responsibilities in certain roles due to postings and DWRs. However, the dedicated team continued to work in their respective roles to administer referees, aid development and promote best practice.



Award to Mr Tony Payne for his long serving commitment to RAF Refereeing as a Referee, Mentor and Observer.

Referee Development. Referee Development Officer, FS Nigel Owen coordinated 2 successful seminars in Feb and Jun each with approximately 35 - 40 referees attending and therefore maintaining numbers comparative with previous seasons. The summer seminar welcomed Premier League Referee Kevin Friend as the key note speaker who also helped present some of the annual awards.

Referee Courses. The RC held a New Referees Course at RAF Halton in Oct 15. The 4-day course covered all aspects of the Laws of the Game delivered in the new practical syllabus format introduced by The FA in Sep 15. The RAF benefitted by recruiting 16 new referees from this Course.

Mentoring. The mentoring scheme established by Sgt Kevin Saunby at the end of the 2014/15 season with the objective to appoint all junior referees with a mentor has proved to be successful. Additionally, referees advancing through the promotion scheme at Level 6 and Level 5 have also been mentored by the more senior referees. We have already seen the benefits of this scheme due to significant momentum that has been put behind it.

Assessor and Senior Appointments. WO Brad Appleby continued to operate in the dual role of Assessors Secretary and Senior Appointments Secretary. A successful Assessors Course in Feb 16 produced 5 additional personnel to be used for assessing the promotion candidates. Feedback provided to referees is essential in their development.

Referee Promotion. 2015-16 has arguably been the most successful year for RAF FA Referees in recent seasons due to the number of promotions to Level 3 (Contributory League) and Level 4 (Supply League). These achievements will hopefully encourage more to follow in future seasons:

Promotion to	Level 3	Level 4	Level 5	Level 6
2015/16	1	6	3	2

Appointments. The “Plum” end of season appointments recognise the consistent performance of the referees who are selected to represent the RAF FA RC at the showcase games listed below:

Inter-Services:

Referee - Kevin Saunby, Assistant Referees – Dan Cobbett & Mark Conway,
4th Official – Matt Hopton

RAF Cup Final:

Referee - Steve Hern, Assistant Referees - Dan Cobbett & Si Bickley,
4th Official – Gary Larner

RAF Plate Final:

Referee - Lee Suggett, Assistant Referees - Stu Wood & Nick Gill,
4th Official - Dave Gault

Sponsorship. The RAF FA Referees have benefitted from the 3 year sponsorship received from RAFA. Investment in the corporate image of RAF Referees has been enhanced through the purchase of new tracksuits for all active referees (displayed below).



RAF Referee of the Year 2015-16

The RAF FA Referee of the Year award is presented to the individual who has contributed the most to all aspects of the game both on and off the field. The 2015-16 winner has been instrumental in the development of junior referees as he continued to successfully coordinate the RAF Referees mentoring scheme introduced in 2014-15 whilst also supporting his local Boston Referee Association as the Training Officer.

Moreover his personal performance on field was rewarded with the appointment as Referee for the Inter-Services game, Army v Royal Navy but most notably a hugely rewarding season was capped with news of his promotion to Level 3 for the 2016-17 season. Finally, recent service promotion to Sergeant completes an excellent year for the 2015-16 Referee of the Year, Sgt Kevin Saunby.



Football Development Department (FDD) Mr John Duff



The RAF Football Development Department (FDD) was established in Feb 2006 with the appointment of the first full-time RAF County Development Manager. The department became an integral part of the RAF Football HQ when it was subsequently established in Oct 2006. Over the past 11 years, the HQ has become the focal point for everything to do with football in the Royal Air Force. The HQ continues to play a key role in the delivery of grassroots football across the entire RAF; it also plays a significant role in supporting our 3 RAF Representative Teams (Senior Men's, Ladies & U23 Development Squad).

The HQ is manned by 2 fulltime staff (County Secretary & County Development Manager) and 1 part-time staff (County Development Assistant). All three posts continue to be funded by the Football Association from their HQ at Wembley Stadium on the understanding that the RAF provides a permanent Football HQ at their largest MOB. The Royal Navy & Army Football Associations (Portsmouth & Aldershot respectively) has the same arrangement with the Football Association. In comparison to other RAF Sporting Associations, football within the Royal Air Force continues to thrive because of the long-term financial support provided by our National Football Association.

Coach Development

A total of 404 RAF personnel attended the 30 football related courses that were organised and delivered by RAF FA HQ during 2016 (see table below for full course details). Whilst this figure equates to approx. 1.5% of the current strength of the Royal Air Force, it is lower than in recent years'. The reduction in numbers can be directly attributed to the Football Associations 18-month review of the content of all of their coaching courses with the recommendations of the review being implemented during 2016.

The review withdrew 3 very popular coaching courses (FA L2 Coaching Award + FA Youth Award Modules 1 & 2). The 3 courses were replaced by a new 3-modular (mod1 = 4 x days, mod2 = 3 x days, mod3 = 3 x days) L2 course which students can choose to complete over a minimum period of 6 months or they can take up to a maximum of 3-years to complete depending on their ability and also their availability to attend the 3 modules. All County FA's have reported a drop in the numbers attending courses during 2016; I believe numbers will return to 2015 figures once individuals become aware of the high technical content of the new L2 coaching course modules.



Another key responsibility of the Development Department is to identify high calibre coaches and encourage/finance them to achieve L3 (UEFA B) coaching status which is the minimum requirement set by the RAF FA Board of Trustees for individuals to manage/coach any of our 3 Representative Teams. Whilst L3 is the minimum requirement to manage/coach our Representatives Teams, we encourage all our L3 coaches to progress to the very prestigious L4 (UEFA A) qualification.

RAF FA currently has 3 serving UEFA 'A' licenced coaches and 21 UEFA 'B' licenced coaches. During 2016, one of our 'A' qualified licensed coaches, who'd, had a very successful 3-year spell as the RAF Senior Rep Team Manager prior to his posting to Cyprus in 2013 was appointed Head Coach of the UK

Armed Forces (UKAF) Representative Team (formally Combined Services). He made an immediate impact in his new role when the UKAF Team went on to win the Kentish Cup outright by beating both the French & Dutch Armed Forces. The Kentish Cup is considered to be the oldest competitive football tournament in Europe.

Medical Qualifications.

RAF FA has a mandate to deliver first aid courses alongside our coaching courses to ensure all our coaches are suitably qualified to identify & respond correctly to serious injuries. In addition, RAF FA is also licensed to deliver the higher 2-day Basic First Aid for Sport (BFAS) Course. Under the RAF Sports Board Football Safety Management Plan (SMP) medics working with our 3 Representative Teams must hold the higher BFAS qualifications as a minimum requirement, most actually hold higher medical qualifications.

Safeguarding Children Workshops

RAF FA is also mandated to deliver a 3-hour Safeguarding Children Awareness Workshops alongside our coaching courses to ensure all our coaches are trained to identify the signs of possible child abuse and how and to who they should report their suspicions.

To renew their coaching licence annually with the FA's Licensed Coaching Club, all qualified coaches, must hold in-date Emergency First Aid and Safeguarding Children certificates, both certificates have to be renewed every 3-years.

Criminal Record Check

All RAF football coaches working with U18 players can now apply through RAF FA HQ to have a National Police Criminal Record Check (CRC) carried out on them. The 3 RAF FA HQ staff have been trained and licensed by the Football Association Child Protection Department to check and verify documents used by coaches to identify themselves during the CRC process.

Community Engagement – RAF Corporate Coaches Kit

During 2016, HQ RAF Recruiting & Selection (HQ R&S) Cranwell agreed to provide corporate RAF kit to all RAF personnel who attend a L1 coaching course with RAF FA. Research showed that the majority of RAF personnel who attend coaching courses do so because not only are they involved in running their Stn Football Clubs, a very high percentage of them are also heavily involved in coaching children in the local communities near their parent units.

HQ R&S saw this as an ideal opportunity to advertise careers in the Royal Air Force amongst children and their families nationwide. Although it's still early days, there has been some very positive feedback from our coaches re the public response and comments to their RAF corporate sponsored kit.



Football Courses Delivered During 2016

Course Description	Number of Days	Number of Courses	Male Students	Female Students	Total Numbers
FA L1 Coaching Course	5	4	66	2	68
FA L1 GK Coaching Course	3	1	12	0	12
FA L2 Coaching Course – Pre 1 Aug 16	6	1	24	0	24
FA L2 Specialist Trg Days – Pre 1 Aug 16	1	2	33	0	33
FA L2 Final Assessment – Pre 1 Aug 16	2	1	16	0	16
FA L2B1 Coaching Course – Post 1 Aug 16	4	1	13	0	13
FA L2B2 Coaching Course – Post 1 Aug 16	3	1	13	0	13
FA Youth Award Module1 – Pre 1 Aug 16	4	1	13	0	13
FA Youth Award Module2 – Pre 1 Aug 16	4	1	17	0	17
FA Youth Award Module3 – Pre 1 Aug 16	2	1	8	0	8
FA Basic First Aid for Sport	2	2	19	3	22
FA Basic Referees Course	4	2	0	0	0
FA Basic Referees Assessment	1	1	6	0	6
FA Safeguarding Children Workshops	3hrs	6	70	2	72
FA Emergency First Aid Workshops	3hrs	4	71	3	74
FA Coaches CPD Event	3hrs	1	13	0	13
Totals		30	394	10	404
*In addition - Number of Criminal Record Checks (CRC's) verified for RAF personnel by RAF FA HQ during 2016					51

*The RAF FA HQ Staff are licensed by the Football Association to check and verify proof of identity documents used by RAF Coaches and Referees to renew their Criminal Record Certificates every 3-years. This arrangement saves our coaches and referees from having to send their personal documents to the FA Criminal Record Department at Wembley Stadium for verification.



RAF FA Headquarters Mr Vince Williams, County Secretary

We have, in this past year worked hard to maintain our output in the delivery of courses, governance, organising and supporting all aspects of RAF football.

It is worth noting that we work with less staff than the other two Service FAs and as with everything that both the FA and Military do, nothing stays still and we continually face challenges, especially in using new systems for communications and administration.

The FAs Whole Game System (WGS) continues to improve as does our knowledge of the system and we hope that Units will start to use it more and more. It really is a one stop shop for affiliation, discipline, referee registrations and on-line payments.



At HQ we generally tend to use both FA and military computers and systems 50/50 and both are required for us to do our jobs, we remain grateful and dependent on the support we receive from both the FA and RAF Brize Norton.

Further to the 9% funding cuts made by The FA to all County Football Associations there has also been changes to the FA regional make up which has seen the RAF FA move from the London Region to the South East Region. This has provided us the platform to meet and share good practices with different County FAs which in turn opens doors for further Community Engagement.



This past year has seen us maintain levels of affiliation with over 80 Clubs and over 400 teams now playing under the RAF FA banner, we should never lose sight of the volunteer workforce who run these clubs and the leagues they compete in.

The main aim of the HQ and Board of Trustees is to provide opportunities for everyone to play and be involved in football. We see ever increasing traffic of emails and phone calls with all manner of queries and issues which underlines the fact that whilst being the most recent of County FAs, in terms of employed staff, we are now very much the central hub of everything to do with RAF football.

The RAF FA HQ staff now regularly travel to Wembley, St Georges Park, South East County FAs, RAF Cosford and RAF Halton for the majority of our commitments away from RAF Brize Norton and this would not be possible without the use of the RAF FA HQ car which is kindly sponsored by Cool Water Direct.

Moving forward, we have plans to launch a mobile phone App with the Associations Handbook and also to have an on-line partnership with Kit-Locker who are an official supplier for Nike so Units, Referees and Coaches can purchase RAF Football branded kit.

Don't forget all the latest RAF Football news, fixtures, results and match reports can be found on our website www.royalairforcefa.com



Director of Communications Sqn Ldr Garf Parker

The Communications Team within the RAF FA have matched resources to output throughout the year with support to the Representative Team, RAF Cup competition as well as broader FA news articles. Liaison with the Diversity and Inclusion Team was also conducted following the initiative for the RAF FA to support the Rainbow laces campaign where both the Ladies Representative Team and Senior Representative Team sported the rainbow laces during the Inter-Services period.

In addition to the regular updates on matches and events on the RAF FA Facebook page we have also seen several other newsworthy stories published on the main RAF Facebook page. Events such as the visit of the Liverpool FC Academy to RAF Cosford and creation of links with professional clubs such as Colchester United FC, Lincoln City FC and Shrewsbury Town FC has helped promote the RAF is a positive light outside of football.



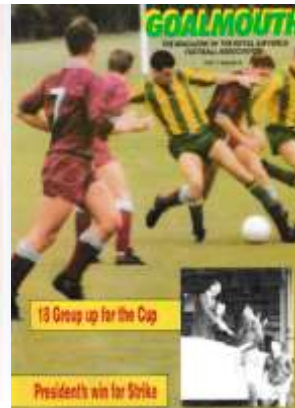
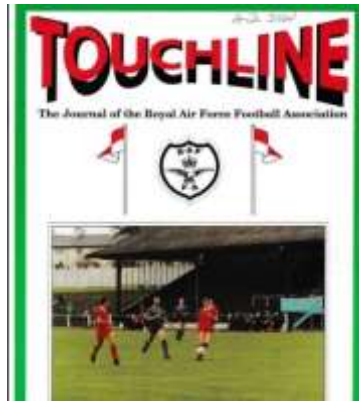
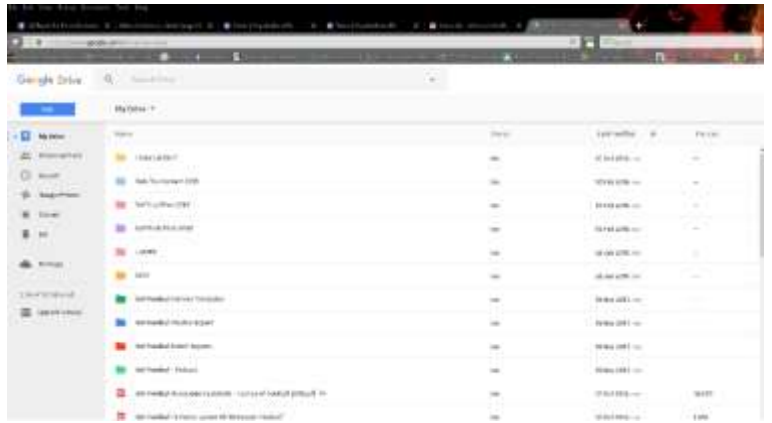
Posters and match advertising. Responsibility for production of posters has now moved to the Comms Team after years of support from RAF Shawbury Graphics Section. Whilst this creates an additional output it allows greater responsiveness and now the initial templates have been created it is envisaged that greater publicity of fixtures can be achieved with one method of expanding visibility to tap into the RAFALOs near to where the fixtures are being played.

The RAF FA continues to utilise our strong links with RAF Cosford Photographic Section who contributed significantly over the season with hundreds of high quality digital images. The printing and graphical support from the Air Media Centre has seen several high quality programmes produced in their masses for the key events of the Inter-Services and RAF Cup and Plate finals. This assistance greatly reduces the burden on the Communications Team but also ensures the quality and presentational aspects of each product are as high as possible, further enhancing the RAF FA's image.

Attracting volunteers has improved but the tempo of Service life often sees best intentions overtaken by short notice deployments and unavailability. This is something that we will continue to work around. Regular inclusion in the RAF News and articles in Envoy magazine have ensured the efforts of all involved are being captured for the wider audience. Twitter feeds allow the respective teams to get news out quickly and provide live match updates and allow the golden strand of information flow to develop through the various media outlets available such as the RAF FA Website, Facebook page, e-Bulletins and RAF News articles.



The Digital Archive has grown significantly over the year as historical images are added. Images from 2011 onwards and programmes, match reports and other new articles from 2012 are all now available online using the Google Drive program which includes the backing up of data using cloud storage. Development of accessible links to allow people to see what is available has allowed the sharing of some items on a view only basis. Additionally a number of historical items have been added following kind donations of literature for scanning or by provision of electronic versions of the originals.



At the end of the season the Director of Communication and Director of Sponsorship, accompanied by a couple of members of the Sponsorship Team attended the Patron's Lunch national event on the Mall in London. The event proved to be a good place to liaise with some of our sponsors but also to inform other guests from across the Commonwealth of the work that goes on behind the scenes in RAF Football.



Future Plans

- Expansion and greater access to the RAF FA digital archive
- Revision of the RAFFA Website
- Expanded use of the Google Drive to build upon the document archive and photo archive that already holds over a thousand images and documents.
- Capture of historical information will continue to play a part in the daily output of the Comms Team, with trawls for old articles, programmes and pictures initiated through Facebook, FA HQ and word of mouth to retired players and officials.
- Capturing of the RAF FA Veterans matches
- Establishing links with Manchester City to follow up on an enquiry at the European Diversity Awards in London.

Director of Football Delivery Sqn Ldr Martin Blagojevic

Football's status as the largest participation sport in the RAF endures and whilst the 11-a-side format has less prominence, in the wider context, grass roots football continues to thrive through inter-section leagues, the Festival of Football, small-sided games and more recent innovations such as 'futsal' and over-50s football. From a Station perspective what we continue to see is that those teams supported by a strong network of managers, backroom staff and OICs reap the rewards, and achieve far more than the sum of their parts (MoD St Athan reaching the semi-finals of the Cup competition was one such example!). High performing teams are inevitably those that are the best organised and supported by a chain of command that understands the importance of sport; I welcome potential OICs, Team Managers and support staff to test this theory in the forthcoming season.

As well as the many challenges faced in the 2015-2016 season, there has been significant success. The change in format of the White Cup from a regional competition to an inter-group competition is now established and we have received the endorsement of the Air Officer Commanding for the Competition. This year's 'Contribution to Grass Roots Award' was won by Sergeant Danny Bartley, a stalwart of RAF Football and someone who has represented the Service at the highest level and continues to contribute massively through station football and community engagement.

Fittingly, the inaugural 'Keith Christie Trophy' (formerly RAF Cup) was presented to RAF Marham by WO Christie's widow, Pat. His family were all in attendance and past and present members of the RAF Football community were delighted to have the opportunity to show Pat and her family the lasting effect WO Christie has had on RAF Football.

Regional Directors

Whilst the White Cup has been broken down into the various commands, Football delivery remains split by region – a format that continues to prove effective, with relationship management being key to this success. During the 2015-16 season, Sergeant Arron Smith was replaced by Flight Lieutenant James Maguire (North Region). The other regional positions remain filled by Sergeant Si Waldock (East), Flight Sergeant Andy Oakley and Sergeant Jason Kehoe (West Region).

The White Cup

Following the success of last year's competition, the inter-command format between 1 Gp, 2 Gp, 22 Trg Gp and 38 Gp endured. As with previous years the tournament represented an opportunity for OICs and Station Football Managers to nominate players from their Units that they feel were worthy of consideration for the RAF Development Squad or the Full RAF Representative Team squad, it also enable players to compete at a higher standard.

This season's competition was held between 21 and 22 September 2016 at RAF Cosford; each squad was well represented, giving the maximum number of players the opportunity to showcase their talent.

Day One

1 Gp vs 22 Gp

The tournament opened with 1 Gp in blue dominating the match from early on and never looking back once they were in front. However, it wasn't until the 44th minute that 1 Gp took the lead, with a defensive mix up from a corner for 22 Gp allowing the blues to take the lead. From there, they 1 Gp further extended their lead to 3-0, LAC Jon Wiles with the pick of the goals, a 25 yard thunderbolt in off the bar. 22 Gp did pull one back after pouncing on a loose ball from a corner before 1 Gp further extended their lead to 4-1 with 10 minutes left. An 88th minute penalty restored pride for 22 Gp in red, before 1 Gp sealed the victory in the 89th minute to confirm their place in the final.

2 Gp vs 38 Gp

An exhilarating first half with no less than 7 goals saw 2 Gp in claret race into an early lead, 2-0 within 8 minutes. When it looked like they might run away with it, 38 Gp in blue pulled one back on 12 minutes to make it 2-1. The goals continued to come as Man of the Match winger LAC Sam Mason set up a 3rd for 2 Gp on 16mins. On the half hour mark a quick counter attack allowed a way back into the game for 38 Gp as they slotted home to make it 3-2. Two more crosses from Sam Mason afforded 2 Gp a 5-2 lead going into half time. By comparison, the 2nd half was a tamer affair, with 38 Gp once again getting back in the game to make it 5-3 with 20 minutes to go, before Sam Mason got his 4th assist of the game, his cross converted to make it 6-3 to 2 Gp, for them to take their place in the final.

Day Two

3rd Place Play-Off

Finals Day opened with the 3rd place play-off at 1100hrs where 22 Gp were up against 38 Gp. A truly one sided encounter, 22 Gp were never truly at the races, with 38 Gp taking the lead after just 8 minutes with a daisy-cutter corner played into the box, right back SAC Dave Holt opened the scoring, striking the ball into the far corner. From there, 38 Gp never looked back, making it 2-0 just 5 minutes later after the 'keeper parried a shot.

On 19 mins, Cpl Will Riding runs through the 22 Gp defence unopposed, slotting home the 1 on 1 to make it 3-0. After 28 mins he was on the score sheet again, this time an audacious lob leaving the 'keeper rooted to the spot, the pic of the goals. On 35 mins, his hat trick was complete with a sublime finish making it 5-0 heading into the break. 22 Gp pulled one back on the hour mark with a consolation goal to make it 5-1, before 38 added another 4 goals with yet another 2 from Cpl Will Riding, needless to say, Man Of The Match, making it 9-1 at the final whistle.

The White Cup Final - <https://www.royalairforcefa.com/news/2016/sep/2-group-win-white-cup>

22 September 2016, 1330hrs saw The White Cup final kick off between 1 Gp vs 2 Gp. From the start, 1 Gp were out of the blocks quickly, creating 3 good chances and forcing 2 Gp's goalkeeper into a save. 2 Gp weren't outplayed and did create the odd chance, however, it was 1 Gp who took the lead on 29 mins, when SAC Phil Bright crossed the ball in from the left wing, for SAC Mike Braniff to fire home magnificently to break the deadlock and carry their 1-0 lead into half time.

Pressure from 2 Gp at the start of the 2nd half was rewarded in the 58th minute when a free kick was headed home by striker LCpl Robbie Priddle. From there it was all 2 Gp, on 69 minutes Cpl Michael Campbell scored a superb individual goal, beating half the team before rifling home into the top corner for a 2-1 lead. On 80 mins he clinched the win, pouncing on a loose ball in from 1 Gp's defence, rounding the keeper to slot home the winner, with it the 2016 White Cup.

Man Of The Match: 1 Gp's SAC Jon Wiles.



The Senior Representative Team continue to support the event by scouting players deemed good enough to represent the senior squad or with sufficient promise to warrant a place on the Men's Development Squad. As with previous years a number of players were approached following the games to gauge their interest in progressing to the next level.

One of the other highlights of the 2016 competition was the standard of football (particularly on day one); this was largely due to the full squads in attendance, but also the willingness for senior players (including those that represent the Combined Services) to participate fully in the competition.

RAF Challenge Cup and Plate Competition



The RAF Cup and Plate competition remains the premier football competition in the Royal Air Force and the Champions League format sees the top team in each group competing for the Cup whilst the runners up play in the Plate Competition. This year's competition saw involvement from the vast majority of RAF units and the ever-present link between a good management structure and success on the field was apparent.

The competition culminated in the RAF Challenge Cup and the Plate Final being played at Oxford City FC; this enabled the RAF FA to further develop our links with the local community at a venue that perfectly suited our needs both on and off the field.

RAF Cup 'Keith Christie Trophy'

RAF Marham 3-0 RAF Cosford - [RAF Cup Final Match Report 2016](#)

RAF Plate

RAF Benson 2 -1 RAF Leeming - [RAF Plate Final Match Report 2016](#)



A look ahead...

The big issues that face grass roots football within the RAF are those that face grass roots football in civilian football, namely: lack of participation, lack of volunteers and facilities. As part of the wider RAF FA's ongoing work to identify and address strategic priorities, the Football Delivery Area intends to look at the following work strands over the coming season:

- Maximising the opportunities to pluss at Grass Roots level
- Maintaining the level of participation in the Challenge Cup competition
- Maintaining links with the regional leagues and station management (through our Regional Directors)
- Working closely with the SRT to develop the utility of the White Cup from their perspective
- Engaging with current sponsors and increasing their involvement

**THE ROYAL AIR FORCE FOOTBALL ASSOCIATION
(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)**

**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (continued)
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST MAY 2016**

3. RESOURCES EXPENDED

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	TOTAL 2016/15 £	TOTAL 2015/14 £
a) Charitable Activities				
Executive Committee Costs	21		21	756
FDO Course Outings	15,455		15,455	12,732
General Activity Costs	15,393		15,393	30,919
Gross Salaries	8 95,484		95,484	87,778
Kit and Equipment Costs	23,418		23,418	17,116
Miscellaneous	663	1,000	1,663	453
Operational Costs	11,321		11,321	10,298
RAFFA HQ Costs	10,968		10,968	10,363
Referee Costs	7,536		7,536	5,612
Sponsorship	0		0	2,915
Ticket Sales	7,155		7,155	6,250
Tours	4,746		4,746	3,102
Training Camps	25,893		25,893	22,998
	218,053	1,000	219,053	211,292

4. RESTRICTED FUNDS

	Balance 01-Jun-15 £	Income £	Expenditure £	Balance 31-May-16 £
Bill Brown Memorial Fund	0	0	1,000	(1,000)
	0	0	1,000	(1,000)

Bill Brown Memorial Fund - ???.

5. DEBTORS AND PREPAYMENTS

	Unrestricted Fund £	Restricted Fund £	Total 31-May-16 £	Total 31-May-15 £
Blazers and Ties			0	170
Disciplinary Fines	10		10	175
Kit and Equipment 2015	9,361		9,361	1,575
Ladies & Seniors OV 16	13,394		13,394	0
Other	3,620		3,620	755
Prepayments	1,200		1,200	0
Ticket sales	535		535	0
	28,120	0	28,120	2,675

**6. CREDITORS AND ACCRUALS: AMOUNTS
FALLING DUE WITHIN ONE YEAR**

	Unrestricted Fund £	Restricted Fund £	Total 31-May-16 £	Total 31-May-15 £
Accruals	6,985	1,000	7,985	7,556
	6,985	1,000	7,985	7,556

**THE ROYAL AIR FORCE FOOTBALL ASSOCIATION
(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)**

**STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST MAY 2016**

Incorporating income and expenditure account

	Notes	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	TOTAL 2016/15 £	TOTAL 2015/14 £
INCOME					
Income from Generated Funds					
Activities in furtherance of Charity's objects		231,264	0	231,264	223,141
Income from Investment		29	0	29	24
Other Income		0	0	0	200
TOTAL INCOME		231,293	0	231,293	223,365
EXPENSES					
Expenditure on Raising Funds		925		925	226
Expenditure on Charitable Activities	3a	218,053	1,000	219,053	211,292
Charitable Expenses		1,380	0	1,380	1,406
TOTAL EXPENSES		220,358	1,000	221,358	212,924
NET INCOMING/ (OUTGOING)		10,935	(1,000)	9,935	10,441
Funds Brought Forward		31,301	0	31,301	20,860
TOTAL FUNDS CARRIED FORWARD		42,236	(1,000)	41,236	31,301

Movements on all reserves and all recognised gains and losses are shown above. All of the organisation's operations are classed as continuing.

The notes on pages 7 to 10 form part of these financial statements.

**THE ROYAL AIR FORCE FOOTBALL ASSOCIATION
(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)**

**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (continued)
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST MAY 2016**

7. TRANSACTIONS BY ACTIVITY

	General	Operational Costs	FA Grants	Total 31-May-16
Income	134,040	11,500	85,753	231,293
Expenses	180,237	8,347	32,774	221,358
	(46,197)	3,153	52,979	9,935

8. STAFF COSTS AND NUMBERS

	31-May-16 £	31-May-15 £
Gross Wages and Salaries	86,928	87,778
Employer's National Insurance Costs	8,556	8,175
	95,484	95,953

Employees who were engaged in each of the following activities:

	31-May-16 TOTAL	31-May-15 TOTAL
Activities in furtherance of organisation's objects	3	3

No employees received emoluments in excess of £60,000. Staff are paid through the PAYE system.

9. DIRECTORS AND OTHER RELATED PARTIES

No payments were made to directors or any persons connected with them during this financial period. No material transaction took place between the organisation and a trustee or any person connected with them.

10. RISK ASSESSMENT

The Directors actively review the major risks which the charity faces on a regular basis and believe that maintaining the free reserves stated, combined with the annual review of the controls over key financial systems carried out on an annual basis will provide sufficient resources in the event of adverse conditions. The Directors have also examined other operational and business risks which they face and confirm that they have established systems to mitigate the significant risks.

11. RESERVES POLICY

The directors have considered the level of reserves they wish to retain, appropriate to the charity's needs. This is based on the charity's size and the level of financial commitments held. The directors aim to ensure the charity will be able to continue to fulfil its charitable objectives even if there is a temporary shortfall in income or unexpected expenditure. The directors will endeavour not to set aside funds unnecessarily.

12. PUBLIC BENEFIT

The charity acknowledges its requirement to demonstrate clearly that it must have charitable purposes or 'aims' that are for the public benefit. Details of how the charity has achieved this are provided in the Trustees report. The Trustees confirm that they have paid due regard to the Charity Commission guidance on public benefit before deciding what activities the charity should undertake.

**THE ROYAL AIR FORCE FOOTBALL ASSOCIATION
(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)**

**BALANCE SHEET
AS AT 31ST MAY 2016**

	Note	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	31-May-16 Total £	31-May-15 Total £
Fixed Assets					
Tangible assets	2	0	0	0	0
Current Assets					
Debtors	5	28,120	0	28,120	2,675
Cash at bank and In hand		21,101	0	21,101	36,182
Total Current Assets		49,221	0	49,221	38,857
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	6	6,985	1,000	7,985	7,556
NET ASSETS		42,236	(1,000)	41,236	31,301
Funds of the Charity					
General Funds		42,236	0	42,236	31,301
Restricted Funds		0	(1,000)	(1,000)	0
Total Funds		42,236	(1,000)	41,236	31,301

The directors are satisfied that for the year ended on 31st May 2016 the charitable company was entitled to exemption from the requirement to obtain an audit under section 477 of the Companies Act 2006 and that no member or members have required the company to obtain an audit of its accounts for the year in question in accordance with section 476 of the Act. However, in accordance with section 145 of the Charities Act 2011, the accounts have been examined by an Independent Examiner whose report appears on page 11.

The director(s) acknowledge their responsibility for complying with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006 with respect to accounting records and the preparation of accounts.

The accounts have been prepared in accordance with the provisions in Part 15 of the Companies Act 2006 applicable to companies subject to the small companies regime and in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard for Smaller Entities (effective April 2008).

The directors acknowledge their responsibility for ensuring that the company keeps proper accounting records which comply with section 386 of the Act and for preparing financial statements which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the company as at the end of the financial year and if its profit and loss for the financial year in accordance with the requirements of sections 394 and 395 and which otherwise comply with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006 relating to accounts, so far as applicable to the company.



The Royal Air Force Football Association (a company limited by guarantee registered in England and Wales) Company no. 06641135

**Registered Office: Alexandra House, St Johns Street, Salisbury, Wiltshire SP1 2SB.
HQ Offices: RAF FA, RAF Brize Norton, Carterton, Oxfordshire, OX18 3LX**

Registered Charity no. 11 29 4 60.

Royal Air Force Trustee Report 2015-2016.

Produced by Sqn Ldr Garf Parker MCM1 GCGI RAF