



# The Air League Newsletter

Issue 2: March/April 2010

## DEFENCE: HAVE YOUR SAY

**T**he Government's Defence Green Paper, entitled "Adaptability and Partnership: Issues for a Strategic Defence Review" was published on 3 February. It arrived in the midst of renewed press speculation concerning the survival of three separate British Armed Forces, and as defence spending continues to shrink as a proportion of Gross Domestic Product. With a full-blown counter-insurgency war now being fought in Afghanistan, the wear and tear on equipment, not to mention human cost, is now having a deep impact on UK defence, slewing procurement decisions and the operational focus away from other national and international commitments. Expanding demands on the defence and contingency budgets resulting from conducting and supporting this warfighting into its fifth year has brought about the need to conduct a thorough Strategic Defence Review to re-examine the future shape and role of the forces. This cannot be undertaken until after the next general election but in the meantime the Green Paper has been released to set out the questions that the SDR will have to answer. The government hopes that it will encourage and inform public debate and has stated that it is interested in hearing the thoughts and views

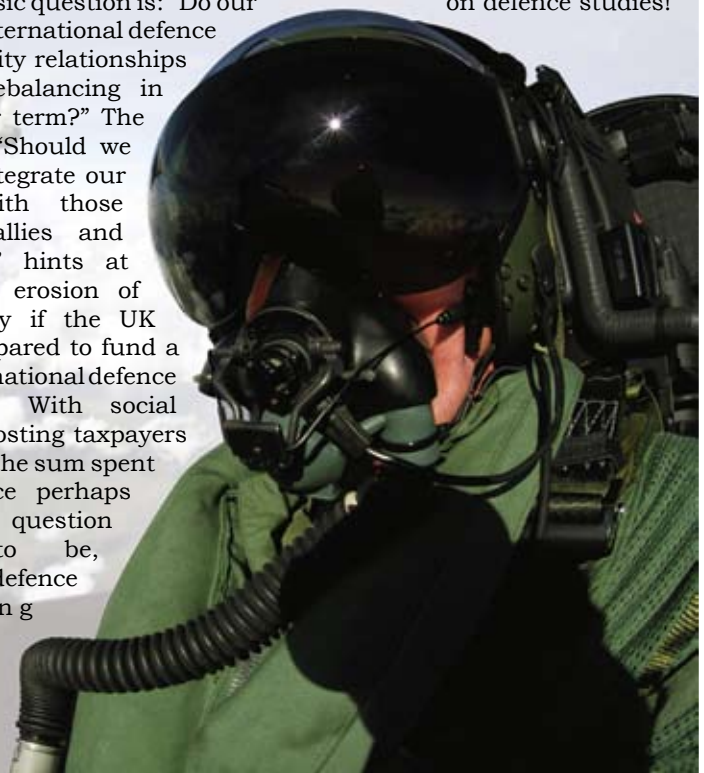
of members of the public and interested parties concerning the key questions as outlined in the document.

Some of the questions arising in the Green Paper include: "Given that domestic security cannot be separated from international security, where should we set the balance between focusing on our territory and region and engaging threats at a distance?" Another is: "What approach should we take if we employ the Armed Forces to address threats at a distance?" A more basic question is: "Do our current international defence and security relationships require rebalancing in the longer term?" The question "Should we further integrate our forces with those of key allies and partners?" hints at a further erosion of sovereignty if the UK is not prepared to fund a balanced national defence capability. With social benefits costing taxpayers ten times the sum spent on defence perhaps another question ought to be, "Why is defence spending given such a low priority when

nobody can predict what tomorrow's threats will be?"

Readers' views and comments can be sent by e-mail to: [MoDDefence-GreenPaper@mod.uk](mailto:MoDDefence-GreenPaper@mod.uk) or via <http://defenceconsultations.org.uk/>

The consultation period will close on 1 April 2010 and MoD has said that all comments will be considered as part of the future SDR process. Hopefully MOD is also consulting independent academic and service organisations that focus on defence studies!



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# MESSAGE FROM THE NEW CHAIRMAN, KEITH MANS

**I**t is a great privilege to take over from Sir Brian Burridge as the new Chairman of the Air League. My involvement with the League goes back to 1993 when the then Chairman, Sir Michael Knight, asked me to join the Council. Soon afterwards the Air League took over the administration of the newly formed Parliamentary Aerospace Group and in the process re-established our previous strong links with Parliament. Since then the Parliamentary Aerospace Group and latterly the Associate Parliamentary Aerospace Group (APAG) has arranged large numbers of meetings in Parliament addressed by Ministers and Captains of Industry which have been particularly valuable to our corporate members. It is also worth

**mentioning that we now have over 200 parliamentary members of the Air League, a number of whom come along to these meetings. It is my intention to continue and improve this series of meetings in the future.**

Alongside the work we do in parliament our other success over the past ten years is the increase in the number of flying and engineering Scholarships we award each year, mainly to younger people and chiefly to help them become pilots. Sir Michael Marshall, our past Chairman and President, contributed greatly to this success and I would like to take this opportunity to personally congratulate him on his well deserved Knighthood.

Over the next two years as well as maintaining our links with parliament I will be giving my wholehearted

support to Andy Perkins and his team in expanding the scope of our youth activities. In this context I will also be examining whether the Air League can act as a catalyst for the creation of an Aerospace Academy for 11-18 year olds under the Government's academy programme – a programme which incidentally is supported by the main opposition party.

Finally, I am very much looking forward to working with Jane Middleton, our new Honorary Treasurer, and our new Director Andy Brookes. Andy and I have known each other rather longer than either of us would care to admit and I know that he will be giving us a much needed higher public profile.

## Farewell to Eddie Cox

Eddie Cox retired as Director of the Air League on 30 November 2009. In the one-hundred-year history of the Air League, Eddie was the longest serving Director and he helped the Air League Educational Trust to expand significantly its financial base from virtually zero fifteen years ago to a current level of just over £1M. He skilfully managed the Flying Scholarship Programme and it is estimated that during his time as Director, over one thousand young people have benefited from Air League scholarships. The League is enormously grateful to Eddie and his wife Shirley for all their enthusiasm and hard effort, and we hope to see them at League events over the coming years.

The Air League was delighted that past President Sir Michael Marshall CBE DL was Knighted in the New Year's Honours List for his services to business, charity and the local community. Hearty congratulations and richly deserved.

*RIGHT: Sir Michael Marshall CBE DL*



The Director, Andrew Brookes, receiving the CP Robertson Trophy from Air Marshal Simon Bryant, Deputy Commander in Chief, Personnel. The Trophy is named after the former Director of Air Ministry PR and is awarded for the best interpretation of the Royal Air Force to the public, either during the previous twelve months or through constant effort over a number of years.

### UK AVIATION - WORTH FIGHTING FOR

**The Air League has always been focused on campaigning for and supporting aviation in Great Britain, whether this be aimed at retaining a strong air capability in defence, maintaining a thriving and innovative manufacturing industry or operating commercial air services around the world. But our supportive efforts have subsequently extended well beyond these general areas of interest to include the encouragement of young people to take a greater interest in flying and engineering, helping them on their way towards training for an aviation career, and providing wider recognition for particularly outstanding examples of individual achievement in aeronautical activity. For over 100 years this has motivated the Air League and led to its continued relevance into the 21st Century, even though the aerospace environment has changed beyond all recognition over the last two decades since the end of the Cold War, following a rise in expeditionary warfighting and increased lobbying from anti-aviation interests.**

The tremendous contribution of the UK aerospace industrial sector to the country's recent history, and its national wealth, should need little promotion to a wider general public, who happen also to be the electors of our governments, present and future. But the reality in truth is somewhat different. After years of media and political indifference concerning the issues surrounding the safeguarding of our national aerospace capability, it is

hardly surprising that there is little public awareness of what is in danger of being lost. If the extent of the threats facing Britain's air defences, aerospace manufacturing base and leading position as the air hub for Europe were to be more widely appreciated, there may be more of an incentive for our political decision-makers to give aviation a higher priority. As it is today, as reflected in media coverage and political debate, the UK public is perceived to be more concerned with domestic topics such as crime, education, retail trends, celebrity gossip and sport. Other than war news from Afghanistan, serious debate on defence, including the question of updating the nuclear deterrent, hardly gets a mention.

And when it comes to air travel, there is little linkage in the public mind between airport delays and the shortage of runways. Plenty of people want to fly abroad cheaply and to as many destinations as possible, but opinion polls suggest that despite growing demand, they don't want to see airports expanded! Politicians seem unwilling to speak out in favour of either increased defence spending or expanded aviation infrastructure. It was a New Labour government that introduced legislation which all but eliminated any national veto over ownership of major UK owned companies, so it is more than a little disingenuous for ministers to now express concern when jobs are threatened within companies which have been transferred to foreign decision-makers.

There is now little scope for trying to define how "British" major companies actually

remain, as even those still registered in the UK often have a majority of shares held by overseas shareholders. But unless national industrial and transport policy, not to mention defence, is to be completely abandoned to international decision-makers in Brussels or the USA, there must be scope to try and bring back into the political mainstream the idea of promoting, where possible, aviation policies that are vital to the UK long term interest. But who is interested in providing such a lead?

This is not a question that has to be asked in any other country with a strong aviation sector, but for some curious reason successive British governments have allowed the importance of aviation to drift off the screen. Thanks to Lord Drayson's largely personal commitment and drive, official spending on space research is due to receive an increase and a shift upward in priority, which is excellent news, though the actual public funding is still relatively small, compared to elsewhere in Europe, with reliance on increased commercial partnering to deliver the new policy. But some very curious financial decisions are still emerging from No 10 Downing Street. Why, for example, is the debt-laden UK taxpayer generously pledging the gift of millions of pounds towards the cost of reducing India's carbon emission footprint when that nation is spending over £3billion of its own money on a programme to launch Indian astronauts into space? It is surely time to start putting our own aerospace capabilities and interests first, but this requires the political and business will to make it happen.

**B**ritain's air power is suffering an accelerating run-down as more and more core operational capabilities are cut back as a result of insufficient funding. The increasing pace of war fighting in Afghanistan is already hastening the end of other operational activities that have, until now, provided the RAF with a well balanced and highly flexible set of defence assets that allow for unexpected eventualities. Spare operational "fat" has long been stripped out and the latest cuts go down to the bone. Even allowing for enhanced performance through new technology and multi-role tasking, that essential balance and flexibility is under threat as never before – and the danger is that the long awaited Strategic Defence Review will cut capabilities even further, rather than restoring funding to a level more appropriate to military responsibilities that go with being a "Premier League" player in global defence.

## Farewell Mighty Hunter - for now

For the first time since the 1920s, from later this month the Royal Air Force will no longer operate its own long-range maritime patrol aircraft. It will become the only major air force in the world with significant maritime responsibilities not to have any dedicated trans-oceanic anti-submarine, surface strike and search and rescue capability. The whole Nimrod MR2 fleet is about to be withdrawn two years earlier than planned to save money and until just nine Nimrod MRA4s become operational, starting in 2012, the UK will have to rely on aircraft provided by other nations to fill this gap, with the hard-pressed C-130 retained as an emergency platform for sea search and dropping rescue equipment. Against strong Atlantic headwinds a C-130 searching in mid-Atlantic, and dependent on air-to-air refueling to extend its endurance, might struggle to maintain 200mph



*ABOVE - Until the Nimrod MRA4 enters service in 2012 the RAF will have no maritime patrol capability.*

ground speed – less than half the speed of a Nimrod. Also, the C-130s do not have any anti-submarine sensors or weapons, unlike the Nimrods, which can detect nuclear submarines and also "sniff out" emissions from conventional submarines and surface ships, including small ships in distress, against extensive sea "clutter" on their sophisticated Searchwater radar systems. US Coastguard C-130s in contrast, are fitted with UK-built Selex Galileo lightweight AESA search radars.

The rundown of the Nimrod force in its primary maritime role comes despite the reputation of its squadrons as world-leading in their specializations which frequently won them the coveted Fincastle Trophy competed against MR teams from the USA, Canada, Australia and New Zealand. At its peak, some 40 Nimrods were in MR service based at St Mawgan, Kinloss, Malta and Singapore, and frequently took part in global deployments. In recent times they have been used as ISTAR platforms in the Middle East. Eleven more, intended for AEW duties, were later scrapped in favour of the E3 AWACS. Within the former 18 Group RAF Strike Command, Nimrods carried forward the skills and traditions of Coastal Command, which played a key role protecting Britain's shipping lanes in the Second World War and later Cold War period. The Nimrod MR2's early demise, despite increases in pirate attacks on commercial

shipping, drug smuggling, threats to offshore oil and gas supplies and a growing submarine threat, leaves a gaping capability gap. And how are the redundant crews going to retain their skills while waiting for the MRA4? As the RAF's current website proclaims, "As a maritime nation, protection of the sea lanes is also of paramount importance, a role fulfilled by the Nimrod fleet."

This decision graphically illustrates how the defence funding crisis is already forcing cuts in capabilities previously regarded as vital to UK national defence. Faced with the choice of increasing defence spending or



*ABOVE - The F-35 joint Strike Fighter land-based and carrier operations,*

# LINE GET THINNER

simply opting out of whole areas of defence activity, it seems the government has embarked on the latter path. The forthcoming SDR may be the tool that implements this as official policy.

## Shifting priorities

The wars in Iraq and Afghanistan have brought the RAF's transport and helicopter support assets into the spotlight, and at long last, extra Chinook and Merlin helicopters have been ordered, with the new AW159 Wildcats in production to replace existing Lynx, and Pumas being updated. The expansion of the C-17 fleet to seven aircraft is also a welcome move, though the A400M programme, which was destined to deliver 25 large tactical transports, replacing the older Hercules C-130Ks, remains in some doubt, and if it survives at all may well see a major reduction in numbers, and a scaled-back operational performance.

To pay for these extra transport and helicopter assets, the RAF has taken a big hit in the strength and overall firepower available from its fast jet front-line aircraft, including the temporary abolition of its long-range maritime capability. A comparison of RAF



ABOVE - The Air Tanker PFI contract will supply Airbus A330 tanker- transports to replace the ageing TriStars and VC-10s.

squadron strength today and when the government came to power will show the drastic reductions that have been made in recent years. Many Urgent Operational Requirements have brought forward new weapons and equipment upgrades needed for operating in a hostile operational environment, but many of these are not fully funded and continued long-term use comes at a price of cutbacks elsewhere. Also, vital performance upgrades to the Typhoon fleet, including AESA radar and Meteor BVR missiles, have been postponed and are struggling for funding, even though Typhoon may end up being the sole multi-role combat aircraft

until the F-35 arrives. Even this is threatened with a halving of orders to around 70 instead of the planned 150. There is a real danger that the new aircraft carriers will be seriously short of aircraft if numbers of F-35s are slashed.

What the RAF has in service today is world-class and second in capability only to the US forces, with arguably the best-trained and experienced air and ground crews in NATO. But halting the downward decline in numbers of combat aircraft may be crucial if it is to be able to continue as a genuine global air power – and perhaps will be the key if it is to survive as a separate Service.



is needed to replace the Harrier for but how many will be ordered?

### RAF Air Power

(No of Operational Air Defence/Offensive Support fast jet squadrons and types – including maritime patrol but excluding evaluation, and OCU training/reserve squadrons)

1997	2010
<b>Air Defence</b> 6 x Tornado F3	<b>Air Defence</b> 2 x Typhoon (1 multi-role) 1 x Tornado F3
<b>Offensive Support</b> 3 x Harrier 3 x Jaguar 8 x Tornado GR	<b>Offensive Support</b> 1 x Harrier 7 x Tornado GR
<b>Maritime Patrol</b> 3 x Nimrod	<b>Maritime Patrol</b> -
<b>Total 23 Squadrons</b>	<b>Total 11 squadrons</b>

# INDUSTRY NEWS

- Support services company VT Group has won the competition to provide support to the RAF's fleet of Tucano training aircraft. The Tucano In-Service Support (TISS) contract is valued at up to £35 million for an initial period of four years with two further one-year options. Service delivery will start in April 2010. Under the terms of the contract, VT will guarantee the availability of the Tucano fleet of over 50 aircraft to deliver between 12,000 and 14,500 hours of flying training every year. VT has supported the Tucano since the aircraft was first introduced into RAF service with the activity including engineering support and maintenance, flight line services and logistics. Most of the activity is based at RAF Linton-on-Ouse in North Yorkshire where Tucanos are used to train fast jet pilots before they progress onto the Hawk fast jet trainer.

- A|D|S, the UK's Aerospace, defence and security trade organisation has welcomed the publication of the Space Innovation and Growth Team (IGT) report into the future of the UK space industry. The UK space sector commands 6 per cent of the global market, supports 68,000 jobs, generates £6.5 billion per year for the UK economy and has experienced steady growth of 9 per cent per annum for several years, including during the current recession. A|D|S intends to assist in supporting the Space IGT in a similar manner to that used with the successful Aerospace IGT. Ian Godden, Chairman of A|D|S, said: "Space is one of the most exciting potential growth sectors for the future of our economy. It represents what is best in our high-tech manufacturing and services industries. Though we often do not quite realise it, Space is already having a large impact on our day-to-day lives through the widespread use of technologies such as broadband, 3G mobile phones and satellite navigation. The opportunities in these areas are only set to grow, with future applications seen to have beneficial uses in areas as diverse as climate-change monitoring to agriculture."

- Saab has selected the Selex Galileo Infrared Search & Track (IRST) system SKYWARD-G to equip its Gripen Next Generation (NG) fighter. IRST provides similar functionality to a radar without giving out electromagnetic radiation and can therefore provide full operational search and track functionality with a stealth capability. IRST can operate in highly cluttered environments to track single and multiple targets, and can also operate in slaved acquisition mode.

- The government has agreed £45m of research projects to research and develop more fuel-efficient, lower-carbon aero engines. It will fund new partnerships between Rolls-Royce and universities around the UK. Research projects will be overseen by the Technology Strategy Board and include developing lighter fans that reduce fuel consumption, simulation technology for virtual engineering and new, affordable high temperature alloys to improve fuel efficiency. Rolls-Royce will partner with the following universities: Birmingham; Bristol; Cambridge; Imperial College London; Loughborough; Nottingham; Oxford; Southampton; Surrey and Swansea. Lord Mandelson also welcomed the Rolls-Royce commitment to build a new aero-engine disc facility in Washington, Sunderland. Ric Parker, Director of Research and Technology, Rolls-Royce, said: "This is a good example of government, industry and academia coming together to expand Britain's capabilities in high value-added manufacturing. The innovative, high value-added work that the SILOET programme is addressing will influence future aero-engine architecture and help to further reduce the impact of aviation on the environment." The disc facility is one of four new facilities Rolls-Royce is

to build in the UK which will secure or create 800 jobs in innovative high-value manufacturing programmes over the long term. The research programmes will be funded by Strategic Investment in Low Carbon Engine Technology (SILOET).

- Poor weather in January adversely affected passenger numbers at BAA airports. The figures also reveal an encouraging improvement in the overall trend, once the disruption has been taken into account. At Heathrow there was a drop of 0.5% in passenger numbers compared to last January. Without the bad weather causing the loss of around 145,000 passengers at the airport, traffic would have grown by an estimated 2.5%. Similarly, the figures for BAA as a whole show a drop of 3.1%, meaning we handled 7.2 million passengers in January. Without the disruption it is estimated the drop would have been 0.3%. At Stansted the drop was 5.6%; at Southampton 9.7%; Glasgow 12.2%; Edinburgh 7.4%; Aberdeen 13.6%. At each airport a significant part of the drop can be attributed to the snow. As in December, Glasgow and Edinburgh were also impacted by the collapse of the airline Flyglobespan. By market, North Atlantic traffic was down 3.8% and scheduled European traffic was down 0.3%. There were rises in South America (9.6%), and in the Middle East (9.5%). Cargo traffic continued the recovery first seen in October, rising in January by 13.9%. Colin Matthews, chief executive of BAA said: "There is no doubt that the market remains a difficult one, and certainly the snow didn't help, but, equally, there are encouraging signs of growth, particularly on the routes out of Heathrow to the Middle East and South America, as well as cargo. This once again underlines Heathrow's role as the UK's only hub airport."

- On 9 February, the Ministry of Defence (MoD) and the Department for Transport (DfT) announced the selection of the Soteria consortium as the preferred bidder for the Search and Rescue Helicopter (SAR-H) programme. SAR-H will be a single harmonised Search and Rescue (SAR) helicopter service in the UK, which will replace the current SAR helicopter service provided by the Coastguard, RAF and Royal Navy. It is intended that military aircrew will continue to develop their SAR skills and experience that will be transferred back to the expeditionary forces. The contract is a 25-year Private Finance Initiative (PFI) and Soteria will work in partnership with the MoD and DfT to replace the current service with initial service provision in 2012. The Soteria consortium includes CHC, the largest global supplier of civilian helicopter services and the current provider of the MCA Interim SAR Service. RBS is providing the investment required to purchase a new fleet of up to 30 US-built Sikorsky S-92 helicopters, a rival to the UK's Yeovil-built Agusta Westland Merlin. Thales UK is already a significant training provider and a leading MoD and DfT contractor. This will be the third major MOD contract involving the purchase of foreign-made helicopters in recent months, following the ordering of extra Boeing Chinooks and re-building of the RAF's Eurocopter Puma fleet in Romania.

- One of the RAF Battle of Britain Memorial Flight's two Chipmunk trainers has returned to RAF Coningsby following a major overhaul. Designed as a primary trainer, WG486 has an interesting history as a rather unlikely spyplane. It was one of the final two Chipmunks that monitored the East German border around Berlin, photographing Warsaw Pact activity. When the Berlin Wall came down in 1989, the aircraft was transferred to the BBMF, while its companion took up residence with the museum collection at Gatow. The two BBMF

*continues on page 7*

# 2010 ANNUAL RECEPTION

**T**he President, Chairman and Council are delighted to announce that our Annual Reception will be held at St James's Palace on Tuesday, 8 June 2010. This is the occasion when our major awards for the year are presented, and certificates and badges are presented to those scholarship and bursary winners able to attend.

- Individual members wishing to attend the reception should complete the enclosed flyer and return it to the League's offices as soon as possible.
- All award winners will receive a separate letter from the Director inviting them to the reception as a guest of the League, with an application form for tickets for their guests.
- Corporate members will also receive a separate letter and application form.

Members are encouraged to come along to this excellent occasion in the splendour of St James's Palace. Please bring your friends and family along to enjoy our annual family occasion. The Palace sets a limit of 500 people attending but that should not deter members from applying.

For security reasons, those attending will need to produce in addition to an Admittance Ticket, issued by the League's office, two forms of identification, which between them will confirm: Full Name, Date of Birth and Current Address. Full details available from the office.

As usual, the Director will need the help of young members to assist with ushering. Student or Intermediate members able to assist should contact the League's office; **those selected to help will be admitted free.**



*ABOVE - A Harrier GR9 makes a dramatic landing.*

*BELOW - The best of British....four Typhoons are seen with the Red Arrows, representing an outstanding display of UK achievement in the air.*



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De Havilland Chipmunks, which are the last in RAF service, are probably the least-seen aircraft of the fleet. They are used year-round primarily for the conversion and continuation training of BBMF pilots on tail-wheel aircraft. Within the RAF, 'tail-draggers' are now unique to the BBMF and pilots new to the Flight commonly arrive with no previous tail-wheel or piston engine experience. Major maintenance is carried out every 8 years on the Chipmunks and July 2009 marked WG486's turn for a trip to the hangar. The work was carried out by the Aircraft Restoration Company (ARCo) based at Duxford under a contract awarded by the MOD's Defence Equipment & Support Nimrod Team, which is responsible for the BBMF aircraft. The Project Team was greatly assisted by staff from the Defence Quality Assurance Field Force office in Cambridge, who carried out surveillance activities and Flight Authorisation Certification prior to flight test. WG486 was successfully flight tested by OC BBMF, Sqn Ldr Ian Smith on 28th Jan and returned to Coningsby that evening to resume its valuable training role.

## YOUTH MATTERS

The Air League Youth Panel is currently engaged in a number of activities, notably preparation for the Young Members Flying Day, scheduled to take place on Saturday 3rd July 2010. This year's event is scheduled to return to its roots at Bicester Airfield, Oxfordshire, and like previous years, there will be a lot of subsidised flying available together with a Barbecue at the end of the day. The event will also include many individuals and organisations that are close to the League, offering advice and tips on all aspects of flying. The exact line-up of the day is yet to be decided so if you'd like to get involved by helping to shape the day, feel free to register your interest with the Youth Panel.

A further initiative that the Youth Panel is looking into is publicity. The chances are that most Air League Youth Members have benefited from either a scholarship or bursary. However, while members are certainly aware of the opportunities available to them, the challenge is to inform friends and colleagues, whether through college, school, university or work about how they too can benefit from the scholarships and bursaries by joining the League. It's really great to see how many people write in to thank The Air League, not just to this newsletter but many mainstream aviation publications too. Do keep sending these letters - it's fantastic to hear about your successes which, in turn, translate into excellent publicity for the League. For those members who might not necessarily fit into the 'Youth' section of The Air League, we'd love to hear from you too. While ex-scholars such as Red 3, Flt Lt Kirsty Moore, make the headlines, equally we'd like to hear from ex-scholarship/bursary winners whatever their connection with aerospace/defence in particular and the wider world in general.

Towards the end of the year, should there be enough interest, we're also looking into holding a networking event specifically for young members. There's no denying that ours is a hard industry to break into but whatever your aspiration, be it test pilot or ground crew, with the support of the League, we'll help you into that role.

This is just a brief snapshot of some of the schemes young members are either planning or looking into and there are many more projects taking place behind the scenes. If you'd like to play a more active part, do feel free to get in touch through [youth@airleague.co.uk](mailto:youth@airleague.co.uk).

# MEMBERS' NEWS

**Stuart Clark (Sir Michael Cobham 2009 Flying Bursary)** I was awarded the bursary, which I flew during August 2009 at Aeros Gloucester. I used it to gain 4 hours training in a Piper PA28 201 RT in order to complete differences training for Retractable gear and Vp Prop. This was an interesting and challenging course which I thoroughly enjoyed. I am due to start my CPL at Aeros in March, and the extra time spent flying a complex aircraft will stand me in good stead for the course. I would like to thank The Air League and my Sponsor for this fantastic opportunity.

**Ronald Dickie (The MacRobert Trust 2009 Flying Scholarship)** I am writing to thank The Air League for granting me The MacRobert Trust 2009 Flying Scholarship. I completed the scholarship and in doing so I was able to complete my PPL using the 12 hours from my scholarship. I have been able to fulfil a life-long dream and achieve my first pilot's licence. Thank you for providing me with this fantastic opportunity.

**Robert Mott (Sir Michael Cobham 2009 Flying Bursary)** I have been extremely fortunate to receive a bursary. I would like to thank ALET and particularly Eddie Cox. Also, I would like to thank Alan Cassidy of Freestyle Aviation for your tuition and the use of your Pitts Special S2-A, G-ODDS at West London Aero Club. I appreciate that we covered a lot of different aspects in a relatively short period of time. The loss of control exercise was particularly useful. I seriously recommend that anyone interested in aerobatics must experience and learn this recovery technique because it works very effectively.

Finally a very big thank you must go to my sponsor, Lady Cobham. Your

generosity has allowed me to undertake some critical training for my future flying in aerobatics.

**Heeral Poria (SLMG (10 hrs))** I am writing to extend my many thanks for the award of a Gliding Scholarship. It was a great experience and has put me that one step closer to a PPL. I am continuing to instruct with 644VGS at RAF Syerston and hope to become a senior instructor in the very near future, however this scholarship allowed me to explore different aspects of aviation such as cross-country navigation. I would like to thank you for the help of putting me onto the first step of the ladder towards one day becoming a commercial airline pilot.

**Alex Saunders (John Marriott, 2009 Gliding Scholarship)** I wish to thank John Marriott and The Air League Educational Trust for awarding me with a cross-country scholarship, which I flew at Long Mynd Gliding Club in Shropshire. I took the opportunity to go across to Long Mynd with the delight at the prospect of flying at a club with a ridge. I achieved my full silver award and have done four cross-countries with some success. I have also been learning to do my Basic Instructors qualification to be able to teach some of the skills I have learnt. Once again I thank you. I hope you continue to sponsor young people to enable them to enjoy the thrills of aviation.

**Henry Saunders (Aerobatics, 2009 Gliding Scholarship) (2009 Engineering Scholarship)** I would like to say that I am very grateful for the opportunity to fly at Nympsfield and thoroughly enjoyed my time there. I am currently flying with 621 Volunteer Gliding Squadron and have recently

achieved my Grade 2 Pilot, and hope to gain an NPPL sometime in the future.

Also I would like to express my thanks for the engineering scholarship I did last year at Wycombe Air Centre. The opportunity to see real aeronautical engineering first hand, and also get my hands dirty doing some myself, is one I am very grateful for. I would recommend it highly to anyone interested in engineering.

**Katie Simmonds (Sir Michael Cobham 2009 Flying Bursary)** I am writing to convey my thanks for the bursary I received in 2009. I have enjoyed every minute of completing my night qualification and was pleased to realise that I could still land an aeroplane in the dark with no runway lights. This bursary has helped me to achieve another valuable step towards achieving my ATPL.

Once again my thanks to The Air League and my sponsor Lady Cobham.

**Helen Vosper (Peggy Follis 2008 Flying Bursary)** I am writing once again to thank you for the bursary I was awarded in 2008. I wanted to update you on my progress so far. Since revalidating my IMC with the bursary awarded to me, I have completed my CPL. I was asked to write an article on my experiences for the BWPA newsletter, and the role the bursary played in helping me achieve my goal. I hope to complete FIC this summer, working through the ground school part in the hope I will be able to fit the airborne work into the gap between May and August. Once again thank you for your support.

**Matthew Wong (Royal Aeronautical Society 2009 Flying Scholarship)** I am writing to give my thanks to the Society for enabling me to undertake an Air League Flying Scholarship. The flying experience has inspired me to volunteer as a Flight Staff Cadet at my local cadet gliding squadron, 616 VGS based at RAF Henlow in Bedfordshire.

I would like to thank you again for the fantastic experience and I have vigorously recommended the scheme to my fellow students and cadets alike.

## New Members

**Full Members:** Mr F Conway, Mr D Crowle, Miss N Davis, Mr C-W Dudley, Mr A Dunnington, Mr L Forbes, Mr A Grisman, Miss E Gunson, Mr T Khan, Mr J Kumah, Mr L Leek, Mr A Mazzoleni, Miss L Pettit, Miss R Rose, Mr M Scrase, Mr P Sorby, Dr L Szkatula, Mr S Tate, Mr I White, Mr R Wiltshire,

**Student Members:** Mr M Askew, Mr A Ball, Mr G Bendall, Miss a Bolton, Mr J Bowers, Mr M Bristow, Mr D Brown, Mr S Burge, Mr D Bush, Mr T Bygrave, Mr A Collings, Mr D Davidson, Miss V Earl, Miss G Ehrmann, Mr M Everett, Mr C Ewbank, Mr T Forester, Mr O Gibson, Mr J Glave, Mr B Gundry, Mr G Havard, Mr A Heakin, Mr N Hibbert, Miss C Holtom-Birch, Mr H Hopewell, Mr D E Houghton, Mr C Howe, Mr J Hygate, Miss L Jackson, Mr A Jones, Mr J Jones, Mr S Jones, Mr V Kakopa, Mr S Link, Mr S Lucas, Mr A Luken, Mr C Mann, Mr R Mansell, Mr P Marsh, Mr A Mitchell, Mr C Moore, Mr S Morris, Mr J Myers, Mr T Nation, Mr M Nelson, Mr E Okon, Mr F Pedrina-McCarthy, Miss V Petersen, Mr D Philip, Mr M Quazi, Miss S Reed, Mr A Reis, Mr J Rillie, Mr L Rodger, Miss H L Rosier, Miss R Ryan, Mr E Sarpong, Mr C Scrimshaw, Mr J Sillett, Miss A Simpson, Mr O Thomas, Mr L Travers, Miss K Walsh, Mr C Webber, Mr A White, Mr B White, Mr D White, Mr P Wigginton, Mr B Wilson, Mr S Wooldridge, Mr J Wright, Mr G Young, Miss K Yule

## Diary Reminders

8 June 2010 Annual Honours and Awards Ceremony  
17 June 2010 Council Meeting and AGM.

For up-to-date information on all our activities please visit our website at [www.airleague.co.uk](http://www.airleague.co.uk) where you can register for changes to be sent to you by email as they are announced.

  
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