

Dear All.

I thought this might interest you and your members.

I attended Lt Gen Nick Borton DSO MBE (SCOTS Colonel of the Regiments) update to antecedent regiments yesterday on behalf of Brig Hughie Monro.

I have the following information to pass on by way of an update.

General Nick broke the brief into 4 parts;

1. Ukraine
2. Points about the Army today.
3. The Regimental Strategy.
4. Battalion / Incremental Company Updates.

Ukraine

The Ukrainians are no nearer to a peace agreement with the invading Russians.

The President has made it clear that he certainly won't negotiate until certain areas within the wider Donbas region are reclaimed from Russian temporary control.

Russia (Putin) has seemingly unlimited numbers of untrained men (cannon fodder) to push into battle and are reported to be losing in the order of 700 men per day!

The Ukrainians are also losing men / women but not on the Russian scale. Long range artillery provided by western allies have certainly help Ukraine achieve this.

Russia is on a war footing and production of artillery shells in particular has been stepped up which is a cause of concern for Ukraine as they rely on western allies for support in this area, not to mention tanks, aircraft etc all of which have been mentioned in the press recently.

There is a thought that the Russian 'spring offensive' (where the ground is firmer) has been attempted and has faltered / failed. Ukraine are keeping their cards close to their chests but with the arrival of tanks / aircraft it is felt that an offensive to reclaim ground in the Donbas / Mariupol areas are being planned.

The question for the western / European allies is, are they prepared to support Ukraine and their intent to recover ground annexed by Russia in Eastern Ukraine for perhaps as long as the next 4 years - or as long as it takes?

For the immediate future the UK will continue to provide training support in Poland / on Salisbury Plain to the Ukrainian armed forces and look at what equipment can be made available.

General Nick as Commander Allied Rapid Reaction Corps is obviously in a key position to understand the complexities of this every evolving situation on NATO's Eastern boundary and can assure everyone that he and his allies work on it on a daily basis.

Points about the Army today.

We will all have seen the news / read the papers but General Nick wanted to stress that not everything you hear / see is accurate. Yes a vast amount of defence spending has been spent on the RN and RAF in the last 4 years (Aircraft carriers, Frigates, new fighter / surveillance aircraft etc) to the detriment of Army equipment programmes.

Sec of State for Defence The Rt Hon Ben Wallace (on behalf of the MOD) has had to fight his corner with the Chancellor of the Exchequer to secure addition money for defence.

He has had to argue that the Defence of the Nation is every bit as important as Education / NHS and Welfare. We have all see that much of the recent increase will have to go on replenishing 'ammunition war stocks' having out loaded stocks to support Ukraine. What's left will be directed towards the Army in the first instance to help complete long overdue equipment programmes. Examples – Challenger 3

and Ajax Recce Vehicle.

General Nick stressed that Press reports stating that we are a 3rd tier Army are widely off the mark and taken out of context. Yes some comments have been made by our NATO allies but this was aimed more at our equipment funding programmes rather than our ability to plan, organise, operate and fight (with what we have) as the British Army is widely accepted as one of the very best in Europe. Yes we need to fight with our allies / partners but this is not new and has been the case since the days of the Cold War and BAOR.

Regimental Strategy

The aim by 2025 is to be 'The standard for others to follow'. (Clear and simple).

How will this be achieved.

Through –

1. Identity. (As SCOTS but piggy backing on everything our antecedent achieved, and the SCOTS can build on).
2. Communications (with the help of Grayling an Edinburgh based Media company).
3. Governance.

The SCOTS have produced a SCOTS App which has been designed to allow the SCOTS regimental family (serving and retired) and antecedent to interact with each other (assist each other especially in matters of welfare). The Open area (open to SCOTS and antecedents) of the App is set up to show what events are being run and what support for welfare is available.

The Members only area is for serving SCOTS or SCOTS veterans only having been verified.

This App can be downloaded for free by anyone.

The Regimental Strategy is split down in to the following Lines of Operations (LoO's).

1. Join Well. Recruiting for the SCOTS is holding up but generally across the Army (not helped by reducing to 73,000) recruiting is down.
2. Live Well. 4 SCOTS have been conducting a 3 month trial (on behalf of the Army) on Mental Resilience using / on the back of an App under the banner Leafyard. This trial is due to finish on 31 March after which a report will be produced and the Army will decide whether or not to roll Leafyard out across all Corps / Branches / Regiments. This is seen as an important step, as mental welfare / wellbeing in its broadest terms (resilience) is a major factor in soldiering today.
3. Serve Well.
4. Leave Well. The Colonel of The Regiment has been able to 'hook up' the Regiment with the Stonemasons Livery Company in London and this going forward will prove beneficial and they have already agreed to support and sponsor certain annual events which will develop further in the years ahead.
5. Engage Well. This is all about engaging with the 'communities' that we recruit from and have the pride to support. There are 4 confirmed and 4 pending 'Freedom Parades' scheduled to take place in the Summer and Autumn of 2023, which the antecedents will be asked to support and attend across the country.
6. Heritage. This is about the SCOTS Museum (shoe horned into the RS Museum in Edinburgh Castle) and just as importantly

the history of the antecedents and how we SCOTS can build on and uphold this proud and hard won heritage.

7. Governance. Speaks for itself and is over riding in all that the SCOTS do on a daily basis.

SCOTS Association.

The SCOTS association is growing fast and is currently based on a branch in each of the 7 x Battalion / Incremental Company and 4

x Regional branches. Regional Branches have each been issued with SCOTS Standards which they proudly carry on Parade.

General Nick stressed that he would welcome interaction between SCOTS and antecedent association on any / every occasion

where possible as at the end of the day we are all from one big SCOTS family.

Battalion / Incremental Company Update.

1 RANGER (formerly 1 SCOTS).

1 RANGER are based in Belfast and are part of 6 Div in the Special Operations Bde commanded by Brig Rob Hedderwick (SCOTS).

77 Bde are the other unit in 6 Div.

The Special Operations Bde conduct unconventional ops and partner ops, capacity building, support warfighting and contingency (readiness)

tasks. They are in effect 2nd level Special Forces and are akin to the US Green berets, who they occasionally work with.

1 RANGER are still aligned to the SCOTS as no decision has been taken yet to make the Special Operations Bde a stand alone Regiment.

They do recruit from across the whole Army but majority of unit will be Infantry heavy.

Operational companies are about 60 personnel strong. 1 RANGER operate in West Africa (Nigeria, Mali, Chad, Cameroon and Ghana in the main).

They have had a busy but exciting year which will continue into the future.

2 SCOTS.

2 SCOTS have had a busy year and remain a Light Role Infantry Battalion based at Glencorse Bks, Penicuik.

Highlights of 2022/ 23 are;

1. Ex Wessex Storm (on Salisbury Plain a bit like the old BATUS) where units are tested to the full and if up to scratch passed a fit for operations.
2. Presentation of the New Assaye Colours at a Parade in June 22 in Glencorse Barrack which was beautifully executed by the Battalion with considerable support from the RHF.
3. Op Newcombe PDT in Mali with French support.
4. Ex Desert Khanjar in Oman.

Looking ahead they will complete Op Newcombe PDT and then at the back end of the year undertake Op Shader in Iraq, which is predominantly a QRF

/ Guarding task around training the Kurds in Northern Iraq.

3 SCOTS.

They are transitioning (rerolling) to become a Security Force Assistance Battalion and are based at Fort George, Inverness until 2032.

(A new date as Leuchars may not be ready before then). General Nick explained that his initial thought on what was meant by a Security Force Assistance

Battalion have been a laid as tasks are varied and exciting.

3 SCOTS have spent little time at Fort George in 2022 as they were fully committed to Op Orbital and Op Interflex and have given invaluable training, to members of the Ukrainian Army in Poland and on Salisbury Plain. Looking ahead they will be training in Bosnia and Nigeria and on Ex Askari Storm in Kenya.

General Nick highlighted that whilst there had been a 21% reduction in the Army in the last 6 months there had been no reduction in commitments, so all units were running hot.

4 SCOTS

4 SCOTS have rerolled from a Heavy Mechanised Battalion to a Light Mechanised Battalion with Husky Armoured wheeled vehicles as part of 7 Bde based in Catterick.

They too have had a busy year and have been on standby / deployed on numerous tasks in support of the Government as they are a relatively large unit.

They have recently completed Ex Wessex Storm on Salisbury Plain where they performed very well. They are leading the Field Army trial on Mental Health issues which will report soon on whether the Leafyard App is appropriate for role out.

5 SCOTS.

This incremental Public Duties company is based in Redford Barracks, Edinburgh.

They produced the Royal Guard in 2022 and will do so again in 2023 along with other public duties in Edinburgh. They supported 4 SCOTS on Ex Wessex Storm recently.

They played a crucial role in Her late Majesties Funeral in Sep 2022 and I am please to say that the Coffin (Bearer) Party were rewarded for their efforts.

The Subaltern (Detachment Commander) and Warrant Officer (2 i/c) were awarded with an MVO and the Bearers all received RVO medals.

They did a sterling job as the very Public face of the Regiment and deserve the recognition.

5 SCOTS will along with 2 and 4 SCOTS P&D's represent the Regiment at the King Charles III Coronation on 6 May in London.

6 and 7 SCOTS

They continue to support the Regular units to the best of their abilities, but recruiting is proving a challenge.

7 SCOTS provided the Operations Room from 51 Inf Bde out of Redford Barracks during Op Unicorn (Late Queen's Funeral) at no notice and did an excellent job.

That concludes my round up of the point General Nick put across and fingers crossed brings you up to speed with some of what is going on.

Kind Regards

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