

BADGE NOTES

FEB 2021

Badge number 320. Cumbria Army Cadet Force arm badge. With their Headquarters in Carlisle Castle, and over 400 Cadets, 85 adult volunteers and eight members of permanent staff in 20 detachments in all major towns across the County, Cumbria ACF enjoy very close ties with The Duke of Lancaster's Regiment (King's, Lancashire and Border) and wear their Regimental cap badge on a red diamond felt backing. In late 2019 the Cumbria ACF introduced a new arm badge which they wear on their upper left arm. The design is based on the glider badge awarded to The Border Regiment for their participation in Operation Husky as part of the 1st Air Landing Brigade. This glider badge was subsequently worn on the upper right arm by The King's Own Royal Border Regiment and is now worn as an arm badge by the Duke of Lancaster's Regiment.

Badge number 321. The Royal Anglian Regiment Arm Badge. 2nd Bn The Royal Anglian Regiment (The Poachers) is currently in the light mechanised infantry role as a part of 7th Infantry Brigade within 1st (UK) Division. Each Company of the Battalion is aligned to a specific County which reflects their regimental heritage as follows: A (Lincolnshire), B (Leicestershire), C (Northamptonshire), D (Bedfordshire & Hertfordshire), and H (Rutland). A Company have recently changed the colour of the "A" on their "Imp" arm badge from red to blue.

Badge number 322. General Service Corps (GSC) TRF. After WW1 the GSC was re-established in February 1942 as a "reception corps" and all recruits were enlisted into the Corps for their first six weeks before allocation to specific regiments and corps of the British Army. Following WW2 the GSC capbadge was worn by infantry Junior Leaders Training Regiments and more recently by soldiers and officers who have not been allocated to a specific regiment or corps such as Public Information Officers. The badge shown is the new TRF worn by all ranks of the GSC.

Badge number 323. 1st Aviation Brigade. Size 50mm wide by 60mm high. As of April 2020, the first ever Aviation Brigade in the British Army was formed. Combining the reconnaissance capabilities of the Wildcat helicopter of 1st Regiment Army Air Corps (AAC), together with the attack firepower of the Apache helicopter used by 3rd and 4th Regiment AAC, 1st Aviation Brigade is designed to unite the resources previously split between the Aviation Reconnaissance Force and the Attack Helicopter Force. As well as the tasks conducted by 5th Regiment AAC with their Gazelle helicopters, the reservists of 6th Regiment AAC and the specialist avionics and aircraft technicians of 7th Battalion REME complete the make up of the Brigade.

Badges number 324/325. In the last year the Royal Navy has introduced officers' qualification badges for graduates of their challenging Principal Warfare Officer (PWO) course. Badges which are worn above medal ribbons (much in the same way as the long established submariner's dolphins) are in silver for PWOs and gold for suitably qualified Commanding and Executive Officers. The cloth badges are 120mm wide by 30mm high and the two metal versions 60mm wide by 25mm high with a pin and grasp fitting

east/west. The PWO is the Captain's tactical advisor and directs the operational conduct of the ship on behalf of the CO. In terms of seniority beneath the Captain and Executive Officer (XO), PWO's are usually the senior warfare officers embarked and most major RN ships require three PWOs embarked at any one time to cover defence watches where the Ops Room (CIC) is manned permanently by a PWO. Any member with more information on these new badges please get in touch through *The Bulletin*.



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JOINT TERMINAL ATTACK CONTROLLERS (JTACS)

by Clive Elderton

When air power is used to support friendly ground units in contact with the enemy it is known as Close Air Support (CAS) and it has been a key force multiplier on the battlefield since the formation of the RAF in 1918. In 1941 to ensure air assets were most effectively coordinated with ground troops the role of Forward Air Controller (FAC) was created within the British Army. These highly trained specialists provided the vital link between air and ground forces by communicating with attack aircraft and calling in attacks of one sort or another onto ground targets. The nature of CAS is such that blue-on-blue, or so-called 'friendly fire' incidents, and causing civilian casualties, is always a risk. FACs help to lower these risks by carefully selecting targets to ensure that only the required targets are hit. In recent years it was standard operating procedure in Afghanistan that no CAS missions were to be carried out without an FAC on the ground, authorising every step of an engagement.

For about twenty years in the US and NATO Forces, FACs have been called Joint Terminal Attack Controllers (JTACs). To quote from the Field Manual they are trained to "call in and direct air support from combat aircraft, helicopter gunships or armed drones engaged in close air support and other offensive air operations from a forward position". To avoid misunderstanding on recent joint and coalition operations UK FACs have now been re-titled JTACs and qualification badges, illustrated here, have been introduced. The different coloured backings are required to meet single service requirements.

The UK Military currently draws JTACs from serving personnel from the Royal Navy, Royal Marines, British Army (mainly from the Royal Artillery and Royal Armoured Corps) and the Royal Air Force (mostly the RAF Regiment). Once qualified they are posted within 3rd (United Kingdom) Division, 1st Artillery Brigade, 1st Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance Brigade, 3 Commando Brigade, 16 Air Assault Brigade, RAF Force Protection Force (RAF Regiment) and within the Special



No 1 Dress badge.



Mess Dress badge.

Forces Support Group. Officers are selected for JTAC training (from (Army) Lieutenant/Flight Lieutenant) to lead Battle Group and Brigade level Tactical Air Control Parties (TACPs). There are opportunities for these officers to continue to use their JTAC skills in posts within the Joint Air and Liaison Organisation (JALO) and UK Air Support Operation Squadron (ASOS) in ranks up to Commander/Lieutenant Colonel/Wing Commander. Other ranks serve as JTACs in all ranks from Corporal/Bombardier to Warrant Officer. Because JTAC is not a trade but a qualification all ranks wear the same qualification badge.

Editorial Note: These badges were approved by the Army Dress Committee 360th meeting in February 2020, decision 4453. They are worn in perpetuity by all ranks who have qualified on one of the following courses. FAC – Operations/Forward Air Controller/Joint. JFAC – Operations/Joint Terminal Attack Controller/Joint. JTAC-I – Operations/Joint Terminal Attack Instructor/Joint. JTAC-E – Operations Joint Terminal Attack Controller Evaluator/Joint and SupFAC – Operations/Supervisory Forward Air Controller/Joint. In parade orders of dress the badge is worn on the upper left arm.



Worn on Combats, its size is to be 50mm wide by 20mm deep.



No 2 Dress badge.

JOINT TERMINAL ATTACK CONTROLLERS (JTAC)

In response to the article on the new qualification badges for Joint Terminal Attack Controllers (JTAC) in the May 2021 Bulletin, member Chris Millwater, has commented that the RAF wear the badge on a dark blue rather than khaki backing. The badge in black on MTP backing, as shown in the article, is actually worn when in Combat Dress and that shown here with a khaki backing is worn by the Army on No 2 Dress.



18 (UKSF) SIGNAL REGIMENT AND UK SPECIAL FORCES COMMUNICATOR'S WINGS

by Clive Elderton



Background

Effective tactical and strategic communications equipment, and operators with the skills to operate it in the most challenging operational and environmental conditions, have always been critical to the success of Special Forces (SF) operations. Consequently, British Special Forces have long had embedded specialist operators from the Royal Corps of Signals to provide appropriate communications and information systems expertise. In earlier times the specialist Royal Signals capability was provided by independent Signal Squadrons. Based in Hereford, 264 (SAS) Signal Squadron supported 22 SAS and 63 (SAS) Signal Squadron (V) supported TA SF units. A few Royal Signals specialists were also embedded in the SBS Signals Squadron to provide communications support to the SBS in Poole. Otherwise personnel in the SBS Squadron are almost entirely drawn from Royal Marines Signallers who conduct training similar to the volunteers of 264 (SAS) Signal Squadron.

The operational benefits of closer integration of UK SF capabilities was recognised in 1987 when the (Brigadier's) post of Director SAS was changed to Director Special Forces (DSF) and the Army's SAS and Naval Service's Special Boat Squadron, renamed Special Boat Service at that time, were brought under his control. The SF Group has since been expanded to include the Joint Special Forces Aviation Wing (JSFAW), the Special Reconnaissance Regiment (SRR) (formerly 14 Intelligence Company), 18 (UKSF) Signal Regiment and a newly created Special Forces Support Group. In 2008, the rank of the DSF was upgraded from brigadier to major general and the Directorate became an independent, operational-level component command, alongside Land, Navy and Air elements within the deployable Joint Task Force Headquarters under the Permanent Joint Headquarters (PJHQ). On 1st September 2014, 21 and 23 SAS of the Reserve Forces were temporarily removed from the UKSF Order of Battle, because it was considered they lacked the ability to successfully operate alongside Regular SF units. They were placed alongside the Honourable Artillery Company (HAC) under command of the 1st Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance Brigade. In 2019 they returned to the UKSF Group.

Special Forces Communicators (SFCs)

Special Forces Communicators (SFCs) are all volunteers and are drawn from across the Regulars and Reserves of all three Services and the Royal Marines. They do not require a signals or communications background, however, all must pass a five day Briefing and Assessment course (BAC) followed by the 25 week UK SF Communicators Course (UKSFCC). The UKSFCC is part technical but also includes physical aptitude, Survival, Evasion, Resistance and Escape (SERE) and parachute training. Over time the selection process and training course has merged and now the Royal Marines train together with the Royal Navy, Army and RAF volunteers.



Khaki beret with bullion badge, wings and stable belt worn by qualified SFCs in 18 (UKSF) Signal Regiment.

The vast majority of SBS SFCs still come from the Royal Marines, however, some British Army and Royal Navy personnel do sometimes serve as members of the SBS Signals Squadron and a few Royal Marines serve outside the SBS with other SF units. Manning is deliberately flexible and people are deployed to best meet the operational priorities of the time. It is worth noting that SFCs also serve with all other elements of UKSF including the Special Reconnaissance Regiment (SRR), the Joint Special Forces Aviation Wing (JSFAW) and the Special Forces Support Group (SFSG) which has one platoon of Signallers.

On completion of the SFC selection course all non-commissioned members of the Army or RAF are required to immediately transfer to the Royal Signals, partly for ease of administration and career management purposes. Unless they decide to transfer, officers serve on attachment to the Unit and remain with their parent Service or regiment. The majority of successful Royal Navy candidates go on to serve with the SBS Signals Squadron and transfer to the Royal Marines soon after completing the selection course.

18 (UKSF) Signal Regiment

With the growing number and complexity of military and commercial communications and information systems available to support SF operations, and the growing impact of cyber capability, it was recognised that far greater operational effectiveness could be achieved by restructuring the specialist communications assets within the SF Group. Consequently, in April 2005, 18 (UKSF) Signal Regiment was established by bringing together the existing independent SAS and SBS signals squadrons into a coherent, specialist, communications and information systems unit with the following sub-units:

- SBS Signal Squadron.
- 264 (SAS) Signal Squadron.
- 267 (SRR) Signal Squadron.
- 63 (UKSF) Signal Squadron (Reserve).
- 268 (UKSF) Signal Squadron is not a part of SFSG but provides strategic level support across all other sub-units and areas of 18 (UKSF) Signal Regiment.

Members of 18 (UKSF) Signal Regiment serve on operations alongside other elements of the UKSF Group around the world and they have sustained casualties on operations in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Badges and Insignia

The Regimental motto “*Colloquendo Imperamus*” meaning “Command through Communications” features on their emblem which is XVIII, the number 18 in Roman numerals, upon three signal flashes, representing the three supported regiments: SAS, SBS and SRR, superimposed on a Xiphos sword. The Xiphos Sword was chosen as the unit emblem in 2005 and follows the inclusion of swords on all UKSF emblems. It was the sword carried by Hoplite Warriors at the battle of Marathon and links to the fact that a messenger ran the “marathon distance” to deliver a message (communications link). This emblem is still borne on the Unit flag and also used as a logo on stationery etc, however, the Roman numerals have now officially been removed from all other Regimental badges.

Members of the Regiment who qualify on the UKSFCC now wear a new, unique, cap badge, parachute qualification wings and stable belt.

- Cap badge: The Service Dress Committees, and HM The Queen, have approved a new Regimental cap badge which was introduced in 2020 and is now worn by all SFCs. The new SFC capbadge was endorsed on 18th August 2020 and was marked by a small ceremony in the Church at Stirling Lines, Hereford, by the unit Padre in the presence of the Master of Signals, Lieutenant General Sir Nick Pope KCB CBE, and the Commander 1 (UK) Signal Brigade¹. Although not currently worn by RM SFCs it is understood that they may do so in the future.
- SFC Parachute Wings². On successful completion of training all SFC are entitled to wear SFC wings on the upper right arm. When first introduced wings were on khaki, light blue or navy depending on the parent Service of the recipient. Because, once qualified, all SFCs transfer to either the RM or the Army (Royal Signals), the pattern of wings has been standardised as follows:
 - Army SFC wings, worn by all Army SFCs on Number 2 Dress. These are set on a black background. Every Army SFC wears the same.
 - Royal Marine SFC wings, worn by all RM SFCs on Lovat Dress. These are gold on Lovat green.
 - Number 1 Dress wings are gold on black – worn by all.
 - Mess dress wings gold on scarlet – worn by all.
 - Combat Dress: SFC wings are officially not worn on Combat Dress and therefore official MTP versions do not exist.
- Stable Belt: All members of the Regiment wear a black stable belt with a unique Regimental buckle. The roman numerals XVIII were subsequently removed from the design but, it is understood, that currently many SFCs wear the old pattern stable belt buckle with roman numerals on a waste out basis (*because the new versions are understood to be £38 each!!*)

Acknowledgements:

The author is grateful to those who have assisted in the preparation of this article.

NOTES:

1 *The Wire* – The Magazine of The Royal Corps of Signals Autumn 2020.

2 344th Meeting of the Army Dress Committee Wednesday 17th November 2010.

18 (UKSF) Signal Regiment Royal Signals. Special Force Communications Wings. After some discussion and a full background brief from 2IC 18 (UKSF) Signals Regiment ROYAL SIGNALS the Committee agreed that those from all three Services who successfully passed the Special Force Communications course could wear the new design of wing shown below. Exceptionally the Committee also agreed that the wings could be worn on parade orders of dress in perpetuity (as detailed in Para 9.43 of Army Dress Regulations) by all ranks subject to any limitations imposed by DSF. The Committee noted that the badge for No 1 and No 2 Dress was to be provided from DSF funds. Decision Approved by ADC, Decision 4231.



Black background Number 1 Dress wings.



Royal Marine Lovet green background wings.



Black background Number 2 Dress wings.



Scarlet background Mess Dress wings.



The regiments stable belt buckle worn on a black stable belt.