

THE AVIATION RECONNAISSANCE FORCE (ARF)

by Clive Elderton

The ARF comprises 1 Regiment Army Air Corps (AAC) based at RNAS Yeovilton, operating the Lynx Wildcat aircraft, and 5 Regiment AAC, based in Northern Ireland with sub-units in Canada and on mainland UK, operating the Britton Norman Islander, the Defender and Gazelle aircraft. The ARF was formed in 2015 as part of the Joint Helicopter Command (JHC), which is a tri-service organisation which wears a formation flash featuring an owl riding a lightning bolt.



In 2016 the Attack Helicopter Force (AHF), which sits alongside the ARF within the JHC, were authorised by the Army Dress Committee (ADC) to wear a striking eagle formation badge, based on the 16 Air Assault Brigade flash. Subsequently in June 2017, at their 357th Meeting, the ADC approved (ADC Decision 4410) a formation flash to be worn by all personnel on Combat Dress and No 12 Dress (flying uniform) throughout the ARF. The purpose of the flash is to help develop a strong and identifiable ethos



across the formation and to allow members of the ARF to be easily recognisable throughout the JHC and not be confused with the AHF.

The design of the ARF formation flash is closely based on the capbadge of the short lived, wartime, RECONNAISSANCE CORPS with the words Reconnaissance Corps on the scroll replaced by the word AVIATION. The badge is superimposed on a 60mm x 60mm square split diagonally green/yellow or dark/light green for the Combat Dress version. The shade of green and yellow chosen is very similar to the identification colours worn on the arm of service strip by the Reconnaissance Corps and which was also worn in the form of a square as a capbadge backing in some wartime Recce Regiments.

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