

The Blue Beret

January 2002



Direct Talks Begin



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Brave New Year

Three events stand out as we move away from the year 2001 and into the brave New Year of 2002.

Most numbingly, the horror of 11 September and the terrorist attacks in the United States on the World Trade Center in New York and the Pentagon in Washington D.C.

All of us have shared in the grief and in the sense of outrage. On that fateful day, the previously unthinkable became fanaticism's done deed. Now, in order to pursue day-to-day activities securely, we all pay the price for heightened vigilance by curtailing many of the personal freedoms we had long taken for granted.

On a happier note, the United Nations and Secretary-General Kofi Annan were jointly awarded the Nobel Prize for Peace. It is an honour done us all in our capacity as servants of this unique organisation. With the honour, come obligations. What better New Year's resolution than to recommit ourselves to the aims and aspirations enunciated by the Secretary-General in accepting the prize. Just as individuals must be the end-beneficiaries of our efforts as an institution, so our individual efforts are the key to the organisation's ability to realize its mission successfully.

Finally, and, let us hope, as a harbinger of good things to come, the New Year has begun well here in Cyprus with the launch of the direct talks between the two leaders. Also, their two meetings on the issue of the missing persons. What better wish for 2002 than the resolution of the Cyprus problem? We wish Mr. Clerides and Mr. Denktash well in their endeavours, as, indeed, we do all our readers.

Editorial

Contents

Editorial/Contents	2
The Facts on Anthrax	3
Nobel Peace Prize/ Working with the Secretary-General . . .	4/5
The Guirins/Mucking in Together/ New DCO Sector 4	6
Visits to UNFICYP	7
Record Numbers Celebrate UN Day	8/9
First Brazilian Soldier in UNFICYP/ A Scenic Day in Sector 1	10
Military Skills Competition	11
Drinking and Driving	12/13
On a Philosophical Note/ Caption Competition	14
Sport	15
UN Day 2001	16

Front Cover: The Two Leaders

UNFICYP Welcomes Lieutenant-General Jin Ha Hwang

On 7 January 2002, Lieutenant-General Jin Ha Hwang of the Republic of Korea assumed command of the United Nations Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus (UNFICYP), succeeding Major-General Victory Rana of Nepal. Lieutenant-General Hwang arrived in Cyprus on 4 January.

Lieutenant-General Hwang has held various military appointments in the service of his country, including command of an artillery battery, and at battalion and higher levels in the ROK-US Combined Forces, as well as serving as Commanding General of V. Corps Artillery. Other assignments as colonel and general officer were primarily in political/military affairs and in strategy and policy positions with the Office of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and the Ministry of National Defence. He most recently served as Defence Attaché in the Embassy of the Republic of Korea to the United States in Washington, D.C.



Lieutenant-General Jin Ha Hwang with the Chief of Mission

Lieutenant-General Hwang enlisted as a cadet in the Army of the Republic of Korea in 1965. He is a graduate of the Korean Military Academy, US Army Command and General Staff College and Central Michigan University.

Born in 1946, Lieutenant-General Hwang is married to Bo Kyung. They have two sons and a daughter.

COM Hosts Leaders for Meeting on the Missing

Chief of Mission Zbigniew Wlosowicz hosted the Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot leaders, H.E. Mr. Glafcos Clerides and H.E. Mr. Rauf Denktash, at his residence on 11 January when they met twice in his presence to discuss the issue of the missing persons. The two leaders agreed to exchange draft proposals on how to resolve the issue of the missing. Mr. Wlosowicz continues to facilitate the exchanges.



Chief of Mission with the two leaders

New Year Greetings from the Secretary-General

Dear colleagues and friends,

I write to you in this New Year with a special feeling of gratitude. During 2001, the United Nations confronted extraordinary challenges – from redoubling our fight against AIDS to undertaking sensitive new tasks in our peacekeeping operations to managing complex humanitarian and political missions. The events of 11 September and their aftermath put us to difficult new tests. Throughout the year, every day, everywhere, you demonstrated unwavering professionalism, spirit and dedication.

New challenges will arise in the year ahead, even as we continue to work towards the Millennium goals of freedom from fear, freedom from want and protecting the resources of our planet. As always, the success of our endeavours will depend entirely on the partnership between Member States and the staff of the United Nations family.

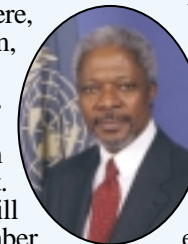
We enter 2002 greatly encouraged by the award of the Nobel Prize in its centennial year – an unparalleled recognition of both the achievements and potential of our organisation. As you know, the Nobel Committee said in its citation that it wished: “to proclaim that the only negotiable route to global peace and cooperation goes by way of the United Nations”.

In a world growing ever closer and more interconnected, and yet still riven by dire poverty, brutal conflict and cruel injustice, it is more important than ever that humanity travel that route, and that all of us work hard to pave the road ahead of it.

One of the themes of my Nobel address is that it is the individual who must benefit from the policies of national governments and from the work of the United Nations. Likewise, it is thanks to the contribution of every individual in the United Nations family that our organisation is able to make a difference; and it will continue to depend on each individual staff member in order to succeed in the future.

I take this opportunity to underline again that the Peace Prize belongs to every staff member, in every part of the United Nations, in every corner of the globe. And it belongs to all the many men and women who gave their lives in the service of our organisation. When you begin your work afresh in the New Year, I hope each one of you will draw renewed inspiration and direction from this honour that will be yours forever. In this spirit, please accept my warmest wishes for the New Year.

Kofi A. Annan



Off To A Good Start



The front entrance of the talks venue



before and after renovations

The Greek Cypriot leader, H.E. Mr. Glafcos Clerides, and the Turkish Cypriot leader, H.E. Mr. Rauf Denktash, kicked off their direct talks on 16 January when they met for 90 minutes in the Nicosia Conference Centre, a refurbished wing of the UNDP/UNOPS complex in the UNPA. The two leaders met in the presence of the Secretary-General's Special Adviser on Cyprus, Alvaro de Soto, having been met on arrival by UNFICYP Chief of Mission Zbigniew Wlosowicz.

After the meeting, Mr. de Soto told some 150 Turkish and Greek Cypriot press and TV reporters and visiting foreign correspondents that the two leaders had met, "first in private, in my presence". After "a good discussion on the substance", they subsequently continued with their advisers.

Mr. de Soto announced that, beginning 21 January, the meetings would continue on "Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays starting at 5:00 pm", thus giving the two sides an opportunity to "reflect on what they discussed today".

Describing it as "a very encouraging start", Mr. de Soto noted that the leaders had "engaged immediately on the substance". He characterized the climate of the initial session of talks as "good, cordial".

As to his own role, the Special Adviser reiterated, "I am there to assist in any way I can".

The direct talks were agreed to when the two leaders met on 4 December 2001 at the Chief of Mission's residence in the UNPA. In the statement read out by Mr. de Soto after that meeting, the two leaders agreed to the following:

- *"That the Secretary-General, in the exercise of his mission of good offices, would invite the two leaders to direct talks;*
- *"That these talks will be held in Cyprus starting in mid-January 2002 on UN premises;*
- *"That there will be no preconditions;*
- *"That all issues will be on the table;*
- *"That they will continue to negotiate in good faith until a comprehensive settlement is achieved;*
- *"That nothing will be agreed until everything is agreed."*

The conference centre in which the direct talks are being held is the last of several buildings restored by UNDP/UNOPS in what was the old Nicosia airport complex. UNDP took over the premises in 1999 for use as an office for its UNOPS programmes in Cyprus, and undertook renovations on a limited number of buildings needed to house its office facilities. Scheduled work on the last of these buildings was moved forward in order to accommodate the direct talks, and the job was completed over a five-week period.



January 2002 - The Blue Beret



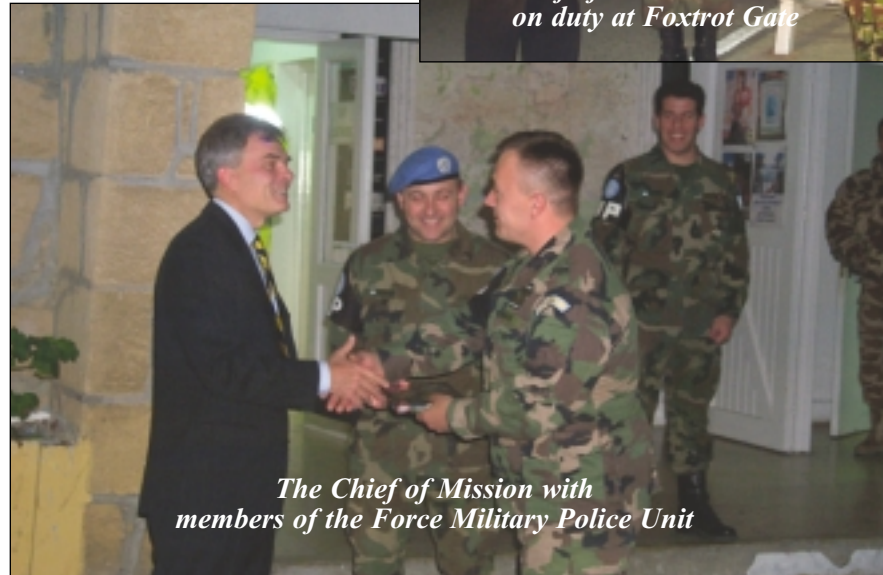
January 2002 - The Blue Beret



Chief of Mission's New Year's Eve Tour



The Chief of Mission with soldiers on duty at Foxtrot Gate



The Chief of Mission with members of the Force Military Police Unit

On New Year's Eve, UNFICYP Chief of Mission Zbigniew Wlosowicz made a series of unannounced visits to soldiers on duty at posts throughout the UNPA. He presented chocolates as a personal sign of appreciation to acknowledge their dedication and goodwill on this very special evening.

Some of the personnel on duty had also worked Christmas Eve. All who did, whether one or both Eves, were splendid ambassadors for their respective countries, and exemplified the season's spirit of goodwill. It will, indeed, be one that they remember.

VIP Visits to UNFICYP

As the year 2001 drew to a close, UNFICYP had the pleasure of welcoming a number of VIPs to the UNPA and to UNFICYP's operations.

On 27 November 2001, Brig. J.B.A. Bailey MBE ADC, Director Royal Artillery (seen below), met with the Chief of Mission and the Force Commander, and paid an office call to the Chief of Staff. He concluded his UNFICYP HQ visit by spending time with the MFR.



The Irish Ambassador to Cyprus, H.E. Mr. John Swift (above), presented his credentials to the President of the Republic on 26 November 2001, and paid his first official visit to UNFICYP on 10 December 2001. On his arrival, he was greeted by the Chief of Staff before inspecting an MFR Honour Guard. Following meetings with the Chief of Mission and the Force Commander, he was briefed by the Chief of Staff.

Mr. Swift is the first Irish Ambassador to be assigned to Cyprus. UNFICYP and *The Blue Beret* wish him every success on his new appointment.

Severe Weather Sweeps Across Cyprus

Once again, winter weather proved that it's not all palm trees, sun, sand and Club Med here on the island. As 2001 ended and 2002 began, the worst weather in recent years blanketed the island in heavy rains and an unusually widespread snowfall, creating a variety of challenges for soldiers patrolling the Buffer Zone and testing the skills of the engineering troops.

According to UNFICYP Force Engineer Maj. Jenó Ladócsi, heavy rainfalls damaged patrol tracks, road surfaces and drainage culverts throughout the Buffer Zone. In Sector 1's mountainous terrain, with narrow patrol tracks, dangerous rocky areas and deep precipices, there are few opportunities to bypass flooded or damaged areas. Sector 2's generally flat terrain creates ideal conditions for water running from the hills to accumulate, again damaging patrol tracks – particularly in Sector 2 East, where the main track crosses through the water assembly area.

Sector 4 features a variety of flat and hilly areas, where flood waters carry so much mud and debris that road surfaces become impassable and drainage culverts are quickly blocked or damaged.

UNCIVPOL Sector 1

In Sector 1, no less than four rivers traverse the Buffer Zone. Bone dry in summer months, these rain-swelled rivers have recently washed away bridges, closed patrol tracks and caused slippery conditions requiring extreme care. Rains were followed by heavy snowfall. Whilst the Troodos Mountains do receive snow above an altitude of approximately 1,500 metres, recent falls have been as low as the 200-metre level, causing road closures, power and telephone service cuts, and a resultant lack of heating.



Damaged surface of patrol track in Sector 2's area

City Troop – Sector 2

The combination of rain, wind and cold, dry weather has caused cracks in the walls of the dilapidated, disused houses and shops along City Troop's patrol track. This has resulted in five areas where rubble fell onto the track. Fortunately, no injuries have been reported so far. Although patrols are usually carried out on foot, vehicles are now used where possible, since the patrol track stretches 1,600 metres, and rubble falling on vehicles is preferable to rubble falling on soldiers!



Flooding in Famagusta's Camp General Stefanik

Liri Troop – Sector 2

Certain parts of the track have been totally washed away by the rains. In one instance, part of a patrol track on the Farming Security Line was washed into an adjacent minefield, together with the fence (which the engineers have now repaired). Soldiers have carried out certain repairs using piping and large rocks to rebuild badly damaged patrol tracks. In some areas, flooding prevented vehicles from passing along the normal route, so patrols were redirected and bicycles used instead.

1st Coy – Sector 4

On 29 November, two soldiers on patrol duty reached the Yialias riverbed at 0510 hrs. The patrol plan included crossing the usually dry riverbed, but the soldiers soon realised that the crossing could be too risky due to deepening water levels. Reversing was impossible, however, as their pick-up's left rear wheel found a hole, and water reached the engine compartment and the cabin. An Atkis recovery truck from HQ 1 Coy was able to pull the vehicle free. The Yialias riverbed has since changed course after very heavy rain and is currently impassable.

Flood In CGS

After heavy storms and intense rain on 8 December, new streams, rivers and lakes appeared in Famagusta's Camp General Stefanik, making the main gate – the camp's lowest spot – accessible only for swimmers. The Ops branch and COMCEN were also unpleasantly affected, with telephone lines cut for several hours. When the flood wave came, offices filled with 40 cm of water within minutes, leaving a layer of silt behind. Thanks to the effort of all disaster fighters, however, everything was back to normal in record time.



A quick-reaction solution to flooding in Famagusta's Camp General Stefanik

THE YEAR 2001 - IN REVIEW

For UNFICYP civilian and military personnel alike, the year 2001 brought both sorrow and hope.

As we focused on our mission of maintaining peace and stability on the island, and facilitating a political solution to the Cyprus problem, we also shared the world's shock at the terrorist attacks on September 11th. And in November, we shared the pride and prize as the 2001 Nobel Peace Prize was awarded to the UN and

to Secretary-General Kofi Annan.

As we enter 2002, the events of 2001 – including the decision to conduct direct talks here on the island – have served to deepen our commitment to the goals of the UN, both in Cyprus and around the world. It is our hope that the new year will bring greater unity and understanding, between individuals and peoples, as well as between countries, and indeed throughout the globe.

The departure of the Austrian Contingent in June marked the end of a 29-year association with Famagusta

The Dutch Contingent ended three years of service with UNFICYP in June

The Slovakian Contingent took over from the Austrians in June

In April, UNFICYP commemorated ANZAC Day

The Secretary-General and Mrs. Annan visited Sesame Street in December

The Slovenian Contingent lowered its flag after four years in UNFICYP

A highlight of UN Day was the bicomunal music evening

Major-General Victory Rana takes the salute at the end of his tour as Force Commander

In January, UNFICYP soldiers helped with the greening of the Buffer Zone by planting trees

January 2002 - The Blue Beret



The two communities celebrate the Festival of Mutual Understanding at the Ledra Palace in March

Mr. Alvaro de Soto reading the 4 December statement announcing that Mr. Denktash and Mr. Clerides will begin direct talks in mid-January

UNFICYP's Chief of Mission declares the opening of the UN Day celebrations

H.E. Mr Rauf Denktash, the Turkish Cypriot leader, shakes hands with H.E. Mr. Glafcos Clerides, the Greek Cypriot leader, at their historic 4 December meeting at the Chief of Mission's residence in the UNPA

The Secretary-General and Mrs. Annan meet the media on their doorstep in New York after learning of the Nobel award

Promoting International Cooperation... Within The MFR!

As the only UN unit within Cyprus where you'll find four different nationalities working together at section level, the Mobile Force Reserve (MFR) is both a challenging and educational environment to work within.

The British component of the MFR, K (Hondegheem) Battery RA, has been endeavouring to carry on the work of 12 (Minden) Battery RA, whom they replaced effective 6 December 2001. The MFR is certainly an environment that many of the British soldiers are new to, as they seldom experience such close working conditions with soldiers of other nations, including Argentinians, Hungarians and Slovaks, at a section level.

Despite this new experience, the close rapport that has quickly formed within the MFR has only helped to improve everyone's understanding of each other – even if the only form of communication at times is sign language.

International cooperation and coordination was highlighted recently, when Slovak Platoon Commander 1/Lt. Pigula presented SSgt. Turton from K (Hondegheem) Bty with his new rank, soon after SSgt. Turton was promoted by his Battery Commander, Maj. R.M. Hayhurst.



Slovakian Platoon Commander 1/Lt. Pigula (left) presenting SSgt. Turton from K (Hondegheem) Bty with his new rank



Christmas Eve in Sector 4

Slovak soldiers on the island of Cyprus celebrated Christmas Day – 24 December – in the same way as at home, with their big celebration taking place on the 24th, rather than the 25th.

At 1800 hours, CO Lt. Col. Kovac invited all soldiers to the NCO's Mess for a common festive dinner, which started with waffles with honey and garlic (a traditional recipe in Slovakia and Hungary),

followed by cabbage soup and special potato salad with fish, plus Cyprus brandy as an aperitif.

At 2100 hours, Padre Maj. Krchnavý presided at Christmas mass in the chapel at Camp General Stefanik in Famagusta.

Dinner and mass were followed by a party at the NCO's Club, thus finishing the seasonal day with another special touch.

Slovaks Celebrate Independence Day



Slovakia, a small country in the heart of Europe, is protected by the Carpathian mountain chain on three sides and by the Danube River from the south. Thanks to this strategic geographical position, the country has been a cultural crossing of Europe for centuries.

Though Slovakia has never had its own royal family, it has had several splendid rulers – including the king Matthias Corvinus, who became a hero of many tales, and the sovereign of enlightenment, Maria Theresa, who was crowned in St. Marti's Cathedral in Bratislava in 1741. In fact, 19 other Hungarian sovereigns were accompanied by ceremonious fanfares on the Coronation Street in Bratislava between

1563 and 1830. In the revolutionary period of 1848 to 1849, the Slovaks entered European history as an independent, modern nation for the first time. In 1918 a new state – the Czechoslovak republic – appeared on the map of Europe. After a long cohabitation, the common state of Czech and Slovak peacefully divided into two independent republics, and so, on 1 January 1993, the Slovak republic was created.

New Year's Day is, therefore, Independence Day for the Slovak people. The Slovak soldiers in Cyprus celebrated this special day on 4 January in Dherinia village, in the company of invited guests including the Slovak embassy representative in Cyprus, Mr. Dusan Rozbora, and some local dignitaries.

UNFICYP Christmas Carol Service A Glimpse Behind the Scenes

By Capt. L. Burt

The doors of the Holy Cross Church, at Paphos Gate in Nicosia, were once again opened on Wednesday 19 December for the annual UNFICYP Christmas Carol Service. Conducted by the three chaplains from Sectors 1, 2 and 4, the occasion brought together all nationalities within UNFICYP in a multi-denominational service with readings, prayers and songs in English, Hungarian, Slovak and Spanish. The final blessing by the three chaplains truly expressed the feeling of Christmas.

Of course, there was much preparation behind the scenes. The multi-national carol service featured the Argentinian, Slovak, Hungarian and British contingents, with each contingent providing a choir to perform (or attempt) two hymns of their choice in front of the congregation. According to the BRITCON Padre, the previous British effort was similar to a football chant, and he requested we altered the image this year. The 32nd Regt RA Gp Quarter Master – Capt Neil Ashford – threw himself into the challenge enthusiastically, and appointed himself the

“Choir Master”.

The first practice in the Officers' Mess, Wolseley Barracks, was supported by 18 fervent albeit novice singers of all ranks, and without any musical accompaniment we launched into our first recital of “We Three Kings”. Apparently it was not a bad effort for beginners, but the advice from the Choir Master was: lift your diaphragm, breathe, look up and pause at the commas! The basses, baritones, tenors and sopranos were positioned together and, rather like drill, we all had to remember our position within the “choir”. The second hymn, “Once in Royal David's City”, was clearly not the choir's favourite and the Choir Master believed that we never really sang “City” with the same conviction as “Kings”! After numerous practices, the British entry for the carol service became confident in their ability, but something was missing.

The Choir Master, who I think believed we were auditioning for the next round of Pop Idols, came up with a cunning plan to use the piper and drummer, both on attachment with 32nd Regt RA from the Full Time



Reserve Scheme. Their performance sounded fantastic and aided in ensuring the British contribution was an improvement on last year's.

The choir sends their thanks to Capt Ashford for his continuing belief and dedication. If anybody would like to book the choir for any future events please contact the Choir Master on Ext. 148.

UNFICYP extends its thanks to Father Umberto Barato OFM and representatives of the Holy Cross Church for their cooperation and assistance on this occasion.

The Sonic Blue Experience (TSBE) in Cyprus!

The Sonic Blue Experience is a semi-professional rock and blues band based in the Salisbury area of the UK. Three members of the UK line-up are members of 32nd Regiment RA, which is based in Larkhill (a large military Garrison located on the edge of Salisbury Plain). Even though only two members were due to deploy to Cyprus, it was agreed that the TSBE would survive, albeit with a slightly different line-up.

After a great deal of talk with regard to musical direction (“man”), and finding a rehearsal area in the form of an old Nissan hut (“nice”), TSBE has been reformed in Cyprus. The new faces in the band are: SSgt. Leo Downes, the lead vocalist; Bdr. Brett Hindle on bass guitar; and Gnr. “H”, courtesy of the TA, on drums.

So what of the original pair from TSBE? There is Sgt. Richie Harris, simply one of the best lead guitarists that you are likely to see.... yes, he's that good, and not too far behind is Sgt. Barney Hall. Both have an on-stage musical understanding that is only acquired after years of playing at the highest level. Following two weeks of very committed rehearsals, the band played its first gig to a home crowd at the Ledra Palace Hotel on New Year's Eve. Never an easy crowd to play to, or indeed impress, 2002 was not only heralded for Sector 2 by a Scottish piper, but also by rave reviews for TSBE.



The band is managed by the QM Sector 2, Capt Neil Ashford, who can be reached on LPH ext. 148. Operations allowing, the manager can be contacted to discuss venues or indeed any musical project within the UN area. Music lovers should not miss hearing The Sonic Blue Experience – the 32nd Regt RA Group Rock and Blues Band!

6th Mountain Brigade: A Proud History

By Lt. Col. A. Alvarez

In 1879, Argentina's borders with the territories of native South Americans were scarcely 250 kilometres south of Buenos Aires. Since this region – Patagonia – had not yet been incorporated within the state, the area was known for lawlessness.

Under these circumstances, Congress passed a bill calling for a military campaign. The operations plan was master-minded by then Defence Minister General Julio Argentino Roca. At the same time, another bill established the Patagonian Government with a capital in Carmen de Patagones.

The operations plan was two-fold. First, different columns attacked simultaneously. Second, a full advance towards the line of the Negro river was made with five columns proceeding from an imaginary line that covered the distance from Buenos Aires to Mendoza.

The First Division, commanded by Roca himself with General Conrado Excelso Villegas as his Chief of Staff, set off from Carhué in Buenos Aires Province

towards the south, crossing the Colorado River and reaching Negro River on 25 May 1879, the anniversary of the first national government. There they set up headquarters on Choele Choel Island. They then proceeded across the desert to the confluence of the Neuquen and Limay Rivers, in what is now Neuquen Province.

As a result of this military campaign, the national government was able to effectively exercise its authority over the whole country for the first time. The constant warfare came to an end, and the interior boundaries disappeared. The land thus acquired by Argentina was used mostly for agriculture and cattle raising, overcoming the persistent economic crisis.

The peace and safety of the territory contributed to a rise in the immigration flow that had begun by the middle of the century. Ranches were established where previously there had been only open pampas, and new cities were founded. Patagonia had definitively become



part of Argentina.

The 6th Mountain Brigade "Tte Grl Conrado Excelso Villegas" inherited the spirit of those "Conquerors of the Desert", the troops who reached the Neuquen land in 1879. The soldiers of the Brigade, which comprises 20 percent of ARGCON's 17th rotation, honour its name in their homeland as well as on faraway peacekeeping missions.

Get Ready!

By Lt. P. Lara

Nobody knows where, when or to whom it could occur – but accidents, both ground and aerial, can happen. Together with the causes of an accident, the chance of successfully helping the casualties depends on previous training in order to reduce life risks and increase safety margins.

In Sector 1, that training is handled by the Air Liaison Officer Department (ALO) and a professional staff. Together, they cover the Sector by maintaining conditions of security for helicopter operations. The training includes rescue procedures in minefield areas and in accident situations, first aid assistance, and ground or aerial evacuation (MEDEVAC) procedures. It also features routine procedures including safety standard rules such as written take-off and landing instructions for passengers.

It is widely known that – using best practices, often based on lessons learned – you will save the most lives. Sometimes how you achieve the steps in lifesaving is more important than speed, but occasionally people who work on the line have no time for reactions: precision and rapid action in case of an accident in a rough scene is expected.

Thus, the main goal for Sector 1's ALO team is



The Argentine Task Force 18 executes a series of exercises led by S-3 of Camp San Martín during the six-month tour

to provide a complete mechanism for helping everyone ON THE LINE. The team is composed of Capt. Dr. Gabriela Godoy (Arg. Marines), Capt. Miguel Del Castillo (Bolivian Army commando), SSgt. David Giménez (Arg. Air Force Para-rescue), Maj. Eduardo Fogliato (Arg. Air Force A4-AR fighter pilot) and WOII Alejandro López (Arg. Air Force Flight Engineer). All are dedicated to carrying out their work so that the best possible result can be achieved should an accident occur.

Reserve Service With 32 Regt RA in Cyprus

By LBdr. Keenleyside
101 (Northumbrian) Regt RA (V)

After completing a four-year computing degree in the summer of 2001, I found myself at a bit of a loose end, and when the opportunity arose to participate in the Full Time Reserve Service (FTRS) programme, I literally jumped at the opportunity.

32 Regt RA had approached 101 Regt RA (V) for possible volunteers to assist them in their forthcoming United Nations tour of Cyprus on OP Tosca. This attachment would last for six months, from 6 December 2001 to 6 June 2002.

Prior to deployment, all FTRS personnel must attend the Reserve Training and Mobilisation Centre at Chilwell, near Nottingham. This training lasted 14 days, and encompassed basic military skills, administration and finance. The aim is to make the eventual deployment to the Regiment as trouble free as possible.

On 19 November, I deployed to 32 Regt RA at Roberts Barracks, Larkhill, where I was informed of my attachment to 74 Bty (The Battleaxe Company). Once introductions were completed, it was time to start the crowd control training. This proved to be fun, and also provided an excellent opportunity to get to know the members of Irish Bridge Troop.

Following the completion of pre-deployment training, which included a two-day battery-level exercise, and a three-day regimental exercise on Salisbury Plain Training Area, the regiment began

Christmas Pudding Competition: A Culinary Skills Test

The Regiment had been in Cyprus for just three weeks when the military chefs and hobby chefs had their culinary skills tested in an inter-troop Christmas pudding competition. Everyone involved gave 100 per cent in both enthusiasm and effort, and the standard produced was a credit to them all. The opportunities for chefs to demonstrate their flair in a competitive setting are limited, because it is more practical and cost effective to buy ready-made meals.

The rules of the competition stipulated that all entries had to be based on a traditional Christmas pudding and be large enough to feed ten people. The troop houses abided by these rules with the exception of Ortona Troop, who gained extra marks for originality by making a chocolate sauce, rather than brandy sauce. Bengal Troop really went to town, requiring fire equipment at hand just in case the flambé experiment went slightly awry.



its pre-deployment leave. Then, on 6 December, we left Larkhill on our short journey north to RAF Brize Norton. Here, we boarded our Egypt Air Airbus A321 bound for Larnaca, Cyprus.

Four and an half hours later, the Airbus descended through heavy cloud, and touched down in Larnaca to cool temperatures and heavy rain. From here we were quickly transported to Ledra Palace Hotel, the home of Sector 2, in Nicosia. Once reunited with baggage, my journey came to an end at Irish Bridge Troop House, in Sector 2 West, my home for the next six months.

The first two weeks on UN Peacekeeping duties have been both interesting and varied. Duties have included patrolling, talking to the Opposing Forces, playing for the UN rugby team, and playing the bagpipes on ceremonial duties in Nicosia.

There is no doubt in my mind that I will enjoy my time with 32 Regt RA Gp, and I look forward with great anticipation to the next five months in Cyprus. In this time, I intend to experience all the opportunities a FTRS tour such as this has to offer...and no doubt, will return to the UK with a much broader range of skills and experience, aiding my future in the TA with 101 (Northumbrian) Regt RA (V).

Judging the competition was difficult, but in the end the decision came down to Bengal Troop and City Troop. Bengal Troop gained extra marks for their presentation, but City Troop pipped them to the post by the effort and thought they applied during their preparation.

The role of the Hobby Chef cannot be underestimated during operational tours, as together with the military chefs they play an important part in the troop houses.



LEDRA... (with apologies to Rudyard Kipling)



While it's Ledra this an' Ledra that....

*I went into George's bar to get a pint of beer,
And old George 'e up an' sez: 'it's a two can rule in here!
So up the stairs I went again, for loggin' on's a joke,
But unsurprisingly once more, the bleedin' lot was broke.*

*O it's Ledra this, an' Ledra that, and Ledra know no
plight,
But it's saviour of the Palace, when the drums need
painting white!*

*I went into the Ops room, as quiet as can be,
They gave a lazy line troop room, but 'and 't none for me.
They'll stick me on the roof all day, and I'm never late,
And when it comes to stagin' on, that's me on Gurkha
gate!*

*For it's Ledra this an' Ledra that, an Ledra stop
complainin'.
But it's 'three cheers for Ledra Troop', when the Union
Jack needs changing.*

*We aren't no council workers, nor we aren't no gardeners
too,
But soldiers with a job to do, line troops just like you.
An' if sometimes you ask us, to paint or weed or tidy,
Forgive us when we tell you straight, 'we don't stop work
on Friday'.*

*While it's Ledra this an' Ledra that, an' Ledra don't you
stop!
But it's 'quick boys, fetch the Ledra lads!', when the
grannies start a COP!*

Caption Competition



- Hairobics
- Couch potato exercises
- **The ex-terminator (winner)**
- Battle of the Biceps Bulge!
- Give me back the TV remote!
- And this, folks, concludes our anatomy lesson...
- I swear, it wasn't there yesterday!
- Yikes... it was my right arm I had tattooed!
- The latest in Cyprus fashions.
- And this month's centrefold...
- Make it stop!
- It's the new diet – up three dress sizes in a week!
- The facial ticks are a minor side effect. But look at those muscles!

Did you have a good rest over the holiday period? Some of you came up with very entertaining captions, all of which are worth printing. As it so happens, Brian Kelly is this month's winner – we're just waiting to see what he wants as his prize....



Rather an unusual photo above – Argentinians who did not expect to be on "snow" duty. All entries should be submitted to the Public Information Office by:

15 February

Sector 4 Football Competition

By 1/Lt. L. Klima

Great football moments were the order of the day when Sector 4 organised a mini (4-a-side) football tournament to recognize the temperatures more suitable for sporting activities. Six teams with almost 50 football fanatics from SLOVCON, HUNCON and IRCON demonstrated their best sporting qualities, with each team carefully choosing a name such as Arcadia, Killer, Destroyers, and Gladiator. The tennis court at Camp General Stefanik in Famagusta witnessed the matches, held each Saturday and Sunday between 17 November and 2 December.

Although everybody wanted to win, all the matches were conducted in a very friendly atmosphere – in pleasing contrast to the violence we sometimes see between the professionals. The overall winner was the unbeaten Arcadia team, while the best player, scoring 17 goals, was Maj.



Horvath from the Destroyers team.

At the end of the tournament, CO Sector 4 gave awards for the first three teams and the best player, and invited all to a reception at the Officers' Club in Camp General Stefanik.

UNCIVPOL Day at the Races

On Boxing Day, 26 December, UNCIVPOL hosted another of its popular days at the races at the Nicosia Race Course. Warm, sunny conditions prevailed and the 140 guests participated in the social activities with enthusiasm. Entrance to the course included the use of an exclusive marquee complete with tote, TV monitors and bar.

All recipients were served with a buffet lunch and some drinks. Prizes included betting vouchers, bottles of wine and two Christmas hampers. A great day was had by all, thanks especially to Diana Bridger's efforts.



UNFICYP Hosts NIGHT OWL Orienteering Event for 2001

On Friday 21 December, UNFICYP hosted the 2001 Cyprus Services Night Orienteering Championships, otherwise known as the Night Owl Trophy, with courses planned and organised by Diana Bridger. Prizes were presented by Sqn Ldr Mike Edwards, Chairman of Cyprus Services Orienteering.

The overall Winning Team of the Night Owl Trophy 2001 (combined times on A and B courses) was once again from UNFICYP and consisted of Capt. Adam Spaul (A Course) from Sector Two, who teamed up with Kyriakos Michaelides from EDP (B Course). The "Under 18" winners on the C Course were Mark, Luke and Jessica Prendergast.



Waiting for the Leaders

