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# The Journal of the Royal Marines

## EDITORIAL COMMENT

On taking command as Head of Service of the Royal Marines, the Commandant General, Major General Dutton has written a message giving a very positive assessment of the state of his new command. As he explains the details of how busy the Corps is and why that is unlikely to change, readers would have noticed from within these pages not only the relentless pace of operations and exercises over the last couple of years, but also how enthusiastic everyone is for whatever task they are given. One quote worthy of note was made in a television interview by the CO of 42 Cdo whilst embarking in HMS *Ocean* for Ex *Aurora*. Lt Col 'Buster' Howes remarked that on taking command of the unit, he was told that *'the Commando only works at two speeds; flat out and stop. Stop was Christmas day.'* Although that would seem to apply to the whole Corps, one enduring thread throughout all our articles from RM Units is the value and relevance placed on the training received - in CTCRM, in units and during planned exercises. Without exception all units extol the benefits gained from training and exude confidence that they remain ready for any eventuality.

We have written much on the wider opportunities available to Royal Marines outside of the mainstream units. This can be no better illustrated than in the accounts that we have published recently on the exploits of individuals in Sierra Leone, Afghanistan, Kosovo, Brunei, Iraq and at home within the DLO. These articles are a cross-section of experiences encountered in just a few of the appointments in some 27 countries where we have Royal Marines employed. From their reports, there is no doubting the tremendous impact and input that these people have on their assignments within the wider defence community, or the immeasurable experience that they gain and bring back with them when they return to the fold.

For the retired Corps, this year has seen the largest attendance ever at the National Memorial (Graspan) Parade. It is heartening to see increasing numbers of the RMA and other former Royal Marines using this event as the focal point of remembrance, particularly in a year when many will also be commemorating 60th anniversary events. A large number of individuals and organisations have indicated that because of age and dwindling numbers, the 60th anniversary may be the last occasion that they will be able to travel abroad for their acts of remembrance. Those who are considering travelling any distance or require financial assistance to do so, are encouraged to consider taking advantage of the Lottery funded 'Heroes Return' scheme. The first batch of grants have been announced and there is still time to apply as the scheme runs until next year. More details can be found on page 221.

*Front Cover: HMS Albion, now becoming a familiar platform for Royal Marines, during Ex Joint Winter.*

*Back Cover: The RMA Standards at the Royal Marines National (Graspan) Parade. Photograph © Nick Panagakis Artwork by 'In-house Graphics'*

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Registered at Stationers' Hall

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