

## Presentation on Military Chaplaincy

Supporting Papers for:

The Naval Chaplaincy Service  
The Royal Army Chaplains' Department  
The Royal Air Force Chaplains' Branch



# The Naval Chaplaincy Service



**To be a happy and well motivated branch dedicated to the mission of the Church and to the needs of those of all faiths and none, and fully engaged with the Naval Service**

## Introduction

The Naval Chaplaincy Service provides spiritual and pastoral support to the personnel of the Naval Service and their families, irrespective of their religion or belief. Those serving personnel who belong to the other major world faiths (Buddhist, Hindu, Jewish, Muslim, Sikh) are supported by their own Civilian Chaplains to the Military (CCMs). These 5 full time CCMs minister to their respective faith groups across the Armed Forces.

The Royal Navy is the smallest of the 3 Services but is jealous of its position as the 'Senior Service'. Its first Battle Honour is dated 897A.D. won against the Danes! Naval chaplaincy offers an enormous variety of experience for chaplains serving in support of personnel at sea (both on and beneath the surface!), on land or in the air. We have unfortunately struggled to recruit clergy from an ever-diminishing pool and, as a result of these difficulties, we have increased the minimum age of those who may feel called to naval chaplaincy to 49.

## Denominational breakdown of Chaplains

	Regular	Royal Naval Reserve	Total
Church of England	37	3	40
Church of Scotland and Free Churches*	19	3	22
Roman Catholic	8	1	9
<b>Total</b>	<b>64</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>71</b>

\*The Church of Scotland and Free Churches Branch of the NCS may include clergy from the Church of Scotland, Methodist, Baptist and other denominations endorsed by the United Navy, Army and Air Force Board (currently URC, Elim Pentecostal and Assemblies of God).

## Operational Chaplaincy

50% of naval chaplains' appointments are in deploying billets, and the expectation is that chaplains alternate between appointments at sea or to the Royal Marines and shore bases at each job change. Appointments last approximately 2 years. This way chaplains' knowledge of operations and what the Naval Service is doing 'at the front line' is kept up to date.

## Chaplaincy Ethos

The Naval Chaplaincy Service is proud of its ranklessness within the Naval community. The unwritten rule is that naval chaplains adopt the rank of the person to whom they are speaking. With this in mind, chaplains can better live up to that description which can be found in Queen's and King's Regulations over the last 2 centuries, namely that the Royal Navy's chaplains are to be:

**“the friend and adviser of all on board”.**



# The Royal Army Chaplains' Department



To deliver a Chaplaincy Service in order to provide spiritual support, pastoral care, and moral guidance to the Army

## Introduction

For centuries the Royal Army Chaplains' Department (RACHD) has ministered to soldiers in times of peace and war. We are proud to provide spiritual support, moral guidance and pastoral care to all soldiers and their families, irrespective of religion or belief.

## Composition

	Regular	MSF	Reserve Territorial Army	Reserve Army Cadet Force	Total
<b>Church of England</b>	80	4	52	59	195
<b>Church of Scotland</b>	21	0	7	11	39
<b>Roman Catholic</b>	22	3	6	6	37
<b>United Board</b>	18	1	6	7	32
<b>Methodist</b>	11	3	1	6	21
<b>Total</b>	152	11	72	89	324

## Operations

The last decade has been one of the busiest for the RACHD since the Second World War. Multi-National operations in Iraq and Afghanistan, intervention in Sierra Leone and the drawdown of operations in the Balkans; at times the Department has deployed over 30 Chaplains simultaneously in support of Operations. Afghanistan is the main focus of the Department's operational commitment with each 6 month tour requiring 18 months of support: 6 months of training in preparation and 6 months of chaplaincy support to recovery and normalisation.

	Regular	Reserve Territorial Army	Total
<b>Afghanistan</b>	25	2	27
<b>Iraq</b>	9	1	10
<b>Other</b>	1	1	2
<b>Total</b>	35	4	39

## Selection

Candidates are sponsored by the Sending Churches and are selected at the Army Officer Selection Board (Chaplains) at Westbury three times a year. If successful they will hold the Queen's commission as a Chaplain to the Forces 4th Class and wear the relative rank of Captain. This initial commission is for 3 years but can be extended up to normal retirement age.

## The Royal Air Force Chaplains' Branch

### *Serving the Royal Air Force Community Through Prayer Presence and Proclamation*

Royal Air Force Chaplains are at the very heart of their community, responsible for the spiritual welfare of all, irrespective of rank or religious background. Chaplains are recruited from the main Christian denominations, and their ministry of Prayer, Presence, and Proclamation is lived out daily on RAF bases at home, overseas and in areas of conflict. In other words, where there are RAF personnel, a Chaplain will be with them.

Today's RAF is an expeditionary force, capable of projecting air power worldwide. Christian ministry within this community can be very rewarding but can equally mean personal sacrifice, physically, spiritually and mentally as the RAF seeks to serve the demands of the nation, often far from home and in places of danger.

To enable their ministry, RAF Chaplains hold a relative rank. This recognises a dual loyalty, both to their Sending Church but also to their Service, whilst allowing them to serve all ranks and levels of the RAF with integrity. The Royal Air Force expects its Chaplains to provide, Spiritual Leadership, Moral Guidance, and Pastoral Care.

It is the story of God's love in action, and as one airman said to his chaplain during an operational deployment, ***'You are here to remind us that there is something better and bigger than us out there – that God loves us'***.

### **Recruitment, Training, and Development**

Potential Chaplains go through a rigorous recruitment process, which begins by examining issues of vocation, before attending the Officer and Air Crew Selection Centre at RAF Cranwell, which tests physical, intellectual and temperamental suitability for RAF Service. Successful applicants attend a 13 week military training course, followed by specialist Chaplaincy training.

Throughout their ministry with the RAF, Chaplains follow a clearly defined programme of training and personal development, with opportunities for study from post graduate to Doctoral level and beyond.

RAF Chaplains are strongly committed to the training and education of the RAF community through the delivery of the Beliefs and Values Programme in Training Establishments which is integral to the whole training system and is part of understanding the Moral Component of Air Power. Beyond the Training System, Chaplains are regularly involved in offering courses on RAF Units, covering subjects from Listening Skills to Bereavement and Loss and, of course, Christian Basics.

### **Worship and Mission in the Front Line**

As part of the responsibility to provide Spiritual Leadership, Chaplains provide worship, and engage in outreach and faith building activities. Worship can range from the great state occasions to a tent in the desert or daily worship in the Station Church. Alpha, The Marriage Course and a range of other similar courses take place across the community at

home and overseas, and most vitally the operational environment. Spiritual Leadership also includes the role of 'prophetic voice' and the opportunity to speak and to influence for good, and often comes out of pastoral encounters.

## **Establishment**

The Chaplains Branch is established for 77 Regular Chaplains, 1 Royal Auxiliary Air Force (RAuxAF) Additional Duties Commitment Chaplain (3 days a week) and 15 RAuxAF Chaplains. however the Branch is currently 16% undermanned; although a vigorous recruitment campaign is producing strong results. There are currently 65 Regular Chaplains, 2 RAuxAF Chaplains, and 2 Chaplains Assistants. A regular intake of new chaplains is required to maintain an appropriate level of experience.

## **Denominational Breakdown**

	<b>Regular</b>	<b>RAuxAF</b>	<b>Chaplains Assistants</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Church of England</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>51</b>
<b>Church of Scotland and Free Churches</b>	<b>15</b>		<b>1</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>Roman Catholic</b>	<b>6</b>			<b>6</b>
				<b>69</b>

## **Operations**

**Iraq** - 2009 saw the end of Operation TELIC (Iraq) although chaplaincy support to the small enduring commitment in the Middle East continues through an RAF Chaplain based at Al Udeid in Qatar. Four Chaplains deployed to this location in 2009.

**Afghanistan** – Operation HERRICK continues to dominate RAF Chaplain's Branch support to operations. Twelve RAF Chaplain's deployed during 2009 to Kandahar, Camp Bastian and Kabul. Ministering to all deployed personnel in their location, whether RAF, Army, Royal Marine or a member of the Coalition Forces, they have received the unanimous support and praise from operational commanders and military personnel alike.

## **Summary**

On joining the Royal Air Force, every new entrant meets an RAF Chaplain on their first day. That Chaplain makes a commitment that, wherever their RAF Service may take them, they will meet an RAF Chaplain, seeking to fulfil the Branch motto:

***'To serve: not to be served'***