



MUSA QAL 'EH MAIL

2nd Battalion,
The Royal Regiment of Fusiliers
OP HERRICK 10 (Apr – Oct 2009)
June Edition



Issue 3

Battle Group (North West)

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EDITORIAL

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COMMANDING OFFICER'S INTRODUCTION

SECOND FUSILIERS BATTLE GROUP COMPOSITION:

Battle Group Headquarters
B Coy Group
C Coy (Influence Group)
Recce Group
HQ Coy
Fire Support Group
LAD (REME)
RLC (CHEFS)
RAMC
AGC (SPS)
AGC (ETS)

Attached Arms

C Coy 2 Royal Welsh (Warrior group)
206 Pioneer Sqn RLC (Mastiff Group)
5 RRF (TA)
3 SCOTS Operational Mentoring Liaison Team (OMLT)
52 Niagara Bty 19 Regt Royal Artillery
33 Armd Engineer Sqn
216/16 Royal Signals
Royal Military Police
OCC-D

Detached members of 2 RRF

A Coy Gp attached to 2 Rifles BG

As I write we are sitting at about the midpoint of the tour. Much has been achieved already and everyone can be justifiably proud of their contribution. Difficult decisions have been made and we have sustained our fair share of injuries. However, much is yet to be done and I am confident that collectively we have the resolve to ensure that we work right up to the last day to improve the lives of the ordinary Afghan citizen. In Musa Qala the month has revolved around Operation Mar Lewe and its aftermath. The operation

itself was a huge success, as we caught the enemy off guard and were able to seize the important village of Yatimchay with minimal casualties either to us or to local nationals. You may have read the slightly sensational reporting of the operation from Chris Hughes our embedded journalist from the Daily Mirror. Since the operation the main focus has been to stabilise the village. This has required effort on a number of different lines of activity from engaging the Insurgents to sorting out compensation claims for damage to compounds that occurred as much as a year ago. Elsewhere in the North of Musa Qala B Coy and Roshan Tower have been subjected to frequent attacks from enemy direct and indirect fire. Thus far we have been able to deal with these attacks robustly, causing attrition to the enemy with little damage to us. A Coy in FOB Nalay have again been busy and are making real inroads into improving security, and understanding the needs of the local population. I am glad to report that all the casualties sustained by A Coy this month are recovering well with no indication as yet of any long term problems.

Finally this month I would like to pay tribute to the great work being done by everyone back on Rear Party who are doing so much to ensure that we can concentrate on the job in hand out here. In particular I would like to single out the events committee who have worked so hard and given freely of their time to make the various families activities such a success.

2 RRF BG (NW) Update

Operation MAR LEWE (Snake Wolf)



Second Fusiliers Battle group take back control of Yatimchay from the TALIBAN

Operation MAR LEWE has dominated Second Fusilier Battlegroup's activity this month. This operation already covered extensively in the national press saw the Fusiliers clear the town of Yatimchay of Taliban bringing it into the government controlled focus area.

Since the Battlegroup assumed command in Musa Qal'eh, the majority of enemy activity focused on the defensive line north of Yatimchay. The short distance between PB Yubaraj and the enemy front line saw almost daily exchanges of fire. This level of violence meant that locals had moved out months ago leaving Yatimchay a ghost town. The mission was simple; bring Yatimchay into governmental control to allow the local residents to return to their homes and live without fear of Taliban intimidation. From the outset the operation was not solely a Fusilier endeavour. The local knowledge our Afghan Army and Police counterparts provided was invaluable, after all many of them owned property within Yatimchay itself and others have been fighting over this area for decades.



The Commanding Officer ensures that the ANA and ANP are aware of the initial planning stages

2 RRF BG (NW) Update (Cont)



Lt Col Charlie Calder runs the Battlegroup through there objectives

D-Day for the operation was set for 29 May. The days prior to the operation saw more forces descending on Musa Qal'eh DC to support the Battlegroup bringing along specialists in reconnaissance, electronic warfare and countering the ever present IED threat.



Recce PI form up with the rest of the BG in Musa Qal'eh DC awaiting to deploy south to Yatimchay

2 RRF BG (NW) Update (Cont)



B Coy 2 RRF secure the line of departure for C Coy 2 R WELSH

Following Recce's deception and engagement on the Taliban northern positions, the operation started with B Company securing a line of departure to the east of Yatimchay to allow C Coy of 2 R WELSH, our Armoured Infantry Company, to isolate the southern portion of the town. Simultaneously both Afghan Army and Police mentored by OMLT teams swept into Yatimchay from the south clearing compounds of Taliban. The enemy resisted for a short while before laying down their arms and fleeing, and it soon became obvious on the discovery of two separate IED factories a much larger force had previously been present. By securing the main objectives in the south of Yatimchay the enemy were unable to reinforce or counter attack effectively. Having been moved forward in the Warriors B Coy were now able to

sweep through the middle portion of Yatimchay unopposed. Two objectives were left untouched due to the assessed concentrations of IEDs laid in defensive belts prior to the operation. After clearing the ground, attention switched to being able to hold it effectively. C Coy were moved and relocated to a new patrol base to the south of the town along with a checkpoint to the north. The Afghan army formed two separate patrol bases covering the central portion of Yatimchay. As expected the enemy responded to the concessions they were forced to make. By which time the Battlegroup was suitably protected.



Members of 2 RRF BG start clearing the compounds



WO1 RSM Bland assists with the casualty extraction



The Medical Emergency Response Team (MERT) arrives to collect the casualty



The US IEDD team clear the IED factories

2 RRF BG (NW) Update (Cont)

Almost immediately after the town had been cleared locals were seen to move back in. All were grateful that the Taliban had been forced out and looked forward to rebuilding their lives once again. This operation is not a single event, it is enduring. Having cleared the Taliban we have but only started in assisting the people of Yatimchay. The weeks and months ahead will see development and reconstruction both of which rely on security for success.



RSM Bland searches local villagers prior to a Shura



Maj Mason, OC C Coy ensures that the village elders are fully briefed on what ISAF forces are trying to achieve



Members of C Coy 2 R WELSH escort the locals back into their properties



Normal pattern of life starts to be restored in Yatimchay

Insert provided by Capt James Fern – Operations Officer 2 RRF

A Company Group FOB Nolay Sangin

Most will, I'm sure, already have heard the very sad news of the wounding of Fusilier John Keegans in a vehicle minestrike on 7 June. Mercifully, his injuries appear to be much lighter than we had first feared, and he is now receiving the best of care and doing well in Selly Oak. All at FOB NOLAY wish him, and his next-bed neighbour Captain Tony Harris every possible success in their recoveries and rehab; we hope to see them during R&R, and also, with luck, in Cyprus for some serious drinking decompression.



Cpl O'Sullivan and interpreter question some locals

This month has seen the company group continue to make inroads into the enemy's weapons and explosives supplies and begin to cement our relationship with the local people around the FOB. Finally having won a modicum of trust, we are now putting some effort at helping the people to improve their lives by providing some low-level assistance with schooling and irrigation. CSgt Jackson has even managed to liberate a replacement wheelchair from Bastion for our disabled local shopkeeper. It's a slow process, and the relationship is fragile, the more so because the people are terrified of enemy retribution if they are seen to 'collaborate' with ISAF. There are a few brave souls out there willing to take a chance to improve things for their families – our job is to channel some help their way and keep the insurgents off their backs while they make the most of it.

We have also been conducting some longer-duration patrols with the aim of maintaining a longer-term presence in some of the areas that traditionally have received less attention. The policy of 'getting in the enemy's face, and staying there', seems to be having an effect – on the last 48 hour patrol, we made some more finds and intercepted a number of enemy radio messages containing words to the effect of 'don't try anything, if you do they'll stay longer, and we don't want that'. Things like this cheer the troops up enormously, so we're all hoping the enemy stick at it.

Inside the wire, I'm pleased to report that moustaches are on the wane. Sgt Metcalfe's is fighting a valiant rearguard action, but it's isolated and seems unlikely to succeed. Fusilier Ramshaw is heroically maintaining a rock-steady six hours a day on the PSP during radio stag, and can now juggle three nets and *Juiced 2* with only very minor losses of vital tactical information. Sgt Valentine appears to have embarked on a tan-off with the rest of the company, including the interpreters, and seems set to triumph, having tanned himself out of the visible spectrum some days ago.

With much regret the CSM has relegated his quad bike to FOB only duty, having proved through exhaustive testing that it doesn't work very well in the Green Zone. This is a shame, as his 'rolling dismount with half-pike and vile expletives' contact-drill manoeuvre was coming on a treat. He intends to write it up for *The Infantryman* as something that ought to be taught at Brecon.



A Coy FSG

Having now done it 'live' twice, the FSG are now past masters at the CASEVAC of injured team members, and are keen to pass on their experience to the rest of the company. CSgt McCowliff and a small team of planners are rumoured to be constructing a CASEVAC simulator for the good and benefit of the rifle platoons. Details are sketchy, but I can reveal that the prototype simulator involves the 'trainee' carrying his own body weight in full jerrycans up a mocked up, greased helicopter ramp, while the 'instructors' blast rotor noise out of a stereo and launch dust and gravel at him through a giant, red-hot hair dryer. Some work still to do, but we think they're onto a winner.

A Company Group FOB Nolay Sangin

Cpl Throssell has risen manfully to the challenge of running the Battlegroup Logistic Node and can now hook a load onto an erratically hovering 30-year old ex-Soviet helicopter, flown by a half-drunk Lithuanian faster than you can say 'don't touch the hook'. He is also rapidly becoming indispensable as the NCP car parks manager; laying out the marshalling area for the regular resupply convoys. His latest effort, for a large night convoy, was a masterpiece, involving just over 11,000 cyalumes (all colours) and around 23 kilometres of mine tape. A number of fast jets transiting at high level commented on how bright and cheerful it looked, even from the very edge of space, while one

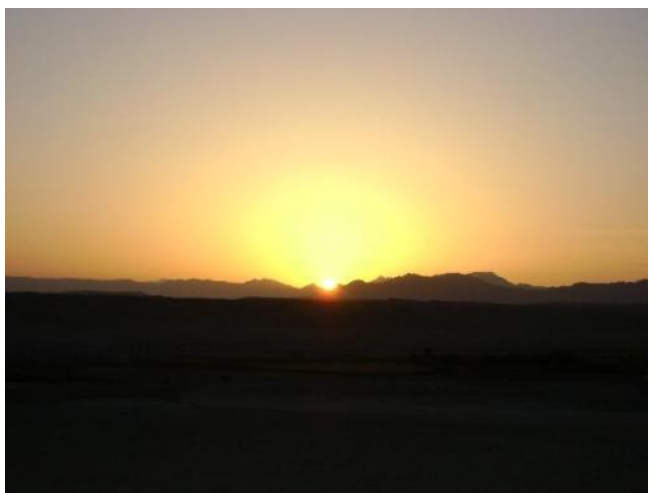
American pilot (an East-coaster, we assume) was struck by the similarity to JFK International. It must have looked less obvious from ground-level however, as the ever-vigilant boys of the Royal Logistics Corps still managed to drive around it the wrong way.

I am sad to report the demise of the table football set, which lost its brave fight against nail-fatigue this week, after a long illness. Sgt Hanrahan is now working on a regimental flag card table, with chess, snakes and ladders, backgammon and 'HERRICK Monopoly' (*..do not pass go, go directly to the Bastion Theatre Internment Facility...*) boards set into the four white quadrants. In his spare time he is still something to do with the intelligence cell. Meanwhile, LCpl Harding-Prior (2 Platoon) has produced a very creditable reproduction of the Regimental Cipher on the wall of the headquarters. A true *magnum opus* lovingly rendered in black marker on non-drip gloss, it's magnificent, and a credit to its creator. H-P was quite pleased with himself, until we told him he had to colour it in as well.

Equally sadly, Dave the donkey has now returned (of his own accord) to his rightful owner, taking with him his bespoke hat. He is missed by all except the medical officer, who is still to be heard muttering to himself about 'bloody stupid sentimentality' and 'health hazards'. We all know that the Doc is, of course, absolutely right, and that the theatre policy on not keeping pets is extremely clear. These rules exist for a reason, and are very important. (So don't tell him about the chicken or the puppy).

Finally, many, many thanks to all those at home who continue to bombard us with parcels, letters and other goodwill messages. The Father's Day handprints sheet was a particular hit and is hanging in the company headquarters for all to see. Please keep them coming – they make a real difference.

Insert provided by Maj Jo Butterfill – OC A Coy Gp 2 RRF



Afghanistan Sun-Rise

B Company Group Woqab



B Coy prepare to move off after the artillery barrage

June commenced with 6 Platoon and the Fire Support Group returning from Operation MAR LEWE (Snake Wolf) and rejoining the company in Patrol Base Woqab. B Company managed to make the national press again, courtesy of two embedded journalists from the Daily Mirror for the duration of the operation. The pair of them followed 6 Platoon back to Woqab and managed to create another two stories from the experience. Fortunately the company was not called on to conduct a fighting clearance of the village of Yatimchay as had been planned for, the enemy had withdrawn following a pre-planned artillery barrage. The company occupied and searched a compound for future use as an Afghan Army location subsequently named Patrol Base Atal (Pashtu for hero!).

During the absence, 7 and 9 Platoons had been busy. One afternoon a local national arrived at the patrol base being carried by members of his family. He had trodden on an improvised explosive device, following treatment by the company medic he was extracted to the hospital in Camp Bastion. The next day, one of the Afghan National Army soldiers living with 7 Platoon shot himself in the leg. Again the medic stabilised the casualty and he was extracted to Bastion.

Shortly after the reunion, 9 Platoon were extracted to reform C Company with responsibility for the central region of Musa Qal'eh surrounding the District Centre and the Bazaar. It was a real shame to lose Lt Jamie Piper, Sgt Dog Harris and the remainder of 9 Platoon however the need was greater elsewhere. They were soon settled in to the White House in the District Centre. With them went WO2 Ned Miller (callsign Lone Wolf) as their Company Sergeant Major. He had been with the company for over a month as the Influence Officer in Patrol Base Woqab and had made some headway in organising the local farmers and deciding where they can grow maize this summer. Cpl Mole took over from WO2 Miller and commenced growing a beard. At the time of writing it is displaying ginger tendencies!



Cpl Wright B Coy sits and wonders why have C Coy left me?

In mid June 7 Platoon, company HQ and a fire support group were attached to the Operational Mentoring and Liaison Team (OMLT) to undertake Operation MAR TAJOB (Snake Surprise) in Nabu Aka, a village to the east of Woqab. The operation involved providing over watch and potentially fire support to the Afghan National Army and OMLT as they swept through the village searching for weapons and Taliban fighters. A number of weapons were found, suspicious individuals arrested and one Taliban fighter found down a well!

The other most notable significant activity has been the hand over of a number of officers to take over posts within the company. The first to arrive was 2Lt Tony Bryant who deployed on Operation MAR LEWE within days of joining the Battalion. He took over 6 Platoon from Lt Stephen Dean who moves to the Infantry Training Centre (Catterick) to train recruits. Next Maj Richard Coates arrived and took over as Company Commander from Maj Jez Lamb. Finally 2Lt Noel Webb has joined the Company and will replace Capt Matt O'Hare who moves to command Roshan Tower in early July.

All those left within Patrol Base Woqab are still busy ensuring the security of the local area for the population of Towghi Kelli and Showaruz (the surrounding villages).

Insert provided by Maj Jez Lamb MC – OC B Coy Gp 2 RRF

C Company Influence Group

What a difference a month makes. Last month I reported we had shrunk in size as a company group. This month I can report that C Coy once again firmly features on the Battlegroup orbat. Not only have we received the lion's share of new draft from ITCC we also welcomed back 9 Platoon from WOQAB (where they had been working with B Company and doing an exceptional job) and took under command the Recce Group. The company strength has risen to 70 and with our own AO to influence and dominate, within the 'ring of steel', C Company are once again fulfilling a vital role for the BG.



C Coy Gp rehearsing for EVCPs

With the reformation of the company came the good news that the Fusiliers would enjoy 5* luxury accommodation in the White House, for some a far cry from the tented city in WOQAB. Not only do they have a solid roof over their heads and ceiling fans (when they work), but also running water, although you would be a brave man to wash in it. As usual the young chaps have made the most of what is on offer with a communal TV room and social area all being put in place, where it is not uncommon to find the guys playing poker, when not on patrol, or trying to develop a full on all over body tan. Fus Aimies and Barnard are doing pretty well so far, so no need for that trip to Ibiza now guys, in clocking up some high quality UV time. But for our redder brethren the sunshine is definitely to be

avoided. All that is missing is a paddling pool although the 2IC, Capt Musson, was muttering about bringing one back from leave.

Now that three months of the tour are complete the first tranche of R&R departed on the 18 June. By the time the newsletter goes to print most of 10 Platoon will have been on or about to go on R&R. There is a definite buzz about the place as people excitedly look forward to spending some time back in the UK. I have it on good authority that some of the Fusiliers from 9 Platoon, who have just returned from their R&R, managed to spend almost all their operational allowance in one go. How? Don't ask!

There has been no let up with the heat. Over 40 degrees by day is the norm but although the temperature drops at night the walls of the compounds retain the daytime heat extremely well so when lying in bed at

night it is like being cooked slowly in an oven. The company managed to survive the outbreak of D&V earlier on in the month, when there was many a visitor to Camp TENCO, without too many falling ill. Those that succumbed did not fare too well. Rapid weight loss was witnessed although it could be argued in some cases it was much needed.



Cpl Miller training the ANP in weapon handling

C Company Influence Group



C Coy Gp at KUNJAK OP mentoring the ANP

With regard operations the big news of the month was the Battlegroup operation conducted in the south of the AO that pushed the Taliban out of Yatimchay, a key village in a contested area. This was a huge success with many of the lads in the company taking part. Since then the company has been making its presence felt in the central focussed area with plenty of patrols. The interaction with the locals has been excellent and whilst not yet fluent the guys are doing their best to develop some rudimentary PASHTU. Mentoring the police has been going very well and Cpl Miller has taken it upon himself to personally ensure their weapon handling and patrolling skills are up to his exceptionally high standards. Fortunately he is a patient fellow and no doubt he will be rewarded with honorary membership of the ANP. More recently the

company had a significant find of a large explosive device whilst on patrol. The device had been buried on a route used by ISAF and following excellent confirmation drills by Cpl Henderson and his team, bomb disposal declared a container filled with 20Kgs of explosive material. We had a new addition patrolling with us this month, Neil the attack dog, who has made himself well known to the guys. He is a particularly bouncy chap with quite a bark looks like he has a bite to match. Despite this the boys have taken him to heart to the point he became a priority for evacuation when he went man down in the heat. However, a quick dip in a stream soon got him back on track. July looks to be particularly busy for us already which will be reported on in the next instalment

We continue to be very grateful for the letters, parcels, emails and eblueys that are being sent out. The bed sheet with painted hands and messages from the children was a particular hit and the sheet has been draped in the cookhouse.

Finally we have had only a couple of birthdays this month Fus Cole 98 and Fus Davies. Many happy returns to you both from everyone in C Company! And we welcomed seven new members to the company straight from ITCC, Fusiliers Anderson, Brereton, Davenport, Jewkes, Thompson (brother of CSgt Thompson) and Thorne. All are settling in well.



Sgt Harris, WO2 Taylor and CSM Miller enjoying local delicacies

Reconnaissance Group



It seems like only yesterday that I was writing last months update, but looking back at all the things the Recce Gp has been up to since then, it almost seems like a lifetime ago. The end of May saw the Recce Gp deployed on OP MAR LEWE (Pashtu for 'Snake Wolf'), an operation which saw the Battle-Group take the TB held village of Yatimchay to the south of Musa Qal'eh. No doubt you've read about it in the papers, so suffice to say it was highly successful. Returning from MAR LEWE, Recce assumed the role of a QRF (quick reaction force), until all the force elements of the BG had returned from the aftermath of MAR LEWE – building patrol bases etc.

Capt Groves on Op MAR LEWE

On the 7th, Recce took over HIMAL OP, an outpost to the west of the DC, from the Mastiff Gp. HIMAL OP, situated on high ground, overlooks much of Route Green – our resupply route – and as such is an target for enemy IED laying. We were there for 10 days all in all, and by the end of it had definitely worked out who the best cooks were. On 10 man rations, it soon became clear, and we had some very good meals, and some excruciatingly bad ones!

Returning to the DC on the 17th, Recce joined the C Coy Influence Gp. Responsible for the security of the inner area of the Musa Qal'eh focus area, which has now expanded following Op MAR LEWE. This has seen Recce out on the ground every day, still available for Battlegroup Recce tasking, but a bit busier than before, which the lads are grateful for. The busier the better as far as we are concerned. As I write, we are keying up for another Op, but I'm afraid you'll have to wait till next month for the details.



LCpl Lee in over watch at HIMAL OP

As I write, it's exactly a month until the Recce Gp will be home on R+R and we absolutely can not wait. Not long now and we'll be relaxing in an English summer!

Insert provided by Capt Nick Groves – OC Recce Gp 2 RRF



Recce and C Coy on the HLS getting ready for Eagle VCP's



Recce PI carrying out security patrols through MSQ DC

BG (NW) FSG PB Roshan Tower

Since my last submission to the Musa Qal'eh Mail there have been several noteworthy events. We have seen enemy activity remain fairly steady within the primary arcs of ROSHAN TOWER (RT). We have seen a spike in enemy attacks against RT in the last week, with 2 x small arms fire engagements and 1 x double RPG attack. These are the first attacks against this location since early April, and despite their inaccurate nature it has served as a stern warning to the enduring nature of the threat here.



The Dragon Gun firing 1 of 7 rounds during contact with the enemy on 2 Jun 09

The 02 Jun 09 saw the most significant kinetic activity we were involved in. We identified enemy forces (EF) moving into position to attack friendly forces (FF) call signs conducting a cordon and exploitation operation, following the discovery of an IED. We positively identified (PID) these EF with an assortment of weapons moving into position allowing us to engage them with 7 x 105mm direct fire Light Gun rounds, 2 x Javelin Missiles, and numerous Heavy Machine Gun (HMG) rounds. This served to defeat the EF prior to their attack and inflicted numerous EF casualties. Since then EF movement with the Northern AO has been minimal, which follows the pattern set following previous engagements where EF have sustained losses in contacts with FF.

Cpl Mick Hughes deputising as Mortar Section Commander, in the absence of Cpl Lee Savage on R and R, has been busy the last few days and nights with the Mortar Section firing large quantities of smoke and illum rounds. The last few weeks have seen the arrival of the final members of the TA Bury MG Section to bolster Cpl Ray Shambayati's GPMG (SF) Section, who have been busily establishing the guns in positions to deter and interdict the recent attacks against RT.

Morale remains high at RT with all of the various specialists still pulling together allowing the team to function very well. We have seen the start of troops deploying on some well deserved R and R, and we expect the first of them back soon. RT 2IC WO2 Steve Mitchinson continues to crack the whip to improve the overall force protection measures and the standard of living. The arrival of a replacement fridge freezer has gone down particularly well, allowing the troops to abandon the 'water bottle in a wet sock' trick to keep their water cool (believe me it works).

We would all like to congratulate RT soldiers Fus Rundle and Fus Walker and their respective partners on their new additions to the family, whilst they were on R and R. All of the troops at RT send their love and best wishes to all those back home.

Insert provided by Capt Martin Hedley– OC ROSHAN TOWER 2 RRF



2IC Roshan Tower organises the troops during a wadi re-supply. Movement in the Greenzone with vehicles is not as easy as it might seem

Fusiliers Forward Echelon in FOB Edinburgh



FOB EDI continues to tick over in its usual way, moments of frantic activity followed by days of routine maintenance and camp security. We have had several key personalities coming and going over the last month. We had a visit from the padre who was kind enough to carry out a church service for us, he made it clear that it was a voluntary attendance and was surprised that every body in camp turned out for it, he thought this was due to divine intervention, I believe it was due to the CSM, s intervention. We have had a new detachment of Royal engineers who have been busy digging drainage ditches and enhancing the perimeter and camp security amongst other things. We have had several visits by other units including the RSM of 40 Reg RA who kept conveniently not getting on any outbound helis to avoid going back to bastion where his sunbathing would have been severely curtailed. Other visitors have been caught out by the more than 24 hours in EDI and you're on the Sangars rule. We also say a fond farewell to Maj Skelton who has left us in order to take over OC rear party back in Hounslow. The chefs arranged a quiz night and this was well supported with 12 teams entering from all cap badges in EDI, with prizes for 1st 2nd and 3rd, this was won by the circle of knowledge team

(OC, CSM, CQMS) last place was claimed by the joint Helicopter force (JHFA) a mixture of Signals and AAC troops who claimed they would come first due to only being up against thick Infanteers. CQMS party still remain the main players (and eaters) in the running of this place trying to ensure that the G4 train moves smoothly form BSN through us and beyond. We look forward to welcoming the New OC in the very near future I am sure he will settle in to FOB routine in no time. Our spare time is filled with following big brother, we are all big fans of Charlie (who is by the way from the same estate as the CQMS) now I know why some of there characteristics are the same. We are also trying to keep on top of fitness here the previous running route has been shortened due to security issues, the new one is 200 laps equates to 1 mile but at least we will get a chance to use the gym now the OC has gone. The first troops have left for R&R and that has given everyone a boost knowing that it will not be too long before we get all some time at home to see our loved ones.

Insert provided by WO2 Reynolds – CSM FOB EDI 2 RRF



Royal Engineers complete the camp security tasking



Maj Skelton (OC FOB EDI) returns to Hounslow to assume the role of OC Rear party

Fusiliers Rear Echelon in Camp Bastion

Another month gone in Bastion. Does not seem like 4 weeks ago (more like 6) that I was bringing the sterling efforts of our resupply team to your attention. This month has been even more challenging due to the reduced manning for R & R and some quite substantial additional commitments. Nevertheless we carve our way to glory. No shying away from adversity for the stalwarts of the Bastion Boys (and more increasingly girls).

This month, as promised I will primarily concentrate on the J1 team (yes there is one, no need for that!) The J1 personnel administration for the Battle Group in theatre is headed up by everybody's best friend (until they've had their R & R) Lt Jenny Long. For the most part her team has consisted of Mr Denny the RAWO, Cpl Fitzsimmons the Mastiff Clerk, LCpl Naraukawa and Pte Debire from our very own Admin Office. Latterly however someone must have kissed a frog because Mr Denny has turned into a blonde sergeant of the female variety, Sgt Mayhew.

The admin staff take care of all the normal peace time personnel and general clerical requirements as well as those specific to deployment. Working from the JOC with limited connectivity and even less access to many of the soldiers being administered, they really put the hours in trying to stay ahead of the game. For Miss Long the R & R plot has been a bit of a jelly nailing exercise but I think she would claim that now she has nailed it.

One of the additional duties held by Mr Den.....(sorry, smoke break)..ny was the handling of the Locally Employed Civilians (LECs). This has been handed over recently to WO2 Gilkes attached to us from the



MG PI at Bury. This had to be done as the LECs refused to carry on working unless they were paid in dollars rather than cigarettes and Irn Bru.

The rest of the team are kept busy keeping the stats and returns in order, paying the soldiers and most importantly keeping the QM supplied in freshly ground coffee, jammy dodgers and sausage rolls. Pte Dabire has a particular flair for collecting the Guard box. Whenever she goes down to fetch it for some reason the chefs treat her very favourably unlike Cpl Fitzsimmons who by the time this is printed will have returned from his most eagerly awaited R & R. Hopefully he got away with bluffing his misses that he has given up smoking and visits the gym.

At a Shura conducted by Q Denny it was agreed that the LECs would be paid in Irn Bru on a trial basis.

Next month is the turn of the CIS (bleep) and MT (beep) teams. You wouldn't want to meet them in a dark alley.

Until then remember everything you eat and drink has passed through the hands of the Bastion Boys, in fact scratch that, maybe that's not such a good thing to remember.

Insert Provided by Maj M McCarthy Quarter Master 2 RRF

Facilities within PB WOQAB



Full outdoor toilet facilities



Fully air-conditioned showers



Communal rest areas



4 star accommodation



Selection of Italian food available



Outdoor swimming pool with pets corner



Pool side sun lounges Remember book early and beat the Germans



High speed internet system

Next Month FOB NOLAY Facilities !