

£15k sponsorship boost for ChamberFORCE

The relaunch event took place at the Amazon Fulfilment Centre in Dunfermline on August 23. Amazon staff and senior management had the opportunity to engage with a variety of military stands, vehicles and equipment.

Regional Learning & Development Officer, Lieutenant Commander Garth Atkinson RNR, represented the Royal Navy. 154 (Scottish) Regiment Royal Logistic Corps (RLC), 225 (Scottish) Medical Regiment and 7th Battalion The Royal Regiment of Scotland (7 SCOTS) attended the event to represent the British Army. 603 (City of Edinburgh) Squadron Royal Auxiliary Air Force represented the Royal Air Force. Regular units, including soldiers from 2nd Battalion The Royal Regiment of Scotland (2 SCOTS), also attended.

Vehicles on display included a Foxhound Protected Patrol Vehicle, Field Ambulance, and an EPLS MK3 truck. Visitors had the chance to get hands on with equipment including Army Bergens as well as trying out a virtual reality simulator.

The tri-service stands were followed by a presentation of a £15,000 cheque for sponsorship funding from Amazon to ChamberFORCE. The funding will be available over a three-year period. Fife Chamber of Commerce Chief Executive Alan Mitchell accepted the cheque on behalf of the other participating Chambers from Amazon Dunfermline General Manager Jamie Strain.

ChamberFORCE is a partnership programme between selected Chambers of Commerce in Scotland and their local Navy, Army and RAF units, designed to bring tangible benefits to Chamber members and to Defence. The founding Chambers of Commerce have all signed the Armed Forces Covenant and achieved ERS Gold Awards: Fife Chamber of Commerce, Dundee & Angus Chamber of Commerce, Moray Chamber of Commerce and Dunbartonshire Chamber of Commerce.

Highland RFCA first launched the initiative in November 2018, with the aim of bringing the participating Chambers of Commerce and Armed Forces Reserve units closer together. Defence Relationship Management (DRM) supported the initial pilot.

ERS Gold Award holder, Amazon, sponsored a virtual leadership event with Fife Chamber back in 2020. Keen to develop the relationship with other Chambers of Commerce, Amazon is sponsoring the next phase of the ChamberFORCE project. Amazon is now the official corporate sponsor of ChamberFORCE for the next three years, enabling the participating stakeholders to deliver advocacy for Defence.

This year, through its Military Programme, Amazon will recruit over 300 veterans, reservists and military spouses in over 35 different jobs. These jobs range from health & safety specialists, engineers, sales managers and team leaders to senior managers.

Amazon was awarded the Employer of the Year Award at the Ex-Forces in Business Awards for two years in succession for its outstanding efforts in supporting ex-services personnel and military spouses.

Alan Mitchell, Fife Chamber Chief Executive, said:

On behalf of all the participating Chambers of Commerce, I want to thank Amazon for embracing ChamberFORCE.

We are all very excited about working with the Amazon team and our friends at HRFCA to create an exciting programme of events that will strengthen the bonds between the businesses and the military units across the four regions that we represent.

Amazon has benefited enormously from employing ex-military personnel and reservists, and we want ChamberFORCE to provide a platform for many other businesses to enjoy the same benefits.

Dunbartonshire Chamber of Commerce was represented by Chief Executive Damon Scott, and Dundee and Angus Chamber by Sarah Young, Events and Marketing Manager. Scottish Chambers of Commerce Deputy Chief Executive, Charandeep Singh, was also in attendance.

Charandeep said:

I look forward to supporting the ChamberFORCE programme and unlocking the opportunities for Scotland's communities. With many sectors and companies continuing to cite recruitment challenges and skills shortages as a barrier to growth, ChamberFORCE is an excellent example of how partnership working can tackle the big challenges facing our economy.