

RAF Typhoons on NATO Exercise in Hungary

Royal Air

Force Typhoons deployed to Romania have taken part in a major NATO exercise in Hungary.

Two

RAF Typhoons from 135 Expeditionary Air Wing (EAW) joined several NATO allies at Papa airbase in Hungary as part of

Exercise LOAD DIFFUSER 17. Deployed as part of a force of four aircraft to Mihail Kogalniceanu (MK)

airbase near Constanta in Romania, the two Typhoons were a huge hit with the Hungarian public.



Representing

the EAW, Paul, a senior RAF pilot, said:

"During the two days we were there we were

absolutely mobbed by a range of media who wanted to see our aircraft up close

and to learn what it was like to fly. It was a privilege to show so many VIPs

around the Typhoon, to answer all their questions, and to see how impressed they were."

The main purpose of the exercise was to test

and increase the interoperability of the various NATO partner air forces. As a

change from the Quick Reaction Alert duties that they had been carrying out in

Romanian since May, the Typhoons acted as 'Red Air' on 7 June to test themselves and their allies. Paul added:

"Playing as 'Red Air', pretending to be the

enemy, gave us the opportunity to fly against a range of aircraft that we would

not normally encounter. It was also a superb opportunity to show off how truly

capable and World-leading the Typhoon is."

Held from 22 May until 9 June, this was the biggest air exercise in Hungary in for many years. Alongside the Typhoons

were some 400 people from the air forces of Hungary, the United States, Slovakia, Slovenia, Croatia and the Czech Republic.



Explaining why the trip across the border from Romania was so worthwhile, Paul explained:

“Exercises like this allow us to fly in a range of roles with our NATO partners; essential to strengthening relationships with allied and partner nations, helping to maintain joint readiness and interoperability, and to reassure European allies and partners”.

The RAF aircraft deployed to Romania are part of the UK’s contribution to reassurance measures to ensure the operational capability of NATO’s eastern flank. The enhanced Air Policing mission demonstrates NATO’s flexible capabilities and readiness, underlining the commitment of Allies to each other.

Editor: Sqn Ldr Toby Watkins

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