

[RAF in Concert Tour](#)

The Royal Air Force in Concert tour returns this autumn with a 'Stars and Stripes' themed music spectacular to mark the 70th anniversary of the United States Air Force.

Listen to our [music sampler](#) for a taste of what to expect!

The RAF in Concert Tour will see RAF bands visit 12 locations around the UK, starting in High Wycombe on 7th October and ending in Norwich on 3rd December.

Over the course of the past 70 years, music legends from the United States have all influenced and shaped the soundtrack to our lives with sounds from the Swing Era, Rock & Roll, Country and Motown. The RAF in Concert Tour will pay tribute to these iconic legends with numbers that are set to impress.



The band will take audiences back in time through the past seven decades – from Sinatra to Streisand, Basie to Bernstein, the programme of music includes *Send in the Clowns*, *Hoe Down*, *Stars & Stripes March* and *I Left My Heart in San Francisco*.

Tour organiser, Tina Outlaw said: "We've brought together a fantastic programme of music to really celebrate the great American legends and the influence their music has had on all our lives over the past 70 years. From Sinatra to Elvis and Dolly Parton, the audiences are set for a fantastic evening".

Sponsored by BAE Systems and Lockheed Martin, the concert tour will visit:

7th October; Wycombe Swan, [High Wycombe](#)
9th October: Royal Festival Hall, [London](#)
16th October: Colston Hall, [Bristol](#)
18th October: The Anvil, [Baskingstoke](#)
20th October: Royal Hall, [Harrogate](#)
29th October: Lighthouse, [Poole](#)
18th November: Royal Concert Hall, [Nottingham](#)
22nd November: Symphony Hall, [Birmingham](#)
26th November: Sage Gateshead, [Gateshead](#)
29th November: Bridgewater Hall, [Manchester](#)
1st December: Cliffs Pavillion, [Southend](#)
3rd December: Theatre Royal, [Norwich](#)

Tickets start from £19 (for London £22) and are available to purchase now from the venues. For more information please go to: rafinconcert.com.



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RAF Typhoon from 6 Squadron have been welcomed on a visit to Jordan.

Royal Air Force

(RAF) Typhoon aircraft from 6 Squadron, based at RAF Lossiemouth in Scotland

were welcomed at Azraq airbase in Jordan to celebrate a common heritage.

The RAF

Typhoons were on their way to exercise in the Middle East where Azraq airbase commander, Royal Jordanian Air Force (RJAF) Colonel Mohammad Hiyasat welcomed them. He said: "In the 1950s the late King Abdullah the First presented the RAF

No 6 Squadron with the Royal Standard. Then in 1995 Jordanian No 6 Squadron and

the British No 6 squadron became sister squadrons. His Royal Highness Prince Faisal,

a squadron commander, led the efforts to join the two squadrons because he knew

that cooperation would benefit both air forces."



Typhoon Force

Commander, Air Commodore Ian Duguid who flew in one of the Typhoons from the UK

was enthusiastic, saying: "The opportunity to come and fly into this part of the Middle East, though Jordanian airspace and land in Azraq air base provides

exceptional training. I was fortunate to

fly on the trail from the UK here to Azraq. In the fourship two of the pilots were on their first posting and I have seen their confidence and experience grow."



He added: "We

thought it would be an excellent idea whilst 6 Squadron was deploying for them

to be able to come and base themselves at Azraq, which is the home of 6 Squadron

of the RJAF, and be able to interact and rekindle those relationships and friendships we have had over the years. The UK has a great relationship with Jordan from a strategic perspective. Clearly we are working with Jordan and many others in the coalition in the fight against Daesh. The Jordanians are

able to offer us support through airspace overflight and diversion capabilities.”



Lieutenant

Colonel Sa'ad Shehaltogh, Officer Commanding 6 Squadron of the Royal Jordanian

Air Force recognised the long heritage, saying: “For me it is an honour to be commander of a squadron that has a relationship with the RAF’s 6 Squadron that

dates to the 1950s and later when HRH Prince

Faisal was a squadron commander.” He continued: “This is the continuation of a legacy. It’s

something we shouldn’t lose and of which we should be proud. Hopefully people will be here in the future celebrating the hundred years of the squadrons as sisters.”



Wing Commander

Billy Cooper, Officer Commanding 6 Squadron of the RAF said: “One of the great

things about the squadrons in the RAF is the real sense of history we engender

and that really informs the ethos that we have. Our relationship with Jordan is

such an important part of 6 Squadron’s history that it really is a great privilege for us to rekindle that here at Azraq.”

RJAF 6 Squadron

pilot, Captain Mohammed Abu Aljazar speaking at a reception held for the visiting pilots from Lossiemouth said: “It’s a very good opportunity since we had never met before and we have an old history between us. We hope to meet and train together in the UK in the future.”

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[New station Commander for RAF Lossiemouth](#)

Group Captain Jim

**Walls DSO RAF took command of RAF Lossiemouth from Group Captain Paul Godfrey
OBE on 29th September 2017.**

Group Captain Godfrey took command of the Moray base at the end of November 2015. His two years in charge of the Moray Typhoon main operating base saw significant support to operations over Iraq, Syria and in Nigeria as well as the announcement of RAF Lossiemouth as the future base of the UK's Maritime Patrol Aircraft. On leaving RAF Lossiemouth Group Captain Godfrey said:

"It has been an honour to have been the Station Commander at RAF Lossiemouth. Being in command of a Royal Air Force base that is charged with directly protecting the United Kingdom's airspace and is involved with current operations around the Globe was both challenging and inspiring. The work we do can sometimes put a great deal of pressure on our people and their families, but the Whole Force here continually demonstrate excellence and a can-do attitude that is humbling; it is undoubtedly the people I will miss.



"My family and I will be sad to leave Moray, we've made many good friends in the local community and have made the most of the opportunities and amazing quality of life available here. We will definitely be back to visit soon.

"As RAF Lossiemouth moves into its next chapter, I'm delighted to hand command over to Group Captain Jim Walls. He has been a Typhoon squadron commander at RAF Lossiemouth so is well aware of the challenges and opportunities the Station faces as it develops to become a MPA as well as QRA base. I'm sure he will enjoy what is undoubtedly the very best job in the Royal Air Force."



Group Captain Jim Walls was born in Australia but educated in the UK, attending Aberdeen University. He has flown Jaguar and Typhoon aircraft both as an instructor and operationally. He was also the Typhoon Display Pilot in 2007, and famously raced a Bugatti Veyron in a Typhoon. He has held roles in the Typhoon development programme, and was Officer Commanding 6 Sqn at RAF Lossiemouth between June 2014 and November 2016. Group Captain Walls is excited to be in command of RAF Lossiemouth as the Station moves towards welcoming the Poseidon P-8 to RAF Lossiemouth, he said:

“It’s an immense privilege to be taking command of RAF Lossiemouth. Group Captain Godfrey has led the Station exceptionally through a significant, and busy, few years. I would like to thank him for his dedicated service and congratulate him on his promotion.



“It is an exciting time to be commanding the station with such huge investment over the coming years. This includes the introduction of the Poseidon Maritime Patrol Aircraft and another Typhoon Squadron. We will be reinvigorating RAF Coastal Command’s heritage with cutting edge technology while continuing to deliver QRA and global operations. I am particularly looking forward to working closely with the local community as we grow the station. It will undoubtedly be a challenging role but it is a real honour and I am ready.”

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[RAF Police Rugby suffer defeat with last kick of the game](#)

THE RAF Police came within a whisker of victory at a rain-sodden Cardiff Arms Park when they played South Wales Police in a thrilling contest.

Early pressure from the bigger home side quickly got results and they notched up a try on the 10 minute mark. After a failed conversion, the RAFP bounced right back but ball handling was difficult as the rain became torrential.

Bold forays by the RAFP, particularly No15 Corporal Callum Macmillan were stopped by South Wales Police bodies. He again stepped up moments later when he challenged a Welsh attack only to be clattered by a marauding forward. The half ended with South Wales Police leading 5-0.



SWP were out of the blocks following a quick restart and almost immediately extended their lead with another try which they converted.

The RAFP bounced back with a great run by Callum Macmillan. The rain came down heavier but still the Snowdrops showed drive and guts.

After RAFP No8 Corporal Andy Melbourne was brought down just yards from the

SWP try line, the RAF men were awarded a penalty which the No12 Acting Corporal Jack Lowe duly slotted over bringing the score to 12-3.

This heralded a fierce RAFF fight back which saw them win a scrum five yards from the South Wales Police line. The pressure paid off when big RAF forward Andy Melbourne stormed over for a try. Despite Jack Lowe missing out on the conversion, the Welsh were kept on the back foot and with the score at 12-8 the RAFF sensed the game was theirs for the taking.

Continued RAFF pressure paid off again when Jack Lowe went over for a try. He duly converted and took the 'Flying Pigs' into the lead with the score at 12-15.

But the Welsh were not done yet. Minutes later, their big No12 scythed through the RAFF defences to score in the far corner. The kick was just wide but they pulled ahead again bringing the score to 17-15.

With just minutes left on the clock, the RAF again pushed forward and won a penalty which Jack Lowe coolly kicked home. With the score at 17-18, they were ahead again, but the day was not yet done.



The Welsh police punted the ball into the RAF half as the seconds ticked away, but before the ref blew for time they were awarded a penalty and with literally the last kick of the game, South Wales Police went for the kick and took the spoils with the final score 20-18.

Victorious captain Inspector Paul Crowley of South Wales Police said he was delighted to win a "hard fought" contest. "We wanted to break their game up and for the first half it worked, but later in the second half they upped their game and we were on the back foot." The police Inspector praised the spirit the game was played in, saying it was a "fantastic occasion".

RAFF team captain Corporal Callum Hales praised a "gritty performance" from the Snowdrops. "They contained us in the first half, but in the second half they realised they were playing a good team and they panicked."

"We played a controlled game in really poor conditions and really pulled together – like we do in the military. I was really pleased with the way we played tonight."

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The Ushtar Eagle Has Landed

The UK's NATO ally Albania hosted over 200 RAF Reserves and Regulars in numerous locations around the country as they trained together developing operational teamwork and friendships on Exercise Ushtar Eagle 17.

Exercise Director and Officer Commanding 8 Force Protection group, Wing Commander Phil Hateley said:

"The UK is committed to NATO, and despite the fact we have are leaving the European Union we are still committed to European security, and our deployment of troops in Albania is a clear demonstration of that. Coming to Albania has given us many opportunities that we could never replicate in the UK. The freedom to be able to go and conduct military training in and amongst local villages is the hallmark."



Drawn from 18 individual RAF stations across the UK, Reserves from specialisms including the RAF Regiment, RAF Police, logistics, medical, intelligence and Media Operations worked alongside their Albanian counterparts to hone their war-fighting, peacekeeping and humanitarian skills.

The Balkan country provided a stunning backdrop for a series of gruelling drills and training scenarios that UK and Albanian troops could carry out on operations together in the future. Gunners and soldiers bonded together over tactical training, physical exercise and some social time in the evenings.



Interest in Ushtar Eagle reached presidential levels in the first week with a visit from the Albanian President, Ilir Meta, who watched a combined tactical demonstration by the RAF Regiment Reserves and soldiers from the Third Battalion of the Albanian Army. He was joined by the British Chief of the Defence Staff, Sir Stuart Peach, who was in Albania's capital Tirana for a NATO conference.

An Albanian naval establishment close to Durrës was the setting for members of 2503 and 603 Squadrons and the Third Battalion of the Albanian Army to storm a building suspected of being a "terrorist safe house". Under the cover of smoke the combined assault team entered the building, making an "arrest" and extracting the "suspect" with the

help of RAF and Albanian police.

Air Chief Marshal Sir Stuart Peach said:

“I would like to thank the Albanian people for the warmth of their welcome and the exceptional training facilities they provide. We have come a long way together through our shared military history and shared experience in NATO. I am confident as the UK Chief of Defence that our future is much more secure as a result of our alliance.”



The Albanian Chief of the General Staff of the Armed Forces, Brigadier General Bardhyl Kollçaku, who also attended the demonstration, said:

“This is a demonstration of the excellent cooperation we have between the Armed Forces of the United Kingdom and the Armed Forces of the Republic of Albania, and the assurance that this cooperation will extend and will continue even more in the future in the interests of peace and security, not only between our countries but also in the region and beyond.”

Moving from the coast to more rural areas in the mountains for the second week the exercise featured section attacks, patrolling through Albanian villages, ambushes and defensive tactics. Enduring temperatures over 35 degrees the RAF and their Albanian counterparts trained from dawn till midnight, pushing themselves physically and mentally. The gunners received a warm but curious welcome from the local population as they went about their daily business.



LAC Alex Hand, from 609 Squadron, and the youngest Reservist on the exercise, said:

“Opportunities like this to train abroad are one of the reasons why I joined the Reserves. I have been pushed out of my comfort zone but loved every minute of it. Working with the Albanians has been very interesting and meeting other Reservists from around the country has made me realise the scale of the organisation I belong to.”

This is the first time the RAF Reserves have worked and trained so closely with the UK's NATO ally Albania. The two countries are developing a close working relationship after the Royal Navy and British Army previously completed exercises and training.

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