

[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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RAF exchange officers contribute to US rescue and aid effort

Royal Air Force personnel serving on exchange with the US Air Force have played an important role in the relief efforts following the devastation wreaked by Hurricanes Harvey, Irma and Maria.

Aerospace Battle Manager Flight Lieutenant Rob Parr is currently serving on an exchange tour in Oklahoma. On 31st August he was aboard an E-3 AWACS aircraft flying over Houston, Texas where Hurricane Harvey had caused significant damage. He said:

“I flew two missions on board the USAF E-3G Sentry, one 6.4 hours long, the other 13.4 hours long from Tinker AFB, Oklahoma. Our job was to provide enhanced radio communication between the helicopter assets and ground based elements to help better co-ordinate the rescue efforts.”



The team aboard the aircraft tracked the status of hospitals, landing zones and provided coordinates and taskings to helicopters undertaking rescues.

“With so much confusion on the ground surrounding who needed to be rescued and what facilities were open, the whole crew felt like we were making a real difference, especially when we would get a call from our ground agency giving us only a street address and cell phone number and vague details of what the survivors’ status were.

“Then we were able to figure out where the location was and task an asset to go and assist. It was also great working with such a wide range of civilian, Coastguard, Navy, Air Force and Army assets all trying to help out the best they could.”

As a direct result of the assistance rendered on the two flights Flt Lt Parr participated, a total of 51 rescues were conducted recovering 218 survivors including three pregnant women and six patients in critical condition.



Summing up the sorties Flt Lt Parr said: “The mission was great, it was probably one of the most rewarding and interesting missions I’ve done in my seven years of flying on AWACS.”

When Hurricane Irma struck the Caribbean Flt Lt Matt Jenkinson piloted a C-17 transport aircraft from its base in North Carolina to Illinois, one of 36 C-17s evacuated from Charleston AFB ahead of the storm. Once there he was put on three hours standby.

“I flew two Hurricane relief Operations” he said. “One was immediately before Irma struck where we landed four hours before the storm arrived to deliver a

search & rescue team and medical & blood supplies. The second was after the storm had passed through – again delivering urgent supplies.”

He added, “We took an Air Traffic Control tower into St Thomas in the US Virgin Islands along with water & food provisions then headed, via Tampa for fuel, to Texas. There we loaded 130 US tons of water and food and took it to St Croix the following day. We received a waiver to operate on night vision goggles into the airfield at night.”



The military personnel exchange programme in its current guise commenced in 1971 when the RAF and USAF agreed to allow each other’s personnel to fill reciprocal positions. Designed to maximise the special relationship the UK shared with the US, the benefits to many areas of air force activity were immediately apparent. In consequence the exchange programme grew steadily to encompass agreements with the US Navy, Marine Corps, Army and Coast Guard.

The range of specialisations also broadened and now embraces everything from Air Transport, Fast Jet, Rotary and ISR platforms, to Project Engineers, Research and Development, Intelligence, Cyber, Space and Force Protection specialists to name but a few. The programme with the United States today stands at an exchange of 55 RAF personnel who have swapped places with 40 Americans now stationed in the UK. Similar exchanges take place with a number of other nations and RAF personnel serve around the world.

Editor: Wg Cdr Dylan Eklund

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