

Fatality notice: Sergeant Matt Tonroe has been killed in action in the Middle East

Updated: Picture added.



Sergeant Matt Tonroe.

It is with great sadness that the Ministry of Defence must confirm that Sergeant Matt Tonroe from the 3rd Battalion the Parachute Regiment was tragically killed in action whilst on duty in the Middle East on the 29th March 2018.

Sergeant Tonroe was born in Manchester on the 14th of August 1984. He enlisted in the Army on the 27th September 2004. On completion of his initial training he joined the 3rd Battalion of The Parachute Regiment in Colchester where he served as part of the Sniper Platoon. He rapidly developed an array of competencies and combat experiences that were to lay the foundations of an outstanding career.

During his service, Matt deployed numerous times on operations to Afghanistan and the Middle East. His distinguished service reflected a man that was happiest when professionally tested on operations. He relished responsibility, the opportunity to contribute and when the time came, to

lead. He was a natural in this role.

Matt was also a capable and respected parachutist. As a gifted instructor he was free with his time and his advice, and would dedicate himself to support and develop this skill in others.

He was well known within his unit, well-liked by all and he will be sorely missed. When talking of Matt, his colleagues recount his humour, mischief and endless endeavours. Laid back, but a consummate professional, Matt was utterly selfless and always strived to achieve excellence.

Matt was very much a family man, making every effort to see his beloved mum around numerous overseas deployments. He is survived by his mother Michelle, his brother Alex and girlfriend Olivia.

Sgt Tonroe's Officer Commanding said

If you had met Matt Tonroe, then you would have liked him. He bristled with the contentment of a life lived to its full. His bravery and talent as a soldier, was matched by his compassion as a human being. He was an individual, with the courage to set his own course, and the perspective to see new possibilities at every turn. He was destined for great things in our unit; his leadership was both natural and apparently effortless. He is already missed. Without Matt, our company has lost some of its humour; some of its warmth; and some of its sheer opportunism. We will always remember him.

Sgt Tonroe's Commanding Officer said

Matt Tonroe was a deeply intelligent man and one of life's characters. He was a caring and considerate soul, a loving and dutiful son, and a friend to many. Yet he had a steel core, served his country with pride and was a first class soldier, proven in combat, faced risk willingly and was ever ready for more. He thus died as he lived: daring and fearless in duty. We mourn his loss dearly, are proud to have known him and will honour him by continuing this fight.

Defence Secretary Gavin Williamson said

My thoughts and prayers are with the family and friends of Sergeant Matt Tonroe at this dreadful time. Sergeant Tonroe served his country with great distinction and it is clear from the tributes made by his colleagues that he was not only exceptionally dedicated and courageous but also a gifted and intelligent instructor who was respected by everyone he served with. Sergeant Tonroe fought to protect British values, our freedoms and to keep us back at home

safe. His sacrifice, unflinching commitment and bravery will never be forgotten.

[Press release: British Army re-joins Boxer programme](#)

The British Army has taken a step towards exploring a deal for a fleet of new armoured vehicles, potentially supporting at least 1,000 British jobs, by announcing it is re-joining the Boxer programme today.

The UK will re-join the Boxer programme and explore options to equip the Army with the 8x8 troop carriers to modernise its vehicle fleet and meet the Army's Mechanised Infantry Vehicle requirement.

The UK played a major role in the original design, development and testing of the Boxer, and would reassume the rights it had as a project partner if a deal was to go through – allowing the option for the vehicle to be built and exported from the UK. The deal could see the Boxer fully assembled in the UK with at least 60% of the manufacturing with British industry, sustaining and developing UK industrial capabilities, facilities and skills.

Artec, the consortium who manufacture the Boxer vehicle, have already made commitments to British industry by signing partnership agreements with BAE Systems, Pearson Engineering and Thales UK, in anticipation of a deal being struck.

It is expected that British companies would compete for the manufacture and supply of many of the vehicle sub-systems, as well as for a full production and assembly line in the UK. Estimates suggest Artec's planned investment in the UK could secure or create at least 1,000 jobs, based across the country including locations such as Glasgow, Newcastle, Sheffield, Stockport, Telford and Wales.

With the likes of Rolls Royce already powering Boxers with engines and Parker-Hannifin, William Cook Engineering and other British companies also supplying sub-systems for the vehicle, this deal could secure a broader industrial UK partnership.

The MOD is now taking forward negotiations with the Organisation for Joint Armament Cooperation (OCCAR) and Artec. Looking forward to the Assessment Phase, concluding in 2019, this will consider the comparable benefits of manufacturing locations and different supply chains for Boxer, as well as value-for-money. Any deal will be subject to commercial negotiation and assessment in 2019 and the aim is to have the first vehicles in service with the Army in 2023.

OCCAR is a European intergovernmental organisation which facilitates and manages collaborative armament programmes through their lifecycle between the UK and European allies. The organisation manages the Boxer programme and, as an OCCAR member state, the UK has the necessary Intellectual Property Rights to the Boxer and greater control over ensuring Britain benefits from supply chain work.

The MOD conducted a comprehensive market analysis of Mechanised Infantry Vehicles in-service, entering service and in development. The analysis was guided by the British Army's requirements and how best to deliver them. The Boxer delivered on protected mobility, capacity, flexibility, utility and agility.

As part of the proposed deal, the UK is also expected to see substantial inward investment from Rheinmetall, one of Artec's parent companies, who signalled their intention to launch a production and integration centre for armoured vehicles in the UK as part of the programme. This would represent a significant commitment which would lead to long-lasting armoured vehicle capability in the UK.

The other of Artec's parent companies, Krauss-MaffeiWegmann (KMW), already has a substantial UK manufacturing facility in Stockport, from where it designs, manufactures and supports complex military equipment as far afield as the US and Australia, as well as parts of Europe.

[News story: Project Servator: One year on](#)

Deployments by the MDP Project Servator teams at these locations have continued throughout the year, and deployments are now being carried out in Whitehall by officers from the MDP station located in MOD Head Office. The Force is currently preparing to launch Project Servator on the Clyde in conjunction with Police Scotland.

Unpredictable and highly visible, Project Servator is designed to deter, detect and disrupt criminal activity.

Deployments can include armed officers, dogs, marine police units, vehicle checkpoints, Automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR), CCTV, plain clothed officers, highly visible uniformed officers and others specially trained in behavioural analysis to help identify individuals who may have criminal intent. They can pop up anywhere, at any time.

Project Servator, which was introduced by City of London Police in 2014, was trialled by the MDP at Portsmouth Naval Base in 2016 and officially launched in January 2017. The launch of Project Servator at the AWE sites followed in February 2017.

Deployments take place within the AWE sites and Portsmouth Naval Base, as well as pushing out into the wider communities – including local railway stations, ferry ports and shopping centres. Project Servator was also used to support the MDP operations at the Royal International Air Tattoo (RIAT) 2017 and for HMS Queen Elizabeth's first entry to Portsmouth and the subsequent commissioning ceremony.



MDP Project Servator officers at RIAT 2017, MOD Crown Copyright

Sir Ben Ainslie joined officers from the Portsmouth Naval Base Project Servator team and commented:

Nice to bump into these two coppers doing a great job keeping Britain safe.



Ministry of Defence Police Crown Copyright.

Joint Project Servator operations are now taking place with our colleagues from the Metropolitan Police Service (MPS), British Transport Police (BTP) and City of London Police (CoLP) in the Whitehall area. If you visit Horse Guards Parade and the area surrounding Whitehall, you will see our officers with MPS Westminster and MPS Taskforce teams dispersed across the area, spreading the word about Project Servator and looking out for suspicious behaviour.



MDP Project Servator officers in Westminster, Paul Kemp Crown Copyright.

During July 2017, and in the wake of the London Bridge attack on 3 June, we deployed with CoLP and carried out examinations of vehicles and passengers at a check point operation at Tower Bridge where a suspected illegal immigrant was arrested. This operation focused on offering a hostile surveillance and security presence on the bridges over the River Thames, while the terror threat across the country was severe.

Although Project Servator's primary function is to assist in the fight against terrorism, it has also proved to be an effective tool for detecting other criminal activity, including drug related offences and driving and vehicle offences.

Inspector Andy Ramsay, from AWE Aldermaston, comments:

We are working closely with our colleagues in Thames Valley Police, sharing information and intelligence, and our site security stakeholders value the contribution that the MDP is making to ensure that AWE remains safe and secure.

Reflecting on the past year, Assistant Chief Constable Paul McLaughlin said:

The threat of terrorism in the UK is ever present and Project Servator provides a valuable tool to help deter, detect and disrupt potential attacks.

We work closely with our security partners, including the Ministry of Defence Guard Service and Mitie Security at AWE, and the support of communities is key to the success of Project Servator. From the outset, we have actively engaged with people visiting and working in and around Portsmouth Naval Base and the AWE sites, encouraging them to report any suspicious behaviour. This helps to create a network of vigilance – with extra eyes and ears – to assist us and make it more difficult for criminals to succeed.

On behalf of the MDP Project Servator Team I would like to thank all of the staff, businesses and partners for their enthusiastic and proactive response – together we've got it covered.

Project Servator will continue to grow within the MDP, with the number of trained officers increasing and plans set to roll out across other sites that we police.

To find out more about Project Servator visit: [Ministry of Defence Police: Project Servator](#)

Keep up to date with our Servator deployments by following us on Twitter: @MODPolice and Facebook: @MinistryofDefencePolice

[News story: £800 million agreed for defence](#)

This includes access to £600 million from the Dreadnought contingency, announced in 2015, and will ensure that the UK's new world-class nuclear submarines are delivered on time and within the £31 billion budget agreed at the [Strategic Defence and Security Review](#) in 2015.

In addition £200 million was agreed at the [Supplementary Estimates](#) earlier in the year.

A Royal Navy submarine has always been on patrol, providing the continuous at sea deterrent for almost 50 years. And the next generation of submarines will ensure this can continue into the future, deterring conflict and protecting the nation 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year.

This money funds a key government priority that has been the bedrock of defence policy for nearly 50 years.

Chancellor of the Exchequer, Philip Hammond, said:

Our commitment to defence and national security is unwavering. The

UK's defence budget is the highest in Europe and the second highest in NATO and ensures Britain can continue to respond effectively to the ever-changing threats we face.

We will continue to invest in our world-class Armed Forces and this additional investment of £600 million will ensure the UK is protected by the nuclear deterrent provided by the new Dreadnought fleet into the 2030s and beyond.

Defence Secretary Gavin Williamson said:

This is a welcome boost to our Armed Forces, ensuring we can continue to back-up our national security with the ultimate capability. In a world of intensifying and evolving threats, we must strengthen and maintain our ability to seize opportunities and counter challenges as they emerge. I have launched the Modernising Defence Programme to ensure we have the capabilities we need to keep Britain safe in an increasingly dangerous world.

News story: Simpler Internal Dispute Resolution Procedures for the AFPS

MOD's Veterans UK organisation, part of Defence Business Services, have taken steps to simplify the Armed Forces Pension Schemes complaints process, known as the Internal Dispute Resolution Procedures.

Veterans UK have listened to and taken on board the advice from The Pensions Ombudsman that the complaints process should be accessible, simple and streamlined with the aim of achieving the right outcome at the earliest opportunity. Sharing that view Veterans UK have shortened the overall process so that they can provide a decision in a quicker timeframe. This change will come into effect from 01 April 2018.

The Pension Regulator expects that a decision will be made on a dispute within four months of receiving an application. The streamlined single stage IDR process will reduce this further, with Veterans UK operating a 60 working days timeline after investigations concluded that this could reduce the time taken to process a complaint by 25%.

Any member of the AFPS has the right to raise a complaint using the IDR process if they disagree with a decision or action taken by the scheme administrator. The single stage process will look at all aspects of the complaint along with any additional evidence or information provided. For

detailed guidance and Frequently Asked Questions on the process an [Internal Dispute Resolution Procedures factsheet](#) (PDF, 110KB, 4 pages)

is available.

Elizabeth Phelan, Assistant Head of Veterans Pensions at Veterans UK, said:

At Veterans UK we strive to deliver the best service we can to all our customers so please remember that we will make every effort to resolve any disputes before turning to the IDR process. However, we are confident that by moving to a more accessible and streamlined complaints process our commitment to excellent levels of customer service can be maintained and strengthened. Veterans UK are constantly looking at ways to improve the Customer Experience.