

From: Lieutenant Colonel (Retd) N A Jordan – Deputy Controller

# The Royal Engineers Association

(Registered under the Charities Act 1992 and a charity registered in Scotland)

**Patron: HER MAJESTY THE QUEEN**



All correspondence to:

The Controller  
RE Association  
Brompton Bks  
CHATHAM  
Kent  
ME4 4UG  
Telephone: 01634 822407  
Fax: 01634 822394  
Website: [www.reahq.org.uk](http://www.reahq.org.uk)  
Email: [info@reahq.org.uk](mailto:info@reahq.org.uk)

Reference: REA/A/1/2

All Management Committee Members  
All Council Members  
All Group Directors  
All Group Secretaries  
All Branch Secretaries  
Controller REA  
Corps Treasurer

16<sup>th</sup> February 2016

**MINUTES OF THE 124<sup>th</sup> MEETING OF THE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE OF THE ROYAL ENGINEERS ASSOCIATION, HELD IN 063 MEETING ROOM 13, MINISTRY OF DEFENCE, MAIN BUILDING, LONDON, ON THURSDAY 28<sup>th</sup> JANUARY 2016**

## PRESENT

Maj Gen A S Dickinson CBE	Chairman
Col D L D Bigger ADC	Corps Colonel
WO1 (RSM) J Rankine	1 RSME Regt
Maj (Retd) R C A Macgregor MBE TD VR	Scotland & NI Group
Mr M Payne BEM	Central Southern Group
Mr B Simm	East Anglia Group
Mr K Gover	South West Group
Mr K Street	South Midlands Group
Mr P Markham	London Group
Mr G Doughty	South East Group
Mr W P Halloran	North East Group
Mr R Price	North Midlands Group
Mr T Webb	South Wales Group

## IN ATTENDANCE

Lt Col (Retd) N Jordan	D Con REA and Secretary
Maj (Retd) I Sidebottom	Corps Treasurer

## APOLOGIES

Lt Col (Retd) R Murfin TD DL	Reserve Army
Maj R Oakes RE	Serving Officer
WO1 (RSM) S Bell	170 (Infra Sp) Engr Group
WO1 (RSM) T Whiteman	3 RSME Regt

1. The Chairman opened the meeting and welcomed those present, especially those who had come from afar. He extended season's greetings to all assembled.
2. The Chairman noted that apologies had been received from those listed above. He welcomed the following new members to the Committee for whom it was their first meeting:

Col D L D Bigger ADC  
WO1 (RSM) J Rankine

Corps Colonel  
1 RSME Regt

### **ITEM 1 - TO CONFIRM THE MINUTES OF THE 123<sup>rd</sup> MEETING**

3. The Committee accepted that the Minutes of the 123<sup>rd</sup> Meeting were a true record of the proceedings.

**Proposed:** Mr W Halloran – North East Gp

**Seconded:** Mr B Simm – East Anglia Gp

4. The Chairman signed the Minutes

### **ITEM 2. To Consider Matters Arising from the proceedings of the 123<sup>rd</sup> Meeting**

5. Paragraph 30. Due to the poor standard of Branch and the Group written recommendations the Chairman suggested that example written recommendations be distributed to Branches so that they might be more aware of the requirement. The D Con said he had distributed such examples to all Branches. The Chairman said he had written to Group Directors to ensure they understood the importance of the award and the need for a clear and supportive written recommendation. NFA

6. Paragraph 32. It was identified that overseas REA Branches were not covered for third party liability on the REA insurance schedule. The Corps Treasurer said that after consultation with the insurers, it had been established that only Public Liability cover was required. He said he had advised all overseas Branches of the need to obtain suitable cover and those Branches were requested to obtain a quote from a local, reputable, insurance company to cover the Branch for Public Liability to a limit of £5 million (or equivalent). The Branch should pay for the cover and the receipt for payment should be sent to the REA Controller for reimbursement. He added that if a Branch could not afford the premium payment then they should email the invoice for payment to the Corps Treasurer for payment (with all bank details to facilitate payment from the UK). A copy of all policies obtained must be sent to the Corps Treasurer, copy to Controller REA, to satisfy the auditors of our governance procedures.

### **ITEM 3 – TO NOTE THE REPORT OF THE BENEVOLENCE COMMITTEE**

7. The D Con presented the Benevolence Report for the 12 month period ending 31<sup>st</sup> December 2015. The report is at Annex A.

8. Kevin Street (South Midlands Gp) said that although he had raised the point at previous meetings, he was still concerned that even though there was a large amount of money held by the REA there had not been an increase in the amount spent on benevolence. He asked that a substantial discussion be held on the matter.

9. The Chairman said it was a fair comment and he intended to raise the issue with Council at their meeting on 3 May 2016. He said that whilst we were meeting the current demand for benevolence assistance he thought that many of those eligible and needing assistance were being missed as they were not aware that assistance may be available.

10. Kevin Street (South Midlands Gp) said he thought that homelessness was the real issue at the moment, particularly homeless soldiers. He suggested that funds be made available, in some

way or another, to former members of the Corps.

11. The Corps Colonel said that the serving element of the Corps should not be forgotten. He reminded members that REA funds came from the serving element. He continued by saying that he had in mind two major projects that he intended to bring to Council that involved the serving element.

12. The Chairman said he intended to hold a substantive discussion with trustees at the next meeting of Council about the ways in which REA money is spent and investigate other avenues of opportunity. He indicated that he would write to each trustee to forewarn them of his intentions.

13. The D Con reminded members that Branches should be urged to send observers to Benevolence Committee meetings. A diary list of all future Benevolence meetings was available on the REA website [www.reahq.org.uk](http://www.reahq.org.uk)

14. The Benevolence Report was accepted.

#### **ITEM 4 - TO NOTE THE CORPS COLONEL'S REPORT ON THE CORPS**

15. The Corps Colonel presented his report. The report is at Annex B.

16. The Corps Colonel advised members of some revised dates of Sapper 300 sporting events and offered his sincere thanks to the REA for their substantial grant of £35K towards Sapper 300 events.

17. The Chairman thanked the Corps Colonel for such a comprehensive and informative report and urged Committee members to share the information with Branches and members.

18. Mike Payne (Central Southern Gp) said that even though Military Survey was not part of the 'sapper command' he asked that they were not forgotten. The D Con said that the report was prepared from information provided by 8 Engr Bde and Mil Svy was not part of 8 Engr Bde. The Corps Col said that regardless of whether they featured in his report on the Corps, Military Survey was indeed part & parcel of the sapper family and where appropriate would be mentioned in his update.

19. The Corps Colonel's report was accepted.

#### **ITEM 5 – TO AWARD THE BADGE OF MERIT FOR 2016**

20. The Committee took great pleasure in awarding the prestigious REA Badge of Merit to the following members:

<b>Name</b>	<b>Branch</b>	<b>Group</b>
Mr D Bishop	Junior Leaders Regt Branch	South East Gp
Mr E Burnett	Aberdeen Branch	Scotland & NI Gp
Mr P Farrington	Walsall Branch	South Midlands Gp
Mr R J Green	Northern Ireland Branch	Scotland & NI Gp
Mr G Head	Medway Branch	South East Gp
Mr C Hornsby	South Humberside Branch	North East Gp
Mr P C Mann	Colchester Branch	East Anglia Gp
Mr R Neilson	Paisley Branch	Scotland & NI Gp
Mr W H Seager-Hillier	Derby & Distr Branch	North Midlands Gp
Mr J Whiston	Preston Branch	North West Gp

21. In addition to those listed above, the following member was awarded the Badge of Merit as a result of a recommendation by the Chairman REA, Maj Gen A S Dickinson CBE.

Mr Brian Simm                      Captain of Standards and Former National Standard Bearer

22. Their commitment to the Association and their comrades was remarkable and worthy of recognition through the award.

23. The Chairman raised the perennial issue of assessing the Badge of Merit nominations. He did not believe that the current method was ideal for identifying those deserving of the award and urged discussion on the matter. There was considerable discussion amongst members, the end result being an agreement that a study should be carried out to determine whether the current system is valid or whether there was a better way of reporting and marking to determine who was worthy of the award. The study group should consist of a member of the Management Committee and a serving member of the Corps. Mike Payne (Central Southern) volunteered to take the study forward with assistance from Kevin Street (South Midlands). The Corps Colonel said he would identify an RSM to work alongside Mike Payne (and others). The Chairman said the aim was to come up with three different options for the Committee to consider at the next Management Committee meeting.

**Action: Corps Colonel, Mike Payne**

#### **ITEM 6 – ANNUAL FINANCIAL SUMMARIES - UPDATE**

24. The Chairman asked the D Con to update the Committee on Branch submissions.

25. The D Con said there were still 11 Branch Summaries outstanding. He confirmed that he was in contact with the Group Secretaries of those Branches and that hastening action had been taken.

26. The Chairman urged Branches not to slip into bad old habits and to ensure that they submitted accurate and timely Summaries.

#### **ITEM 7 - BRANCH MATTERS**

27. Change of Branch Name. Mike Payne (Central Southern Gp) told the Committee that the Gosport Branch wished to rename their Branch the 'Gosport & Fareham Branch'. He said the Branch had stated that it meets at Titchfield which is within Fareham, that many of their members lived in Fareham, and that the Branch name should represent all of its members. The Committee carefully considered the proposal but noted that similar situations existed within their own Groups and that to allow Gosport to change its name, especially after 79 years, would create a precedent they were not willing to accept. The proposal was not accepted.

28. Re -formation of the Plymouth Branch. Mr Keith Gover (South West Gp) proposed the re-formation of the Plymouth Branch. In accordance with Association Rule 17.03 a list of twenty REA Life or Full Members has been submitted to HQ REA by the proposed Branch. HQ REA is content to accept the new Branch and allocate it to the South West Group.

**Proposer: Keith Gover**

**Seconder: Maj R Macgregor**

**Vote: Carried**

29. Associate Membership. The D Con said that in Jan 2015 the Committee sanctioned a cap of 20% Associate Members within a Branch; this guideline was to be reviewed in one year. The Committee was asked if they were content to continue with the 20% guideline or whether they wished to review the percentage cap. The Committee was content to continue with the 20% guideline cap.

## **ITEM 8. To note the allocation of Grants to Annual Events**

30. Grant requests were received for the following events in 2016:

Event (a)	Requested Amount (b)	Amount Supported by HQ REA (c)
CM & Vets Weekend - Chatham	£8,000 (£8,000 in 2015)	£8,000
Minley Weekend	£6000 (£6,000 in 2015)	£6,000
Chilwell Weekend	£9,000 (£6,500 in 2015)	£6,500

31. Committee members are asked to note the requests. Given that military units and REA Groups would be receiving extra funding to help commemorate S300, the Committee could not recommend the extra funding requested for the Chilwell Weekend. The Committee recommends to Council the allocations shown in column (c).

## **ITEM 9. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

32. 2016 Diary. Events of interest for 2016 have been notified to HQ REA.

10 – 12 June	Chilwell Weekend*
28 May	Trooping the Colour - Major General's Review
09 June	Royal Hospital Chelsea Founder's Day Parade
4 June	Trooping the Colour – Colonel's Review
8 - 9 June	Beating Retreat, London
11 June	Queen's Birthday Parade
29 – 31 July	Minley Weekend*
16 - 18 September	Corps Memorial Weekend*
08 October	REA AGM and Annual Dinner *
09 October	Sapper Sunday at Royal Hospital Chelsea
10 November	Field of Remembrance, Westminster Abbey
13 November	Remembrance Sunday

\*National Events

33. Sapper 300 Events. The Corps will celebrate the 300<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Corps of Engineers in 2016 with a selection of activities throughout the year. Though some dates are still to be confirmed, listed below is a small selection of notable Sapper 300 events:

20 April	RE v RA rugby match, Aldershot Military Stadium
20 May	RE v RA cricket match, The Oval. Tickets details TBC
13 May	RE v RA football match, 1 RSME Regt
6 & 7 July	RE v RA boxing evening, location TBC
16 July	Music Extravaganza, Rochester Cathedral. Ticket from Corps Funds – Mrs Mary Downie 01634 822998

34. Sapper 300 Unit Events. A number of Royal Engineer units will host Sapper 300 events. The dates and events are as follows:

7 May	21 Engr Regt Ripon Weekend
21 May	24 Cdo Engr Regt Families Day
3 & 4 June	22 and 26 Engr Regts Families Day, Tidworth
4 June	12 Engr Gp Families Day, Wittering
10 – 12 June	170 Engr Group Chilwell Weekend, Chilwell.
18 June	39 Engr Regt Families Day, Kinloss
2 July	75 Engr Regt Families Day, Warrington
7 July	RSMS Families Day and Freedom Parade

9 July	R Mons RE Families Day, Monmouth
23 – 25 July	101/ 33 EOD Regt Families Day, Wimbish
23 July	32 Engr Regt Families Day, Catterick
30 July	35 Engr Regt Families Day, Paderborn, Germany
30 – 31 July	23 Para Engr Regt Families Day, Colchester
30 – 31 July	3 RSME Regt Minley Weekend, Minley.
25 August	42 Engr Regt Families Day, Wyton

35. Branch Closures. Tony Webb (South Wales Gp) advised the Committee that since the last Management Committee meeting the Pembroke Dock Branch had closed; the Branch closed at the end of September 2015. The D Con confirmed that the Branch had complied with Association Rules regarding Branch closure procedures.

36. The D Con advised members that the REA Dome Tent was available for Branch and Group events and that those wishing to avail themselves of the tent should advise HQ REA of their requirement, particularly the dates when the tent was required. Some Branches had already made bookings.

37. The Chairman said that at some stage in the future the REA should be looking at how it affiliates regular and reserve regiments with Groups and Branches. That aspect would be considered in one single review once the staff deficit at HQ REA had been resolved.

38. Graham Doughty (South East Gp) told the Committee that he was organising another battlefield tour; this one would be based around Sapper VC's. The Corps Colonel said it was most important that the tour was open to serving soldiers and that it be advertised as such. Graham Doughty said he would ensure this was done.

39. The Corps Colonel took the opportunity to remind members that Armed Forces Days were originally brought about to give the country an opportunity to thank the Armed Forces community. As it is now, for most serving soldiers, it is a duty weekend and rather misses the point. He asked that the original concept be remembered and supported.

#### **ITEM 10. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

40. The next meeting is planned for mid-July 2016 in MOD Main Building. The D Con advised the Committee that 7<sup>th</sup>, 14<sup>th</sup>, 19<sup>th</sup>, 20<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup> of July were all possible meeting dates. He asked that members check their availability for these dates; they would be advised in due course of a firm date.

16 February 2016

Deputy Controller

Minutes Approved

Chairman

## Benevolence Report - 124<sup>th</sup> Management Cttee Meeting

1. **Trends 2015.** The charity continues to ensure that grants are made in a speedy, efficient and cost effective way. This was achieved, and grants, periodical allowances and Christmas benevolence gifts were made to 928 recipients, from whom many letters of appreciation have been received. The total numbers of benevolence cases considered in 2015 was 10% less than the previous year. The reason for this decrease in submitted cases is unclear. The majority of cases continue to be processed by The Royal British Legion (TRBL) and SSAFA on behalf of the REA Benevolence Committee.

### 2. Benevolence Cases Considered 2015– 2011

<u>Category</u>	<u>2015</u>	<u>2014</u>	<u>2013</u>	<u>2012</u>	<u>2011</u>
Disabled & Illness	175	202	185	192	329
Old age	71	63	52	118	84
Widows	86	78	110	138	132
Unemployed	118	137	152	210	144
Miscellaneous	149	171	187	285	268
Grants not made	51	68	51	23	12
Totals	650	719	737	966	969

Table 1

3. **Cost of Benevolence 2015.** The *unaudited* net cost of REA benevolence in 2015 made up of Grants, Christmas grants, weekly allowances and grants to other charities was in the region of £415,437 this figure does not include donated services support costs which are as yet unknown. This is higher than 2014 where the *audited* net cost of benevolence made up of Grants, Christmas grants, weekly allowances and grants to other charities was £405,911; this figure does not include donated services support costs of £70,380 (£476,291 in total).

4. **REA Branch Observers.** Observers are always most welcome to visit REA Benevolence meetings in London to see how the committee carries out the business of making financial grants on behalf of the Corps. The Chairman and Controller REA invite REA Branch observers to attend and participate with the aim of reporting back to their Branches on the breadth of cases that are considered and how we are able to help. We would hope that all REA Committee members would attend at least one meeting.

5. **Weekly Allowances 2015.** Regular weekly allowances were awarded to about 80 applicants and some have further assistance from the Army Benevolent Fund (ABF) where there is a need to financially assist with nursing home fees.

6. **Christmas Cards and Gifts 2015.** Approximately 1370 Christmas cards and some 336 monetary gifts were sent out in November to those in elderly people homes, in hospitals or homes for the mentally infirm, to those who are in receipt of weekly allowances and those being treated through Combat Stress.

7. **Grants to Other Charities 2015.** REA Council approved grants to other Service charities who are involved in the care and benevolent work for our Sappers and their families.

- A grant of £35,000 was made to the ABF
- A grant of £7,500 was made to SSAFA
- A grant of £2,500 was made to Combat Stress, The Ex-Services Mental Welfare Society.
- A grant of £3,000 was made to BLESMA.

**CORPS UPDATE JANUARY 2016**

**8 Engineer Brigade**

**12 (Force Support) Engineer Group**

1. HQ 12 (FS) Engr Gp has focused on the re-subordination of 21 & 32 Engr Regts to the Gp. Support continues to Project ANEMOI (large RE construction task in the Falkland Islands).
2. 21 Engr Regt has transitioned across to 12 (FS) Group in good order. The Regt has two Sqns committed to Project ANEMOI and one preparing to deploy on exercises to Salisbury Plain and Kenya. Over the Christmas period the Regt provided manpower and equipment to the flood reliefs in Cumbria.
3. 32 Engr Regt have also successfully transitioned across to 12 (FS) Gp. The Regt was heavily committed to the flood relief efforts over the Christmas period by supplying manpower and equipment. A sub-unit has returned from a successful tour of Kenya and preparations continue for when the Regt takes over the running of Project ANEMOI later on in the year.
4. 36 Engr Regt, and in particular the Gurkha squadrons, continue to be heavily committed to the earthquake relief in Nepal. The remainder of the Regt has recently returned from a large scale exercise in the UK in preparation for deployment to Cyprus with a sub-unit additionally deploying to Jordan and Kenya early 2016.
5. 39 Engr Regt have had a well-earned extended Christmas leave period. The Regt's logistic specialists still continue to support Project ANEMOI. Sub-units continue to prepare for various deployments around the globe.
6. 71 Engr Regt have focussed their training on the individuals that will be deploying to Cyprus with 36 Engr Regt.
7. 75 Engr Regt have deployed on a Regimental training weekend focussing on ranges and trade training. The Regt has also supported the RE Ski camp, achieving first place in the veterans category.
8. RMon RE(M) have conducted a unit training weekend focussing on all 'in camp' skills and have also focussed on preparing individuals for deployment to Cyprus with 36 Engr Regt.

**25 (Close Support) Engineer Group**

9. HQ 25 (CS) Engr Gp has successfully re-orbated to 3 (UK) Division.
10. 22 Engr Regt RHQ continue to conduct validation in order to assume its role in the UK's lead Armoured Infantry Brigade. A large number of soldiers deployed to Salisbury Plain on range construction tasks and on various different exercises. A sub-unit has deployed to Canada on Ex WARPAINT (range construction).
11. 26 Engr Regt continue to be busy. A sub-unit has just deployed to Cyprus on Ex PINESTICK (construction) with other elements of the Regt deploying to Jordan and Canada in various roles. A Regimental Cadre and section competitions has been conducted along with a number of soldiers deploying to Germany on Adventure Training.
12. 35 Engr Regt are conducting various training for what will be a busy year that will cumulate with sub-units deploying to Canada. In addition, the camp gym has had a £200,000 refurbished which had put the soldier's artisan skills to good use.

## Official

### 29 (EOD & Search) Group

13. HQ 29 EOD and Search Gp currently have vast numbers deployed supporting the various operations and exercises being conducted in the UK and around the world.
14. 1 MWD Regt have notable amounts of teams deployed all around the UK and the world.
15. 11 EOD Regt RLC continues to maintain its support to UK operations and other tasklines, and providing Ammunition Technical support in the UK and overseas. EOD teams will be deploying to Jordan, Kenya and Canada in the coming weeks.
16. 33 Engr Regt (EOD) troops remain deployed in the Middle East conducting various training camps and exercises.
17. 101 Engr Regt (EOD) is supporting the Middle East and continue to have soldiers held at readiness. In addition teams will be deploying on exercise to Jordan in the forthcoming weeks.

### 170 (Infrastructure Support) Engineer Group

18. Planning is ongoing against a broad range of tasks around the UK and the rest of the world. Currently teams are deployed in Cyprus, Malta and the Middle East.
19. 62 Wks Gp is delivering infra support across the broader Middle East area of operations. A team has deployed to Cyprus as well as individuals deploying to Somalia and the UK in support of the flood relief in Cumbria.
20. 63 Wks Gp is delivering for Project ANEMOI, which is the rebuilding of the three radar head site on the Falkland Islands. A team is currently conducting the design work for upcoming Exercise PINESTICK in Cyprus.
21. 64 Wks Gp are currently conducting training in preparation to deploying to Belize. Individuals deployed to Cumbria to assist with the flood relief.
22. 65 Wks Gp focus this month has been on industry engagement with the CO visiting various UK construction organisations recruiting volunteers.
23. 66 Wks Gp was the Corps lead on the flood relief in Cumbria. In addition to this, teams are training for various upcoming deployments around the world.

### Future Activities & Events

24. The following notable activities are planned for the future:
  - a. 8 – 9 June 16 – Royal Engineer Games, Perham Down.
  - b. 18 Sep 16 – Corps Memorial Service, Rochester Castle.
25. **Sapper 300.** The Corps will celebrate the 300<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Corps of Engineers in 2016 with a selection of activities throughout the year. Though some dates are still to be confirmed, listed below is a small selection of notable Sapper 300 events:

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### General Points

27. **Royal Engineers website.** To find out more about what the Corps is up to and view electronic copies of things like Sapper Magazine visit the RE pages inside the Army website using the link at the bottom of the page.

### Sports & AT

28. **Corps Sporting Fixtures.** A short list of Corps sporting fixtures, should personnel wish to drop into events to provide support, is below:

a. **Hockey:**

- (1) 10 Feb 16 – RE v RAMC, Aldershot.
- (2) 15 Mar 16 – RE (Ladies) v REME (Ladies), Lyneham.

b. **Football:**

- (1) 29 Jan 16 – RE v REME, Tidworth Oval.
- (2) 19 Feb 16 – RE v RAPTC, Aldershot.
- (3) Fri 18 Apr 16 – RE v Infantry, Aldershot.
- (4) 16 – 20 May 16 – Quad Tournament, 1 RSME Regt.

c. **Cricket:**

- (1) 19 May 16 – Inter-Services tournament, Lords.
- (2) 20 May 16 – RE v RA 50 over cricket match, The Oval.
- (3) 30 Jun 16 – RE v RA 3 day game, 1 RSME Regt.

29. **New Year's Honours List 2016.** The following RE officers and soldiers were awarded the following awards on the New Year's Honours List:

Official

## Official

- a. **OBE:**
  - (1) Col D D Casey.
  - (2) Lt Col G P Hatcher RE.
- b. **MBE:**
  - (1) Lt Col S D Matten RE.
  - (2) Maj C R Ankers RE.
  - (3) Maj R B Frost RE.
- c. **MSM:**
  - (1) WO1 (RSM) J B Aldridge RE.
  - (2) WO1 (RSM) M Dorkings RE.
  - (3) WO1 (CRSM) McLennan RE.
  - (4) WO1 (RSM) E R Render RE.
- d. **Chief of the General Staff Commendation:**
  - (1) Maj I J Jenkins RE.
  - (2) LCpl S M Sadler.
  - (3) Sgt S Ottewill.
  - (4) Maj A A Gooch RE.
  - (5) Maj R S Oakes RE.
- e. **Commander Field Army Commendation:**
  - (1) SSgt M N Richardson.
  - (2) Mrs S H King.
  - (3) Spr Y Al-Ekely.

### 30. **Useful Links:**

- a. Army Website (Royal Engineers): <http://www.army.mod.uk/royalengineers/26293.aspx#>
- b. REA Website: <http://www.reahq.org.uk/>
- c. REA Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/pages/Royal-Engineers-Association>
- d. RE Museum: <http://www.re-museum.co.uk/>
- e. Institution of Royal Engineers: <http://www.instre.org/>
- f. Sapper Shop: [www.sappershop.com](http://www.sappershop.com)

Official