

The Royal Engineers Association

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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
Email: info@reahq.org.uk**

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See Distribution

23rd Feb 2018

MINUTES OF THE 128th MEETING OF THE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE OF THE ROYAL ENGINEERS ASSOCIATION, HELD IN 052MR05, MINISTRY OF DEFENCE, MAIN BUILDING, LONDON, ON TUESDAY 16th JANUARY 2018

PRESENT

Col M Quare MBE	Corps Colonel
Lt Col M Heffer RE TD	Reserve Army
WO1 (RSM) S Allen	170 (Infra Sp) Engr Gp
Mr M Payne BEM	Central Southern Group
Mr B Simm	East Anglia Group
Mr G Doughty	South East Group
Mr S Lipscombe	North Midlands Group
Mr T Webb	South Wales Group
Mr D Ormsby	East Anglia Group
Mr K Street	South Midlands Group
Mr W Halloran	North East Group
Mr R Tootle	Scotland & NI Group
Lt Col P Taylor	Airborne Engineers Branch

IN ATTENDANCE

Lt Col (Retd) N Jordan	REA Controller
Mr K Kirk	REA Controller (Des)
Maj (Retd) I Sidebottom	Corps Treasurer
Maj (Retd) IL George	Assistant Controller and Secretary

APOLOGIES

Maj Gen A S Dickinson CBE	Chairman
Maj J Walker RE	Serving Officer
WO1 (RSM) M Eastly	3 RSME
WO1 (RSM) K Rank	1 RSME
Mr J Allerhead BEM	London Group
Mr K Gover	South West Group
Mr A Bulmer	North East Group

1. The Corps Colonel opened the meeting and welcomed those present, especially those

who had come from afar. He extended season's greetings to all assembled.

2. The Corps Colonel 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:

WO1 (RSM) S Allen
Mr R Tootle
Mr D Ormsby
Lt Col P Taylor

170 (Infra Sp) Engr Group
Scotland & NI Group
East Anglia Group
Airborne Engineers Branch

3. The Corps Colonel also welcomed the following new HQ REA staff to the meeting:

Mr K Kirk
Maj (Retd) IL George

REA Controller (Des)
Assistant Controller

ITEM 1 - TO CONFIRM THE MINUTES OF THE 127th MEETING

4. The Committee accepted that the Minutes of the 127th Meeting were a true record of the proceedings. The Chairman signed the Minutes

ITEM 2. TO CONSIDER MATTERS ARISING FROM THE PROCEEDINGS OF THE 127TH MEETING

5. There were no matters arising from the proceedings of the 127th Meeting.

ITEM 3 – TO NOTE THE REPORT OF THE BENEVOLENCE COMMITTEE

6. The Controller presented the Benevolence Report for the 12 month period ending 31st December 2017. The report is at Annex A.

7. The Controller pointed out that the amount of Individual Benevolence grants and the number of cases for Reservists had increased. He also discussed that there is a big push for Reservists to join the Day's Pay Scheme and that they are given the right information to ensure that they are aware of the benefits.

8. The Controller reminded members that at its last meeting, Council agreed that with effect from 2018, the REA grant to ABF would be increased from £40k to £50k and the grant to SSAFA would be increased from £15k to £20k; Council also agreed to remove the standing grants to Combat Stress and BLESMA and retain the £3k per annum for other charities to be nominated annually by Council.

9. The Controller discussed the REA Welfare Grant and highlighted the 32 ER Marne Pavilion project which is £270,000,00 in credit and waiting for other agencies before it can progress. The under-spend from the welfare grant will not be carried forward and the initiative is finished.

10. Mr K Street – South Midlands Group asked if Benevolence cases need to have SSAFA or TRBL input. The Controller explained that all cases must be staffed through SSAFA and TRBL. It was then discussed that if branches have SSAFA caseworkers in their Branch this could assist members and speed the process. Mr Rick Tootle – Scotland & NI Group explained he is a trained SSAFA caseworker and mentor which works well in the Branch and encouraged other Groups and Branches to train caseworkers.

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

11. The Corps Colonel presented his report and urged members to share this information with Branches and members. The report is at Annex B.

ITEM 5 – TO AWARD THE BADGES OF MERIT FOR 2018

12. The Controller explained that a new system for considering Badge of Merit nominations for REA members was put in place last year. Under the new system, nominations are received at HQ REA and considered by an Awards Board on the 7th December 2017 and considered the nine submitted nominations. Of the nine nominations, six were selected to receive the award.

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

Name	Branch	Group
Mr Peter Bain	Minley Branch	Central Southern Group
Mr Alan Bulmer	Birkenhead branch	North West Group
Mr Ray Lambert	Lowestoft & District	East Anglia Group
Mr Alan Marks	Peterborough Branch	East Anglia Group
Mr David Ormsby	Junior Leaders Regt RE Branch	South East Group
Mrs Sue Simm	Cambridge Branch	East Anglia Group

14. Their commitment to the Association and their comrades was remarkable and worthy of recognition through the award. The Controller will notify award winners officially.

ITEM 6 – ANNUAL FINANCIAL SUMMARIES - UPDATE

15. The Corps Colonel asked the Controller to update the Committee on Branch submissions.

16. The Controller said there were still 50% of Branch Summaries outstanding. He confirmed that he was in contact with the Group Secretaries of those Branches and that hastening action had been taken. The Controller was also concerned that summaries he had checked had inaccuracies and accounts do not balance. This was concerning as two members of the Branch had signed to say the figures were correct. Branches need to spend more time over their accounts.

ITEM 7 – HQ REA MANNING UPDATE

17. The Corps Colonel confirmed that with the arrival of Ken Kirk and Iain George, HQ REA is now fully manned. The current Controller will be taking the remainder of his annual leave from AD 16 February 2018 and will handover to Ken Kirk on that day.

ITEM 8 – TO CONSIDER AND APPROVE THE REA RISK REGISTER

18. The Risk Register was distributed to all members of the Committee prior to the meeting and the Corps Colonel stated that he would not discuss the Risk Register in detail as the whole format will change this year as directed by the Chief Royal. The Corps Colonel discussed with the Committee some of the serials and invited all to have a look, take notes and comment on its validity. All members were content to accept the Charity Risk Register dated 10 January 2018. The Risk Register will be reviewed again in July 2018.

ITEM 9 – REA STRATEGY DOCUMENT

19. The Corps Colonel relayed the Chairman's thoughts on the REA Strategic Plan. Although there are Strategic Objectives the Chairman is keen to develop these as a plan and show how we intend to meet them. The Strategic Plan will focus on two aims; one is to maintain the Esprit of the Corps from cradle to grave. The second is to ensure that we have a wide reaching benevolence strategy in place that meets the diverse needs of those eligible. There will be different courses of action and lines of operation that will need pulling together and the recommendations of the recent Membership Scoping Study will form an important part of the strategy. The final strategy will be put to Council for their endorsement in due course.

20. The development is long overdue, but has not been possible due to the manning problems experienced at HQ REA. Now that HQ REA is fully manned the focus will be on the future in terms of what the REA is about. The Chairman expects that over the next year or so we will see some interesting developments that would ensure the REA is well positioned for the future.

21. The Controller (Des) who will be heavily involved with the Strategic Objectives spoke on the requirement for Groups and Branches to have an input with this process as feedback and bright ideas will be required from them.

ITEM 10 – REVISION OF REA RULES

22. The Controller advised members that the Association Rules will need revising this year. The review is necessary due to the following:

- Recent Changes in the responsibilities of both the Controller and the Assistant Controller
- Recommendations made in the Membership Scoping Study
- Strategic Plan development
- The closer integration of Corps units with REA Branches

23. The REA Rules need to be in a format which is more understandable for those at grass roots level. Groups and Branches will be involved with this process as feedback and input will be required. The changes to the REA Rules will not happen overnight and could be a long process as ratification will be required from the AGM.

24. The Controller gave an update on the realignment of Branch Boundaries. The work was 50% complete and had to be put on hold because of the manning issue. There will be an update of the progress at the next meeting.

ITEM 11 – BRANCH MATTERS

25. Inglis Bridge. Mr S Lipscombe – North Midlands Group gave a detailed update on the recovery of the Inglis Bridge by the Doncaster Branch. The Highways Agency was involved with the removal of the Inglis Bridge which was now in Chilwell being refurbished in the workshops. His concern was what the RE Museum was going to do with the Bridge next as it cannot stay at Chilwell indefinitely and the communication with Mr D Flippance at the RE Museum was not good. The Corps Colonel informed Mr S Lipscombe that he would contact the Curator at the RE Museum and discuss the action to be taken.

26. Sapper Finch. Mr T Webb – South Wales Group gave an update on Sapper Finch who died in 1916 and informed the members that there was a good article about Sapper Finch in the December 2017 Sapper Magazine.

ITEM 12 – TO NOTE THE ALLOCATION OF GRANTS TO ANNUAL EVENTS

27. Grant requests were received for the following events in 2018:

Event (a)	Requested Amount (b)	Amount Supported by HQ REA (c)
CM & Vets Weekend - Chatham	£10,500 (£8,500 in 2017)	£8,500
Minley Weekend	£7,500 (£7,000 in 2017)	£7,500
Chilwell Weekend	£8,500 (£8,500 in 2017)	£8,500

28. The Controller discussed the amounts allocated for the Corps Annual Events and told the Committee that HQ REA did not support the £2000 increase for the Chatham Weekend. He also reminded the Committee that at the last meeting the Chairman said that if £8500 was not enough for the Chatham Weekend then members should be charged.

29. The Corps Colonel said that there is a planning conference for the Chatham Weekend soon where charging for the event will be discussed. The Corps Colonel also told the Committee that at the Chatham Weekend the Chief Royals will change over and that General Ty Urch will be the next Chief Royal on a, 5 year tenure.

30. Committee members are asked to note the requests. The Committee recommends to Council the allocations shown in column (c).

ITEM 13. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

31. Armed Forces Covenant. Mr T Webb – South Wales Group addressed the Committee on his concern that the Worcester Local Authority is not doing much to support the Armed Forces Covenant. He wanted to know if any other Groups/Branches had the same problem. Mr S Lipscombe – North Midlands Group spoke on how the Doncaster Branch had a similar problem and overcame this. The Corps Colonel asked for any references to help Mr T Webb to be passed on and for him to keep chipping away. Mr T Webb was asked to give a report at the next Committee meeting to inform the members of any progress he has made.

32. 2018 Diary. The Controller informed the Committee that the Events of interest for 2018 have been notified to HQ REA. A full list of the events was included in the November HQ Circular and has been sent to all Groups and Branches. The 2018 Diary is also available on the REA website.

33. REA Chilwell Veterans' Weekend. WO1 (RSM) S Allen – 170 (Infra Sp) Engr Gp Informed the meeting of the date changes to the Chilwell Weekend which are now from Friday 29 June – Sunday 1 July 2018. He also discussed the format for the weekend which included: Armed Forces Day, Centenary of the Chilwell Disaster, Kimberley Freedom Parade, Standard Bearers competition and various social activities. He also mentioned that poor behaviour will not be accepted after last year's incident. WO1 (RSM) S Allen also thanked the REA for their assistance when two ex sappers died in the Borough recently. He received nice letters from the families thanking for the support they were given.

34. Points from Corps Colonel. The Corps Colonel spoke on the following:

- The Corps Colonel informed the meeting of the demise of the RE Band in 2018 due to restructuring and the Reserve Band at Chilwell will be the main Corps Band.

- The Corps Colonel formally thanked Neil Jordan for all his hard work as the Controller over the last 16 years and for organising and carrying out the secretarial duties for every Management Committee meeting since 2002. Neil Jordan said it was a pleasure working for the REA for 16 years and thanked everyone for their support.

ITEM 14. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

35. The next meeting is planned for the 26 July 2018 in MOD Main Building.

{original signed}

23 February 2018

Assistant Controller

Minutes Approved

Dated

Chairman

Distribution:

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

Benevolence Report to 128th Meeting of the REA Management Committee

1. **Trends 2017.** For the period 1 Jan – 31 Dec 2017 the number of benevolence cases submitted to the Association by SSAFA, The Royal British Legion and other organisations was 545, this is 20 cases fewer than the same period in 2016. Of these 545 cases, 388 were submitted by SSAFA and 128 by TRBL; these figures are comparable to the same period in 2016.

2. Individual Benevolence Cases Considered during 2017 – 2014 (Excludes Weekly Allowances and Christmas Grants)

Category	2017	2016	2015	2014
Disabled & Illness	163	174	175	202
Aged	32	53	71	63
Widows	51	55	86	78
Unemployed	119	107	118	137
Miscellaneous	129	136	149	171
Grants not made	51	40	51	68
Totals	545	565	650	719

Regular – Reserve Case Comparisons	2017	2016	2015	2014
Regular Cases	450	540	605	666
Reservist Cases	44	27	45	53
Regular Grants	£255,169	£260,925	£282,412	£287,855
Reservist Grants	£16,614	£10,145	£20,318	£18,217

3. **Cost of Benevolence Cases Jan to Dec 2017.** The unaudited amount spent on benevolence cases for the period 1 Jan – 31 December was £271,783. This is comparable to the same period in 2016.

4. **Benevolence Committee meetings.** In 2016 the Controller's delegated powers increased from £500 to £1,000. Since that increase the REA Benevolence Committee sits quarterly rather than monthly. Meetings are now held in March, June, September and December. Cases requiring financial assistance greater than £1,000 (Controller's financial threshold) are referred to the REA Benevolence Committee. Cases of an urgent nature that exceed the Controller's delegated powers are considered out-of-committee in consultation with the Chairman of the Benevolence Committee and the Hon Treasurer REA. There is no financial limit on grants that the Committee can authorise for benevolence. The Committee also deals with applications for weekly allowances. Cases, having been in front of the Committee, are dealt with within a week of the Committee decision.

5. **Grants to Charities.** At the last meeting of Council, the trustees agreed that with effect from 2018, the grant to ABF would be increased from £40k to £50k, the grant to SSAFA would be increased from £15k to £20k. Council also agreed to remove the standing £5k grants to Combat Stress and BLESMA and retain the £3k per annum for other charities to be nominated annually by Council.

6. REA Welfare Grant Update.

o A total of 45 submissions were considered. With the exception of REAWF-016 where the bid is still being refined, the following bids were considered and approved:

REAWF-001	39 ER Campervan	£38,529.00	Approved	£38,529.00
REAWF-002	Corps Cricket Practice Nets	£40,000.00	Approved	£41,700.00
REAWF-003	Carver Bks Sports Village	£195,000.00	Approved	£195,478.00
REAWF-007	1 RSME Cpls Club Furniture	£4,400.00	Approved	£4,416.00
REAWF-009	39 Engr Regt 2nd Campervan	£40,670.00	Approved	£40,670.00
REAWF-010	299 Para Sqn RE Drill Hall	£3,800.00	Approved	£3,800.00
REAWF-011	3 RSME Regt Cpls Club Furniture	£4,150.00	Approved	£4,150.00
REAWF-012	3 RSME Regt Minibus	£27,171.00	Approved	£27,171.00
REAWF-015	23 ER RVS Lounge Furnishings	£5,853.00	Approved	£4,684.00
REAWF-016	32 ER Marne Pavilion	£270,000.00	re-sub requested*	£270,000.00
REAWF-017	1 RSME Regt Minibus	£19,519.00	Approved	£19,519.00
REAWF-021	RSMS Welfare Equip	£712.00	Approved	£712.00
REAWF-022	1 RSME Regt Soldiers Space Eqpt	£10,700.00	Approved	£9,457.00
REAWF-023	3 RSME Regt Cpls Club Garden Shed	£846.00	Approved	£846.00
REAWF-024	3 RSME Regt Cpls Club Ents Equip	£4,032.00	Approved	£4,032.00
REAWF-025	3 RSME Regt Clay Target Club	£11,993.00	Approved	£11,993.00
REAWF-027	3 RSME Regt Golf Nets	£2,568.00	Approved	£2,568.00
REAWF-029	23 Para ER Welfare Minibus	£36,272.00	Approved	£35,991.00
REAWF-033	32 ER Campervan	£40,000.00	Approved	£40,000.00
REAWF-035	21 ER Campervan	£42,195.00	Approved	£42,195.00
REAWF-036	42 ER JNCO Club	£33,007.00	Approval	£33,007.00
REAWF-044	71 Engr Regt Minibus	£19,519.00	Approved	£19,519.00
REAWF-045	REA Chesterfield Branch Gazebo	£1,066.00	Approved	£1,066.00
Total				£851,503.00

o It is not intended that the under-spend should be carried forward or that a similar allocation from REA reserve of capital should be made available again in 2018. A little time is needed to assess the marketing, management and results of this initiative before deciding whether – and how - it should be repeated in future. The Finance Committee will conduct a review in early 2018 and expects to be in a position to make recommendations to Council by its September meeting in 2018.

CORPS UPDATE JANUARY 2018

8 Engineer Brigade

1. 8 Engineer Brigade and the wider Corps continues to support defence operations throughout the UK and overseas. The attached slides highlight the following:

- a. 749 personnel are currently deployed on 17 Operations across 19 countries. A further 503 personnel are held at readiness for future potential overseas activity.
- b. 551 personnel committed to a plethora of UK Operations and commitments in support of the emergency services and other government agencies.
- c. The Corps currently has 71 Reserve personnel mobilised on Operations, this is 31.6% of the British Army's total Reserve deployed force currently.

Since the previous Corps update in Oct 17, the Corps also deployed on Operation RUMAN, a Tri-Service deployment to the Caribbean providing military support in order to supply humanitarian and disaster relief post hurricane Irma. The task force came under command of Brigadier Ridge, the previous 8 Brigade Commander. At its height of the deployment the Corps had 328 personnel deployed from across 8 Engineer Brigade with assistance from 23 Parachute Engineer Regiment and 24 Commando Engineer Regiment.

Army 2020

2. It is hopefully widely understood that we are in a period of significant change in a bid to re-shape and re-structure the Army and the Corps under the banner of Army 2020. Significantly several Corps units will relocate under the wider Army rebasing project, for some specific locations and timelines are yet to be defined. In the short term the Corps will however conduct the following:

- a. 35 Engr Regt will relocate from Paderborne to Wimbish Station, rerolling as an EOD Regt, mirroring 33 EOD Engr Regt in scale and capability. Within this restructure 35 Engr Regt will resubordinate 2 x sub units to 21 Engr Regt and 32 Engr Regt respectively.
- b. 101 EOD Engr Regt, currently a Hybrid unit (Regular and Reserve personnel) will relocate from Wimbish station to London, also rerolling from a Hybrid unit to a Reserve EOD Regt.
- c. The Corps has been tasked during 2019 to establish a Counter Chemical Biological Radiological and Nuclear Regiment. Details yet to be defined, however the unit will form under the remit of 28 Engineer Regiment.
- d. In order to assist the above action listed, including other changes yet to be released, some RE units within 8 Engineer Brigade will resubordinate to different Engineer Group Headquarters as Force Troops Command and the wider Field Army also restructures.

Corps Sport

3. As 2017 drew to a close the Corps can sit comfortably knowing we are more than punching above our weight at many sports from unit level up to Team GB. The following is a flavour of the Corps 2017 sporting achievements:

- a. Cricket - Inter Corps Plate Champions

- b. Football Winners - Corps Men's Woolwich Cup Winners and Vickers Trophy
- c. Powerlifting - Inter Corps Champions
- d. Road Bike - Inter Service Champions
- e. Tennis - Inter Service Champions
- f. Judo - Corps Team of the Year
- g. 3 RSME Regt - Sapper Games Winners
- h. 21 Engr Regt - Army Major Unit Sports Champions
- i. Spr Jones - Army Rising Star Award (Female Boxing - Team GB)
- j. Capt Paske - Corps Sports Personality of the Year Award (Judo - Team GB)

Royal Engineer Winter Sports are currently competing across the Alps from unit to Combined-Services level of competition in the following disciplines: Alpine, Nordic and Telemark skiing, Snowboarding, Luge, Skeleton, Bobsleigh and Ice Hockey; competition results will be published come the end this winter season.

Useful Links

4. Sapper Network Limited (SNL) has been rebranded throughout the latter stages of 2017. SNL has been set up to deliver and run an online employment support service for the Corps service leavers, Reserve and veteran personnel who seek employment and support beyond that available from MOD and other career transition organisations; the link to the appropriate web page can be found below.

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

As the Corps continues to outsource internal information to the veteran community and potential joiners, the exploitation of social media has become critical in assisting in the delivery of updates and current activity. Appropriate websites are listed above, another source for current information, in particular from specific organisation or units is Twitter. Twitter offers the chain of command a platform to release information as activities are occurring in a timely and concise manner, often with

images or links to short videos. The following are recommended personnel or organisations to follow on Twitter:

- a. Royal Engineers Official Page: @Proud_Sappers
- b. Commander 8 Engineer Brigade: @Commander8X
- c. Commandant RSME: @CommandantRSME
- d. Corps Colonel: @CorpsCoIRE
- e. Corps Sergeant Major: @CorpsSM
- f. British Army: @BritishArmy
- g. Chief of General Staff: @ArmyCGS
- h. Army Sergeant Major: @ArmySgtMajor

Each Group Headquarters and all major units also have a Twitter feed, along with most Corps sports association. Should individuals follow the above list, wider Corps units and organisations will soon present themselves within the timelines of personal accounts.

SA Webster
Warrant Officer Class 1
Royal Engineers Corps Sergeant Major