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From: Group Captain E J Flynn OBE ADC MA MEng CEng FIET RAF
Station Commander



Royal Air Force Brize Norton

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The Worshipful the Mayor of Torbay
Councillor Maggie Douglas-Dunbar
Torbay Council
Town Hall
TORQUAY
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25 January 2021

Dear Madam Mayor,

Thank you for your e-mail dated 4 January 2021 requesting written information on the activities at Royal Air Force Brize Norton so that you might share it at your forthcoming Council meeting. I have set out below information that I hope you will find useful.

With its mixed fleet of aircraft, Royal Air Force Brize Norton provides rapid global mobility in support of UK and overseas operations and exercises, as well as Air-to-Air Refuelling for aircraft both on deployed operations and in support of UK Homeland Defence. The Station, the largest in the UK, is home to: 7 flying squadrons; four air mobility aircraft types; five RAF Reserve Squadrons; several units comprising logistics, medical, Force Protection, trials and evaluation, Legal and other specialists; as well as several industry partners. The Station's population comprises over 5500 service personnel, 300 civilian staff and 1200 contractors.

As the UK's primary military Airport of Embarkation, it is an extremely busy station. With passengers and cargo arriving by road and air on a 24-hour basis, 365 days a year, alongside an array of visitors, Royal Air Force Brize Norton is continually preparing for and delivering global Air Mobility Operations.

Summer 2020 brought a change of command for Royal Air Force Brize Norton with the departure of Group Captain Dan James ADC and the arrival of Group Captain Emily Flynn OBE ADC as the new Station Commander. We also introduced a new leadership structure, with the addition of a second Group Captain, Simon Blackwell OBE, in the new role of Commander Air Wing, responsible for the flying squadrons and parachuting.

However, like every element of industry and society, 2020 has been dominated by the COVID-19 pandemic. Protecting not only our personnel but also our operational output as well as supporting the COVID-19 response throughout the pandemic has been much of our focus.

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The Station supported civilian charter aircraft repatriating British Nationals from high risk Coronavirus areas. Our Air Mobility aircraft were extensively utilised to repatriate Service Personnel, their dependents and staff from other Government departments back to the UK from over 20 different countries. Royal Air Force Brize Norton-based aircraft were also on hand to transfer critically ill patients from remote parts of the UK to hospital facilities to receive the care they needed. Personnel from the Station have deployed in support of the NHS, developing Nightingale Hospitals, delivering equipment in the UK and overseas, assisting at testing facilities and, more recently, transporting vaccines to some of the UK's overseas territories.

Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, the pace of other military operations and exercises has continued unabated. The Station has continued to enable, support and project air mobility effects globally in support, including sustained support to numerous deployed operations across the globe and the maintenance of higher readiness Air-to-Air Refuelling assets as part of UK Quick Reaction Alert. All of this has been achieved under COVID-19 restrictions. Some of the many achievements in the last year include:

- C17s enabled the move of a temporary field hospital to Accra in support of the World Food Programme.
- C130J Hercules from 47 Squadron joined forces with 16 Air Assault Brigade to deploy 250 paratroopers in Ukraine on exercise.
- A new World Record for the fastest flight between the UK and the Falklands Islands of 15 hours and nine minutes was set by one of our Voyager aircraft.
- A C130J delivered 63 tonnes of stores to the British Antarctic Survey.

In October 2020, RAF Brize Norton received the outstanding news that it had been awarded the 2019 Firmin Sword of Peace in recognition of its contribution to humanitarian activities by establishing good and friendly relations with the inhabitant of any community at home or overseas. Some of the activity which contributed to the award is as follows:

- The delivery of 20 tonnes of lifesaving aid to Mozambique.
- The deployment four Air transportable isolators to Sierra Leone to repatriate 8 patients at high risk of Lassa Fever, a highly contagious haemorrhagic fever similar to Ebola.
- Our A400M detachment in the Falklands was instrumental in the location and rescue of a capsized French sailing yacht some 500 nautical miles north of the Falkland Islands.
- The Station's contribution to local communities in 2019 in a multitude of ways including: Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM); Military co-responders who volunteer to support paramedics from the Ambulance Service; and, charity fundraising (over £166,000 in 2019).

The year was rounded off by the annual Remembrance commemorations. These felt very different in 2020. Held virtually, or in small socially distanced contingents, parades were cancelled up and down the UK. Since then, many of our personnel have remained at

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readiness to deploy across the country in support of the Government and local authorities throughout the Winter months as well as ensuring Royal Air Force Brize Norton remains operational no matter the circumstance.

2020 was certainly a year like no other. Whether facing the challenges brought by the global pandemic to every aspect of all our lives, supporting the national effort against COVID-19 or continuing to protect the UK and support our allies, I am incredibly proud of the way all Royal Air Force Brize Norton personnel have responded to this time of unprecedented challenge. We look forward to continuing to deliver in 2021.

On behalf of all at Royal Air Force Brize Norton, thank you to the members of Torbay council for your continued support of our activities. We are proud of our links with our communities and we look forward to continuing to build our relationship with you over the coming year.

Yours Sincerely,



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