

RAF COLLEGE CRANWELL

“SGIOT Combatants”



A Brief Tribute to the Cranwellian Combatants of
Afghanistan, Bosnia, Iraq and Kosovo

In its electronic form, this document contains underlined, hypertext links to additional material, including alternative source data and archived video/audio clips.
[To open these links in a separate browser tab and thus not lose your place in this e-document, press control+click (Windows) or command+click (Apple Mac) on the underlined word or image]

Introduction

It would be remiss of the Cranwellian Historical Society's review of the first 100 years of RAF College history to ignore the contributions from Cranwellians in the most recent conflicts in Iraq, Bosnia, Kosovo and Afghanistan. This album attempts to put that right, albeit too briefly.

The task has not been made any easier by the following factors:

- The lack of coverage in traditional source documentation from the RAF College, notably the College Journal and the diligent maintenance of individual cadet record cards (which ceased in 1973).
- The need to observe the requisite security restrictions attached to recent RAF operations.
- The further restrictions imposed by GDPR, which continue to make recording history of Cranwellians' achievements all the more difficult.

Accordingly, we are restricted to the material already published on line, principally summarising and referencing authorised articles on RAF operations during the past 30 years in the knowledge that the majority, if not all, RAF officers on active service in Afghanistan, Bosnia, Iraq and Kosovo were graduates of the College Single Gate Initial Officer Training (SGIOT) scheme phased in between 1978 and 1981.

Whilst we acknowledge that RAF officers, explicitly Cranwellians, from earlier College training schemes will have been involved in the staffing and management of these overseas conflicts, our focus is on the SGIOT element directly involved as combatants. In this album, therefore, we pay tribute by summarising RAF combat operations and those who we know paid the ultimate sacrifice in active service.

We trust the brevity of this album is understood and we would welcome any feedback that might throw legitimate light on Cranwellian contributions in recent conflicts.

Op GRANBY



Gulf War

Page 3

Op DENY FLIGHT



Bosnia

Page 4

Op ALLIED FORCE



Kosovo

Page 5

Op TELIC



Iraq War

Page 6

Op HERRICK



Afghanistan

Page 7

Iraq 1990/91 - Operation GRANBY

[Return to Index](#)

Narrative is taken from Wikipedia

Within nine days of the invasion of Kuwait on 2 August 1990, 12 Tornado F3 aircraft of 5 (AC) Sqn and 29 (F) Sqn from Coningsby had arrived in Saudi Arabia, alongside aircraft of the USAF. Later, Jaguar GR1 aircraft from Coltishall, and Tornado GR1s, redeployed from service in RAF Germany deployed to the theatre. Buccaneer aircraft from Lossiemouth were also deployed in order to laser designate ground targets for the Tornado and Jaguar aircraft. This action had the effect of maintaining the confidence of friendly nations, and limiting the potential for further Iraqi expansion. The force of Tornado F3s was expanded to 18, drawn from the three British bases then housing F3s (Leuchars, Leeming, and Coningsby), with 27 air crew and 350 ground personnel. RAF ground personnel and aircraft weapons technicians were also taken from TWCU at Honington and operated Tornados out to Tabuk airfield. Victor tankers based at Jubail Naval Base provided AAR support to all the coalition aircraft. Hercules, VC10, and TriStar aircraft supplied both the Royal Air Force and other military endeavours; Nimrod MR.2P aircraft assisted naval operations. At bases in Tabuk, Dhahran, and Muharraq, the RAF deployed Rapier missiles as part of surface-to-air defences. In total, around 6,000 RAF personnel were deployed to the Gulf.

As far as we are aware, there were no Cranwellian fatalities.



Tornado F3 of 5 Sqn



Tornado F3 of 29 Sqn



RAF Jaguar GR1



Tornado GR1 of RAF Germany



RAF Nimrod MR2P



Gulf War RAF Victor Tanker



RAF Rapier FSA with Blindfire Radar



Bosnia 1993/95 - Operation DENY FLIGHT Return to Index

Narrative is adapted from **Britain's Small Wars** Article at:
https://britains-smallwars.com/campaigns/bosnia/page.php?art_url=operation-deny-flight

Op DENY Flight started on 12th April 1993 and continued until 20th December 1995, having been preceded by NATO's Operation Sky Flight, which had monitored no-fly zone breaches over Bosnia for the previous six months.

Deny Flight had three objectives: to monitor and enforce compliance with the UN Security Council Resolution 816 banning flights by fixed wing and rotary aircraft over Bosnia; to provide air cover at the request of UNPROFOR; to conduct air strikes against targets threatening UN safe havens.

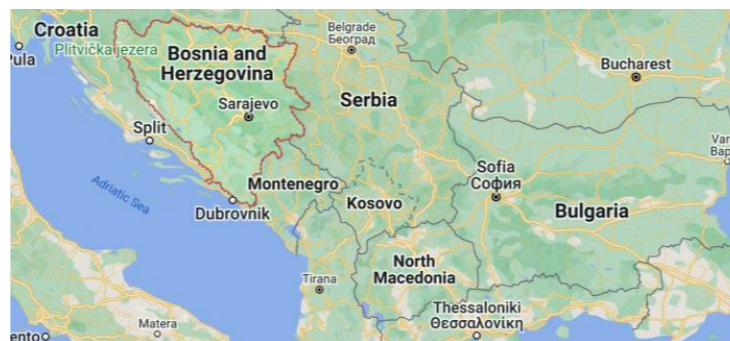
Deny Flight was commanded by CINCSOUTH, Admiral Leighton W. Smith Jr, USN, headquartered in Naples Italy. Authority was delegated to COMAIRSOUTH (Commander, Allied Air Forces Southern Europe), Lieutenant General Michael E. Ryan, USAF, and operational control was delegated to 5th Allied Tactical Air Force Commander, Lieutenant General Andrea Fornasiero, Italian Air Force, at Vicenza, Italy.

Aircraft and personnel from 12 NATO countries participated in Deny Flight. The United Kingdom contributed six F3 Tornados, twelve GR-7 Harriers, six Sea Harriers, two L-1011 tankers and two E-3D AWACS. The British combat aircraft were based at Gioia del Colle, with the tankers based at Palermo, Sicily and the AWACS at Aviano airbase.

As far as we are aware, there were no Cranwellian fatalities.



RAF Harrier GR7



RN Sea Harriers FA2



RAF Tornado F3



RAF L 1011 Tanker Aircraft



RAF E3D

Kosovo 1999 - Operation ALLIED FORCE

[Return to Index](#)

Narrative is adapted from Sebastian Ritchie's Paper at:

<https://www.raf.mod.uk/what-we-do/our-history/air-historical-branch/post-coldwar-studies/raf-over-iraq-and-kosovo-1997-2000/>

On 24 March 1999, NATO launched an air operation entitled Allied Force against the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (FRY) in response to the actions of the FRY security forces in the southern Serbian province of Kosovo. It was the first live military action to be conducted entirely under NATO auspices since the creation of the alliance in 1949. Two and a half months later, on 10 June, the campaign was suspended after the FRY's president, Slobodan Milosevic, agreed to withdraw his troops from Kosovo and satisfy a range of other requirements laid down by the international community for ending the conflict. NATO aircraft flew some 38,004 sorties, of which 10,484 were offensive sorties. The UK contributed 1,618 sorties to NATO's total, 1,008 of which were offensive sorties.

When the Kosovo conflict began, a significant number of RAF combat aircraft were already engaged in other overseas operations. Detachments of 12 Tornado GR1s and six Tornado F3s were deployed in Kuwait and Saudi Arabia, while four Jaguars were based in Turkey and were helping to patrol the No-Fly Zone over northern Iraq. Commitments and resources had thus to be carefully weighed in determining the size of the UK's contribution to Allied Force. The British offensive effort at first comprised eight Harrier GR7s based at Gioia del Colle in Italy. When NATO air operations failed to achieve their initial objectives, the Harrier detachment was augmented by a further four aircraft, and eight Tornado GR1s based at RAF Bruggen were committed to the campaign.

Between them, the Harriers and Tornados flew around 1,000 operational sorties. The Harriers accounted for about 85 per cent of this total, being the larger force numerically and operating closer to the theatre of operations. They flew predominantly against tactical and static military targets in Kosovo, while the Tornados were entirely committed to attacks on fixed targets, such as military and transportation infrastructure, and flew a higher proportion of their missions over Serbia. Exceptional challenges confronted both detachments. The story of UK combat air power in the Kosovo conflict provides an illuminating insight into the relationship between the strategic and operational direction of an air campaign and the harsh realities of tactical-level execution. At the same time, effective tactical air command and control was of paramount importance, and RAF E-3Ds executed a significant proportion of the airborne C2 task.

As far as we are aware, there were no Cranwellian fatalities.



RAF Harrier GR7 departs from Gioia del Colle airbase, Italy. April 1999



RAF Jaguar GR1



Tornado F3 of 29 Sqn



Tornado GR1 of RAFG



RAF E3D



Iraq 2003 - Operation TELIC

[Return to Index](#)

Narrative is adapted from Sebastian Ritchie's Paper at:

<https://www.raf.mod.uk/what-we-do/our-history/air-historical-branch/post-coldwar-studies/the-royal-air-force-and-uk-air-power-in-operation-telic-iraq-2003/#:~:text=The>

On 19 March 2003, a coalition of nations led by the United States opened the second Gulf War against Iraq – the US Operation Iraqi Freedom, the UK Operation TELIC. By the middle of April, combat operations had been successfully concluded and the primary coalition goal, the overthrow of Saddam Hussein's regime, had been achieved.

The Royal Air Force deployed around 8,000 personnel and 126 aircraft for the operation, including 51 offensive aircraft and a range of intelligence-gathering, air-to-air refuelling and air transport platforms, as well as E-3Ds for airborne command and control, and support helicopters. Fixed-wing aircraft committed to TELIC flew more than 2,500 operational sorties. The RAF's Tornado GR4s and Harrier GR7s released some 872 air-to-ground munitions, of which 85 per cent were precision-guided, and launched 47 Air Launched Anti-Radiation Missiles (ALARM).

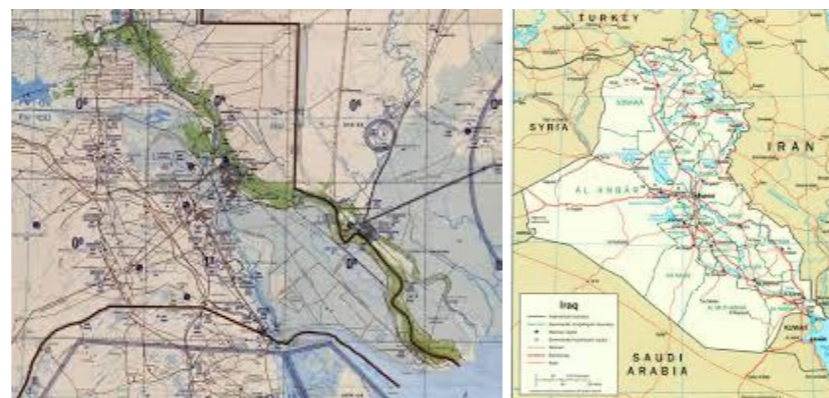
The operational challenges that faced the RAF in 2003 were very different from those confronted in 1990. They were primarily linked to the transition from limited No Fly Zone (NFZ) policing to major combat operations, which took place in an atmosphere of great political uncertainty with far-reaching implications, extending into such fundamental issues as basing and operational planning. On the one hand, it was necessary to enlarge the deployed force many times over; on the other, NFZ policing had to be maintained within strictly defined limits and operational definitions pending any formal directive to initiate more general hostilities with Iraq.

As far as our research has revealed there were two Cranwellian losses during Operation TELIC:

Name	Entry	Circumstances of Loss	Date
<u>Main KB</u>	101 IOT	KOAS in Tornado GR4 ZG710 of XIII Sqn when returning from an operational mission, having been engaged near the Kuwaiti border by a Patriot missile battery.	22/03/03
<u>Williams DR</u>	49 IOT	KOAS in Tornado GR4 ZG710 of RAF Marham, when returning from an operational mission, having been engaged near the Kuwaiti border by a Patriot missile battery.	22/03/03



Tornado GR4 ZG710 at Mildenhall



Op TELIC Map - Kuwait Border



Patriot missile in Gulf War

Afghanistan 2002-14 - Operation HERRICK [Return to Index](#)

Narrative is adapted from Wikipedia and MOD's Op HERRICK (Afghanistan) Aircraft Statistics at:
https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/5a80f1f2ed915d74e6231558/Op_Herrick_Aircraft_Annex_A_-_Bulletin.pdf

Operation HERRICK superseded two previous military operations in Afghanistan. The first of these was [Operation VERITAS](#), which consisted of support during the United States invasion of Afghanistan in October 2001. The last major action of this was a sweep in east Afghanistan by 1,700 Royal Marines during [Operation JACANA](#), which ended in mid-2002. The second was [Operation FINGAL](#), which involved leadership and a 2,000 strong contribution for a newly formed ISAF in Kabul after December 2001.

Operation HERRICK employed Harrier GR7/7A/9A, Tornado GR4, Hercules C130J/K, Nimrod MR2, Sentinel R1, Sentry AEW 1, Chinook HC2/4, Merlin HC3 aircraft and remotely piloted Reaper UMA of the RAF, and Desert Hawk, T-Hawk, Hermes and Watchkeeper UMA of the British Army. In December 2012, the UK Prime Minister David Cameron announced that 3,800 troops, almost half of the force serving in Helmand Province, would be withdrawn during 2013 with numbers to fall to approximately 5,200. The UK ceased all combat operations in Afghanistan and withdrew the last of its combat troops on 27 October 2014. Between 2001 and 24 July 2015 a total of 454 British military personnel died on operations in Afghanistan. *There were the following Cranwellian losses:*

Name	Entry	Circumstances of Loss	Date
<u>Chauhan AR</u>	106 IOT	KOAS in a Lynx helicopter crash in Takhta Pul district within Kandahar Province	26/05/14
<u>Downing AM</u>	182 IOT	KOAS, dying of wounds when vehicle caught in an explosion south of Kabul.	22/12/11
<u>Johnson SA</u>	98 IOT	KOAS in Afghanistan when Nimrod MR2 XV230 of 120 Sqn crashed following on-board fire.	02/09/06
<u>Marshall PB</u>	125 IOT	KOAS on C-130K Hercules XV179 of 47 Sqn; crashed 30 kilometres of Baghdad.	30/01/05
<u>Mitchelmore LA</u>	192 IOT	KOAS in Afghanistan after Nimrod MR2 XV230 of 120 Sqn ceased following an on-board fire.	02/09/06
<u>Mulvilhill S-J</u>	194 IOT	First RAF female KIA. According to an Iraqi policeman at the scene, the Lynx AH7 helicopter XZ614 of 847 NAS was shot down by a missile or rocket.	06/05/06
<u>Scott AJ</u>	IOTC 5	KOAS in Afghanistan in Puma XW 229.	11/10/15
<u>Squires AJ</u>	115 IOT	KOAS in Afghanistan when Nimrod MR2 XV230 of 120 Sqn crashed following on-board fire.	02/09/06
<u>Steal DK</u>	126 IOT	KOAS on C-130K Hercules XV179 of 47 Sqn; crashed 30 kilometres north-west of Baghdad.	30/01/05
<u>Swarbrick S</u>	191 IOT	KOAS in Afghanistan when Nimrod MR2 XV230 of 120 Sqn crashed following on-board fire.	02/09/06



7



Air Operations involving the RAF

GRANBY



Gulf War



DENY FLIGHT



Bosnia



ALLIED FORCE



Kosovo



TELIC



Iraq War



HERRICK



Afghanistan

