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Announcement

RAF protecting Camp Bastion

Organisation: Ministry of Defence (https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ministry-of-defence)
Published: 25 June 2012
Policy: Establishing stability in Afghanistan (https://www.gov.uk/government/policies/establishing-stability-in-afghanistan)

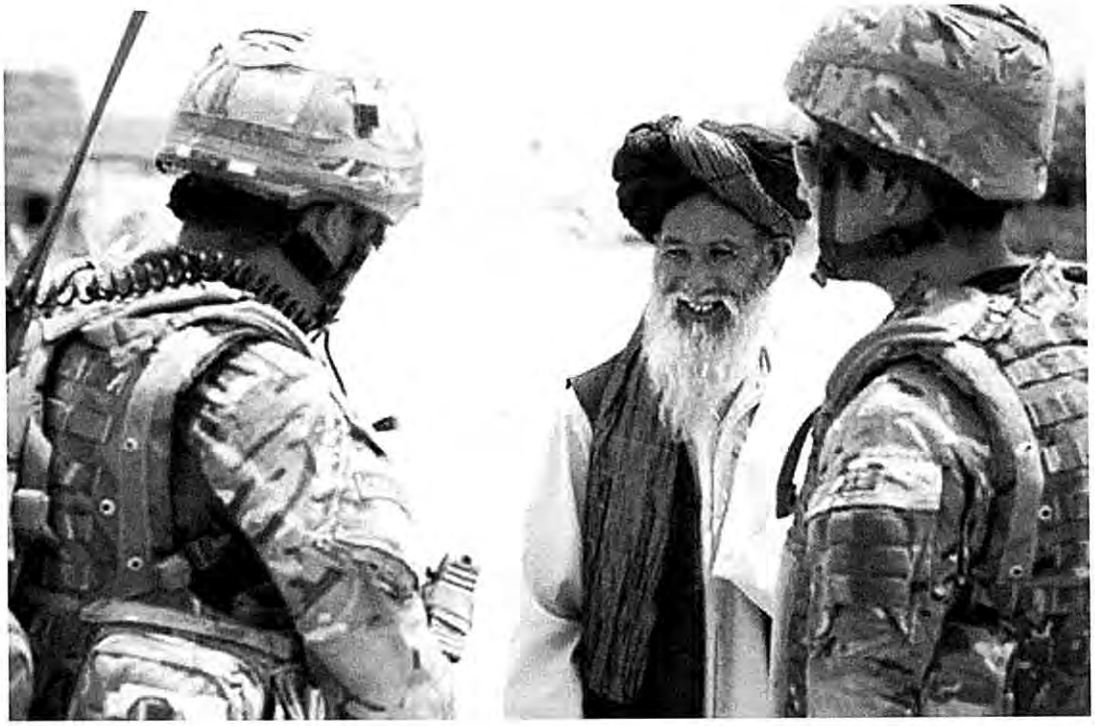
Personnel from Number 5 RAF Force Protection Wing, based at RAF Lossiemouth, have now been deployed at Camp Bastion for two months where they have responsibility for providing security at the main British base in Helmand province.

51 Squadron RAF Regiment personnel on patrol [Picture: Crown Copyright/MOD 2012]

Number 5 RAF Force Protection Wing, comprising members of the Wing Headquarters, 51 Squadron RAF Regiment and 2622 (Highland) Squadron Royal Auxiliary Air Force Regiment, left RAF Lossiemouth on 16 April 2012 and the personnel are now two months into their deployment to Afghanistan.

They are serving with members of No 2 (Tactical) Police Squadron from RAF Henlow in Bedfordshire, soldiers from the Tonga Defence Services and elements of 16th Regiment Royal Artillery, which together form the Bastion Force Protection Wing.

Since their arrival they have taken responsibility for the security of the Camp Bastion complex, one of the busiest airfields in the world with over 28,000 people working on-site. They are also responsible for patrolling the surrounding area, covering over 600 square kilometres, to prevent insurgent attacks against the airfield and its personnel.



51 Squadron RAF Regiment personnel with a village elder [Picture: Crown Copyright/MOD 2012]

Squadron Leader Kev McMurdo, Officer Commanding 51 Squadron RAF Regiment, said:

> We have made sure that the tempo of operations has not fallen during the transition and we continue to deny the insurgents the ability to operate around Camp Bastion.

> We are now looking to the future, planning further operations to ensure we stay one step ahead of the insurgents.

Lance Corporal Liam Telford is a gunner in 51 Squadron and has been out on patrol in the area. He said:

> The squadron has been working hard since we arrived, making good progress and the lads are happy to be here.

Wing Commander Tony Brown, Commanding Officer of the Bastion Force Protection Wing, said:

> All of the hard work during six months of mission specific training has paid enormous dividends. All elements of the Wing have risen to the challenges present in Helmand and the team have gelled together really well.
>
> We are now firmly settled into this tour and look forward to developing the force protection of Camp Bastion and contributing to the wider campaign in Afghanistan.