

THE UNIVERSITY OF ABERDEEN and THE ROBERT GORDON UNIVERSITY
MILITARY EDUCATION COMMITTEE

Minutes of the Meeting of the Committee on 7 March 2013

Present: Dr J Grieve (**Convener**, UoA), Lieutenant Colonel P Binnie (AUOTC), Professor I Broom (RGU), Mr M Combe (UoA), Sgt P Corral (ESUAS), Mr P Fantom (UoA), Professor S Klein (RGU), Mr J Lemon (UoA), Colonel AK Miller CBE (HRFCA), Professor P Robertson (RGU), Mr J Wyllie (UoA) and Ms Y Gordon (Clerk).

Apologies: Ms C Buchanan (RGU), Professor Sir I Diamond (UoA), Professor R Flin (UoA), Wing Commander BJO Kennedy, Squadron Leader J Lafferty (ESUAS), Lieutenant J Martin (AURNU), Professor von Prondzynski (RGU), Dr P Ziegler (UoA).

Minutes

- 1.1 Subject to a minor change to Minutes 2.6 and 7.1, the Committee approved the Minutes of the Meeting held on 3 December 2012. *(copy filed as MEC/070313/004)*

Matters Arising

AURNU (Minute 2.1 refers)

- 2.1 Colonel Miller reported that at a recent RFCA event, it had been discussed that the name of the URNU now based at the Forth had cut itself off from the universities in Dundee and St Andrews and this had been acknowledged by the Navy representative. It had been suggested that the URNU should be renamed something like the East of Scotland URNU.

Prizes (Minute 5.3 refers)

- 2.2 The Committee noted a letter to the East of Scotland URNU, dated 1 March 2013, regarding the return of prizes, together with their response. URNU had confirmed that prizes would be returned. The Convener agreed to write to the URNU to offer continued support to current students from the Universities in Aberdeen. *(copies filed as MEC/070312/009 & 9a)*

Action: Convener

Unit Progress Reports

- 3.1 The Committee considered reports from the Service Units:

- **AUOTC** *(copy filed as MEC/070312/004a)*
- **ESUAS** (Report tabled) *(copy files as MEC/031212/004b)*

AUOTC

- 3.2 The following points were noted:

- Commanding Officer Binnie would be arranging a meeting with both Aberdeen Principals in the near future;
- The modular approach to training designed by the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst had proved popular with cadets. Exams would be held at Easter Camp in Edinburgh;
- The Unit's mission was to produce well-rounded individuals 1) by providing military training in a safe and controlled environment, 2) building on sporting and leadership

skills 3) building personal robustness and self worth. The mission was at risk due to falling numbers of TA training officers and the mentoring aspects that they provide.

Colonel Miller reported that one aspect of the Future Reserves 20:20 Review (Green Paper due in November 2013) was to review the shortage of TA officers. An event was held recently with Universities and Colleges which proved useful, demonstrating how universities and the defence interface could work together more beneficially.

The Committee invited the AUOTC to come forward with suggestions on how the MEC could assist with small costs. **Action: AUOTC**

- It was noted that the lease on the Roy Strathdee building was coming to an end and there was a possibility that activities could relocate to Gordon Barracks into the space vacated by AURNU.

ESUAS

3.3 The following points were noted:

- An announcement by Government was expected shortly, to confirm that 600 Army troops would move into Leuchars. ESUAS was to remain at Leuchars, with access to one runway, which was good news;
- No flying could take place currently due to technical issues with the aircraft. It was hoped to resume flying in June. Unfortunately it had impacted on 1st year training.

COMEC

The Committee:

4.1 Considered a letter from the Chairman of COMEC, dated 8 February 2013, regarding the relocation of the AURNU, and thanked them for making representation to the Navy regarding AURNU. *(copy filed as MEC/070313/005)*

4.2 Considered and approved a request from COMEC to invite a member of the COMEC Executive to attend an upcoming MEC meeting. Their aim was that every MEC could, if they wished, invite attendance once a year of an Executive member. *(copy filed as MEC/070313/006)*
Action: Clerk

4.3 Noted that the closing date for entries submitted to the next COMEC prize competition was 30 April 2013. The COMEC Executive had asked that the CO and the Convener of the MEC countersign any submission prior to despatch to COMEC. It was suggested that this could be by either attaching a letter of acknowledgment to the CO's submission, or if it was easier, email: a.c.mayes@exeter.ac.uk. COMEC Prize competition details were attached. *(copy filed as MEC/070313/008)*

AUOTC New CO in 2015

5.1 The Committee considered a letter from Brigadier Harkness, dated 25 February 2013, asking the MEC's opinion on a future successor to Lieutenant Colonel Binnie in May 2015. *(copy filed as MEC/070313/006a)*

5.2 The Committee agreed that the MEC would wish to appoint the best person for the post who would show enthusiasm and drive. Regular Army personnel had always served the

MEC well and did not have other civilian job pressures as a TA Officer might. The Convener agreed to write to the Brigadier in response to his letter.

Action: Convener

Date of Next Meeting

- 6.1 It was agreed that the date of the next meeting should be Wednesday 5 June 2013 at 11am to be hosted by the Robert Gordon University.

[Note by Clerk: unfortunately the date had to be cancelled as no suitable alternative date could be found. The next meeting is scheduled to be Monday 2 December 2013 at 11.30am at RGU.]

Elphinstone Defence Lecture 2013

- 7.1 It was noted that Colonel Matt Glunz, Commander, Joint Intelligence Operations Centre Europe Analytic Centre, Molesworth, United Kingdom would present the eighteenth Elphinstone Defence Lecture this evening. The title of the lecture would be '*Informing Military Decision making – The Role of Academia*'. The poster for the event was attached. The Convener apologised that he would be unable to stay for the Lecture.

(copy filed as MEC/070313/007)