

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

Minutes of the Meeting of the Committee on 9 December 2013

Present: Dr J Grieve (**Convener**, UoA), Lieutenant Colonel P Binnie (AUOTC), Professor I Broom (RGU), Ms C Buchanan (RGU), Mr M Combe (UoA), Mr P Fantom (UoA), Professor S Klein (RGU), Mr J Lemon (UoA), Mr R Livingstone (COMEC), Lieutenant J Martin (AURNU), Colonel AK Miller CBE (HRFCA), Sgt L Powles (ESUAS), Professor P Robertson (RGU), Mr J Wyllie (UoA) and Ms Y Gordon (Clerk) with Ms J McKernan (Minute Secretary).

Apologies: Professor Sir I Diamond (UoA), Professor R Flin (UoA), Professor von Prondzynski (RGU), Dr P Ziegler (UoA).

Minutes

- 1.1 The Committee approved the Minutes of the Meeting held on 7 March 2013.
(copy filed as MEC/091213/01a)

Matters Arising

Small Costs (Minute 3.2 refers)

- 2.1 The Committee noted that all the Units were welcome to come forward with suggestions on how the MEC could assist with small costs.
Action: Units

AUOTC New Commanding Officer in May 2015

- 2.2 The Committee noted that the new CO in May 2015 was to be Peter Fox, who was Regular Army personnel.

Unit Progress Reports

- 3.1 The Committee considered reports from the Service Units:

- **AUOTC** *(copy filed as MEC/091213/01b)*
- **URNU** *(copy filed as MEC/091213/01c)*
- **ESUAS** *(copy filed as MEC/091213/01d)*

AUOTC

- 3.2 The following points were noted:

- The modular approach to training designed by the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst continued to be popular with cadets. In the 3rd and 4th years cadets undertook bespoke leadership and personal development training. The Unit continued to promote the STAR and Mentoring schemes to cadets;
- Recruitment had not been as successful as in previous years partially due to a change in the way medicals were administered (in Dundee) leading to delays in the recruitment process. It was hoped that medicals could revert to Aberdeen in the future. To boost Unit strength a second round of recruitment was to proceed in January 2014;

URNU

3.3 The following points were noted:

- That URNU had given its commitment to the 10 remaining Aberdeen students to see through their training to the end. They had been given a bespoke package as they could not attend regular drill nights in Rosyth. The URNU was no longer recruiting from the Aberdeen area;
- For the time being the name of the Unit would be the East of Scotland URNU, though in the future its name may change to the Edinburgh UNRU;
- The URNU would advise the AUOTC shortly after the start of term in September whether the Aberdeen URNU students would be parading/attending the Remembrance Service in November 2014.

Action: URNU

ESUAS

3.4 The following points were noted:

- The squadron has remained operational despite a near 100% regular staff turnaround. The cadets were able to train with 58 Squadron, acting as injured civilians, before the squadron left for Afghanistan.
- Although there was limited flying time last year this has improved with 2 tutors now back on the squadron and an increase in new recruits.
- Although the army is moving in 2015, Leuchars will remain active.

Gordon Barracks

4.1 It was noted that the lease on the Roy Strathdee building was coming to an end and there was great potential that AUTUC could relocate to Gordon Barracks into the space vacated by AURNU. It was hoped to secure funding to fully refurbish the accommodation.

COMECLiaison with COMEC

5.1 The committee was informed that COMEC felt interaction and communication between the committees could be improved upon. Roddy Livingstone volunteered to attend MEC meetings periodically and feedback to COMEC.

COMEC Conference

5.2 John Lemon reported on the recent COMEC conference held in September 2013. The committee heard that a series of high powered speakers attended the conference which was considered very useful and informative. It was noted that the expectation for all regions to be represented was no longer in place with COMEC aiming to get the best contributors regardless of region. COMEC is regarded as an important vehicle for links to government at Whitehall.

Elphinstone Defence Lecture 2014

6.1 The committee was invited to consider suggestions for a speaker at the next Elphinstone Defence Lecture. Professor Klein suggested Sir Simon Wessley (Professor of Psychological Medicine at the Institute of Psychiatry and a Director of the Kings Centre for Military Health Research) and Rory Stewart OBE FRSL MP (British academic, author and Conservative Politician). The committee recommended contacting both speakers. Michael Clark was suggested as an alternative.

Action: SK & YG

Date of Next Meeting

7.1 It was agreed that the date of the next meeting should be coincided with the date of the next defence lecture in March.