

# Our man from the Revenue

**Tim Flesher is the Deputy Chief of Defence Logistics, CDL's right-hand man. Caroline Wickham Smith spoke to him about Mrs Thatcher, Monty Python and the MOD.**



scratch. Most people thought the whole idea was barking mad and would never work, but it did."

Tim had a particularly interesting job in the 1980s when he was Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher's Private Secretary. He said:

"I arrived to work for the Prime Minister in 1982, on the day the Argentines surrendered the Falkland Islands. They'd clearly heard I was coming. For most of the four and half years I worked at No.10 I was Private Secretary for Parliamentary Affairs which meant my core job was providing briefing for the twice-weekly Prime Minister's Questions in the House of Commons. This was the primary means by which the Prime Minister found out what was going on across government and the way she dominated the House. She took Questions very seriously. If she could put in a good performance her authority was enhanced, so the process of briefing her, which I did personally, with experts on various subjects as required,

**T**im Flesher admits to still feeling a bit of a new boy when it comes to the MOD, but he's learning fast. He arrived hot-foot from the Inland Revenue last April to take up the post of Deputy Chief of Defence Logistics after working in several other government departments. I asked him about his career before he joined the DLO.

"Most recently I was deputy chairman of the Inland Revenue, which was a terrific job. The organisation is very big – around 70,000 people, and I was responsible for issues including strategy, IT and people, together with managing the Revenue's change programme. There was a lot of interest all

the time because it was a very rapidly changing organisation. Before that I was head of the

Immigration Service, a job also concerned with change, dealing with real, human issues. My time there was characterised by asylum becoming a huge political issue. Another interesting job I had was setting up OFSTED – establishing not only a new government

department but a whole new system for inspecting 25,000 schools on a four year cycle – all from

was very testing. We had to spot likely questions in advance and provide answers that were both

accurate and authoritative, and which occasionally scored points over the Opposition.

"The Prime Minister had a briefing folder for Questions which contained all the lines to take we'd worked up for her, and normally it was the job of her Parliamentary Private Secretary to pick it up and bring it out of the House if she was going to stay in after Questions. One day he forgot, and everyone just assumed that everyone else

had it until we sat down the next day and realised none of us had it. This wasn't exactly a matter of

***"Far from the telling off he expected, we greeted him with open arms"***

***"Practically every day I do something that's completely new to me"***

national security, but if it fell into the hands of the Opposition or the Press everything the Prime Minister wanted to say would be exposed, which would be embarrassing and possibly a bit damaging. We really panicked – we rang everyone who'd been on the front Bench, looked everywhere we could think of, including the waste bins, checked the newspapers to see if they had it, but no joy – we were really at our wits' end. Eventually a Treasury Minister, Barney Heyhoe sheepishly owned up that he'd just opened his red box and found it in there – he must have accidentally picked it up. Far from the telling off he expected, we greeted him with open arms. It wasn't funny at the time, but I can look back now and laugh at the state we were in.

"During my time with the Prime Minister there was an awful lot going on. It started with the Falklands conflict and included the Miners' Strike, the bombing of Libya, and the Westland crisis. The thing I remember most though is that I was the Private Secretary on duty the night of the Brighton Bomb. I received a call at home at 3 am from the Prime Minister's suite to say a bomb had gone off, and then I had to quickly drive to London and manage things at No.10. One of the things I had to do was ring people up, including Buckingham Palace, and tell them who was safe or not safe. That was a very strange feeling."

The DLO is somewhat different to No.10, and I asked Tim whether the DLO had lived up to his expectations.

"The only real contact I'd had with the MOD was when I worked at No.10, which was a long time ago," he said. "I'm not sure what I was expecting, but I deliberately took this job because I expected it to take me outside my comfort zone, and it's certainly done that. Practically every day I do something that's completely new to me, which is scary, but I'm certainly not going to get stale. I expected it to be very 'real-world' focused and it is, but my expectations in the other direction have been exceeded in terms of the language here, which is extremely specialised, and has proved very difficult to crack at times. In fact, if there's one thing I could change about the DLO it would be to outlaw acronyms!"

Tim has enjoyed visiting parts of the DLO, and looks forward to continuing his travels. He said:

"The sheer scale of the organisation and the things it deals with has surprised me – until you actually see it you can't appreciate it. When you're desk-bound you don't see much apart from problems. When you go out and meet people in their workplace you also get to see the uncelebrated bits – all the things that are going right, which is great." In his time in post he's found the DLO a good place to work:

"If you want big, interesting challenges this is the place to be –

***"The thing I remember most though is that I was the Private Secretary on duty the night of the Brighton Bomb"***

***"If you want big, interesting challenges this is the place to be"***

***"But it's a big challenge to find the best way to communicate the direction we're taking"***

it's where everything's happening. It's obvious we've come a long way and achieved great things – just look at our successes in Operation Telic – but we've got loads more potential."

Many of Tim's previous posts have been involved with managing change, and I asked what he thought were the key factors for the success of the DLO's change programme.

"I think there are really three things," he replied. "First we need to get the structure of the organisation and its governance right, and we've come a long way here. The governance we have for our change programme is really world class stuff, and that's been recognised across the MOD and other government departments already. Secondly 'buy-in' is a big issue for us, across the DLO and defence, and there's still a way to go on this. And thirdly people within the DLO need to be really clear what we're doing, why we're doing it and what their part in it is. Things like the CDL Roadshows help, but it's a big challenge to find the best way to communicate the direction we're taking."

Industry's involvement will be a factor in the success of the change programme and Tim recognises that the DLO's relationship with industry needs to develop. He said:

"I think industry and the DLO need to challenge each other more in the proposals and solutions put forward for logistic support. However we have to be pragmatic about it. It's not always the

solution that industry can do things better or cheaper than us, but we must consider all options, and have the bottle to adopt different ways of doing things if appropriate. I can see, however, that within a couple of years our involvement with industry will be much greater, and if we take a more cohesive approach to our requirements, perhaps joining forces with the Defence Procurement Agency more, we'll really increase our buying power."

I suggested that cohesion was something the DLO could generally be much better at, and Tim agreed.

"I'm heavily involved in the restructuring of the DLO at the moment, something which will obviously play a part in the organisation's cohesiveness. It will be my job to present a number of options to the Top Team that both deliver a more effective and efficient way of supporting where we want to be, offer opportunities for savings, and mean we can operate more

'corporately'. But restructuring is only part of it. Culture eats structure for breakfast any day. We must focus on the cultural issues, and that comes from the way we behave together, and the Top Team must lead from the front. That's a very easy thing to conclude, but actually quite difficult to do, and we must make a real effort here."

The way people feel about the DLO will in some part be reflected in the outcome of the latest staff attitude survey, and I wondered what Tim thought would come out of it.

"I'll be particularly interested to see if we've made progress on people's understanding of where they fit into the organisation, as well as whether they understand the DLO's direction. I'll also be interested to see what messages come out on diversity – an area where I feel the MOD and the DLO clearly still has a way to go. For example, at the most basic level, we only have one female One Star officer in the whole DLO – what does that say?"

***"Culture eats structure for breakfast any day"***

Tim lives in Surrey and commutes daily to Bath, which I ventured must be rather time-consuming, and I asked how he managed to keep a work/life balance.

"It's not easy," he replied. "I keep weekends free, and my aim is always to get home in time to read my three year-old daughter a bedtime story. I'm lucky, because I get driven, and I can use the time in the car to work, which extends my working day. In general I try and manage my time as ruthlessly as I can – it's all about being disciplined really." Tim's spare time is mainly centred around his family, His wife works too, so they spend a lot of time in activities involving their two daughters.

"We do a lot of our shopping on the internet which has created a bit more free time" he said. "I'm also now finding time to go to the gym. I'm a real anorak about 1960s pop music – I think I probably know more about it than the average person. I also take an interest in modern pop music and have interesting discussions about it with my twelve year old daughter. We have similar tastes, but while I have the uncensored version of Eminem I insist she has the censored version!"

Tim strikes me as someone with a dry sense of humour and I asked what made him laugh.

"Absurdity mainly. Paul Merton on 'Have I Got News for You', 'Friends' and I particularly enjoy 'Frasier'. And going back a bit, I really like Monty Python too. I feel it's important to see the funny side of things and keep things in perspective, after all you want to enjoy life, whether you're at work or home."

It's obvious Tim is enjoying his move into the world of MOD – the Man from the Revenue has turned into the Man from the Ministry, and said:

"I've joined an organisation full of people who believe passionately in what they're doing, which is a huge asset and we really mustn't underestimate how precious that is. I'm really looking forward to joining forces with them to move the DLO forward and contribute to the transformation of defence logistics."



# Bombs, bullets and Brimstone

By Lisa Cole and Melanie Tanner

**The recent war in Iraq brought munitions into sharp focus, and many of the munitions you saw on television were supplied by the DLO's Defence Munitions Centres around the country. DLO News headed north of the border to find out how the Scottish munitions centres deal with the things that go bang.**



HMS Invincible at Glen Mallen jetty

**O**n our trip to Scotland the sun shone – not terribly usual we were told, and we travelled through very picturesque autumn-tinted scenery to our first port of call, the Defence Munitions Centre at Crombie, north-west of Edinburgh. We were met by Keith Sneddon, Training Manager and Head of PR and Allan Potter, Deputy Superintendent. I asked Allan what types of munitions were dealt with at Crombie. He replied:

“We store, process and maintain SKYFLASH, ALARM and AMRAAM missiles, which are used on jets such as Tornado and Royal Naval Sea Harrier aircraft. We also have the Mine Disposal Charge which is part of the Remote Control Mine Disposal System and was used to good effect by the Royal Naval Mine Countermeasures Squadron during Operation Telic. The UK has a defensive mines policy not an offensive one, so we also prepare mines for clearance teams to practise on, not to be used in warfare.” The impressive jetty at Crombie is in water deep enough to accommodate any ship the Navy have, including aircraft carriers, and it saw a lot of action during Operation Telic, with ships sometimes ‘queuing’

to load cargo, which is not a usual state of affairs.

## Not all for show

We embarked on a depot tour, and as we were making our way to the underground storage facilities we commented on how well maintained the site was.

“It’s not all for show,” Keith said. “Due to what we keep here we have to keep the grass short in case of fires, and the site has to be surrounded by trees to help absorb the blast in case of an accident. For every tree that dies a new one is planted.” We arrived at the underground storage facilities to be met by Jim Moultrie, Warehouse Manager. A couple of seals were relaxing on a rock on the water beside us, normal practice apparently! An arched doorway in the hillside led us into a 90 metre tunnel, the end of which expanded into a room containing huge ALARM missiles, safely stored in boxes. The room looked a bit empty apart from the boxes of missiles, but Jim explained that due to explosives regulations there’s a limit to the

amount of explosives that can be stored there. So, although there was physically plenty of room for more missiles, if they put any more in there the explosives limit would be exceeded.

## Testing

Jim then led us to the Integrated Weapons Complex at Crombie, where missiles are tested, refurbished and repaired. These buildings, also found at Gosport and Beith have been specially designed to implode. Should there be an explosion the roof will blow off and the walls will collapse inwards to limit the effects of the blast. Everything was concrete, and after negotiating some automatic concrete-looking doors we found some SKYFLASH missiles being tested inside. This is an air to air missile fired from the Tornado aircraft. The missiles, lying on stands, were connected to various bits of test equipment which were quietly assessing whether everything was in working order. Depot fitters attached various leads to the missiles and examined the test equipment whirring away, heads to one side, like doctors overseeing patients.

## Ready to fire

Our tour finished in the small arms workshop where we were met by Andy Dewar. Here they repair, recondition, clean and test Royal Navy small arms and prepare them for issue to ships.

“We’re currently testing SA-80 rifles,” said Andy. “They can fire 800 rounds per minute, and are magazine fed. Each magazine holds 30 rounds of 5.56mm ammunition and they can be fired as a single round or an automatic.” The workshop ‘ranges’ the guns to make sure they fire accurately, and we were shown into the testing room where an SA-80 was set up for testing. I couldn’t quite believe my ears when Andy asked if we’d like to have a go. I braced myself as I pulled the trigger back, then ‘bang!’ It was a lot easier to fire than I thought, although I did miss the target. With the gun set to automatic, and a sharp rat-a-tat of bullets, funnily enough I did manage to hit the target. We were given bullet shell keyrings as a memento of the occasion which were eventually allowed through the security check at the airport on our way home!



Transporting an ALARM missile outside an underground store at Crombie

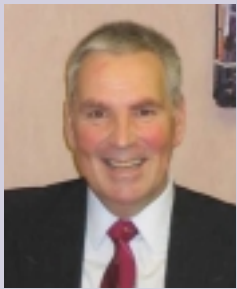


**Deputy Superintendent  
Allan Potter**

Allan Potter added:  
"I really enjoy working here at Crombie, hence the reason I have been here since 1993! In this time I have seen the depot transformed from a conventional munitions site into a sophisticated weapons processing site. I've

enjoyed the challenges of working here and it's given me great pleasure and pride to be part of a team that has continuously and successfully met the challenges it has faced. One of our most recent achievements was progressing from a 'bronze' to a 'silver' award in the Scottish Health at Work Initiative (SHAW). The initiative is all about health, including healthy eating and health checks. There is a great deal of depot participation in the scheme and the next stage is to gain the 'gold' award. If successful we will be one of few in Scotland to have achieved this standard."

## Finding the Glen



**Superintendent  
Derek Nuttall**

We left Crombie and drove west to the munitions centre at Glen Douglas, established in 1966. It's situated on the Clyde, not far from Loch Lomond. The centre is a NATO asset, the UK being the sole user, and certainly takes some finding.

After a trip along a very narrow and windy track, through extremely beautiful countryside – more sheep and highland cattle than you could shake a stick at – we met Superintendent Derek Nuttall and Sandy Brodie, the Operations Manager, who explained the current task and role of the depot:

"With nearly 650 acres of land, 56 magazines built into the hillside, processing rooms and general engineering workshops, Glen Douglas stores a high volume of assorted bombs, various ammunition and explosives and pyrotechnics – the sort of items known as 'conventional munitions' as opposed to 'sophisticated' weapons and missiles. The three strategic strengths of the site are its ability to store significant amounts of explosives, the deep water explosives handling jetty at nearby Glen Mallen and the road and rail capability for UK wide distribution of explosives stores. The remote and isolated location of the depot means that explosives licences are more than adequate for the current and predicted task."

## Loading up

Three miles down an access road is Glen Mallen jetty, part of the main depot. It's a popular berth for Royal Navy and Royal Fleet Auxiliary ships due to its relatively close proximity to the bright lights of Glasgow, and the Glen Douglas staff have a busy time loading up all the ships that come in. Sandy said:

"On a regular basis we see small warships which stay at the jetty for a couple of days as well

as larger ships like Royal Fleet Auxiliaries which stay for a week or more. At the moment RFA Fort Victoria is alongside. Although the primary task is the loading or unloading of munitions we also regularly handle general stores like spares, food and water. Recent customers have included the aircraft carriers Ark Royal and Invincible and both ships were loaded with a wide variety of supplies." Derek said:

"The current explosives handling licence for Glen Mallen Jetty offers considerable scope in terms of the amount of explosives that can be handled at the berth. To give an example of how much we do here, the handling capability of Crombie jetty is 110,000 kilograms of explosives but here we can handle four times that amount."

## Recovery

During Operation Telic the depot was busier than normal but the real test came during the recovery phase. Derek said:

"The majority of munitions returning from theatre were channelled through Glen Mallen jetty and Glen Douglas Depot. Whilst some of this was returned to local stock, significant amounts were also moved by road and rail to sister defence munitions depots at Longtown in Cumbria and Kineton in Warwickshire. During this short time a total of 15,000 tonnes of munitions in 1,400 shipping containers were handled by Glen Douglas staff. I'm extremely proud of this achievement which I believe was a testament to the professionalism and dedication of my staff."

## On the road

The depot doesn't just load up ships, its road fleet travel up to 400,000 miles a year transporting munitions to various MOD customers around the country. In addition Derek was keen to stress the emerging use of rail as a cost effective transportation medium. A professional and calm atmosphere pervades this beautifully-situated munitions centre, and Derek considers himself fortunate in having a solid and reliable team supporting him in a busy and ever changing environment. He said:

"I feel the reason Glen Douglas succeeds is because of its team spirit. There is a real flexibility and versatility within the workforce and a commitment to ensuring targets are met. I've worked all over the world and I'd certainly say that in my 35 year career this is the best place I've worked. I feel very privileged to lead the Glen Douglas team."

## Difficult times



**Managing Director  
Duncan Judge**

decision to cut posts. Duncan Judge, the Managing Director said:

"Approximately 60 per cent of our workload

We reluctantly left Glen Douglas to travel south to the Defence Munitions Centre at Beith in Ayrshire. We arrived at the centre at a difficult time for the staff, as the outcome of a business process review had recently been announced, resulting in the

comes from commercial contracts with defence industry contractors such as BAE and MBDA. This percentage could increase as a result of MOD initiatives on smart acquisition and partnering. Our customers expect value for money when they place work with us, and if we can't provide this they will go elsewhere. The business process review is aimed at ensuring that we continue to provide value for money. I believe the changes recommended by the review team, if implemented, will significantly increase our chances of retaining existing work and winning contracts for work on next generation weapons in a reducing and more competitive marketplace."

## Changes at Beith

Beith was established as a munitions depot in 1943, and Mary Worrell, the budget manager, who has worked at Beith for 17 years, and whose job encompasses both Beith and Crombie told us:

"The site at Beith was developed during the Second World War when the Royal Navy decided to move some munitions inland away from the threat of attack. It took most of the war to develop and in 1943 Beith opened for business. Over the years it has seen generation after generation of different families work here and is thought of very fondly by local people as it provides a good source of employment." A lot of the staff have worked at Beith for many years, Graeme Kane for 26. He said:

"I've seen a lot of changes in that time to the way the business is run. In my opinion some have been good, some not so. I've recently been involved in looking at the way the processes in the depot work, which has been very interesting – I never stop learning." In line with some other munitions depots, including Crombie, Beith works a four and a half day week, and Trisha Conway the training officer, who has worked at Beith for 15 years said:

"The introduction of the four and a half day week has been very well received by staff – we all enjoy having a slightly extended weekend, even though we work slightly longer days than most from Monday to Thursday."

## Planning and preparation

George Connor, the production manager, is quite a 'new boy' compared to some, having worked at Beith for just 18 months. He told us that the centre's main purpose is to store, produce, test and issue a range of 'sophisticated missiles' used by all three Services. He said:

"The hardest bit of my job has been keeping up to speed with everything – there's been such a lot to learn in the time I've been here. Because we're an inland site we send out a lot of munitions by road, particularly to the Clyde Naval Base further north. All this takes a lot of planning and preparation, but it's a job I'm enjoying – I think Beith's a great place."

## In the News

Karl Venkort, Business Systems Support Manager, prepared us for a tour of the Non-Explosives Workshops (known as the NEWS building) by issuing us with white lab coats. Feeling, and probably looking, like trainee doctors we followed Stephen Neil, the Spearfish Production Manager, into the workshops, who



explained to us the process of making Spearfish weapons. Spearfish is one of the most sophisticated weapons the UK has and is fired from submarines. Beith has a commercial arrangement with BAE Systems, formerly GEC-Marconi, to act as sub-contractors to produce Spearfish missiles for them. We spoke to Alan Watson, who works on Spearfish production. He said:

"I've worked at Beith for ten years and spent six of those working here with Spearfish. I supervise the testing of these weapons and never stop learning. I face a fresh challenge every day and the technology we use is amazing. Unfortunately, I've never seen the weapon fired except on video footage but even that was very impressive."

## Spearfish

The missiles are tested by the Royal Navy in two places, the 'BUTE' range, off the Kyle of Lochalsh in Scotland, and the 'AUTE' range in the Bahamas. Teams from Beith often assist on these test firings and insist that although the Bahamas sounds a very exotic location the bit they go to is not the tourist side and living conditions are somewhat basic. They admit, however, the weather's pretty good. They also feel it's important to see the missiles in action if the opportunity arises and get a sense of pride in a job well done when they see the target hit. Peter Caer also works on Spearfish and said:

"I'm a weapons engineer, originally trained by Marconi and then joined Beith 18 years ago. I enjoy working with this weapon, as the feedback we get from our customers, the Royal Navy, is very good, and that gives a good sense of job satisfaction. The US Navy is also very impressed with the weapon's performance."

Malcolm Grossart and Tommy Johnston are also engineers working on Spearfish and have accolades for the weapon. They said:

"Spearfish is extremely interesting and complex to work on, and solving the problems that arise during production has really tested and developed our skills."

## More about missiles

Next we visited the area where Storm Shadow is produced. This is an air to ground missile fired from aircraft such as Tornados. Billy Trousdale, Project Manager for Storm Shadow, said:

"Storm Shadow has two warheads, one to make the initial impact and the other to create the blast. It uses a range of features to improve its usefulness to the Royal Air Force. It takes us two and a half days to fill the explosive compartments, test the weapon and finally box it up. MBDA are the prime contractor and have contracted us to produce missiles using the components they provide." Billy is also project manager for Tomahawk and Brimstone missiles. He said:

"Tomahawk is a land attack missile and is fired from submarines. It works from photographs of the terrain it flies over, pre-loaded into its 'brain' to help it reach the correct destination." All was calm and quiet in the Brimstone production room, a relatively new, purpose-built building. Staff were leaning over the missiles, concentrating hard on the work in hand. These missiles were a lot smaller than the ones we'd seen earlier on, such as Spearfish. Billy said:

"Brimstone will provide lethal anti-armour capability for fixed wing aircraft such as the Harrier, Tornado and Eurofighter. It's attached to the launcher with metal 'shoes' which help the alignment, and each launcher will hold three missiles which allows each aircraft to carry a great many. In the workshop we produce six missiles every day."

We found our trip to Scotland thoroughly enjoyable and appreciated the chance to get up close and personal to all the missiles and guns, which we'd only seen on the News and read about in the papers. The calm professionalism at each of the depots impressed us, and it was nice to know these munitions were in safe hands! So next time you are driving through the wilds of Scotland, take a moment to think



Brimstone production room at Beith

about what's going on around you, often underground in these hard working munitions centres.

### Want to know more?

Speak to  
Rose Sedgewick  
on 94240 2842 or  
01869 256842

## Crombie facts

- Crombie has 8,000 cubic metres of storage space
- The jetty, built in 1989, goes out 700 metres into the Firth of Forth and is funded equally by NATO and the UK
- 200 people work at Crombie
- Crombie site is 200 acres and two miles from end to end
- The underground stores at Crombie are built to withstand a direct hit from a 1,000 lb bomb
- Wildlife seen around Crombie includes seals, stoats, buzzards, green woodpeckers and even whales

## Glen Douglas facts

- Glen Douglas has 40,000 cubic metres of storage
- Glen Mallen Jetty, built in 1996, is licenced to handle up to 440,000kg of 1.1 explosives
- The site is 650 acres
- There are 150 people working at Glen Douglas
- There is an abundance of wildlife around the site, and a herd of approximately 100 Roe Deer live within the depot itself

## Beith facts

- Beith has a site area of 1,000 acres and over 21 miles of interior roads
- The site is surrounded by 6.5 miles of perimeter fence
- There is a protected peat bog within the site which is a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)
- During the late 19th and early 20th Century considerable coal and iron mining and limestone quarrying was carried out on and around the depot



Spearfish missiles at Beith



# Christmas on Operations

**Lisa Cole found out how Servicemen and women on operations will be celebrating Christmas.**

**W**hile sitting down to your Christmas dinner this year, take a moment to think of our armed forces on operations all over the world celebrating Christmas in a slightly different style. The temperature in Iraq on Christmas day is expected to be around the mid-70s, nowhere near the cold temperatures we are used to and expecting. Those serving out there still want to celebrate in style and having a traditional Christmas dinner is high on their list of priorities.

The Defence Catering Group, based at Ensleigh in Bath, has been busy making sure their Christmas fare is up to scratch, and on top of the normal rations turkey, vegetables and stuffing have been despatched, together with a variety of other Christmas foods including Christmas cake, Christmas pudding and Yule logs. The food was packed up and loaded onto a number of ships back in October and these have now reached a number of places around the world including Bosnia, Afghanistan and Iraq. The units also pay to have things like crackers, streamers, party poppers and Christmas hats bought and delivered to them along with the food.

I spoke to Major Mackenzie, currently serving in Iraq, about what had been planned for Christmas Day this year. He told me:

"10,000 troops will be here in Iraq this Christmas and it's an extremely hard time of year to be away from home. Christmas day will be a normal working day, although there are plans for some sort of sporting event to take place, and the senior ranks and officers will serve up Christmas dinner to the junior ranks and mount guard duty."



Unpacking Christmas provisions in Kuwait

## **The Christmas items sent out this year included:**

### **Kabul (350 Military Personnel)**

138 large Christmas puddings  
24 boxes of shortcake  
600 balloons  
936 party poppers

### **Bosnia (2000 Military Personnel)**

288 Christmas cakes  
6372 mince pies  
2000 crackers  
2016 party poppers

### **Kuwait (9500 Military Personnel)**

1002 large Christmas puddings  
4160 yule logs  
12528 mince pies  
11400 balloons  
11400 crackers



## **The Christmas mail must get through**

Christmas is always a busy time for the British Forces Post Office (BFPO) and this year, with so many of our armed forces deployed around the world, including Iraq, the Balkans and Afghanistan, they are busier than ever. Mail has increased by 33 per cent over normal volume, which equates to a doubling of the workload, and meant that 50,000 to 80,000 items of Christmas post were despatched by the beginning of December. The last posting dates for Christmas were at the beginning of December but it's never too late to send an e-bluey.

