MAJOR General Rob Thomson was sworn in as the new Sovereign Base Areas Administrator on Wednesday during an official ceremony.

Maj Gen Thomson, who also assumed the role of Commander British Forces Cyprus this week, is now set to get down to work as head of both the civilian and military elements within the Bases.

The new Administrator, who was based in Paris working as the Defence Attaché before coming to Cyprus, joined the Army in 1989.

His early regimental career took him all over the world, including postings to Kosovo, Afghanistan, Northern Ireland and Bosnia. In 2006, he worked closely with British Forces Cyprus (BFC) when he was based at the UK’s Standing Joint Force Headquarters where he helped in the evacuation of UK citizens from Beirut during Operation Highbrow.

Speaking after the ceremony, he said: “I am delighted to have been appointed the new Commander British Forces Cyprus and to have been sworn in as the Sovereign Base Areas’ Administrator, which will be a new, exciting and slightly daunting challenge for me.”

He continued: “I absolutely get the importance of British Forces Cyprus to UK Defence and I can’t wait to get started. I am particularly keen to meet everyone in this great team who are playing such a crucial role in giving the SBAs and BFC the outstanding reputation it enjoys throughout Defence.”

“Having spoken to my predecessor and very dear friend of over 30 years, James Illingworth, I am aware of the excellent job our people are doing here in the eastern Mediterranean – military, civil servants, dependants and the locally engaged workforce – and I look forward to working closely with all of them and of course, our colleagues within the Republic of Cyprus.”

Former Administrator and CBF, Maj Gen Illingworth, reflected on what had been a “highly rewarding and challenging” experience as both head of a military and civilian organisation.

He said: “The combination of being the CBF and the Administrator was a great challenge and to be able to work at the coalface, dealing with both the military and civilian community, was one I will not forget.

“We have an incredible cross-section of people working within BFC and the SBAs, including military and civilian personnel, which makes it such a unique environment.

“One of the greatest contributors to what we do here and why I have had such a wonderful time, are the LECs, our wonderful Greek and Turkish Cypriot employees, some of whom occupy the most important jobs; we rely on them a great deal.”

NEW APPOINTMENT: Major General Rob Thomson at the ceremony
SOLDIERS from The 1st Battalion, The Princess of Wales’s Royal Regiment (1PWRR) are settling in well to their new life in Cyprus after officially taking over as the Resident Infantry Battalion in Dhekelia.

Troops and their families finished arriving at the beginning of September after spending 13 years based in Paderborn, Germany. But despite the sudden change of scenery, 1PWRR’s Second in Command, Major David Robinson, has revealed the Battalion are looking forward to immersing themselves into British Forces Cyprus and Cypriot life.

Speaking from his office at Alexander Barracks, he said: “This is of course a big change for the Battalion as a whole. It is a change from an armoured role to a light role and of course, it is a change of country after spending so long in Germany.

“We have some of the soldiers’ German partners for example who have never left Germany, so this is quite a change for them but it is one we are all embracing.”

This is the first time 1PWRR have been posted to Cyprus despite their sister battalion, 2PWRR, having served on island multiple times in the past. Maj Robinson said his soldiers and their families are determined to make the most of it.

He continued: “We are feeling really good now that we are here. Obviously, moving from Germany after such a long time leaves many with mixed emotions, but we are a resilient battalion and we are settling in very well.

“We are a multi-national and very diverse battalion and we are very much looking forward to meeting many of our Cypriot colleagues and neighbours.

“We want to be involved with the local Cypriot community as much as we possibly can and we are certainly not here for two years simply transiting through.

“Cyprus is our home now and we are going to enjoy the working life surrounded by such beautiful scenery and of course we intend to make the most of what this island has to offer.”

And in explaining how the Battalion has wasted no time in making that happen, Maj Robinson explained: “Some of the soldiers have already enrolled their children at one of the local football clubs and they are really enjoying it.

“We have also already met some of the local community and in the near future, we will be organising some events so we can meet many more members of the local community that we will be working and living with over the next two years.”

In a working capacity, 1PWRR have now taken up their role as the Regional Standby Battalion, ready to deploy at short notice within the surrounding areas.
World War II veteran Ray Wooley, the world’s oldest scuba diver, was awarded the special Administrator’s and Commander’s Coin from former Commander British Forces Cyprus, Major General James Illingworth last week, writes Kristian Gray.

Mr Wooley, who is now 96 years old, broke his own world record for the third time after he explored the world famous Zenobia shipwreck off the coast of Larnaca last month.

The dive down to the Zenobia, which is located 139 feet under water, saw Merseyside-born Mr Wooley beat his previous best by six feet.

During the presentation, the humble veteran said he was feeling overwhelmed by all of the attention he has received and in particular, by being honoured by Maj Gen Illingworth.

He said: “To get to my age and be in the limelight like I have been recently, is very overwhelming for me.

“When I broke the first record, I never thought it would come to this, standing in the office of the general and being given this wonderful award, I am very honoured.

In presenting Mr Wooley with his coin, Maj Gen Illingworth said: “I have only given 16 of these coins to people in the two and a half years as CBF and I do this now to say thank you for your service and for being an inspiration to others for all that you have done and continue to do.”

New faces at BFC primary schools

Ben Turner – Akrotiri Primary School Headteacher

I am full of enthusiasm and optimism for the future and it is very refreshing to be in an active environment with longevity. It’s now time to see how we as a school can strengthen our curriculum given our unique context and overall, I’m very excited to be here.

As staff, we have re-established our core values and this will underpin any development going forwards. The curriculum is high on the agenda and getting it right for all our children is at the centre. I’m very much looking forward to the year ahead and beyond. I intend to capitalise on the huge potential that the school has.

Alex Thorpe – Episkopi Primary School Headteacher

I am so happy to be here. There is a lovely, relaxed feel to the school in Episkopi and everyone has been so welcoming to me. I accepted the job in July of last year, so it has taken a year for me to get here and I’m delighted to get started.

Over the next school year, we are looking at developing the curriculum to ensure it is unique to us here in Episkopi and we want to create memory making moments for the children on the island. We want to develop their learning and make sure they can take that away with them when they leave.

Kim Fox – Dhekelia Primary School Headteacher

I am delighted to be here and I am of course looking forward to the school year ahead. For me personally, I have come full-circle, because I was here between 2001 and 2011 as a teacher. So, things have become very familiar to me very quickly. Not too much has changed if I am being honest, although the Station is smaller, with fewer units around.

Looking ahead, as a school we place a lot of importance on the community and we are very much looking forward to making the most of the community spirit that Dhekelia has always had.
What’s On in BFC

To advertise your community related event in this section, please contact the Cyprus Lion editorial team on 2596 2052 or email your submissions to sovereign.areas@outlook.com

Episkopi

MACMILLAN COFFEE MORNING AT THE HIVE
Thursday, September 26th, 09:00-12:00
Come and join us in the Hive, Dodge City for coffee and cake in aid of Macmillan.
For more info call the HIVE on 2596 2000.

WOMEN’S HEALTH FAIR
Thursday, September 26th, 15:00 and October 3rd, 15:00, at the Families Centre.
Open to all entitled personnel. Join us for healthy refreshments and an informal chat on all things female. There will be clinicians from various areas. Ask any health questions you want.

ARNHEM 75th CELEBRATION PARTY IN THE PARK
Saturday, September 28th, 10:30-23:00
Happy Valley €10 at the gate.
All day activities 40+ stalls, arts and crafts, food, drinks, exhibitors, kids play area, live bands and much more. Military parade of the whole Mercian Regiment starts at 11:00 followed by a drumline on the main stage.

MACMILLAN COFFEE MORNING
THE COFFEE POT
Friday, September 27th, 08:00-13:00 - or until the cakes run out.
Come and join us in the Coffee Pot, for coffee and cake in aid of Macmillan.
For more info call the HIVE on 2527 6390.

RAF RECRUITMENT OPPORTUNITIES
Friday, September 27th, 14:00-19:00
Force Development Learning Centre
Do you want to know more about a career in the RAF? Do you have a current application?
RAF Recruiters are visiting Cyprus offering Q&A sessions and one to one appointments for non-applicants, and Airman Selection Tests and interviews for current applicants.
To register your interest please email fay.hunt974@mod.gov.uk

AKROTIRI RUGBY CLUB PRESENTS THE DECOYS
Saturday, September 28th, 21:00
No ticket required. For more information visit www.facebook.com/thedecoyscyprus

CSE OUTDOOR CINEMA
Saturday, October 5th, 17:00 onwards
The Sports Pitches, Pavilion Road
A unique outdoor cinema experience on your doorstep. 17:00 Moana, 19:30 Jurassic Park.
Free entry, entitled personnel only. Refreshments on sale at the cinema and on the pitch.
For more information log on to www.facebook.com/AstraCinemaAkrotiri

RAF AKROTIRI STATION AWARDS NIGHT
Friday, November 15th
WOs’ & Sgts’ Mess
The inaugural RAF Akrotiri Awards evening; an event to recognise civilians, contractors, dependants and service personnel of all ranks.
For tickets please call 2527 6110.

AKROTIRI SWIMMING POOL COURSES
In the next few months RAF Akrotiri Swimming Pool will be running an RLSS UK National Pool Lifeguard Qualification (NPLQ) and an STA Swimming Teachers Association Swim Teachers course. Both of these courses are internationally recognised and Ofqual regulated. They can be taken anywhere with you on future postings.
Dates and times are yet to be confirmed. If you are interested in either of these courses in the future could you please contact the pool on akiswimmingpool@gmail.com

Can you help the Cyprus Lion roar?

Do you like the Cyprus Lion? Would you like to see it continue? Please complete this short survey and help us make the Cyprus Lion even better https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/6T2PYC2
Dhekelia and Ayios Nikolaos

AY NIK CAMEO MACMILLAN COFFEE MORNING
Thursday, September 26th, 09:30-12:30
Every penny we raise means Macmillan can help people with cancer live life as fully as they should.
For more info contact 2395 7699.

MACMILLAN COFFEE MORNING
DHEKELIA Hive
Friday, September 27th, 09:00-12:00
Come and join us in the Hive in the Amenities Centre for coffee and cake in aid of Macmillan.
For more info call the Hive on 2474 4551.

DHEKELIA STATION SWIMMING POOL ROOKIE LIFEGUARD SESSION
Friday, September 27th 15:00-16:00 Age 7yr+
16:00-17:00 Age 10yr+
The cost will be €10 per child. Children have to be strong competent swimmers. If you’re interested and would like to secure your place please email dhekeliastationpool@gmail.com
Places are limited.

HIVE DHEKELIA VOLUNTEERS COFFEE MORNING
Thursday, October 3rd, 09:00-12:00
Are you interested in volunteering? Do you run an organisation in need of volunteers? Dhekelia Hive is running a volunteers coffee morning to bring volunteers and organisations together.
For more information call 2474 4551.

THE JSSU CYPRUS WALKDOWN
Saturday, October 12th 40km or 15km route
Entry is €25 per person. Open to all service personnel, UKBCs, dependants (13 years and over on the 15km route) UNFICYP, LECs and Cypriot National Guard (by invite only)
Please contact your station gym staff to register. Registration closes Friday, 26th September.
For more information log on to www.facebook.com/JSSUCypWalkdown

DHEKELIA DASH FUN RUN
Saturday, October 19th, 10:00 onwards
Dhekelia Station Lion’s Gym
Fun run, 15x1 mile circuits. Kids activities will take place on the day including children’s races. Vendors and stalls, bouncy castles and much more. Open to all military units, dependants and entitled personnel. For more information call 2474 4207 or get an application from the Station Welfare Office.

DHEKELIA RBL TABLE TOP SALE
ROYAL BRITISH LEGION, DHEKELIA
First Saturday of every month 10:00-14:00
Looking for a bargain? Love to mooch around Car Boot Sales? Why not come along, see what is on offer in our table top sale? Everyone is welcome (no passes needed) there will be hot and cold refreshments. Located between Alexander Barracks and CESSAC in the old customs building. For more information, contact Trudy on 9651 6529.

Episkopi Cinema Club
Friday, Sept 27th, 19:00
Stuber (15)
93 minutes

Saturday, Sept 28th, 10:00
Dora & The Lost City of Gold (PG)
102 minutes

Monday, Sept 30th, 15:00
Playmobil (U)
99 minutes

Tuesday, Oct 1st, 18:30
Tomorrow (15)
92 minutes

Wednesday, Oct 2nd, 18:30
Rambo Last Blood (18)
89 minutes

For more information on prices and ticket availability please go to www.forcescinema.com
**Community Noticeboard**

Do you like the Cyprus Lion? Would you like to see it continue? Please complete this short survey and help us make the Cyprus Lion even better

https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/6T2PYC2

---

**Recycling Centres Opening Times**

RAF Akrotiri Recycling Centre.
From September 2nd, the RAF Akrotiri Recycling Centre will be conducting a three month trial of extended opening hours.
The hours are:
Monday, Tuesday: 10:00-15:00
Thursday, Friday: 10:00-15:00
Saturday: 09:00-13:00

Ay Nik Recycling Centre.
Open 24/7
Located near the QMs department.
Call 2395 7468 for queries

Dhekelia Station Recycling Centre.
Monday: 10:00-15:00
Tuesday Closed
Wednesday: 12:00-17:00
Thursday, Friday: 10:00-15:00
Saturday 10:00-14:00
For further information call 2585 2302

Episkopi Station Recycling Centre.
Opening Hours (effective from Sept 2nd)
Monday, Wednesday, Friday, 10:00-15:00
Saturday, 09:00-13:00
Call: 2596 2029

---

**CAn You Help?**
Below is a list of Clubs and Associations across the island who are currently looking for volunteers.

**RDA EPISKOPI**
Riding for the disabled, based in Happy Valley, Episkopi.
Call 9948 1026 for more info or visit their Facebook Page

**MUSICIANS WANTED**
Do you play drums, guitar or any other instrument? Dhekelia-based band seeking new members. Drum kit available for rehearsal.
Email: simonmusician@hotmail.co.uk

**AKROTIRI THRIFT SHOP**
**VOLUNTEERS REQUIRED**
Every week, Monday-Thursday Akrotiri Thrift Shop is looking for volunteers. For more information please pop into the shop, or email them on akrotirithrift@gmail.com

---

**Emergency Number**

112

Looking for employment on camp? UK Dependant and Locally Employed Civilian roles can be found on the SBA Administration website:
https://sbaadministration.org/index.php/m-vacancies

---

**BFPO CYPRUS LAST RECOMMENDED POSTING DATES FOR CHRISTMAS**

**BFPO CYPRUS ➔ BFPO WORLDWIDE**
- Letters and Parcels by 8th November

**BFPO CYPRUS ➔ INTERNATIONAL**
For more information please speak to your local FPC

**BFPO CYPRUS ➔ Intra-command (within Cyprus)**
- Letters and Parcels by 19th December

**UK ➔ BFPO CYPRUS**
(To reach BFPO London by these dates)
- Letters and Items below 2 Kg by 29th November
- Parcels over 2 Kg by 13th November

**BFPO CYPRUS ➔ UK**
- Letters and Parcels by 6th December

---

Fiscal Office Contact Numbers

Episkopi 2596 3342
Akrotiri 2527 6762
Dhekelia 2474 4078
Ay Nik 2474 4226

---

Note: These dates are a guidance only and not guaranteed.

Enquiries - Cpl Davies: 94120 6511
ARISTOS ARISTIDOU, first joined the DFR in 1989 when he was 22 years old and looking to make a difference and help people when they needed it. Now a 30 year veteran working in Episkopi as the Development Support and Training Manager across the Bases, he is rightly proud of where his career has taken him. He said: “When I first joined in 1989, I didn’t know what to expect but my career began developing at a good speed and I was able to secure a promotion within the first two years of service.” Subsequent other promotions followed and Mr Aristidou spent time working in Troodos before his talent for first aid and training development became even more apparent. As the training manager, he can ensure that DFR are fully prepared when they are called upon. He continued: “It is crucial that we are well trained and ready to act when we are required to tackle a fire and we now have the capability to ensure that our training is second-to-none.” In March this year, Mr Aristidou was presented with the prestigious Order of the Hospital of St John of Jerusalem for his outstanding work for the St John’s Ambulance in Cyprus. Speaking after receiving the award, he said: “I keep using the word proud but that is what I am. To have the Queen approve an award to me is an incredible thing to happen.”

The Club
We are an 18 hole golf club for service personnel, civilians and their families and entitled persons, including veteran members. The course is challenging, with astro-turf greens and numerous obstacles, and is beautifully located alongside the beach. We have a happy and friendly clubhouse with bar and regular events. We have an active membership, with societies every Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday and regular competitions running throughout the year, including open tournaments. There is a Junior Section that meets on Mondays, 15:30 till 17:00. The Juniors have two open tournaments during the season, which attracts young golfers from all the clubs around the island. Golf equipment is available for the use of the juniors to get them started with no cost involved. The Junior Section will begin again on September 23rd. The tutor, Mr Ray Taylor is also responsible for an Adult Beginner and Intermediate Skills Golf Course, which can be accessed through 55 AEC at Episkopi Station.

Membership and fees
Our new fees structure offers a Social Golf Membership of €60 or joint Social Golf membership of €110 for the season. This enables entitled personnel to play as much golf as they wish and is especially beneficial for those trying out the sport for the first time. Our full fee structure for the year is:

- Officers/Entitled: UKBC €300 single membership, and €520 joint membership.
- WO & SNCOs: €300 single membership and €520 joint membership.
- Other Ranks: €140 and €260 joint membership.
- Veterans: €510 single membership and €930 joint membership.
- Associate Members: €530 single membership and €930 joint membership.
- Junior Members: €20.

Membership runs from October 1st to September 30th. We are actively seeking more entitled personnel, Military, UKBC/T etc to join our ranks. Golf is a challenging sport but not always a ‘good walk spoilt!’ Why not give us a try?
Station Commander visits Ancient Akrotiri Project

Since 2015, archaeological teams from the University of Leicester and Southampton have been conducting excavation and survey work on Roman and early Byzantine remains at Dreamer’s Bay, Akrotiri. The excavation work has revealed warehouse complexes, harbour works, and shoreline stone quarries and there is also evidence of an ancient port site inside what is now RAF Akrotiri at the southernmost point of Cyprus.

Earlier this month, RAF Akrotiri Station Commander, Group Captain Chris Snaith, visited the site of the Ancient Akrotiri Project (AAP) to get an insight into the progress and complexity of the work being undertaken.

The Department of Antiquities, Ministry of Transport, Communications and Works, announced the completion of the land-based element of the AAP in April but the marine archaeological aspect of the project has continued. The project is led by the University of Leicester under the direction of Professor Simon James and his professional excavation staff and undergraduate students from the University’s School of Archaeology and Ancient History, in collaboration with colleagues from the Universities of Southampton, Cyprus and Athens.

During his visit to the maritime project, the Station Commander spoke to lead marine archaeologist Dr Lucy Blue, who explained her theory of a tsunami-like event, several hundred years ago, which destroyed the breakwater and likely wrecked ships at anchor in the harbour.

Gp Capt Snaith said: “I’ve been lucky enough to go diving with the team from the University of Southampton, which is looking at the marine archaeology in Dreamer’s Bay. They believe that ships from all over the eastern Mediterranean would use Cyprus as a logistic hub, much as it is today, getting re-provisioned before then sailing on to Syria, Turkey or wherever. “We found columns which we think were on the way from Egypt en-route to Antioch. “It’s fascinating, because the area has not been overdeveloped and we can restrict access, many of the artefacts are in pristine condition, which provides a great opportunity for the academics to come and study the area.”

The work has been conducted with the endorsement of the Defence Infrastructure Organisation and Sovereign Base Areas Administration, which look after heritage sites inside the Sovereign Base Areas on the island and with the permission of the Republic of Cyprus Department of Antiquities.

SSAFA boxes clever for Episkopi

The SSAFA Episkopi In-Service Committee donated €500 towards the training boxing ring at the new boxing facility, situated near the station pool. Staff Sergeant Wood said: “Without the generous donation from the Episkopi In-Service Committee, the station would not have this boxing ring. It has added value to the wider station community.” He went on to thank SSAFA for their support in this new venture. Corporal Hobbs, pictured with Drew Elgeli (SSAFA Episkopi In-Service Committee Chair) and Claire Thomas (SSAFA Episkopi In-Service Committee Publicity) explained the fitness and discipline benefits of boxing. The training ring sits alongside the station funded punch bags. There are future plans to use the ring for female and children sessions.
Did you like the Cyprus Lion? This edition was just a one off special, but would you like to see it continue?

Let us know what you would like in your Cyprus Lion by completing this short survey at the link below:

https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/6T2PYC2