

COMUKMCMFOR Newsletter



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COMUKMCMFOR Operations Team

OPERATION KIPION

Ever wondered what Operation KIPION is really all about? Let us explain...

Maritime trade is the lifeblood of the United Kingdom's economy and industry. 95% of Britain's economic activity depends on the sea. Every year Britain imports goods worth £524 billion. Much of the oil and gas we use comes from the Gulf region.

Op KIPION is the United Kingdom's demonstration of continued commitment to enduring peace and stability in the region. The entire force is commanded by the United Kingdom Maritime Component Command (UKMCC). This position is held by a Commodore.

Four of the Royal Navy's minehunters are permanently based in the region and are commanded by Commander United Kingdom Mine Counter Measures Force (COMUKMCMFOR). The Mine Counter Measures (MCM) vessels conduct route survey and seabed clearance all over the Gulf and are poised to clear sea mines if necessary.

Whilst providing a visible naval presence in the region, the MCM force works tirelessly to maintain good relations with the region's coastal states.

MESSAGE FROM COMUKMCMFOR



Commander Paul Ottewell

With less than two months left of this deployment, inevitably our thoughts are turning to preparing the way for the next Mine Warfare Battle Staff and our own homecoming.

Needless to say, we still have much to do out here before we go. In fact, saving the best until last, November promises to be our busiest month yet as we work right up until it's time to pack our grips and head to the airport. We will be preparing for and commanding another task group for a complex exercise.

With homes spread all over the country, I'm conscious that there isn't a 'critical mass' in any one area to have a Families' Day. Instead, the money available for such an event has been channelled into vouchers that we will shortly be sending home for you to have a family night out. I realise it is only a small token of our appreciation for your support but I hope you have fun spending it. I hope to 'firm up' our return date very soon.

Finally, if you have a smart phone, look out for the 'JCCC App'. This gives a new way to contact the right authorities in case of a family emergency.

SANDOWN CLASS MINE HUNTER

The Royal Navy currently has seven Sandown Class Minehunters. Their home port is located at HM Naval Base Clyde in Scotland. Two of the seven minehunters are always in Bahrain, with each and spending around four to five years in the region.

Sandown Class MCM vessels are versatile coastal minehunters that can hunt mines in water depths of up to 200+ metres.

HMS Bangor and HMS Penzance are the current Op KIPION MCM Vessels.



Range: 2500nm
Displacement: 600t
Length: 52.5m
Beam: 10.9m
Draught: 2.3m
Propulsion: Paxman Valenta Diesels Engines
Diesel Electric Drives
Voith Schnieder Propellers
Schottel Bow Thrusters
Speed 13kn

Sensors: 1007 Navigation Radar
Sonar 2093 (Variable Depth)
Weapons Systems: Seafox Mine Disposal System
Mine Clearance Divers
30mm Gun
General Purpose Machine Guns
MK 44 Miniguns
Complement: 5 Officers
8 Senior Rates
21 Junior Rates

LIFT THE SHIP CHALLENGE

Our preparations for the Lift the Ship Challenge are well underway. Most staff are training at least once a day for it.

We'd like to thank all of you who have sponsored us this far, however we are a long way off making the difference we want to all three charities. Please spread the word to family and friends back in the UK. Every little amount will make a difference.

As a reminder our just giving page can be found at <http://uk.virginmoneygiving.com/team/COMUKMCMFOR14>



VISIT TO LAC ASSAL

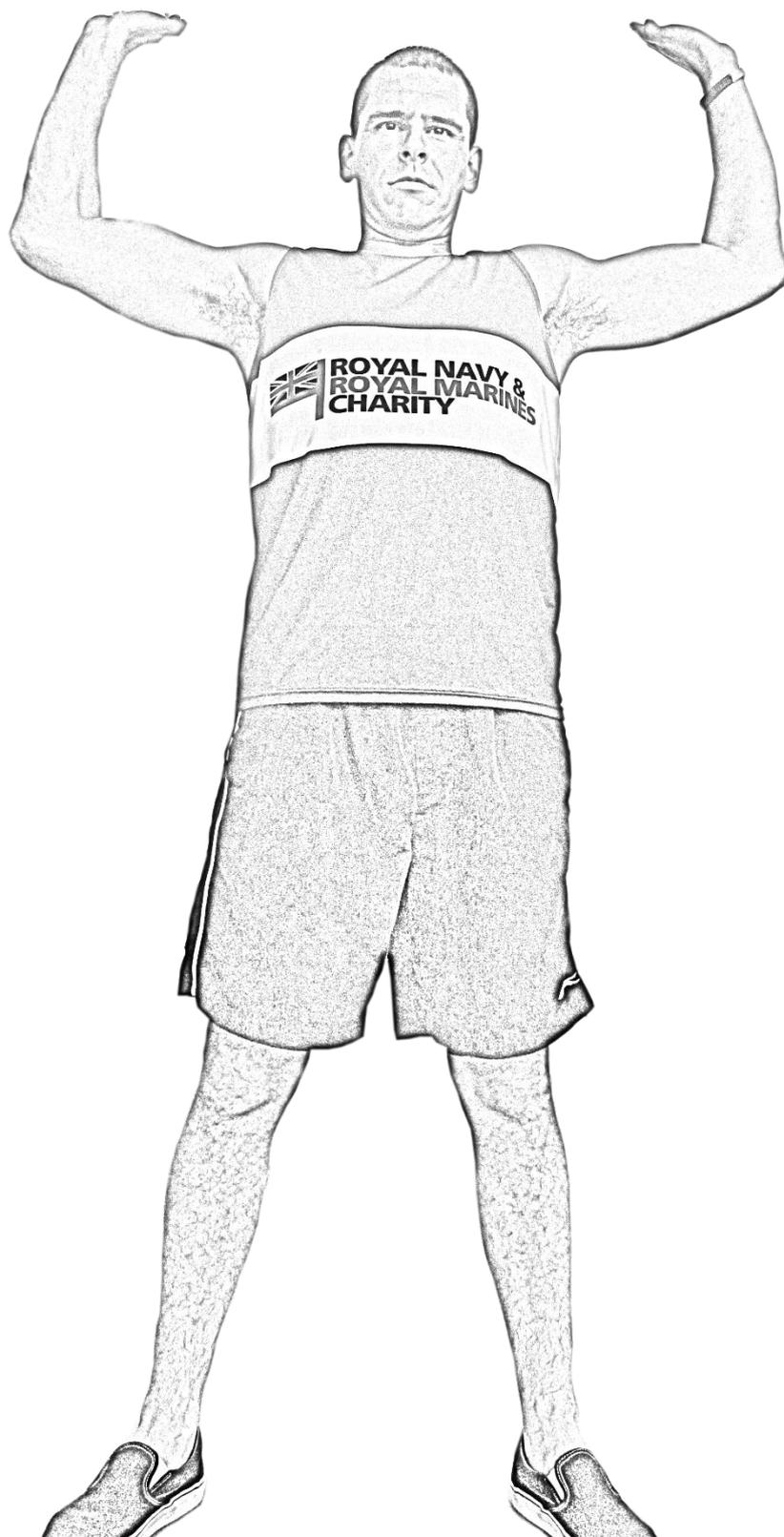
During our last operation some members of the team visited Lac Assal in Djibouti. Having spent a day at the brine lake, the whole team came together for a sunset barbeque at French Beach. A great day.

FACTS

Lac Assal is a crater lake and it lies 155m below sea level. It is the lowest point on land in Africa. The lake is ten times more saline than the sea, making it the second most saline in the world.

JUST FOR THE KIDS...

Why not colour in our weight lifter and add a ship to make it look like our weight lifter is lifting a ship?



SOURCES OF SUPPORT AND ADVICE

The Joint Casualty and Compassionate Centre (JCCC). If there is a requirement for a sailor serving overseas to return to the UK for compassionate reasons, for example if a close relative becomes very seriously ill (normally life threatening) or dies, then it is the role of the JCCC to investigate the circumstances and make a recommendation as to whether compassionate travel should be granted. This telephone line is manned 24 hours a day. Communicating bad news directly to servicemen is not recommended. **+44 (0) 1452 519951.**

You can now download the JCCC App:

JCCC - MOD ICE app

The new JCCC app is called 'MOD ICE' and provides a very simplistic 'Click and Call' facility that will direct the user to the most appropriate organisation if they are faced with a family emergency. The app can be downloaded as follows:

1. Visit www.defencegateway.mod.uk using the phone or device you want to download the app onto.
2. Enter your Defence Gateway User Name and Password. If you don't have a Defence Gateway account, click 'Register' to set one up.
3. On the Defence Gateway home page, click on 'App Store'.
4. Read the instructions and click on either 'Android' or 'Apple' to suit your device.
5. Select 'JCCC MOD ICE' from the selection of apps and follow the download procedure. In some cases you may need to 'trust' the defence gateway site on your device if prompted.
6. You can download the app onto as many devices as you wish.
7. To download the app onto phones or devices belonging to family members, we recommend the device is given to the Service Person, who can then access the Defence Gateway using their own log-in and complete the download. Passwords and log-in details should not be shared.
8. Note the JCCC MOD ICE app is not currently available via public app stores and can only be accessed via the Defence Gateway.

The Naval Families Federation. This exists to give naval families an independent voice in government. I commend their website and services to you. <http://www.nff.org.uk>

Confidential Support Line. This is a confidential, impartial telephone listening/advice service offered by trained civilian advisers who will discuss any issue that may be causing concern or personal distress. Advisers will endeavour to identify possible sources of support or resolution where necessary but no direct action will be taken by the support line. Callers may remain anonymous. The line operates seven days a week from 1030 to 2230. Call **0800 731 4880** or from overseas call UK **+44 1980 630854.**

If you are concerned by something unexpected you have learned from the media about the Royal Navy or the Royal Fleet Auxiliary in the Middle East, you may obtain further information by calling the Confidential Support Line.