



The Royal Engineers Association Radio Branch

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Minutes of the 2016 Deferred AGM on 21st April 2017 Held at the Royal Engineers Command Support Branch, REWW, Gibraltar Barracks, Camberley, Surrey

Preliminaries:

Prior to and after the meeting a branch development meeting and an overview of the trade was presented. The notes of this are at appendix 2

Present:

Chairman. R MacDonald

President. TG Milne

Secretary. S Dixon

Members: Capt J Woolley RE

Apologies:

WO2 McLay

Item 1 - Minutes of Previous AGM

**Mr Milne Proposed that the notes of the 2015 branch AGM were read and accepted.
Seconded by Mr MacDonald**

Accepted.

2016 Committee Reports

Item 2 - Presidents Report

The president's address focused on the successes and failures of HF and the branches ability to form nets on frequencies other than those it uses on Saturday Mornings. He said he would be coordinating further our presence on digital modes and frequencies that allowed all licensees to inter-communicate which was most important for foundation licensees to feel included.

He thanked Captain Woolley for his interest and for hosting the AGM in the officers mess.

Item 3 - Chairman's Report

The chairman echoed the presidents report.

Item 4 - Treasurers Report

- Annual Accounts (at appendix 1) have been audited and accepted previously by RERHQ and Audited with no comments. This was hailed as an achievement in itself and the treasurer, Mr Gater is to be congratulated.

Item 5 - Secretary's Report

The branch HF Voice radio net had been fairly consistent. It noted the ROYAL ENGINEERS had a presence on the amateur bands for most weeks during the eighteen months since the last AGM. People were listening and responding to it. While it didn't have the connections or resources to mount any special events it was a busy year and most of us attended the RE300 somewhere. This

year will be quiet by comparison.

Jack Braithwaite's efforts to ensure the 60th Anniversary of Operation Musketeer and 3Tp 9 (Para) Fd Sqn RE in action at El Gamil with 3 Para was commemorated on air - were commendable.

Mr Milne was thanked for maintaining the branch presence by raising the standard abroad and at home while simultaneously providing services to the RBL.

Mark McLay our serving member and the SMI had done a good job of providing information to use during the development of the branch. We didn't meet our objectives last year and have set some objectives for 2017 to raise during the branch development meetings we plan to hold at CSB. See appendix.

Item 6 - Serving Members Report

Proposal: Combined with secretaries report

Item 7 - Standard Bearer Report

Ceremonial Activity 2016

Proposal:

Item 8 - Awards: (President)

This year the President's Award Goes to Mike Gater for his flawless accounting and subsequent audit report.

Item 9 - Election of Branch Officials

Proposal: As nobody had come forward to contest the committee roles, the current committee kindly consented to remain in post.

Accepted

Item 10 - Secretary's Proposal to Hold AGM Annually at CSB

The branch would like to hold its AGM annually at the Command Support Branch - there was no objection to that and Capt Woolley said it would be welcome.

Item 11 - AOB

We thanked Capt Wooley for his hospitality and for hosting the AGM.

There being no further business the meeting closed.

Next Meeting

October\September, TBC

Signed: M MacDonald,
Chairman.....Date.....

Signed: TG Milne,
President.....Date.....



The Royal Engineers Association Radio Branch

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AGM 2016

Treasurer's Report

Branch income amounted to £274.00 for the year. Most of this came from very generous donations by two members. Of the total membership, only 15, which includes 3 Life Members, are up to date with their subscriptions.

Members who are in arrears with their subscriptions could be reminded individually at the end of any e-mails or other correspondence relating to Branch activities.

Expenditure amounted to £200.00, which included a donation of £100.00 to Dementia U.K. in memory of our late President, Major M Bernard BEM RE. Ten blazer badges were purchased at a cost of £100.00.

I hold 8 blazer badges, which are very good value at £10, plus £2.50 postage and packing and 11 lapel badges at £3.50 plus £1.50 postage and packing.

The current balance held by the bank is £594.29 which is a modest increase of £74 over the year.

M.J.E.Gater Branch Treasurer.

ROYAL ENGINEERS ASSOCIATION

RADIO BRANCH

STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS

AS AT

AGM 2016

OPENING BALANCE £ 520.29

RECEIPTS	PAYMENTS	BALANCE
£ 274.00	£200.00	£594.29

Fixed Assets Branch Standard £650.00

11 Lapel badges @ £3 each £33.

8 Blazer badges @ £10 each £80.

CASH IN HAND

NIL

AT BANK

£594.29

Signed.....*M.J.E. Gater*.....Date.....*26 SEP 2016*.....

M.J.E GATER

TREASURER

Signed.....Date.....

Auditor

Stuart Dixon

Signed.....Date.....*15/10/16*.....
For TG Milne - President

Auditor

Branch Chairman / Secretary.....*Stuart Dixon*.....Date.....*06/10/16*.....



25 Sept 2016
Mr Michael James Edwin Gater
Email: mjeg@mjegater.co.uk
Work Email: No address currently held
Work Tel: 01604 759950

Transactions

COMMUNITY

20-54-25 70361151

Available balance	£594.29
Last night's balance	£594.29
Overdraft limit	£0.00

Showing 1-11 of 11 transactions between 01/09/2015 and 25/09/2016

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Date	Description	Money In	Money Out	Balance
29/03/2016	NORTHAMPTON LPC 1	£10.00		£594.29
09/03/2016	100062 100.00		-£100.00	£584.29
23/02/2016	S DIXON	£2.00		£684.29
23/02/2016	M GATER	£20.00		£682.29
22/02/2016	M HARRIOTT	£10.00		£662.29
22/02/2016	STEPHENS A	£2.00		£652.29
05/01/2016	S DIXON	£20.00		£650.29
20/11/2015	100061 100.00		-£100.00	£630.29
09/10/2015	41 WEEDON ROAD	£100.00		£730.29
28/09/2015	WATTS DEREK	£110.00		£630.29

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Account ledger: Current account

Period: 04/09/2015 to 21/09/2016

Date	Category	Reference	Payee	Details	Paid out £	Paid in £	Balance £ 1-off
03/09/2015		BAL B/FWD		Balance brought forward		520.29	520.29
28/09/2015	Donation		Derek Watts			100.00	620.29
28/09/2015	Subs/donations		Derek Watts			10.00	630.29
09/10/2015	Donation		Dave Barker			100.00	730.29
10/11/2015	Blazer Badges	Cheque	S & GA DIXON		100.00		630.29
05/01/2016	Blazer Badges		S. Dixon			20.00	650.29
12/01/2016	Donation			Dementia UK re M Bernard	100.00		550.29
22/02/2016	Subs/donations		Andrew Stephens			2.00	552.29
22/02/2016	Subs/donations		M Harriot			10.00	562.29
23/02/2016	Subs/donations		S. Dixon			2.00	564.29
23/02/2016	Blazer Badges		M. Gater			10.00	574.29
23/02/2016	Subs/donations		M. Gater			10.00	584.29
18/03/2016	Subs/donations		C. J. Woodford			10.00	594.29

Transactions 13

Totals £ 200.00 794.29

ACCOUNT LEDGER: CURRENT ACCOUNT
ROYAL ENGINEERS ASSOCIATION Radio Branch

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Appendix 2 - Notes of a Meeting between Command Support Branch, and the REA Radio Branch on 21st April 2017

Present:

Command Support Branch

Captain J Woolley RE - AI

REA Radio Branch

Mr R MacDonald - Chairman

Mr TG Milne, President

Mr S Dixon, Secretary

Item 1 - Arrive\Tea Coffee

The radio branch committee were welcomed into the officers mess by Captain J Woolley RE.

Item 2 - Opening address - Mr Dixon

Aims

In accordance with the aims of the REA and the Corps commander, the aim of the meeting is to secure the future of the REA Radio Branch, by bringing together the interests of both serving and retired members of the RE command support community. The contact was supported and facilitated by HQRSME.

As the current REA branch management gets older the branch needs to develop a leadership that has the same strong interest, willpower, capability and objectives to sustain an association.

REA Radio proposes to develop an association that binds us all as sappers, with the unique skills that has supported command and control in the corps through generations.

If we agree these aims it will be something of a change from the current situation which has seen us split.

The aims were agreed.

Change Going forward. The first consideration in achieving this is to move the focus to the centre, which, to the REA Branch, will always be CSB in whatever form it takes. Secondly the proposal is to join forces and operate as one in respect of; welfare, hobbies, heritage and legacy systems. It was thought this could be achieved by combining our assets: Briefly these are listed at the appendix.

Item 2 Discussion - REA Radio Branch. Recent History – Current State, Objectives.

Before, (when we were serving) we had technical links, and as trainers in the corps we used to develop our interests and encourage young soldiers. Partly by taking up amateur radio as a hobby. The syllabus for the Radio Amateurs exam were directly related to the CSB Course syllabi. This good practice developed good radio communications skills, pride and esprit de corps. Many signalers took the radio amateurs exam.

The views presented last year when the branch was planning its approach - was that the digital telecommunications used today had changed all that.

Self Training

We suggest the approach today should be the same as it was before. Hobbies help safeguard mental health. The hobby today is broader, based on modern digital technology as much as the military are developing along the same lines. Moreover, according to OFCOM Many professionals use amateur radio in the same way the

corps has. Amateur Radio today combines IT with digital transmission and reception of UHF, VHF and HF signals. Data is fast becoming dominant. There are legacy systems and a knowledge base that supports all. It still therefore provides advantages in training.

Second to amateur radio but no less important are IT Skills including Cyberwarfare. Many computing and cyber security professionals self-study to gain the knowledge they need to work in IT. Capt Woolley outlined a number of potential changes where the CSB operators role would take on cyber duties, Information management, and reconnaissance.

Consequently our interests don't solely rest with the radio hams. But also with the IT Technicians, script kiddies, hackers and geeks of today, (jobs into which combat signalers often go when leaving the services.) we have a broad focus that reflects the life of the communications operator.

Branch Membership and Activity

The REA Branch currently, has a retired membership of 80 and a few serving members. We have a regular radio net on Saturday Mornings that has been going strong for many years and want to develop the presence this provides the corps in the community. Social media responses average 80 or more hits on Facebook these come from both members and non-members. Our website has a similar following. We can outreach to 4500 people if we advertise. We don't have access to the data needed to outreach to the target personnel yet. Nor do we exploit SM fully as it would open up a floodgate of membership applications and this needs to be planned as to how to manage it.

Also the REA Branch needs to establish a routine set of events, publish its timetable and market itself. Under the current arrangements this remains difficult to achieve.

Where are we now?

The branch is ready to support a change. There are a few steps to go to complete the transition which have been deferred pending this meeting.

Possible Outcomes

The REA Branch will soon come a point where it will have to dispose of the assets. Financially we don't collect enough money to sustain all our activities.

We paused at this point to hold the radio Branch AGM

Item 4 - Command Support Branch update, the modern day operator, equipment and training

Capt Woolley gave a tour of the wing (CSB) during which he outlined the current state of training and development. We noted the differences between the various generations of technology and training and there was remarkably few thanks to the corps unique requirements, its supremacy within the army and its approach to training. The corps comes under pressure to save money and often technology is seen particularly by the other arms as a means to achieve this. There is a surfeit of technology and solutions don't always fit the requirement. There are gaps between the methods used by other arms and the corps. CSB sees training as an experience it provides that familiarises the soldier with operating the equipment under the conditions he or she would expect to find on deployment. The CSB has found no substitute for field exercises, from operating and carrying manpacks to vehicle operation. Screen based systems just don't provide that nor are there any simulators that can. The same pressures on manpower exist today as they have in previous generations - CIS operators are dual roled as drivers and armorers and storemen etc which often override their comms role.

The classrooms were familiar to the ex-instructors from the radio branch as we walked through, Capt Woolley outlined the pitfalls inherent in the design of the computer based training classroom and proposed improvements to the conference room. This had dilapidated and was due to be upgraded.

The vehicle based BOWMAN System simulator was an impressive high tech design which was able to provide practice on scenario based simulations using combined VHF \HF and UHF networks and configurations. The built in electronic countermeasures were explained as well as the various devices in each vehicle, which was a land rover chassis suitably racked with the various system components.

Capt Woolley explained the changing threat had meant that training had also changed. As it went through the last twenty years of conflict the scenarios demanded different techniques due to the distance between HQ and Troops little or no long range communications were used and the local UHF Network was prominent. More recently the threats of the previous conflicts had returned. The branch was deeply involved in restoring the skills it requires in extending its range, with an increased reliance on HF. This required a different experience and the CSB had to bring in some senior instructors to provide those skills. This was highlighted by the training area surrounding the CSB. Here were simulators to practice Line laying and obstacle crossing. Capt Woolley explained where we thought by now digital secure systems might have been expected to phase this out, it was very much part of the modern syllabus - and the ULS and equipment had not changes much - the unit level switchboard was still in service.

The Radio Branch said it was willing and available with the resource to help to develop long range comm's training, as it had previously.

Item - REA Branch Future Development Plans – CSB requirements:

Capt Wooley said he was willing to signpost and advertise the REA Branch to students and staff. SD said that was welcome as marketing is one of our objectives, we would like to place a stock of cards with the web address for distribution during courses. Other common ground we saw was the award of the REA Branch president's award and featuring top students on the website. Also giving access to course photographs via the internet was seen as a must do by both parties. This was in progress (although no deadline was mentioned) we would like to see a plan for the final destination and the opening of the archive to the public etc. We would like to re-instate the amateur radio station with a modern up to date system, and open that up to recruits and others to develop their interest.

Outcomes\Action Plan

It was agreed to take forward the joint approach and to re-establish the REA Branch as a feature of the CSB. How this is achieved wouldbe subject to a monthly development meeting - to be coordinated. Mr Milne said he would make his services available as he was already in contact with Jim and could help resurrect the hobbies aspect.

Other items for the agenda in development meetings include:

- Developing a Joint calendar of events based on CSB and Locating at Gibraltar Barracks
- Develop Modern Joint RE Telecommunications Workshop - Projects
- Heritage - access to memorabilia.

There being no other business, the radio branch thanked Captain Woolley for hosting us and our AGM and we looked forward to both development meetings and another AGM in October 2017.

Annex 1 to Appendix 2 - Assets

Branch Assets:

Social Media Presence
Website and management system combined
Funds: Own and available
Badges and Memorabilia
Weekly presence on the amateur bands
No central assets such as fixed premises or radio equipment
Legacy and digital radio systems, Cyber and IT Services
Links with industry and the community.

REA Assets

Funds
Welfare
Social and Ceremonial

CSB Assets:

Memorabilia
Data
Support
Social
Workshops (shack) and classrooms
- others.