20210514-IX\_Assn\_Committee\_13 May 21\_Minutes-U

14 May 21

**MINUTES OF IX(B) SQN ASSOCIATION COMMITTEE TELECONFERENCE – 13 May 2021**

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| Present | AM S Evans  Air Cdre N Hay  Gp Capt J Nixon  WO (Ret’d) D A Wood  Mr Mike Pritchard  Mrs Eve Pritchard  Wg Cdr S Batt  CT R Swanson  Sqn Ldr (Ret’d) R James  Gp Capt (Ret’d) A Ferguson | President  Vice President  Vice Chairman  Secretary  Joint Treasurer  Joint Treasurer  OC IX(B) Sqn  Dep Secretary  Historian  2021 Reunion ProjO |
| Apologies | Gp Capt I Sharrocks  Wg Cdr (Ret’d) P Lenihan  Flt Lt A Hargreaves  CT Mark Couling | Chairman  Charities Comm Rep  Groundcrew Liaison  OIC Assn Standard |
| **Item 1 - Welcome**  1. The Vice Chairman opened the Meeting, passed on the Chairman’s apologies and thanked everyone for joining.  **Item 2 – Minutes of the last meeting**  2. The minutes of the last meeting (8 Apr 21) were distributed to all members prior to the meeting and outstanding actions were added to this meeting agenda. These outstanding actions were reviewed as follows:  **Decision:** All other Actions listed in 8 Apr 21 Minutes that are not agenda items for this meeting were deemed closed.  **Item 3 – Financial Situation**  3. The Treasurers reported the accounts are in a stable position with a current account total of £23,327.31  4. Subs receipts have been forthcoming and the only outgoing has been for TABS printing which was a reduced cost from previous years.  5. The Vice Chairman asked how things were going with chasing non-payers and those paying reduced subs and he was informed that it was much improved, due in no small part to the Assn Historian contacting individuals.  6. The Treasurers stated that the accounts are in a good place for this year.  **Item 4 – Recruitment**  7. The Vice Chairman had discussed the digital recruitment campaign with the Chairman and it will begin in Jun 21.  8. The Chairman will also discuss ideas to attract serving squadron members into Assn membership when OC IX(B) returns from their operational tour. In the meantime, OC IX(B) will do some campaigning and will include the subject in his handover to the incoming OC IX(B), taking over mid Jun 21.  **Item 5 – Lancaster Parts for Auction**  9. The Historian informed the Committee that he had made repeated attempts to contact the Swedish POCs but had not received any replies. It was decided to allow the Swedes time to respond at their own pace and no further contact will be made by the Historian attempting to illicit a response.  **Decision:** Wait for Swedish POC, Stig Olsen to contact Assn through the Historian.  **Item 6 – 2021 Reunion**  10. The ProjO, Alfie Ferguson, kindly attended the meeting to provide an update. He stated that 85 Assn members had committed to attend the 2021 Reunion weekend and dinner; an outstanding effort by the Membership. There remains a question about whether the Mess at Lossiemouth would be able to host the dinner and some discussion ensued about making an attempt to have the dinner re-designated from a private to public function to gain more priority. OC IX(B) explained this would not be possible due to the criteria used to classify functions. He also informed the Committee that the Sqn Uncle is working hard with the Mess Committee to ensure the dinner goes ahead and that Mess functions will recommence in Sep 21 when they hold a joint Officers and SNCOs Autumn Ball. OC IX(B) reminded the Committee that different rules apply to Scotland regarding the route out of lockdown and that the Mess are looking at what the Covid compliant numbers will look like for all functions. The Vice President also stated that the Mess Manager is very keen to host us and that the Lossiemouth Mess Staff, both Service and civilian take great pride in offering their services but unfortunately these decisions do not sit wholly within their gift.  11. The ProjO declared that he had approached the Stotfield Hotel, Lossiemouth, as a contingency plan and that they would be able to host the dinner on 2 Oct but not provide accommodation. This was not deemed an issue as the Premier Inn has already been secured.  12. The Committee were united in the view that the Reunion Weekend and Dinner should be held in the Lossiemouth area to demonstrate to both members of the serving squadron and the wider Lossiemouth community, the benefits our strong Squadron Association can bring and to promote membership.  13. It was not considered to be an immediate issue as funds for accommodation do not have to be committed until 3 Sep 21.  14. It was decided to take a two-prong approach to then put a choice to the Membership at the AGM on 26 May. The ProjO will liaise with the Stotfield Hotel and the Charities Member will continue to engage with the Officers’ Mess. OC IX(B) requested that a maximum capacity be sought so that he could offer an all ranks function in tandem with the Reunion Dinner as they will have just returned from Ops; this would also free up opportunity for the Sqn to make a financial contribution.  **Action 1:** ProjO to liaise with the Stotfield Hotel over numbers, costs and latest date for committed booking and to report back X-Committee by 21 May 21.  **Action 2:** Charities Member to continue engagement with Officers’ Mess to report back X-Committee before AGM.  **Item 7 – Brittlebank Recognition**  15. At the last meeting a suggestion that the Assn should recognise the considerable financial contributions made by Harry and Maureen Brittlebank was discussed. The ideas were put to Harry and Maureen by the Historian and were politely refused as they do not feel there is a requirement to recognise them in this way. The decision was taken to drop the idea of hosting them for a VIP day and lunch at RAF Cranwell but the Historian would once again question if they would like a framed picture of Harry’s Lincoln aircraft WS-C.  16. The Historian did state that Harry and Maureen really enjoyed receiving letters in the post and strongly encouraged members of the Committee to write to them.  **Item 8 – Assn 50th Anniversary 2022**  17. The Historian reported that whilst initial letters to form the Assn were sent in 1972, the Assn itself did not officially form until 1975 therefore, the 50th Anniversary will be in 2025. The action is deemed closed.  **Item 9 - OC IX(B) Sqn – Sqn Update**  18. OC IX(B) Sqn provided the following update to the Committee on IX(B) Sqn operations:   * The Sqn have begun their first operational tour in Romania on Op BILOXI. This is as part of the ongoing NATO Air Policing Mission. The role focus for the Sqn has changed to fully QRA and they have also been training with US, Romanian, Bulgarian and Hungarian partners, carrying out Close Air Support missions. * The deployment is with Typhoon Tranche 2 aircraft which was a significant training challenge for both aircrew and groundcrew in preparation but to everyone’s credit, the Sqn was airborne within 30 hours of arrival and then passed NATO accreditation well before the RAF Expeditionary Air Wing had been fully established. * Of note, the Sqn’s future has been secured through the recent UK Defence Integrated Review and will begin to grow modestly with 10% more groundcrew, 1 more pilot and another aircraft by mid 2021. Growth is only constrained by the space to operate and when the new Sqn hangar comes on line in Jun 2022 the Sqn is expected to grow to full sqn size and strength. Exciting times!     **Item 10 – AGM 2021**  19. The Secretary read through the proposed agenda for the 2021 AGM which was accepted by all. He also stated that the Slide Show is available on SharePoint and encouraged Committee members to make updates where required.  20. The Vice Chairman questioned where we could insert a request for volunteers to fill future vacancies on the Committee and it was decided this would feature under ‘Governance’.  **Item 11 – AOB**  21. There were 3 items of AOB:   1. **OC IX(B) Handover timeline.** The Vice President asked OC IX(B) when he would be handing over and if he would be celebrating his time as Sqn Boss before departing. OC IX(B) replied that his handover will be in mid-June but he doesn’t currently know who his replacement is. As he has to return from Ops, quarantine due to Covid and then move to his next posting in the USA by mid-July, he does not believe time will allow for any form of leaving function. The Vice President offered the opportunity of a ‘virtual’ function to celebrate his time commanding the RAF’s premier unit and Committee members agreed to attend.   **Action:** Vice President to inform members of the Committee once a date has been agreed for a ‘virtual’ celebration for OC IX(B) Sqn.   1. **TABS 2021.** The Vice Chairman/Editor reported that TABS 2021 had been published by the May Day Bank Holiday deadline and had been distributed by the Secretary. He thanked everyone for their inputs, especially with the final edit before printing. 2. **OC IX(B) Sqn last meeting.** As this is his last meeting, OC IX(B) thanked the Association Committee for their support and assistance to both him and the Sqn. He stated his enjoyment at working with the Committee and looked forward to his continued interaction as the Typhoon Era Secretary.   **Item 12 – President’s Remarks**  22. The President thanked the Committee for their inputs once again and stated his belief that we are well set up for the AGM on 26 May. He thanked Alfie Ferguson for joining the meeting and for his sterling efforts in organising the Reunion Weekend, reiterating the importance of holding the function at or around RAF Lossiemouth. The President then congratulated OC IX(B) Sqn on his successful tenure and offered any assistance for the future, coining a phrase oft quoted by former President ACM Peach, ‘You’re part of the IX Sqn family now’.  **Item 13 – Date of Next Meeting**    23. Thur 17 Jun 21 at 20:00 via Teams TeleConference. | | ProjO    Charities Member  Vice President  Secretary |

D A Wood

WO (R’td)

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Approved by J Nixon, Vice Chairman, 15 May 21.