

## The Royal Airforce (RAF) Regiment in Twilight 2000



The RAF Regiment was created in 1942 and tasked with airfield defence for the Royal Air Force. At the start of the Twilight War it's strength was made up of 17 regular squadrons and 8 Royal Auxiliary Air Force squadrons (manned by part time volunteer reservists).

Each regular squadron had a book strength of 171 members (making them the equivalent of large companies but capable of independent deployment as it includes administrative and support elements usually found at higher level). They were divided into two types Field Squadrons and Air Defence squadrons.

Field Squadron were divided into flights (equivalent to platoons). These were Rifle Flights (intended for close range combat) and Support Weapon Flights (with 81mm mortars, ATGMs, GPMGs in the heavy role on tripod mounts and sniper rifles). The usual ratio was three Rifle Flights to one Support Weapon Flights. In early 1996 with the threat level increasing,

Light Armoured Squadrons were reintroduced using Scimitar and Scorpion series vehicles with Spartans in the APC role. Most Field Squadrons had a motorised element in Land Rovers capable of ranging up to 40km from the base in patrol operations. Air Defence Squadrons had a strength of 6 Rapier or Starstreak missile launchers. Royal Auxiliary Air Force Squadrons had a pre war strength of about 100 with four flights, two in Land Rovers and two static defence.

They are frequently known as Rock Apes. Commonly thought to refer to Gibraltar the nickname instead refers to an incident in the 1950s in Aden when two RAF Regiment officers went out hunting local baboons (nicknamed rock apes). Splitting up one shot the other, in the board of enquiry he was asked why he had fired, he replied that in the light, his friend had looked like a rock ape. This took very little time to reverberate around the RAF and the nickname stuck.

1 Squadron: Field Squadron. Initially deployed in Germany at Laarbruch in a light armoured role. One flight has converted to horsed cavalry to increase mobility as Land Rovers (which had replaced the armour by 1999) become scarce. Current location Celle. Acting as a recce unit for 12<sup>th</sup> Armoured Brigade.



*Illustration 2: RAF Regiment title (worn on both arms), TRF (note the wings) and rank slide. (RAF Museum)*

2 Squadron (Parachute) – all troops are parachute capable, although this capability has reduced as aircraft have become less available for training. Intended to be capable of parachuting to take control of airbases. During the war no full deployment was made by parachute but instead helicopters were primarily used, one of their best known operations being the ground support in the operation to rescue members of the Dutch government ahead of the French advance. The unit has been based throughout the war in Germany having deployed from RAF Honnington as German troops crossed the border. It is currently in Braunschweig attached to 6 Airmobile Brigade.

*Illustration 1: RAF tactical recognition flash (TRF) worn on the right arm by all RAF personnel (including reluctantly by RAF Rgt members not assigned to a squadron)*

3 Squadron: Based in Northern Ireland. Provides protection to RAF Aldergrove and Belfast International

Airport. Has provided a cadre for training infantry in Northern Ireland and has dealt with a number of threats to the airbase from the southern Irish Ranger Company. Still equipped with Land Rovers (some of which are ex-civilian) the unit has gradually moved to acting as a raiding force.



*Illustration 3: 3 Squadron WIMIK Land Rover on patrol near the border with Eire. January 1998.*

15 Squadron: A prewar air defence unit this unit is now a light infantry unit (lacking the Support Weapons Flight). Currently due to withdraw from Germany, it is in Hannover attached to 1/Royal Anglian Regiment effectively as an extra company.

16 Squadron: A prewar air defence unit this unit was based in the UK but was disbanded to reinforce the other UK based squadrons in May 1999.

20 Squadron: Used to provide defence to US airbases, the squadron has stopped responding to orders and is believed to be operating as marauders in the East Anglia area.



*Illustration 4: 15 Squadron TRF (RAF Museum)*



*Illustration 5: Formerly used by the RAF Depot this has (since 1st January 2000) been used as the TRF for 26 Squadron, usually with a 26 in a wreath below the crown.*

26 Squadron: Another pre-war air defence regiment that has spent the war in the UK. Now converted into a light infantry role, this Squadron has been tasked with training of new recruits for the RAF Regiment and has been reduced to cadre strength (approximately equivalent to an NCO heavy flight plus extra administrative elements). Based in the Aldershot area.

27 Squadron. This Squadron converted to the light armoured squadron role in early 1996. It was despatched to assist other squadrons in Germany (the flights were assigned to other squadrons to give them increased firepower). In early 1998 as aircraft became scarcer the squadron was concentrated to provide a light armoured squadron attached to 1 Welsh Guards Battlegroup. Current strength is 2 Scimitar, 1 Scorpion and 4 Spartan. Based in Celle where it effectively under the command of II Corps.





*Illustration 6: 27 Squadron, RAF Regiment Scorpion and Spartan set up to defend a Harrier refuelling point in Germany May 1997. The Mirror*

34 Squadron: Deployed to Germany from its Yorkshire bases in 1996. Badly weakened by the nuclear strike on RAF Bruggen in 1998, the unit now includes a large number of Germans who fled the French drive into the Rhineland and attached themselves to the unit as it withdrew from the French (at least one French Le Clerc tank was destroyed by the squadron as it withdrew). Currently in Hannover it has been attached directly to I Corps pending the training of the new recruits. Its future is as yet undecided.

37 Squadron: In mid 1995 this was redesignated 104 Squadron.

48 (Commando) Squadron: Deployed to Norway with 3 (Commando) Brigade, this unit saw extensive combat guarding forward Harrier bases against Soviet patrols and special forces. To commemorate this 40 Squadron now wears a commando green backing to the cap badge and many have completed the All Arms Commando Course to gain the dagger flash. Renamed 48 (Commando) Squadron RAF Regiment in



*Illustration 7: 51 Squadron personnel train for deployment to the MEFF (note the mix of desert and temperate equipment) late 2001. MoD*

September 1999, it is the first RAF unit to gain the distinction and from 1<sup>st</sup> January 2002 all personnel must have completed the All Arms Commando Course. The unit withdrew to the UK in July 2000 and is now attached to 3 (Commando) Brigade as a recce unit.

51 Squadron: Deployed to guard RAF bases in Cyprus. This unit has seen little action other than local base defence and is due to deploy to the MEFF in early 2002 as the RAF abandons its Cyprus bases.

58 Squadron: Deployed to the Falklands when the threat of an Argentine invasion loomed. It deployed without Land Rovers and rediscovered the use of the mountain ponies for patrolling.

*"Norway was nasty, as the airbases were in easy range for Ivan we dispersed the Harriers (both ours and the US Marine ones) over a big area, even using roads as runways. What we did was arm and fuel them before dispersing them to a hide.*

*The Soviets got wind of this and started to send small teams to hit us. Sometimes they would hide nearby with a hand held SAM, other times they would go for an attack with the Harrier on the ground. Made for an interesting few months until I was wounded."*

*Pilot Officer Terry Silver*

*48 (Commando) Squadron, RAF Regiment*

*Recounted in "Forgotten Voices from the Frozen North" Winter Wolf Publications 2034*

63 Squadron: Based in Yorkshire in an air defence role the squadron stopped responding to orders in mid 1998 and is operating as a local defence force in Ripon.

66 Squadron: A pre-war air defence squadron that was used to guard US airbases. Took heavy casualties in Pact attacks on the bases. Disbanded in late 1997 with the survivors being integrated into 63 Squadron.

98 (Parachute) Squadron. War raised unit with a strength of only two flights. Initially all personnel were parachute trained using a cadre from 2 Squadron, this requirement was dropped in early 1997. Initially based in Germany the unit was incorporated into the Special Services Brigade and was withdrawn to the UK with this.

104 Squadron: Formerly 37 Squadron. Redesignated in early 1996 when the unit was (temporarily) rerolled as an NBC training unit. Deployed to Aldershot it survived the war relatively intact and in mid 1998 was moved to Portsmouth. The sole remaining air defence element of the RAF Regiment, this unit is tasked with air defence of the UK using its few remaining Starstreak, Rapier, Javelin and Blowpipe AA missiles. Units are deployed across England, based primarily around high value English targets against possible (presumably French) air attack.

1310 Wing (RAuxAF): The administrative headquarters unit for RAuxAF units (incorporates the survivors of 1339 Wing).

1339 Wing (RauxAF): Amalgamated into 1310 Wing (RauxAF) as a purely administrative unit in January 1999.

2503 Squadron (RauxAF) (County of Lincoln Squadron): Tasked with RAF base defence in the UK, the unit has served continually in the UK. Currently based near the outskirts of London it is acting in a light infantry role.



*Illustration 8: 2620 Squadron RauxAF Rgt Land Rovers moving to Bandar-e-Khameyni. Note the rag tag appearance. The paint appears to be a local expedient as normally it has a more pink hue. MoD*

2620 Squadron (RauxAF) (City of Cardiff): Deployed to Belize when the reserves were mobilised, it was recalled at the outbreak of hostilities and deployed as part of the MEFF. This unit is one of the few units that is still entirely vehicle mobile using Land Rovers exclusively (many converted into gun trucks locally).

2622 Squadron (RauxAF) (City of Belfast): Deployed to Germany when reservists were called up, this squadron converted to horsed cavalry when it was discovered that the unit included a number of civilian riding instructors. Currently acting as a cavalry training school for I Corps in Braunschweig.

2623 Squadron (RauxAF) (City of Birmingham): A prewar training unit that became an operation squadron in January 1997. Deployed to Germany in 1997 the unit was virtually wiped out when RAF Laarsbruch was hit with

nuclear weapons. Most of the survivors have been absorbed into 350 Regiment (Royal Engineers) although they maintain their RAF rankings, name tags and customs of service.

2624 Squadron (RauxAF) (County of Oxford): Was deployed to Gibraltar in June 1996. It was destroyed in the nuclear attack on the bases in late 1997.



2625 Squadron (RauxAF) (County of Cornwall): Disbanded in May 1999 to bring other UK squadrons up to strength. Prior to this it had acted as a base defence on UK RAF bases (including those used by the USAF).



*Illustration 9: A Flight 2629 Squadron on return to the UK.*

2626 Squadron (RAuxAF): A war time created unit using a cadre from 63 Squadron that was deployed to Hong Kong in August 1996. It has never reached full strength but consists only of two rifle flights and a HQ element (mainly from local recruits). Current status is unknown.

2629 Squadron (RauxAF) (City of Lincoln) (VERSION 1.0): Deployed

to Berlin as part of the BAOR build up in 1995. When the city was attacked it was mauled in the defence of Templehoff airbase. When the city was relieved the survivors were withdrawn to the UK where they were assigned to 2625 Squadron.

2629 Squadron (RauxAF) (City of Lincoln) (VERSION 2): Deployed to Germany as part of the BAOR build up in 1995. The unit was used alongside 44 Airborne Brigade in a bold heliborne attempt to seize the Okęcie Airfield in Warsaw. The unit failed to take the airfield but did manage to deny its use to the Pact. When the city was counter attacked it was mauled in withdrawal, the survivors were withdrawn to the UK where they were assigned to 2625 Squadron.

2890 Squadron (RaufAF) (City of Glasgow): Deployed to guard RAF bases in Scotland, the unit had a fairly uneventful war. With the forming of the Scottish National Party Government, the squadron declared for the new government and is currently based in Stirling where it has been used as a training cadre for the Royal Army of Scotland. They now wear the TRF of a St Andrew's Cross in white superimposed over the old RAF TRF colours.



*Illustration 10: Cpl Simon Little of 2892 Squadron under mortar fire during the Battle of Belize Airport. Cpl Little was later to win the Military Cross for his actions. The Times*  
a ceremonial role.

2892 Squadron (RauxAF) (City of Liverpool): Raised in 1994 to give an extra air defence squadron it never achieved full strength. In mid 1996, the Squadron was re-roled as a light rolled squadron of two flights and sent to Belize to relieve 2620 Squadron there (where ironically one flight resumed the air defence role). During the Guatemalan invasion they provided airfield defence fighting off the Marine landing.

Queen's (now King's) Colour Squadron. This is the ceremonial unit of the RAF but also has a wartime role of guarding the airports near London. Heavily hit during the nuclear exchanges the survivors have been reduced to cadre strength and are currently rebuilding in Plymouth where they also have

*"I'll never forget the assault on Warsaw. As the Chinook I was in came in low and fast there were constant pops as rounds went through the fusilage, you could just hear them over the engines. Then we hit, hard! People were thrown to the floor; we tried to scramble out, trying to climb over the wounded and dead. The crew member at the rear was pumping out rounds from the M60 (never understood why they never replaced them with GPMGs). As I got out there were fires everywhere, tracer zipping past me, screams everywhere, the smell of burning aircraft and bodies, all over the runway was chaos.*

*Whoever had planned the operation should have been in that hell with us."*

*Corporal Andy Adams*

*2629 Squadron (RAuxAF)*

RAF Regiment Depot: The pre-war training unit, destroyed when RAF Honnington was destroyed in the nuclear exchanges. It's role was taken over by 26 Squadron.

As can be seen from the illustrations dress is basically as per the British Army with no specialist items. The beret is the standard RAF blue with the standard RAF cap badge. Pre the Soldier95 uniform being issued, personnel wore the shoulder flash RAF Regiment on both shoulders and silver on blue rank slides. After Soldier 95 was introduced these were often (but not always) replaced by a standard army style OG or (occasionally) DPM rank slide with the RAF Regiment title at the bottom in black (officers continued to use the blue rank slide although some had OG or DPM ones made up with RAF rank on).

Weaponry used was HP-35 9mm pistols, L2A3 Sterling submachine guns, L1A1 SLR rifles, L85 IW rifles, L86 LSW squad automatics, L7A2 GPMG (FN MAG), L42A1 and L96A1 sniper rifles. As the war continued M16s were issued from stores in lieu of L85s and some FN Minimis were issued to supplement the LSW.

Ranks are based on the British Army for enlisted men with the exceptions that no lance corporal exists, instead they are known as senior aircraftsman, colour/staff sergeants known as flight sergeants and there is no distinction between warrant officer class 1 and 2.

Officers ranks are based on the Royal Navy (in particular the Royal Naval Air Service of World War One), with the ranks being:

- 1 Pilot Officer
- 2 Flying Officer
- 3 Flight Lieutenant
- 4 Squadron Leader
- 5 Wing Commander.

## Character Generation

For version 1.0 characters can be generated as normal using the details below.

Branch	Speciality	Roll	Skill	Benefit	Special
RAF Regiment	Armour	8	-	TVD:30, HW:30 RCN: ½ cost CRM:20	
RAF Regiment	Artillery crewman	7	STR	HW:1/2 cost TVD or WVD:20 CRM:20 PAR:1/2 cost	Man AA weapons
RAF Regiment	Heavy weapons	7	-	CRM:40 HW:40 IF:20 PAR:1/2 cost	
RAF Regiment	Infantryman	6	-	CRM:60, HW:30 PAR:1/2 cost	
RAF Regiment	Vehicle crewman	7	-	CRM: 30 HW: 40, TVD or WVD:30	

For version 2.0 and 2.2, follow the rules for UK characters in the rulebook , undergo air force basic training as normal and choose from the following careers:



*Illustration 11: King's Colour Squadron member in Portsmouth February 2001 MoD*

- Armour arm: as per rules but only available for the war term as the light armour was only reformed then.
- Artillery arm: as per rules but replace forward observer with computer and tracked vehicle with wheeled vehicle.
- Infantry arm: as per rules but no mountain infantry or ranger careers available.
- The Marine Sniper, enlisted career is available.