The Air League Newsletter

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GATWICK MAKES ITS CASE

s the great debate continues on how best to deliver future airport capacity for London and the South East, Gatwick, London's second international airport, has put forward for public consultation details of its alternative proposals that look towards potentially more than doubling the airport's current passenger capacity by 2050.

Gatwick is famous for being the world's busiest one-runway international airport and currently handles 35.8 million passengers annually. Over the last twelve months passenger numbers have risen by over 4.8% with a big rise in European air traffic. Some 60 airlines use the airport serving over 200 destinations and load factors average 83.1%. New aircraft now flying from the airport include the Boeing 787s of Thomson and the Airbus A380s of Emirates. Over £1 billion has recently been spent improving airport facilities and another £100million is due to be spent in each of the next seven years. Without an extra runway the airport aims to handle up to 40 million passengers by 2021-22.

However, as the consultation papers show, Gatwick has the potential to play a much bigger role in meeting expanding demand if it is allowed to build a second runway to the South of the existing one. Three two-runway options have been presented. Option 1 comprises retaining the existing runway and terminal areas but adding

a new 3.4km runway 585m south of the existing one and parallel to it. This would use one runway for landings and one for take-offs and could handle up to 68 million passengers per year. Option 2 envisages adding a new 3.4km runway 1,045m south of the existing runway allowing operations of single-use runways independently of each other. A new passenger terminal area would be built between the runways and up to 85 million passengers could be handled. Option 3 would have similar twin runways, central terminal area and separation distance to option 2 but would use both runways independently for both take offs and landings and could handle up to 90 million passengers.

The airport management believes that Option 3 has the best performance overall, followed by Option 2, then Option 1. While Option 1 has the lowest environmental impact, Option 3 brings the greatest social and economic benefits, greatest operational efficiency and lower impacts per passenger.



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MILITARY AIR SAFETY - MOVING ON

Cave QC sent shock-waves through the Royal Air Force, Parliament, MOD and the aerospace sector. This in-depth report threw the spotlight on military air safety in a way that had never been seen before. It indicated that there were serious issues regarding the chain of command and responsibility for ensuring that military aircraft were maintained and supported in a thoroughly safe manner and that widespread failures within the military, and industry contractors, had directly led to the tragedy. Clearly a significant change in procedures, processes and personal and legal responsibility was needed and as a result the Military Aviation Authority (MAA) was established, tasked with introducing a more robust and fit-for-purpose organization to oversee all aspects of military air safety and support.

At a briefing in London recently the current MMA Director-General, Air Marshal Garwood, explained that the Haddon-Cave report had shown that there had been a lack of accountability involved and while the rules had been interpreted as for guidance, there had not been sufficient attention paid to the levels of risk involved in key airworthiness issues. He said that following the creation of the new MAA "We are back in a good place". He added that safety had to be balanced with operational needs and must never get in the way of operational freedom, but it was not true to suggest that the new arrangements might lead to a risk-aversion culture. He said that nobody wished to return to the previous situation and now all were clear on their responsibilities. The MAA had a firm grip on understanding risk and how to manage it. He added there was now in place a new approach to Air Safety Governance with clearly defined Duty Holders, a focus on Risk to Life, a new regime for Safety Cases and Certification, comprehensive air domain oversight, independent accident investigation.



The MAA has a broad reach in carrying out its responsibilities both within the RAF/MOD community and interfacing with industry. The latter is particularly important now that so much servicing and maintenance support for military aircraft is carried out by contracted out services. This all adds up to a regulated community of around 100,000 people. After describing the MAA Governance reporting structure and the revised Regulatory Framework organisation, AM Garwood turned to the subject of the Military Air System Certification Process. The changes that have been introduced were essential, he said, because of the inadequately designed and certified modifications that were at the root of the Nimrod accident. Certification assures

that the system is designed and built to a defined and recognised standard by a competent organisation. The lessons from history must be applied and the new system provides independent assurance that the air system is fit for the intended purpose. The revised Certification Process is based on civil EASA process and is modified to account for military data – usage and modification standards.

Currently there is a very large certification workload underway within the MAA. This has recently included certification of such varied aircraft types as the Voyager tanker-transport, BAe146QC tactical transport, Chinook Mk6, Watchkeeper and Scan Eagle RPAS, and Puma Mk 2 and Wildcat helicopters. Major modification programmes have included the Chinook Mk4 and Merlin Mk2 helicopters and Typhoon P1Ea. Planned forthcoming certification activity includes the A400M transport, F-35B and Scavenger Reaper replacement RPAS and Shadow and Apache upgrades. The MAA is engaged in sharing experience and areas of common interest with US and French military airworthiness organisations. This will help with the introduction and support of the F-35s and A400Ms. However, one challenge currently involving the MAA is the certification of the three US-supplied RC-135W Rivet Joint electronic intelligence aircraft, the RAF's Airseeker programme. These have a vital role in electronic warfare and are urgently needed to fill the capability gap caused by the retirement of the Nimrod R1s. The certification issues result from the fact that the KC-135R airframes are ten years older than the 40 year old Nimrods! Build specifications and operating standards have advanced significantly in the last half century so solving this matter will centre on trading off risk against the essential role the aircraft are required to perform.

Strategic Air Safety risks include mid-air collisions, the shortfall in suitably qualified and experienced engineering personnel, the cumulative effect of defence change initiatives and the Afghanistan redeployment, which is a very large and complex operation. The MAA's current priorities centre on the re-write of regulations, continued development of the bevond Air Safety Culture, assurance compliance, increased engagement across the aviation environment, certification of new air systems, the challenges of RPAS use and moves towards a Defence Safety Authority in 2015-16. This all adds up to an ambitious future workload.

COMMENTARY by Aeronautica



he next Strategic Defence and Security Review, due after next year's General Election, is an opportunity for the incoming government to recognize that much has changed since the 2010 SDSR. The time has surely come when defence should be given a higher priority in national spending so that some degree of regeneration can at least start. UK foreign aid spending increased by 28% in 2013 and is now the second largest in the world after the US, which spends 0.19% of its GDP on aid, while the UK percentage is 0.7%. So the continuing squeeze on UK defence can't be because "there is no money" as has been the official line for years.

The decision to include the UK nuclear deterrent within the general defence budget instead of funding it, as in the past, from a separate national contingency budget, has hollowed out a huge chunk of more general defence spending. Nuclear and conventional defence has always been regarded as complimentary but if the deterrent remains bundled into an already reduced defence budget then over the next decade it will be increasingly difficult to provide other vital conventional capabilities. The recent events in the Indian Ocean highlight in no uncertain terms the essential value of long-range maritime air platforms, not just for surveillance, search and rescue over vast oceanic regions, but also in the highly specialised area of underwater detection and anti-submarine warfare. Prior to the demise of the Nimrods this was a global capability that was continuously exercised, and in which the RAF excelled. Retaining a few "seedcorn" specialist aircrews seconded to allied air forces and navies has kept key MR and ASW expertise alive when we have no MR of our own, but clearly this cannot continue indefinitely. At present there is no allocated funding for a new MR fleet, although studies are underway to see how this might be restored. Such a programme must be part of the next SDSR, with an increased budget to pay for it. The US, Australia and India have all adopted the Boeing P-8A Poseidon as their P-3 replacements and this aircraft comes closest in performance to the lost Nimrods. The US Navy and Australia also plan to operate a mixed MR fleet including Triton remotely piloted surveillance aircraft, based on the Global Hawk, though their operation

incrowded European skies would be problematical, as Germany discovered and subsequently cancelled its similar EuroHawk programme. In the meantime the US desert storage areas have many pre-owned P-3C Orions available and which could be upgraded and put to good use if the P-8 is considered too expensive for the UK.

Far more worrying in the short and long term for not only the UK Services, but also a sizable proportion of the current British defence and aerospace industrial sector, is the prospect of what might happen if Scotland becomes independent. Only now is the UK defence establishment starting to point out the fundamental defence issues that would arise from the UK breaking up and Scotland becoming an independent state, probably outside NATO and the EU, as the First Sea Lord has warned. Up until very recently the Secretary of State for Defence had dismissed the prospect by stating "It won't happen", but is now spelling out some of the consequences that would follow if it does. Closing RAF bases at Leuchars and Kinloss and scrapping the Scottishbased MR squadrons hasn't helped his case against the SNP however. If a "Yes" vote should happen, against all the poll predictions, then the next draft SDSR would have to be completely re-written. This prospect is currently causing less than a total panic in Whitehall, but it seems the full impact on our defences and the national defence industrial base resulting from a UK break-up, was at best underestimated, and at worst never considered seriously enough in the first place.

THE ROYAL AIR FORCE - TOW

n 24 March 2014 Air Marshal Greg Bagwell CB CBE MSc RAF, Deputy Commander Operations, RAF Air Command, addressed Air League members and guests and Parliamentarians in the House of Commons for the annual Slessor Lecture.

"As I complete my 34th year in this uniform, I find myself as proud to wear it today as I was all those years ago when I graduated from the RAF College Cranwell. It is both humbling and inspiring to see what some of the Nation's brightest and best are able to achieve in the face of increasingly demanding and sometimes dangerous circumstances.

A man who would have known this from his time in the Service gives his name to these annual lectures, and he would be proud, and reassured, to know that in some respects not much has changed. Indeed his own career makes for some interesting comparisons and parallels to today's RAF.

"His first operational squadron was 17 Squadron, flying in the Great War - predominantly in the Middle East, and then with 5 Squadron on the Western Front. He commanded 4 Squadron between the wars and as the Commander of No 3 Indian Wing was awarded the DSO for operations in Waziristan. He went on to command in every rank in the RAF, including Coastal Command, Mediterranean and Middle East Command, and finally Chief of the Air Staff. He commanded operations in the Middle East, Asia and Europe (including Yugoslavia), and he would certainly recognize most of the geography that we



have operated over in my time in the Service.

"Undoubtedly, he would be pleased to know that the three flying squadrons on which he served are still active today, but the way in which we deliver Air Power has changed dramatically, and the roles and equipment of Slessor's old squadrons provide perfect examples of how we have developed over the last 100 years. His first squadron, 17 Squadron, is now engaged in the operational test and evaluation of the Joint Strike Fighter in the USA, which we know as Lightning 2 – this aircraft will provide a first of class air capability that goes far beyond its advanced stealth technology; it will introduce a precise first strike capability that has the sensors and information to operate in the most cluttered, congested and contested

environment that we might face in the coming years. These aircraft, in tandem with the complimentary capabilities provided by Typhoon, will protect the Nation and, if necessary, deliver the lethal force to deter or defeat our enemies. We fast jet pilots are sometimes accused of being too fixated on our combat aircraft, yet this is a strange accusation on a number of levels. Firstly the combat air element of the RAF makes up less than 20 % of its manpower and front line squadrons. Secondly, the prime responsibility of any military is to defend its nation and its national interests, whether it be through the deterrent threat of force or its ultimate use, and it is combat aircraft that provide the very essence of this hard power, and which is fundamental to our nation's security.



ARDS THE NEXT 100 YEARS



"Rapidly deploying a combat squadron within a matter of hours, to deliver precision strikes or to reassure an allied or threatened nation sends a very clear



This flexibility and agility offers a quick, efficient and effective way of demonstrating political support and intent. For example, we were able to deliver lethal force over Libya in less than 10 hours from the political decision to act, without the need to deploy or commit combat forces in advance or signpost intent. It is therefore vital that the Nation not only has the right amount of Combat Air - both in quality and quantity, but that it is employed wisely and carefully against the highest priority task. It is for this reason that ownership is independent from the often competing demands of our sister Services - directed where it is needed most by the Joint Commander. In a demanding scenario this decision may have to be tested and adjusted on a minute to minute basis. Independence is about preserving the freedom and agility to be applied at the right

time in the right place without a protracted discussion or decision on competing command authorities. It is not, as those who are less well informed might believe, to go it alone.

"As our combat aircraft become more sophisticated so they have a tendency to become more expensive, this has an effect on the numbers we can afford, but we must guard against the urge to judge our capability by numbers alone. Although the RAF today is about 75% smaller than when Slessor was CAS in 1952 he would undoubtedly be impressed by the leap in capability. The venerable Tornado GR4 continues to provide the most flexible and precise combat air platform in Afghanistan, as it did over Libya, and many more campaigns before it. In Typhoon and Lightning 2 we will have two of the very best combat aircraft in service world-wide over the next two decades and they will complement each other superbly as we begin to look to deter or defeat far more complex and capable air threats in the potential operations that we may face in the coming years

"Slessor's second squadron, 5 Squadron, now operates the Sentinel aircraft which provides vital information and cueing for other sensors and platforms to both detect and track a myriad of potential threats, or as we call it ISTAR -Intelligence Surveillance Target Acquisition and Reconnaissance. Although a relatively new and small squadron, it has operated over the skies of Libya, Afghanistan, Mali and the Gulf in recent years and is an important part of a constellation of capabilities that adds to our understanding of the battle-space in which we operate. It has the agility to detect threats and the precision to ensure that we act proportionally and discriminately.

"Other surveillance systems include our Reaper remotely-piloted aircraft, Shadow, the E3-D AWACS, the tactical reconnaissance pods on our combat aircraft and soon the Air seeker. Over the years we have seen these as vital in understanding the conflict in which we are engaged - I would argue it is even more important to understand the ones that might be, so that we can avert them or, if necessary, be prepared for them. But the RAF ISTAR Force is not just about the equipment, it comprises highly-trained men and women who are not only key to collecting information but also building understanding from it; turning electro-magnetic signals, images and voices into actual intelligence - at the right time, in the right form to the right person, in real time if necessary.

"Slessor served in many far flung parts of the globe, and he would have fully understood the essential role of air mobility. The RAF's air mobility force is as vital to deploying, sustaining or recovering military force, as it is to providing humanitarian aid rapidly. But it is perhaps the role performed today by Slessor's third Squadron, 4 Squadron, now equipped with the Hawk T2 at RAF Valley that would surprise him the most. This new training aircraft is transforming the way that we train future combat pilots of the RAF and many other We are now using a nations. blend of live and synthetic training

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and emulating aircraft operating systems and software to such an extent that the step up for a young pilot from a Hawk to a Typhoon is not quite the leap it was. Not only has this been helped by the design of the Hawk T2 and associated training systems, but also by the quality of instruction that the RAF is famous for. It is no surprise therefore that many other nations are keen to utilize this expertise; and this is often the vital factor when it comes to capturing the lucrative defence export market.

"Over the last few years Defence exports in the Aviation sector dwarf those in the maritime and Land domains, and so, we might ponder whether we should better see ourselves as an Aviation Nation in terms of our industrial base and our future prosperity. For whilst we still provide some of the World's big aerospace hitters through companies such as BAES and Rolls Royce, there are numerous other, smaller but extremely hightech industries some of which are represented here, that bring wealth and skills to these shores and place us in a strong position for the types of technologies that may dominate this century.

"Despite my focus on platforms we are not defined merely by our aircraft, and perhaps the aspect of today's RAF that Slessor would draw most comfort from is the quality of our personnel; and by personnel I include the extended family of Reserves, Civil Servants and Contractors. We recognize that our partners in the civilian world are often able to grow and generate vital skills which would be impossible to sustain or afford in an RAF of just over 30,000 - skills such as cyber, communications, networks, medicine, languages and contract management. As the RAF strives to stay at the cutting edge of air power it is vital that we are able to maintain as wide a skill base as possible.

"There have been a number of key events since the last Slessor lecture. At home we have covered the firemen's strikes and assisted in flood relief - and have provided round the clock air defence and search and rescue nationwide and for our overseas territories. We have provided support to the French led operation in Mali and the Central African Republic, and humanitarian assistance in the



Philippines and Sudan. We have conducted a number of high profile deployments in the Middle East, as well as our permanent presence there, and we continue to stand ever ready to diffuse any increased tension in that strategically vital region. We prepared for potential operations over Syria, and this also prompted a deployment of Typhoon, AWACS and Air Refuelling aircraft to provide Air Defence over Cyprus, whilst the situation in the Eastern Mediterranean stabilized. More recently we have offered both Typhoons and AWACS aircraft to assist in the stabilization of the situation in Ukraine. And last but not least we are at the heart of the shift in campaign focus in Afghanistan from one of operations to one of transition and re-deployment.

"Each of these operational tasks brings unique challenges demands and we have to constantly revisit and adjust our priorities to meet each new emerging task. For today, our geographical span is vast: from the Falklands to Afghanistan, Africa to the North Cape we continue to deploy and act across a large part of the globe. Moreover, as we refocus on new threats and potential regions of conflict we recognize that the potential foes that we may face are better equipped and less constrained than those we have met in the recent past, and so we spend considerable effort in training and preparing to meet, deter or defeat the most sophisticated and dangerous enemies. So, as we approach our

centenary, today's Royal Air Force looks forward to the next 100 years in good heart and spirit. But we cannot and will not be complacent - for there are many challenges to face and overcome. But in these financially constrained times, the most vital of all of these is providing value for money.

"We must continue to demonstrate and deliver the utility and flexibility that air power brings to operations. As we continue to eke out the very most from scarce resources it is now more important than ever that an independent air force works to provide air power wherever it is needed most, on land or sea, and from the land or sea. We are independent, because in an age of competing priorities and dwindling resource, we provide unconstrained and unrestricted airpower wherever and whenever it is needed most a decision that may change from minute to minute. But this challenge requires us to be as comfortable on land and at sea as we are in the air. For the next 100 years that will mean our young men and women flying off Navy decks in support of the Army or Royal Marines, or offland bases in support of our Navy we are ready to meet that challenge and take the Royal Air Force to even greater heights than our forefathers. Now, tomorrow and for as long as Air power remains critical to the security and prosperity of this country, or our allies, your Royal Air Force will continue to serve with courage and pride.

FROM AIR LEAGUE SCHOLARSHIP TO FLYING THE F-22

Guy Lockwood describes how The Air League has led him to an exciting career in the world's most advanced fighters.

was very fortunate to win the Air League's Joe Wheater PPL award in early 2000. Accordingly, I owe much to the Air League which helped me learn to fly and enabled me to pursue a career as a pilot in the RAF. Since then, I have been very lucky and flown the Typhoon FGR4 on 3(F) and XI Squadrons and the F22A on exchange duties with the United States Air Force. I have been asked to share a few of my experiences thus far and have chosen the ones that remain most vivid in my memory.

I was posted to the Typhoon in late 2005 and started training a few months later on what was to become my first frontline aircraft. It is difficult to describe accurately in words the gulf between sitting in a Hawk TMk1 and the Typhoon. The latter feels extremely high off the ground and when you look behind you, all you can see is wing. The cockpit is very comfortable and modern with a dearth of analogue flight instruments and a wide-angle head up display or HUD. Starting the Typhoon is very smooth and it's not until you line up for take-off that you truly understand why pilots wax lyrical about the performance. From brake release you can be at 40000' and Mach 1.0 ninety seconds later, just enough time to wonder what happened! Over the time that I flew the Typhoon, I had the opportunity to fly in Oman, India, North America, Spain, Cyprus, Italy, the Falkland Islands and the Middle East. I spent the majority of detachments in the latter two destinations experiencing the full spectrum of weather that the world has to offer. However, the most rewarding time was deploying on operations in support of Operation ELLAMY, the United Kingdom's contribution to the Libyan No-Fly Zone. Flying in mixed formations with our Tornado GR4 colleagues was an unusual but very effective tactical mix and I think that the vast majority of aircrew who flew in these missions got a huge feeling of pride from the often exhausting sorties flown at great distances from the nearest friendly runway. The unsung heroes of the deployment were the tanker crews, particularly the Tristar and VC10 guys, who were always in the right place at the right time and looking to try to take us to wherever we needed to go to maximise our time on task. Throughout the operation, the Typhoon barely missed a beat. Accelerated software changes greatly reduced the in-cockpit workload and the core parts of the aircraft designed to keep you airborne, engines, hydraulics and flight controls were bulletproof in terms of reliability. In 6 months of operations, I think there was only one engine change, testament to the reliability of the machine and the dedication of the engineers who worked on it.





Fast forward to 2012 and I am sat at the end of the runway at Tyndall Air Force Base in Florida in an aircraft made for one person (with no 2 seat training variants...) wondering whether it handles anything like the simulator. In a world full of hyperbole, even the Unites States struggles to find the right words to describe the Raptor. With around 80,000lb of thrust and limitless alpha, it handles differently to the Typhoon and in some ways feels like a much bigger aircraft. Post take-off, the aircraft rumbles below 250kts as if the engines are out of harmony and then as it accelerates above 350-400kts, everything seems to smooth out as if you are driving a luxury car. Significant speed and altitude are the order of the day and when combined with stealth, the Raptor offers a lethality that is currently unmatched by anything else in the world. As such, it is an asset that is in much demand and I have had the opportunity to deploy to both Australia and Japan during my assignment; a long way from the east coast of the US. Watching the USAF move fighters around the world, it is difficult not to be impressed as tankers refuel from tankers to meet more tankers from forward deployed locations. On one memorable 11 hour sortie, I had to refuel 14 times prior to landing at our destination and was more than in need of a beer on arrival after a total electrics failure. That the destination was Melbourne made the flight more than bearable!

To date, I have quite clearly had a lot of luck with respect to flying a variety aircraft and being taught by some very talented instructors along the way. The one piece of advice that I would offer to anyone aspiring to undertake a career in aviation is to hunt high and low for chances to fly. There are many more than you might initially think and organisations such as the Air League continue to provide incredible opportunities for those who wish to pursue this path.

MEMBERS' NEWS

Inaugural Young Aviators' Dinner

Saturday 5th April saw the Air League Leading Edge and Young Air Pilots get together for the Young Aviator's Dinner'. Organised by Leading Edge Panel Member Lucie Martin, the event was for all members of both organisations and had one simple aim: a good old get together to chat, meet up with old friends, make some new friends and talk about our shared passion – a love of aviation and all things flying.

Held at the Royal Air Force Club, around 100 members were present for this unique occasion. After dinner we were treated to an excellent talk by Sasha Nash who is currently a QFI on the Tucano based at RAF Linton on Ouse. Sasha talked us through some of the highlights of her career to date in the RAF and there were certainly some interesting stories which captivated the audience. Describing flying the Tornado in Afghanistan, Sasha talked us through operating the aircraft to assist troops on the ground, be that just a radio relay between ground elements to dropping precision weaponry on insurgents. Above all, she delivered some inspiring words and left the audience really







ABOVE - Young Aviators' Dinner...

inspired and motivated to pursue their aviation goals and ambitions.

Given the huge success of the evening, we are planning on holding another joint event with our colleagues at Young Air Pilots on 28 March 2015.

Scott Pendry

New Members

Corporate Members: 2229 (Loughborough) ATC Squadron Individual Members: Josh Abrahams, Louis Allen, Harry Bell, James Bibbington, Josh Branton, Jason Butcher, Joe Curry, Ryan Duffy, Ryan Ellis, Tom Erangey, Barnaby Evans, Timothy Fairhurst, Andrew Forrest, Benjamin Hachula, Oliver Hall, Jamie Isted, Haydn Jakes, Kim Johnson, Emma Keogh, Patrick Laroche, Christopher Lawson, Michael Leung, James Mackenzie, Joshrun Mann, Stuart McLaren, Fay Montlake, James Nealings, Kuljit Kaur Panesar, Josh Park, Bisma Pervez, Keshab Rana, Amy Jo Randalls, Sam Richardson, Susan Richardson, Alex Russell, Amir Saidian, Rachel Sillers, Daniel Simmonds, James Singh, Thomas Slingsby, Joseph Smith, Ben Southern, Stuart Strachan, Andrew Taee, Sarah Taylor, Max Thorpe, Louise Turnbull, Joel Wignall, Andrew Wilson

Young Aviators' Dinner

Attendees at the Air League Young Aviators Dinner at the RAF Club on 5 April.



Diary Reminders

20 May 2014: Annual Reception

7 June 2014: Youth in Aviation Flying Day, Bicester

11 June 2014: AGM

20 October 2014: Red Arrows 50th Anniversary Banquet 29 October 2014: Youth in Aviation, House of Lords

26 November 2014: Andrew Humphrey Memorial Lecture

AGM and Annual Accounts

The AGM will take place in the RAF Club at 2.30pm on Wednesday 11 June 2014. The Annual Report and Accounts will be posted on the Air League website (www.airleague.co.uk) during May.

For up-to-date information on all our activities please visit our website at **www.airleague.co.uk** where you can register for changes to be sent to you by email as they are announced.



THE AIR LEAGUE

Broadway House Tothill Street London SW1H 9NS

Tel: 020 7222 8463 Fax: 020 7222 8462

E-mail: exec@airleague.co.uk

Editor: Richard Gardner Material for consideration for inclusion can be sent via The Air League's office.