



Registered No 1129091

**Minutes of the RAMC Association
Executive Committee Meeting
Held via ZOOM on
Thursday 19 October 2023 at 1900 hrs**

Present	Col (Retd) KNA Millar (KM)	National Chair	Chair
	Col (Retd) C Mason (CM)	Reg Rep - NE England & Yorkshire	
	Col (Retd) M Pemberton (MP)	Reg Rep - Wales & SW England	
	Maj R Parkes RAMC (RP)	Reg Rep - NI & NW England	
	Maj (Retd) M J T Ellis (ME)	Regimental Secretary RAMC	
	Capt (Retd) P H Starling (PS)	Reg Rep - South & SE England	
	WO1 (RSM) J Loy (JL)	RAMC Rep SM	
	Mr K Roberts (KR)	Reg Rep - Midlands	
Mr I Hooper (IH)	Reg Rep - London & East Anglia		
Mr J Wall (JW)	Senior Standard Bearer (SSB)		
In Attendance	Maj (Retd) I Razzell (IR)	Facebook Page Manager	
Apologies	Mr A Geelan (AG)	Reg Rep - Scotland	
Secretary	Lt Col (Retd) J A'Lee (JA)	National Secretary	Zoom Host

Item	Minutes	Action / Lead
	The Meeting Opened at 1901 hours	
1.	Chair's Opening Remarks	
	<p>a. The Chair started by thanking all for attending and asked that all attendees introduce themselves, which they did. He asked the National Secretary (Nat Sec) for any apologies, of which there was one and finally, he welcomed the following new Committee (Ctee) members:</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">(1) Col (Retd) C Mason – In post since 16 Oct 23</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">(2) Mr I Hooper – In post since 25 Jul 23.</p> <p>b. The Chair said he aimed to keep the meeting as short as practical and asked that all attendees to keep their input brief by letting others speak, not talking over each other and by using the mute and hand-up button appropriately.</p> <p>c. The Chair started by recognising the enormous amount of work that Joe A'Lee had undertaken since he took up the post of Nat Sec. Without going into detail he said they had both inherited what can only be described as a complete administrative b****rs muddle. Records were incomplete and inaccurate; the membership application process was broken; reports and returns were not being sent or were inaccurate; with some financial matters relating to membership applications being positively derelict. All of these took time, effort and dogged perseverance to expose and correct. As such, the size and shape of the Association can now actually be defined, it can be confident that applications for memberships are properly processed, and membership cards are being issued.</p>	Chair / Nat Sec

<p>He further stated that, partly as a result of these forensic examinations of the underbelly of the Association, it became clear there was a need to “fix” the management of the Association, work that he, along with the Nat Sec are currently involved with, which mainly revolves around a rewrite of the Association Rules. This is in train, but as it involves many alterations it is taking time to complete. However, he assured the Cttee that once a draft is put together, it would be circulated to them and their Branches, for comments, amendments and then an agreed document would be put to the Trustees for their final endorsement. The Chair said that the Rules, as they stand, are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (1) Not being followed (thus are less useful than they should be). (2) Incomplete (as they do not contain guidance on, for example, safeguarding). (3) Contain contradictions (and are thus confusing). (4) Do not adequately define the function of this Cttee or Regional Representatives. <p>d. The Chair said that he had hoped to be able to update the Cttee on the anticipated changes within the AMS as they might affect the Association, however, unfortunately, this is still on Close-Hold. What he could say was that the Trustees are in communication with the AMS on how their various functions may be continued after any the changes have taken place and that it is fully recognised that the Association will continue, and continue to require funding, for some considerable time after the RAMC, ceases to exist. He assured the Cttee that as and when he was permitted to do so, he would inform the Cttee of all relevant decisions.</p> <p>e. The Chair went on to say that arising from conversations during and after the AGM in Jun, he had been in contact with Brig Finn regarding rebuilding the Association’s contact with the serving Army. However, he had not, as yet actively engaged on this matter, for the simple reason that all AMS units are in the process of reorganising, re-roleing and re-titling. This is therefore not the best time to bother them with what would be, for them, a peripheral problem while they are getting all their ducks in a row! Once the dust settles on the reorganisation, he would be picking this up once more.</p>	<p>Chair</p> <p>Chair</p>
<p>2. Previous Minutes & Matters Arising</p> <p>a. The Nat Sec opened the floor for any comments on the previous minutes or any matters arising. The Chair raised the following issues:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (1) Welfare Training – this issue is currently in abeyance, but he stressed it had not been forgotten. (2) “Active Member” – In defining what this constitutes and means, he asked rhetorically, what is meant by “<i>regularly attends</i>”? (3) Funding – This needs to be considered against existing individual Branch (Br) assets, to negate underwriting savings within Branches from Charity funds! This would be particularly important as attention shifts to a single AMS Corps. (4) Study of Facebook (FB) members – This follows in light of the recent Forces News article of 14 Aug 23 (Posted on the RAMC Website News) where the GSM of London District (Vern Stokes) warned young veterans to use their Associations or run the risk of losing them. The Chair proffered the possibility to run a survey asking FB members what they wanted from their Association (Para 7b(2) Below). 	<p>Chair</p>

<p>(5) Association Website – The Chair stated that this had greatly improved.</p> <p>(6) Bespoke email addresses for Regional Representatives (Reg Reps) – The Chair asked that this be jointly raised under additional items (Para 8 below).</p> <p>b. In the absence of any other observations from the forum, the Nat Sec, raised the following two areas from the previous minutes:</p> <p>(1) Para 11c – This was being effected ahead of the rules re-write.</p> <p>(2) Para 14a(c) – These had been designed, produced and issued to all Branches (Brs).</p> <p>c. With no dissention, the previous minutes were approved.</p>	
<p>3. Financial Matters</p> <p>a. The Chair reminded the forum that the new “Guidance on Funding” had been issued as it was felt necessary to issue out this particular Annex to the Rules quickly, as the process in existence seemed to be adhered to mainly by ignoring it! Further, when it is issued as part of the complete rewrite of the Rules, it will equally be open to comment by all, before being ratified / endorsed by the Charity.</p> <p>b. The Chair stressed, again, that wherever our future funding may come from it must be able to withstand scrutiny and clearly demonstrate that we are fiscally responsible. He made the point that a balance needs to be struck between funding from the Charity and existing financial assets in Brs.</p> <p>c. The Chair stated that despite views to the contrary having been expressed, the Association Brs hold very little power over the Charity as voting members of the Company. He reminded the forum that the Charity encompasses more than the Association i.e., Benevolence, which has more than three times the annual funding than the Association receives and that through the Nat Chair, as a Trustee, has one vote. Unlike a limited company with shareholders, Charities are bound by the Charities Commission and the related laws.</p> <p>d. Finally, the Chair stated that it was his intention to bid for funding for 2024 based on this year’s allocated funding moderated by this year’s actual expenditure. To that, he would add any specific needs forecasted by Branches for special events, whilst these would need to be forecasted with at least some degree of accuracy to allow him to do so. This would include any Association sponsored events such as the proposed Battlefield Tour in autumn 2024 (Para 14a below). The Chair then opened the agenda item to the forum:</p> <p>(1) MP stated that he “respectfully” disagreed with the premiss that the Brs have very little power over the Charity. He stated he was the only Trustee (as Rep Col Comdt - therefore Managing Trustee) involved with the Solicitor and Barrister, along with Sarah Parry, who was employed by the Charity, as his supporting PoC and acted as "Company Secretary" when the votes to amend the Memorandum and Articles (separate documents in law though conjoined and the constitution) of the Association of the RAMC Charity were required. At all times the Col's Commandant were updated regularly and the Trustees at their Biannual meetings. The Chair said that he would look into this matter.</p> <p><i>(Chair Afternote: The Brs do indeed have the constitutional right to vote on any proposals by the Charity which are seen to affect the Association directly. This is embodied in the said Memorandum and Articles.)</i></p>	<p>Chair</p>

<p>4. Report from the Secretary</p> <p>a. The Nat Sec reported the following:</p> <p>(1) Branches – That the Association currently has 28 Brs with seven either having viability issues or were due to close.</p> <p>(2) Recruitment (Membership) – That since the last Exc Cttee Mtg:</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">(a) 68 new online applications had been made.</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">(b) 16 members had been realigned to a new Br.</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">(c) 21 new veterans had been contacted, post discharge, with a view to them either joining the Association or aligning to a Br.</p> <p>(3) Online Application Process – After some six months of work, it was now fully under the control of the Nat Sec along with a new PayPal and Bank account. Further, a new functionality had been added, allowing extant online members the ability to order a replacement Photo Membership Card, if lost, stolen or damaged.</p> <p>(4) Br Membership Reviews (Scrubs) – That a number of Brs have had their membership data “scrubbed” against both centrally held databases, with Manchester being the latest. This allows both the Br and the Centre to update their records and allow Brs to get a “ground truth” of their membership.</p> <p>(5) New Rules – This was already raised by the Chair but would also include a review of “Quorums” (Para 12a below).</p> <p>(6) New Funding Guidance – This had been issued in Aug 23 and placed on the Association Website, including a “quick link”.</p> <p>(7) Association Website – Several updated and improvements had been made, as previously championed by the Chair (Para 2a(5) above). He advocated the use of the new Pan-UK Association Events Calendar by submitting events to him for posting.</p> <p>(8) Website Contacts – That since the last Exc Cttee Mtg some 54 various Contacts had been made to the site which is a vast improvement in Association / Corps communications as previously the link was not routed to the Nat Sec and thus was not being responded to.</p> <p>(9) Tenure Periods – That along with other data capture this year, he was currently seeking the tenure periods of the Reg Reps, Br Chairs and Standard Bearers (SB).</p>	<p>All Brs</p> <p>Nat Sec</p>
<p>5. Report from Regional Representatives (Reg Reps)</p> <p>a. The Nat Sec ran through the reports from all Reg Reps in the following order:</p> <p>(1) Wales and SW England – A verbal update was given by MP which is enclosed to these minutes.</p> <p>(2) South & SE England – A verbal update was given by PS which is enclosed to these minutes.</p> <p>(3) Scotland – A report was provided after the mtg and in enclosed to these minutes..</p>	

<p>(4) NI & NW England – A verbal update was given by RP which is enclosed to these minutes.</p> <p>(5) NE England & Yorkshire – Nil.</p> <p>(6) Midlands – Due to IT sound issues, the Nat Sec gave the verbal update which is enclosed to these minutes.</p> <p>(7) London & East Anglia – A verbal update was given by IH which is enclosed to these minutes.</p>	
<p>6. Report from the Senior Standard Bearer (SSB)</p> <p>a. A verbal update was given by the SSB which is enclosed to these minutes, after which:</p> <p>(1) The Chair sought clarity from the SSB that the summary of expenses for SBs he had submitted had already been paid. The SSB confirmed that this was the case.</p>	JW
<p>7. Communication</p> <p>a. The Nat Sec opened this item to the forum.</p> <p>b. The Chair started by covering the following:</p> <p>(1) Website improvements, which had already been covered (Paras 2a(5) & 4a(7) above).</p> <p>(2) The need and possibility of a study into the wishes of those on Social Media (SM) pages asking what changes they would like to see to encourage them to join the official Association and indeed, their reasons why they don't join (Para 2a(4) above). IR agreed this would be simple enough to arrange but warned that whilst most on the RAMC FB would provide suitable and constructive feedback, this could not be guaranteed from other SM sites where some individuals hold egregious or unsavoury views on such matters. A simple "SurveyMonkey®" questionnaire could be formulated and thus distributed.</p> <p>(3) IH said that there had been a noticeable improvement in communications since the current NatSec took post.</p>	IR
<p><i>Additional (Tabled / Proposed Items) – In Italics</i></p>	
<p><i>Note: The text below has been taken in part from the Chair's speaking notes, as there were problems with the Zoom connection. They are included for completeness.</i></p>	
<p>8. <i>Bespoke Email Addresses (Both for Reg Reps and Branch Officers) – Raised by the East Kent Chair at the last AGM.</i></p> <p>a. <i>The Chair started by covering the Reg Reps and asked how much volume of email traffic did they have in relation to their current positions and thus would a bespoke email address enhance their effectiveness in any way. Further, he asked, how it would ensure that their end of tenure was co-ordinated with the transfer of their email account to ensure they were no longer involved and lastly, he asked, if it would be a reasonable charge against the Association.</i></p> <p>b. <i>The Chair then covered Br Officers, where he asked the same questions as for Reg Reps but with the addition of how bespoke emails addresses would benefit</i></p>	

<p>their Brs and how this would justify central funding. He stated there was nothing stopping Brs doing this on their own if they consider it useful.</p> <p>c. Lastly, the Chair said his own past experience of specific domains, was not a happy one, with multiple passwords, failure of previous individuals to relinquish and the need to actually open the specific account all of which potentially contributed to lowering, rather than raising, efficiency. The matter was then open to the floor.</p> <p>d. Initially IR raised the issue of and principal of General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) and the Data Protection Act 2018 (DPA 2018), in that the Association would be leaving itself open to challenge if data and specifically, personal and sensitive welfare data was not conveyed in-line with the said policies. An open forum conversation followed where consensus was initially split however when asked individually, the majority of the forum were swayed by the case put by IR that it would be prudent and appropriate for bespoke email addresses to be sought and provided. In light of the consensus, the Chair agreed to take the matter forward and out of Cttee ensuring that Reg Reps and Brs were appropriately informed.</p>	<p>Chair / Nat Sec</p>
<p>9. Expenses for Br Chairs to attend the AGM – Raised by the East Kent Chair at the last AGM.</p> <p>a. Ahead of discussing this request, the Chair made the point that the extant Rules specify that Br Chairs are to attend the AGM and that this requirement would not be altered in the rewrite. As such, the Chair stated that the Association needed to ensure that nothing gets in the way of Chairs complying with this Rule. Thus, as this is a central requirement of the Association, it should also be a central financial responsibility. The Chair further stated, that if this wasn't the case then potentially, all Brs would do is add such costs to a funding bid! Lastly, he said Travel and Subsistence (T&S) allowance should be in place to ensure that any personal lack of funds would not stop Br Chairs from attending this essential event.</p> <p>b. A wider forum discussion followed where the majority of the Cttee accepted the suggested change. For some the change was a positive surprise (MP) whilst for others (PS) caution was erred in that caveats and a wider definition of what would be deemed "reasonable" costs. This latter observation was also endorsed by the Cttee in that "Reasonable T&S would be available, if required, for Br Chairs, or in their absence a Br Representative, to attend the Association AGM". (Afternote: This change would be incorporated into the rules rewrite)</p>	<p>Chair / Nat Sec</p>
<p>10. Clarification of the Revised Per Head Grants Change – Raised by the Shropshire Chair at the last AGM.</p> <p>a. The Chair was unsure as to the clarification sought but asked if this was meant to be asking "what is an active member?". The Nat Sec stated that despite this being raised at the AGM, the subsequent minutes provided further clarity in an afternote under Para 9a(2) in that, going forward in 2024 Brs could submit Funding Grant Requests at any time and now in-line with the revised Funding Guidance. No further comment came from the Cttee.</p>	
<p>11. The Possibility of Overseas Branches – Raised by the FB Page Manager after addressing a request from Australia.</p> <p>a. The Chair stated that this subject had come about from a conversation between the Nat Sec and some RAMC veterans in Australia. The Chair had no difficulty with the concept, but the Association and Cttee would need to bear in mind two points. First, the Cyprus Br seems to have collapsed. Cyprus is a relatively small island, where get-togethers would have been fairly simple. Second, how would a Br in Australia engineer face to face gatherings? As such, would the Association need to make special arrangements for overseas Brs in relation to how</p>	

<p>they do (or do not) conform with Association Rules? The Chair said he would be less than happy, and he suspected the Cttee too, for the Br Chair from Sydney to be granted T&S to attend the AGM, as an example.</p> <p>b. It was indeed IR who held the initial conversation with Australia and he then stated that not facilitating such a desire, despite the geographical distance, would fall foul of an EQuality Impact Assessment (EQIA). Indeed, he felt that it would send the wrong message if this aspiration was denied, and when asked, he said it was not uncommon amongst other Cap-Badges to have such distant Brs. In the absence of an agreed direction from the Cttee, the Chair then agreed to add this possibility into the rules re-write.</p>	<p>Chair</p>
<p>12. The Endorsement to Close the Maidstone Br and thereafter the Request to Change the name of the East Kent Br to the Kent Br – Raised by Maidstone Br Chair (former) and East Kent Chair (latter).</p> <p>a. The Chair started by saying these two propositions presented a slightly complex problem. He stated that the proposal is that the Cttee endorse the closure of the Maidstone Br and agree the re-titling of the East Kent Br to Kent Br, thereby absorbing the rump from Maidstone. However, since the requests made, a delay has been requested, by the East Kent Br Chair, to ensure all the correct procedures (a review of current Quorum formulae) have taken place (N.B. The East Kent Report at the enclosure refers). The Chair proposed that the Cttee endorse both change requests, subject to and pending the procedural niceties being carried out. This would allow the Cttee the ability to amend / repeal this decision, if necessary due to any changes, which could be done out of Cttee by a round robin email. With no dissention, the proposal was endorsed by the Cttee.</p> <p>b. As the SSB, JW asked if he could then proceed and arrange for a new “Kent” Standard, with the name change. (Afternote. This can only be undertaken once Maidstone endorse its closure after the procedures and niceties have taken place).</p>	<p>Chair</p> <p>JW</p>
<p>14. Forthcoming Events</p> <p>a. The Chair asked PS to lead, ahead of the forthcoming events, and give a brief outline on the proposed Battlefield Tour for 2024, of which he stated:</p> <p>(1) It would be a five-day tour starting on Mon 2 Sep 24 from the Union Jack Club in London. Two days would be travelling with the other three days on the ground.</p> <p>(2) That to mitigate costs, time and a lengthy road trip on the French side, a day Ferry would be taken from Portsmouth to France rather than from Dover.</p> <p>(3) Along with our own guides, Brig Alistair MacMillan, and Pete Starling, the aspiration would be to include museum Staff and some serving personnel.</p> <p>(4) That it would be facilitated by using a Tour operator i.e., Ledger, whilst using our own expert guides to save costs. However, PS stated, that having done the recce earlier this year and acting as a guide, a separate administrator would be required to pull the whole event together.</p> <p>(5) The cost of the event would be self-funded by attendees whilst he was hopeful that the Association would be able to offset some of the costs along with Brs from which attendees would participate. The Chair was supportive of a central grant, from allocated Association Funds, to offset the overall cost along with the potential for Brs to assist their own members who wish to attend.</p>	

<p>(6) That whilst there was no specific limit of attendees, the general rule is to try and fill either a 40 or 50-seater coach.</p> <p>(7) It was generally accepted that ahead of any commitments, that costings would need to be sought which could then be put to the Brs to ascertain the level of interest. MP agreed to take on the sourcing of the costings only but not act as the overall administrator.</p> <p>b. The Nat Sec then provided the following primary dates and events that were on his radar:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (1) 23 Oct – Funeral of the Late Maj Gen Jack Coull. (2) 30 / 31 Oct – Expected issue of Cenotaph E-Tickets and Joining Instructions (JIs) by The Royal British Legion (TRBL). (3) 9 Nov – Fd of Remembrance. (4) 12 Nov – Cenotaph Parade and Westminster Abbey Church Svc. (5) 27 Nov – Laying-Up of the Cowal & Highlands Br Standard. (6) 1 Dec – Christmas Function – Northumbria Br. (7) 2 Dec – Turning of the Pages (TOP) Ceremony. (8) 15 Dec – Christmas Function – Shropshire Br. (9) 15-22 Dec – Nat Sec on Lve. (10) 16 Dec – Christmas Function – East Midlands Br. (11) 21 Mar 24 – Exc Cttee Mtg. (12) 23 Jun 24 – Corps Day & Association AGM (NMA). <p>c. In the spirit of listing certain funerals, IR highlighted the notification, to the Association earlier in the day, of the recent loss of Alec Hall, a RAMC veteran of 181 Airlanding Fd Amb who died aged 102 years old and was believed to be the last medic standing from the battle of Arnhem (Op MARKET GARDEN). IR then talked more widely on his belief that the communication of such notifications between the Association (Nat Sec) and FB posts had greatly improved and was mindful of the process to formally engage. IH stated that he had seen the very FB post and was keen to assist but many on FB were unsighted or aware of the process and asked how this would be communicated. The Nat Sec stated that IH and many others like him, should direct individuals to the RAMC Association Website and specifically the Contacts facility. Further, the Nat Sec took the opportunity to make it clear that whilst many deceased notifications are posted widely on FB, until the immediate family engages with the Corps and requests our involvement, then it rests squarely with the family and that at all times we must respect the wishes or otherwise of the family.</p> <p><i>Afternote: On occasions, families elect to not have the presence of the Corps at their funerals, and as such this must be respected.</i></p> <p>d. The Regimental Sec RAMC (ME) stated that as far as she was concerned and despite potential changes ahead, 2023 was not the last year of the RAMC and that the RHQ RAMC would still be planning RAMC events in 2024 including a full “Blue Book” programme.</p>	<p>MP</p>
---	-----------

<p>15. Open Forum</p> <p>a. The Nat Sec offered the floor to the forum and the following responses were given:</p> <p>(1) IR raised the potential opportunity that an invitation be extended to the Association, from a RAMC Yeoman Warder, to attend the “Ceremony of the Keys” at the Tower of London. Up to 50 would be invited of which 30 places would be extended to the Association. After the ceremony, there would also be chance to visit the Yeoman Warders Tavern. He said he would gather further bespoke information and once details are known, would engage with the Nat Sec. (Afternote: The Ceremony takes place daily from 2130 – 2205 hours with a planned date of 4 Jul 24)</p> <p>(2) The SSB, JW requested that the RSM, JL arrange and facilitate a Standard Bearers (SB) training day, which he agreed to do.</p>	<p>IR</p> <p>JL</p>
<p>16. Closing Remarks</p> <p>a. The Chair closed the meeting by thanking the forum for their support of the Association over the past year, indeed for many years. He said he was aware that some on the Exc Cttee would be standing down after the meeting, and urged them to try to identify their own successors, as there was still much to be done. He reiterated that as soon as he was permitted, he would let the forum know what the future of the AMS would look like, including its name, any agreements on uniform, and so forth. Lastly, he would be taking up the challenge of re-establishing our interface with the reorganised and renamed AMS Units, Regular and Reserve and hoped to complete the rewrite of the Rules soonest, and that its draft, when complete, would invite critical but constructive comments from the Cttee.</p>	
<p>17. Date of Next Meeting (DONM)</p> <p>a. The Nat Sec sought consensus and agreement to a date and time from the forum. After proffering a date and a brief discussion it was agreed that the next Exc Cttee Mtg would take place on Thu 21 Mar 24 at 1800 hours via ZOOM.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">The Meeting Closed at 2050 hours</p>	<p>Exc Cttee</p>

J A'Lee
Lt Col (Retd)
National Secretary RAMC Association

Enclosures: Regional Representatives and Senior Standard Bearer Reports.

Regional Representatives and Senior Standard Bearer Reports.

Region	Branch	Report
Wales and SW England		When I shared my proposed draft with my Branches asking for comment I was going to report that nothing much had changed, but in the last few days things have. However, on a balanced scorecard over the period I'd say that in performance terms:
	S Wales Br	Grade Green , meeting all the markers for a successful Branch. However, the very recent resignation of their Chair, and the issues behind it, now require the remaining officers to take urgent action to restore balance. I stand ready to assist in any way I can.
	SW Region Br	Yellow (being nearly green but doing a few less things).
	Bristol Br	Amber fighting hard but in the arena of a small band of determined men (and all other genders naturally).
	Wessex Br	Red . At some time, someone will have to make the decision to lower the colours. By my understanding, under articles 8 and 10 of the Articles of Association of the RAMC Charity this rests with the Trustees of the Charity, unless the Branch indicates that it cannot go on and applies to be dissolved. In a recent exchange with the National Secretary the Branch Secretary suggested that he would continue in role until later in the year and then seek new officers to take the Branch on, or have the current officers (mainly him) accept that it is no longer possible to regard this geographically spread entity as a Branch. As a Region and an Association we would then need to consider how we serve members in this geographical void.
<p>A burning issue, within my Region and from "Icom Chatter" more widely, is funding to support Branch activities in support of the charity and Association's aims. My own view, not dissented by my Branches, is that Branches should rank equally with gaining serving personnel (Regular and Reserve) involvement as the front line of our efforts to meet the Charity's Objects, particularly 3.1.1 and 3.1.2, and should be funded accordingly.</p> <p>In this vein a specific but wide-ranging concern has reference to Association Rule 23 (amplified by the Nat Sec's email of 1658hrs on 2 Jun 23) concerning attendance at the AGM. I suggest that to meet this democratic requirement T&S for these representatives should be funded, or at least that funding be offered, by the Charity. In terms of central funding of attendance, I feel that I must declare my previous experience as Representative Colonel Commandant and thus President of the Association where my costs were covered. This consisted of centrally provided B+B but I do recall that on one of the two occasions an evening meal was provided by the Regimental Secretary's Credit Card. However, I believe that the largesse at that time extended to several others and it might be reassuring or even disarming for Branches to know who was actually centrally funded this year. As an aside, on all other occasions whilst a Colonel Commandant I paid my own way.</p> <p>Given the disquiet over funding out in the shires it is perhaps fortunate for the <i>Status Quo</i> that Branches are a disparate bunch who do not realise the power they hold over the Charity as the voting members of the company</p> <p>Finally, I have already informed the National Secretary and my Branches that I will not stand for re-election as Regional Representative when my tenure is up in June 24. This has nothing to do with representing my Branches or their Members, but reflects my concern about the current futility of the role, and indeed the Executive Committee, in terms of the management of the Association.</p> <p><i>Mark Pemberton</i></p>		

South & SE England	Aldershot Br	<p>Since the last report the branch has had five new members join and these have all been contacted and welcomed by the Chairman. This resulted in the branch having an active membership of 28.</p> <p>Members of the branch attended the funeral of Phylis Prior, the widow of a previous standard bearer. I also attended the funeral of Brigadier Peter Brasher.</p> <p>Our Standard Bearer has been representing the Association at funerals out of area as well as in our own area.</p> <p>The branch has enjoyed lunches at various locations and our next lunch and Annual General Meeting will be held in Bracknell on 31 October 2023. At the lunch the Museum Director will join us and update the branch on the future of the museum.</p>
	East Kent Br	<p>Membership</p> <p>East Kent has managed to attract 9 new members over the past 12 months and now have 20 'active' members (subs paid).</p> <p>Branch AGM</p> <p>Held on 30 Sep 23 with 13 members in attendance and 7 apologies received. Two significant matters were discussed, and resolutions passed:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Branch Title <p>The Executive Committee has been requested to approve re-designation of the Branch 'East Kent' to 'Kent'. This will be predicated on the closure of Maidstone and will allow County-wide recruitment.</p> Regional Representative <p>The Executive Committee has been requested to appoint Chair East Kent as Regional Representative for South and Southeast, subject to the views of Aldershot Branch.</p> <p>Chair East Kent has requested consideration for fixed terms for Regional Representatives / Branch Chairs.</p> <p>Association Rules in Relation to Quorum</p> <p>The Branch has a review of what constitutes a quorum threshold. Current rules are either 10% of the active Membership or twelve, whichever is the greater. For East Kent 12 members would represent 60% of membership. The Association Chair has acknowledged this as a valid observation.</p>
	Maidstone Br	<p>Closure of Maidstone</p> <p>Chair East Kent has requested that the Executive Committee defer any decision on the closure of Maidstone Branch until after the review of quorums thresholds is completed.</p>
Scotland	Aberdeen Br	Will most probable close and is already non-viable.
	Central Scotland Br	Have recruited some new members from both Argyll and Edinburgh branches and new members from RHQ. Have had out outing so far this

		<p>year one to Cullybragen camp and the other to the Scottish Military Museum and will look to undertake a 3 event before Christmas leave. Have touched base with the QA and Dental Corps Association with a view to having a social event next year, so far, the QA Association have replied and would do a joint event. TBC</p> <p>Several of the branch members will be attending Armistice Day services across our area.</p> <p>Continue to look at ways to recruit members.</p>
	Cowal & Highlands Br (CLOSED)	<p>There branch Standard Will be laid up on the 26th November 2023 10:30 am. In St Johns Kirk Hanover Street Dunoon. It is a short ceremony only lasting for 5 to 10 minutes. Once the standard is Layed Up it can never be used again and will remain in the church forever more.</p>
	Dundee & Tayside Br	<p>Viable, just (Defence changes and amalgamations could challenge Dundee if it loses its RLS).</p>
	Edinburgh Br	<p>All but closed (Awaiting Closure Documentation).</p>
NI & NW England	Manchester Br	<p>In July, the Branch held a successful Committee Meeting in a restaurant near Manchester. Also present, by invitation, were a former Commanding Officer of 207 General Hospital and two Ordinary Branch Members. The future of the Branch was discussed but no firm conclusions reached.</p> <p>I note that you appear to be requiring an update on activities since October so can confirm that the Committee meeting in April took place and the future of the Branch was discussed but no firm outcome. Only other activities were attendance at funerals, cards to older Members & widows at Christmas also arrangements to scrutinize, and amend as appropriate, the Branch Nominal Roll – this work is ongoing.</p> <p>On a personal note may I first express appreciation of the attempts, by the National Secretary, to boost Branch numbers. The development of an Association Sympathy card was also much appreciated.</p> <p>As can be seen from the above, the Branch continues in its semi dormant state with the main activities being of a welfare nature therefore it would seem appropriate to enquire whether further consideration has been given to arranging a Welfare Officer course.</p>
	Merseyside Br	<p>No Report</p>
	Ulster Br	<p>The Association AGM took place on the 28th April 2023 in the splendid surroundings of the Ulster Reform Club in Belfast, followed by an excellent dinner with over 60 members in attendance. We have an impressive program of activities developed for this year with plans for a Battlefield Study to Gallipoli next year.</p> <p>The Branch would like to acknowledge with grateful thanks the contribution of the RHQ and National Secretary. It is greatly appreciated and we are relevant, stronger and better thanks to your ongoing involvement and support.</p>
NE England & Yorkshire	Grimsby Br	<p>No Report</p>
	Northumberland Br	<p>No Report</p>
	Sheffield Br	<p>No Report</p>
	Durham Br	<p>No Report</p>

Midlands	East Midlands Br	<p>The East Midlands branch has at 1st October 83 members. Next year 2024 will indicate how many losses or gains we will attain.</p> <p>Eighteen branch members attended the Corps service and march past at the NMA on corps day 23 June 2023.</p> <p>As all branches suffer with age and frailty our branch is no exception and recruiting are an ongoing process.</p> <p>The current branch committee were elected to serve for the next 12 months. Branch subscriptions are to remain at £10 for all members.</p> <p>Our branch Facebook page is running smoothly and is policed by our vice chairman. It has become a focal point for recruitment although this has reduced lately.</p> <p>Our semi-annual formal dinner evenings are well attended and the introduction of this being a Tri service event has become very popular with RNR and RAFR in attendance.</p> <p>The branch attends all County, City and Diocese events as well as all RAMC taskings. Five members will attend the DeMontfort Hall service of Remembrance, and the secretary will lay a wreath at the indoor cenotaph at this event.</p> <p>Approx 20 members will attend the Remembrance Sunday service at the Leicester Cenotaph at Victoria Park on the 12 November 2023. The chairman will lay a wreath on behalf of the RAMC.</p> <p>The branch Christmas function will be held at the Leicestershire Senior Services Club on Saturday 16 December 2023. A buffet meal will be served during the evening. A Christmas raffle will take place. Entertainment has been secured and this is FOC to all members and their guests.</p> <p>KJ Roberts Secretary</p>
	Shropshire	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Shropshire Branch continues to attract new members. As at the 30 September 'active' Branch membership stands at 65. A further 11 non-active past RAMC members who live in the county of Shropshire receive quarterly Branch Newsletters and regular updates via the Branch Facebook site from our Branch Welfare Officer who is the Shropshire Council Armed Forces Covenant Outreach Support Coordinator. 2. The current branch committee were re-elected for another 12-month tenure at the Branch AGM on the 20 June 2023. It was decided unanimously to retain the Annual Branch membership fee at £5.00 for both Full and Associate Branch members. 3. A number (12) Branch members attended Corps Day at the NMA on the 23 June 2023 and participated in the march past, a number of old friendships and acquaintances were strengthened. 4. The traditional pause in Branch social activity during July / August as members are away on holiday was observed. A Branch social function took place on the 1 October at a very 'well-known to the military' Public House at Nesscliffe namely The Old Three Pigeons where over 20 branch members attended a great Branch subsidised Sunday lunch.

		<p>5. A total of 4 Branch members will travel to London to participate in the National Remembrance service and march past the cenotaph as part of the RAMC contingent on Remembrance Sunday. A RAMC wreath will be laid by Maj (Retd) Ray Pullen a long-standing Branch member at Shrewsbury (Shropshire's County town) Remembrance service / parade on the same day.</p> <p>6. This year's annual Branch Christmas function will again take place at the same venue as last year namely The Corbett Arms at Uffington on the 15 December in the Sabrina Suite, as ever a traditional Christmas Raffle will be held.</p> <p>7. Branch members have been briefed on the revised RAMC Association Financial Guidance and the reconfiguration of the RAMC Association website.</p> <p>8. The Branch committee have produced a A4 Branch Recruitment Poster which has been promulgated and cascaded down the Shropshire Armed Forces Covenant network and various points of contact for Shropshire veterans, we await the impact of this initiative.</p> <p>9. A concerted effort to ensure that ALL Branch members are registered retrospectively on the RAMC Association 'member mojo' data base will be undertaken by the Branch secretary over the next number of months; liaison with the new national secretary is ongoing he will advise accordingly regarding this burdensome administrative task.</p> <p>I am aware post discussions with the national secretary that this is not a unique issue specifically to Shropshire Branch. This has been an ongoing concern raised on many occasions since I have been Branch Chairman over the last 5 years. I am delighted at long last that is area of Association / Branch administration is being actioned.</p> <p>A Branch committee decision has been taken as this is in the main is retrospective action that Branch funds will be used to register current Branch on the member mojo data base. All future new Branch member applications WEF 01 Oct 23 will be directed by the Branch Secretary and Treasurer to the RAMC Association web page, which in turn will be dealt with by the RAMC Association national secretary.</p> <p>10. As Branch Chairman my and the committee's focus in 2024 will be to improve our Branch relationship with our local medical unit namely 202 (Midlands) Multi-Role Medical Regiment based in Birmingham. This has been attempted in the past with little success, however, under the guise of 'if at first you do not succeed try again' the aim is to forge a relationship in the hope it may attract younger Branch members so as to help ensure the longevity of the Branch.</p> <p>D A JONES Lt Col (Retd) Branch Chairman</p>
	Birmingham Br	No Report
	Coventry Br	No Report
	North Midlands Br	No Report

London & East Anglia	I took over as Rep from David Hulme after the last AGM in June. I have three branches under my remit: London, Essex and North Cambridgeshire & South Lincolnshire.	
	Norfolk Br (CLOSED)	The Norfolk Branch closed as I took over as Regional Representative and at this time I am awaiting a decision from the Procedural Committee of Norwich Cathedral as to the laying-up of the Norfolk Standard.
	London Br	The London Branch is in a state of uncertainty as they lost their secretary and Terry Pain has been unwell. The known membership of the Branch is very low and Terry has proposed that it should be closed. The National Secretary and I have been in contact with Terry on this matter and we are trying to save the branch if we can.
	North Cambridgeshire & South Lincolnshire Br	The North Cambridgeshire and South Lincolnshire Branch is also struggling and is trying to encourage membership. At this time it is undecided what will happen to it.
	Essex Br	Essex Branch is growing slowly with 4 new members transferring in from the Norfolk Branch and some new blood from newly discharged member. The Branch attended Temple at War at Cressing Temple Barns, a military show in Essex, and the Suffolk Military Show in Ipswich. Both shows were well attended by the public and many conversations and connections were had with retired Corps personnel, not only from this region but from further afield.
	I look forward to more engagement with the Branches as I move forward in this role. Ian Hooper	
SSB	<p>First of all, I would like to thanks all the Standard Bearers and Deputy Standard Bearers for what they have done over the last year, to keep the flag flying for the Association and I am sure I also speak for all the members of the National Executive. I have had quite a few reports and a lot of them have been quite busy with local parades.</p> <p>During 2022 we lost William Deeney Branch Standard Bearer for Cowal in Scotland, This year we also John Chater Standard Bearer East Midlands Branch, both have been carrying for many years, we have also lost Colin Cleverly-Parker who carried the Birmingham Standard for many years until he had to give up due to ill health RIP to all three of them. The following have decided to retire, the two Standard Bearers from Norfolk Branch Ralph Girling and Jack Lummis who have both carried for many years and they were always available if I had a spare Standard I needed carrying. Fred Nock from Wessex Branch has also decided to call it a day, who beside carrying his Branch Standard for many years was also my predecessor as Senior Standard Bearer but gave it up as he preferred to carry a Standard, last but not least Terry Smart from Maidstone who has also been with us for many years. They have all decided as they are all over 80 that they will retire. Fred, Terry, Ralph and Jack thanks for all the years you have put in and good luck in retirement I have appreciated your help over the years.</p> <p>We had a few new Standard Bearers over the year some Ian Hooper and Darren Patterson from Essex is back with us, William Duffy and Andy Geelan Central Scotland (Formally Glasgow Branch) their Standard was dedicated at the Arboretum in June. Gerald Dixon from Birmingham Branch first time for many years we have had a Standard Bearer for Birmingham, Michael Fox Deputy at Durham, Steven Francis Merseyside, Tim Wharton South West England. Welcome to you all and thanks for taking on the role.</p> <p>I have recently spoken to Bristol Branch about their Standard Bearer David Howell he is making progress after his fall and broken femur he is still having District Nurses to change his dressing he is starting to get out and about we all wish him well.</p>	

We only have one Branch that does not have Standard Bearers that is Coventry. And some of our other Standard Bearers are of a good age we need younger branch members to step up and help out. But some Branches tell me that they only have older members in the Branch.

I have replaced quite a bit of equipment this year and also the new Standard Bearers have all had new uniforms to hopefully match those that had them a few years ago. I have told them If any replacement any of your equipment is required, please contact me in the first instance I will need details of what is required with photos for me to look at I always check their equipment when we meet at the Arboretum.

We have attended all the Turning of the Pages that have taken place. There are some Standard Bearers that enjoy doing it and get their bid in quite quick it would be nice if other Branches submitted. We have attended many funerals over the past years especially the beginning of this year. Earlier this year we had a request for a Standard Bearer to attend a reburial of a WWI soldier who was a stretcher Bearer in the RAMC this was held in Belgium and Alex Young from East Midlands undertook this role. I would like to thank them all for undertaking any of these duties.

I would like to thank Marie Ellis Col Millar and the National Executive for all their support again this last year

John R Wall
Senior Standard Bearer