



ROYAL AIR FORCE OFFICERS' CLUB

Johannesburg

P.O. Box 69726

BRYANSTON 2021

info@rafoc.org

www.rafoc.org

| | | |
|-------------------|---------------------------|--|
| President: | David MacKinnon-Little | |
| Vice Presidents: | Basil Hersov, Geoff Quick | |
| Chairman: | Bruce Harrison | bruce@jbharrison.co.za |
| | | Cell: 083 325 0025 |
| Vice Chairman: | Jon Adams | bookings@rafoc.org |
| | | Cell: 082 450 0616 |
| Hon. Secretary: | Colin Ackroyd | Cell: 082 800 5845 |
| Hon. Treasurer: | Jeff Earle | Cell: 083 652 1002 |
| Committee Member: | Geoff Fish | Cell: 083 660 9697 |
| | Russell Swanborough | |
| Web Master: | Hanke Fourie | Cell: 082 553 0210 |
| Almoner: | Rob Tannahill | Cell: 082 806 6779 |
| Bank Account: | Nedbank - Melrose Arch | Br: 19 66 05 Account 19 66 278 063 |

RAFOC REMINISCENCES AND RAMBLINGS - WEEK 268 15th AUGUST 2025

GREETINGS:

Spat with US ramps up (this is going to cost us...)... while CSANDF visits Iran (Oh Dear...even DIRCO distanced SA from his "reckless political utterances")... National Convention now a major National Squabble - Legacy Foundations withdraw... "Failed state" warning for South Africa... G20 spotlight (carefully) misses Joburg's neglected neighbourhoods... South African-Born Professor Makes History as UK's First Female Astronomer Royal... South Africans kiss DStv goodbye... Fikile Mbalula's strange claim about Eskom... Spot the difference: From Botha to Mbalula, same script, different stage... "Ghosts and prisoners claim overtime:" Free State worst-run province in South Africa... R200m cocaine theft from KZN Hawks office may tie SAPS to global drug traffickers... Gupta Saxonwold Compound properties auctioned for R34 million... De Beers discover first Kimberlite field in 30 years in Angola...

'If we had wanted to commit genocide, it would have taken exactly one afternoon' (Netanyahu)... Putin to meet Trump in Alaska this week... Ukraine will not cede land that could be Russian springboard for new war, Zelenskyy says... Russian casualties in Ukraine reach another grim new milestone – 1 million... North Koreans 'worked like slaves' to make up for Russian losses in Ukraine... Putin embarrassed as new Russian navy ship sinks in dockyard... Hackers spark panic in Moscow with fake nuclear alert... Ukrainian forces carry out daring strike behind enemy lines... Russian propaganda machine working overtime (*See end of Ramblings*)... "Bunch of Pricks in Whitehall" goes viral...

RED ARROWS OVER BLACKPOOL AND EDINBURGH:



Red Arrows make trails over Edinburgh (RAF pic)

The Red Arrows made a spectacular appearance on both days of this year's Blackpool Air Show and helped Edinburgh's Royal Military Tattoo mark its 75th birthday.

Painting the skies with their trademark red, white and blue vapour trails, the red jets wowed the crowds at both events against the backdrop of two iconic UK landmarks – Edinburgh Castle and Blackpool Tower. The venerated Royal Air Force aerobatic team kicked off their display season in May for VE Day celebrations and have already visited Greece and Spain, with plenty more display dates in the UK and abroad before October (*RAF News*)

ANOTHER ONE BITES THE DUST:



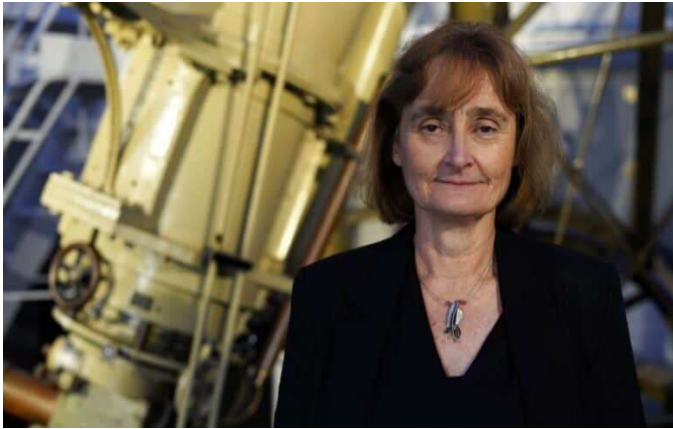
A UK fighter jet has been forced to make an emergency landing in Japan after suffering an engineering issue during a sortie from the Royal Navy's flagship, BFBS Forces News understands. The F-35B Lightning II landed at Kagoshima International Airport, outside of Kirishima, and is undergoing an inspection.

The aircraft is expected to return to the Carrier Strike Group 25 as soon as possible.

The jet's unscheduled arrival prompted a 20- minute closure of the runway at Kagoshima airport. Local media reported that the F-35B was not damaged while making the emergency landing. "The aircraft landed at Kagoshima Airport due to a malfunction," Japan's defence ministry said. CSG25 has been conducting joint exercises with the Japanese and American militaries as the deployment approaches Japan. *(ForcesNews)*

SOUTH AFRICAN FIRST FEMALE ASTRONOMER ROYAL:

Professor Michele Dougherty, University of KwaZulu Natal (UKZN) alumnus, has been newly appointed the Astronomer Royal in the United Kingdom. This is an honorary position advising the British monarch on astronomical subjects. Dougherty has over 35 years of experience that has included taking charge of the magnetometer instruments onboard the Cassini/Huygens mission to Saturn and the Jupiter Icy Moons Explorer of the European Space Agency. Succeeding Lord Martin Rees, who has been in the post for 30 years, Dougherty is the first woman to be appointed to the position since its creation in 1675.



In this honorary role, Dougherty plans to focus on outreach, engaging the public on the wonder of astronomy and science, and its potential to provide real returns for the UK economy.

Born in Johannesburg, Dougherty and her sister were raised in Durban, where their late father, Professor Brian Dougherty, worked in the civil engineering departments at both the University of Natal and University of Durban-Westville, serving as Head of Department at

the latter. *(Natal Witness)*

CHAGOS ISLANDS DECEPTION REVEAED:

Sir Keir Starmer must have thought the headlines about the Chagos Islands had gone away finally. For the past nine months, his reckless deal to give away the islands to Mauritius has become a millstone around his neck, arousing fury among both Left- and Right-wing voters. But The Telegraph has revisited the deal – which involves ceding a British overseas territory and leasing back an airbase – and we have a startling revelation about its cost. In May, when he announced that he had struck an agreement with Mauritius, Sir Keir claimed it would cost £3.4bn over 99 years – a small sum for a country of the UK's spending power. Immediately, there were cries of indignation from the Conservatives, who said the true cost was likely to be north of £30bn. Those estimates were, in turn, disputed by the Foreign Office. However, we can reveal that the Government's own internal figures show that the Tories were correct. A freedom of information request to the Government Actuary's Department shows that the deal was originally costed at £34.7bn – or 10 times the bill announced by Sir Keir. Writing for The Telegraph, Dame Priti Patel last night accused the Prime Minister of lying to Parliament and the public, and of using wily accounting techniques to play down the cost of his "surrender".

The figures show that officials were told to downrate the cost in line with inflation, then again to minimise costs at the end of the 99-year lease. When Parliament returns in three weeks, Dame Priti is set to demand an apology and 'a correction' to the official record. *(Telegraph)*

DRONE DEFENCES:

As Russian first-person view (FPV) drones become increasingly advanced, a Ukrainian firm has developed a new type of 5.56mm Nato-codified cartridge in an effort to give President Zelensky's forces the edge on the battlefield.

The new round is designed to fire five fast-moving pellets rather than a single bullet, creating a larger shotgun-style spread. This means it can effectively hit drones at distances out to 50 metres.



If enough rounds are fired, a soldier can create a net effect in the air to catch and take out incoming drones. It's similar to a shotgun cartridge, which releases a number of pellets that spread out, making fast-flying targets easier to hit.

The idea is that soldiers won't need to carry two weapons with them. They can swap magazines quickly on their primary weapon, depending on whether they are targeting enemy drones or enemy soldiers.

Ukraine's state-funded defence innovation programme, Brave1, has released footage of the ammunition in action. It shows a soldier filling a magazine with black and grey-tipped 5.56mm rounds, before loading it into a CZ Bren 2 assault rifle then firing at a drone on a test range.

RUSSIAN LOSSES:

In June 2025, the Ukrainian General Staff reported in one of its daily updates on Russian losses that Moscow's casualties in Ukraine reached over one million military personnel. The UK Ministry of Defence later assessed the claim and noted that the Russian Armed Forces had likely sustained approximately one million casualties in the ongoing conflict. The importation of North Korean "Slave Labour" underscores the impact of these losses...*(various)*

SA WINE WINS "BEST IN WORLD"

Le Grand Vin de Stellenbosch Cabernet Sauvignon was named best in the world at the 2025 International Wine Challenge.

At the 2025 International Wine Challenge (IWC), one of the most rigorous and respected wine competitions worldwide, Le Grand Domaine in Stellenbosch was awarded both the International

Cabernet Sauvignon Trophy and the South African Cabernet Sauvignon Trophy for its Le Grand Vin de Stellenbosch “La Grande Sélection” Cabernet Sauvignon 2022 vintage.

The wine was placed ahead of international contenders from renowned regions including Bordeaux, Napa and Coonawarra. Judges described it as: “Dense, youthful colour, cassis, blackcurrant, leafy black pepper and bouquet garni. Savoury, graphite lead, dark fruits with tar and mulberries over a tight, restrained, dry, lightly spiced finish.”

“The IWC award is a powerful endorsement of what we’re quietly accomplishing at Le Grand Domaine,” says winemaker Debbie Thompson, who joined the winery in 2020. “This wine speaks of place, patience and the work that happens every day in the vineyard and cellar. It’s a proud moment, not just for us, our team but for the broader South African wine community.”

AL LILLY: FIRST CANADIAN TO BREAK SOUND BARRIER:



On this day in aviation history, 75 years ago (August 9, 1950), Alexander John “Al” Lilly became the first Canadian pilot to break the sound barrier. Born on July 19, 1910, in Moose Jaw, Saskatchewan, Lilly developed a fascination with aviation as a teenager in the late 1920s. He left university to pursue his passion for flying, joining the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) in 1932. While stationed at Meadow Lake, Saskatchewan, he advocated for replacing the RCMP’s traditional dog teams and canoes with aircraft equipped with skis and floats. His efforts paid off, helping to usher in an era where bush planes became a vital tool for the “Mounties.”

After the war, Lilly became a test pilot for the Canadair DC-4M North Star -a variant of the Douglas C-54 Skymaster fitted with Rolls-Royce Merlin engines. This role eventually placed him in the cockpit of a Canadian-built Canadair F-86 Sabre on August 9, 1950. On that historic day at Dorval, Quebec, Lilly took the first Canadian-manufactured Sabrejet into a steep dive, coaxing out the final few kilometers per hour needed to break the sound barrier. The maneuver carried considerable risk in the early jet age, but it succeeded - making Lilly the first Canadian pilot to achieve supersonic flight. He continued his career as a test pilot with Canadair, retiring with 35 years of flying experience. Alexander John Lilly passed away on November 21, 2008, at the age of 98, leaving behind a proud legacy as a trailblazer in Canadian aviation history.

PLOD THE PROSPECTING POLICEMAN:

Johannesburg Metropolitan Police Department (JMPD) has denied that traffic officers are being pushed to collect R7,000 in traffic fines per day. This follows claims from Democratic Alliance (DA)

Gauteng spokesperson for community safety, Michael Sun, who alleged that officers told the party they are under pressure to meet this target. Sun added that the party was told by officers that if they met the daily fine targets, they would be offered overtime payments. This encouraged them to focus on issuing fines rather than on bylaw enforcement, traffic management, and crime prevention. Sun argued that the tactic would shift the focus of policing from public safety to revenue collection.



The DA said it believes this is contributing to increased roadblocks across the city, especially at busy intersections. It said many of these are labelled as “roadside checks” to avoid stricter legal requirements set out in the National Road Traffic Act and SAPS Standing Orders. These requirements include authorisation from a senior officer, proper signage, and adequate warning to motorists.

Sun argued that without these safeguards, such operations are not aimed at improving road safety or traffic flow but at collecting fines from motorists. The DA called on Gauteng Premier Panyaza Lesufi to step in, remove any revenue-based policing targets, and ensure that JMPD officers focus on their core duties. It also submitted questions to Premier Lesufi asking for clarity on the legality of these instructions, the roadblocks, and the use of public resources.

However, following the allegations, the JMPD denied the claims, saying that no quotas are in place. The JMPD emphasised that its primary mission is to maintain safety and order on the city’s roads, rather than to generate revenue. (*BusinessTech*)

LEST WE FORGET:

Last week, 37 years ago at 17h00 the guns fell silent in Southern Angola when on the 8th of August 1988 a ceasefire came into effect effectively ending hostilities between South African Statutory Forces and Angolan Forces and their Allies. Let us remove our headgear, bow our heads, and observe a minute of silence to remember all those that paid the supreme sacrifice in this War.

NEXT LUNCH:

Diarise 12th September doe our next lunch at the Wanderers. We are hoping to have a fly-past for the Battle of Britain remembrance but in these times we cannot confirm. We can confirm the lunch which will be a Ladies occasion.



TAILPIECE:

"As US chicken shipments head to SA, poultry producers fear the worst" (*News 24 headline – the chickens are coming home to roost...*)



'So, we're all agreed, the next presenter of MasterChef should be Prince Andrew'

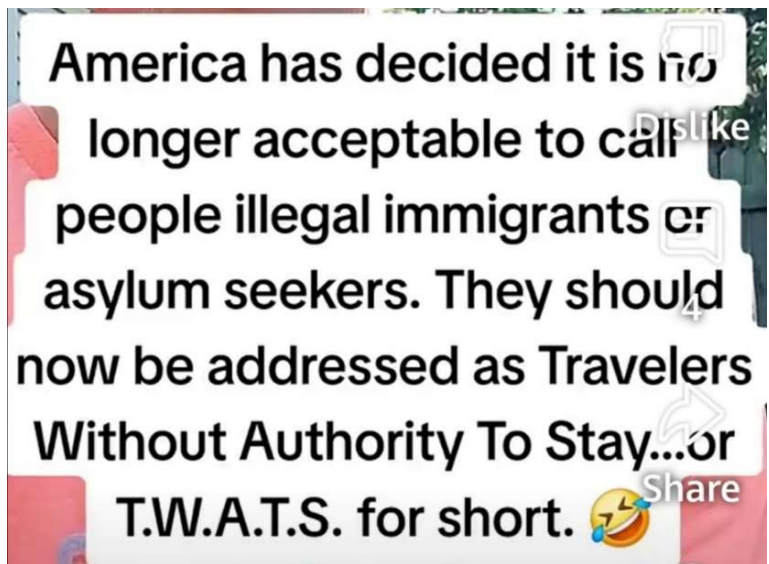


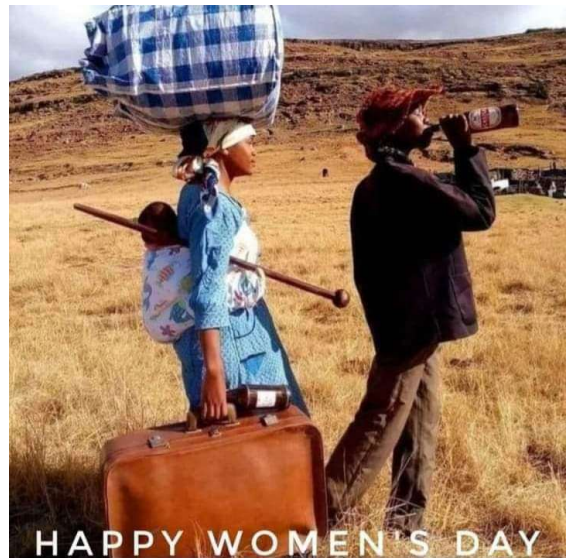
'And I've also invented this very handy finance scheme'

AMERICAN ENGLISH TO BRITISH TRANSLATOR



| | |
|--------------------|------------------|
| TRUCK | LORRY |
| FRIES | CHIPS |
| DIAPER | NAPPY |
| ELEVATOR | LIFT |
| FREE SPEECH | JAIL TIME |





RUSSIAN PROPAGANDA MACHINE AT WORK:

Russian propaganda campaigns aim to promote government narratives, shape public perception, and influence both domestic and international audiences through various media channels and tactics.

Objectives of Russian Propaganda: Russian propaganda serves several key objectives:

- Promote Government Agendas: It seeks to align public opinion with the views and policies of the Russian government, particularly under President Vladimir Putin, who is often portrayed positively in state media.

- Cultivate Nationalism: Propaganda often emphasizes themes of national pride and historical narratives that glorify Russia's past, including the Soviet era, to foster a sense of unity and identity among citizens.
- Discredit Opponents: It aims to undermine the credibility of political opponents and foreign adversaries, often portraying them as threats to national security or stability.

Methods and Channels: Russian propaganda utilizes a variety of methods and channels to disseminate its messages:

- Social Media and Online Platforms: The use of social media, including platforms like Telegram and X (formerly Twitter), allows for rapid dissemination of propaganda and engagement with audiences.
- Disinformation Campaigns: These campaigns often involve the spread of false or misleading information to create confusion and manipulate public perception, particularly during crises or conflicts.
- Countering Western Narratives: Russian officials have frequently criticized Western media for allegedly misrepresenting Russia's actions, claiming that their perspectives are biased and do not reflect the "true" situation.

Recent Examples

- Conflict in Ukraine: Since the onset of the conflict in Ukraine, Russian propaganda has employed narratives such as "denazification" and "demilitarization" to justify military actions. These narratives often dehumanize Ukrainian people and frame the conflict in ideological terms.
- Conclusion: Russian propaganda campaigns are complex and multifaceted, leveraging historical narratives, state-controlled media, and modern communication technologies to influence public opinion. Understanding these campaigns is crucial for recognizing their impact on both domestic and international perceptions of Russia and its policies.

You can see all of the above at work in this Statement from the Russian Ministry of Defense, ahead of the Trump / Putin meeting in Alaska this week:

"The KIEV regime's forces are preparing for a provocative operation coinciding with the Alaska summit between President Vladimir Putin and his American counterpart Donald Trump. On Monday, August 11, a group of foreign journalists was transported to the city of Chuhuiv in Kharkiv by vehicles affiliated with the Ukrainian Security Service under the pretext of 'preparing a series of reports about the city's residents in the frontline area.' The Ukrainian Armed Forces have planned a provocative attack using drones and missiles targeting a densely populated residential area or a hospital housing a large number of civilians, which the Western journalists brought in are supposed to 'document' immediately. As a result of this provocation by the KIEV regime, the Russian Armed Forces will hold full responsibility for the attack and civilian casualties, which aims to create a negative media backdrop and favorable conditions to hinder Russian-American cooperation on issues related to resolving conflicts in Ukraine."

(This appeared on Military YouTube on Wednesday 13 August – sent in by Andrew Muttitt)

ET DONA FERENTEs...

Recently disclosed documents have exposed a proposal by Russian President Vladimir Putin, purporting to be a peace plan with Ukraine during the early stages of the conflict. However, the concealed motives discernible within the details of the proposal have sparked doubts about its true intent towards achieving peace. The treaty was leaked by Systema, a part of Radio Free Europe, a

U.S. government-funded organization that broadcasts news, information and analysis to countries in Eastern Europe, Central Asia and the Middle East, according to HuffPost. Radio Free Europe reports, the agreement was presented by Russian authorities to their Ukrainian counterparts on March 7, 2022, in the town of Belavezha, Belarus. It was then the third round of negotiations between representatives of Moscow and Kyiv, 11 days after Russia launched its invasion of Ukrainian territory. An article on the blog of the American think tank Atlantic Council recalls that Putin has often cited the rejection of the proposal in an attempt to prove that Russia wanted to achieve peace through diplomatic means. However, the article defines the treaty as a “blueprint for the destruction of Ukraine.”

Peter Dickinson, editor of Ukraine Alert, is the author of the piece. He claims that the conditions proposed by the Kremlin in spring 2022 would have left Ukraine " partitioned, disarmed, internationally isolated, and utterly unable to defend itself against further Russian aggression." This is because the treaty imposed very rigid restrictions mainly on Ukraine's military capabilities and the presence of foreign forces in the country, and even called for the cession of separatist territories. For example, Ukraine could not allow the entry or deployment “in any form on its territory, including temporarily, of foreign armed forces and formations, including military personnel, and not allow the creation or maintenance in Ukraine of military bases, warehouses, strongholds and other military facilities.” In terms of territory, Ukraine should recognise the self-proclaimed People's Republics of Donetsk and Lugansk, including areas under Ukrainian control. In addition, the country should bear the costs of rebuilding infrastructure in Donbas that has been damaged since 2014. The treaty also sought to end sanctions against Russian companies and individuals imposed by Ukraine and its allies since 2014. Finally, it also demanded that Russian be established as an official language in Ukraine, that the property of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church be returned to the Moscow Patriarchate, and that the country again allow the use of Soviet and communist symbols related to victory in World War II. (*Daily Digest*)

The phrase *Timeō Danaōs et dōna ferentēs*, paraphrased in English as "I fear the Greeks even when they're bearing gifts" originates from Virgil's *Aeneid* and serves as a warning against trusting enemies, even when they appear to offer something beneficial.