PRESS RELEASE

Naval Air Squadrons Receive Top Aviation Awards

The Royal Navy Search and Rescue Flight at HMS Gannet, Prestwick in Scotland and 815 Naval Air Squadron based at RNAS Yeovilton were both Navigators at the Guild annual trophies and awards ceremony in London on 23 October 2008.

HMS Gannet Search and Rescue Flight was awarded the Prince Philip Helicopter Rescue Award for exemplary courage and tenacity in a particularly complex, hazardous and protracted rescue of three climbers on Ben Nevis in May 2007 and 815 Naval Air Squadron was presented with the Johnston Memorial Trophy for an outstanding performance in the development of navigation techniques for the maritime Lynx helicopter in preparation for a four month tour of duty providing aviation support to Headquarters Northern Ireland in 2007.

HMS Gannet Search and Rescue Flight routinely responds to more than 250 Search and Rescue missions every year and is the busiest Search and Rescue unit in the UK. Speaking after the awards ceremony, Admiral Simon Charlier, Rear Admiral Fleet Air Arm, praised the mettle and moral fortitude of the crew of Rescue 177. 'It was a rescue that pushed them to their absolute limits. Their airmanship, grit and sheer determination was exceptional.'

ENDS

22 October 2008

857 NAVAL AIR SQUADRON

MOTTO
‘Animis Opibusque Parati’ - ‘Prepared in Minds and Resources’

ROLE
Operational Airborne Surveillance and Control

BASE
RNAS Culdrose

SQUADRON HISTORY

857 Naval Air Squadron initially formed during World War 2 in 1944 as a Torpedo Bomber Reconnaissance Squadron of Mk II Avengers. They also embarked upon an Anti-Submarine course before travelling to the Far East in November 1944.

After attacking Sumatran targets, including Palembang, the Squadron regrouped in Australia, only to re-embark in February 1945 for two months of continuous attacks on islands in the East China Sea and Formosa. 857 NAS then sailed to Hong Kong where the Squadron was active against Japanese suicide boats in September 1945. The Avengers were left in Australia when the Squadron returned to the UK and disbanded in November 1945.

In 2006, ‘B’ Flight 849 NAS was re-badged as 854 NAS using the Sea King ASaCS Mk 7. Current Squadron commitments include carrying out Maritime Surveillance Operations in the Middle East.

PREVIOUS AIRCRAFT TYPES
Avenger, Sea King

BATTLE HONOURS
Palembang 1945, Okinawa 1945

WESTLAND SEA KING ASaCS Mk 7
Primary Role
Airborne Surveillance and Control

Max Speed
120 Knots

Crew
1x Pilot, 2x Observer

Max Takeoff Weight
9,800kg

Endurance
4 Hours

Weapons
Searchwater 2000 Radar