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

771 NAVAL AIR SQUADRON

MOTTO
‘Non nobis solum’ - ‘Not unto us alone’

ROLE
Search and Rescue

BASE
RNAS Culdrose

SQUADRON HISTORY

771 Naval Air Squadron was formed in 1939 at Lee on Solent as a Fleet Requirements Unit flying a variety of fixed wing aircraft. In 1945 it received the Hoverfly helicopter, making 771 the first Naval Air Squadron to operate helicopters. The Squadron reformed in 1961 as a helicopter trials squadron. Early tasks included pioneering Search and Rescue techniques.

771 Squadron assumed the dedicated Search and Rescue role with the introduction of the Whirlwind HAR 3 and, moved to its present home at RNAS Culdrose in 1974. The Whirlwind was soon replaced by the Wessex and later by the Westland Sea King Mk 5. With the Sea King's greater lifting capacity, longer range and improved avionics, the Squadron assumed a long range, day/night, and all weather SAR capability.

PREVIOUS AIRCRAFT TYPES

BATTLE HONOURS
None

WESTLAND SEA KING HU Mk 5

Primary Role
Search and Rescue

Max Speed
120 Knots

Crew
2x Pilot, 1x Observer, 1x Aircrewman

Max Takeoff Weight
6,000 kg

Endurance
4 Hours

Weapons
None