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

849 NAVAL AIR SQUADRON

MOTTO
‘Primus video’ - ‘The first to see’

ROLE
Aircrew and Maintainer Training Squadron for Sea King

ASaCS Mk 7

BASE
RNAS Culdrose

SQUADRON HISTORY

849 Squadron first formed in 1943 with Avenger torpedo, strike and reconnaissance aircraft but has its origins with the Naval Wing of the Royal Flying Corps from 1912. Seconded to Coastal Command, they supported Operation Overlord, the D-Day landings.

The Squadron disbanded at the end of the war but was reformed in 1952 to perform the new Airborne Early Warning role. The first of 50 Douglas Skyraiders, fitted with long range radar, had been delivered in 1951. Airborne Early Warning embarked for the first time on a carrier in September 1952.

The rebirth of Airborne Early Warning in the Royal Navy occurred in 1982 as a result of the Falklands War. The first two helicopters to be converted to carry the Thorn EMI Searchwater radar were completed in just 90 days. They returned to RNAS Culdrose later in 1982 to continue trials. In 1984, the concept having been proved, 849 Squadron was commissioned.

PREVIOUS AIRCRAFT TYPES
Avenger, Skyraider, Gannet , Sea King

BATTLE HONOURS
Normandy 1944, Palembang 1945, Japan 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