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

854 NAVAL AIR SQUADRON

MOTTO
‘Audentes fortuna juvat’ - ‘Fortune helps the daring’

ROLE
Operational Airborne Surveillance and Control

BASE
RNAS Culdrose

SQUADRON HISTORY

854 NAS was officially formed in 1944 flying the Grumman Avenger aircraft. Quickly they were amalgamated into No.157 Wing, RAF coastal Command and carried out anti-shipping patrols in the English Channel from Hawkinge. In September the Squadron sailed in HMS Activity bound for the Far East, equipped with the Avenger I and took part in operations at Belawan and Palembang. In addition the Squadron was involved in attacking airfields on the Sakishima Islands in the East China Seas in March and April of 1945.

In 1945 the aircraft were upgraded again to the Avenger III’s and the Squadron joined the 3rd Carrier Air Group. This deployment, however, was short lived with the aircraft being withdrawn and the Squadron disbanding a couple of months later.

In 2006, ‘A’ Flight 849 NAS was re-badged as 854 NAS using the Sea King ASACS Mk 7.

PREVIOUS AIRCRAFT TYPES
Avenger Sea King

BATTLE HONOURS
Normandy 1944, 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

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