

E-Newsletter



Learners and instructors in and beside the sea survival tank as rope training takes place in the background.

‘Military to Wind’ initiative launched

Highland RFA Defence Relationship Manager Ray Watt visited Aurora Energy Services in Inverness to see its innovative Military to Wind training programme in action.

The seven-week programme – delivered in partnership with the Engineering Construction Industry Training Board and the Ministry of Defence – is designed to transition Service leavers directly into the renewable energy sector.

Aurora Energy is an Armed Forces Covenant signatory and holds the Defence Employer Recognition Scheme Bronze Award.

The pilot project kicked off in the middle of February with three serving Regular members of the Armed Forces. Each of them will be transitioning out of the military in the coming months. During Ray’s 18 February visit the learners were nearing the end of the first full week of training. This saw them completing the Global Wind Organisation Basic Safety Training covering the following modules: working at height; manual handling; sea survival; first aid; and fire awareness.

Military to Wind provides guaranteed interviews and industry-recognised certification, preparing Veterans for roles as technicians in the onshore and offshore wind industries. It ensures that by the end of the programme they have a clearly defined career pathway, are site ready and able to take up employment in the industry.

The programme is the brainchild of Aurora Director of Training Andy Elrod. As an Armed Forces Veteran himself, Andy is acutely aware of the challenges facing personnel transitioning from the Armed Forces into the civilian workforce.

Andy hopes to run as many as four of the courses every year, with those running alongside Aurora Energy’s day-to-day training delivery.



Capturing the action and (right) the learners and an instructor beside the sea survival tank.



Inverness Detachment.

ACF detachment at Inverness growing

Army Cadets in Inverness have opened the unit for a second evening each week due to increased interest from young people in the area.

Based at the Army Reserve Centre on Gordonville Road, Inverness Detachment of 1st Battalion The Highlanders Army Cadet Force (ACF) has traditionally paraded on Monday evenings. However, with a current strength of 54 cadets, detachment staff decided to add a Wednesday training evening. This will ensure all current and new cadets continue to receive high-quality instruction in fieldcraft, navigation, first aid, and adventurous training, and are supported if taking part in The Duke of Edinburgh’s Award scheme.

Major Debi Ennis, Inverness Company Commander, said: “Our numbers are growing rapidly, and we want to ensure every young person in the area has the chance to challenge their limits and grow their abilities.

“A second detachment opening on Wednesday evenings will allow 12 to 18-year-olds to attend on Wednesdays if they have other activities on Monday evenings. Cadets are also free to attend both nights if they wish to do so.

“We support cadets with neurodiversity and are very much an inclusive organisation. I am keen that young people are offered every opportunity to gain much-needed resilience and promote independence and confidence in preparation for adulthood.”

The expansion also creates a need for new Cadet Force Adult Volunteers to support the detachment training evenings. No previous military experience is necessary.

Alness JCC completed



The new extension was built off site.

Work on the new Joint Cadet Centre (JCC) in Alness has been completed.

The £440,000 project was part of the nationwide Reserve Estate Optimisation Programme. The works saw Integra Buildings redevelop the Royal Air Force Air Cadets site used by 379 (County of Ross) Squadron.

The building footprint was enlarged with a new extension of prefabricated modules, allowing it to be used jointly by the Royal Air Force Air Cadets and Alness Detachment of 1st Battalion The Highlanders Army Cadet Force (ACF).

A new store was also constructed. Consolidating the two cadet units on one site allows for the disposal of the standalone ACF building and return of the lease.

Groundworks started on 11 September 2025. Following that the prefabricated units were craned over the boundary fence and laid down on the new foundations, creating a fresh space that will be in use for the next 20 years. The work was completed in time for the resumption of cadet training following the festive break.



Inside the new space.



Volunteers needed!

The Sea Cadets unit at Fraserburgh is looking for enthusiastic Adult Volunteers to help inspire the next generation of cadets through adventure, teamwork, and maritime skills.

None of the opportunities available to the young people of (No 419) Training Ship Gowanlea would be possible without its amazing volunteers. Could you be the unit's next superhero?

Why volunteer with the unit?

- No prior military experience needed — just enthusiasm and a willingness to learn.
- Full training provided, including nationally recognised qualifications (for example Royal Yachting Association, British Canoe Union).
- Flexible roles to suit availability and interests.
- Be part of a nationally recognised youth organisation.

Volunteer roles available:

- Unit Instructor – lead fun and educational activities for cadets.
- Watersports Instructor – teach kayaking, sailing, rowing, and more.
- Trustees – the unit is also seeking new trustees to help ensure the safe and smooth running of training and activities from behind the scenes.
- Or bring your own skills — photography, IT, social media, coaching, teaching, mentoring, driving — all talents welcomed!

What you'll gain:

- A chance to give back and support young people.
- New skills and qualifications.
- A supportive community and lifelong friendships.
- The satisfaction of helping cadets grow into confident, capable young adults.

Interested?

- Email the team at: recruitment@fraserburghscc.org

#CARAS2026

CARAS

THE CADET ADULT RECOGNITION AWARDS

NOMINATIONS:

16 MARCH TO 20 APRIL

AWARD CEREMONIES:

28 MAY, PERTH


4 JUNE, ABERDEEN

Gold Awards revalidated

The Defence Employer Recognition Scheme (ERS) Gold Award revalidation dinner took place at The Black Watch Castle and Museum in Perth on 22 January.

The evening saw three organisations from the Highland RFA area presented with their 2025 Award certificates. Both the ERS Gold and Silver Awards are reviewed and revalidated on a rolling five-year basis. Aberdeen City Council, Angus Council, and High Life Highland were all first awarded Gold in 2020. The Award from the Ministry of Defence is in recognition of the ongoing support the organisations give to the Armed Forces community, recognising the positive role employers play in supporting Defence and inspiring others to do the same.

The organisations have all been powerful advocates for the Armed Forces Covenant over the past five years, actively engaging with their peers, encouraging them to employ Armed Forces personnel, Veterans, and their families, and providing robust and sustained support for Reservists.



ARMED FORCES COVENANT

EMPLOYER RECOGNITION SCHEME

GOLD AWARD

