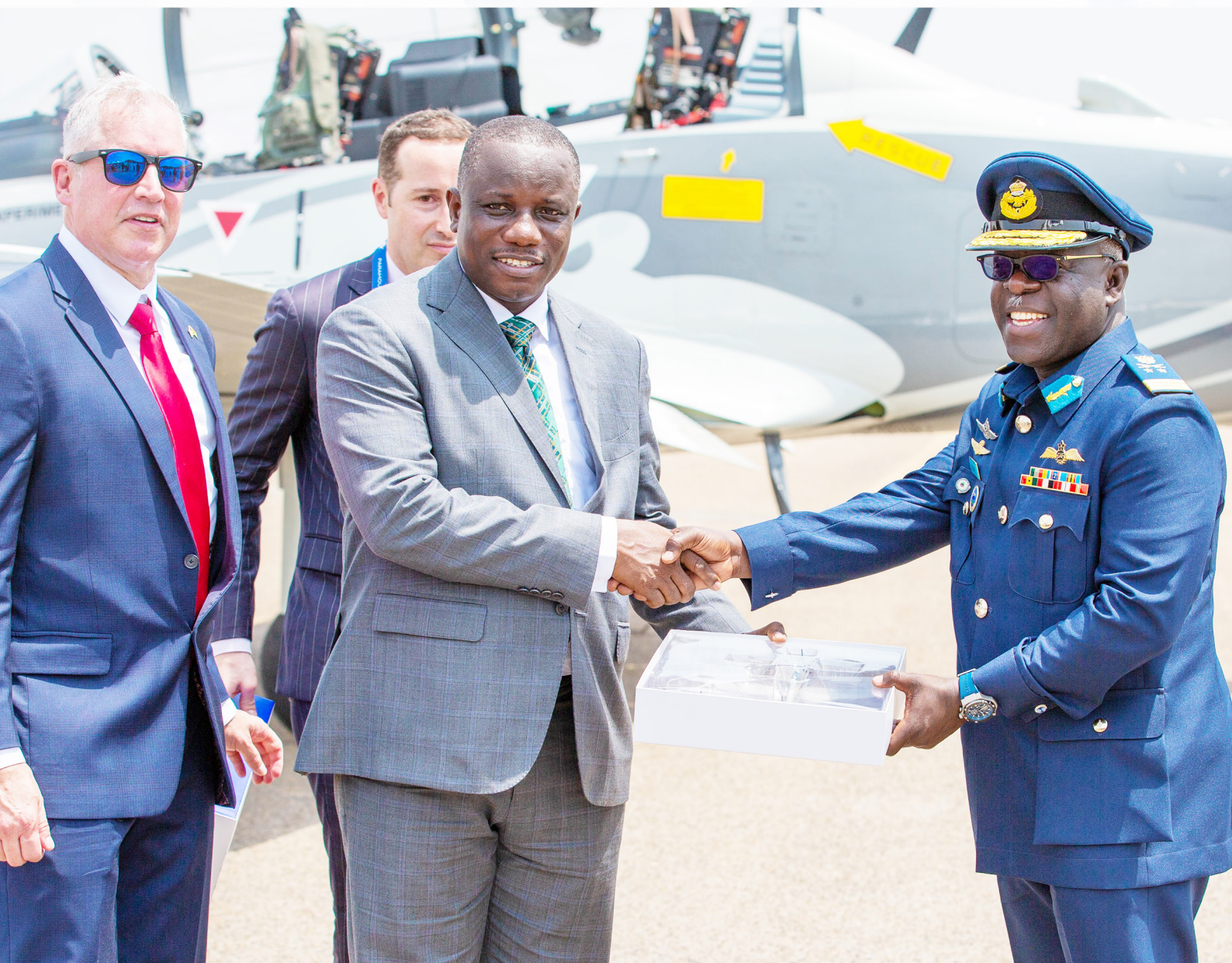




# THE Airman Newsletter

VOL 2

JAN - JUN 24



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# EDITORIAL

## EDITORIAL



**WG CDR SO PEPRAH  
CHAIRPERSON**

We are excited to present to you the **Second Edition of The Airman Newsletter** for the first half of 2024. In December 2023, we introduced to you the maiden edition of The Airman Newsletter focusing on our Vision, Mandate and the various activities over the period. The maiden edition was well received with enthusiasm and applause.

In this edition, we give you more updates and highlights of our activities in the first half of the year. We have also introduced new columns such as the **Aviation Corner** and **Interview with Retired Personnel**. We would also delve into the rich and colourful Military traditions.

The new additions are aimed at giving you a rewarding reading experience; where you get to learn about the world of aviation and also acquire wisdom nuggets from our distinguished retired personnel through their shared experiences.

We believe these new additions will sharpen our minds, perceptions and catapult us to accomplishing great feats. As the old adage goes, "Knowledge is power" and so absorb yourselves in this bank of knowledge.

This editorial will not be complete without expressing our deepest appreciation to all those who have supported us in this endeavour. To our writers, we are grateful for the submission of articles and pictures which have contributed to this great edition.

To our sponsors, we say thank you for the untiring support. May the good Lord richly bless you all. To members of the Editorial Board, I commend you all for your dedication and hard work. Indeed, team work makes dreams come true!

Finally, to our readers, enjoy each page and let yourselves be captivated by the awesome and inspiring stories.

We wish you all a pleasurable reading experience!

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### FRONT PAGE CAPTION

**COVER PICTURE** - THE CHIEF OF THE AIR STAFF, AIR VICE MARSHAL FREDERICK ASARE KWASI BEKOE RECEIVES A MINIATURE AIRCRAFT FROM THE MINISTER FOR DEFENCE, HON DOMINIC NITIWUL DURING THE A-29 SUPER TUCANO FLIGHT DEMONSTRATION.

**BACKCOVER PICTURE** - GHANA AIR FORCE PARTICIPATION IN THE 67TH INDEPENDENCE DAY ANNIVERSARY PARADE HELD AT KOFORIDUA.

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LAC KYEREMEH E - AFB TAMALE

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**AVM FAK BEKOE**

★★★  
**CHIEF OF THE AIR STAFF'S  
FOREWORD**

On 26 January 2024, I marked one year in Office as the Chief of the Air Staff and as I reflect on the gains within the period, I am filled with gratitude to God Almighty for how far he has brought us. Despite the challenges, the strength, resilience and hard work exhibited by personnel has been unparalleled and I look forward to us working and building a smart Air Force together in the coming year.

Operationally, we continue to provide air support to the Ghana Army and Navy while assisting other Security Agencies, Governmental and Non-Governmental Organisations in undertaking various humanitarian tasks.

The Ghana Air Force participated in several joint operational exercises such as SEA LION, FLINTLOCK, and AFRICAN LION among others to improve upon our interoperability. We also supported the airlifting of troops for peacekeeping operations in Gambia and Guinea Bissau. All these activities were successfully executed regardless of the constraints.

Increasing the number of aircraft platforms remains a top priority. We continue to engage with government and our stakeholders to increase the number of aircraft platforms.

As part of the processes, we organised a successful flight demonstration of the A-29 Super Tucano aircraft. This demonstration is part of the critical steps in selecting the appropriate aircraft to augment our current platforms. We hope these will translate into possible acquisitions soon.

Training on the other hand, forms part of the core strategy of building the capacity of personnel. We therefore continue to train personnel across all branches both locally and internationally. I am particularly elated at the introduction of the Drill and Duties and Military Police Basic Courses spearheaded by the Air Force Training Command (AFTRAC). These courses are foundational and very important for the career progression of Airmen. Thus, training will equip us with the necessary skills to perform our roles creditably.

Infrastructurally, all projects are progressing steadily and are almost completed. The newly refurbished Air Force Officers' Mess was re-opened for use while the construction of the Warrant Officers and Senior Non-Commissioned Officers' Mess is almost completed. All accommodation projects initiated at the various Bases are also on course and we hope to

undertake some commissioning ceremonies in the coming months to open the various facilities for use.

On the welfare front, our continuous dedication to the needs of personnel has been phenomenal. Our clothing stock has also improved considerably with personnel being issued various clothing requirements. Efforts are still being made to close up the clothing deficit.

While we undertake our various mandated assignments, it is imperative that we also take good care of our health and maintain healthy lifestyles. Let us prioritise our health by undertaking regular checkups and engaging in physical and sporting activities to keep fit always.

As we continue to build on our gains, we are reminded to uphold the highest standards of discipline, comportment and professionalism in every endeavour. This would enable us to achieve the vision of being a smart Air Force capable of defending our territorial airspace against any threat and deliver air power effectively and efficiently for national development while enhancing the welfare of Airmen. Together, we can make an impact and together we will succeed!



# CHIEF OF THE AIR STAFF HONOURED

The Chief of the Air Staff (CAS), Air Vice Marshal Frederick Asare Kwasi Bekoe was inducted into the International Honor Roll of the US Air University at Maxwell Air Force Base, Alabama on Friday 19 April 2024.

International Honor Roll (IHR) is a prestigious tribute to international Officer and Senior Non-Commissioned Officer Alumni of Air University who have attained the highest military or other prominent positions in either a military or civilian capacity.

AVM Bekoe is an alumnus of the US Air Force Air University, Alabama where he obtained a Diploma in Operational Art and Science at the Air Command and Staff College. He later attended the Air War College graduating with Masters in Strategic Studies.

During the ceremony which was held for 22 other inductees, the CAS was presented with a certificate and a customised plaque. Additionally, his name was inscribed on the honor wall of the University in recognition of his achievement as the Chief of the Air Staff of the Ghana Air Force.

## BACKGROUND TO IHR

IHR was an initiative of the Vice Chief of Staff of the United State Air Force, General John L. Piotrowski, in 1985, and was designed by the International Officer School to facilitate senior-leader military engagement with international partners and build global alliances. IHR was dedicated in February 1988 by the Secretary of the Air Force, Edward "Pete" C. Aldridge Jr.



CAS RECEIVING A CERTIFICATE FROM THE CHIEF OF STAFF, GENERAL DAVID W ALVIN AND CHIEF MASTER SERGEANT DAVID A FLOSI

Any qualified international alumni who had ever taken select Air University courses since the first allied officer students in 1946 were inducted. Every inductee's name and their highest position held, is permanently inscribed on a plaque in the dedicated IHR room, located at the International Officer School and similarly at the Maxwell Club.

## ABOUT AIR UNIVERSITY

*AU Vision:* The intellectual and leadership-development center of the Air and Space Forces.

*AU Mission:* Access, train, educate and develop Air and Space warfighters in support of the National Defense Strategy.

Air University (AU), headquartered at Maxwell Air Force Base is a major component of Air Education and Training Command (AETC) and is the lead agent for Air Force education. AU provides the full spectrum of Air Force education, encompassing pre-commissioning programs for new Officers; graduate programs in specialised military disciplines; progressive, career-long professional military development for officer, enlisted, and civilian Airmen; and specialised programs for US cabinet appointees, senior executive service (SES) civilians, and general Officers.



EXCHANGE OF PLAQUE BETWEEN CAS AND THE COMMANDER OF US AIR UNIVERSITY, GENERAL ANDREA D TULLOS



THE DELEGATION FROM GHANA AND THE COMMANDER OF THE US AIR UNIVERSITY



THE INDUCTEES OF THE 2024 INTERNATIONAL HONOR ROLL



# GHANA AIR FORCE, EMBRAER AND SNC TEAM DELIVER SPECTACULAR AIRCRAFT DISPLAY

The much anticipated A-29 Super Tucano aircraft demonstration came off in grand style at the Air Force Base Accra from 19 to 20 February 2024.

Organised by the Ghana Air Force in collaboration with Embraer Defence and Sierra Nevada Corporation (SNC), the event aimed to showcase the A-29 Super Tucano's prowess in close air support and aerial reconnaissance missions in low-threat environments.

In his welcome address, the Chief of the Air Staff, Air Vice Marshal Frederick Asare Kwasi Bekoe, expressed enthusiasm about the static and flight display, emphasising the importance of acquiring light attack aircraft in the face of increasing terrorism threats within the sub-region.

He added that the partnership with SNC and Embraer was timely, considering that the A-29 Super Tucano was a strategic offensive platform to enhance the deterrent and offensive posture of the Ghana Air Force within the sub-region.

In his keynote address, the Minister for Defence, Hon Dominic Nitiwul, underscored the importance of prioritising counter-terrorism efforts in addressing the evolving security landscape.

He added that, the A-29 Super Tucano aircraft presents itself as a suitable aircraft to augment the capabilities of the Ghana Air Force in counter-insurgency and counter-terrorism operations.

Representatives from SNC and Embraer, Mr Eric Hauff and Mr Arnaud Sobrero, expressed delight in the collaborative opportunity as it aligns with their objectives for future cooperation.

As a prelude to the aerial display, dignitaries had the opportunity to experience a static display and view the aircraft. The audience were then treated to a mesmerising aerial display featuring fly-pasts and impressive manoeuvring drills by the No.3 Helicopter Wing and the No.4 Strike and Recce Wing.



DIGNITARIES ENJOYING SPECTACULAR DISPLAY BY THE A-29 SUPER TUCANO AIRCRAFT



THE MINISTER FOR DEFENCE RECEIVING BRIEFING IN THE COCKPIT OF THE A-29 SUPER TUCANO AIRCRAFT



HON ZANETOR AGYEMAN-RAWLINGS, MP FOR KORLE KLOTTEY CONSTITUENCY AND DEPUTY RANKING MEMBER FOR INTERIOR AND DEFENCE, IN A GROUP PICTURE WITH CAS AND GHANA AIR FORCE PILOTS AFTER COMMENDING THEM FOR A FANTASTIC DISPLAY AND FLY PAST



# GHANA AIR FORCE SUPPORTS EXERCISES SEA LION, FLINTLOCK AND AFRICAN LION

The Ghana Air Force (GHF) within the period supported three (3) major multinational Exercises codenamed SEA LION, FLINTLOCK and AFRICAN LION. This is in line with the mandate of the GHF to support the Ghana Army, Navy and other Security Agencies in maintaining peace and security in the country.

Exercise SEA LION which was conducted from 19 to 22 March 2024 was aimed at testing the endurance and combat readiness of Ghana Navy Ships and enhancing collaboration among the three arms of the Ghana Armed Forces. The GHF as part of the exercise provided air transport for the various phases of the exercise.

Exercise FLINTLOCK and AFRICAN LION took place concurrently from 13 to 24 May 2024. It was aimed at strengthening the ability of US and its partner nations in the Region to counter violent extremist organisations while enhancing the readiness of partner nations to collaborate across borders to share intelligence and provide security.

During both exercises, the Ghana Air Force provided crucial air support by transporting personnel and logistics to and from the various staging areas. Additionally, by providing ground support to the various foreign Air Forces who played a key role in the multinational exercise.

The Ghana Air Force's participation in these training exercises showcases its capabilities and readiness to work with other security services and partner nations in responding to security challenges in the Region.



# GHFAC COMMENCES NON-TECHNICAL COURSE FOR AERO FIRE AND SUPPLY AIRMEN



The Ghana Air Force Aviation College (GHFAC) commenced a non-technical course for selected personnel of Aero fire and Supply on Tuesday 12 March 2024 at the Air Force Base, Accra.

A total of 60 participants drawn from various Bases of the Ghana Air Force are participating in the programme. The course which is set to run for a duration of one year and ten months will provide essential training and skills development for the Airmen.

The course is also aimed at mustering personnel into their various trades and would also cover various aspects of Aero fire and supply from general academics, basic, intermediate and advance phases.

Speaking at the event, the acting Commanding Officer (CO) of the College, Squadron Leader Victor Okanta Asiedu enumerated the importance of the course in enhancing the capabilities of the students. He highlighted that, the course would enable them develop invaluable teamwork, problem solving and communication skills.

He also used the opportunity to caution the students to conduct themselves in a positive manner and abide by the rules and regulations of the College throughout the period of the course.

The CO also tasked the students to adhere to all the Standard Operating Procedures of the College and encouraged them to take their studies seriously as this would prepare them to thrive in their ever-evolving trade.

# GHFAC HOLDS GRADUATION CEREMONY FOR NON-TECHNICAL TRADE



The Ghana Air Force Aviation College (GHFAC) graduated 40 students of course 15B Non-Technical Trade on Friday 19 January 2024 at the Air Force Base, Accra.

Delivering his welcome address, the Acting Commanding Officer GHFAC, Squadron Leader Victor Okanta Asiedu mentioned that the course which started in May 2022 was made up of 33 Supply and 7 Aero fire students. He said the College was always poised and positioned to deliver on its mandate to train world class aviation tradesmen for the Ghana Air Force.

The Guest of Honour, Deputy Chief Staff Officer Logistics, Air Commodore (Air Cdre) Samuel Benjamin Offei congratulated the students for the successful completion of the course. He stated that the course was of immense importance to the Ghana Air Force as it forms part of the foundation for the various non-technical trades.

Air Cdre Offei noted that the course would equip the graduands with the knowledge and skills required in the aviation industry. Adding that, it formed part of the Chief of the Air Staff's vision to build a smart Air Force capable of defending the territorial air space against any threat and deliver air power efficiently for national development whiles enhancing the welfare of Airmen.

He further advised the graduands to apply the knowledge acquired wherever they find themselves to compliment the efforts of the Military High Command while he reiterated the efforts being made by the Chief of the Air Staff to support the training and capacity building of personnel. He also commended the instructors for their good work and dedication during the period of the course.

Awards were given to 3 Supply students and 2 Aero fire students for their exceptional performance during the course. Leading Aircraftman Dorlaar Sinyiri Patricia emerged the overall best student.

The ceremony was witnessed by the Chief Fire Officer, Ghana Airport Company Limited, Mr Sosu Gakpey, Officers, Airmen and students of GHFAC.





# AIR TRAFFIC ORIENTATION COURSE HELD FOR AIRMEN

A 6-week Air Traffic Orientation Course commenced at the Ghana Air Force Aviation College on Monday 15 April 2024.

The course was aimed at enriching the knowledge base of personnel within the Operations Branch of the Ghana Air Force and to provide them with additional training in line with Air Traffic Operations.

In his remarks, the Guest of Honour and Director Air Operations at the Air Force Headquarters, Group Captain Fiiifi Adu Boadu underscored the importance of constant training and availability of such an avenue to improve the knowledge capacity of personnel.

Group Captain Fiiifi Boadu further urged participants of the course to put in their maximum effort in order to impart the knowledge gained at their respective Bases.

The Director Air Operations also expressed his profound gratitude to the Chief of the Air Staff for spearheading the initiative; stating that it served as a platform for the upgrade of personnel to effectively execute their mandate.



## ORIENTATION FOR NEWLY EMPLOYED DCS HELD AT AFHQ

An orientation programme for newly employed Defence Civilian Staff (DCS) was held at the Air Force Headquarters on Wednesday 10 July 2024.

The purpose of the orientation was to familiarise the staff with the various branches and functions of the Ghana Air Force.

In a welcome address, the Personnel Staff Officer Grade I, Squadron Leader Cyril Zikpi, welcomed the new DCS to the AFHQ and advised them to abide by all military regulations and respect their superiors at all times. He further cautioned that all military documents are to be kept confidential.

Personnel were also advised to maintain a high standard of discipline and also abide by the code of ethics of the Ghana Armed Forces.



# MAIDEN DRILL & DUTIES AND BASIC MILITARY POLICE COURSE GRADUATION PARADE HELD AT TAKORADI

The maiden Ghana Air Force Drill & Duties and Basic Military Police Course 1/2023 graduation ceremony was held at the Drill Square of the Air Force Recruit Training School, Air Force Base Takoradi on Friday 19 January 2024. Comprising 42 Drill & Duties and 38 Military Police, the graduands put up a spectacular drill performance which drew applause and excitement from dignitaries and guests.

The Guest of Honour was the Deputy Chief Staff Officer Administration, Air Commodore Frank Kobla Kudoh. In his speech, he said the occasion was historic and joyous because it was the first time the Ghana Air Force had embarked on such a training programme.

He opined that with the establishment and expansion of schools under the Air Force Training Command coupled with the need to clear the backlog of a high number of untrained personnel, it became imperative to run such courses to train personnel in line with the vision of the Chief of the Air Staff.

Sergeant Obeng Afua Sandra Konadu received the Chief of the Air Staff Award for the overall best student in the Drill and Duties Course. She was presented a plaque, a customised military cane and a refrigerator.

For the Military Police category, Lance Corporal Baah ABA-YORMA Matilda received the Chief of the Air Staff Award for the overall best student. She was presented a plaque and a refrigerator. The awards were co-sponsored by Enterprise Life Insurance.



SERGEANT OBENG AFUA SANDRA KONADU RECEIVING THE AWARD FOR THE OVERALL BEST STUDENT IN THE DRILL AND DUTIES COURSE



LANCE CORPORAL BAAH ABA-YORMA RECEIVING THE AWARD FOR THE OVERALL BEST STUDENT IN THE MILITARY POLICE COURSE



MAWO DECORATING THE GRADUANDS WITH DRILL AND DUTIES MEDAL



GRADUANDS EXHIBITING A SPECTACULAR DRILL DISPLAY



DIGNITARIES AND GRADUANDS OF THE BASIC MILITARY POLICE COURSE



DIGNITARIES AND GRADUANDS OF THE DRILL AND DUTIES COURSE



## ULTRA-MODERN STUDIO ACCOMMODATION FOR AIR FORCE BASE TAKORADI

The Chief of the Air Staff (CAS), Air Vice Marshal (AVM) Frederick Asare Kwasi Bekoe on Thursday 11 January, 2024 broke ground for the construction of a monumental 3-storey, 24-unit studio accommodation for Airmen at the Air Force Barracks in Takoradi.

In his remarks, the CAS, who was the Guest of Honour stated that this was an important milestone in the history of the Ghana Air Force and commended all for being part of the historic event.

AVM Bekoe noted that the recent expansion in the Ghana Armed Forces coupled with the acute accommodation challenges made it necessary to provide comfortable accommodation for Airmen to enable them work more effectively and efficiently. He said similar projects had already commenced in Accra and Tamale.

The CAS added that the drive to re-tool the Air Force was underway and already yielding results. On building capacity of personnel, he stated that his vision was to ensure personnel across the various Branches were trained to undertake their mandates. He mentioned the successful training of 6 helicopter pilots who returned recently from the US and 6 fixed-wing pilots who had completed their private pilot license phase and had progressed to the next stage.

He also said Engineering and Administrative Officers sent to Nigeria and India were also progressing in their training as well as the Air Traffic Controllers who went for training in South Africa. He announced that his office was working tirelessly to send Airmen to study various technical courses in Egypt and Nigeria.

AVM Bekoe acknowledged the collective effort of all stakeholders and tasked personnel to continue to be dedicated, hardworking and committed to inspire higher Command to do more.

The Flying Group Commander, Group Captain SY Agbenyefia in her welcome address noted that the ceremony had a profound significance as it marked the first major project initiated by the Chief of the Air Staff in the year 2024.

She praised the CAS's transformative efforts in re-shaping the Ghana Air Force through the construction of various accommodation projects and the comprehensive training and essential kitting of Airmen.



CAS OFFICIALLY BREAKS GROUND FOR COMMENCEMENT OF CONSTRUCTION OF THE ACCOMMODATION



CAS AND DIGNITARIES BEING TAKEN THROUGH THE PICTORIAL DRAWINGS OF THE ACCOMMODATION



A CROSS SECTION OF AIRMEN AT THE EVENT



THE CAS WITH DCSOs, DIRECTORS AND SOME OFFICERS



THE CAS WITH FLYING GROUP COMMANDER, MAWO AND MEMBERS OF THE RETIRED AIRMEN ASSOCIATION

# INDEPENDENCE DAY

Picture highlights of the 67th Independence Day Parade held at the Youth Resource Centre in Koforidua on Wednesday 6 March 2024. The Parade Commander was Group Captain Fiifi Boadu, Director Air Operations at the Air Force Headquarters.



THE PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC AND C-IN-C OF THE GHANA ARMED FORCES, NANA ADDO DANKWA AKUFO- ADDO TAKING THE PRESIDENTIAL SALUTE AT THE 67TH INDEPENDENCE DAY ANNIVERSARY



SERVICE CHIEFS OF THE GHANA ARMED FORCES OBSERVING THE 67TH INDEPENDENCE DAY ANNIVERSARY PARADE IN KOFORIDUA



THE PARADE COMMANDER, GROUP CAPTAIN FIFI BOADU AND THE GHANA ARMED FORCES CONTINGENTS MARCH PAST DURING THE PARADE



THE AIR FORCE FEMALE CONTINGENT MARCH PAST DURING THE PARADE



THE AIR FORCE MALE CONTINGENT MARCHING DURING THE 67TH INDEPENDENCE ANNIVERSARY PARADE



A SECTION OF THE CROWD CHEERS ON AS THE COLOURS FLY PAST DURING THE INDEPENDENCE ANNIVERSARY PARADE



A GHANA AIR FORCE HELICOPTER SUPPORTING THE SPECIAL FORCES DISPLAY DURING THE PARADE



AN ACROBATIC DISPLAY BY PTIS FROM THE GHANA ARMED FORCES



# GHANA AIR FORCE OPEN DAY 2024

Picture highlights of the Open Day Activities held across all Air Force Bases on Thursday 7 March 2024.



STUDENTS AND CIVILIANS TROOPING INTO THE AIR FORCE BASE, TAMALE.



STUDENTS TROOPING INTO THE AIR FORCE BASE, ACCRA.



AN AIRMAN BRIEFING SOME STUDENTS ON AN EQUIPMENT ON DISPLAY AT THE AIR FORCE BASE, TAKORADI.



STUDENTS WATCHING A DRILL DISPLAY BY PERSONNEL OF THE AIR FORCE BASE, TAKORADI.



A PUPIL GETS AN OPPORTUNITY TO HANDLE A GUN AT THE AIR FORCE BASE, TAKORADI.



STUDENTS AND CIVILIANS BOARDING THE CASA C295 AT THE AIR FORCE BASE, ACCRA FOR A FLIGHT EXPERIENCE.



STUDENTS AND CIVILIANS BEING GIVEN AN AIR EXPERIENCE AFTER THE INDEPENDENCE PARADE AT KOFORIDUA.



STUDENTS AND CIVILIANS BOARDING THE MI-17 HELICOPTER AT THE AIR FORCE BASE, ACCRA FOR A FLIGHT EXPERIENCE.



# ORI CONDUCTED AT AIR FORCE BASE ACCRA

The Commander, Air Force Base Accra, Air Commodore Eric Agyen-Frempong on Thursday 9 May 2024 conducted an Operational Readiness Inspection (ORI) of vehicles used for operational duties at the Air Force Base, Accra.

The purpose of the inspection was to ensure that the vehicles at the Mechanical Transport Section were serviceable and in working condition for maximum operational efficiency.

During the inspection, he urged the Commanding Officer and personnel of the Engineering Wing to adhere to the regular maintenance schedule of the vehicles to keep them in working condition to perform all assigned tasks effectively.

Operational Readiness Inspections are conducted periodically in all military units to assess the overall effectiveness and preparedness of personnel and equipment to undertake any mission or assignment.



BASE COMMANDER INTERACTING WITH A DRIVER



THE MT IC BRIEFING BASE COMMANDER



BASE COMMANDER INSPECTING THE VEHICLES ON DISPLAY



BASE COMMANDER INSPECTING SOME TOOLS AND FIRST AID KITS



BASE COMMANDER CONDUCTS A CLOSE-UP INSPECTION OF THE TYRES OF ONE OF THE VEHICLES ON DISPLAY

# CABIN CREW ATTENDANTS RETURN FROM TYPE RATING COURSE



Five (5) cabin crew attendants who were sponsored by the Ghana Air Force (GHF) to undertake a two-week training in the Falcon Cabin Attendant Type Rating Course in the United Arab Emirates have returned. The training programme was aimed at equipping the personnel to discharge their duties professionally.

Upon their arrival, the Chief of the Air Staff, Air Vice Marshal Frederick Asare Kwesi Bekoe congratulated and advised them to showcase their newly acquired skills in their daily activities to contribute to the vision of becoming a smart Air Force.



Flight Sergeant Patricia Brabi who was the team leader of the personnel thanked the Chief of the Air Staff, Air Vice Marshal Frederick Asare Bekoe for the opportunity given them and vowed to lift high the image of the Ghana Air Force.

# TRAUMA AND HEALING SESSION HELD FOR AIRMEN

A two -day trauma and healing session aimed at improving the emotional and mental health of personnel was held at the Air Force Base Accra .

Trauma healing is a method of using scripture and mental health principles to address emotional wounds caused by trauma of violence, domestic abuse, crime, natural disasters, accidents and conflicts.

At the end of the sessions, personnel were relieved of emotional pains and equipped with helpful coping mechanisms to improve on their emotional and mental wellbeing.

The healing group session which took place from 25 to 26 March 2024 was organised by the Base Chaplaincy in collaboration with the Trauma Healing Institute of the Bible Society of Ghana.



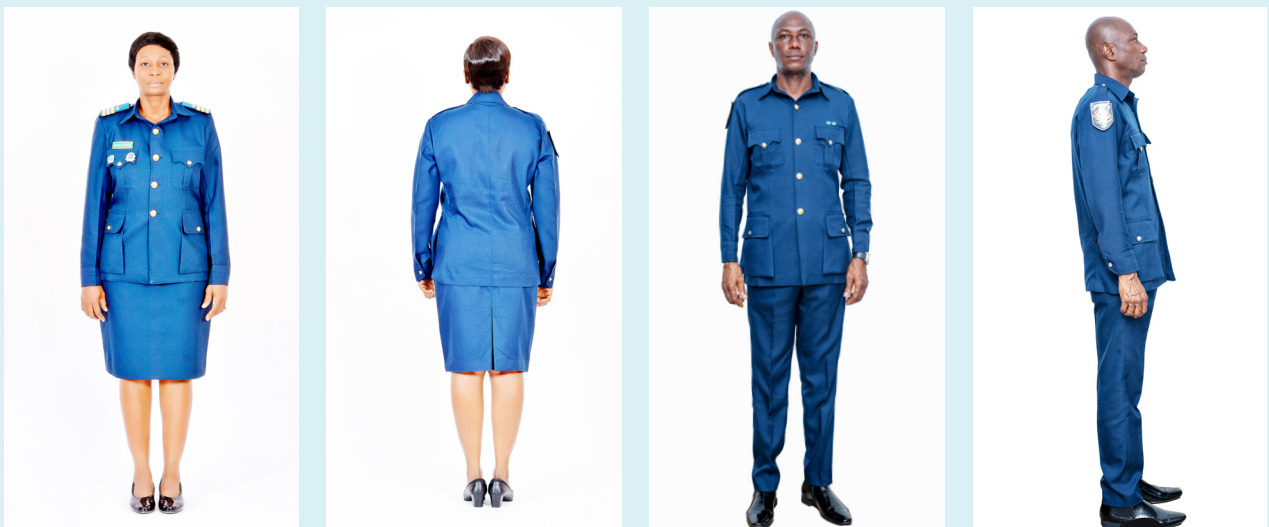
# REVISED AIR FORCE DRESS CODE

Pictorial excerpts of the new Dress Code assented to by the Chief of the Air Staff on 4 October 2023.

## GHANA AIR FORCE NO. 1A WORKING DRESS



## GHANA AIR FORCE NO. 1B WORKING DRESS



## GHANA AIR FORCE NO. 2A WORKING DRESS



## GHANA AIR FORCE MESS DRESS



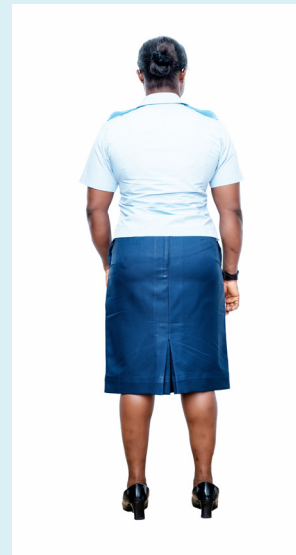
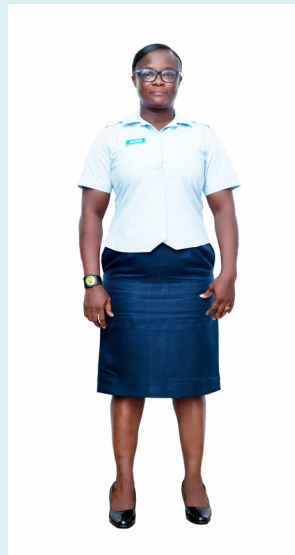


# REVISED AIR FORCE DRESS CODE

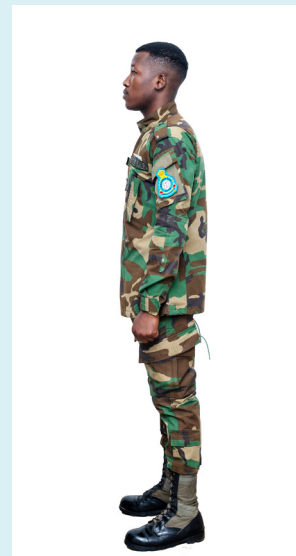
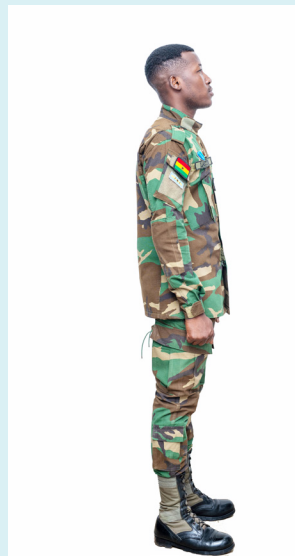
## GHANA AIR FORCE NO. 2B WORKING DRESS



## GHANA AIR FORCE NO. 2C FEMALE WORKING DRESS



## GHANA AIR FORCE OPERATIONAL DRESS



# AIR FORCE BASE TAMALE ORGANISES HEALTH TALK AND MEDICAL SCREENING

As part of efforts of Command to enhance the general welfare of personnel, a health talk and medical screening exercise was organised for All Ranks and their families at the Air Force Base, Tamale.

The exercise which took place on Thursday 21 March 2024 was initiated by the Base Commander and supported by medical personnel undergoing Regimental Officer Training (ROT) at the Base.

Personnel were educated and screened on some common non-communicable diseases and medical conditions such as hypertension, diabetes, cancers and substance abuse with emphasis on cervical and prostate cancer screening.

The Base Commander, Air Commodore Joshua Lartei Mensah-Larkai in his welcome address emphasised the importance of good health. He reiterated the need for all to maintain healthy lifestyles and undertake regular medical checkups as early prevention and early detection are paramount in saving lives.

The exercise was supported by the MDS Lancet Laboratories, Social Society of Ghana (SOS Children's Village), Baseline Pharmacy, Tobinco Pharmaceuticals, Unichem Pharmaceuticals, Air Borne Force Medical Reception Station (ABF MRS) and the Tamale Teaching Hospital (TTH).



## BANK OF GHANA DONATES TO AIR FORCE BASE TAMALE

The Northern Regional Branch of the Bank of Ghana donated air conditioners and computers to the Air Force Base, Tamale on Friday 10 May 2024.

Presenting the items on behalf of the Bank, the Branch Manager, Mr Mohammed Abdul-Aziz said the gesture formed part of their Corporate Social Responsibility programme to support the Ghana Armed Forces.

The Base Commander, Air Commodore Joshua Lartei Mensah-Larkai, who received the items on behalf of the Base expressed gratitude to the donors and gave the assurances that the items would be used for the purposes for which they were donated.

The items included, four 2.5 HP Bruhm split air conditioners, four HP Pro Tower 290G9 desktop computers, and three Uninterruptible Power Supply Units.a

Accompanying the Branch Manager were some staff members of the bank including, Mr Paul Kofi Aboagye, Mr Mark Quaye, and Mr Charles Amuna.



BASE COMMANDER, AIR CDRE MENSASH-LARKAI RECEIVING THE ITEMS FROM THE BRANCH MANAGER, MR MOHAMMED ABDUL-AZIZ

# GHANA AIRPORT COMPANY LIMITED HANDS OVER OLD TERMINAL TO GHANA AIR FORCE

The Ghana Airport Company Limited has successfully handed over the old Airport Terminal in Tamale to the Air Force Base Tamale. The facility was handed over to the Base on February 7 2024.

Commander, Air Force Base Tamale, Air Commodore Joshua Mensah-Larkai expressed his appreciation to the management for the facility and the equipment. He assured them that they would operate the facility by adhering to the International Military Aviation Standards to improve safety and security.

Air Commodore Joshua Mensah-Larkai in his welcome address stated that, the steady growth of the Ghana Airport Company Limited and other stakeholders in Tamale had been made possible with the steady partnership with the Air Force Base Tamale.

The Guest of Honour, Mrs Yvonne Nana Afriyie Opere, the newly appointed Managing Director of Ghana Airports Company Limited (GACL) said that the move to support the Air Force was a step in the right direction. She noted the long standing and cordial relationship between the two institutions.

Present at the ceremony were the Northern Regional Minister, Hon Alhassan Shani Shaibu, the Garrison Commander, Major General Matthew Essien and other board members of the Ghana Airport Company Limited.



THE OLD AIRPORT TERMINAL



MRS YVONNE NANA AFRIYIE OPARE, MANAGING DIRECTOR OF GHANA AIRPORTS COMPANY HANDING OVER KEYS OF THE OLD TAMALE AIRPORT TO THE BASE COMMANDER, AIR CDRE JOSHUA MENSAH-LARKAI



GOC NORTHERN COMMAND, MAJ GEN MATTHEW ESSIEN AND AIR FORCE BASE COMMANDER, AIR CDRE JOSHUA MENSAH-LARKAI SEATED AT THE EVENT



THE GUEST OF HONOUR, MRS YVONNE NANA AFRIYIE OPARE AND OTHER DIGNITARIES SEATED AT THE EVENT



DIGNITARIES AT THE CEREMONY



# AFHQ OPERATIONS ROOM RECEIVES FACELIFT

To enhance its pivotal role as the nerve centre, the Operations Room (Ops Room) of the Air Force Headquarters (AFHQ) under went a significant upgrade under the auspices of the Chief of the Air Staff, Air Vice Marshal Frederick Asare Kwasi Bekoe.

The transformation encompassed both cutting-edge gadgets and a complete overhaul of the office space, creating an environment that is not only conducive but also fosters efficient coordination of security and flight plans.

At the heart of the upgrade is the integration of the Ops Room with the National Security Signal Fiber Bureau, facilitated by four (4) big screens and consoles. The connectivity enables real-time monitoring of activities on the ground and seamless transmission of crucial messages across various Air Force Bases.

Some responsibilities of the Ops Room include tracking Ghana Air Force aircraft, recording future commitments and task orders, coordinating medical evacuations and disasters among many others.

The upgrade not only enhances the technological prowess of the Ops Room but also underscores CAS's commitment to ensuring the safety, security and operational efficiency of the Ghana Air Force.





# CAS INSPECTS ONGOING PROJECTS

The Chief of the Air Staff (CAS), Air Vice Marshal Frederick Asare Kwasi Bekoe, on Monday 15 April 2024 inspected ongoing Ghana Air Force infrastructural projects in Burma Camp.

The projects inspected included, the construction of a 24-unit studio accommodation for Airmen at the Air Force Barracks, a state-of-the-art Warrant Officers and Senior Non-Commissioned Officers' Mess and the Air Force Officers' Mess.

During the inspection, the CAS assessed the progress of work and entreated the contractors to ensure the timely completion of the projects. The projects which began earnestly last year are scheduled to be completed this year.

The projects when completed would provide modern and comfortable living quarters for Airmen and a conducive environment for personnel at the various Messes.

Accompanying the CAS were the Base Commander, Air Force Base Accra, some Deputy Chief Staff Officers, Senior Officers, and the Master Air Warrant Officer from the Air Force Headquarters.



CAS INSPECTING THE CONSTRUCTION OF A 24-UNIT STUDIO ACCOMMODATION FOR AIRMEN AT THE AIR FORCE BASE, ACCRA.



CAS INSPECTING THE PROGRESS OF WORK ON THE WOs AND SNCOs MESS AT THE AIR FORCE BASE, ACCRA.



INSPECTION OF THE ANTE ROOM OF THE AIR FORCE OFFICERS' MESS



CAS INSPECTING AN EQUIPMENT INSTALLED IN THE OFFICERS' MESS KITCHEN

# TAC BUI FORGES COLLABORATION WITH GAFTAG

The Commander, Tactical Air Command Bui (TAC BUI), Air Commodore Elvis King Arneson paid a courtesy call on the Head of Mission (HoM) of the German Armed Forces Technical Advisory Group (GAFTAG), Lt Col Andreas Heselschwerde on Monday 22 April 2024.

The purpose of the visit was to discuss areas of mutual collaboration and seek support for the logistics and infrastructural development of TAC BUI. This follows an initial visit to Bui by WOII Meikel Scherer from GAFTAG and Naval Captain Kofi Sarfo from the General Headquarters Plans, Research and Development to physically assess the permanent site of the Command.

TAC BUI was established in January 2022 to help deliver airpower effectively and efficiently to meet national security objectives in line with the expansion and restructuring of GAF. This is because swift mobility is a vital component of every military's capability. The ability to move rapidly on short notice to or within an Area of Responsibility (AOR) is thus a primary requirement in planning and also an essential tool towards the effective accomplishment of military missions.

The joint collaboration will therefore deepen the partnership between the two Armed Forces for national security development.



GAFTAG HoM, LT COL HESELSCHWERDE WELCOMES TAC BUI COMMANDER, AIR CDRE ARNESON TO HIS OFFICE



A GROUP PICTURE OF TAC BUI COMMANDER WITH GAFTAG PERSONNEL



TAC BUI COMD, AIR CDRE ARNESON GIVING A SITE BRIEFING TO NAVAL CAPT SARFO AND WOII MEIKEL SCHERER



A GROUP PICTURE OF TAC BUI COMMANDER, PERSONNEL AND VISITING DIGNITARIES

## ORIENTATION FOR NEWLY DEPLOYED PERSONNEL TO TAC BUI COMPLETED

In a unique collaboration between the Tactical Air Command Bui (TAC BUI) and Bui Power Authority, twenty-one (21) newly deployed Airmen to the command were taken through orientation training by personnel of the Bui Power Authority after completion of a Power Plant Course from 4 April to 19 April 2024. The health and safety officer, Bui Power Authority, Mr Addo Anas introduced the team to two saddles dams and also lectured them on the general history and operations of the dam, its safety and security protocols.

The Airmen also visited the floating solar farms and the Bui Generation Station, where they were briefed on how the three turbines work to produce electricity.



# AIR FORCE HOLDS MAIDEN OFFICERS' PRACTICAL PROMEX

The maiden Air Force Officers' Practical Promotion Examination (PROMEX) was held from 13 to 17 May 2024.

The practical examination was held for Officers of the rank of Flight Lieutenant who were due for promotion to the rank of Squadron Leader. It precedes the annual written examinations and was aimed at testing the knowledge of candidates in all facets of Ghana Air Force Operations.

Prior to the practical examination, candidates went through a mandatory Basic Fitness Test (BFT) as part of the requirements to test their physical and mental fitness.

Speaking at the opening ceremony held at the Air Force

Base Accra, the Chief Staff Officer, Air Commodore Eric Yirenkyi who is also the president of the 2024 PROMEX board stated that the practical examination was to test the readiness and capabilities of the Officers to adapt to real world scenarios.

This he noted would prepare them to effectively carry out the mandate of the Ghana Armed Forces as defenders of the country as enshrined in the 1992 Constitution.

Air Commodore Yirenkyi encouraged the candidates to approach each task with confidence and determination. He also commended the examiners for their commitment and dedication in preparing and mentoring the candidates.



C/SO DELIVERING HIS REMARKS DURING THE OPENING CEREMONY



CANDIDATES RECEIVING BRIEFING ON THE CAPABILITIES OF THE AIRCRAFT



A CANDIDATE BEING ASSESSED BY THE EXAMINERS



CANDIDATES UNDERGOING BFT



A GROUP PHOTOGRAPH OF CAS AND OTHER DIGNITARIES, EXAMINERS AND PROMEX CANDIDATES AFTER THE CLOSING CEREMONY

# AIR FORCE OFFICERS' MESS RECEIVES MASSIVE FACELIFT

The Air Force Officers' Mess has received a superb transformation of modern design and architecture. From its meticulously crafted interior decor to its flawless exterior finish, the Mess now stands as a testament of excellence within the Ghana Armed Forces.

In a colourful ceremony held on Tuesday 30 April 2024, both serving and retired Officers gathered to unveil the Mess amid merry making and enthusiasm.

Speaking at the event, the Chief of the Defence Staff, Lt Gen Thomas Opong-Peprah commended the Chief of the Air Staff for his unwavering leadership in steering the refurbishment project to fruition.

"You have not only refurbished a building, but you have revitalized our camaraderie and esprit de corps" he added.



Lt Gen Opong-Peprah further urged members to cherish and maintain the facility so as to preserve the newly renovated space for future generations. He emphasised that the Mess was not just a place of merry making but a sacred space that embodies the shared history and traditions of the Air Force.

It is also heartwarming to note that the Warrant Officers' and Senior Non-Commissioned Officers Mess reconstruction project which began last year is also nearing completion and will be unveiled soon.

The refurbishment of the Messes forms part of the Chief of the Air Staff's overarching vision of improving infrastructure within the Air Force to ensure that Officers and Airmen are equipped with modern facilities to meet their operational and welfare needs.



AIR MARSHAL SAMSON-OJE (RTD), CDS AND CAS CUTTING THE RIBBON TO REOPEN THE NEWLY REFURBISHED AIR FORCE OFFICERS' MESS



INTERIOR VIEW OF THE REFURBISHED MESS



CDS INTERACTING WITH SOME RETIRED SENIOR OFFICERS



THE CAS EXCHANGING PLEASANTRIES WITH FORMER CDS, AIR MARSHAL SAMSON-OJE (RTD) AND OTHER GUESTS



# MAWO HOLDS MAIDEN MEETING WITH BASE WARRANT OFFICERS

The Master Air Warrant Officer (MAWO), MWO Bawa Abdulai held a meeting with all Base Warrant Officers (BWOs) on Monday 14 January 2024 at the Air Force Headquarters. The agenda for the meeting was to discuss issues of interest to the Ghana Air Force which focused on administration, discipline and leadership.

Addressing the BWOs, MWO Bawa highlighted ways of administering the various Bases to align with the CAS's vision to become a 'SMART' Air Force. He said, the pace at which the CAS was passionately addressing the welfare issues of Airmen was highly appreciated and therefore needs the collective commitment of Senior Non-Commissioned Officers to achieve this feat.

During the meeting, MAWO spoke extensively on discipline and conduct of Airmen and also their attitude towards work. He said it was important for the Base Warrant Officers to ensure that the efficient and effective running of the Bases are kept with the utmost dedication, commitment and selfless service.

As part of the meeting, the BWOs met with the Chief Staff Officer, Air Commodore Eric Yirenkyi in his office. He commended them for their dedicated service and also urged them to continue with the good work thus far.



CSO GHANA AIR FORCE IN A GROUP PHOTOGRAPH WITH MAWO AND BASE WARRANT OFFICERS

# EXECUTIVES OF AWO CALL ON CAS

Executives of the Air Wives Organisation (AWO), led by the President, Mrs Fanny Agyen-Frempong called on the Chief of the Air Staff (CAS), Air Vice Marshal (AVM) Frederick Asare Kwasi Bekoe at the Air Force Headquarters on Friday 12 January 2024.



CAS IN A GROUP PHOTOGRAPH WITH EXECUTIVES OF AWO

According to the President of AWO, the visit was to thank the CAS for the enormous support offered them during the festive season, especially in the conduct of their annual Christmas street bazaar.

AVM Bekoe on the other hand welcomed the Executives and assured them that his office was always open to assist them in their activities. He further advised them to consolidate the gains of the street bazaar by leveraging on the networks established during the period to help increase the sales of their wares.

"As wives of Airmen, I urge you all to maintain a united front in all your endeavours to support your husbands. In line with your itinerary for the year, I entreat you to come up with more innovative activities to nurture and build upon the talents of your members", he added.

The wives presented a plaque to the CAS as a symbol of their appreciation.



# AVIATION CORNER

Welcome to the high-flying world of aviation! Buckle up as we soar through the skies of knowledge, exploring the essential terminologies that keep planes aloft. From lift to thrust, drag to weight, and beyond, join us on a journey through the language of flight in this captivating aviation terminology showcase!

## LIFT

Lift is the aerodynamic force acting on an airplane that runs perpendicular to the relative wind, which allows the aircraft to oppose gravity and stay in the air. It is generated by the pressure difference between the upper and lower surfaces of the wings. For example, during level flight, the lift generated by the wings equals the weight of the aircraft, allowing it to maintain a constant altitude.

## THRUST

Thrust is the force that propels an aircraft forward, produced by the engines, either jet engines or propellers, and overcomes the drag of the aircraft. For example, when an aircraft takes off, the thrust produced by the engines must be greater than the drag to accelerate the aircraft down the runway and lift it off the ground.

## DRAG

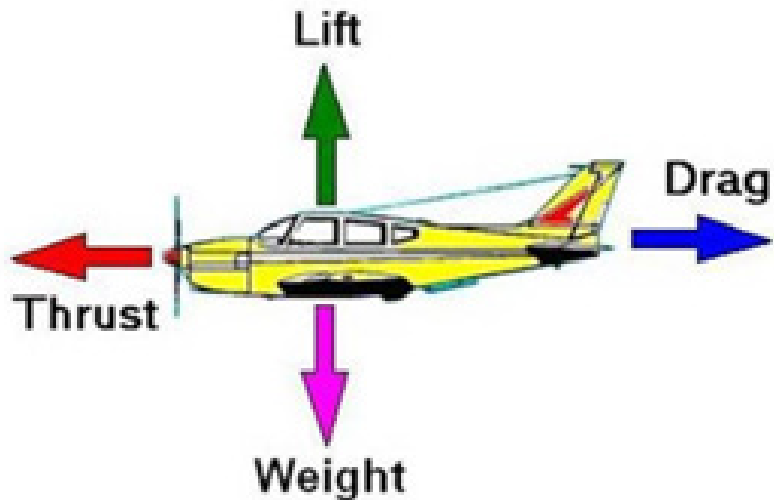
Drag is the force that opposes the forward motion of an aircraft, caused by the air resistance to the aircraft's movement. It can be reduced by streamlining the aircraft's design. For example, during level flight, the drag produced by the aircraft must be equal to the thrust to maintain a constant speed and altitude.

## WEIGHT

Weight (Gravity) is the force that pulls an aircraft down towards the earth, determined by the total weight of the aircraft, including its fuel, payload, and structure. For example, when an aircraft lands, the weight of the aircraft must be equal to or greater than the lift generated by the wings to ensure a safe landing.

## AIRSPEED INDICATOR (ASI)

An instrument that measures the airspeed of an aircraft. It is calibrated in knots and shows the aircraft's speed relative to the airmass around it. For example, an ASI may show a



speed of 120 knots, indicating that the aircraft is moving at 120 knots relative to the air.

## VERTICAL SPEED INDICATOR (VSI)

An instrument that measures the rate of climb or descent of an aircraft. It is calibrated in feet per minute (fpm) and shows the change in altitude over time. For example, a VSI may show a rate of climb of 500 fpm, indicating that the aircraft is gaining altitude at a rate of 500 feet per minute.

## HEADING

The direction in which an aircraft is pointed or facing. It is expressed in degrees and measured clockwise from the North. For example, a heading of 090 degrees means that the aircraft is pointed or facing towards the East.

## TRANSPONDER

A device that transmits a coded signal in response to interrogation by radar. It is used for identification and tracking of aircraft. For example, a transponder may transmit the aircraft's identification, altitude, and position to air traffic control.

## CLEARANCE

Clearance is the authorisation given by air traffic control to prevent collisions between aircraft, based on the aircraft's position, altitude, and speed, and is essential for safe flight in controlled airspace.

For example, when an aircraft is cleared for takeoff, air traffic control ensures that the aircraft's path is clear of other traffic and obstacles, providing a safe route for the aircraft to climb and reach its cruising altitude.

## FLIGHT LEVEL (FL)

The altitude of an aircraft expressed in hundreds of feet. For example, FL250 means an altitude of 25,000 feet. Flight levels are used in controlled airspace to ensure standardization and separation between aircraft.

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# VISITS TO AFHQ



THE CHIEF OF THE DEFENCE STAFF, LT GEN T OPPONG-PEPRAH, INSPECTING A GUARD OF HONOUR DURING HIS MAIDEN VISIT TO THE AFHQ



THE CHIEF OF THE AIR STAFF RECEIVING A CHEQUE ON BEHALF OF GHANA AIR FORCE FROM PRESIDENT OF THE GHANA CHAMBER OF MINES , MR MICHAEL AKAFIA DURING THEIR VISIT TO THE AFHQ



THE CHIEF OF THE AIR STAFF, AVM FAK BEKOE PRESENTS A PLAQUE TO THE AMBASSADOR OF THE CZECH REPUBLIC TO GHANA, HE PAVEL BILEK DURING HIS VISIT TO THE AFHQ



DIRECTOR GENERAL OF THE GHANA CIVIL AVIATION AUTHORITY, MR CHARLES KRAKUE AND OTHER STAFF MEMBERS RECEIVE BRIEFING ON THE OPERATIONS ROOM ACTIVITIES OF THE HEADQUARTERS DURING THEIR VISIT TO THE AFHQ



THE CHIEF OF THE AIR STAFF, IN A GROUP PHOTOGRAPH WITH THE COMMISSIONER GENERAL, MAJ GEN EW KOTIA AND SOME STAFF OF THE NATIONAL BOUNDARY COMMISSION DURING THEIR VISIT TO THE AFHQ



THE DIRECTOR GENERAL OF THE NARCOTICS CONTROL COMMISSION, MR KENNETH ADU-AMANFOH PAYING A COURTESY CALL ON THE CHIEF OF THE AIR STAFF



THE CHIEF OF THE AIR STAFF, AVM FAK BEKOE IN A GROUP PHOTOGRAPH WITH THE NEW MANAGING DIRECTOR OF THE GHANA AIRPORT COMPANY LIMITED, MRS YVONNE NANA AFRIYE OPARE DURING HER MAIDEN VISIT TO THE AFHQ



A DELEGATION FROM TULLOW GHANA LIMITED IN A GROUP PHOTOGRAPH WITH THE CHIEF OF THE AIR STAFF DURING THEIR VISIT TO AFHQ



THE ITALIAN DEFENCE ATTACHÉ TO ABUJA, COLONEL DAVIDE ROSELLENE INTERACTING WITH THE CHIEF STAFF OFFICER, AIR CDRE YIRENKYI DURING HIS VISIT TO THE AFHQ



THE CHIEF STAFF OFFICER, AIR CDRE E YIRENKYI PRESENTS A PLAQUE TO THE ZIMBABWE DEFENCE ATTACHÉ TO GHANA AND NIGERIA, COLONEL PHILLIP KUPE DURING HIS VISIT TO THE AFHQ

VISITS

# INTERVIEW WITH AIR VICE MARSHAL NAPOLEON RICHARD YAWOVI ASHLEY-LASSEN (RTD) (GH/34)

FORMER CHIEF OF THE AIR STAFF & FORMER CHIEF OF THE DEFENCE STAFF

## Can you share with us some insights into your early life and upbringing?

I am Air Vice Marshal Napoleon Ashley-Lassen and I was born on 29 March 1934 in Port Harcourt River State, Nigeria. My father was an accountant working with an international company in Nigeria and so he took us along wherever he went. I have four sisters and I attended the St Mary's School in Port Harcourt.

About mid-May 1934, my father decided that it was time for me to know my mother's hometown, Denu in the Volta Region of Gold Coast as it was known in those days. I left Nigeria for the town of Anloga in the Gold Coast towards the end of November 1948.

In Anloga, I attended Zion College with my cousin Joe but he decided not to continue after his father (my uncle) died. I continued alone until 1952 when I sat for the Cambridge School Certificate Exam. Due to local disturbances, I left Anloga in December 1952 to live with my mom in Denu.

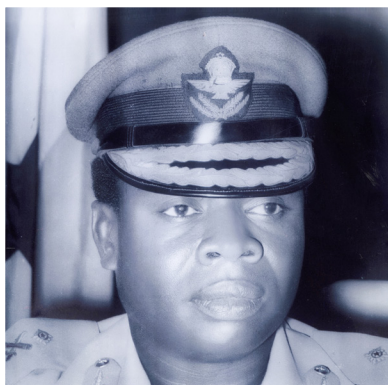
## How were you enlisted into the Service?

My mother was very keen that I should be a teacher and so she arranged with a local Parish Catholic Priest by the name of Father John to secure my admission to the St Francis Teacher Training College in Hohoe. However, just around that time in 1953, the Daily Graphic newspaper came out with a publication that Government wished to recruit ex-secondary school boys into the military to be trained as Officers. I applied and received a response that we should come to Burma Camp for interview. I deceived my mom that St Francis College had called me to commence my teacher training programme but I ended up in Burma Camp to begin my military career.

At Burma Camp, we were divided into batches of 35 and assigned to Ghanaian Officers who would test us in oral and written English as well as General Knowledge. The next phase was to appear before a selection interview board made up of several prominent Ghanaians headed by a British Major General from Nigeria. During the interview, the Chairman asked me to re-apply next year because I looked too young to be considered for military training. But a Ghanaian member on the board, Mr Konuah, the founder of Accra Academy disagreed as he felt I had done well in the interview. He was supported by other members and as a result I went through.

After the interview, those of us who passed were called and sent to Kumasi for 8 weeks of our initial training before being sent to the Regular Officer Special Training School (ROSTS) at the Teshie military camp. My intake was ROSTS 4 and we were about 25 with colleagues from the Gambia, Sierra Leone and Nigeria.

We stayed at ROSTS for about 6 months. It was a very good but difficult training. Another selection took place and 11 of us were successful and sent to England to continue the Officer Cadet Training at the Royal Military Academy at Sandhurst and other cadet training schools in England.



AVM ASHLEY-LASSEN  
CHIEF OF THE AIR STAFF  
(11 MAR 68 - 12 JAN 72)

For the Ghanaians, the training at the Royal Military Academy was smooth because we had already done our basic training in the Gold Coast. Our instructors found us extremely useful and used us to demonstrate some of the training exercises for the British Cadets training with us. In December 1958 we were commissioned as Second Lieutenants from the Academy. We were at the Sandhurst when the Gold Coast attained independence in 1957 and became known as Ghana.

On my return to Ghana, I was posted as a Troop Commander to the Ghana Artillery. This was from October 1958 to January 1959 after which the Artillery Regiment was replaced by the Reconnaissance Regiment. Soon afterwards, the entire unit moved from its original location behind the El-Wak Stadium to its present location in Gondar Barracks.

## How did you become an Air Force Officer?

In March 1959, President Nkrumah decided to establish the Ghana Air Force. The Ministry of Defence (MOD) sent out an official note to all military units, inviting serving Officers not above the age of 25 years and who wish to apply for training as pilots in the Ghana Air Force. I had just been transferred to the 1 Infantry Battalion in Takoradi when the note from MOD came out. I was fascinated by the invitation and applied to be considered. Six other Junior Officers in the battalion also applied. Major Joseph Ankrah, (Later Lieutenant General) who was then the Second-in-Command of the Battalion objected to all of us applying and ordered us to withdraw our applications immediately. I did not withdraw my application and he was very angry with me.

Later I was interviewed by the Commanding Officer on this issue. He decided that he would allow me to go for the interview on condition that I would return to the Unit if I did not succeed. I agreed with him and went for the interview a week later and was successful. That was how I became an Air Force Officer. Another Officer by the name of Lieutenant Charles Beausoleil from the 3 Infantry Battalion was also selected. We both joined the Ghana Air Force about 6 months after the selected ex-secondary school students had completed the ground school programme.

Soon after the ground school phase of our training, we embarked on a 6-month flying training to make us pilots. The flying training was quite a difficult one for us because we were using a basic trainer, the India-manufactured Hindustani (HT2) initial trainer. Our instructors for this phase were from the Israeli Air Force. The Ghana Air Force at that time was under the administrative control of two Indian Air Force Officers. The flying training school was under a team of 12 Israelis (4 qualified flying instructors and 8 technicians) under the command of a Lieutenant Colonel.

The rapport between these two teams was not good and as a result, the MOD advised the President to replace them with a Royal Air Force (RAF) team to undertake the administration and training of the Ghana Air Force. By mid-1963, a team of the RAF took over the entire administration and training of the Ghana Air Force.

## How was life in the Air Force and what were some of the major occurrences?

My career in the Air Force was quite eventful and interesting. I went through the mill and became a Squadron Pilot. I later became the OC of the Caribou Squadron. I was part of a team that ferried two Caribou aircraft from Canada to Ghana in 1963. Each flight took 10 to 12 days from Toronto in Canada to Accra-Ghana. After the advanced training of the first Ghana Air Force pilots at the RAF Ternhill, my colleague, Lieutenant Charles Beausoleil and I helped to co-pilot the first 2 Beaver aircraft bought by Ghana Air Force from the RAF Abingdon to Accra. We took 8 days to get to Accra after making 6 refuelling stops en route to Accra.



I did my Junior Staff Course at the Royal Air Force Staff College in Ternhill, in the United Kingdom in 1963. I later did my Senior Staff Course at the Royal Air Force Staff College in Andover, United Kingdom in 1966. I was on that course when Lieutenant General Kotoka staged the first coup d'état and overthrew President Nkrumah. On my return from the course, I was made the Commanding Officer (CO), Air Force Station, Accra.

Another important episode was the 1967 botched coup by Lieutenant Arthur and Yeboa with troops from my former unit, Recce Regiment. Lieutenant General Ankrah sacked the Chief of the Army and Chief of the Naval Staff for their poor reaction to that coup. The Chief of Air Staff, Air Vice Marshal MK Otu survived that event. I was the CO of Air Force Station, Accra when I heard the news of the attempted coup. I immediately called Squadron Leaders Banor and JOK Koranteng who were Officers Commanding 4 and 3 Squadrons to meet me at the Air Force Station.

On arrival, they confirmed the news of the coup attempt and thereafter, we went around the Station to make sure there were no foreign troops around. After crossing the runway towards hanger number 3 on the Civil Aviation side, we saw a lot of Recce Soldiers fully armed. When I enquired why they were there, the NCO in charge told me they were informed foreign troops were on their way to occupy the airport. I told him this was not true and that he should take his troops to Gondar barracks. At about mid-day, we drove towards the construction site of the Kotoka International Airport. Suddenly, we stumbled on the body of General Kotoka near a heap of gravel. His chest was riddled with bullets. I alerted the 37 Military Hospital to convey his body to the hospital and informed the Chairman of the National Liberation Council (NLC), Lieutenant General Ankrah. Later that day, the NLC formally announced the death of Kotoka.

Another major occurrence was in December 1966 when one of our Aermachi aircraft was involved in a crash during formation flying exercises around the coastal town of Aflao. This was a few weeks before I took over as Commanding Officer, Air Force Station. I had to set up a Board of Enquiry to investigate the accident. It was an unfortunate accident and a very sad period.

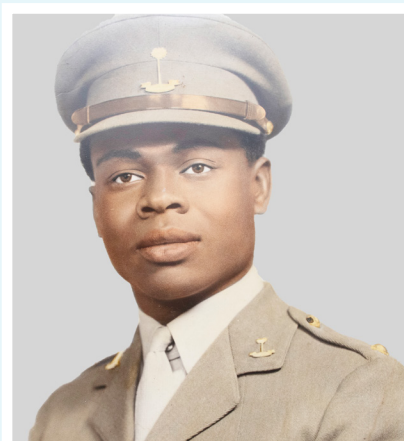
**When were you appointed Chief of the Air Staff?**

I became the Commander, Ghana Air Force in 1968 taking over from Air Vice Marshal Michael Akuoku Otu. About mid-1969, I was appointed ADC to President Edward Akufo-Addo who was then the Head of State.

While serving as his ADC I was sent on a course at the National Defence College (NDC) in New Delhi, India in January 1971.



THEN BRIG GEN ASHLEY-LASSEN BEING WELCOMED BY RT HON GOUGH WHITLAM, PRIME MINISTER OF AUSTRALIA IN AUGUST 1973



AVM ASHLEY-LASSEN AS A YOUNG OFFICER

I was the first senior West African military Officer on that course. At the end of the course in November 1971, I received instructions from MOD Ghana to fly to London to accompany the President back to Ghana.

**How did you become Chief of the Defence Staff?**

I was still the Air Force Commander when I went for the course in India. On my return, I decided to visit two of my bases namely Takoradi and Tamale to access their performances during my absence. At the dawn of 13 January 1972, while in Takoradi, I had a call from Group Captain Banor, the CO of AFS Takoradi that there had been a coup in Ghana led by Lieutenant Colonel IK Acheampong.

This news was a big surprise to me because I knew Lieutenant Colonel IK Acheampong very well when both of us were young Lieutenants. He was then serving as the Platoon Commander in 3Bn and I was a Troop Commander at the Recce Regiment in Gondar barracks. Lieutenant Colonel IK Acheampong appointed me the Chief of Defence Staff (CDS) after he staged the coup in 1972 against the Busia government. I did not want to accept the appointment until I was prevailed upon by NLC members (IGP Harlley, COP AK Deku and Justice Apaloo a former Chief Justice) to accept.

**When and how did you retire from the Ghana Armed Forces?**

General Acheampong was quite an affable character but those around him (his ex-NCO colleagues) largely influenced him. I went through some very challenging times with him in NLC until I was honorably released in December 1974. I left Ghana with my entire family in July 1975 to Stanford University in California in the United States of America.

I returned to Ghana in July 1978 and was arrested and taken to Nsawam prisons. I was in Nsawam when General Afrifa and Air Vice Marshal Boakye, Rear Admiral Amedume and Major General Kotey were brought in and detained. I had a fruitful chat with General Afrifa before he and the others were killed. All this occurred when Flight Lieutenant Jerry John Rawlings was in charge of the PNDC. Many people didn't know I had helped him to join the Air Force. He did not know I had returned home and was put in Nsawam for 8 weeks. He was later informed by General Nunoo Mensah who was then CDS.

Rawlings later called for me to meet him at Gondar barracks where he requested that I should lead a delegation to Togo, Benin and Nigeria to explain the reasons for the coup. I was reluctant because I was not involved in their coup but after pleas by Nunoo Mensah, I decided to go. On our return, I reported to Rawlings that I was done with the assignment and I wanted to move on with my life. I later joined Anglo Gold Ashanti and worked in East Africa and Zaire for about 10 years.

**Can you share your guiding principles for success in the Service?**

One of my guiding principles is the military code by Field Marshal Philip Chetwode at the inauguration of the Indian Military Academy in 1932 which says;

*"The safety, honour and welfare of your country come first, always and every time. The honour, welfare and comfort of the men you command come next. Your own ease, comfort and safety come last, always and every time".*

As an Officer, you must be guided by this principle in all your dealings. You must also be honest. I have had an illustrious and enjoyable career. I was fortunate to have met several famous and important personalities and Heads of State. I was privileged to meet Queen Elizabeth II while representing General IK Acheampong.

**What are your final comments?**

For my final comments, I think that the Government needs to procure bigger and more modern aircraft for the Air Force. The Ghana Air Force plays an important role, especially during times of natural disasters such as floods. I say so because, during the Akosombo Dam spillage, it was the Air Force that had to fly equipment and people across. It is therefore prudent that money should be spent on the purchase of aircraft.

Currently, I am writing my book and enjoying my retirement life in Denu. After my wife died, I re-married my current wife who has been with me throughout. I also have sons both in Ghana and abroad.



AVM ASHLEY-LASSEN WITH HIS SPOUSE



## AWARDS CENTRE DONATES TO GHF

Awards Centre, a subsidiary of Point 5 Ventures donated sports items to the Ghana Air Force (GHF). The 4-member delegation led by the Chief Executive Officer, Mr Paa Kwesi paid a courtesy call on the Chief of the Air Staff (CAS), Air Vice Marshal Frederick Asare Kwasi Bekoe on Monday 12 February 2024 at the Air Force Headquarters.

Mr Paa Kwesi stated that the donation was a benevolent gesture by the company to support the activities of the various sports teams in the Ghana Air Force. He reiterated the commitment of the company to supporting sports development in the Ghana Armed Forces and thus called for the re-activation of the Security Services Association (SESSA) Games.

A member of the delegation, Mr Prince Annan, added that the company had branded the sports items to give the teams a unique identity and make them stand out in their various disciplines.

This he noted would encourage and spur the teams on to victory. He also expressed gratitude to the CAS for the cordiality and good working relationship over the period.

The CAS, AVM FAK Bekoe expressed his gratitude for the kind gesture which he noted would go a long way to motivate the sports teams to continue to excel in their various disciplines. He added that the donation was one of the gestures that would win the hearts and minds of the personnel and thus thanked them for the good initiative.

The delegation later presented a photo frame of a customised jersey to the CAS and assorted sports clothing and equipment for the various sports teams.



CAS WELCOMES THE DELEGATION TO HIS OFFICE



THE CEO, MR PAA KWASI PRESENTING A CUSTOMISED JERSEY TO THE CAS



A GROUP PHOTOGRAPH OF DIGNITARIES IN ATTENDANCE AT THE A-29 SUPER TUCANO FLIGHT DEMONSTRATION



A GROUP PHOTOGRAPH OF GHANA AIR FORCE PILOTS WITH SNC AND EMBRAER TEAM

