

D.S.O.

Wing Commander Glenn Lester TORPY (5203033),
Royal Air Force.

Wing Commander Torpy arrived at RAF Detachment Dhahran on 15 January 1991 as part of the small tactical reconnaissance element of the Tornado GR1 Squadron. He quickly demonstrated the aggressive enthusiasm for the task that was to be the hallmark of his exemplary performance in the weeks that lay ahead.

To a large degree the embryonic reconnaissance system that equipped the Tornado GR1A was brought to an acceptable standard for operations as a result of his tireless efforts.

His first flight in-theatre was a war mission at night into the high threat environment on the forward edge of the battle area, but undeterred by the obvious risks involved, he set about the task with exceptional resolve. Subsequently Wing Commander Torpy regularly led the way into areas of increasingly high threat, often combining several air tasks so as to reduce the workload for his less experienced aircrews. In this respect his selfless leadership and devotion to duty were unparalleled. He always led the field in terms of operational sorties flown over enemy territory, and every flight was conducted alone, at night and at a very low altitude. His bravery and press-on spirit took him unescorted deep into enemy territory to known concentrations of hostile formations, and on more than one occasion only his unsurpassed skill and exceptional daring extricated his aircraft from these areas. His courage and coolness were typified by a mission to the north of Kuwait when he executed a complex route through a dense collection of the enemy elite Republican Guard and returned with intelligence that proved vital to the later successful prosecution of the land campaign. In all Wing Commander Torpy flew a total of 22 night low-level missions; a number not exceeded by any other RAF reconnaissance pilot on active duty. His exceptional skill and an exemplary sense of duty, together with courage of the highest order which he displayed over an extended period of flying operations, were in the highest traditions of the Service.

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Wing Commander Ian TRAVERS SMITH (4232959),
Royal Air Force.

Wing Commander Travers Smith is the Officer Commanding No. 16 Squadron and was the Tornado GR1 Squadron Commander at Royal Air Force Detachment Tabuk in Saudi Arabia. Arriving two months before the outbreak of hostilities, he had overall responsibility for the final preparations of the various attack plans, and training flying, and drove himself relentlessly to ensure that his Squadron was highly motivated and fully prepared for war.

At commencement of hostilities, Wing Commander Travers Smith led the first operational mission from Tabuk in the early hours of 17 January 1991. This was a low level attack against a heavily defended airfield deep in Iraq. The mission was conducted precisely as planned, thereby contributing to the immense success of the air campaign's initial surprise offensive. Throughout the conflict Travers Smith continued to lead formations of Tornados employing a range of tactics and weapons, and at cessation of hostilities he had flown a total of 20 operational sorties.

The size of the Tornado detachment steadily increased during the war, and finally numbered

19 aircraft and 30 crews, making it the largest Tornado force in the Gulf. These aircraft flew 653 operational sorties and delivered over 2,000 weapons, with the loss of a single aircraft over Iraq. During the entire campaign Wing Commander Travers Smith displayed flair, skill and airborne leadership of the highest order, and showed great personal courage and determination in pressing home his attacks often in the face of heavy enemy defences. As the Squadron Commander he also committed himself tirelessly to the further development of tactics, always seeking to ensure that targets were attacked in the most effective way, while at the same time minimising the risks to his crews.

Throughout the war, both on the ground and in the air, Wing Commander Travers Smith has led his Squadron from the front in the very highest traditions of the Royal Air Force.

D.S.O.

Wing Commander Jeremy John WITTS (8020843),
Royal Air Force.

Wing Commander Jeremy John Witts arrived at Dhahran on 1 January 1991 with elements of his own Squadron, No. 31, and those of 9, 14, 17 and 27 Squadrons. He quickly moulded these various elements into a cohesive operational unit which was declared to the Air Commander just prior to the start of hostilities on 16 January 1991. He also exercised command of a reconnaissance element from No. II (AC) and No. XIII Squadrons which arrived in theatre on 12 January 1991. On 17 January 1991 he personally led the first night low level attack on the enemy airfield of Mudaysis only one hour after H hour. This attack was pressed home with great courage and determination, and despite heavy enemy surface to air missile and anti-aircraft artillery defences and degraded navigation equipment, his formation laid down their weapons with unerring accuracy. In the ensuing weeks Wing Commander Witts showed bravery of the highest order when leading 13 further raids into enemy territory. His courage and leadership of his own formation provided an outstanding example to his other formation leaders. His cool and measured performance under fire was inspirational, and his aircrew were similarly driven to emulate their squadron commander. He insisted that he personally flew all attack profiles before other squadron aircrew should be allowed to do so. On 8 February 1991 he led an eight aircraft formation in a daylight raid against the Al Kut Petroleum Production Facility, and while the rest of his formation completed a level bombing attack from medium altitude, with great skill, determination and an utter disregard for his own safety, Wing Commander Witts dive bombed the heavily defended target and achieved direct hits. His exceptional flying skills and outstanding leadership in the air were complemented by the excellence of his performance on the ground. He personally monitored the progress of his formations, the integrity of their planning and the manner of the execution of their task. His genuine concern and quiet encouragement of his young crews was fundamental in ensuring that when losses were suffered it did not affect morale.

Wing Commander Witts has led his squadron with consummate courage, outstanding flying skill, and in a manner that reflects the highest traditions of the Service.

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One Distinguished Service Order was awarded to a Member of the Special Forces, Royal Air Force.