

## **NORTHUMBRIAN UNIVERSITIES MILITARY EDUCATION COMMITTEE (NUMEC)**

### **ANNUAL REPORT 2022-23**

#### **NUMEC Activities in 2022-23**

Two formal meetings of the committee meeting were held in person on 26 October 2022 and 7 June 2023.

Services of Remembrance were held in person in the Newcastle University Armstrong Quadrangle, and at Durham Cathedral (for Durham University), on 13 November 2022, and at the University of Sunderland Veterans' Garden on 11 November 2022.

Colonel (Retired) Giles Timms OBE MC gave a presentation at Durham University for staff and students on 15 November 2022 around the UK's contribution to the UN mission in Mali, followed by drinks in the St Cuthbert's Society bar. A good number of Service Unit students attended.

The NUMEC Secretary attended the Autumn meeting of the Reserve Forces and Cadets' Association for the North of England at Anzio House, Newcastle upon Tyne, on 18 November 2022, and also the Association's Annual General Meeting, held at the Royal Naval Museum, Hartlepool, on 24 March 2023.

A number of NUMEC members attended the NUMEC Annual Defence Lecture, held at Newcastle University on 7 February 2023, and given by Major General Kristin Lund, retired United Nations Force Commander. The subject was "Are women better leaders than men, does diversity matter in military operations?"

Following its meeting on 26 October 2022, and a discussion about the impact of the cost of living crisis on students, the Committee agreed to allocate some of the funds at its disposal (approximately £5k) to support students attached to service units.

At Durham University, the St Cuthbert's Society's excellent relationship with the Northumbrian Universities Air Squadron continues. In May 2023, St Cuthbert's hosted the squadron for three of its regular "In Town" meetings. Vice-Principal Dr Jon Warren also visited the Squadron on the occasion of its annual formal inspection at RAF Leeming, later taking to the skies in a Grob Tutor training aircraft.

The NUMEC Secretary, Honorary Colonel of the Northumbrian Universities Officer Training Corps and Chief Executive of the Reserve Forces and Cadets' Association for the North of England attended the OTC annual summer training camp (ADX) in Ballykinler, County Down, Northern Ireland, 1-3 July 2023. The NUMEC representatives had opportunity to interact with many Officer Cadets and observe them taking part in training exercises in the field.

The NUMEC Secretary attended the COMEC Annual Conference at Britannia Royal Naval College, Dartmouth, on 7 September 2023.

#### **Next steps**

The Committee will continue with its range of formal and informal engagements with the Service Units with a view to involving University representatives throughout the region. Strengthening interaction with and support for students remains a primary ongoing objective, and further opportunities for engagement with Officer Cadets in training will be explored. A review of induction arrangements for NUMEC members (University representatives and Commanding Officers) is planned, with a focus on the responsibilities of University members and the role of the Reserve Forces and Cadets' Association, and on university's student support and governance arrangements for Commanding Officers.

Dr Simon Meacher  
Head of Executive and Governance Office, Newcastle University  
On behalf of NUMEC

July 2023

## Background

The Armed Forces sponsor three designated University Service Units to serve the five universities in the North East:

- Northumbrian Universities Royal Naval Unit (NURNU)
- Northumbrian Universities Officer Training Corps (NUOTC)
- Northumbrian Universities Air Squadron (NUAS)

In addition, Trojan Squadron, Defence Technical Undergraduate Scheme (DTUS), was formed under Ministry of Defence contract with Newcastle and Northumbria universities in 2002. The scheme is in the process of shutting down over a five year transitional period, and is being replaced by the Defence STEM Undergraduate Scheme (DSUS).

The mission of the service units is to develop the leadership and management skills of selected university students, thereby enhancing their potential as future officers in the armed forces, or as leaders in their chosen future professions

Following the purpose laid down in the Haldane report (1908), the Northumbrian Universities Military Education Committee (NUMEC) oversees the work of the service units and represents the combined interests of the region's higher education institutions in liaising with them and providing advice and support. The primary aims of the committee are as follows:

- (i) to encourage the study of defence-related issues within the constituent universities;
- (ii) to promote the selection, instruction and training of candidates for Commissions in the Regular and Reserve Forces;
- (iii) to co-operate with the Ministry of Defence in all Service matters affecting the universities;
- (iv) to ensure that the time spent by undergraduates enrolled in a Service contingent is not to the detriment of their academic studies;
- (v) to encourage liaison between the university Service contingents and the Regular and Reserve Forces at regional level;
- (vi) to report via the Senates to the Councils of the universities, or their equivalent statutory bodies, on all matters which require their financial consideration, and all matters which affect the roles of the Service Units in the universities.

NUMEC members include the Commanding Officers of each service unit, and academic and professional service colleagues appointed by each institution. The committee normally holds two formal meetings annually. Additional informal visits to the service units are arranged on an opportunity basis. Each university pays a small annual subscription. The Committee is serviced by Newcastle University which is also responsible for organising the Annual Defence Lecture as part of the University's Insights Public Lectures series.