



Affiliated to the AEA, but as always open to ALL 299 men past & present.

The aims and ideals of this association are decreed as being:

**Promoting and maintaining contact with the members of 131 Independent Commando Squadron RE, 299 Para Squadron RE; and all other Airborne/Commando Associations.
Relieving where practicable any hardship or distress suffered by a member, or dependent(s) of a member of this association.
Promoting and encouraging such events that may bring pleasure to all members of this association.**

W. Dick, (Seadog), 2/8/2002

Date: September 4th, 2026, Monthly Meeting at the Minerva Inn, Hull.

Members present:

Mick Beardshaw, Gary Coe, Neil Cooper, Derek French, Craig Gadd, Craig Heppenstall, Walter Holbrook, Tony Irwin, Tom James, Mike Maddison, Adam Morris, Glenn Ratten, Pete Robson, Kenny Russell, Chris Shillito, Andy Thomas, John Thompson, Tony Weldon, Neil Yates.

Apologies:

Ricky Able, Anthony Alcock, Kev Blacker, Chris Duggan, Tony Foster, Andy Green, Paul Hairsine, Carl Henrickson, Roger Holding, Dean Ideson, Martin Lawrence, Keith Morley, Bud Oldfield, Steve Oliver, Paul Robinson, Kev Saddington, Lee Smith, Martin Tindle, Chris Wilcock, Dave Woollas.

Guests: Capt. Heppenstall came to the Association with a few Sqn members prior to their range package.

Chairman:

The chairman John Thompson welcomed everyone and opened the meeting and called for a proposal of the last minutes.

Minutes proposed:

A true record of the last meeting.

Proposer: Chris Shillito

Seconder: Tom James

Treasurer

Glenn confirmed that the funds remain healthy and that he is still in the process of transferring the funds over to the AEA account system, this is still ongoing.

Vice Chairman

Craig started by informing the members that Eamon's been going down to Cromwell Lock for some time trying to get the local Parish to assist in the maintenance of the memorial. The area is in a bit of a poor state and requires some maintenance. Discussions are ongoing.

The commemoration on the Saturday 26th September 2026 will go ahead. This will not be a formal service as such, but the various branches will be laying wreaths from 11:00. Individual members who wish to attend may do so. Anybody from the Association wishing to attend please let the Vice Chairman know so you can lay a wreath on the Association's behalf.

The Normandy trip for 2027 is still in the planning phase and has been sent out to all of the branches for those who wish to attend. Details TBC.

Capt. Olaf Dudley from 131 Cdo Sqn RE confirmed that the 80th Sqn anniversary is in the planning stages. Dates TBC. Watch this space.

CHAIRMAN'S COMMENTS:

Normandy, we have reached out to Roy Hatch from 144 Fd Med Sqn ref: joining their trip to Normandy, he was still trolling for numbers and would let us know in due course. Craig is also speaking with Phill Taylor from the Yorkshire branch and the Brummies to see if they had anyone interested in joining us and making up the numbers. At the next meeting we need to decide GO or NO go on the trip.

ARMY V NAVY 1st May 2027, Fri – Sat. Will take place at Kingsbury Arc. Those wishing to attend please let the Chairman know.

John continued to inform the members that we were looking forward to the John Rock dinner and AGM. 9-11 Oct 2026.

The Chairman invited Capt. Heppenstall to give an update on the Sqn.

Current Sqn strength 159 with recruitment at 80% and have strong, motivated personnel on high readiness reserve (HRR). The Sqn is planning more cross training with other reserve units. Focusing on key capabilities such as, Military Engineer – Digital Communications Technician (ME DCT) Formally called ME C3S is to reflect the shift toward Cyber focused Engineering. Military Engineer, Logistics Specialist (ME LogsSpec) Brigade General Engineer and Assault Pioneer support.

Even though the government has told the British Army to reduce all non-essential training exercises to save money. The Sqn remains positive and still on it's HRR full commitment.

The Sqn wishes to raise social media profile to support recruitment.

Any other business:

Gary Coe informed members that Tony Kitchen is not doing so great. Anybody who wishes to go visit him at his care home will be more than welcome however Gary suggested to go in pairs as chatting to Tony is quite difficult. If anyone needs details, please contact Gary.

Welfare:

Bri Bilton is recovering well and taking the opportunity to catch some sun in his garden.

Ricky Able Doing fine in his recovery from his hip operation and intends making the next meeting.

Bus stop winner: Derek French

Next meeting: Friday 2nd October 2026

With nothing more to discuss the Chairman closed the meeting

Dates for your diary

9th – 11th October 2026 AEA AGM and John Rock Dinner

8th November 2026 Remembrance Parade

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WELFARE:

Help for Heroes <https://www.helpforheroes.org.uk>

Veterans Welfare Service <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/veterans-welfare-service>

SSAFA <https://www.ssafa.org.uk>

Royal British Legion <https://www.britishlegion.org.uk>

Hull 4 Heroes Supporting those that Served <https://hull4heroes.org.uk> 01482 534483