



Inside the Wire

Ohakea Proud, our People, our Stories

11 (14) September 2026

230 SQN - Habitat for Humanity

230 SQN INTFLT members volunteered at a Palmerston North property, alongside Habitat for Humanity and Bunnings, last Tuesday 25 Aug. With the majority of 230 SQN INTFLT previously based in Whenuapai, social events for the SQN included volunteer projects alongside DOC, however when the move to Ohakea was made, they were yet to establish something similar.

Habitat for Humanity is a registered charity that has worked to ensure Kiwis have safe, affordable, and healthy homes for the past 30 years. Their Home Repair Programme provides support and no-interest loans for repairs that are critical in ensuring NZ homes are warm and safe. LAC Taylor Kennard approached Habitat for Humanity having previously volunteered there during her studies at university, and they came back with a project that needed some extra hands.

A Palmerston North family were scheduled to have their bathroom renovated and an HRV system installed.

Additionally, their property had overgrown trees, shrubs and a back fence that had seen better days. Enter 230 SQN and Bunnings, the latter graciously donating the materials and staff needed to tidy up the property, build new raised gardens and fix the back fence.

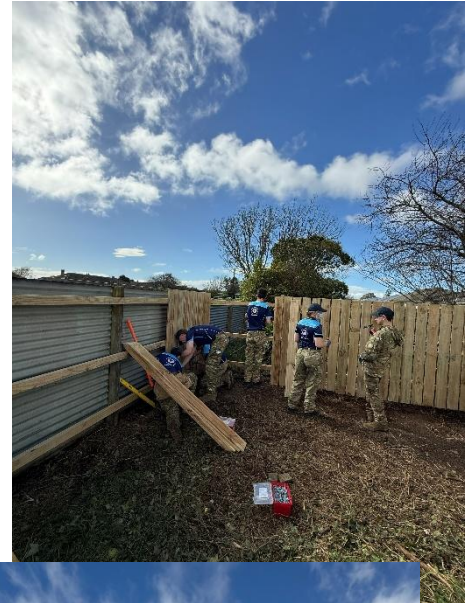
The family met us with grace and humility,

allowing us to come into their home and share their story. Faced with trials and tribulations, priorities had shifted to homeschool their two daughters and manage health complications. They stated other aspects - like the backyard - had taken a backseat and while they tried to stay on top of it, they recognised that a helping hand was needed. So, we got to work.

Lawns were mowed and cleared, hedges were trimmed, rubbish was removed, and wood was stacked. Out the back, corrugated iron was discarded to make room for the new fence and raised gardens began to take shape. The family prepared home baking for morning joe and it was staggering to see the results achieved and still having the afternoon to go.

Heading into Spring, we were treated to four seasons, with a downpour occurring as soon as the lawnmower started up. However, a little rain couldn't deter our determination. Of course, a backyard isn't complete without a fairy garden and murals created with chalk paint. This was a highlight for the daughters, and they thoroughly enjoyed setting this up.

While the aim of the day was to fix up the backyard, connecting with the family was important too and stopping to have a chat with them was inspiring. Despite



being faced with challenges, it was clear this home was full of love, laughter, and light.

Three organisations came together to reach a common goal and teamwork conquered the day. Having the opportunity to give back and make a difference for this family was incredibly rewarding and we must thank Habitat for Humanity and the family for allowing us to help. Also notably, thank you to LAC Taylor Kennard for organising this day.

The day ended with smiles all round, a grateful family and a sense of satisfaction. We hope this day will be the first of many.

Article Credit – AC India Yule.

Dotterel Season



With the coming of spring, we have a unique opportunity on the airfield, to assist the population of one of our rare and nationally threatened species, the Banded Dotterel.

This energetic and busy little bird utilises the specific areas it requires to build a nest, in the safety of our airfield, where the predatory birds are discouraged. The carparks

and gravel areas around the base provide the perfect spot as far as they are concerned. So, if you see a white circle or a cone in what seems the wrong place, it could be marking a nest. There are several in the car park between the mound and 5 Squadron building.

They also try to nest along the edges of taxiways E & F with eggs blending in almost perfectly with the gravel. The small gravel patch, by the fuel tanker site has currently six nests. The population on the airfield is currently about 40 birds but can get up to 250 after the breeding season, the survival rate is higher on the airfield than the nearby riverbed nests, with most if not all chicks taken by gulls, cats, hawks and magpies.



Agile Tasman - 2SECFOR meets 2SECFOR

No. 2 Security Forces Flight Ohakea worked alongside 2 Security Forces Squadron RAAF last week providing an elevated security effect at Ohakea in anticipation of the increased public interest in Base. Teams worked 12-on-12-off providing 24/7 patrol dogs and deterrence patrols near area of public congregation, while using patrol dogs and UAS in PM hours to detect any intrusion. Personnel also augmented RAAF at their F-35A security piquet IOT provide powers of challenge and detention at the aircraft site.

The units conducted security scenarios and training together in the evening hours while out on patrol, with personnel chopping to OPFOR and attempting to access set locations on Base without being detected by dogs or UAS.

Teams also took part in a joint range practice with each unit having opportunity to qualify on and fire each other's in-service weapon. As nostalgic as the enhanced Steyr was, and while having some excellent sighting systems...I think the MARS-L was the favourite rifle across



both sides of the Tasman. In terms of pistol, the Kiwis enjoyed the addition of a laser sight on the RAAF's Sig Sauer P226 F9 which allowed for more rapid target acquisition, with less cognitive load on the firer during recoil control.

In the background, in addition to the usual footprint of personnel on ops... the unit hosted MSTs at the patrol dog unit, who delivered the military working dog welfare course. This allows SECFOR personnel to safely support husbandry, welfare and exercise requirements of RNZAF Patrol Dogs. MSTs leaned into the enhanced security posture over the week with all dog walks being conducted in full operational kit as an added sensor/deterrent.



After two busy weeks of shift work between VA26 and AGT26, the unit will be settling back to a more usual training routine next week with airfield driving, range work, and challenge/detention training at the NZPOL district training venue in Palmerston North, while preparing to deliver an Urban Operations Package at the same venue the following week.





Agile Tasman – Aviation Refuellers

Fuel section worked with the Australian air force to refuel their C130 and the amazing and loud F-35s. The Australian crew were super friendly and were very welcoming – inviting us to come and look at the aircraft while we did our refuels. Even when having issues with aircraft we were able to work around them and deliver what they were after. The whole Fuel team loved being able to get out and see some different aircraft and it brought back some good memories for the ones who have fuelled them in Australia at Ex Pitch Black. As a team we even brought them some good NZ pies on the last day as a thank you for being nice to all our crew. As a team we welcome them back any time!





Last Word

This week's ITW is a little delayed in being released. As we all know, the last two weeks have been busy for Team Ohakea. The last week has seen a great initiative and awesome work by one of our Team Ohakea Aviator's organising her unit to help Habitat for Humanity. These initiatives are very good to see and show how Base contributes to the local community. Don't forget to keep your eyes open for the endangered Dotteral. And of course, Agile Tasman - this week showcases 2 SECFOR and the Aviation Refuelers. There will be more on Agile Tasman in the next edition.

Keep sending in those stories to: gavin.hey@nzdf.mil.nz.