Inside the Wire
Ohakea Proud, our People, our Stories
16 October 2026

Ohakea Promotion

On Fri 09 Oct, Ohakea's only resident Clinical Psychologist, FLTLT Stephen Wright, was promoted to SQNLDR. Stephen joined the RNZAF in 2013 as an Organisational Psych and retrained as a Clinical Psych over the last few years. Family and friends were present to do the honours and celebrate along with LTCOL Steve Kearney, NZDF Chief Mental Health Officer. Stephen is an incredibly valued member of the Base Ohakea Support Team and it was great to celebrate this special occasion. *Article Credit – CHAPCL3 Rog Black.*

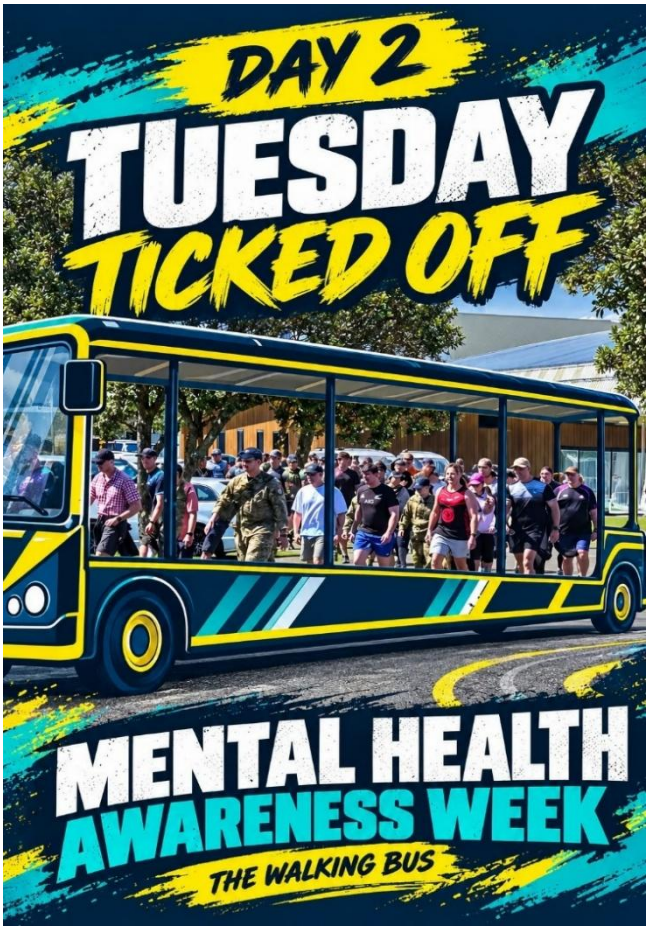


Mental Health Week

This week has seen the Ohakea gym staff take the lead for Mental Health Awareness Week. They have organised an event each day. On Mon 12 Oct it was Team Box Jumps where each member of a three-person team had to do 180 box jumps. Boxes were set up in the gym and outside the café. There was a constant stream of Aviators, civilians and contractors who joined in. Attached are a few photos from outside the café.

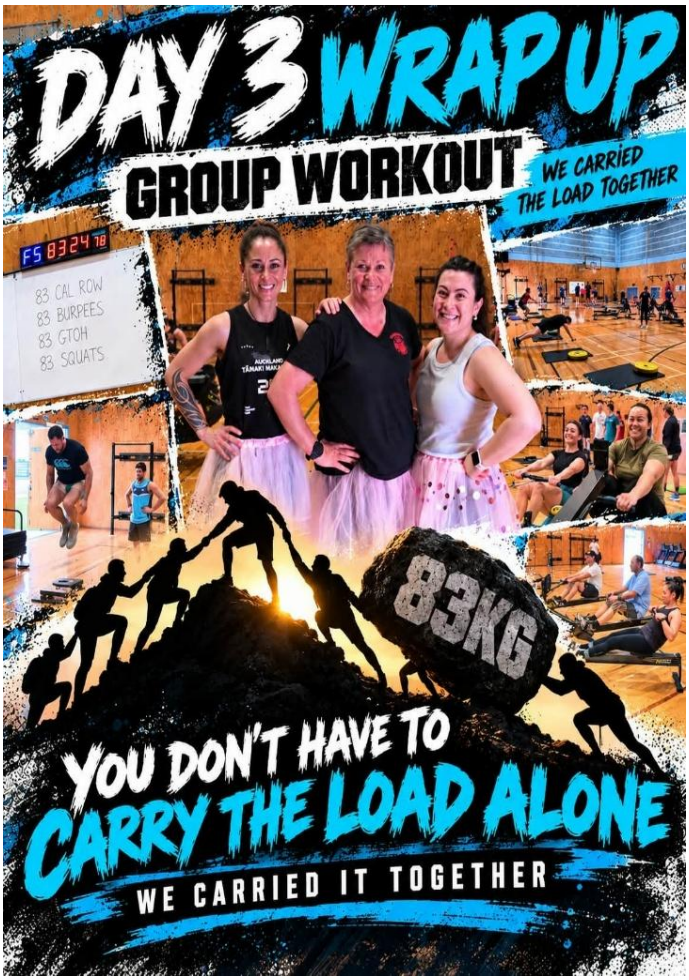














On Tue 13 Oct it was the Base Walking Bus. This proved to be a very popular event with a large Base contingent joining the bus. The weather was warm and sunny and lots of great conversations were had covering a huge range of topics.
Wed 14 Oct saw some more mahi required in the Team Challenge with each team member having to do 83 burpees, 83 squats, 83 ground to overheads and 83 cals on the rowing machine.

Thu 15 Oct saw a day of reflection and catching up with a mate/friend. Fri 16 Oct will be reported on next week.

3 SQN NATCON

On Wed 14 Oct a 3 SQN NH-90 was on a routine training sortie when it was re-tasked to Hastings to support an NZ Police SAR operation for a missing high school student around Sunrise Hut in the Ruahine Ranges. On arrival in the search area, tracks in the area were searched along with Top Maropea Hut. Following this, the Waipawa river valley was searched, and the lost party was spotted by the crew. He was extracted via winch and returned to the road end to NZ Police and family. LANDSAR personnel were then extracted before the aircraft returned to Ohakea via Hastings. Given the nature of the terrain, where the LANDSAR teams were commencing their search from, and the direction of travel by the lost party, had aerial searching not occurred it is likely he would not have been found till Thu. A good result for all involved after a long night searching by LANDSAR volunteers. *Article Credit – FLTLT George Bellamy.*



Editor Note – Spot the missing student in the first photo.





Last Word

Congratulations to SQNLDR Wright on his promotion. I hope all Team Ohakea personnel have managed to get out of the office and take part in the events around Mental Health week that the PTIs have organised. Even if it was to check in on someone or stop by for a coffee. Another Ohakea unit continues to deliver with a successful NATCON. Well-done to the crew and 3 SQN.

As mentioned last week, there are a lot of things happening around the Base and in the community that the editor would like to share with a wider audience. Please send the stories in to: gavin.hey@nzdf.mil.nz.