

## BFPO and Royal Mail Sign New Agreement to Keep Personnel Connected

BFPO was delighted to host a visit by the new Chief of Materiel (Land) (COM(L)), Lt Gen Paul Jaques CBE, and the Chairman of Defence Equipment and Support, Paul Skinner CBE, on 23 Mar 16. An ideal opportunity to brief both Chairman DE&S and the new COM(L) on the vital work of the organisation, COM(L) also signed the Forces Mail Settlement (FMS) on behalf of the Ministry of Defence, alongside Mike Newnham, Chief Customer Officer for Royal Mail Group.

Worth £11m over four years, the FMS is the contract between BFPO and its strategic partner, Royal Mail Group, which assures the continued support of Royal Mail to the delivery of mail on behalf of BFPO on the first and final mile legs to and from BFPO London, as well as their match-funding of the Enduring Families' Free Mail Service in support of Operations and Ships.

Mike Newnham, Royal Mail's Chief Customer Officer, said:

*"Royal Mail is delighted that its long standing contract with the British Forces Post Office is continuing. We are proud to play our part in delivering mail to our armed forces stationed around the world."*

The agreement, which reaffirms the relationship between Royal Mail and the BFPO, will help military personnel to keep in touch with family and friends back in the UK, wherever they are in the world. In accordance with the Armed Forces Covenant, sending mail to personnel overseas will remain at inland UK prices. For Service men and women on operations, the vital service of keeping in touch with home will remain free.

Forces Post Offices based all over the world handle service personnel's mail while it is overseas, with the Royal Mail taking over its handling when it reaches the UK, whether at the beginning or end of its journey. The Forces Mail Settlement, in place from today until March 2020, also sees the BFPO receive a percentage of the cost of postage for the letters and parcels it handles from Royal Mail. The Royal Mail also pays half the costs of the Enduring Families' Free Mail Service, which allows relatives and friends within the UK or at BFPO addresses to send letters and small parcels to military personnel on operations and ships overseas for free.

Lieutenant General Jaques, signing the Forces Mail Settlement on behalf of the Ministry of Defence, said:

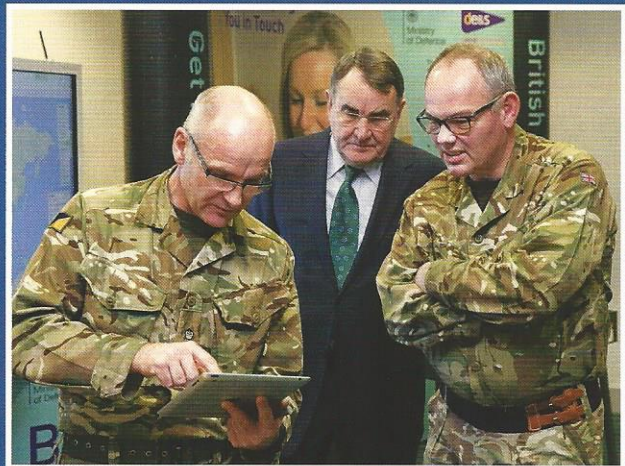
*"There is nothing like getting a letter from back home, whether you're a few hours away or on the other side of the world. This deal will ensure that friends and family members can continue to support our troops with letters, parcels and packages, without incurring extra postage costs. It is crucial that Service personnel, who work so hard to keep Britain safe, both at home and abroad, have the support of agreements like this one between Government and Royal Mail, as part of the Armed Forces Covenant."*

Following the signing of the FMS, Lt Gen Jaques and Mr Skinner were given a tour of the BFPO Sorting Office by BFPO SO1 Operations, Lt Col Brett Duxbury, where they met a variety of staff from across the business.

Col Tim Blackmore OBE, Head BFPO, said: *"I was very pleased that Lt Gen Jaques and Mr Skinner were able to accept our invitation to visit BFPO, particularly so early into COM(L)'s tenure. I am especially grateful to General Paul for signing the Forces Mail Settlement today, thus guaranteeing the invaluable support provided by Royal Mail to BFPO, and sustaining the top quality service we provide to our customers, for another four years."*



**Royal Mail's Chief Customer Officer, Mike Newnham, signs the Forces Mail Settlement with Lt Gen Paul Jaques CBE, Chief of Materiel (Land).**



**Lt Col Mark Lloyd MBE shows the BFPO iOS apps to Lt Gen Jaques and Mr Paul Skinner CBE, Chairman Defence Equipment & Support.**



**BFPO SO1 Operations, Lt Col Brett Duxbury, explains the range of BFPO postal capabilities to Lt Gen Jaques and Mr Skinner.**