



Media Release 29 October 2017

BFPS welcomes RFA TIDESPRING

RFA TIDESPRING – A136 is the first of four MARS Tide Class fast fleet tankers entering service to support the Royal Navy and wider Defence. In particular they have been designed to support all Royal Navy warships, including the new aircraft carriers, HMS Queen Elizabeth and HMS Prince of Wales, wherever required in the world.

This official commemorative cover has been issued by the British Forces Philatelic Service, in conjunction with the Royal Fleet Auxiliary Association, to mark the introduction into service of this remarkable new state-of-the-art vessel.

The image used on the cover was taken by Capt SP Jones OBE, from the ship's boat, during the ship's 'delivery voyage' across the Pacific. The cover will bear a personalised Smiler stamp using an image taken by Pearl Harbour Pilot Wade Armstrong when RFA TIDESPRING visited Hawaii. This stamp will be cancelled by the special handstamp BFPS 3210 which features the ship's badge.

The covers may be ordered from the BFPS online shop (www.bfps.org.uk/shop) at a cost of just £7.50. A limited-edition version, signed by prominent officers within the Royal Fleet Auxiliary, will also be available at £15. All of these covers have been conveyed in RFA TIDESPRING during her sea trials.

Also available will be sheets of the personalised Smiler stamps used on the cover, priced at £38 per sheet. Please watch the BFPS website for further information.

Covers and stamps may also be ordered by post by sending a cheque (payable to 'BFPS CIC') to BFPS The Old Post Office Links Place Elie LEVEN KY9 1AX.

Ends

An image of the commemorative cover is attached.

About BFPS

The British Forces Philatelic Service (BFPS) fundraises for Service charities through philately and is a not-for-profit organisation run by a small team of volunteers, all of whom are Veterans. BFPS was specially set-up to ensure that the Forces Philatelic Bureau survives and thrives. BFPS is a registered Community Interest Company (CIC) working closely with the British Forces Post Office (BFPO).

The BFPO has had responsibility for all aspects of military mail, including philatelic matters, since its formation in 1882. More recently, as part of a Strategic Defence and Security Review, BFPO was reorganised and as a result of this the Forces Philatelic Bureau was transferred to BFPS, which was specially set up, as the sole authorised body empowered to deal with all matters concerning the Forces Philatelic Bureau. BFPS is officially licensed by the UK MOD.

BFPS is managed by two retired career Army officers, each of whom has had extensive experience working within the BFPO in general and the Forces Philatelic Bureau in particular. The third member of the management team is an ex Royal Engineer Warrant Officer who has a passion for Forces philately. All are volunteers and are dedicated to keeping the Forces Philatelic Bureau alive and are working hard to ensure the future of this unique area of BFPO operations is secure and flourishes.

Links:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/british-forces-post-office-services>

<http://www.royalmail.com/personal/stamps-collectibles-gifts>

<http://www.postalmuseum.org/>

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BFPS fundraises for Service charities through philately and is a not-for-profit Community Interest Company (CIC) limited by guarantee. Registered No 417647.

Registered address: The Old Post Office Links Place Elie Leven Fife KY9 1AX

About the Royal Fleet Auxiliary (RFA)

The Civilian-manned Royal Fleet Auxiliary delivers worldwide logistical and operational support for the wide range of tasks the Royal Navy undertakes including warfighting, counter - piracy, humanitarian and disaster relief, and counter-narcotics operations.

Website: <https://www.royalnavy.mod.uk/our-organisation/the-fighting-arms/royal-fleet-auxiliary>

About the Royal Fleet Auxiliary Association (RFAA)

The Royal Fleet Auxiliary Association is a registered charity and is open to all serving and retired members of the RFA and their spouses. Members are automatically enrolled in one of six branches in the UK, or two others covering Malta and the Rest of the World.

Contact:

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website: <http://www.rfa-association.org.uk/>

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