

From: Major General OJ Kingsbury OBE



Colonel Commandant
Regimental Headquarters
The Parachute Regiment
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16th October 2024

Major General RRE Lindsay CBE
Military Secretary and General Officer Scotland
Kentigern House
65 Brown Street
Glasgow G2 8EX

Dear Robin,

As we have previously discussed, I write in my capacity as Colonel Commandant of The Parachute Regiment and President of The Parachute Regimental Association (PRA).

For some time, we have had some difficulties with an organisation known as the Airborne Alliance (ABA, Scottish Charity No 045965), creating friction for our Scottish branches of the PRA. Given your General Officer Scotland role, I am very grateful for your offer of taking this matter forwards with Brigadier Jody Davies and the 51 Brigade engagement teams.

The history of this issue is complex and goes back to 2010. The current Chairman of the ABA (Col (ret'd) Clinton Hicks – a former CO of 2 PARA) was asked by a previous Colonel Commandant, Lieutenant General Sir John Lorimer, to review the PRA in Scotland with a view to improving its effectiveness and governance. Unfortunately, rather than engaging to improve the PRA from the inside, in 2015 Clinton formed the ABA as a rival association, causing the breakaway of a number of PRA branches. For several years, the Regiment's position was one of being civil to the ABA in the hope that over time relationships would improve and they would return to the PRA. Regrettably, rapprochement has not materialised and increasing friction, particularly around commemorative event representation and Branch funds (the subject of a recent Sheriff's court judgement and mediation), has become the norm, sadly requiring more formal engagement.

In order to avoid conflict and potential embarrassment at commemorative or civic events, and to support the Scottish PRA Executive and membership, our position is that the PRA is the only regimental association:

1. supported or endorsed by The Parachute Regiment
2. entitled to use Regimental images including the capbadge, whether digitally or physically
3. entitled to parade with Parachute Regiment Standards
4. engaged with or supported by RHQ PARA, the serving Regiment or other Regimental organisations such as The Parachute Regiment & Airborne Forces Charity (PRAFC) and Air Assault Landing (AAL) the Airborne Forces Museum Duxford

Despite the frustration with elements of ABA leadership's approach, as individuals, all former Paratroopers remain welcome and celebrated lifetime members of the PRA whether members of specific branches or not. As individuals they are also entitled to the full support of the regimental charity if they were ever to need welfare support.

I hope that stating the regimental position clearly will give confidence to the official PRA branches, and, through your engagement with Jody and his team, will get the message to any unaware garrison or civic leadership that inviting the ABA to their events is unhelpful.

Your advice and support is greatly appreciated. Please do not hesitate to ask if you need anything further from me.

*Yours,
Ollie Kingsbury*

Colonel Commandant
The Parachute Regiment

CC:

Maj Gen (ret'd) Freer (President, Grampian Branch of the PRA

Col (ret'd) Hicks (Chairman ABA)

Mr V Cowie

Col (ret'd) Jackson

Col Arter (16X-D Comd)

Lt Col Hitchins (2PARA-CO)

Lt Col Mans (3PARA-CO)

Lt Col Mackay (4PARA-CO)

Maj McGrane (ITC-2ITB-Para OC)

Capt Child (RC-APDT-REDDEVILS-OC)

Maj (ret'd) Jowett

Maj (ret'd) Raison

Mr J Baker