

# Industrial placements for RLC Petroleum Operators - The World Fuel Services (WFS) experience



**As an RLC trade with restricted peace-time opportunities, any experience to conduct real-time planning and/or live fuel operations is extremely valuable.**

Industrial placements offer the opportunity for knowledge transfer and the study of commercial techniques against which military technical doctrine can be benchmarked. It also instils individual confidence in technical understanding whilst enhancing skills.

Placements routinely last between four to six weeks and are focused on individual key competencies, skills, and specific areas of interest. The stimulus for individuals is to experience the behaviour of a commercial organisation and share these with trade colleagues in the military workplace. As well as developing generic functional skills, placements focus on particular strengths of individuals and identify areas for development. This 'professional orientation' creates CPD opportunities which ultimately benefit the trade. Enhanced technical competence in procedural and equipment areas also offer a unique insight into managing COTS systems, a vital and growing area in the provision of military fuel support. This exposure to commercial operating regimes is proving invaluable for trade personnel who experience how risk is managed, both in terms of Healthy and Safety and commercial considerations - an experience that can rarely be replicated in the military environment.

In January 2020, a joint initiative

between The RLC Foundation and WFS provided the opportunity for WO1 Baynham and WO2 Stewart to conduct a four-week industry placement with WFS Global Physical Operations.

The selection for the placement involved sending the participants' CVs to WO1 Franks, the Command Pet WO who forwarded them to WFS. A rigorous interview with senior management at WFS in London followed. This allowed the participants to understand the interview process and gain important and constructive feedback regarding their CVs and how the individuals came across during the interview. On completion of this process, WFS confirmed through their suitability and an industry placement offer was made.

Week one started at WFS offices in London, to gain an understanding of WFS, particularly what they are currently doing globally and their vision for the future, connected to subsidiary businesses such as Nordic Camp Supply Fuel (known to many in Afghanistan) and the energy management advisory service of WFS Kinect. Week two with Watson fuels enabled the Pet Ops to deepen their understanding of land operations from both a management and operator perspective. The time also included an insight into procurement, storage and physical delivery of various ground fuels to both domestic and commercial customers in southern England. Week three covered the aviation business, starting with depot storage operations and quality assurance. There was also the

■ L-R: WO2 Stewart and WO1 Baynham presenting the 66 Sqn history. WO2 Stewart refueling an Airbus 380 at Birmingham Airport. WO2 Stewart conducting a shell water detector test. WO2 Stewart at Luton Airport

chance to conduct re-fuelling of aircraft at Luton and Birmingham airports. Back in London, week four included sessions with Marine Operations and Austere & Remote Operations. The placement concluded with individual research project presentations to the senior members of the management team. As a mark of appreciation for the opportunity to conduct the placement, a gift of the framed history of 66 Fuel and General Transport Sqn RLC was presented to Peter Edwards, Senior VP Global Physical Ops.

WO1 Baynham said: "The placement provides an invaluable industry perspective of the difficulties and challenges of procurement, storage and physical delivery of fuel across a complex global network. On reflection, the knowledge, experience and competences that I have gained over my military service in the areas of command, leadership and management of fuels, resources and personnel map over very well to the commercial needs as there are lots of synergies between civilian industry and the MOD which I believe offer great opportunities."

The opportunity to provide military personnel with industry knowledge and experience from one of the world's leading fuel businesses, World Fuel Services, will continue.