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## **ADJUTANT GENERAL'S CORPS HOCKEY TOUR: HONG KONG AND SINGAPORE EXERCISE ASIAN THUNDER 2016 (ExAT): 25 FEB – 8 MAR 16 POST EXERCISE REPORT**

### **Introduction**

1. This was the 5<sup>th</sup> tour the AGC Hockey Club has undertaken since the formation of the Corps in 1992. It was the third twin location tour and follows the very successful tour to Australia and Singapore in Oct/Nov 14. This tour was a another huge success and the AGC Hockey team played games in Hong Kong and Singapore, culminating in the Singapore Cricket Club (SCC) "International Sixes".
2. The SCC International Sixes is a two-day tournament with well over 60 teams participating from around the world, albeit mainly Australasia. It starts as a Day One league event, which depending on results and final league placement determines whether teams are placed into the Cup, Plate or Bowl knock-out tournaments for Day Two. An invite only event, the AGC Hockey Club were the first HM Forces team to have ever been invited, and were the only European team at this year's tournament.
3. The Men's team played two matches prior to the tournament in Singapore, losing both in keenly fought fixtures. The men's team played extremely well in the tournament, losing their first match against a team that amongst them held over 200 national caps for Holland. Subsequent to this, they performed far above expectations and successfully qualified for the main Cup competition against all odds. Due to injuries, acclimatisation issues and simply being outclassed by another very strong team from Hong Kong, they were knocked out from the competition early in Day Two.
4. The Ladies team played two matches prior to the tournament against very strong Singapore club sides, losing both games. Despite winning their first match of the tournament, the rest of that day proved very difficult resulting in the Ladies team being seeded into the Bowl competition. Once placed with teams of similar abilities, their quality started to shine through. Consequentially, they ended up in the final, for which the result does not truly reflect how close the game really was.

5. In addition to the above, two mixed games were played in Hong Kong against specially pulled together sides from the Hong Kong Football Club hockey section. The AGC played superbly well as a mixed unit, drawing the first game and narrowly losing the other.

## Personnel

6. The tour consisted of 21 personnel, 10 Men and 11 Ladies. Selection has been based on availability and commitment to Corps Hockey in recent years.

## Points of Contact

7. In Hong Kong, we were hosted by the hockey section of the Hong Kong Football Club, a historic, globally recognised and much lauded private sports club. They arranged the pitches, changing facilities, and post-match hosting. The POC was:

a. Simon Chapman ([schapman@hkfc.com](mailto:schapman@hkfc.com))

8. In Singapore the team played two fixtures against local opposition with the POCs being:

a. Tornadoes Hockey Club – Jacqueline Shorrocks  
([jashorrocks@gmail.com](mailto:jashorrocks@gmail.com))

b. SCC – Hockey Section – Geer Langezaal ([glangezaal@outlook.com](mailto:glangezaal@outlook.com))

c. Also Mrs Pauline Appleyard (our POC for the AGC tour in 2014), provided excellent support ([paulinerappleyard@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:paulinerappleyard@yahoo.co.uk))

9. The tournament organiser for the SCC International Sixes was as follows;

a. Stanley Goh ([stanley.goh@scc.org.sg](mailto:stanley.goh@scc.org.sg))

## Accommodation

10. Hostel accommodation was used throughout the tour to keep costs to the minimal, and were found to be completely suitable. Rooms were a combination of four to eight bed dorms and facilities varied between the two hostels used. All hostels were booked direct to save on booking fees. Full details are as follows:

a. Hong Kong (26-29 Feb 16)– The Check Inn, Wanchai, Hong Kong.- [Check Inn](#) The hostel was clean and bedding and towels (small local charge) provided with en-suite showers and toilets in the dorms. Free wi-fi was provided, and it was on the doorstep to local eating options. It is in a great central location and easy access by public transport from the airport and a ten minute walk to HKFC. Despite this, there were some minor concerns of structural safety and the way the rooms were spread out, in what was effectively a combination of hostel rooms and personal flats. We would recommend checking out other hostel options first, albeit the Check Inn remains one of highest recommended Hong Kong hostels on numerous review websites.

b. Singapore (1 – 7 Mar 16) – Five Stones Hostel, 61 South Bridge Road Level 2 (near Hong Kong Street), Singapore 058691. Contact - reservations@fivestoneshostel.com (+65 6535 5607). This hostel was in a great location by Clark Quay and close to China Town. Free wi-fi is available throughout the hostel and breakfast is provided. Towels are not provided but cost about £1.50 to hire. The staff are extremely friendly and helpful beyond fault, especially with taxi and bus hires, and providing local information. This is the second time we have used Five Stones Hostel and it remains our definitive first choice for Singapore.

## Timings

11. The tour was organised to coincide with the SCC International Sixes Tournament over the weekend 5-6 Mar 16. It was decided to travel earlier, with the tournament becoming the culminating point of the whole Tour. By doing this it allowed for our gradual acclimatisation to the temperature ranges: UK -1°C; Hong Kong +20°C; Singapore +34°C.

## Travel

11. Flights were organised through group sales at Trailfinders and were via Cathay Pacific Airlines. (POC Sarah Szyszkiewicz – 020 7938 3858):

- a. London Heathrow (LHR) TO Hong Kong (HKG) Cathay Pacific – 25 Feb 16  
CX238 25 Feb London to Hong Kong 1715 – 1250 (26 Feb 16)
- b. Hong Kong (HKG) To Singapore (Sin) Cathay Pacific – 29 Feb 16  
CX 739 Hong Kong to Singapore 1135 - 1535
- c. Hong Kong to London Heathrow 7 Mar 16  
CX 716 Singapore to Hong Kong 1815-2205  
CX 255 8 Mar 16 Hong Kong to London Heathrow 0100 - 0620

12. Flights were held with a 10% deposit. Final payment was taken eight weeks before departure on 6 Jan 16. The earlier the flights are booked, the cheaper the flights costs are.

13. The tour party met at Cavalry Barracks, Hounslow at 1030 hrs on the day of travel to enable tour kit to be issued without causing disruption at Heathrow where 20 people would need to repack. Final checks were made on passports and insurance, and the party then departed by coach to London Heathrow. Dress was smart trousers and tour polo shirts. A coach was organised to collect the party on the return leg, back to Cavalry Barracks. The RAO from 1 Irish Guards facilitated the use of the barracks and this allowed individuals to leave their personal vehicles safely parked throughout the tour, and without the concern of potentially losing their car keys whilst overseas.

14. **Transport in Hong Kong and Singapore.** In Hong Kong and Singapore public transport was used. Although due to very cheap costs, a coach was booked through the British High Commission in Singapore to collect the tour party on arrival at Singapore Airport and then again to return the tour party to the airport on 7 Mar 16.

## **Messing**

15. Most breakfasts were provided by the hostels and the remaining meals were either paid for by the individual, by hosting teams or through tour funds. The cost of food and drink in Hong Kong and Singapore can be high; the costs in some locations (outside tourist areas) were considerably cheaper but language barriers then became an issue.

## **Administration**

16. **Finance.** See Annex B for the final breakdown. All personal contributions were capped at £650, which were paid in instalments to ensure that junior members did not feel a significant financial pinch.

17. **Funding.** All personal were encouraged to approach their individual units for grants from the PRI and ECOPF. For the majority this reduced the cost of the personal contribution by between £50 - £150.

18. **Currency.** It was a personal responsibility to make arrangements for currency exchange for the tour. It was recommended that the majority of money be taken as cash passports as these can be replaced more easily if stolen or lost, unlike cash. Restaurants and shops accept the major credit cards. Thomas Cook, Marks & Spencer and the Post Office all offer “no commission” currency exchange to military personnel.

19. **Passports.** All members of the tour held a valid passport which remained valid for at least six months after the ENDEX date; this is a requirement for entry into Singapore. Details of passports and driving licences were held by the tour manager and all personal were directed to hold a photocopy of their passport. No passport issues were encountered on the tour.

20. **Visas/E-Visas.** There are no visa requirements for holders of a British Passport visiting either Hong Kong or Singapore.

21. **Army Sports Lottery.** All members of the tour were fully paid members of the Army Sports Lottery prior to departure. The ASL also provided water bottles and t-shirts with ASL logos that were used throughout the tour. Without the £500 contribution per person to the tour, the tour would quite simply not have been financially possible.

22. **Emergency Contacts.** All members of the tour their Emergency Contact (EC) details were correct and in date on JPA prior to departure. The tour management held all emergency contact details; JCCC was not required.

23. **Compassionate Emergencies.** All members of the tour ensured they passed on the “Compassionate Leave and Travel from Overseas” information card (JPA P001) onto their NoK.

## **Clearances**

24. **ASCB.** Authority to travel must be obtained through both the chain of command and the ASCB. The latest DIN for Army Overseas Sports Travel is **2014DIN10-055.**

25. **Political.** In addition to the ASCB authority, political clearance must be obtained for both countries. Contacts were as follows:

- a. Hong Kong. Through the British Embassy, Beijing. Admin Officer [Mat.Brown@fco.gov.uk](mailto:Mat.Brown@fco.gov.uk)
- b. Singapore. Through the British High Commission, Singapore. [Mick.Saunders@fco.gov.uk](mailto:Mick.Saunders@fco.gov.uk).

## Medical

26. **Vaccinations.** Personnel ensured they were fully up to date with their normal military required vaccinations. No specific additional vaccinations were required for visiting Hong Kong and Singapore.

27. **Personal Medical Responsibilities.** All personal were deemed fit to travel prior to the tour although some injuries were sustained through the duration.

28. **First Aid Kit.** A specialist hockey first aid kit was included in the team equipment. This proved to be sufficient for the needs of the tour. The company used was Firstaid4sport. The SCC provided full medical support during the tournament including physiotherapists, chiropractors, and medics. An ambulance was also situation 'pitch-side' ready to take any seriously injured individuals straight to the hospital.

29. **Impact of the Weather.** The estimated temperature for Hong Kong in Feb 16 was estimated to be 20 °C but the actual temperature was closer to 22 °C. In Singapore the temperature was around 32°C and with humidity around 100%. Playing conditions in Hong Kong were manageable. Precautions were taken, with ice and cold drinks readily available on the sidelines. The playing conditions in Singapore were considerably harsher and games were reduced to 25 mins each way to compensate. Again, fluids and ice were readily available for players to re-hydrated, including after the fixtures. For the tournament, a "cool-off" swimming pool was provided pitch side which was readily used by all teams, and plenty of shade was provided.

30. **Injuries.** The touring party suffered some injuries during the fixtures played and during the tournament a first class medical service was provided on site. The injuries sustained were as follows (MOD Form 510 to be completed by the player concerned on return to UK):

- a. 3 x pulled muscles.
- b. Heatstroke – Treated at the tournament by qualified personnel.
- c. Shoulder injury
- d. Knee ligament damage
- e. Fracture to right shoulder
- f. Various bruises – No further action required.

## Insurance

31. **Travel Insurance.** All payers paid for their own travel insurance. It was stressed this must include cover for contact sports and specifically mention hockey. All players confirm their policy details to the tour manager prior to departure.

32. **Security.** As Hong Kong is on the Countries to which Special Security Restrictions Apply (CSSRA) then additional security requirements were put in place. All players participating in the tour required a brief from the unit Security Officer and those with Developed Vetting required further briefings. In addition a Security Instruction was issued to all players. Further advice is provided by the Embassy in China and through International Policy and Planning (IPP) in main building. The POC for the North East Asia Desk is: Sara Perring ([IPP-AP1@mod.uk](mailto:IPP-AP1@mod.uk)), MOD Main Building. Tel: 020 7218 7290

33. Early engagement with both IPP and the British Embassy in China is strongly recommended. There were no incidents of theft, altercations, or security approaches made during the tour. The Hong Kong and Singapore hosts ensured we did not venture into the back streets of the cities and kept to the tourist areas. On the whole the cities were found to be very safe.

## Equipment

34. **Personal.** A detailed kit list was provided to players and this proved to be sufficient.

35. **Baggage Allowance.** Everyone was allowed two hold bags with a combined total of up to 30kg. It was suggested that this was split as one suitcase/holdall and one hockey stick bag (or goalie bag for Goalkeepers) be taken per person. There was also a hand baggage allowance, which was restricted to the usual 7kg per bag with set dimensions for routine flights. No excess baggage was required. In the tour instruction players were limited to 25kg of their baggage allowance to allow for the tour kit, goalkeeper equipment, presentation items and splitting out of other team items. There is no specific group check-in for Cathay Pacific and liaison with the ground staff at the various airports ensured that issues were kept to a minimum. It should be noted that the normal baggage allowance for Cathay Pacific is 20kg, but that by using Trailfinders we were able to increase the baggage allowance to 30 kg at no extra charge.

36. **Tour Kit.** The tour kit was purchased through Frog Island Sport in Leicester. They provided a healthy discount and were able to embroider the kit at very reasonable price. Each player was issued the following kit:

- a. Two playing shirts
- b. Two tour polo shirts
- c. Two training shirts
- d. One pair of tour shorts
- e. Two pairs of tour socks
- f. One tour stick bag.

## Activities

37. Activities at some locations were factored into the itinerary. Other days were left free for individuals to explore where they wished. Those factored into the tour budget included:

- a. Hong Kong – Dragon Dance Brunch at the Hong Kong Football Club

- b. Singapore – Stand-Up Paddleboarding - <http://www.supschool.com.sg/>
- c. Singapore – Cultural Tour
- d. Singapore – Trip to Sentosa Island - <http://www.sentosa.com.sg/en/>

### Media

38. Maj Sarah Ballantyne was the “Chief Scribe” and articles will be submitted to the AGC Journal, ASCB, ASL, Soldier Magazine and England Hockey.

### Discipline

39. There were no disciplinary incidents at all during the tour, and all personnel adhered strictly to the timings given.

40. Match results were as follows:

#### Tour Matches MIXED

Match 1	Hong Kong football Club	Drew 3-3	Simon Chapman	Hong Kong football Club
Match 2	Hong Kong football Club	Lost 2-0	Simon Chapman	Hong Kong football Club

#### Tour Matches LADIES

Match 1	Tornadoes HC – Singapore	Lost 3-2	Jacqueline Shorrocks	Evans Road, Sports Pitches
Match 2	Singapore Cricket Club – Hockey Sect	Lost 6-0	Geer Langezaal	Evans Road, Sports Pitches
<b>Tournament results</b>				
Match 3	HKFC	Won 1-0		Padang
Match 4	SCC Flamingos	Lost 2-0		
Match 5	High Tea Hockey	Lost 2-0		
Match 6	International Sport Club Indonesia	Lost 4-1		
Match 7	Modernians	Lost 1-0		
<b>Qualified 5th in group and went into the Bowl competition.</b>				
Match 8	Southern Storm troopers	Won 2-0		
Match 9	Esperance Dolphins	Won 1-0		
<b>Bowl Final</b>				
Match 10	Touring Lions	Lost 4-0		

## Tour Matches MEN

Match 1	Tornadoes HC – Singapore	Loss 3-1	Jacqueline Shorrocks	Evans Road, Sports Pitches
Match 2	Singapore Cricket Club – Hockey Sect	Lost 4-1	Geer Langezaal	Evans Road, Sports Pitches
Tournament results				
Match 3	Hollandse Club	Lost 4-0		Padang
Match 4	Anzai Japan	Won 2-1		
Match 5	YMCC Youth	Won 2-1		
Match 6	Roaming Redmen	Drew 0-0		
Qualified 2 <sup>nd</sup> in group and went into main cup competition.				
Match 7	Hong Kong Cricket Club	Lost 5-0		

## Defence Engagement

41. We were well hosted by the Hong Kong Football Club, Tornadoes Hockey Club and Singapore Cricket Club.

42. In Singapore we were also hosted by the Defence Attaché staff from the British High Commission.

## Command and Control

43. OIC Tour – Maj Matt Cann  
Tour Manager – Maj Warren Ginn  
Media – Maj Sarah Ballantyne

## Summary

44. The AGC Hockey tour to Hong Kong and Singapore was a great success and was hugely rewarding to those that took part. It was very much a development side due to the unavailability of a number of players selected to play in the concurrent Inter-Services tournament. Both teams did extremely well in the hot and humid conditions, and many new contacts were made. This also cemented our relationship with the Singapore Cricket Club. It is hoped that the AGC will be able to accept the offer to participate in the 2017 International Sixes as well as renew the rivalries with the Hong Kong Football Club.

45. Any queries relating to this PXR should be directed to the undersigned in the first instance.

WF GINN  
Major  
Tour Manager and Secretary  
for Chairman AGC HC

Annexes:

A. Latest Itinerary



Dated 4 Apr 16

## AGC HOCKEY TOUR TO HONG KONG AND SINGAPORE 25 FEB – 8 MAR 16

Date	Time	Activity	Remarks
25 Feb 16	1715	Depart London Heathrow	Cathay Pacific CX238
26 Feb 16	1250	Arrive Hong Kong	
26 Feb 16	1400	Move to accommodation	<a href="#">Check Inn</a>
27 Feb 16	1200	Match versus Hong Kong Football Club (HKFC) – Hockey Teams	
28 Feb 16	1000	Post match analysis	
28 Feb 16	1100	Team Brunch	HKFC
28 Feb 16	1800	Social Event	
29 Feb 16	0730	Check out of hostel and travel to airport	
29 Feb 16	1135	Depart Hong Kong	<b>Cathay Pacific CX739</b>
29 Feb 16	1535	Arrive Singapore	
29 Feb 16	1615	Move to accommodation by coach	<a href="#">Five Stones Hostel</a>
1 Mar 16	1000	Training	Day free after 1000 hrs meet to tour Singapore
1 Mar 16	2000	Match versus Tornadoes Hockey Club – Singapore	PB 2000 and 2100 hrs
2 Mar 16	0900	Beach day hosted by Singapore Cricket Club (SCC) personnel	
3 Mar 16	1830	Karaoke event	Loud/Flowery shirt required – we will be hosting SCC and High Commission staff who have assisted the tour.
3 Mar 16	1000	Training	Day free after 1000 hrs meet to tour Singapore
3 Mar 16	2000	Match versus SCC Select	PB 2000 and 2100 hrs
4 Mar 16	1000	Pre-tournament briefing	
4 Mar 16	1000	Cultural tour of Singapore	
4 Mar 16	1800	Tournament Briefing (SCC) followed by players cocktail party	Team Captains and Tour Managers only to attend briefing
5 Mar 16	0800	SCC International six a Side Tournament commences	
5 Mar 16	1900	Tournament Dinner and Dance	Fancy Dress Theme – Greek – <b>Issued at Cavalry Barracks</b>
6 Mar 16	0800	Tournament continues	
6 Mar 16	1900	Tour Dinner	Location - <a href="#">Cafe Iguana</a>
7 Mar 16	1200	Check out of hostel	
7 Mar 16	1815	Depart Singapore	Cathay Pacific CX716
7 Mar 16	2200	Arrive Hong Kong	
8 Mar 16	0110	Depart Hong Kong	Cathay Pacific CX255 – arrive London Heathrow at 0620