

PROPOSALS FOR THE FUTURE OF THE 6<sup>TH</sup> QUEEN ELIZABETH'S OWN GURKHA RIFLES  
REGIMENTAL ASSOCIATION – THE NEXT STEP

References:

- A: 6GR/5 dated 22 Apr 18 (Proposals for the Future of the 6GRRRA)
- B: 6GR/6a dated 16 Aug 18 (Summary of Ref A)
- C: 6GR/7 dated 23 Oct 22 (Update on disbursement of Trust Funds)
- D: 6GRRRA Rules approved on 22 Nov 22.
- E: GBA Constitution under BS072/14 dated 24 Nov 14

1. Members will recall that two papers dealing with the future of our Association (6GRRRA) and Trust (6GRRT) were issued in 2018, with a third in 2022. These are listed under 'References' above and copies of Reference A and B have been posted on the 6GRRRA Website. This document will also be posted when completed, as will Reference C, and copies will need to be made available to all recipients of annual Trust grants.

Aim.

2. The aim of this paper is to make proposals for the move of 6GRRRA from the current organisation to a simpler but equally effective one which 'homes' our Regimental Association (RA) within the Gurkha Brigade Association (GBA). This does not represent closure of the association, but rather reorganisation: current activities would continue but with a much-reduced structure and no significant diminution of service.
3. The Trust (6GRRT) would close.
4. Whether or not annual subscriptions continue will be dependent on decisions on, principally, the future of the Regimental Journal.

Background.

5. The references lay down the background of both the 6GRRRA and 6GRRT and propose options for the future in detail (Reference A) and in a condensed form (Reference B). In brief, it was proposed that:
  - a. As the active membership declines and availability of suitable individuals to run matters reduces, 6GRRRA and 6GRRT as constituted at present would close, probably between 2023-2028.
  - b. A decision on Closure of the Association would be made by the membership at a Special General Meeting (Reference D para 19.1), while in the case of the 6GRRT, any such decision would be made by the Trustees.
  - c. Membership would be absorbed by the GBA, although certain 6GRRRA events would continue to be run by our members.

- d. Funds held by the 6GRRT would be dispersed and the Trust closed. Note that Reference A identified possible recipients of these funds, and this was reviewed in Reference C in the light of a reduction in our capital following the Memorial Project.
  - e. No firm decisions on the format of the organisation post-closure were made.
6. Role of the Association. The objectives of the Association are listed in Reference A and Reference D. The main objective remains unchanged: “to foster esprit de corps and comradeship and to preserve the traditions and history of the Regiment for all former members of the Regiment and members of the Association”. In particular, and in furtherance of this, the Association:
- a. Provides a forum for members to keep in touch.
  - b. Organises an Annual Memorial Ceremony in Winchester Cathedral and an Annual General Meeting (AGM) and Luncheon in the Gurkha Museum in Winchester on the same date.
  - c. Issues an Annual Regimental Journal.
  - d. Promulgates Brigade and Regimental communications via the Secretary, who also coordinates attendance at GBA events.
  - e. Ensures that the Association is represented at special events when appropriate.
  - f. Maintains the 6GRRRA website and members’ contact details.
  - g. Supports, when applicable, ‘own steam’ events organised by individual volunteer members, such as the Cuttack Lunches, the Regimental Shoot, Battlefield Tours et al.
7. Role of the Trust. The role of the Trust is fully covered in Reference A: the main objective is “To foster the esprit de corps and further comradeship and welfare of former members of the 6<sup>th</sup> Queen Elizabeth’s Own Gurkha Rifles (The Regiment) and their families and to preserve the history and traditions of the Regiment”. In furtherance of this the Trust:
- a. Administers the 6GRRT charitable trust under Charity Commission rules.
  - b. Disburses funds to beneficiaries in line with the formal objectives and as needed. A copy of the long-standing and regularly updated policy on welfare work is at Annex A.
  - c. Ensures Regimental assets remain under the control of Trustees and that their disposal is appropriately managed.

#### Current Situation.

8. In recent years the number of active members has declined, although a hard-core of steadfast members remains involved. Our current Chairman will retire in 2024, our Secretary in 2025 and our President, who has been in post since 2002, will retire as soon as

possible. However, recruiting replacements is extremely difficult: in a recent trawl by our Chairman among the younger generation, very few (11%) said that they would be willing to take on any post, and all offers were conditional.

9. Moreover, even if we were able to recruit officers to fill posts, this would simply defer establishing a future modus operandi, rather than designing one now while we have an experienced team in post (and in the GBA). Note that several other antecedent Regimental Associations (RAs) are now closing, down-sizing or changing the way in which they operate.
10. 6GRRRA and 6GRRRT cannot continue as organised at present, and we are not the only RA in this position. Reference A postulated that the Association could be 'homed' in either the GBA or even the RGR Association: bearing in mind that the former covers the whole Brigade, whilst the latter would tend to be rather insular, it is felt that the GBA offers the best solution: we are, after all, members of the Brigade of Gurkhas. It should be noted that several of our pre-Indian Independence Associations continue to this day and are 'homed' in the GBA, pay no subscriptions to the GBA and are run by just a Secretary.

#### Proposal.

11. Bearing in mind the continuing decline of active membership, the dearth of volunteers to take on roles and responsibilities, and the forthcoming retirement of both the current President and Chairman, it is proposed that:
  - a. The 6GRRRA, as presently constituted, closes on 31 Dec 2024, with a decision on membership subscriptions having been made before Nov 2024.
  - b. The Association would, from 1 Jan 2025, be 'homed' in the GBA. It might then be regarded as an "Association-Light".
  - c. The 6GRRRT, having resolved all outstanding business (including dispersal of funds) closes at a time determined by the Trustees, but probably within the following year.
  - d. Post-closure the membership is represented within the GBA by a "6GR Secretary" (6GR Sec).
  - e. The 6GR Sec would not be unsupported: it is proposed that a small group of past office-holders to be available to the 6GR Sec for representational duties and to advise or to assist as required. This group (a Council?) might be made-up of past Chairmen, Secretaries, President or Trust trustees on a voluntary basis.
12. This seems simple in principle, but the mechanics of reorganisation need to be resolved: most actions needed were identified in Reference A and have been under discussion with GBA since then, although some areas remain to be confirmed. How reorganisation might be effected is covered in Annex B, although these suggestions are not exclusive and may need both amendment and additional action. For example, decisions on the future of the Regimental Journal and membership subscriptions and will need to be made.

13. Trust funds would be disbursed to various groups as outlined Reference A. Trust closure would impact on some of the current recipients of annual financial support, but all would receive significant final grants to assist them to adjust to the need to be self-supporting. These will include the charity “Hands Together Tiplyang Project”, who administer our grants to Tiplyang school in Nepal, and a substantial grant to the Gurkha Museum as it embarks on a major refurbishment.

Decision Process.

14. It is proposed that the process of approving or rejecting these recommendations will be decided after consultations between the President, the Chairman, members of the 6GRRRA Committee past and present, the GBA and the Trustees of the 6GRRT. The provisions of Reference D must be borne in mind and the matter will need to be put to the Association membership.

John Anderson  
President 6GRRRA  
Chairman 6GRRT

6GR/8v6  
19 Oct 2023