

**AIR VICE-MARSHAL SIMON ROBERT CHARLES DOUGHERTY MSC  
MBBS FRCP FFOM DAvMed DObstRCOG FCMI FRAeS (G60-67)**

Air Vice-Marshal Simon Dougherty was born in Colchester. He was educated at Brandeston Hall (1960-62) and Framlingham College, Suffolk (Garrett House) (1962-67) where he did not excel on the sports fields. He was a member of the choir and reached the rank of Staff Sergeant in the Army Section of the Combined Cadet Force. Although not a scholar, he was placed in the 'scholarship form' [Upper IVa] on entry to the College. On reflection, this may not have been the best option as he was almost always at the bottom of the class. However, he picked up 4 'O' Levels a year early and was allowed to enter the Lower VIth at the age of 15. He gained 2 poor 'A' Level passes and one graded at 'O' at the age of 17. Subsequently, he stayed for a third year in the VIth Form, when he was appointed a House Prefect, and retaking his 'A' levels, he achieved grades which enabled him to be selected to study medicine at The London Hospital Medical College, University of London. He joined in October 1967 and graduated in May 1972. He joined the Royal Air Force as a Medical Cadet in 1969. He married Margaret, a London Hospital Staff Nurse, in 1971. After completing 'House' Appointments at The London Hospital and The Royal United Hospital, Bath, he entered productive service in the RAF in 1974.



His initial posting was at RAF Binbrook in Lincolnshire where he experienced his first flights in a 'fast jet' – the English Electric (later British Aircraft Corporation) Lightning. Simon and Maggie's eldest son, James, was born at RAF Hospital Nocton Hall, early in 1975. Subsequently, in June 1975 he moved to the UK Support Unit at the NATO HQ at Brunssum (HQ Allied Forces Central Europe) in Holland where he completed General Practice Vocational Training. He gained the Diploma in Obstetrics in 1976. Philip, their second son, was born at RAF Hospital Wegberg in April 1977. Then, in December 1977, he moved to become the Senior Medical Officer (of one) at the UK Support Unit at HQ Allied Air Forces Central Europe at the huge USAF Base at Ramstein Germany, for one year. He was promoted to Squadron Leader in June 1978.

He was selected to attend the Diploma in Aviation Medicine Course at the RAF Institute of Aviation Medicine, Farnborough in 1979, when he gained the Stewart Memorial Prize and was designated Flight Medical Officer. Following this, he was appointed as Chief Instructor at the RAF Aviation Medicine Training Centre, RAF North Luffenham where he spent 3 years training aircrew in the physiological stresses of flight and their protective equipment. This included giving aircrew personal practical experience of hypoxia in hypobaric chambers. In 1980, he was appointed an Associate of the Faculty of Occupational Medicine of the Royal College of Physicians (AFOM). In this period, he also had a period commanding No 1 Air Evacuation Squadron, a 'shadow manned' medical unit whose task was to hold and transfer aeromedical casualties at the time of conflict. Clare, their daughter, was born in Oakham, in 1980.

In 1982, he moved to be Senior Medical Officer at the Trinational Tornado Training Establishment at RAF Cottesmore, with a staff of RAF and German Air Force doctors and medical staff. There he completed his training in Occupational Medicine and was appointed a Member of the Faculty of Occupational Medicine (MFOM). As he had gained his professional qualifications in occupational medicine via a legacy experience route, he chose to study for a Masters degree in Occupational Health at the TUC Centenary Institute at the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine from 1985-6.

Subsequently, he commenced a series of non-clinical (policy, delivery, governance and training) appointments which would continue throughout the remainder of his career. Initially, after promotion to Wing Commander, he was appointed in 1986 to HQ RAF Support Command in Cambridgeshire as Deputy Principal Medical Officer (Occupational Health & Safety). There, his main responsibility was for the occupational health of the Service and civilian workforce of the large RAF Maintenance Units in the United Kingdom. He was the designated medical officer to the then RAF-maintained Nuclear Accident Response Organisation. At this time, he was appointed as a Consultant Occupational Physician by an Armed Forces Consultant Appointment Board.



In 1987, he moved to HQ RAF Germany where he served for 4 years as Deputy Principal Medical Officer at the Joint HQ at Rheindahlen in West Germany. There, he was responsible for the functional control of 11 RAF Station Medical Centres and the RAF Hospital at Wegberg. Additionally, he oversaw occupational, aviation and environmental and public health medicine in the RAF Germany and was involved in the immediate investigation of many military aircraft accidents. He oversaw aeromedical evacuation flights, which flew patients from Germany, Holland, Belgium and Sardinia to the UK. In 1990, he was appointed to a personal chair as Taylor Professor of Occupational Medicine, a joint RAF – Royal College of Physicians (London) appointment, which he held for 6 years. During the first Gulf War (Operation Granby), he was responsible for overseeing the medical preparation of the deploying RAF squadrons, the deployment of nearly 60% of the RAF Germany medical and nursing personnel and the maintenance of core medical services for the RAF personnel and families who remained in RAF Germany. Following this tour, he was appointed an Officer Brother of the Most Venerable Order of St John of Jerusalem.

In 1991, he attended the residential Joint Service Defence College at Greenwich and then, in early 1992, he took command of the RAF Institute of Health and Medical Training at RAF Halton. This unit delivered basic medical training to RAF medical personnel. Further, all RAF nurses and medical officers received initial branch training. The unit also maintained the RAF Environmental and Occupational Medicine Department, the focal point for RAF Public Health Medicine and the organisation of RAF General Practice Vocational Training and recruited and parented all RAF Medical Cadets whilst they continued to study at University. He was elected as a Fellow of the Faculty of Occupational Medicine in 1993.





On promotion to group captain in 1994, he assumed command of the Princess Mary's Royal Air Force Hospital Halton, a 200-bed hospital with a staff of over 400. After 4 months in post, the closure of the hospital was announced as part of the Defence Review – 'Options for Change'. After putting in place the initial closure plan, he was posted after a mere 8 months to the newly formed HQ Personnel & Training Command in Gloucester as Deputy Director of Medical Policy and Plans (RAF). There, he oversaw the closure of the remaining RAF Hospitals in UK and the transfer of their personnel to the newly formed Ministry of Defence Hospital Units and the Royal Hospital Haslar. In particular, he ensured that the RAF retained its world-renowned aeromedical evacuation service, its highly praised community psychiatry service and general practice care of RAF families within the United Kingdom. He also ensured that resources were provided to set up the RAF Tactical Medical Wing to train and deploy RAF medical personnel on operations.

In 1996, he took up command of The Princess Mary's Hospital, RAF Akrotiri and duties as Command Medical Adviser to HQ British Forces Cyprus. In this appointment, he was responsible for the provision of secondary health care to Cyprus-based UK military personnel and their dependants, funded and overseen by the newly formed Defence Secondary Care Agency, based in London. The hospital was a 50-bed facility staffed by residential Service and civilian consultants in the major specialities. He was also responsible to Commander British Forces Cyprus for the delivery of health and primary medical services, including general practice, aviation, occupational, environmental and public health medicine and child health services. In 1997, he was appointed as Consultant Adviser in Occupational Medicine to the RAF, an appointment he held until 2002.



In 1999, he returned to HQ Personnel & Training Command on promotion to air commodore as Director Health Services (RAF), responsible for the delivery of primary care and occupational health, aviation medicine, public health and environmental health services to RAF and other Service personnel and entitled dependants on RAF Stations and Units. He was responsible for the introduction of Clinical Governance into the RAF. He was elected a Fellow of the Royal Aeronautical Society in 2000.

In May 2001, he moved to become Director Medical Personnel, Policy and Plans (RAF). He was appointed as Honorary Physician to Her Majesty the Queen in February 2002, the same month he moved to the Ministry of Defence as Director Medical Policy where he was responsible the formulation of triservice medical policy on behalf of the Surgeon General. This appointment covered the deployment of UK Forces to Afghanistan and the second Gulf War. In addition, it covered a period of major organisational change, both within the MOD and of

the management of higher medical management in Defence. He was selected as Director-General Medical Services (RAF) on promotion to air vice-marshal, in September 2004.

As Director-General Medical Services (RAF) his first challenge was to ensure the continued existence of the RAF Medical Services as a separate entity, providing Air-centric medical advice and treatment to RAF personnel. At the time, there was considerable pressure to place medical services personnel from all 3 services into a 'purple' organisation, with treatment being provided to Service personnel without regard of colour of uniform or cap badge. Whilst this had been agreed as acceptable for secondary (i.e. hospital-based) care, it was considered that similar provision would place a considerable risk to the care being provided at Station or Unit level to specialist personnel, such as aircrew, and in the specialist health advice being provided by Command Staffs to the Executive. This took 4 years of continued studies, negotiation and staff work to achieve a satisfactory solution – which endured until 2012 when it was decided that administrative control of primary care would be handled jointly under Surgeon General. The next challenge was the rationalisation and relocation of the RAF Medical Directorate from HQ Personnel and Training Command to HQ Air Command at RAF High Wycombe in 2006. As DGMS (RAF) he visited most RAF stations and units to meet medical and other personnel. He given opportunities to experience flights in Tucano, Hawk, Tornado and Typhoon aircraft and most types of RAF helicopters and transport aircraft. He made several visits to the United States which resulted in considerable exchange of views on many common issues, and particularly on aeromedical evacuation from operational theatres. He visited the Royal Australian Air Force where he lectured on the RAF Medical Services experiences in Iraq and Afghanistan to both military and civilian audiences. He visited Iraq in 2006 to meet RAF Medical Services personnel on the RAF-heavy deployment to the Field Hospital at Shaibah. He was a member of the Chief of the Air Staff's Senior Leadership Team and a number of single-service and MOD boards and he undertook Defence Strategic Leadership Training in 2007. He handed over this post in July 2008, and retired from the RAF in April 2009 when he relinquished his appointment as Honorary Physician to Her Majesty the Queen. He was elected a Fellow of the Royal College of Physicians of London in 2009.



In retirement, he has undertaken voluntary appointments. He is Honorary Air Commodore of No 4626 (County of Wiltshire) Aeromedical Evacuation Squadron Royal Auxiliary Air Force, a Governor of The Royal Star and Garter Homes, a Governor of Framlingham College and a Trustee of the Royal Air Force Benevolent Fund.



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He served as a Trustee of the Headley Court Charity 2010-13 and on the Court of the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine from 2004-10. He is a Liveryman of the Worshipful Society of Apothecaries and a Freeman of the Honorary Company of Air Pilots. He is a Freeman of the City of London.

He was President of the Society of Old Framlinghamians from 2011-13 when he initiated and negotiated new administrative and funding arrangements with Framlingham College.

The logo for The Society of Old Framlinghamians, featuring a large stylized 'O' and 'F' in blue and gold, followed by the text 'The Society of Old Framlinghamians' and the website address 'www.oldframlinghamian.com' below it.

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Simon and Maggie live in a village near Colchester, where he is Vice-Chairman of the local Parish Council. Their 3 adult children are all Old Framlinghamians. His interests include alpine skiing, exploration of local coastal waters, travelling, gardening and house renovation.

