

EDITORIAL

We are pleased to kick off our Pointer Supplement for 2015 with an Air Force-themed issue. This supplement which is scheduled to be published in July 2015 coincides with Singapore's 50th birthday since independence. It is fitting therefore that the theme is 'RSAF through 50 Years of Nation-Building'. Under this theme, the articles presented explore how the RSAF has contributed to the nation-building efforts. Retrospectively, the articles will also examine how the RSAF has evolved over the past 50 years as the world changes and Singapore progresses.

The first article entitled "Balancing Our Strategic Resources and 3rd Generation RSAF Mission Imperatives," is by SLTC Christopher Chew, SLTC Vincent Yap, MAJ Alex Chew and MAJ Lee Hsiang Wei. The article discusses how the RSAF has built itself up since its early beginnings in 1968. Through the acquisition of assets to deal with internal and external threats in the 1970s to strengthening component competencies in the 1980s and 1990s and then focusing on the development of network-centric capabilities in the 3rd Generation Air Force—all these have led to a competent and established Air Force. However, the authors highlight that we cannot rest on our laurels and have to continuously develop ourselves. Moreover, this requirement would need to be balanced with Singapore's limited resources—budget, manpower and geographical space, i.e. land use and airspace. Therefore, as part of our planning policy and discipline, the authors stress that we need to take into careful consideration the available supply of resources, balanced with other national requirements, engage in long term planning and conversation, leverage on technology, innovation, as well as the ingenuity and capability of our people to ensure that not only will we overcome our challenges, but we will turn them into opportunities to better ourselves.

The second article, 'The Expanded Role of Air Power in the Defence and Security of Singapore' by LTC Tan Jinq Yeu, MAJ Teo Wei Keong and MAJ Leong Tyng Wey, examines the expanded role of air power as a result of changes in the global security landscape and technology advancements, and highlights their implications on the RSAF and Singapore. The article aims to show that while the roles of air power have expanded progressively and benefited Singapore over the years, Singapore's strategic vulnerability and the uncertain regional security environment mean that the *raison d'être* of the RSAF remains primarily to defend our nation's sovereignty. This is something we need to keep in sharp focus to avoid over-extending our limited resources for Operations Other Than War missions. The authors emphasise that in order to secure the interests of a small country like Singapore in peace and war, the RSAF's order of battle should be structured for flexibility to meet peacetime demands, yet not compromise our abilities to secure a swift and decisive victory when called upon.

‘Contributions of Women in the RSAF’ is the third article in this Air Force Supplement and is written by LTC Kenneth Chiong, LTC Ng Yu Jing, Eugene, CPT Ye Rouyin and CPT Yam Gui Hao, Gabriel. The article provides insights on the contributions women have made through military service in the RSAF. In this article, the writers interviewed eight of the RSAF’s servicewomen and highlighted their contributions to the RSAF. The article takes a critical look at the challenges they have had to overcome and seeks to dispel any misconceptions that society may have of women in military service. The article also describes how many of our women have managed to build successful families despite the high work tempo in the RSAF. Through these stories, the authors hope to increase awareness of how women have contributed to the RSAF and inspire more women to favourably consider a career in the RSAF.

The fourth article, ‘Organisational Culture and the RSAF’ by MAJ Nicholas Chng, MAJ Alex Chan and ME4 Chia Bing Qiang contend that a strong organisational culture is pivotal to the sustained success of any organisation. The authors state that one of the reasons why the RSAF has been so successful in its growth and development is due to its strong organisational culture. Drawing upon evidence from RSAF’s history, the authors present a case for how the RSAF’s culture has been instrumental to its success. Looking ahead, the authors also suggest how the RSAF can evolve its culture to ensure its continued success in the future.

The final article in this supplement is entitled ‘Civil Military Relations in Aviation.’ Written by LTC Chen Boon Chong, LTC Brandon Sim, MAJ Sebastian Chai and CPT Ren Jinfeng, the article provides an insight on the transformation of both civil and military aviation in Singapore. The authors argue that the RSAF and the civil aviation industries have played crucial roles in Singapore’s growth as a nation, through building a harmonious and symbiotic relationship over the past few decades. However, they caution that many serious challenges still lie ahead for Singapore; for example, the declining pool of manpower, which will affect all industries in Singapore. Furthermore, the sustained growth of civil aviation and the planned expansion of both Changi International Airport and Changi Air Base (East), as well as the proliferation of Unmanned Aerial Vehicles will require continued judicious management of our limited airspace. The authors conclude that for Singapore to maintain its position as a leading premier civil aviation hub and a ‘First Class Air Force’, both civil and military aviation sectors must work in synergy to develop innovative ways to overcome these challenges and limitations.

The POINTER Editorial Team