

Press Release



Serving the Services

Subject NAAFI Celebrates 89 Years Serving the Services
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NAAFI Celebrates 89 Years Serving The Services

On Sunday 6th December, the Navy, Army and Air Force Institutes (NAAFI) celebrated its 89th birthday having served alongside British Armed Forces since 1921.

Whilst the organisation officially started trading in January 1921, NAAFI was actually established in December 1920 when a committee, led by Winston Churchill, Secretary of State for War, agreed that there should be one canteen organisation to serve all three services.

At a time when the Navy, Army and Air Force each had their own catering contractor, he argued that the Armed Forces needed one organisation to serve all three services, enabling it to rapidly expand or contract at times of war or peace. As a consequence, the Navy, Army and Air Force Institutes was born and after 89 years of serving the Services the Force's favourite remains an integral part of the British Armed Forces to this day.

NAAFI CEO, Reg Curtis said: *"We are delighted to be celebrating our 89th year and remain committed to supporting Britain's Armed Forces, side by side, in campaigns all around the world. Over the years NAAFI has been many things to many people. To troops out on deployment we are a taste of home; to their families living overseas, a source of comfort; I read that entertainer Max Bygraves fondly remembers the NAAFI standing for 'Never Aye Any Fags In' whilst BBC World Affairs Editor, John Simpson recently described us as 'quintessentially British'. There is a certain fondness attached to NAAFI, and everyone has a story to tell. As we celebrate our 89th birthday it is clear we have a fantastic history behind us and a heritage that we can all be proud of."*

Next year NAAFI will commemorate its 90th Birthday with a 'year of celebration' in recognition of the history, achievements and sacrifice of its people, past and present.

----- Ends -----

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NAAFI Up: Soldiers queue up for their 'char and wad' in 1942.



Serving the Services: The Expeditionary Force Institutes serving out in theatre today.

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Notes to editors

- *Since 1921, NAAFI has actively supported Britain's Armed Forces, side by side in campaigns all around the world, providing an important link to home for the men and women who continue to bravely represent our country.*
- *NAAFI is a 'not for profit' organisation, created and managed solely to serve the Services. It provides a wide range of services including; Catering, Retail, Leisure, and Facilities Management.*
- *On operations, NAAFI's task is to be there when and where they are needed, providing retail and leisure facilities in often extreme conditions.*
- *As a 'not for profit' organisation, with no shareholders to reward, any financial surpluses made are reinvested back into the Armed Forces through either welfare payments, infrastructure investment, or subsidised products, outlets & services.*
- *This press release is issued by NAAFI Communications, Central Support Office, Darlington, Co. Durham, UK.*

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