

Speaker and Panel Biographies

In programme running order



Wing Commander Dr Walter Busuttil

Medical Director and Consultant Psychiatrist, Combat Stress

Dr Walter Busuttil retired from the Royal Air Force after 16 years' service. He helped to rehabilitate the British Beirut Hostages and was instrumental in setting up rehabilitation services for personnel returning from Gulf War I with Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD). Walter set up tertiary general adult and forensic psychiatric services for sufferers of Complex PTSD.

Walter was appointed Director of Medical Services to Combat Stress in 2007. He has helped to set up Veterans' mental health residential, outreach and community clinical services nationally, leading and expanding the clinical capability of Combat Stress as well as campaigning for and encouraging statutory NHS services to be set up for veterans' mental health.



Brian Whittle MSP

Brian was born in 1964 and grew up in the Scottish town of Troon. He was educated at Marr College, Glasgow University and Kilmarnock College.

Brian is a former athlete who represented Great Britain 45 times over a 10-year period including at all major championships from 3 Commonwealth Games to Olympic Games. He won the gold medal in the 4 x 400 metres relay at both the 1986 European Athletics Championships and 1994 European Athletics Championships. He also competed at the 1988 Summer Olympics in Seoul. He is famed for running the third leg of the 1986 European Championships final with one shoe! He continues to be involved in sport by being a senior level 4 track and field coach since 2000.

Brian started his career as an industrial chemist. He is currently the CEO of Demon Sport and Director of Uniquedoc Ltd.



Mike Seabrook

Company Secretary, Thales UK

Mike is Company Secretary of Thales UK, Trustee of the Thales Charitable Trust, Director of Ethics, Head of Corporate Responsibility and UK Compliance Officer for Thales UK. Mike started his career in the Group Secretariat of Racal Electronics Plc in 1986, joined Thales in June 2000 and became Company Secretary in 2008.

During his career he has had responsibility for various legal, compliance and governance matters, including insurance, corporate governance, compliance, risk management and corporate responsibility. Mike is a Fellow of the Institute of Chartered Secretaries and Administrators, a member of the Institute of Directors and a vice chairman of the ADS Business Ethics Network.

MILITARY MIND

BUSINESS SYMPOSIUM 2019



Robert Lappin

Veteran Welfare Development Manager, Scotland's Bravest Manufacturing Company

Robert was born and brought up in Glasgow. Despite earlier aspirations to attend further education, the lure of a career in the Army drew him in and he joined up at 17, enlisting into the Royal Engineers. He enjoyed life as a soldier but after 4 busy years in the ranks was recommended to try the selection process for officer training attending the Royal Military Academy at Sandhurst returning to the Royal Engineers as an Officer. During his career he completed operational tours in Northern Ireland, the Persian Gulf and the Balkans. He completed postings across the UK and in Germany at Regimental Duty and in MOD roles. He left the army in 2008 after a Squadron Command tour.

On leaving the Army, Robert spent time working as a project manager before taking up a role with Combat Stress, the Veterans' Mental Health Charity. In 9 years with that charity he was involved with @1500 veterans across Scotland, the majority of whom were suffering with chronic mental illness and experienced significant deprivation. He left Combat Stress in January 2019 to join Scotland's Bravest Manufacturing Company as the Veteran Welfare and Development Manager.



Norman Yarwood

Head of Ex Forces – Programme and Business Operations Manager Scotland, FDM Group

Norman served for over 24 years in the Royal Corps of Signals, working worldwide in a variety of operational roles. Norman retired from the Army in 2001 as a Warrant Officer Class 1, Regimental Sergeant Major.

Whilst serving he studied with the Open University and subsequently completed his Master of Arts degree in Creative and Cultural studies at Glasgow University. Since graduating he has worked in the Private, Public and Third sector in a variety of senior management roles including Chair of the East Renfrewshire Arts Development Forum and as Director of an International Creative Academy.

Since June 2014 Norman has been the Operations Manager and Head of FDM Ex – Forces Scotland



Peter Hoare

*Medical Director and Consultant Psychiatrist, Combat Stress
National Coordinator Peer Support Service, Combat Stress*

Peter completed 35 years' service in the Royal Marines retiring as a Late Entry Major in 2012, during this time he deployed on numerous operations including Afghanistan, Iraq, Northern Ireland and the Balkans. During the latter part of his career he qualified in Trauma Risk Management (TRiM) and supported pre and post operational stress management training and assessment for personnel deploying to Iraq and Afghanistan. After a short spell working in the Maritime Security Industry he began work with Combat Stress, the largest veterans' mental health charity in the UK. He is currently the National Coordinator for the Combat Stress Peer Support Service



BUSINESS SYMPOSIUM 2019 responsible for the introduction and management of the UK's first national veterans' mental health peer support service.



Dr David Turgoose

Clinical Psychologist, Combat Stress

David Turgoose is a clinical psychologist who has worked in the Research Department at Combat Stress since 2016. He has published a number of research papers on the mental health needs of veterans and led a pilot study investigating the use of Skype to deliver therapies to Combat Stress Veterans. As well as his work with veterans, he works with young people with attachment and trauma difficulties at Great Ormond Street Hospital.



Helen Thomas

Communication Specialist, Thales UK

Helen has more than 18 years of experience in internal communications management having led internal communications for NatWest Life, AXA Sun Life, Lloyds TSB Insurance and following the merger with HBOS, Lloyds Banking Group Insurance division.

Highly regarded as a valuable team player with excellent communication skills, Helen is great at building rapport to establish effective business relationships. She is focused, enthusiastic and highly motivated to deliver long-term business results, with strong project management skills.

Helen also has considerable experience as an HR business partner and her dual expertise makes her a valuable asset for any HR, change and employee engagement related communication project.