

Sergeant Robert Loughran-Dickson

Royal Military Police

It is with deep regret that the Ministry of Defence must confirm the death of Sergeant Robert David Loughran-Dickson of the Royal Military Police in Afghanistan on 18 November 2009.

Sergeant Loughran-Dickson died as a result of gunshot wounds sustained whilst taking part in a routine patrol in the vicinity of Patrol Base Wahid, in Nad-e-Ali District, Helmand Province.

Sergeant Robert David Loughran-Dickson, 4th Regiment, Royal Military Police

Sergeant Robert Loughran-Dickson, known as Robert to his family, Rob or L-D to his friends and colleagues, was 33 at the time of his death.

The youngest of three children, he was born and raised in the town of Deal in Kent. Together with his two sisters, he attended a local village primary school of fewer than 100 children, followed by the town's secondary school.

Sergeant Loughran-Dickson attended further education and, following this, in 1997 he enlisted into the Army, in the Royal, Electrical and Mechanical Engineers (REME).

In 2001 Sergeant Loughran-Dickson transferred to the Royal Military Police and, over the course of his career, deployed on operations in Kosovo, Iraq, Northern Ireland and finally Afghanistan. He was initially posted to 156 Provost Company and subsequently moved on to 160 Provost Company, 4th Regiment Royal Military Police which led to his deployment on Operation Herrick 11, in Helmand Province.

Sergeant Loughran-Dickson held a variety of positions during his time in the Army, including Police Post Non-Commissioned Officer, Motor Transport Non-Commissioned Officer, and Crime Reduction and Local Intelligence Officer. This last job was the one in which he got the most job satisfaction, giving crime reduction presentations, visiting schools or processing intelligence, and the job where he gained his promotion to Sergeant.

He was a keen runner, who enjoyed preparing for, and running marathon races, as well as hill-walking and swimming.

Sergeant Loughran-Dickson was the proud father of a son, also named Robert, born in September 1992.

Lieutenant Colonel Debbie Poneskis, Commanding Officer, 4th Regiment, Royal Military Police, said:

"Sergeant Loughran-Dickson was an exceptional soldier and was completely committed to the Royal Military Police; he will be sorely missed by the Regiment and by the military community in

Aldershot.

"Prior to his deployment to Afghanistan, Sergeant Loughran-Dickson was the Local Intelligence Officer and a Community Policeman; he excelled in this role, where his calm personable nature, dedication and commitment plus his consistent enthusiasm for the job, made him stand out.

"He was totally professional, easy company and was the first to volunteer for anything – whether it was helping his colleagues, attending community events out of hours or taking on additional tasks. I had absolute faith in Sergeant Loughran-Dickson: he was utterly reliable, wise beyond his years and he simply got on with the job, quietly and without fuss.

"He was an extremely proud father, and his son Robert is a credit to him."

Major Phil Hacker, Company Commander, 160 Provost Company, said:

"We have lost a talented, dedicated and much loved Senior Non-Commissioned Officer. Sergeant Loughran-Dickson was deeply respected by all who served with him. Undoubtedly professional, he was adored by those he led and by those who served with him.

"As a professional soldier and as a man, he has left a lasting contribution towards helping the people of Afghanistan. He will be sadly missed and our thoughts are with his family and loved ones."

Captain Karen Tait, Operations Officer, 160 Provost Company, said:

"Sergeant L-D was an honest, caring, genuine and devoted soldier and father. He was the kind of man who commanded respect from all who worked with him. His work back in Aldershot was exemplary and in his role out here, even in such a short space of time, he was far superior.

"L-D was a true friend whom I will deeply miss and even now cannot comprehend the void he will leave, not only in me but those he has served with and those he loved deeply and who loved him. I was proud and honoured to serve with him but above all being able to call him my friend. His smile I will miss the most."

Lieutenant Dominic Ellis, Platoon Commander, 160 Provost Company, said:

"Sergeant Rob Loughran-Dickson was a fine soldier and Military Policeman. Intelligent, confident, courteous and stalwart, he led from the front, happy to get stuck in at the sharp end, always setting an excellent example to his subordinates.

"Sergeant Loughran-Dickson could always be relied on to provide sound advice for junior officers who had the privilege to have him under their command. His professionalism ensured he was well respected by all he worked with, regardless of rank.

"Sergeant Loughran-Dickson's death is a tragic loss to the Royal Military Police and the British Army as a whole and my sincerest condolences go out to his family and friends."

Warrant Officer Class 2 Jon Barnett, Company Sergeant Major, said:

"When I arrived at 160 Company in Aldershot, L-D was one of the first Non-Commissioned Officers I met. I knew that when he was on shift, with such an abundance of confidence, he had the ability to produce the goods under pressure. It was a pleasure to see him promoted to Sergeant and work with him here in Afghanistan, where he thrived on the responsibility and the opportunity to lead from the front.

"He was one of the most professional Senior Non-Commissioned Officers I have had the pleasure of knowing."