



Sapper Darren Foster of 21 Engineer Regiment was killed on Friday 13 August 2010.

At 0653hrs on 13 August 2010, whilst manning a sangar in order to provide security to his colleagues in Patrol Base Sangin Fulod, Sapper Darren Foster was engaged by small arms fire and suffered a gunshot wound.

He received medical treatment on site and was evacuated by helicopter to the Bastion Role 3 Hospital where he died of his wounds.

Sapper Darren Foster, aged 20, originally from Whitehaven, Cumbria, enlisted into the Royal Engineers on 22 September 2008. After completing basic training he qualified as a combat engineer and subsequently as a military fabricator. He joined 21 Engineer Regiment, based in Ripon, on 18 May 2010.

After preparing for deployment in Ripon, he joined the Regiment on Operation HERRICK 12 on 20 July 2010. He quickly joined his section who were supporting 40 Commando Royal Marines in Sangin.

He was employed on a wide range of construction and combat engineer tasks and was closely involved in the demanding construction project to upgrade Patrol Base Sangin Fulod to a company-sized location.

In a joint statement, the family of Sapper Foster said:

"He was a loving son, grandson and brother who will be sorely missed for his crazy flamboyant lifestyle. His only aim was to serve in the Army, for which he made us all proud."

Lieutenant Colonel Bobby Walton-Knight Royal Engineers, Commanding Officer, 21 Engineer Regiment Group, said:

"Sapper Darren Foster was a young soldier with a great deal of promise. From the moment he arrived in the Regiment he was pushing to get out to Afghanistan as soon as he could. He arrived full of energy, itching to join his fellow Sappers and was quickly in the thick of it in Sangin.

"He loved soldiering and was fiercely proud of being a Sapper.

"He was never one to shy away from work or to leave a task half done; his section knew it and they loved him for it. He was a soldier you could rely on and one we could all trust. He was with the Regiment for just three months and in Afghanistan for just three weeks, but in that time he made his mark.

"His motivation, professionalism and his pride marked him out. He died doing a job he loved and whilst defending his friends. We have lost a good man and as a regiment our thoughts and prayers go out to his family, girlfriend and his many friends."

Major Jason Ainley Royal Engineers, Officer Commanding, 73 Armoured Engineer Squadron, said:

"Sapper Darren Foster recently joined the ranks of 73 Armoured Engineer Squadron, bringing with him a real zest for soldiering. From the moment he first learned of his new Squadron's deployment in Afghanistan, his enthusiasm to join us out here was never in doubt.

"He soon found himself deployed as part of a small team of Royal Engineers supporting 40 Commando Royal Marines in Sangin; a challenge that he rose to admirably.

"Sapper Foster clearly made a mark on those who worked with him during his short time with us, and he will be sadly missed. We have lost a soldier and sapper of real promise, and our thoughts and prayers are with his family and friends at this difficult time."

Captain Greg Harris, Battle Group Engineer, Combined Forces Sangin, said:

"Sapper Darren Foster had only recently joined us in Sangin, but from the day he flew into Forward Operating Base Sabit Qadam he had impressed me with his enthusiastic manner. He had joined his colleagues in 9 Troop at Forward Operating Base Sangin Fulod, where he was part of a small team striving to enlarge the base and improve living conditions for Delta Company, 40 Commando Royal Marines.

"He was hard working and instrumental in achieving this task and his contribution to the team effort ensured that he was well respected by his fellow Engineers. My thoughts are with his parents, girlfriend and all those he left behind."

Corporal John Rutter, Section Commander, 73 Armoured Engineer Squadron, said:

"Sapper 'Cookie' Foster was a Sapper through and through; although new to the Squadron he possessed the qualities and capabilities of a soldier beyond his years.

"He gained the name 'Cookie' by making the mistake of telling the section that cooking was a passion of his and was duly appointed head Engineer Chef, however this was not the only reason why he shone within the Section, it was his hardworking and enthusiastic approach to work, accompanied with his friendly personality that made him the sapper he was.

"As an intelligent and skilled sapper he fitted in with the section from the start and was liked by all. We only had the privilege of knowing 'Cookie' since he deployed and joined us at Forward Operating Base Sangin Fulod, but within that time he has made a lasting impression on us all that we will never forget.

"Rest in Peace mate."

Sapper Richard Cummings, 73 Armoured Engineer Squadron, said:

"When I first arrived at 21 Engineer Regiment, Sapper Foster was one of the first people to greet me. He was very kind and told me what I should expect when I first arrived in the Regiment.

"Sapper Foster was extremely keen and when he was told he was to deploy to Afghanistan and meet up with the rest of the Squadron, to say he was excited would be an understatement! He was very enthusiastic about his role in the Royal Engineers.

"He fancied himself as a bit of a Masterchef, and despite attending every fixed meal would still be cooking up super noodles like he was Gordon Ramsey in the evenings; he could eat to his hearts content and still stay in shape. He was great at physical training and would always come back from a hard training session barely sweating at all.

"Sapper Foster was a genuine down to earth guy and will be missed by all who knew him."

Sapper Mark Kiseljov, 73 Armoured Engineer Squadron, said:

"I first met 'Foz' in Ripon, when he arrived in the Regiment not long after me. We did most of our pre-deployment training together and we got to know each other on the build up to our tour.

"Although he seemed to be wide eyed and apprehensive at first, he soon settled into the scheme of things and was quick to show his willingness to do the job and his keenness for the Army.

"He was always ahead of the game and preparing for his next task, this was an early sign of his potential and demonstrated his aspirations for a long career in the Royal Engineers.

"A funny lad and a typical Northerner, his pride and joy was his silver Golf and, possibly because of this, he was especially careful with his money.

"I'll always remember how he would stash ration packs in his locker and profusely claim that 'it was because [he] liked the taste of them' and that 'it had nothing to do with the fact that they were free'. He was always on the phone texting to his girlfriend with a cheeky grin on his face.

"It is another tragic loss for the Regiment, for a family and for the peers of another sapper taken in his prime. Although he's gone, his spirit lives on and he will never be forgotten. Rest in Peace friend. We miss you."