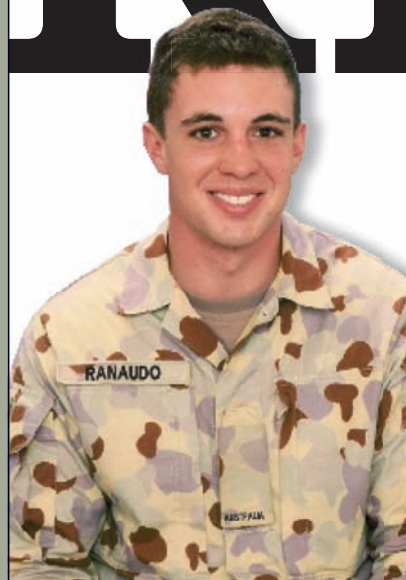


IKIA

Enthusiastic professional



Pic Corporal Rachel Ingram



Pic Leading Seaman Paul Berry

Private Benjamin Ranaudo from the Townsville-based 1st Battalion, the Royal Australian Regiment, serving with the Mentoring and Reconstruction Task Force 2 in Afghanistan was killed by an anti-personnel explosive device on 18 July 2009 while on patrol.

Chief of the Defence Force Air Chief Marshal Angus Houston said Private Ranaudo was a professional soldier who served enthusiastically and with distinction.

"Benjamin was clearly dedicated to his career as a soldier and committed to the profession of arms," Air Chief Marshal Houston said.

"His career record speaks to a young man, very well trained, with an extraordinary array of completed courses."

Chief of Army Lieutenant General Ken Gillespie extended his condolences to the family and friends of the young soldier.

"Private Ranaudo [was killed] while serving his nation and his sacrifice will never be forgotten," Lieutenant General Ken Gillespie said.

"This loss is felt heavily by the wider Defence community, and particularly by members of the Australian Army."

Private Ranaudo's colleagues in Afghanistan, farewelled their mate in a moving memorial service at Tarin Kowt on 20 July. They remembered him as a professional, well-liked soldier who served with distinction.

Members of coalition forces in Tarin Kowt lined the road to the runway, where a plane waited to take Ben's body home.

On arrival in Australia, aboard an RAAF C-17 Globemaster on 26 July, Pte Ranaudo's remains were greeted at Avalon Airport, Victoria, by family, friends and dignitaries.

A 1RAR bearer party was piped from the aircraft as they carried the casket to the waiting family.

Chaplain Steve Neuhaus said, "We meet here today to reverently bring the mortal

remains of Benjamin James Ranaudo, who [was killed] in the course of his duties while on active service in the Australian Army in a foreign land, back to his homeland.

"We give thanks for Ben's devotion to duty and we pray for those who mourn."

Acting Chief of Defence Lieutenant General David Hurley presented Private Ranaudo's medals, which included the Australian Active Service Medal, Afghanistan Campaign Medal, the NATO Medal-ISA, the Timor Solidarity Medal and the Infantry Combat Badge, to the family.

Private Ranaudo was 22 years old and leaves behind a loving family and a devoted girlfriend.

He joined the Australian Army three years ago and was killed when he stepped on a landmine while on operations north of Tarin Kowt.

He was buried in Melbourne on 31 July.



Pic Corporal Rachel Ingram